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Windpole Ventures LLC to Partner with Garrad Hassan to complete ultrasonic –mechanical sensor comparison

Twelve month study to begin this summer will compare data quality and sensor reliability in cold climate using Lufft ultrasonic and cup anemometers

As the long icy winter draws to a close, Windpole Ventures LLC of Arlington, Massachusetts has teamed up with Garrad Hassan Americas to conduct a twelve month comparative study of mechanical and cup anemometers. The test will take place at three locations in Illinois, Iowa and Indiana, locations where winter anemometer icing is known to be severe.

Both sensors will be unheated during the twelve month test duration. Boom configuration will be standardized and recommended by the third party engineering firm. The tests will use a Lufft ultrasonic unit which promises to address the problem of cup damage from falling ice and lost data as ice freezes sensors. The Lufft is armored, affordable and can be heated. "Ultrasonic sensors seem expensive at $1,000 to $1,500 per unit. A cup anemometer with a calibration certificate may cost just $350. But we look at life cycle costs over five years. As soon as a cup sensor fails, that "cheap" anemometer looks expensive." said Steve Kropper, WindPole's CEO. Industry standard cup (mechanical) anemometers were chosen for this study in order that the comparison reflect 'industry standard' for wind assessors in the US.

After the field study, Garrad Hassan will submit a complete analysis of the results. The results will be queried on three parameters.

1. Data quality comparison. Does data produced from ultrasonic sensors track that of the 'industry standard' mechanical sensors?
2. Ice resistance during icing events
3. Common cause of failure for both mechanical and ultrasonic.

While mechanical (cup) sensors are a commonly accepted technology in the wind industry, the precision and maintenance free aspects of ultrasonic sensors make them attractive to the wind assessment field especially in applications requiring real-time data. The National Weather Service upgrade from mechanical to ultrasonics started an industry trend. However, the IEC proscribes mechanical sensors for use in wind assessment. Time, research and experience will show how the industry will accept growing use of ultrasonic technology.

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About WindPole Ventures, LLC
WindPole provides real-time, hub height wind resource data from a portfolio of almost 6,000 very tall towers in 39 states. WindPole Ventures, LLC is based in Lexington, MA. www.windpole.com

About Lufft GmbH
G. Lufft Mess-und Regeltechnik GmbH, based in Fellbach, Germany designs and manufactures intelligent wind and weather sensors using ultrasonic technology for precise measurement of wind speed and direction. Lufft USA is the North American sales and distribution office located in Santa Barbara, CA.