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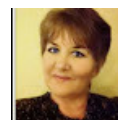
CIVILIAN DRONE OPERATORS: THE THREAT OVER THE HORIZON IN THE AGE OF COUNTERTERRORISM

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CIVILIAN DRONE OPERATORS: THE THREAT OVER THE HORIZON IN THE AGE OF COUNTERTERRORISM



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Article by : Dr. JOSEPH A. FINLEY, JR. PH.D., CPP and ALEXANDER PENALTA, Esquire (Juris Doctor)

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAS) or “Drone” technology is in its infancy. Next year, it is expected that the (FAA) Federal Aviation Administration will incorporate a new set of regulations, known as the (FAR’s) Federal Aviation Regulations which will proscribe the acceptable and legal boundaries for the use of drones in FAR Part 107, under the term Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS).

Technology is a neutral tool. It can be used for good and it can be used to carry out evil acts. For example, commercial flight has been a useful tool which has brought tremendous value to society globally, since the Wright Brothers first achieved powered flight at Kitty Hawk. However, for every good use of technology that humans have devised, there are potential uses of technology for evil purposes. On September 11, 2001, international terrorists flew two commercial aircraft fully loaded with passengers and fuel into the twin towers in New York. That 9/11 scenario was unimaginable and dismissed as improbable by many in the media and in government, prior to 9/11. Pilots, military, special forces, law enforcement, and the intelligence community are trained to stay ahead of a foreseeable chain of events and train continuously to factor in contingencies to break the steps that lead up to a catastrophic event.

We are all familiar with Google and Amazon’s plans to create an automated commercial delivery system where drones will process internet based purchases and deliver packages by air. Very recently, drones have been used for delivering medicine to rural health clinics across difficult terrain, in Virginia, at costs that are substantially lower than traditional helicopter or fixed wing delivery aircraft. In Australia, drones have been used to deliver flotation devices by flying slightly above and over heavy surf from the beach to air drop a personal flotation device to potential drowning victims who were struggling to stay afloat. The delivery of the flotation device was substantially more efficient than a traditional lifeguard rescue that required the time consuming effort and physical fitness of a human lifeguard,

punching through the surf, to reach a potential drowning victim. In New Zealand, drone makers are racing to develop flying camera platforms for film makers worldwide. While priced upwards of \$100,000.00, it will cost significantly less to hire than jibs, cranes and helicopters that studios currently use to capture aerial footage. In Tanzania, the Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI) uses drones in conservation areas to keep elephants away from danger and can direct them back into protected areas. Whenever the elephants stray into farmlands and residential areas, they create danger to themselves and to the human population. In the United States, the first national drone-racing competition was won by an Australian using first-person view (FPV) technology. FPV involves small, custom built drones with cameras attached to them that broadcasts video feeds back to specifically designed goggles that allow drone pilots to see what the drone sees while traveling at speeds of up to 70 mph. For those of you who are familiar with the Star Wars trilogy, it is similar to a first person view of a high speed flight in the speeder bike chase scene on the forest moon of Endor in Star Wars Episode VI: Return of the Jedi.

However, we have recently seen drones misused, as well. In July 2015, hobbyists trying to obtain footage of California fires using drones were flying them so close to the fire protection zones that it began to interfere with firefighting efforts causing firefighting aircraft to be rerouted and even halted due to the potential for an aerial collision between a hobby drone and large fixed wing or rotary aircraft. Moreover, an average size bird weighing only a few pounds can cause catastrophic damage, upon collision, which can endanger the captain, crew and passengers. A hobby drone can weigh up to 55 lbs. and could cause substantially greater damage to a full scale commercial aircraft in a collision resulting from a high closure rate between the aircraft and the drone. For several decades now, the military has been experimenting in urban warfare settings with micro-drones, less than a foot long, and loaded with C-4 explosives that can be flown through a window into a building to neutralize a room full of hostile enemy combatants. You may have seen the videos circulating on the internet, recently, where civilian drones are being weaponized with high caliber pistols and automatic weapons that are capable of substantial property damage and serious bodily injury.

The Florida Space Coast Region is home to NASA and Cape Canaveral. The commercial space launch program in Florida is experiencing a renaissance in commercial space travel. This year, we celebrated the 46th year of the Apollo landing on the moon. It was not only one of the greatest technological achievements for the United States Space Program, it was a great source of pride for Americans and it was the greatest achievement in space for the history of human civilization.

It is estimated that within a few years, manned space flights will once again become a reality in Florida. NASA just ordered its first ever commercial human spaceflight mission from Boeing to begin launching and delivering American astronauts to the International Space Station (ISS) in 2017.

