SMALL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM OPERATION POLICY

Category: Facilities, Health and Safety
Responsible Office: Environment, Health and Safety
Responsible Executive: Vice President for Finance and Administration

Summary

The University at Buffalo will comply with current FAA regulations and best management practices as these will lead to the highest level of safety and privacy of UB students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

The University at Buffalo (UB, university) recognizes that small unmanned aircraft systems (sUAS) offer potential as tools for research, education, and administrative functions as well as provide opportunities for recreational use and business pursuits across a diverse array of users and industries. However, the use of sUAS can pose significant safety, security, and privacy risks to the university community. To minimize these risks, the university will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations and laws.

Operational Requirements

- The university allows the operation of sUAS for recreational, educational, and commercial use in accordance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations. The university does not allow the operation of sUAS under the public entity category, however, exceptions within this category may be made for police response, firefighting, and hazmat operations.
- All flights within five miles of the Buffalo Niagara International Airport must have prior authorization from the FAA. Pilots who do not possess a valid Waiver or Authorization from FAA shall use the Low Altitude Authorization and Notification Capability (LAANC) to obtain such authorization. Calling the Buffalo Air Traffic Control (ATC) directly is appropriate for emergency situations.
- Downtown campus sUAS flights originating from UB-owned property occur for limited purposes (e.g., aerial photo survey of a building). All flights require registration at ehs.buffalo.edu.
- Only pilots who are FAA certified may operate flights outside of the Safe Fly Zones (SFZ).
- A flight plan, approved by Environment, Health and Safety (EHS) or University Police, is required for all flights outside of a SFZ.
Rules For Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems

- All sUAS must be registered with the FAA.
- Maintain a Visual Line-of-Sight (VLOS) for all flights.
- Do not operate a sUAS over any persons not directly involved in the operation of the vehicle.
- Obey all FAA Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs).
- Limit flights to 400 feet above ground level (AGL) (300’ AGL on North Campus when flying south of the 43 degree parallel) and 100 mph.
- Operate flights during daylight or civil twilight (i.e., 30 minutes before official sunrise to 30 minutes after official sunset with FAA approved anti-collision lighting).
- Perform preflight inspections.
- Do not operate a sUAS under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Report all crashes and injuries related to sUAS operation to University Police or EH&S.
- Comply with FAA and UB flight rules as detailed in the following flowcharts:
  - Recreational Use Flight
  - Commercial Use Flight

Recreational Use

Operating a sUAS weighing less than five pounds within a designated SFZ for recreational use is allowed without prior authorization from EHS or University Police. Follow the Recreational Use Flight Flowchart.

Educational Use

Students may operate a sUAS in a manner consistent with the FAA rules for educational use as follows:

- Follow the Recreational Use Flowchart.
- Flights must be part of coursework and the majority of flying time must be related to an academic goal, the purpose of which is not simply learning to fly. Acceptable coursework includes science, technology, aviation, television, film, or arts.
- Demonstrations at UB events are allowed.
- Flights must not be related to a faculty members’ professional duties, compensation, or collection of data for their research projects.
- A course instructor may provide only minimal assistance to a student flying a sUAS.
- File a flight plan when flying outside a SFZ.

Commercial Use

The requirements for commercial use are the standard method of compliance for both commercial flights and flights by faculty and staff conducted as part of their professional obligation. Flights conducted for research fall into this category.
Remote Pilot requirements:
- The pilot must be at least 16 years of age.
- Must hold a remote pilot airman certificate with a sUAS rating or be under the direct supervision of someone holding a remote pilot airman certificate.
- Must pass the applicable Transportation Security Administration (TSA) vetting.
- The pilot or company providing commercial services to the university must have insurance covering their planned flights that meets the requirements of the university.
- The pilot or company must have a Certificate of Authorization or Waiver from the FAA for the airspace in which they operate.

Public Entity Use

UB does not have a Certificate of Authorization (COA) to allow operation of a sUAS by faculty or staff under the public entity category, however, exceptions may be made for police response, firefighting, and hazmat operations.

Indoor Flights

Requests for indoor flights should be directed to EHS for planning and approval.

Emergencies

An emergency includes the following:
- Auto crash
- Personal injury accident
- Fire
- Request for emergency medical services
- Police issue such as theft of property
- UAS crash

Report all emergencies occurring on the North or South campus to UB Police. (Do not call 911 from the North or South campus.)

