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**FAA Final Rule Authorizes Use of Drones to Transport Property for Compensation**

Yesterday, the Federal Aviation Administration (“FAA”) issued a Final Rule authorizing the commercial operation of small unmanned aircraft systems weighing less than 55 pounds (known as “sUAS” or “drones”). In a significant departure from its proposed rule, the FAA has authorized the use of drones to transport property for compensation, subject to certain limitations. Some of those limitations are applicable to commercial drone operations generally (e.g. visual line of sight and operating time requirements), while others are specific to property-transportation operations. The Final Rule also clarifies that the transportation of property for compensation by drone is limited to *intrastate* operations, and therefore does not require air-carrier or airworthiness certification.

The Final Rule is a major step toward the integration of drones into the nation’s airspace. Up until the Final Rule, the commercial operation of drones could only be conducted pursuant to an exemption process, and the transportation of property for compensation was not authorized. In addition, as part of the reauthorization of the FAA, Congress is considering additional provisions authorizing transportation of property for compensation by drone.

If you have questions about these developments, please contact Prasad Sharma at [psharma@scopelitis.com](mailto:psharma@scopelitis.com), Jacob Fisher at [jfisher@scopelitis.com](mailto:jfisher@scopelitis.com), Craig Helmreich at [chelmreich@scopelitis.com](mailto:chelmreich@scopelitis.com), or JT Young at [jyoung@scopelitis.com](mailto:jyoung@scopelitis.com). The Firm’s general telephone line is 317-637-1777.