SAV UAS Integration

Background

An industry-leading provider of unmanned aircraft system (UAS) services, Woolpert invests in technology research and participates in federal policy development. The Woolpert UAS team has been providing Savannah-Hilton Head International Airport (SAV) with asset management, geospatial and UAS integration services since 2017.

Challenge

After streamlining airport operations and inspections with an asset management system, SAV determined to use UAS technology as a force multiplier for its operations team. To accomplish this goal, the airport required UAS consulting, strategic planning, risk assessment and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) coordination services.

Solution

Woolpert collaborated with SAV's airport operations team and FAA Air Traffic Control to help SAV establish a formal and fundable UAS program for airfield and airport inspections. Initially, Woolpert demonstrated the capabilities of UAS to prove the feasibility and value of operating in controlled airspace. Then, the Woolpert team developed the elements necessary for SAV to initiate its program with minimal risk. Team members are currently performing airfield inspections on behalf of SAV.

Woolpert continues to provide SAV with subject matter expertise and UAS integration program management. These services include additional flight demonstrations, training and final recommendations for live data streaming, flight management systems and cybersecurity planning. Additionally, Woolpert is also assisting SAV with purchasing UAS, supervising flight staff and studying the impact of UAS on staff workloads.

CLIENT
Savannah-Hilton Head
International Airport (SAV)

LOCATION
Savannah, GA

CHALLENGE
Integration of UAS into
business operations

SOLUTION
UAS integration program for
airfield and airport inspections

SERVICES
Unmanned aircraft systems (UAS)

BENEFITS
• Simplified inspections
• Rapid deployment of UAS

Outcome

The Woolpert-designed UAS program prepares SAV for the near-horizon integration of this exciting technology. The program includes the following elements:
• Concepts of operations (CONOPs)
• FAA authorizations/waivers
• Public relations support
• Standard operating procedures
• Technology recommendations
• Training and safety education

Real-time safety data and risk and flight management have proven valuable not only to the airport, but to the FAA as well. The successful application of SAV's UAS program has prompted the FAA to use it as a model for developing national policies around the use of UAS in controlled airspace.

Benefits

SAV's new UAS program integrates into existing inspection routines and simplifies airport operations. It enhances the airport's ability to rapidly deploy UAS to perform:
• Airfield, facility and perimeter inspections
• Construction monitoring and mapping
• Emergency response and security
• Wildlife inspections and management

By combining Woolpert's expertise and relationships with the FAA and within the UAS industry, SAV achieved UAS integration milestones on an accelerated schedule.