

## Near Space Corporation supports a NW Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization to develop UAS training program and procedures

April 26, 2022

Near Space Corporation (Tillamook UAS) has partnered with the Scappoose Fire District and the Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization (RDPO) to attain the necessary waivers for their UAS Public Safety Aviation Program. The District and NSC developed a training and certification program as well as a tracking database for the pilots and aircraft.

The Certificates Of Authorization (COA) issued by the FAA are as follows and cover the entire state of Oregon and Clark County Washington:

- Flying UAS in controlled airspace (Class C, D, E)
- Flying UAS as tactical beyond visual line of sight (TBVLOS)
- Flying UAS above 400' and up to 1,199 AGL



Agencies who are interested in flying under these waivers (specifically for entire state of Oregon and Clark County, WA) must sign an agreement, already have their part 107 certificate, complete an additional 40+ hours, enroll in the pilot and aircraft management platform and participate in monthly training. This program was developed under the guidance of Chief Jeff Pricher (Scappoose Fire District). Jeff sees the use of drones for emergency response as critical to their rapid response, "The ability for us to visualize a disaster scene or fire very rapidly using Uncrewed Aircraft Systems will undoubtedly save lives, and vastly improve our ability to put the right resources at the right place and out of danger that would otherwise be difficult to see and mitigate."

Chuck Bagnato with Near Space Corporation is eager to replicate this program for other regions and districts around the country: "We are now offering this framework for other departments to implement. Our collaborative relationship with the FAA is necessary to streamline the process for organizations to obtain the necessary waivers (COA) to attain the same operational capability that Oregon now enjoys." The project and implementation for the RDPO in Oregon cost approximately \$150k, with recurring costs associated with the database and monthly training costs being covered by each district as part of their operational overhead. You may contact Chuck Bagnato at Near Space ([Charles.bagnato@nsc.aero](mailto:Charles.bagnato@nsc.aero)) for more info or to develop the program in your region. Representative from Near Space will also be available to meet during the AUVSI Expo in Orlando. They can be found under the banner of **Tillamook UAS Test Range** (operated by NSC) at **booth #2214**.

**About Near Space Corporation (operating Tillamook UAS Test Range)**

Near Space Corporation has operated since 1996 as a commercial provider of high-altitude (stratospheric) test platforms and flight services for government, academic and commercial customers. Near Space manages the FAA Designated UAS Test Range located on the Oregon coast, enabling the company to coordinate closely with the FAA for mission planning and flights of balloons and UAS test and validation both overland and in the offshore maritime environment. It offers a unique combination of on-site engineering expertise and consulting, flight operations, and purpose-built facilities for UAS testing (including fully equipped hangar and tower, located on a 5,000' runway with no commercial air traffic). A large blimp hangar located on the field also offers a GPS denied environment and UAS hover testing in a controlled environment.

[www.nsc.aero](http://www.nsc.aero)

[www.tillamookuas.com](http://www.tillamookuas.com)

**About the Scappoose Fire District**

The fire district consists of a 52 square mile fire protection area, and 100 square mile ambulance service area. The service area includes the City of Scappoose, the unincorporated areas of Warren, Chapman and Holbrook as well as 12 miles along the Multnomah Channel, which has a large residential riverfront community. The Fire District services approximately 15,000 residents. There are 3 stations and a boathouse for the fire boat. The Fire District is a full-service emergency provider (fire suppression, rescue swiftwater, Rope Rescue & Rapid Extraction Module Support (REMS), transport ambulance, and aviation (UAS). The district started their UAS program in 2015 and has provided mission support for several governmental agencies with response to structure fires, wildland fires, Search & Rescue, mapping, fire investigation, crash reconstruction and GIS needs. In 2019, Scappoose Fire was tasked with being the RDPO project lead to create a first-of-its-kind Public Safety Aviation program for the metro region.

[www.sfd.us](http://www.sfd.us)

[www.ccfiremarshal.com/aviation](http://www.ccfiremarshal.com/aviation)

**About the Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization (RDPO)**

The Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization (RDPO) is a partnership of government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and private-sector stakeholders in the Portland Metropolitan Region collaborating to increase the region's resilience to disasters. The metropolitan region spans Clackamas, Columbia, Multnomah, and Washington counties in Oregon and Clark County in Washington.

[www.rpdo.net](http://www.rpdo.net)