When operating over university property (other than the North or South Campus), personnel must confirm whether emergency communications go through UB Police or 911.

BACKGROUND

Operation of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) is regulated by the FAA in accordance with the FAA Reauthorization Act 2018 as codified in section 336 of 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 101 (for hobby and recreational purposes) and 14 CFR Part 107 (for commercial purposes) and other applicable laws.
APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all persons operating a sUAS in airspace above UB property. UB property includes the North, South, and Downtown campuses and off-campus properties including but not limited to Anderson Gallery and the President’s house.

This policy does not apply to operating a sUAS over property not owned by UB. Pilots must follow protocols as set forth by the appropriate property owner.

DEFINITIONS

Certificate of Waiver or Authorization (COA)
An authorization issued by the FAA for UAS operations.

Commercial or Business Use
Flights for which compensation is given or received, including arrangements with third-party contractors or vendors. Commercial and business flights are subject to FAA regulations under 14 CFR Part 107.

Educational Use
Flights conducted as part of a student’s coursework including science, technology, and aviation-related curricula, or other coursework such as television and film production or the arts.

Public Entity
A government entity such as a federal or state agency, law enforcement agency, or public college or university. A sUAS may be operated for a public entity in accordance with the rules for business users (Part 107) or the public entity may apply for a blanket public Certificate of Authorization.

Recreational Use
Operating an unmanned aircraft for enjoyment and not for work, business purposes or for compensation or hire.

Safe Fly Zone
An area over which a sUAS is allowed to fly.

Small Unmanned Aircraft
An unmanned aircraft weighing between .55 and 55 pounds.

Unmanned Aircraft
An aircraft that is operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft. An unmanned aircraft is a component of an unmanned aircraft system (UAS).

Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS)
An unmanned aircraft and the equipment necessary for the safe and efficient operation of that aircraft.
RESPONSIBILITY

Small Unmanned Aircraft System Operators
- Comply with this policy.
- Register small unmanned aircraft weighing more than .55 pounds and less than 55 pounds with the FAA in accordance with federal law. Mark the aircraft with a registration number.
- Review the *Recreational Use Flight* and *Commercial Use Flight* flowcharts before your flight.
- Conduct preflight inspection that includes the aircraft and control system to ensure safe operation.
- Program the UB Police emergency number (716-645-2222) into cell phones to facilitate emergency reporting.
- Wear high visibility garments (e.g., vest, shirt, jacket) if engaged in commercial or public entity use. Law enforcement activities are exempt from this provision.

UB Police
- Require operators to suspend operation that is not consistent with this policy or FAA rules.

Environment, Health and Safety
- Provide guidance to operators.
- Approve flight plans and experimental activities.

Contact Information

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<tr>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environment, Health and Safety</td>
<td>716-829-3301</td>
<td><a href="mailto:msadams@buffalo.edu">msadams@buffalo.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Police</td>
<td>716-645-2222</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Ub-police@buffalo.edu">Ub-police@buffalo.edu</a></td>
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Related Information

University Links:
- Flight Rules
  - Commercial Use Flowchart (to be linked when posted on website)
  - Recreational Use Flowchart (to be linked when posted on website)
- Managing Facilities
  [http://www.buffalo.edu/administrative-services/managing-facilities.html](http://www.buffalo.edu/administrative-services/managing-facilities.html)
- Planning, Designing and Construction – Building Profiles – Off Campus
University Police
http://www.buffalo.edu/police.html

Forms:

Related Links:

Federal Aviation Administration B4UFLY Mobile App
https://www.faa.gov/uas/where_to_fly/b4ufly/

Federal Aviation Administration Educational Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems

Federal Aviation Administration Summary of Small Unmanned Aircraft Rule (Part 107)
https://www.faa.gov/uas/media/Part_107_Summary.pdf

Federal Aviation Administration LAANC Airspace Authorizations

  Kittyhawk.io web and mobile app, must have account
  https://kittyhawk.io

  Skyward.io web and mobile app, must have an account
  https://skyward.io

  Airmap.com, web and mobile app, must have an account
  https://skyward.io

Know Before You Fly
www.knowbeforeyoufly.org

Sunrise and Sunset Calculator Calendars
https://www.timeanddate.com/sun/usa/buffalo

Presidential Approval

Satish K. Tripathi, President

Date