

Uncrewed Services Advisory Network – Meeting 8

Wednesday 05 February 2025, 9:30am to 11:30am AEDT

Meeting Summary

Agenda Item 2 – Uncrewed Services Integration approach and roadmap

2.1 Iterative development approach

- The Uncrewed Aircraft Systems Traffic Management (UTM) Action Plan outlines an iterative approach for UTM delivery. In support of this objective, the discussed Airservices' approach for delivery of uncrewed services specifies that the initial capabilities of Airservices' Flight Information Management System (FIMS) in late 2025 will be foundational, however will continue to evolve to meet the needs of the uncrewed industry.
- The Airservices vision is aligned to government policy with an iterative delivery approach across three key phases:
 - o Phase One – Launch of foundational capabilities: As the current focus, this phase centres around building foundational automated UTM capabilities and services but paving the way to establishment of more advanced future capabilities.
 - o Phase Two - Iterative expansion: This phase focuses on generating insights through expansion of access to FIMS and increased UTM services and capabilities by testing these in trial environments, to inform future decision making. This phase is anticipated to commence in 2026.
 - o Phase Three - Advanced capabilities: This phase focuses on enhancing capability towards tactical deconfliction, to drive improved and efficient safety outcomes. This phase is anticipated to commence in 2027.
- Importantly, the work to deliver these phases will occur in parallel.

Discussion:

- A phased approach is supported by the Uncrewed Services Advisory Network (USAN). Members agreed that a collaborative engagement approach on the future delivery pipeline will be critical to this process, which will form part of future USAN engagements, including working towards a shared vision for maturing airspace integration.

2.2 Delivery Roadmap and key milestones

- Airservices shared a delivery roadmap detailing key milestones that support the three phased approach towards delivery of integrated uncrewed services and the maturity of future integrated airspace.
- The immediate focus is on delivering the milestones associated with Phase One of the roadmap. Critical learnings throughout this phase will inform how future phases take shape and how these are then implemented.
- Airservices is committed to sharing key insights along the way to support industry readiness. This will ensure the future pathway is seamless and efficient.
- This roadmap will form the basis of future discussion with USAN. Phases two and three will require more engagement and collaboration across Government and with industry.

2.2.1 Request for Proposal (RFP) update - Bridget Kehoe

- Airservices is committed to collaborating closely with Drone Safety Applications (DSA's) and the future Uncrewed Aircraft System (UAS) Service Suppliers (USS) community. Airservices will share key learnings as we work towards future onboarding opportunities.
- The objectives of the recent Request for Proposal (RFP) included:
 - o Creation of an open market in the UTM ecosystem
 - o Development and refinement of processes and documentation for future onboarding rounds
- A high number of quality applications were received, across a range of national and international submissions highlighting strong interest and engagement.
- The initial joint workshop has taken place with Frequentis Australasia and the first three selected USS. There will be a series of workshops and testing activities over the coming months as well as opportunities for Airservices to share learnings from this work with USAN and industry more broadly.
- Initial integration testing will commence from the end of March 2025 and continue through until October 2025.
- Throughout this process the draft Application Programming Interface (API) documentation will be refined and updated; to enable us to share this with future USS in advance so they can understand the level of technical detail and enable readiness for future onboarding.

Discussion:

- Industry will have an ongoing interest in Airservices activities that assist future USS providers readiness.
- USAN discussed ways to support a fair and equitable process for others to become a USS and access FIMS. USAN agreed that there is a role to play in ensuring information is shared across industry to facilitate efficient future onboarding.

2.2.2 DSA/USS transition plan - Sharon Marshall-Keeffe

- Airservices and the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) are working closely together to develop a transition plan between DSA/USS. This will be finalised by April 2025 and will ensure continuity of services to drone operators.
- DSA's that provide Automated Airspace Authorisations (AAA) will be given a 12-month period in which they can develop and test requirements to be able to connect to FIMS.
- Airservices is intending to offer an opportunity to DSA's to receive information and documentation ahead of future onboarding rounds, and this will capture the lessons learned during the integration testing period.

Discussion – Policy Settings:

- The release date of the Government's Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) strategy is yet to be confirmed. Work across government and industry, will need to commence soon to understand feasibility and assess readiness for implementation of AAM. Industry confirmed it is prepared to lobby in support of a policy position from the Government on AAM.
- Discussions across Government for the next UTM action plan will commence soon. A significant amount of industry consultation and engagement is expected to enable this.

2.2.3 Pricing strategy update – Sasha Nikolic

- The development of Airservices proposed pricing approach for uncrewed services is based on the principles of fairness and simplicity, recognising the cost required to establish and maintain FIMS, whilst balancing the objective to support industry growth.
- A key component of this approach will be working through the appropriate pricing regulatory model. As a government enterprise, our priority will be ensuring that our pricing approach meets all regulatory requirements.
- Airservices is planning to return to USAN with an update on our pricing approach in the middle of the year.

2.2.4 Integration Testing and FIMS launch– Bridget Kehoe

- Airservices is currently on track to deliver the launch of FIMS in November 2025.

2.2.5 Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) – Sharon Marshall-Keeffe

- Previous USAN discussions have emphasised the need for a documented roadmap for the long-term development of UTM towards integrated airspace.
- With the recent release of the Aviation White Paper, the UTM Action Plan, and CASA's updated Roadmap, as well as CASA's renewed focus on the Australian Future Airspace Framework (AFAF), Airservices is better positioned to develop a detailed roadmap. This will focus on Airservices' specific role in achieving integrated airspace, aligned to government policy and regulatory requirements.
- To inform this work, Airservices will be completing a detailed assessment, identifying the foundational capabilities required to support AAM on a practical level. This includes understanding existing capabilities, gaps, and dependencies.
- Updates will be shared with USAN, including proposed future opportunities to discuss how we can shape this together, based on the requirements of the industry.