Since 9/11, the United States of America continues to receive terrorist threats from abroad and domestically. It is imperative for the defense industry, the military, law enforcement and the intelligence community to stay ahead of the curve by imagining how to defeat the "mission impossible." Evaluation and implementation of a risk-cost

analysis is needed to protect against national security threats to our country's infrastructure and specifically to the United States Commercial Space Program. The United States has been fighting an almost daily barrage of cyber attacks in a cyber war against China, Russia and other nation state actors.

NASA, the United States Military and the defense industry partners that will be delivering astronauts to the ISS, have to be actively intercepting and defending against electronic cyber attacks intended to disrupt commercial space flight by disrupting flight operations. There will come a day where the existing technology will marry with the evil intent and the will of a highly educated terrorist or a coordinated team of trained terrorists to use drones in an offensive manner. Just last week, the country lost four United States Marines and a United States Sailor in a violent, unprovoked attack outside of two recruiting stations. The Kuwaiti born radicalized terrorist, perhaps even a sleeper cell, was a graduate engineer that had been employed for a short duration at a U.S. nuclear power plant facility, prior to being discharged for unlawful drug use.

Outside of the typical cyber security concerns resulting from an unlawful internet, wi-fi, or satellite communication breach of the flight computers or operational command, the greatest challenge on the horizon for the United States Commercial Space Program, is a physical UAS attack upon our rockets and our astronauts. The need to create a force protection security specialist team of highly trained individuals that can detect, intercept and neutralize a criminal or terrorist threat must constantly evolve ahead of the existing technology that is available to the public. Specifically, a drone operator that has weaponized a UAS and initiates a short range attack from land or sea, using first person viewer goggles to traverse the terrain at low altitude, with speeds exceeding 70-100+ mph. A direct strike on the launch pad prior to takeoff while the astronauts are going through pre-flight or a vector which intercepts a rocket launch on ascent causing a collision or destruction to the external tanks, could cause a catastrophic failure leading to the termination of the flight toward the ISS.

From a National Security perspective, preventing such a terrorist event is critical. U.S. based companies have developed tools for detecting near-by drones. Every drone produces a unique sound signature while in flight. A security device listens to the ambient sounds and compares them to known signatures. If a drone is detected, an alert is given to warn the user that a drone is detected. Depending on the ambient noise levels, the device can detect a drone from 150 meters up to a kilometer. Additionally, "jamming" the frequencies of the drone could also disrupt the flight characteristics. Other alternatives produced rely on detecting the radio transmissions between the drone and the operator. Physical security perimeters should be greatly expanded and "listening post" arrays should be positioned in the outer security perimeters and manned by security specialists. Early detection and elimination of the drone would enhance the probability of disruption of an attack. Security specialists need to be trained in the use of this equipment, as well as visual identification technique training.

Being aware of the threat presented by UAS is the first step that must be addressed to mitigate the possibility of such a catastrophic

attack to the Florida Space Coast Region, home of NASA and Cape Canaveral.



Dr. JOSEPH A. FINLEY, JR. PH.D., CPP co-authored this publication. Dr. Finley currently serves as the Director of Training at Invictus Security which is a disabled veteran owned and operated company in Florida. Previously, he was with G4S Secure Solutions, USA as Director, G4S, North America Training Institute (NATI). Dr. Finley is a knowledgeable safety and security expert, with an extensive background in federal law enforcement and academic administration. He has more than 28 years as a Special Agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Dr. Finley has been involved in the FBI SWAT/Sniper program, and conducted 200 dynamic entries while assigned to the Special Operations Division of the FBI. Additionally, he has been on the Executive Protection details for U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno and U.S. Congressman Allen B. West. Since 1987, Dr. Finley was assigned to the Special Operations Group of the FBI (17 years) and while assigned to the New York Division, actively conducted Technical Surveillance Countermeasure Sweeps (TSCM) and surreptitious entries. Upon being transferred to the Miami Division in 1996, he continued his assignment in the Special Operations Group. He is an Expert Witness in the field of Forensic Geology and was assigned to the FBI Laboratory as an examiner and testified as an expert in Federal, State, and Local courts. He has conducted many crime scene investigations and started the Underwater Search and Evidence Recovery Team (USERT), FBI, Miami. He was an original member of the FBI Scuba program. He has lectured at the university level and at private symposiums on Maritime Security, Homeland Security, MTSA Compliance Matters, Terrorism, Underwater Crime Scenes, PTSD in Security Officers, and Technical Surveillance Countermeasures. Dr. Finley is on the Board of Directors, American Society of Industrial Security (ASIS) International Chapter 254, The Palm Beaches, as well as being on the ASIS National Standards Committee for Investigations. Dr. Finley is a certified protection professional (CPP) through ASIS International. He holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Education Leadership with a Global Perspective, a Master of Science in Criminal Justice Administration with concentration in Forensic Science, and a Bachelor of Science in Geology.



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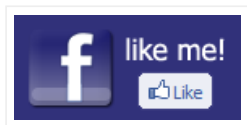
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