

PRESS RELEASE

60,000 Bottles of Beer per Hour: This Collision-Tolerant Drone Keeps Production Going During Inspection at Pilsner Urquell



It's a challenging question: how to inspect the ceiling of a vast production facility, without having to shut it down. Czechoslovakian beer giant Pilsner Urquell found the answer with Flyability's collision-tolerant Elios drone, designed to navigate difficult spaces. Able to gather good footage while bouncing unharmed off of obstacles, Elios was able to negotiate electrical wiring, sound barriers, sprinklers, and vents to inspect the beams and trusses of the Pilsner Urquell bottling plant.

Building regulations require that the ceiling of the facility be inspected each year, and a detailed inspection be performed every 10 years. Inspecting the 30,000 square meters (nearly 7 and a half acres) plant is no small project. It's generally performed by 5 workers who climb to the ceiling to perform a visual inspection. This requires scaffolding and a safety net to be constructed for the project. The process takes over a month.

Not only is the work dangerous and time consuming, it is also extremely costly. During inspection, the bottling production must be stopped in the area that is being inspected. While the company doesn't release exact figures, reducing the production of 60,000 bottles of beer per hour for over 35 days is an expensive proposition.

It was considered a standard business expense - until the team at Drony SITMP, a drone service provider, Flyability reseller and innovation center based in the Czech Republic, met the inspector responsible at Pilsner Urquell while on another mission. She immediately saw

the possibilities of using Elios; and the company management was instantly interested in pursuing a method of inspection that didn't require stopping production, says Ondrej Bouček, drone expert at Drony SITMP. "The drone was exactly the solution for their situation," he comments.

By standing with the two pilots – one to fly, one to change batteries and act as observer – the inspector was able to direct the pilots to exactly the areas required, getting all of the data she needed to complete a detailed report for the brewery in only 12 days of 4 -5 hours each. The mission saved Pilsner Urquell over 3 weeks of inspection time – without requiring shutdown of the bottling facility.

Additionally, the drone allows the inspector to evaluate inaccessible areas better than with climbers, who can't always move around the obstacles to get close enough to the beams safely to do a good visual inspection. "Pilsner Urquell were really pleased with the results of the flights," says Bouček. "Elios provided benefits in safety, downtime, and mainly cost... They are also proud to be the first in the Czech Republic to use this method for roof inspections." Pilsner Urquell is now planning to expand the drone program to other locations – and the brewery industry now has a major use case to prove the benefit of drones for indoor inspections.

"This is the plan going forward," says Bouček. "We'll be doing more and more of these."



About Flyability

Flyability is a Swiss company building safe drones for inaccessible places. By allowing drones to be used safely inside cities, inside buildings, and in contact with people, it enables new interactions and services with UAVs. With Elios, Flyability solves the two most critical issues of one of the fastest growing industries: collision and injury risks. The company's first market is in industrial inspection where it avoids sending people in dangerous and confined spaces for the inspection of Power Generation, Oil & Gas, Mining, Chemical, or Maritime infrastructures. It is also active in Search & Rescue and Security to assess emergency situations without putting humans at risk. Flyability is the winner of the 1M USD Drones for Good Award and over 15 other technology and business prizes.

More information on www.flyability.com / @fly_ability

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