LUFTHANSA TRIALS UAV AT FRANKFURT

News / Airlines

Lufthansa has flight-tested an unmanned air vehicle at Frankfurt airport as the airline plans to employ the technology for aerial surveillance purposes for third-party customers.

Together with airport operator Fraport and German air navigation service provider DFS, Lufthansa has tested a remote-controlled, camera-equipped UAV around runway 07L/25R, northwest of the gateway's main facilities.

The runway was temporarily closed for regular flight operations to facilitate the trial.

Lufthansa says the objective was to gain initial experience of operating UAVs at airports.

It adds that part of the trial was to assess how well the UAV – which was equipped with a transponder – can be detected by DFS's radar systems and accommodated within regular air traffic.

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The airline plans to use its aeronautical expertise for commercial UAV operations to serve clients in the infrastructure sector to inspect, for example, wind turbines, railway lines and large construction projects.

Fraport is considering the use of UAVs to inspect runways.

Dubbed Lufthansa Aerial Services, the project is being conducted through the airline's consulting arm today.

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