Discussion

- A joint discussion around understanding how airspace needs to evolve in future phases, to support the needs of industry, including a need to understand who will deliver and govern safety services for passenger carrying eVTOLs. Airservices is trying to bring a pragmatic view, and these questions are important to inform policy and regulation, however this is something that requires broader Government consideration.

Agenda Item 3 –Iterative Service Delivery

3.1 Phase 1 overview - Courtney Meares-Whitty

- An overview of the services and capabilities being delivered as part of the phased, iterative approach was discussed. For phase 1: Foundational capabilities being delivered as part of the launch of FIMS include:
 - Automated Airspace Authorisations for operations within three nautical miles (nm) of all civil controlled aerodromes, which will eventually only be available through FIMS.
 - Strategic Coordination: A new capability that currently does not exist and is supported by operational planning. Strategic Coordination includes FIMS containing information about different operational plans submitted to the UTM ecosystem by operators through USS. When there is an overlap between operational plans, FIMS will be able to notify the other operation of the occurrence. This is a foundational capability that can be used to enhance situational awareness.
 - Operational planning: This capability can only be accessed through USS and enables operators to create, and submit operational plans to the UTM ecosystem.

- Airspace awareness (constraint management): Providing real time information about airspace boundaries and restrictions and can be incorporated into flight planning.
- Airservices confirmed there will be opportunities for future USS onboarding rounds to access FIMS capabilities.
- Importantly, services and capabilities are being delivered iteratively to support the objectives of the UTM Action Plan. Whilst participation in UTM services is not mandatory outside of 3 nm during the initial phases, this is expected to evolve in the future as expanded, advanced capabilities are delivered, and operational risk increases because of increased flight activity and more complex uncrewed operations.

Discussion

- A discussion occurred on operational rules related to Beyond Visual Line of Site (BVLOS) operations, and a requirement from industry to understand the pathway towards implementation. There was agreement that a strong need exists from industry to facilitate BVLOS and recognition that this will not be possible until there is full participation by operators in the UTM ecosystem. This is a critical component in realising advanced future capabilities and how we iterate and build on the foundational capabilities to get us there.
- Data verification: Airservices will provide certain aeronautical data sets as part of the launch of FIMS and will validate the tools used in provision of the data sets (e.g. Special Use Airspace (SUA), No fly zones, Notice to Air Missions NOTAMS). Airservices is looking at transforming and digitising some of the data sets that will be provided through FIMS to add further value to industry in the future. Data sets related to ground planning will not be provided by the FIMS for go-live in late 2025.

Agenda Item 6 – Action items

ID	Action	Owner	Due Date
08_01	Airservices to incorporate Uncrewed Services Integration Roadmap to regular USAN agenda, which will form the pipeline of future engagement topics.	Sasha Nikolic	28 Feb
08_02	Wisk to provide input related to AAM in the Uncrewed Services Integration Roadmap, to inform phase 2 activity. This will provide clarity and understanding of what is underway and what we can leverage to inform other working groups.	Phil Swinsburg	31 Mar
08_03	<p>To ensure the evolving needs of end users are incorporated into USAN meetings and out of cycle discussions, Airservices and Reece to identify supporting mechanisms that facilitate capturing and centralising questions, concerns and opportunities identified by end users with USAN members.</p> <p>Identify how USAN can establish and support two-way feedback mechanisms for end users such as drone operators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explore establishing a working group with primarily end users (drone operators) as members, to provide insights and feedback to USAN members and inform USAN discussions. 	Luke Gumley, Sasha Nikolic Reece Clothier	31 Mar
08_04	Luke to set up offline meeting with Scott for a discussion regarding data subleasing opportunities.	Luke Gumley, Scott Hamey	31 Mar
08_05	Industry to provide feedback on what they require for phases 2 and 3.	All	Ongoing

Attendance

Name	Role	Company	Attendance
Luke Gumley	Chair	Airservices Australia	Yes
Reece Clothier	Co-chair	Boeing	Yes
Sasha Nikolic	Member	Airservices Australia	Yes
Courtney Meares-Whitty	Member	Airservices Australia	Yes
Bridget Kehoe	Member	Airservices Australia	Yes
Sharon Marshall-Keeffe	Member	Airservices Australia	Yes
Holly Costello-Luke	Secretariat	Airservices Australia	Yes
Adam Welsh	Member	DJI	No
Andrew Crowe	Member	AAUS	Yes
Brendan Williams	Member	Boeing	Yes
Benedict Lyons	Member	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, and the Arts	Yes
Daniel Mackey	Member	Wing Aviation	No
Daniel Smith	Member	Qantas	No
Dario Valenza	Member	Carbonix	No
David Rylance	Member	Fire Rescue Victoria	Yes
David Cole	Member	FlyFreely	No
Greg Tyrrell	Member	Australian Association for Uncrewed Systems (AAUS)	No
Jackie Dujmovic	Member	Hover UAV	Yes
Jonathan King	Member	AVCRM	Yes
Julian Fraser	Member	Australian Helicopter Industry Association	Yes
Nathan Lewis	Member	Department of Defence	No
Paul Hardy	Member	Surf Life Saving Pty Ltd	Yes

Name	Role	Company	Attendance
Philip Swinsburg	Member	Wisk	Yes
Rob Weaver	Member	Eve Air Mobility	Yes
Scott Hamey	Member	SkyLink UAS Pty Ltd	Yes
Scott Mitchell	Member	Virgin Australia	No
Tim Boyle	Member	Brisbane Airport Corporation	No
Katie Wilkinson	Invitee	Frequentis Australasia	Yes