UNMANNED AIRCRAFT IN THE RAIL INDUSTRY

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Overview

- UAS Applications in the Rail Industry
  - Asset Inspection
  - Inventory
  - Emergency Response
  - Track Inspection
- Regulatory Framework
  - Old Rules
  - New Rules (Federal Aviation Regulations, Part 107)
  - Other Considerations
Asset Inspection

Asset Inspection
Inventory

- Reporting Marks & Car Number
- Load Limit (Pounds or Kg)
- Empty Weight of Car
- Placard Holder
- Tank Test & Safety Valve Test Information
- Car Specification
- Commodity Name
- TC Permit Number
Inventory

Emergency Response
Track Inspection
Integration of UAS
The Old Rules

Public Aircraft Operations

COA – Certificate of Waiver or Authorization

Civil (Not Recreational/Hobby)

Section 333 Exemption or Special Airworthiness Certificate and COA

Civil (Recreational/Hobby)

Registration for aircraft; generally applicable rules


- Two threshold requirements:
  - Remote Pilot Certificate
  - Registered Aircraft
New Rules: Operational Req’s

- Operational Requirements
  - Less than 55lbs
  - Remain within Visual Line of Sight (VLOS)
  - Daylight hours, or civil twilight with lights
  - Yield right of way to other aircraft
  - Remain below 100mph
  - Remain below 400 AGL or w/in 400 feet of structure
  - Visibility of 3 miles from ground control station
  - No operations from a moving vehicle or watercraft (unless sparsely populated area)
New Rules: Air Traffic Control

- Air Traffic Control Coordination
  - Class B, Class C, or Class D airspace; or
  - Within the lateral boundaries of the surface area of Class E airspace designated for an airport
New Rules: Accident Reports

- Accident Reporting
  - Serious Injuries
  - Loss of Consciousness
  - Damage to Property Other than the UAS (> $500)

- In addition to FRA or NTSB reporting
New Rules: CoWs

- Certificate of Waiver
  - Immediate integration of “low-risk” operations
  - Case-by-case determination for “higher-risk” operations

- “[T]he standard that an applicant seeking a waiver will be required to meet is to demonstrate that his or her proposed small UAS operation can safely be conducted under the terms of a certificate of waiver.”
Other Considerations

  - “Laws traditionally related to state and local police power – including land use, zoning, privacy, trespass, and law enforcement operations – generally are not subject to federal regulation.”
  - 2015: 45 states considered 168 bills related to UAS.

Thank You!

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