

FAA Announces Small UAS Registration Rule

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Registration will be free for the first 30 days!

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) today announced a streamlined and user-friendly web-based aircraft registration process for owners of small unmanned aircraft (UAS) weighing more than 0.55 pounds (250 grams) and less than 55 pounds (approx. 25 kilograms) including payloads such as on-board cameras.

The Registration Task Force delivered recommendations to FAA Administrator Michael Huerta and Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx on November 21. The rule incorporates many of the task force recommendations.

“Make no mistake: unmanned aircraft enthusiasts are aviators, and with that title comes a great deal of responsibility,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. “Registration gives us an opportunity to work with these users to operate their unmanned aircraft safely. I’m excited to welcome these new aviators into the culture of safety and responsibility that defines American innovation.”

Registration is a statutory requirement that applies to all aircraft. Under this rule, any owner of a small UAS who has previously operated an unmanned aircraft exclusively as a model aircraft prior to December 21, 2015, must register no later than February 19, 2016. Owners of any other UAS purchased for use as a model aircraft after December 21, 2015 must register before the first flight outdoors. Owners may use either the paper-based process or the new streamlined, web-based system. Owners using the new streamlined web-based system must be at least 13 years old to register.

Owners may register through a web-based system at: www.faa.gov/uas/registration

Registrants will need to provide their name, home address and e-mail address. Upon completion of the registration process, the web application will generate a Certificate of Aircraft Registration/Proof of Ownership that will include a unique identification number for the UAS owner, which must be marked on the aircraft.

Owners using the model aircraft for hobby or recreation will only have to register once and may use the same identification number for all of their model UAS. The registration is valid for three years.

The normal registration fee is \$5, but in an effort to encourage as many people as possible to register quickly, the FAA is waiving this fee for the first 30 days (from Dec. 21, 2015 to Jan 20, 2016).

“We expect hundreds of thousands of model unmanned aircraft will be purchased this holiday season,” said FAA Administrator Huerta. “Registration gives us the opportunity to educate these new airspace users before they fly so they know the airspace rules and understand they are accountable to the public for flying responsibly.”

The online registration system does not yet support registration of small UAS used for any purpose other than hobby or recreation – for example, using an unmanned aircraft in connection with a business. The FAA is developing enhancements that will allow such online registrations by spring of 2016.

The full rule can be viewed here: www.faa.gov/news/updates/media/20151213_IFR.pdf

For questions regarding this notice, contact Ken Kelley, AFS-850 by email at Ken.R.Kelley@faa.gov or by telephone at (775) 858-7700 Ex 258.