Global UTM Association

Enabling a safe, secure and efficient integration of drones in civil airspace systems worldwide.

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TSG SA #85
3GPP
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Lausanne, September 12, 2019

Subject: Liaison statement from GUTMA to 3GPP's TSG SA #85 plenary meeting

To whom it may concern in 3GPP's TSG SA #85 Plenary

Dear Madame/ Sir,

The Global UTM Association (GUTMA) is a non-profit consortium of worldwide Unmanned Aircraft Systems Traffic Management (UTM) stakeholders. Its purpose is to foster the safe, secure and efficient integration of drones in national airspace systems. Its mission is to support and accelerate the transparent implementation of globally interoperable UTM systems.

Since its establishment in 2016, the association has grown over 70 members, representing 28 countries worldwide, and continued its ambitious journey towards worldwide recognition. Now, GUTMA is seen as the ideal vehicle to drive the integration of drones into the national airspace systems and enable the unmanned aviation sector from technical aspect with interoperability and competitive market access in mind. As UTM systems and services are taking shape in pilot programs and demonstrations around the globe, various new actors apply to join the emerging industry. The diversity can be tackled in the current composition of GUTMA community: civil aviation authorities and air navigation service providers share their views with telecommunication companies, UAS manufacturers, drone operators and UTM service providers to identify the new solutions, roles and responsibilities in the UTM ecosystem.
https://gutma.org/blog/2019/06/22/2019-gutma-general-assembly-new-board-of-directors/

It has come to the attention of GUTMA that 3GPP will prioritize SA2 Work Items in the SA Plenary Sept 17-20, 2019. One of the work items among the set to be prioritized for SA2 is FS_ID_UAS_SA2 (UID = 820011), "Study on supporting Unmanned Aerial Systems Connectivity, Identification, and Tracking."

We can report that there has been a marked increase in interest from our aviation membership in exploring 3GPP networks usage for aviation. GUTMA members are already using 3GPP networks

for their operations including inspections and package delivery. GUTMA's Connected Skies conference was dedicated to this topic, drew many participants from both aviation and telecommunication, and clearly concluded on the need and opportunity of enabling UAS support via 3GPP networks.
https://gutma.org/portland-2019/
https://dronebusiness.center/2019-connected-skies-issue-dronin-on-06-26-19-32881/

GUTMA is looking broadly across the UAS ecosystem as members also use other forms of communication including satellite, wifi and unlicensed spectrum. Each of these has unique characteristics. It is recognized by our membership that the deployment base, ecosystem, and performance of 3GPP systems merit strong consideration for roles in aviation. GUTMA also supports several standards bodies in their development of performance-based standards for UAS and UTM services.

GUTMA's Board of Directors formed a working group dedicated to this UAS support via 3GPP networks to contribute an aviation point of view to assist the 3GPP work with a focus on unmanned aviation. This working group's role will include contributing an aviation perspective on UAS operations using 3GPP networks, highlighting existing uses of 3GPP networks, and harmonization across aviation and 3GPP as needed. In fact, an informal version of this working group has been meeting regularly since late July of this year. We understand and are sensitive to the issue that 3GPP cannot possibly customize deeply for every vertical application. In fact, to do so, would defeat the primary interest that unmanned aviation has in 4G/5G, which is to join a healthy standard and cost-effective ecosystem. However, we believe that increased synchronization and communication between unmanned aviation and 3GPP can help both communities address this matter efficiently.

Our understanding is that if FS_ID_UAS_SA2 is not prioritized, there will be no schedule for 3GPP discussion of such items, and no place to make 3GPP contributions, for at least a year. This would likely negatively impact the opportunity for 3GPP networks to serve this application. It would be more difficult to engage with 3GPP on regulatory topics as the architecture matures and as regulation is developed. Regulations are already being formed such as Part 107 and LAANC in the US, or Delegated Act 2019/945 in the EU.

Therefore, we urge 3GPP members to support prioritizing of FS_ID_UAS_SA2 in Release 17.

Yours sincerely,

Sebastian Babiarz	Reinaldo Negron
Co-president	Co-president
Sebastian Babiarz	Reinaldo Negron Jr (Sep 12, 2019)