Claims

1. A method of inspecting and monitoring an elevator installation (100) comprising the steps of:
   a) providing an autonomous flying object (32), the autonomous flying object having at least one sensor (33);
   b) sending the autonomous flying object (32) to the elevator installation (100);
   c) selectively providing the autonomous flying object access into and out of a hoistway (40) of the elevator installation (100);
   d) positioning the autonomous flying object within the hoistway (100); and
   e) sending data collected by the sensor (33) of the autonomous flying object (32) to a remote elevator service center (20).

2. A method according to claim 1 wherein the remote elevator service center sends access information for the elevator installation to the autonomous flying object.

3. A method according to claim 2 wherein the access information includes a specific timeframe for which access is granted to the autonomous flying object for entry into the hoistway of the elevator installation.

4. A method according to claim 2 or claim 3 wherein the access information includes a predetermined time interval in which the autonomous flying object must complete its tasks.

5. A method according to any of claims 2 to 4 wherein the access information includes a specific code.

6. A method according to any preceding claim wherein the remote elevator service center sends an access instruction to the elevator installation.

7. A method according to claim 6 wherein the access instruction a specific timeframe for the installation to grant access to the autonomous flying object.

8. A method according to claim 6 or claim 7 wherein the access information includes a predetermined time interval after which the installation will grant exit to the autonomous flying object.

9. A method according to any of claims 6 to 8 wherein the access information includes a specific code and further comprising the step of providing a sensor to read a code from the autonomous flying object and comparing the code sent directly from the remote with the code read by the sensor from the autonomous flying object.

10. A method according to any one of the preceding claims further comprising the step of providing the autonomous flying object exit from the hoistway of the elevator installation.

11. A method according to claim 10 further comprising the step of sending the autonomous flying object to its base station.

12. A method according to claim 10 further comprising the step of sending the autonomous flying object to another elevator installation and repeating steps c to d.

13. A system for remotely inspecting and monitoring an elevator installation (100) comprising:
a remote elevator service center (20);
an autonomous flying object (32), the autonomous flying object having at least one sensor (33);
an access (48) within the elevator installation (100) to selectively permit the autonomous flying object with entry to and exit from an elevator hoistway (40); and
a communication network (16) to transmit data collected by the sensor (33) to the remote elevator service center (20).

14. A system according to claim 13, further comprising a further sensor (49) connected to an elevator controller (46) to read a code from the autonomous flying object (32) when it is in a vicinity of the further sensor (49).

15. A method according to claim 1 wherein the remote elevator service center sends access information for the elevator installation to the autonomous flying object and sends an access instruction to the elevator installation.