FAA Flowchart

U.S. National Airspace System (N.A.S.)

FAA oversees the N.A.S.

Department of Defense oversees its restricted air space

Unmanned Aircraft

Manned Aircraft

Model Aircraft
(Hobby or Recreation *only*)
- Must fly below 400 ft. and remain clear of obstacles
- Must remain within visual line of sight at all times
- Must remain clear, and yield to all manned aircraft operations
- Can't fly within 5 nautical miles of an airport; nor within 2 nautical miles of an active heliport
- Can't fly near/over people or stadiums
- Can't fly aircraft greater than 55 lbs.
- Must fly with extreme care and due diligence
- Can't collect data/pictures for personal use and then decide to sell it later. The data/pictures collected must remain personal
- Can't fly using these rules if being paid in any capacity
- Must purchase all components with personal funds for personal use

Public Entity/ Public Operation
(Governmental)

Public Entity
- – federal, state, local agencies
- – law enforcement
- – public universities & colleges

Public Operations
- – intelligence mission
- – firefighting
- – search & rescue
- – law enforcement
- – aeronautical research
- – biological/geological resource mapping

Civil or Commercial Entity/ Civil or Commercial Operation
(Non-Governmental)
- Includes private business, private higher educational institutions, fly-for-hire groups, industry, etc.

<u>Apply for Certificate of Authorization (COA)</u>
- Need letter to prove "public entity"
- Need Certificate of Airworthiness – can self-certify if knowledgeable
- Depending on type of operation and various factors may or may not require pilot certificate
- COA is specific for airframe, operation, flying parameters (location, time, radio frequency, fail safes, altitude, operator, etc.)
- Airframe must be registered with FAA and be issued an "N-number"
- COA is non-transferrable and issued for 2 years
- Takes approximately 2-3 months to get COA

2 Options To Legally Operate

Petition for Section 333 exemption
- Used for civil or commercial operation in low-risk controlled environment
- Can be used by public entity for "civil" operations
- Exemption is issued for 2 years
- Takes approximately 6 months to get exemption

Receive Exemption with blanket COA for specific make/model of aircraft
- Must remain within visual line of sight at all times
- Can't fly within 5 nautical miles of an airport
- Can't fly aircraft greater than 55 lbs.
- Can't fly faster than 100 mph
- Can't fly higher than 400 ft. above ground level

NOTE:
- Need airline transport, commercial, private, recreational, or sport pilot certificate to fly aircraft with 333 exemption
- Additional requirements needed for aerial photography for motion picture and TV industries for scripted closed set filming

Special Airworthiness Certificate (SAC)

Apply for SAC in experimental category
- Used for civil or commercial aircraft to perform Research & Development, crew training, market surveys, etc.
- Need FAA inspector to provide Certificate of Airworthiness
- Need pilot certificate to fly aircraft
- SAC is issued for 1 year or less after date of issuance
- Takes approximately 2-12 months to get SAC

Apply for SAC in restricted category
- Similar to Experimental Category to the left, a pilot CANNOT certify the airworthiness of the airframe; this must be done by a FAA inspector
- The 'Restricted Category' Special Airworthiness Certificate is the slowest and most arduous method for private companies to obtain FAA permission to fly their UAS

January 22, 2016