



Above & Beyond

Project summary

Industry Partner(s):

Cadent, Northern Gas Networks, Northern Powergrid, Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks, UK Power Networks, Wales & West Utilities and National Grid Gas Transmission

Innovator:

Callen-Lenz Associates

Challenge:

Aerial inspections of network infrastructure are expensive, and the use of drones is now becoming recognised as a viable and cheaper alternative. Current drone inspection tasks are operated 'Within Line of Sight' due to Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) regulations. To fully realise the benefits that drones can bring to traditional inspection tasks, there is a requirement to fly beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS)

Approach:

An innovation call was launched to find a solution.

Outputs:

This project, in collaboration with the Civil Aviation Authority and the Department for Transport, is intended to deliver the required safety cases, operational definitions and guidance to enable universal BVLOS drone operations across the distribution networks.



Impact:
Transformational



Key benefit:
Financial

Previous work has estimated that flying drones BVLOS could deliver 22% operational cost savings compared to traditional inspection methods



Additional benefits:
Cross sector collaboration

A first of its kind crossutility project