



UVS Canada

By Wayne Crowe, President

UVS Canada is the focal point for Unmanned Vehicle Systems in Canada. We are a Canadian-registered not-for-profit association representing the interests of the UVS community in Canada; this includes industry, academia, government and other interested parties.

The UVS Canada theme for 2008 was «Coming of Age» representing not only the theme of the 2008 Conference, but also the continued growth and change within the association. Each year unmanned vehicles systems become more reliable and their use more mainstream while our association has grown to a point where we have a professional staff dedicated to serving our members and growing the association. To facilitate this growth the Board of UVS Canada has been restructured, adopting By-Laws, policies and procedures that make the operation of the organization open and transparent to our membership. Within the board structure there is increased diversity with representation from all regions of the country and a new Executive Committee headed by our Chairman Pip Rudkin.

UVS Canada continues to grow and move forward with its mandate to represent the Canadian unmanned vehicle sector on both the national and international front. Our 2008 Conference which was held in Ottawa, attracted over 300 people from North America, Europe and Asia representing Industry, Government, Military, Academia, and others with an interest in the sector. The conference was led off by a series of workshops with Regulatory Issues and UVS in Law Enforcement generating particular interest. The main conference saw more than 70 presentations on subjects such as Research & Development, Safety and Security, Industrial Solutions, Modelling and Simulation and other topics. The conference, held in November of each year, is the premier event for the association affording its members and the entire UVS community the opportunity to exchange ideas and network with professionals from Canada and around the world. UVS Canada also works hard to encourage Canadian students and young engineers to get involved in the field of unmanned vehicle systems. We hold a bi-annual Student UAV Design/Build/Fly Competition, an annual Student Papers Competition, and since 2007 have awarded the «Mark Cuss Scholarship» helping young engineers interested in unmanned vehicle technology. We also recognize organizations and individuals who have contributed to the advancement of the UVS Sector with awards presented at our annual conference. Here is a short summary of our major activities this past year.

Transport Canada SFOC Working Group

Following our participation in a Transport Canada UAV Working Group, UVS Canada was invited to participate in the Special Flight Operations Certificate (SFOC) Working Group. Over half of the participants on that working group were members of UVS Canada. The group addressed important issues surrounding the process for approval of an SFOC including airworthiness, crew qualifications, and addressing requirements for beyond line-of-sight and line of-sight operations. Of particular interest was the development of a streamlined approach for operations where the UAV would be kept in visual range of the controller. UVS Canada is consistently recognized as the association representing Canadian UVS interests as reflected in invitations

from the National Research Council and Transport Canada to participate as members of working groups and steering committees in activities aimed at expanding the operations and regulations regarding unmanned vehicles.

UVS Canada Student UAV Competition

Following the success of our first Student UAV design and fly competition held in Goose Bay Labrador in 2007, UVS Canada announced the continuation of this event for 2008/09. Ten university teams submitted design papers for a UAV intended to support forest fire fighting operations. At the time of publication, 7 of the teams will have competed in the flight program conducted at CFB Gaagetown, NB. The popularity of this event has ensured that it will now become a permanent feature for UVS Canada on a bi-annual basis (every two years).

New UVS Canada Website

As part of our growth in 2008, we launched a new interactive website (www.uvscanada.org) that features a modern look, greater information and a Members Only section. The new site facilitates online membership and online registration for our annual conference along with a feature to allow online submission of presenter abstracts.

International Reach

UVS Canada maintains an informal relationship with the European-based UVS International providing its members with the benefits of a larger contact base and frequent news flashes. UVS Canada's Executive Director accompanied by the winner of last year's Student Papers Competition attended UAS 2008 in Paris, France where they represented member companies, UVS Canada, and the Canadian sector as a whole. In addition to participating in UAS 2008, UVS Canada was invited to nominate a representative to join the UAS International Coordination Council.

2009 Conference

In recognition of being a truly national association, the next gathering of UVS Canada will take place on the west coast of Canada at the Fairmont Empress Hotel in Victoria, BC on 2-5 November 2009. This conference will highlight developments in underwater research while continuing our aim of bringing the community together again from across the public and private sectors, as well as from across Canada and internationally.

