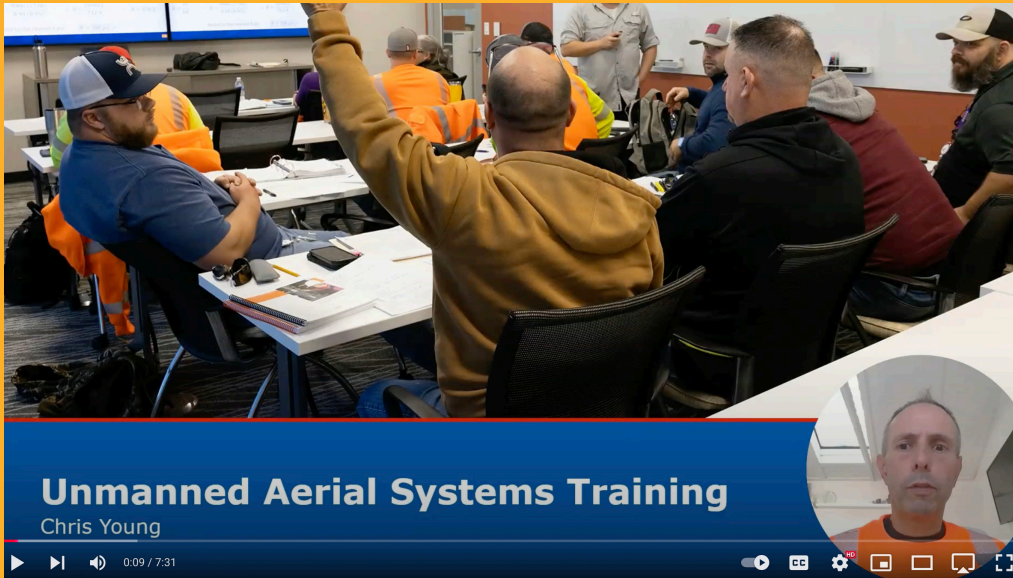


INNOVATION SUCCESS:

Texas Department of Transportation Prepares State Workforce for Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS)



TXDOT Unmanned Aerial System Training Program

13,000 Employees,
Industry Partners

121 Licensed Pilots

CHALLENGE

The Texas DOT (TxDOT) was officially charged with leading Texas' oversight and adoption of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) technologies. This entailed three primary issues: the emergence of "drones" as a remote sensing platform, civilian and commercial applications leading the market, leading public entities behind, and public airspace requiring public entity oversight. The agency aims to establish its training program as swiftly as possible to educate key agency staff participating in the program.

INNOVATION

TxDOT created an agency-wide response to this new technology and practice to address this challenge.

The agency moved forward under a triple constraint, where speed was paramount:

- **Cost** - Additional funds request
- **Quality** - TxDOT had no organic capability
- **Time** - Options prioritized an interagency contract with quality training providers

The objective was to establish the training program within four weeks.



[Texas Department of Transportation Training and Development](#)



INNOVATION SUCCESS: Texas Department of Transportation Prepares State Workforce for Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS)



ACTION

01 Develop internal support for the new agency-wide initiative

- SharePoint page
- Application processes and e-forms
- Physical shipping process for support materials
- External access to a third-party Learning Management System (LMS)
- Frequent communications from the Aviation Division to participants
- Outreach and communications activities at conferences and industry events
- Ongoing support to contract managers overseeing training providers

02 Update policies, manuals, processes, and procedures

- Determine the decisions needed internally for contracting.
- Implement the knowledge and change management tasks.

03 Make organizational changes and designate functional responsibilities

- Design Division – Engineering Operations managed by the Aviation Division

04 Harmonize with federal guidelines

- FAA represented an arguably new federal partner

05 Publish a public-facing website for customers and the public

- Develop a robust TxDOT landing page, including an online flight plan webform

06 Develop new organizational capability in UAS operations

RESULT

TxDOT now has robust organizational capability in UAS operations and oversight, meeting public expectations. The program is well-communicated and authoritative, with 121 licensed UAS pilots across the State. This almost invisible “change” provided seamless integration of UAS technologies into department operations. The program also enables new research.

Links

[TxDOT Training Program website](#)

[TxDOT Unmanned Aerial Systems website](#)

