MMBL Pathfinder Group to introduce commercial drone operations

Pathfinder Capital, an associate company of the MMBL-Pathfinder Group, having examined the vast array of drones in the market, chose Israel-based Airobotics, which has developed an ideal solution for commercial drone applications.

MMBL-Pathfinder Group is a pioneer investor in the private civil aviation sector in Sri Lanka. The variety of services provided by Airobotics includes perimeter security, HSSE monitoring, emergency response, 2D/3D mapping, survey & analytics, and asset inspection.

Drones developed by Airobotics cover a range of business applications, including public safety, construction, real estate, utilities, ports and airports, and industrial facilities. The management of Pathfinder Capital will seek to go through the application process with the CAASL and work closely with local companies interested in utilizing the state-of-the-art drone system offered by Airobotics.

The Airobotics infrastructure allows for fully automated data collection through flights beyond the visual line of sight (BVLOS).

This ability to fly remotely enables operators in various industries to operate an aircraft with minimal training or background in aviation.

In homeland security, police officers used the system to reduce response time. In

industrial facilities to, conduct their inspection work along power lines and railway lines for maintenance work. In agricultural farmland, observe the health of plantations and check on other aspects of commercial properties.

Drones are usually operated by pilots specially trained for the job. However, with the deployment of advanced technology, autonomous flight capability would render drone operators redundant.

Airobotics became the first company in the world to receive authorization for unmanned commercial drone operations, granted by the Civil Aviation Authority of Israel way back in 2017. Since then, Airobotics has received regulatory approval for additional countries and has been operating in the US, Singapore, and Dubai with multiple clients and rapidly expanding their global unmanned operations.

Most recently, Airobotics has entered urban areas and has deployed its infrastructure to fly over millions of people in the UAE.

Most have heard of drones in the context of military aircraft engaging in warfare or small drones deployed by children and adults alike for recreational purposes. However, drones are increasingly being developed, marketed, and used for commercial purposes.

It is estimated that since 2012 over US$ 1.5 billion has been invested by commercial drone startups. Looking at the new trends in the drone market, it appears that in the future, drones will represent a significant segment of commercial applications due to their efficiency and capability in gathering and analyzing data.

With the Covid 19 pandemic sweeping across the world, many countries considered the option of using drones to move medical items required for fighting the pandemic.

Sri Lanka Civil Aviation Authority also recognized the utility of drones for surveillance and delivery purposes, revised the regulations that controlled licensing and operation of drones, and invited those interested in registering their drones that could help fight against the pandemic. The drone market was expected to grow steadily in the consumer, commercial, and military sectors. In a 2016 report, Goldman Sachs estimated that drone technologies would reach a total market size of $100 billion between 2016 and 2020.

The commercial business component of this growth forecast was projected to reach $13 billion. Meanwhile, it was estimated that consumer drone shipments would reach $ 29 million in 2021.

Practical application of drones includes delivering health-related products and consumer items, mainly the last-mile delivery helping to keep transportation costs low.

Another application is drones’ ability to inspect hard-to-reach places within a fraction of the duration taken by visual inspection undertaken manually.

Thus, interested parties could deploy drones for aerial analysis of large construction sites and buildings, pipelines, solar panels, electric grids, commercial plantations, and offshore platforms. The ability of drones to gather high-quality images will save time and money for ports, airports and support perimeter surveillance of large commercial projects.