

SKY'S THE LIMIT FOR DEDICATED DRONE UNIT IN DUBLIN



Dublin City Council has launched its first ever Drone and Urban Air Mobility Strategy, which aims to transform how the local authority will deploy drone technology to enhance public services, such as mapping, dangerous building inspection and emergency response over the next five years.

Drones are being applied for a range of services provided across the city, in a bid by Dublin City Council (DCC) to increase service efficiencies, reduce costs and streamline operations.

Services include mapping, dangerous buildings inspections and emergency response, in addition to providing access to hard-to-reach areas for surveys and environmental monitoring, better oversight and management of urban spaces.

The 2024-2029 strategy marks a significant milestone for Dublin City Council, according to Eileen Quinlivan, DCC's Assistant Chief Executive and Chair of the Drones High Level Steering Group. Speaking at the recent strategy launch at the DCC Innovation Hub in the CHQ building she said: "By embracing drone technology, we're not only enhancing our service delivery but also paving the way for a smarter, more sustainable city.

"Drones will revolutionise how we approach various tasks, from emergency response and infrastructure inspections to environmental monitoring and urban



Pictured at the launch of DCC's Drone and Urban Air Mobility Strategy on 27 May (l-r): Philip Butterworth-Hayes, international aerospace consultant at PMI Media Ltd; Eileen Quinlivan, DCC's Assistant Chief Executive and Chair of the Drones High Level Steering Group; Julie Garland, Founder and CEO of Avtrain; and Jim Gavin, IAA's Chief Operations Officer.

planning. The benefits for our staff members and citizens are immense, and we are committed to ensuring that Dublin remains at the forefront of this urban innovation."

A new dedicated drone unit, which will centralise drone operations and support internal departments to accelerate the adoption of the technology, will build on existing capabilities and resources and maximise efficiencies across the council. The unit will also play a role in supporting innovation in the drone industry by helping develop new services that benefit citizens and communities as the commercial sector grows.

HARNESSING POTENTIAL OF DRONES

Jim Gavin, Irish Aviation Authority's Chief Operations Officer, said that Ireland's aviation authority is very supportive of public sector bodies developing drone strategies. "We're delighted to support Dublin City Council's initiative to develop this strategy in driving innovation and development in the drone sector.

"By harnessing the potential of drones, the council is taking proactive steps to enhance public safety, improve efficiency, and foster economic growth. We believe that this initiative will pave the way for advancements in urban air mobility, benefiting both the public and the broader aviation industry."

The development of the five-year Drone and Urban Air Mobility Strategy



Philip Butterworth-Hayes, international aerospace consultant at PMI media, Ossian Smyth TD, Minister of State with responsibility for Public Procurement and eGovernment, and Prof Tim McCarthy, GIS researcher at Maynooth University, pictured at the launch of the 'Accelerating the Potential of Drones for Local Government' project report on 14 June 2022.

for Dublin City Council has been led through the Smart City programme, which supports the council in futureproofing how new and emerging technologies are applied. By fostering a vibrant drone technology ecosystem, Dublin has the potential to attract new businesses and drive economic growth, positioning itself as a leader in this emerging sector.

Julie Garland, Founder and CEO of Avtrain, who provided expertise and guidance on the development of the strategy emphasised the transformative potential of drones. "Drones are revolutionising how we think about urban mobility and public service delivery. Dublin's strategy is a step towards a future where drone technology can improve our daily lives, enhance safety, and contribute to a more sustainable environment.

"By integrating drones into various city services, cities can streamline operations, reduce response times in emergencies, and provide more efficient monitoring of infrastructure and environmental conditions."

Philip Butterworth-Hayes, principal consultant of PMI Media Limited, who advised DCC on the strategy, said that Dublin's approach to integrating drone

technology into city services sets a new benchmark globally.

"The strategy's focus on safety, efficiency, and public engagement is exemplary and will undoubtedly inspire other cities to follow suit. The efficiency gains from using drones for tasks such as infrastructure inspections, environmental monitoring, and emergency response are significant, leading to cost savings and more effective service delivery. The strategy's commitment to public engagement means that the community is actively involved and informed, fostering trust and collaboration."

The background to DCC's Drone and Urban Air Mobility Strategy was outlined in 2021-2022 with the 'Accelerating the Potential of Drones for Local Government' project, which saw the publication of the 'International Best and Emerging Practice Report' in June 2022.

The report identified how drones could provide better services for local government and to understand the role it may play to shape the future of drones. The project won a World Smart City award in 2022 in the 'Emerging Technology and Governance' category.



For more information visit: <https://smardublin.ie/dublin-city-drone-strategy>
To view video footage of the drones, visit: <https://youtu.be/W2Ot3nIUbKE>