

Fredericton Chamber of Commerce Receives National Support for Enhanced UAV Regulations

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FREDERICTON, NB – At the recent Canadian Chamber of Commerce annual general meeting and conference in Ottawa, the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce acquired the support of delegates from coast-to-coast on a policy resolution that aims to accelerate development of regulations for unmanned aerial vehicle (“UAV”) technology, commonly known as drones.

With the use of UAVs for recreation, law enforcement and commercial purposes expected to continue to increase rapidly over the next several years and decades, federal regulations need to anticipate and keep up with the rate of change. Canada has been a leader in the use of commercial drones, allowing such use since at least 1996. Commercial uses for UAVs in Canada currently include cartography/land surveying, environmental protection/monitoring, agricultural planning, weather forecasting, filming, mining, telecommunications and more. There are, however, legitimate safety and privacy concerns that must be balanced with encouraging commercial uses.

“As an entrepreneurial community and centre of innovation, Fredericton is well-positioned to take advantage of technologies that have emerging commercial uses,” said Krista Ross, Fredericton chamber CEO. “This policy position asks the federal government to continually work on finding the right balance of safety, privacy and commercial interests with the goal of maintaining Canada’s and Fredericton’s position as a world leader in this important and evolving technology.”

The recommendations were approved as follows:

That the federal government:

1. Prior to implementing new regulations, consult with representatives from a wide range of industries that are currently using or plan to use unmanned aerial vehicles for commercial purposes.
2. Continue the Canadian Aviation Regulation Advisory Council’s Unmanned Aircraft System Program Design Working Group after fulfilling its current mandate so that Canada’s regulatory regime can continue to be responsive to evolving commercial circumstances.
3. Continue to work on technological solutions to eventually permit exemptions to the current line-of-site restrictions.

Peter Goggin, CEO of Fredericton-based startup Resson Aerospace provides some perspective on the emerging importance of fostering UAV technology: “UAVs offer new ways for businesses to get creative, solve problems, and disrupt traditional industries. Collaboration among industry, government policy makers, and Transport Canada is critical in order to develop a regulatory environment that promotes indigenous UAV applications, gives a competitive advantage and technological edge to Canadian Industries, and helps Canadian businesses compete and succeed on a global scale.”

“Having the support of the national chamber and delegates from every province behind us is a powerful force,” added Stephen Hill, Fredericton chamber President. “We think the recommendations

contained in our resolution would be a very exciting to our local innovative startups and technology companies, but in reality, they are equally beneficially to business across Canada.”

Approved policy resolutions remain an active part of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce’s advocacy work for three years, after which they may be resubmitted.

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*With more than 950 members, the **Fredericton Chamber of Commerce** is one of Atlantic Canada’s largest chambers of commerce. A dynamic business organization, the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce is actively engaged in policy development that affects the competitiveness of our members and of the Canadian business environment.*

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