



JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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MPA Partners Republic Polytechnic to Launch Unmanned Aircraft Pilot Training Programme for Maritime Drone Operations

The Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) and Republic Polytechnic (RP) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish a specialised Unmanned Aircraft (UA) Pilot Training programme for MPA UA pilots, which will also provide internship opportunities for RP students. This initiative aims to equip MPA, as well as commercial UA pilots, with advanced competencies to operate drones for maritime applications. These include inspection of vessel structures, monitoring of vessel emissions, and supporting emergency response efforts.

2. The course will cover essential skills, including take-off and landing from vessels, emergency procedures at sea, and Beyond Visual Line of Sight operations. UA pilots will also be trained to operate drones equipped with various sensor payloads such as electro-optics, infrared, and multispectral imaging. Tethered drone operations, which enable extended flight times for surveillance and monitoring, will also be included.

3. Under this five-year collaboration arrangement, MPA and RP plan to develop competency frameworks for UA pilots operating at sea, and will train over 20 MPA UA pilots annually. The collaboration will also explore the potential development of a maritime-specific qualification for UA pilots for interested parties. The training will be conducted by RP's team of full-time lecturers who are also certified UA Pilot Licence trainers.

4. Through this partnership, RP students have internship opportunities with MPA, and can explore potential career pathways as UA pilots and watch supervisors coordinating the deployment of unmanned systems for port operations and maritime safety. RP lecturers and students will also have opportunities to gain industry exposure and practical experience through participation in MPA's upcoming drone-related projects. In addition, RP will work with MPA in relevant committees and forums to shape policies, safety standards, and regulations for maritime drone operations.

5. In 2025, MPA will trial new drone capabilities, including coordinated drone operations for chemical spill management and the Maritime Drones Traffic Management System to ensure safety in port waters. The Maritime Drone Estate, launched in 2021, will also be expanded to support commercial drone services such as remote inspections and shore-to-ship deliveries. These advancements will contribute to safer, more fuel-efficient, and sustainable maritime operations.

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About the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA)

MPA was established on 2 February 1996 with the mission to develop Singapore as a premier global hub port and international maritime centre, and to advance and safeguard Singapore's strategic maritime interests. MPA is the driving force behind Singapore's maritime and port development, taking on the roles of maritime and port regulator and planner, international maritime centre champion, national maritime representative, and a champion of digitalisation and decarbonisation efforts at regional and international fora such as at the International Maritime Organization and the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation. MPA partners industry, research community and other agencies to enhance safety, security, and environmental protection, facilitate maritime and port operations and growth, expand multi-domain capabilities, and support the cluster of maritime ancillary services and manpower development. MPA is responsible for the overall development and growth of the maritime multi-domain and the Port of Singapore.

For more information, please visit www.mpa.gov.sg/

About Republic Polytechnic

Established in 2002, Republic Polytechnic (RP) is Singapore's youngest polytechnic. RP offers over 40 full-time courses across diverse fields, including Applied Science, Business, Engineering, Hospitality, Infocomm, Sports and Health, and Technology for the Arts, Media, and Design. Through its "Becoming Greater Me" framework, RP endeavours to spark joy in learning by helping students discover their purpose and aligning their goals and passions with both academic and life pursuits.

RP adopts effective learner-centred pedagogies to equip students with a wide range of skills needed to thrive in an ever-evolving world. The polytechnic envisions its graduates as Articulate Self-Starters, Passionate Community Builders, and Purposeful Game-Changers. Additionally, RP's Academy for Continuing Education offers a comprehensive suite of lifelong learning programmes, providing graduates and adult learners with upskilling opportunities.

About Singapore Maritime Week 2025

SMW is an annual gathering of the international maritime community to advance key industry issues and exchange ideas to bring the sector forward. Driven by MPA, in collaboration with industry stakeholders and research and educational institutions, SMW brings together key opinion leaders and industry leaders through conferences, dialogues and forums.

The range of activities and events organised by MPA, industry stakeholders and research and educational institutions, as well as the cosmopolitan profile of participants, reflect the vibrancy and diversity of Singapore as a global hub port and leading international maritime centre.

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