



Japan: 7-Eleven starts drone delivery trial

The retailer aims to make this service fully operational for its Japanese stores sometime in 2025.

7-Eleven has begun a trial for 20-minute deliveries by drones in their stores located in Fukuoka City, Japan. The initiative is part of Tokyo's Building Business Models for Logistics Services Using Drones project.

The company in charge of overseeing the pilot program is ANA Holdings, the group that owns All Nippon Airways and Air Japan. Its main objective is to test drone delivery in suburban areas as a safe and practical service and for partly densely populated territories as well, as the news site DroneLife reported.

The system is anticipated to reach full-scale Level 4 drone operations, which include unassisted flights over populated areas, in addition to being able to fly beyond the visual line of sight. The Japanese government is planning on removing the ban for this kind of operation sometime this year, as reported by the news site PYMNTS.com.

This recent evaluation followed another conducted in a 7-Eleven located in the Nishitama District of the city. Whenever the program is fully operational, drones will use parking lots of existing stores to take flight after the brand's employees finish loading its cargo, which will support approximately 5 kg of merchandise. The retailer aims to launch drone delivery as a permanent service in Japan in 2025.