

NextGen Air Transportation Program to Hold Landmark Briefing on Drone Industry at RDU's General Aviation Terminal

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North Carolina's NextGen Air Transportation Program (NGAT) will hold an industry briefing on recent developments relating to unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), commonly called drones. The event is sponsored and co-hosted by Brooks Pierce, and will be held in the General Aviation Terminal at Raleigh-Durham International Airport on Thursday, April 2, from 3:00-6:30 p.m.

N.C. Rep. John Torbett, NGAT Director Kyle Snyder, Brooks Pierce attorney Stephen Hartzell and other leading industry executives and regulators will discuss a variety of topics, including the future of commercial drones in North Carolina, the FAA's small UAS rulemaking proceedings, public policy issues, and current operations. The event will conclude with an industry networking reception.

"It's an exciting time for the UAS industry, especially here in North Carolina," said Snyder. "Moving forward, we expect UAS to become an integral part of operations for many organizations, including private sector and government. This event is part of an ongoing dialogue that will update stakeholders on NGAT activities and aims to provide business owners and executives with the resources and knowledge they need to navigate this growing industry. The timing of this event is ideal for the public to share their thoughts on the FAA's proposed rule for small UAS operations with North Carolina leadership while the FAA's public comment period is open and the General Assembly is in session."

"This meeting comes at a key time in the development of the UAS industry, with the FAA's proposed regulatory framework having been announced in February," said Hartzell. "Industries such as real estate, architecture, surveying, building inspection, and the media have an opportunity to influence the direction the FAA takes as federal policy helps the commercial drone industry achieve lift-off."

Individuals and enterprises in the commercial drone space may register to attend the online at <https://openskiesnc.eventbrite.com>. The briefing is free to attend, but registration is required. The event can also be followed on Twitter with the hashtag #OpenSkiesNC.

NGAT is a university consortium of academia, industry and government agencies created to provide a research and application-oriented organization for conducting technology development,

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investigations, and field trials as North Carolina transitions to a modern air transportation system. NGAT focuses on developing and evaluating improvements to existing and anticipated air traffic control, airspace management, airport and airspace system capacity, surface traffic management, and flight safety, specifically as it relates to the integration of UAS into domestic airspace.

Hartzell has been closely watching drone law developments, including the FAA's proposed rules and North Carolina's 2014 drone law. He represents a variety of businesses, including media companies, on issues related to drone use. Brooks Pierce advises clients on compliance with Federal Aviation Administration and state operational and licensing regulations, and is poised to help businesses navigate contractual, intellectual property, and privacy issues related to drone use.