

## **New pilotless aircraft research centre opens**

Pilotless aircraft could soon be flying over Queensland skies.

A \$3.5 million Australian Research Centre for Aerospace Automation was officially launched in Brisbane today.

The facility will be based at the Brisbane Airport and will allow Queensland University of Technology and CSIRO researchers to develop and test pilotless aircraft.

The centre's director, QUT Professor Rod Walker, says the unmanned aviation vehicles (UAVs) have both defence and civil applications.

"People are talking about using them for so-called armchair farming," he said.

"The farmers sending out cheap UAVs to find where the stock is on large properties or using them for remote sensing purposes on businesses to improve the productivity of our sugar crops say and other crops we have in Australia.

"Protecting our borders with UAVs is a big application."

The centre was officially launched by the Deputy Premier, Anna Bligh.

Ms Bligh says the State Government-funded facility will position Queensland at the forefront of the latest aviation technology.

"This is the future of aviation," she said.

"This is the next most significant development internationally in aviation and Queensland wants to be at the cutting edge of that.

"We will in this centre develop the capacity to take this technology to the world."

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200512/s1521208.htm>