



SKYPORTS PARTNERS WITH MASSDOT TO LAND ITS DRONE SERVICES IN MASSACHUSETTS, USA

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Skyports has partnered with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's (MassDOT) Aeronautics Division to demonstrate how its drone services could link communities across the Cape Cod region in Massachusetts, USA. MassDOT is investigating the uses of drones as a solution to connecting its remote communities to everyday services such as healthcare and logistics, and in particular is looking to develop a capability to provide emergency medical delivery after storms or other natural disasters. The Cape Cod region contains numerous hard to reach communities including: islands, peninsulas, and offshore energy projects where drones can provide an effective method of keeping these areas connected.

Skyports presents an ideal solution to the problem, as the operator's drones are capable of flying safely in harsh weather conditions and are able to carry varied cargo payloads up to 100 lbs. Skyports has been granted approval by the Federal Aviation Administration to operate beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) flights during a week-long feasibility project.

The project will guide MassDOT as it explores broader BVLOS drone operations in Massachusetts, to perform services such as rail network and road inspections.

MassDOT already uses drones as part of its program to support the transportation infrastructure across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. MassDOT's Drone Program performs daily flights to support the MassDOT Highway, Rail and Transit, and Aeronautics Divisions, along with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) that operates the subway and commuter rail lines. These flights inspect rail track, document the health of wetlands near construction sites, and map highway and airport projects. As part of these efforts, MassDOT is also looking to expand its ability to perform complex drone operations such as BVLOS flight over rail and emergency delivery to remote communities. MassDOT turned to Skyports to help define the approach to delivery operations, and to demonstrate delivery flights across Vineyard Sound, between Woods Hole on Cape Cod and the island of Martha's Vineyard.

Dr. Jeffrey DeCarlo, MassDOT Aeronautics Administrator said: "MassDOT is excited to be working with Skyports for this first delivery demonstration, helping us establish a foundation for new, innovative drone use cases to support communities across the Commonwealth. The Aeronautics Division established the Drone Program after recognizing the potential of drones to support MassDOT's traditional inspection and asset management missions. We are now exploring new drone use cases such as emergency delivery and are fortunate to be able to partner with companies like Skyports that are pushing innovative technologies and operations. Massachusetts has a diverse geography and a complex airspace to navigate, and Skyports has brought its tremendous flight experience to bear in order to make this first demonstration a success."

Alex Brown, Head of Drone Deliveries at Skyports said: "We're really excited to be partnering with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to demonstrate how our drone services can bring life-enhancing benefits to its rural communities. Our belief at Skyports is that services such as healthcare should be accessible in a timely way for everyone regardless of where they live, which up-until-now has been a huge challenge for road transport in hard-to-reach areas. Drones really are transforming the logistics sector by bringing fast, frequent, reliable and affordable solutions. This is just the first step in bringing BVLOS drone operations, including drone delivery services, to Massachusetts in the coming years."

During the project, Skyports will complete a series of test flights and demonstrations to prove its operational reliability and technological capability. Following the completion of the project, Skyports plans to move into full scale permanent commercial operations in Massachusetts before expanding its operations across other states in the US.

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