

Book Review

Introduction to Unmanned Aircraft Systems

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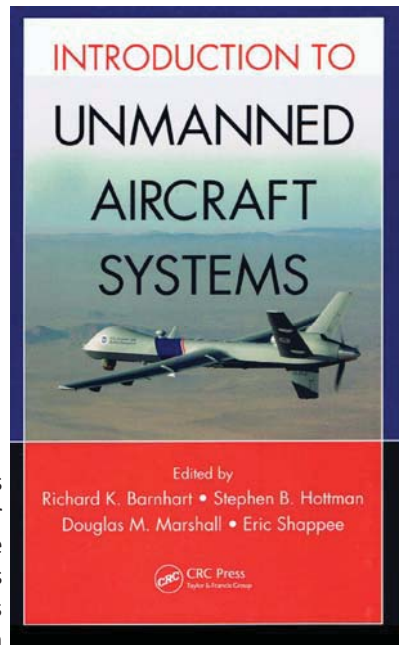
When it comes to technology as game-changing as Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), the private sector has one of two choices: paddle quickly and ride the crest of the wave or do nothing and be crushed by its full force. Businesses that perform aerial missions that are dull, dirty or dangerous will likely find that a UAS makes good business sense. The challenge is bringing decision-makers up to speed with issues, current limitations, and trends without getting into mind-numbing engineer-speak. That's exactly what the editors and authors do in *Introduction to Unmanned Aircraft Systems*. The writings of each contributor represent the latest thinking from New Mexico State University, Kansas State University, University of Arizona, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, and the University of South Florida.

This book is not what one might call a traditional textbook. Each chapter is a work entirely capable of standing on its own merits. Readers are free to skip around without fear of losing context from unread previous chapters.

Issues examined within the text are germane to the latest concerns for a national air space shared by both manned and unmanned aircraft. Readers do a low pass over the flight authorization process, "Flight safety is achieved globally by all airspace users operating aircraft, including unmanned aircraft, in compliance with established regulatory criteria." (Witt and Hottman, 52) We are led into the shared realm of operator and machine, "Automation is not all-or-nothing; rather it is an agent that interacts with the human operator." (Elliott and Stewart, 100) Readers are also given a clear bottom line, "The most important element of the UAS is the human element." (Brungardt, 28)

A consistent theme throughout the combined works is the need for useful taxonomies to describe UAS vehicles, missions, and operations; not all authors use the same lexicon—suggesting that UAS applications in a private sector context are still in a nascent stage of development. Despite the use of different terms, readers aren't required to make difficult leaps of logic between authors.

For business executives and decision-makers new to the world of aviation and unmanned systems, this book is your primer.



D.H.