

Responses to Reviewers' Comments for Manuscript TMC-2025-02-0445

Optimizing Joint Speed and Altitude Schedule for UAV Data Collection in Low-Altitude Airspace

Addressed Comments for Publication to
IEEE Transactions on Mobile Computing

by

Yiqian Wang, Jianping Huang, Feng Shan, Yuming Gao, Runqun Xiong and
Junzhou Luo

Dear editors,

Please find enclosed the revised version of our previous submission entitled “Optimizing Joint Speed and Altitude Schedule for UAV Data Collection in Low-Altitude Airspace” with manuscript number TMC-2025-02-0445. We would like to thank you and the reviewers for the valuable comments which help improving the quality of our manuscript. In this revision, we have carefully addressed the reviewers’ comments. A summary of main modifications and a detailed point-by-point response to the comments from Reviewers 1 and 3 (following the reviewers’ order in the decision letter) are given below.

Sincerely,

Yiqian Wang, Jianping Huang, Feng Shan, Yuming Gao, Runqun Xiong and Junzhou Luo

Note: To enhance the legibility of this response letter, all the editor’s and reviewers’ comments are typeset in boxes. Rephrased or added sentences are typeset in color. The respective parts in the manuscript are highlighted to indicate changes.

Response to the Meta Review

Summary Comment 1

The reviewer(s) have suggested some minor revisions to your manuscript. Therefore, I invite you to respond to the reviewer(s)' comments and revise your manuscript.

Response S1: We appreciate your handling of the review process.

According to the reviewers' comments, we have checked our manuscript and addressed them in the following way:

1. We added content.
2. We removed our wrong statements in Section I.

Response to Reviewer 1

Comment 1.1

This paper fails to justify the selection of heuristic factors (α, β) in SSF-ACO. You should conduct grid search experiments to demonstrate parameter sensitivity or cite theoretical foundations for ACO parameter tuning.

Response 1.1:

We agree that the title is somewhat misleading. We therefore changed it in the current version of the manuscript.

Comment 1.2

Current experiments only cover small-scale scenarios (≤ 30 nodes), it should extend to more nodes to should the scalability of algorithm.

Response 1.2:

We totally agree. We also added the following to the new version of the manuscript

This really important sentence was added to the paper.

Comment 1.3

The assumptions of linear GN deployment and complete GN knowledge are restrictive and not sufficiently justified. Please provide a detailed discussion of the assumptions, including their implications for real-world applicability and potential extensions.

Response 1.3:

Comment 1.4

Could the proposed models and algorithms be adapted for 3D GN layouts?

Response 1.4:

Comment 1.5

Some statements have inconsistent tenses (e.g. “Our previous work [20] investigated...”). vs. (“we propose...”), need to unify the full text tense; The reference format should be checked according to IEEE standards (e.g. URL references [6] are not standardized).

Response 1.5:

Thank you for the comment. We have carefully reviewed the tense usage throughout the manuscript and corrected the inconsistent expressions to ensure consistency. Additionally, we have standardized the website reference format according to IEEE Reference Guide.

Response to Reviewer 2

Comment 2.1

The computational latency of SSF-ACO-Online needs justify.

Response 2.1:

:(

Comment 2.2

Alg. 4 does not specify the specific implementation of “Roulette-Wheel-Selection”, which needs to supplement pseudocode or reference standard methods.

Response 2.2:

Thanks for your suggestion. We have added a brief description of the Roulette-Wheel-Selection method in the revised manuscript.

Specifically, in **Roulette-Wheel-Selection**, the vertex $(\varphi + 1, j')$ is selected if $\sum_{j''=0}^{j'-1} p(\varphi, j, j'') \leq \text{rand}() < \sum_{j''=0}^{j'} p(\varphi, j, j'')$, where $\text{rand}()$ generates a random number in $[0, 1)$.

Comment 2.3

The vertical energy consumption is assumed to be linear related to the altitude difference, which seems oversimplified, more justification is needed.

Response 2.3:

Thanks for the comment. Research [1] serves as the theoretical basis for this “linear assumption”. According to [1], the following equation fits well with the theoretical derivation,

$$p_V = c_{0,V} + c_{1,V} v + c_{2,V} v^2, \quad (1)$$

where p_V is the vertical power consumption, $c_{0,V}$, $c_{1,V}$ and $c_{2,V}$ are coefficients, and v is the climbing or descending speed of the UAV. In our manuscript, we assume that the UAV climbs or descends at a constant speed and flies in a stable environment. Therefore, the vertical power consumption is constant. For a certain altitude difference Δh , the vertical energy consumption is $E_V = \frac{p_V \Delta h}{v}$, which supports the “linear assumption”. Furthermore, similar assumptions have also been adopted in previous research [2].

