



The Delaware River and Bay Authority

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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DRBA Conducts Inspection Trials of Delaware Memorial Bridge Using Drone Technology

New Castle, DE —The Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA) conducted an inspection today of the Delaware Memorial Bridge Twin Span using an Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) or drone. Keystone Aerial Surveys, Inc., based at Northeast Philadelphia Airport, in cooperation with WSP/Parsons Brinckerhoff, utilized an Inspire Pro 1 and Maverik X8 to perform the inspection services for DRBA as a test of the technology. The test inspection flights occurred on the New Jersey side of the Bridge complex on Tuesday, April 5.

“The Delaware Memorial Bridge Twin Span is subjected to a rigorous inspection program every year,” said Shekhar Scindia, DRBA project engineer. “Drones have the potential for making bridge inspection operations significantly safer and more cost efficient.” He added that the annual inspection costs of the Authority bridges at times exceeds \$500,000.

“We are pleased to able to work with the DRBA on this project,” said David Day, Executive Vice President of Keystone Aerial Surveys. “We feel confident that our technology can be used to improve and enhance their regular bridge inspection processes.”

This inspection tested the viability of using drones to inspect areas of the Bridge that are hard to access. The drone obtained video and still imagery within a concrete anchorage, externally of a concrete pier, and of the bridge’s steel cable and superstructure. The DRBA will assess the relative quality of the data recorded and the operational conditions, compared to traditional methods.

The use of drone technology may enable inspections to occur in less time, for less money, at better quality and with significantly reduced lane closure requirements.

Cape May County, NJ airport –KWWD, operated by the DRBA, has also hosted drone research campaigns. “Working with our partners in Cape May County, the DRBA has established Cape May County airport as a venue for collaboration and innovation in the UAS field,” said Scott A. Green, DRBA Executive Director. “Today’s test of the use of drones for bridge inspections at the Delaware Memorial Bridge is a case of putting our money where our mouth is.”

The DRBA has been actively engaged in safe drone research and development as a member of The Cape May County NJ UAS Innovation Forum and The Delaware UAS Task Force.

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About the Delaware River and Bay Authority

The DRBA, a bi-state governmental agency created by Compact in 1962, owns and operates the Delaware Memorial Bridge, the Cape May- Lewes Ferry, and the Forts Ferry Crossing. The DRBA also manages corporate and aviation properties through its economic development powers - two airports in New Jersey (Millville Airport and Cape May Airport) and three in Delaware (New Castle Airport, Civil Air Terminal and Delaware Airpark). All DRBA operating revenues are generated through the bridge, ferry and airport facilities. For more information, visit www.drba.net.

About Keystone

Keystone Aerial Surveys, Inc. (Keystone), established in 1963, specializes in providing quality aerial surveys throughout North America as well as abroad. Keystone has flown millions of survey miles throughout the United States on projects with varied specifications. We have four locations; Philadelphia, PA (headquarters), Tyler, TX, Tucson, AZ and Los Angeles, CA. Keystone operates twenty-one aircraft, nine metric film camera systems, eight large-format digital sensors and two Optech LiDAR systems. Keystone offers two types of UAS: a fixed-wing Altavian Nova F6500 with both RGB and near-IR payloads for large area mapping and two rotorcraft or vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) aircraft with both RGB, Video and NDVI payloads. The combination of these sensors and platforms allows Keystone to offer services for a wide range of applications, including survey, mapping, inspection, real estate, precision agriculture and construction monitoring and as-built documentation. Learn more about Keystone's UAS Division at www.kasurveys.com/uas.