EUROCONTROL LATEST

**Welcome Estonia**

EUROCONTROL has reported that on 26 November 2014, the Minister of Economic Affairs and Infrastructure of Estonia, Mrs Urve Palo, signed the documents for the accession of her country to EUROCONTROL.

The ceremony took place at the Brussels headquarters of EUROCONTROL in the presence of the Director General, Mr Frank Brenner. Estonia will officially become EUROCONTROL’s 41st Member State on 1 January 2015. With the accession of Estonia, EUROCONTROL’s membership covers all twenty-eight EU States.

**New studies look to potential social issues of drone use**

As part of the strategy to support the development of the European market for civil drones (or Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems – RPAS) adopted by the European Commission last April in its communication COM(2014)207, DG ENTR (Enterprise in Industry) has commissioned two studies addressing some aspects of the societal issues linked to the development of civil drones applications.

The study on Third-Party Liability and Insurance Requirements of RPAS investigated the current regulatory framework and insurance market, in order to assess their efficiency to ensure an effective compensation of victims in case of an accident. It concluded that there is no immediate need to adapt national liability regimes or the EU insurance regulation (Regulation 765/2004 applies to professional use of RPAS). However, it identified a need to raise awareness about existing regulations and support the development of an appropriate insurance offer.

The study on privacy, data protection and ethical risks in civil RPAS operations found that despite the current European and Member State regulatory frameworks’ neutral approach towards technology they are largely adequate to address the privacy, data protection and ethical impacts of RPAS. Rather, it points out and that the problem is in educating the RPAS industry about their obligations and enforcing the regulatory mechanisms that are in place.

Furthermore, it is understood that the report recommends the development of a Privacy Impact Assessment framework for RPAS and awareness-raising activities targeted at the RPAS industry that clarify privacy and data protection requirements, as well as privacy-by-design features and practices. It highlights the need for industry and Data Protection Authorities (DPAs) to establish an ongoing dialogue and to develop national or cross-national information
resources enabling citizens to identify the missions and operators associated with individual RPAS.

Finally, the report called for a closer collaboration between Civil Aviation Authorities (CAAs) and DPAs to enable them to mobilise their complementary competencies and encourage CAAs to ensure that legal obligations such as transparency tools or Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) requirements have been conducted, when they deliver flight permits. On its side the technology sub-group of the Article 29 WP party is working on an opinion on drones.

**Picture caption**
The European Commission has published two studies on social issues linked to the development of civil applications of drones.

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