

DRONE/UAS OPERATIONS NEAR AIRPORTS

Guidelines for Model Aircraft (Hobbyist) Operations

By federal law, when flown within 5 statute miles of an airport, a model aircraft operator is required to give prior notice of the operation to the airport or air traffic control tower. **The model aircraft operator is not seeking permission.** Model aircraft operations within five miles of the airport cannot be prohibited or prevented by Airport Operators. However, the Airport Operator can object to the proposed use of a model aircraft if the proposed activity would endanger the safety of the airspace around the airport. Specific reasons for the objection should be provided to the model aircraft operator at the time of the request.

Model Aircraft Safety Guidelines

- Fly at or below 400 feet.
- Keep your UAS within line of sight.
- Avoid flying near manned aircraft, above stadiums, or above groups of people.
- Avoid flying near emergency response efforts such as fires.
- Aircraft must be registered with the FAA (more than 0.55 pounds).
- Be aware of airspace requirements like TFR, Restricted, etc.



Questions for the model aircraft operator who proposes a flight within five statute miles of the airport



- What is your name and contact information?
- Where do you plan to fly?
- What altitude will you be flying (maximum)?
- What time will you be flying?
- How long will you be flying there?
- What is the make/model of the aircraft you are flying?
- How can I contact you while you are flying?

It is best practice for Airport Operators to document all UAS operations conducted at or within five miles from their airport. A sample UAS intent to fly at or near airport form for UAS operators to fill is available at Aviation Division Resource site—[goo.gl/TqpsGh](https://www.faa.gov/atsa/aviation-division-resource-site).

Best Practices for Airport Operators

- Be familiar with the manned aircraft operating areas within five statute miles of the airport and share this information with the operator of the model aircraft.
- Based on the answers to the questions above, be able to describe to the model aircraft operator whether the proposed flight interferes with normal manned aircraft flight.
- Provide the model aircraft operator information on any special or unusual activity occurring at the airport during the proposed model aircraft flight (e.g., skydiving, low flying agricultural aircraft, helicopters, etc.).
- Ask the model aircraft operator to notify the air traffic control facility, if one is located at the airport.
- Ask the model aircraft operator to contact other airports that may also be within five statute miles of the proposed flight.



HAVE MORE QUESTIONS ?

Visit the FAA's frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the Use of Model Aircraft Near an Airport or scan the QR code to visit the page [goo.gl/e6fFSy](https://www.faa.gov/e6fFSy).



DRONE/UAS OPERATIONS NEAR AIRPORTS

Guidelines for Commercial / Government Operators

It is important to understand that some drone operations will fall outside of the model aircraft definition. This would include commercial and government operations and are governed by different federal laws. Most of these operations will be flying under a new set of rules called Part 107 (14 CFR Part 107) and some will continue to operate under a 333 Exemption. An individual operating under Part 107 in North Carolina will have obtained a FAA Remote Pilot Airman's Certificate and a NC UAS Operator Permit.

Commercial/ Government Operations (Part 107) near Airports



- Operations in Class G airspace are allowed without ATC authorization or prior notification to the airport.
 - Operations in B, C, D, E airspace require an authorization (Part 107 airspace waiver), not through the airport operator or local tower.
 - All requests for Part 107 airspace waivers must be made through FAA Headquarters—https://www.faa.gov/uas/request_waiver
 - FAA Headquarters will coordinate with individual facilities for airspace authorization requests.
 - FAA Headquarters may deny requests for operations that pose an unacceptable risk to the NAS and that cannot be mitigated.
- Part 107 UAS operators are not required to file NOTAMs.
 - Requests for airspace authorization via ATC radio communication frequencies will not be accepted.
 - ****Class H felony for use of a UAS to interfere with or disrupt a manned aircraft (NC General Statutes 14-280.3).**

Following table summarizes the notification and authorization requirements for all classes of airspace:

	Class B	Class C	Class D	Class E	Class G
Model Aircraft	Notify airport and ATC facility if operations are within five miles				
Public Aircraft	As provided by Public COA				
Blanket COA (Section 333 exemption holders)	Operations not permitted within: 5 Nautical Miles (NM) of airports with Operational Control Tower, 3 NM of airports with published instrument procedures, 2 NM of airports without published instrument procedure, and 2 NM of heliports				
Part 107	ATC Authorization Required				No Auth. Required

NC UAS Operator Permit

- Required for commercial & government UAS operations in North Carolina.
- No person shall operate an UAS in North Carolina for commercial purposes unless the person is in possession of a permit.
- ****Class 1 misdemeanor to operate an UAS for commercial purposes in NC without NC UAS Permit. (NC General Statutes 63-96)**



HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

For more information visit- <https://www.ncdot.gov/aviation/uas/>
UAS Program Office Email - UAS@ncdot.gov || Phone - 919-814-0550

