



---

**News release**

*Date* 18 October 2017

*Contact* Mihnea Anastasiu  
Marketing and Communication Leader, PwC Romania

Tel: +40 21 225 3546  
Email: [mihnea.anastasiu@pwc.com](mailto:mihnea.anastasiu@pwc.com)

---

### **PwC Sees USD 9.46 Billion Drone Solutions Market for Power, Utilities Industries**

The global market in drone-powered solutions for the power and utilities industries is worth as much as USD 9.46 billion a year, PwC estimates in a new report that illustrates how creative uses of unmanned aerial vehicles are disrupting the way companies build, operate and maintain their networks.

A flamethrowing drone used to clear rubbish from power lines is one of the more dramatic examples of innovative uses for unmanned aerial vehicles found in Clarity from above: Leveraging drone technologies to secure utilities systems, from PwC's global Drone Powered Solutions team. More prosaic applications range from geospatial surveys in pre-investment planning, through monitoring of the construction process and managing assets, to proactively dealing with threats such as overgrown vegetation.

Global power transmission networks are forecast to increase to 6.8 million circuit kilometres in 2020, up 15% from the 2016 level, as energy production is reshaped by the rise of renewables, and demand grows in emerging markets such as China and India. Regulators are increasingly concerned about reliability, offering incentives to reduce outages and penalties for downtime. Every year the sector loses USD 169 billion due to energy network failures and forced shutdowns.

“Pressure to shift to renewables from fossil fuels, while reducing prices, is forcing power and utilities companies to look for new ways to stay profitable. As companies reinvent their business models, drones are helping increase the reliability of energy production, transmission and distribution”, stated David Trow, Assurance Partner, Energy and Utilities Industry Group Leader, PwC Romania.

The latest report in PwC's Clarity from above series includes stories of how creative utilities managers around the world are turning to drones to solve some of the industry's most intractable problems, increasing both reliability and worker safety. For example, in most countries monitoring vegetation growth and trimming trees near power lines is the single biggest maintenance cost for power companies. Drones can make the trimming process more efficient, as well as providing data that helps predict and avoid damage from falling trees.

“Applying drone technologies to capture a variety of data on power plants, electrical substations or power lines is becoming a change driver for the entire power and utilities industry. Not only can drones gather standardised, tangible data in a more efficient way than people located on the ground, but also, unlike manned aerial vehicles, they can do it without risking human life”, added David Trow.

Water utilities are also finding that drones can be more useful than satellites in the process of monitoring water quality. PwC's Geospatial.App software allows the integration, presentation and management of mapping data gathered by drones equipped with visual, infrared and other cameras, which is useful in areas including monitoring the process of infrastructure construction, tracking the need for maintenance and assessing damage after natural or man-made disasters.

Today's report is the third in the Clarity from above series. The first, in May 2016, looked at the overall global market for applications of drone technology, estimating its value at more than \$127 billion. The second report found a \$45 billion market for applications in the transport infrastructure sector.

"To remain competitive on the market, and stay current in the changing business ecosystem which is being challenged by new technologies, companies from the power and utilities sector need to broaden their horizons. They need to perceive new technologies, such as drones, as opportunities to improve internal processes, reduce costs and increase effectiveness", said Ionuț Simion, Country Managing Partner, PwC Romania.

### ***About PwC***

At PwC, our purpose is to build trust in society and solve important problems. PwC is a network of firms in 157 countries with more than 223,000 people who are committed to delivering quality in assurance, advisory and tax services.

PwC has been active in Central and Eastern Europe for the past 25 years. PwC Central and Eastern Europe (PwC CEE) is a network of firms, consisting of separate legal entities in accordance with applicable local laws and regulations. We work to help our clients in local markets become more successful and globally competitive. Today we have more than 8,800 people, including 260 partners, working in 55 offices across 29 countries in the region.

More information about PwC at [www.pwc.ro](http://www.pwc.ro)

©2017 PricewaterhouseCoopers. All rights reserved