- [1] K. Wu, M. Feng, C. Wu, Y. Lin, and S. Lu, “Trajectory Planning for Multi-rotor UAV Based on Energy Cost Model,” in *2022 41st Chinese Control Conf. (CCC)*, IEEE, 2022, pp. 1–6.
- [2] Y. Cao, A. Wang, G. Sun, and L. Liu, “Average Transmission Rate and Energy Efficiency Optimization in UAV-assisted IoT,” in *2023 IEEE Wireless Commun. and Netw. Conf. (WCNC)*, IEEE, 2023, pp. 1–6.

Comment 2.4

The difference between the transmission range model of Equation (17) and literature [35] is not fully explained, and the improvement points or advantages need to be clearly defined.

Response 2.4:

Comment 2.5

What is the purpose of presenting Equation (18)?

Response 2.5:

Thanks you for the comment. Equation (18) in the original manuscript was included to provide a quantitative description of the data transmission range's width. To retain a more holistic presentation, we have modified the expression.

The width and height of the range are linearly related to the coefficients C_W and C_H , respectively. And the quantitative relationship can be found in Appendix F of the supplementary material.

Comment 2.6

There are too many curves in Figure 8 and the colors are similar, so it is difficult to distinguish them. It is suggested to optimize the color matching or add mark symbols

Response 2.6:

Comment 2.7

The dynamic nature of the sensor is not considered, such as movement, inaccurate position, failure and other problems.

Response 2.7:

Comment 2.8

Some minor suggestions:

- (1) The the first sentence in subsection 2.1, "UAV" \rightarrow "UAVs".
- (2) Second paragraph of subsection 2.1, "maintaining" \rightarrow "maintained".
- (3) Second paragraph of subsection 2.2, "maintaining" \rightarrow "and maintain".
- (4) The "=" in table 1.
- (5) Add $k \neq k'$ to equation (11), and $i \neq i'$ to equation (12).
- (6) The parameter \mathbb{S} of algorithm 1 and 2 is neither used nor updated.
- (7) Line 2 of Algorithm 3, why set 20 to Z ?

Response 2.8:

Thanks for your detailed suggestions. In response, we have made the following revisions.

For points (1) to (4), we have improved the phrasing and table in the manuscript to make it more consistent and easier to read.

For point (5), we would like to clarify that in Definition 1 in the manuscript, the condition $k < k'$ is defined. Additionally, in Equation (11), the condition $b_k < b_{k'}$ already implicitly ensures that $k \neq k'$. As for Equation (12), we have removed it along with its related content to improve the overall structure and clarity of the manuscript.

For point (6), \mathbb{S} is defined as a data structure that encapsulates essential sensor information. To improve clarity and facilitate readers' understanding, we have revised the manuscript by relocating the description of \mathbb{S} closer to Algorithm 1 and 2.

For details, Alg. 1 takes the necessary sensor information as input and returns the optimal horizontal energy consumption. For simplicity, we denote these pieces of sensor information (such as l_i and r_i) by \mathbb{S} .

For point (7), we have added an explanation in the revised manuscript.

Here, Z is set to 20 to balance solution quality and computational efficiency.

Response to Reviewer 3

Comment 3.1

Compared with previous works, the current work further considers the complex overlapping range relationship between sensors. Therefore, the authors should spend a lot of effort to emphasize this contribution in Section I.

Response 3.1:

Comment 3.2

The system model assumes an idealized scenario without incorporating real-world path loss effects (e.g., fading, shadowing). This limits the practical use of the proposed algorithm.

Response 3.2:

Comment 3.3

The claim of “near-optimal performance” for SSF-ACO-Online lacks a clear benchmark (e.g., theoretical bounds or exhaustive search). Provide a quantitative comparison to support this conclusion.

Response 3.3:

We appreciate the reviewer’s insightful comment. We agree that the term “near-optimal” was not precise. Our intention was to indicate that SSF-ACO-Online performs closely to the offline algorithm SSF-ACO. We have revised the abstract to clarify this point and removed the term “near-optimal” to avoid confusion.

Extensive simulations demonstrate that SSF-ACO significantly outperforms baseline approaches in energy efficiency, and SSF-ACO-Online achieves comparable performance with energy consumption 1.24% higher than offline counterpart in average.

Comment 3.4

The robustness of the SSF-ACO and SSF-ACO-Online algorithms to network dynamics (e.g., node mobility) is not evaluated. Include tests under time-varying conditions to demonstrate adaptability.

Response 3.4:

Comment 3.5

The paper uses multiple important symbols, but a comprehensive table of symbols and definitions is missing. Adding such a table would enhance readability and help readers locate information more easily.

Response 3.5:

Comment 3.6

The discussion of related work is not sufficient. Please include recent literature on “the fusion of AI, UAV, and LAE” and provide further discussion.

Response 3.6: