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Autonomous Akin



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Our newsletter reflects the focus of Akin’s cross-practice autonomous systems and advanced mobility team on developments in the regulatory, policy, trade, intellectual property, and cybersecurity and privacy spaces. Autonomous Akin brings you the latest news and developments so that you can keep a pulse on what is happening in government and industry that is impactful for your business. For our new readers, you can subscribe to future issues of this newsletter [here](#). Thank you!

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Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)

Study Offers Objective Insights to Near-Miss Collisions Between Drones, Airplanes - *Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University*

Researchers have developed a new way to accurately count and objectively analyze close encounters between drones and airplanes—without depending solely on pilot sightings. In a peer-reviewed study published by the Society of Automotive Engineers in the SAE International Journal of Aerospace, researchers looked at more than 1.8 million piloted aircraft operations and nearly 460,000 flights by small -uncrewed aerial systems (sUAS) around Dallas-Fort Worth Airport, a major hub. Between August 2018 and July 2021, researchers with Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and Unmanned Robotic Systems Analysis (URSA) identified 24 near midair collisions (NMACs) in which sUAS or “drones” came within 500 feet of piloted aircraft.

[Read the Article](#)

Drones Reach Stratospheric Heights in Race to Fly Higher, Longer - *Wall Street Journal*

This month, a drone took off from a missile range in New Mexico and climbed into the stratosphere, joining a race to deliver unmanned aerial vehicles that can fly higher and longer than ever before. Drones have already shaken up warfare, recently playing a prominent role in the war in Ukraine. But militaries have long sought craft that can provide intelligence at a height beyond the reach of most radar and missile-defense systems, and for extended periods. For commercial users, high-altitude drones can be a way to beam internet services into areas with low connectivity.

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China Imposes Drone Export Curbs Amid US Tech Tensions - *Aljazeera*

China has announced export controls on some drones and drone-related equipment, saying it wants to safeguard “national security and interests” amid escalating tension with the United States over access to technology. The restrictions on equipment announced on Monday, including some drone engines, lasers, communication equipment and anti-drone systems, would take effect on September 1, the commerce ministry said.

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Drone Regulations Easing for Farmers - *Farm & Ranch Guide*

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is making it easier for private citizens to get licensed to operate drones. The process, according to Hylío, a U.S. spray drone company, is making the technology even more accessible to farmers. “The FAA is making it way easier for farmers to get the license,” said Hylío CEO Arthur Erickson. “It used to take over a year and now it’s 30-60 days, so you are essentially getting a year of your life back.”

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Advanced Air Mobility



Reliable Robotics Gets FAA Approval to Test Automated Aircraft Systems - *Reuters*

Reliable Robotics, a Silicon Valley startup aiming to automate conventional fixed-wing planes, has received approval from the Federal Aviation Administration to proceed with its plan to test and certify fully automated aircraft systems, the company said on Thursday. “We’re three to four years out from being able to remotely operate these aircraft at any kind of reasonable scale,” said Robert Rose, co-founder and chief executive of the Mountain View, California-based company which aims to license its autonomous flight system to other companies.

[Read the Article](#)

There's No Way to Slash Airline Emissions Without Greener Fuel - *Bloomberg*

In the run-up to the (almost but not quite) four-day weekend over July 4, U.S. air travel set a new record. The Transportation Security Administration said it screened nearly 2.9 million fliers on June 30, the highest daily count in the agency's history. Flying in the U.S. has rebounded from its COVID-19 lows. And if global expectations hold true, elsewhere, air travel will just go up and up. In its recently released 2023 commercial market outlook, Boeing Co. predicts the world's fleet of commercial planes (now numbering just over 24,500) will double by 2042. More planes, more passengers and the continuing predominance of larger aircraft add up to a big climate takeaway: Sustainable aviation fuel will be critical to the effort of decarbonizing the industry.

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Urban Air Mobility Could Give Residents More "Freedom to Move About," Former FAA Official Says - *Smart Cities Dive*

Air taxis may begin operating in Chicago, New York City and San Francisco in the coming years. Using electrically powered aircraft that can take off and land vertically, known as eVTOLs, they promise a new era of urban air mobility, flying between downtown areas and airports or acting as regional transportation. The Federal Aviation Administration recently published its implementation plan for advanced air mobility, which former FAA acting administrator Billy Nolen spearheaded while he led the agency.

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Technology, Environment and Legislation



One Year Old, US Climate Law is Already Turbocharging Clean Energy Technology - *AP*

On a recent day under the July sun, three men heaved solar panels onto the roof of a roomy, two-story house near the banks of the Kentucky River, a few miles upstream from the state capitol where lawmakers have promoted coal for more than a century. The U.S. climate law that passed one year ago offers a 30% discount off this installation via a tax credit, and that's helping push clean energy even into places where coal still provides cheap electricity. For Heather Baggett's family in Frankfort, it was a good deal.

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No Clean Energy Source is Marginal in the Quest for Net Zero - *Bloomberg*

This month, two deeply established decarbonization technologies, geothermal and nuclear power, saw new milestones reached. Texas-based Fervo Energy demonstrated its enhanced geothermal technology is feasible at scale, while nuclear fission reactor developer Oklo Inc. announced plans to go public via a special purpose acquisition company. Both developments

fuse (no nuclear pun intended) past capabilities with future potential, looking ahead to an energy system of sufficiently great scale that even relatively small technologies are anything but marginal.

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A Bottleneck on the Grid Threatens Clean Energy. New Rules Aim to Help. - *New York Times*

Federal regulators on Thursday approved new rules to speed up the process for connecting wind and solar projects to the electric grid, in an attempt to reduce the growing delays that have become one of the biggest obstacles to building renewable energy in the U.S. Energy companies are investing hundreds of billions of dollars in wind farms, solar arrays and batteries, spurred on by federal tax breaks and falling costs. But these projects face a severe bottleneck: It is getting harder and taking longer to connect new power plants to the power lines that carry electricity to homes and businesses.

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A Climate Laggard in America's Industrial Heartland Has a Plan to Change, Fast - *New York Times*

From toxic algal blooms in the Great Lakes to sewage pouring into Detroit basements to choking wildfire smoke that drifted south from Canada, Michigan has been contending with the fallout from climate change. Even the state's famed cherry trees have been struggling against rising temperatures, forcing some farmers to abandon the crop. But this state at the center of the American auto industry has also been a laggard when it comes to climate action, resistant to environmental regulations that could harm the manufacturing that has underpinned its economy for generations. That may soon change.

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Autonomy & Electric Vehicles



Self-Driving Car Rules Get Renewed Push as Congress Eyes China - *Bloomberg*

Congress is renewing efforts to accelerate the deployment of autonomous vehicles on U.S. roads, drawing concerns from safety and labor groups. "Inaction over the past two Congresses has put America at risk of ceding leadership in this industry," House Energy and Commerce Committee Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-Wash.) and Innovation, Data and Commerce Subcommittee Chair Gus Bilirakis (R-Fla.) said in a statement. The Autonomous Vehicle Industry Association—a trade group with members including Aurora, General Motors Co.'s Cruise, Nuro, Ford Motor Co., Uber Technologies Inc., Alphabet Inc.'s Waymo—is urging Congress and the administration to advance AV legislation and regulation this year.

[Read the Article](#)

NHTSA Announces New Autonomous Driving Regulations - *U.S. News*

The U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is expected to make a move that may hasten the deployment of driverless cars onto our roads but wants more data from the automakers in return. Automotive News reported that Ann Carlson, NHTSA's acting administrator, told the audience at an industry gathering that the agency expects to publish a notice of proposed rule-making on automated driving systems this fall.

[Read the Article](#)

Unions and Local Tech Companies Spar Over Proposed Statewide Autonomous Trucking Ban - *The Almanac*

A battle is brewing over the future of self-driving trucks in California, and local tech companies are keeping a close watch on Sacramento as it weighs major changes to the industry. Just last week, the city of Mountain View hosted its Technology Showcase that dove into the latest self-driving trucking technology. But hanging over the event were lingering concerns over a bill, making its way through the state Legislature, that is looking to halt those ambitious ideas in their tracks.

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Inside an Aurora Self-Driving Truck Testing in Texas - *Transport Topics via The Dallas Morning News*

Darcy Desjarlais, senior truck operations specialist at Aurora, hovers both hands under the steering wheel of Aurora's self-driving truck as it cruises at 65 mph down Interstate 45, heading in its typical route toward Houston. Above his palms could be the future of short and long hauls for transported goods. To his right sits Riliwan Fabanwo, truck operations specialist at Aurora, monitoring the roads for any objects, slow-moving cars or challenges the Aurora technology faces. Sensors track up to 400 meters ahead and behind the truck, nearly 360 degrees around the big rig's front, back and sides. "I feel like this is the future for trucking," said Fabanwo, who has been with Aurora for over a year.

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Taxi Firm's Hydrogen Cell Experience Highlights Fuel's Pitfalls - *Bloomberg*

Japan was one of the first countries in the world to formulate a national hydrogen strategy, pledging back in 2017 to innovate production, transport and storage technologies related to the cleaner fuel, which produces only water when burned. Almost seven years on, things aren't turning out entirely as politicians may have hoped. MK West Group, a taxi operator in Kobe, a city on Osaka Bay in central Japan more famed for its heavily marbled beef than its passenger cars, is a case in point.

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[Congress Takes a Step Forward on Outbound Investment](#) (July 27, 2023)

[Autonomous Akin Update - July 2023](#) (July 6, 2023)

[Akin's Mid-Year TMT Report Provides Important Updates on Regulatory and Policy Developments for TMT Leaders](#) (May 25, 2023)

[Autonomous Akin Update - May 2023](#) (May 11, 2023)

[Autonomous Systems & Advanced Mobility: 2023 Trends & Predictions](#) (May 5, 2023)

[Kayo Sustainable Infrastructure Webinar Recording](#) - Passcode: Fm%!X07T (April 19, 2023)

[New Federal Funding Opportunity Announced to Supercharge Electric Vehicle and Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Development](#) (March 20, 2023)

Events

[Women and Drones: 7th Annual Global Awards](#)

October 25, 2023

Washington, D.C.

The UAS/AAM community will come together to celebrate the preeminent women in business, government and education.

[AUVSI New England UAS and AAM Summit 2023](#)

October 4-5, 2023

Burlington, MA

Akin partner Jennifer Richter will be speaking on a panel at the annual advanced airspace summit.

Questions?

If you have any questions please contact your regular Akin lawyer or advisors or:



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