



PHOENIX AIR UNMANNED, LLC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Phoenix Air Unmanned Achieves Single-Day Pipeline Patrol Milestone

Houma, Louisiana — [Phoenix Air Unmanned \(PAU\)](#) has achieved a significant milestone by completing 320 miles of aerial pipeline patrol in just 7.6 flight hours using a single Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS). This pipeline patrol was conducted for Shell Pipeline Company (SPLC). The achievement surpasses a project goal of proving that 300 linear miles of pipeline can be effectively patrolled by UAS in a single flight day. Conducted under PAU's nationwide beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) regulatory approval, these flights represent a leap forward in critical infrastructure inspection and scalable UAS operations capability.

These BVLOS pipeline patrols are conducted under a PAU certificate of waiver from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), allowing BVLOS flights without the need for visual observers along the route. This nationwide waiver permits multiple UAS operations across various critical infrastructure types, including pipelines, electric utilities, railroads, and canals. Since 2019, PAU has completed over 16,000 miles of linear infrastructure inspection under multiple authorizations. Following successful operations and thorough safety assessments by the FAA, a new waiver was granted in the Fall 2024 for scalable and repeatable BVLOS operations. PAU views this milestone as a step toward standardized regulatory approvals, supporting the FAA's validation of UAS technology, safety, and public benefit.

"Many FAA authorizations are site-specific or limited in scope due to restrictive criteria. We built upon years of BVLOS operations and proposed a viable alternative to traditional pipeline patrol methods," says Will Wheeler, Director of Operations of Phoenix Air Unmanned. "This authorization solidifies the business case for routine UAS inspections required for regulatory compliance, as we achieved a substantial increase in assets patrolled beyond visual line of sight with UAS."

PAU safely executed these UAS operations through extensive safety risk analysis and by securing FAA regulatory approvals. Mission planning ensured the flights remained within designated rights of way across southern Louisiana. PAU utilized the Event 38 E455 UAS for 16 BVLOS flights, coordinating with SPLC and aviation operations. The fixed-wing, vertical takeoff and landing UAS, weighing under 55 pounds, carried a high-resolution camera with a live video feed. PAU logged 7.72 hours and 332.4 miles of flight, including right-of-way transit and functional check flights. The collected video data was provided to inspectors in real-time and archived for future analysis.



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PAU with an Event 38 E455 patrolled 320 miles of Shell pipeline in under eight flight hours.

About Phoenix Air Unmanned:

Founded in 2014 with a commitment to aviation and safety assurance, Phoenix Air Unmanned, LLC (PAU) is affiliated with the internationally recognized Part 135 air carrier, Phoenix Air Group, Inc. Specializing in utility inspection services, PAU has conducted over 16,000 miles of unmanned linear infrastructure inspections. With extensive BVLOS operational experience, FAA authorizations and waiver expertise, and robust project management, PAU became the first registered operator of the International Standards for Business Aircraft Operations (IS-BAO) Stage 1 for remotely piloted aircraft systems in 2021.

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