

Section 4. Airspace Access for UAS

11-4-1. Recreational Flyers

a. Advisory Circular 91-57, Exception for Limited Recreational Operations of Unmanned Aircraft, provides guidance for recreational flyers. Failure of a recreational flyer to adhere to any of the requirements for recreational status under 14 USC 44809 will result in the flight being considered 14 CFR Part 107 by the FAA, which may result in greater penalties if the operator is found operating in an unsafe manner. Recreational flyers may only operate under the statutory exception if they adhere to all of the conditions listed in the statute.

REFERENCE-

AC 91-57, Exception for Limited Recreational Operations of Unmanned Aircraft.

49 USC 44809, Exception for Limited Recreational Operations of Unmanned Aircraft.

14 CFR Part 107, Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems.

b. Operations in Class G airspace. Flights in Class G airspace will be the most common environment for many recreational flyers. The upper limit of recreational UAS operations in Class G airspace is 400 feet AGL. When operating in Class G airspace, the recreational flyer must follow the set of safety guidelines outlined and developed by a recognized Community-Based Organization (CBO).

c. Operations in controlled airspace or uncontrolled airspace above 400 feet AGL. If a recreational flyer desires to operate in class B, C, or D airspace, or within the lateral boundaries of the surface area of class E airspace designated for an airport, or in class G airspace above 400 feet, the operator must obtain prior authorization from the Administrator or designee before operating. For the recreational flyer wishing to enter controlled airspace, there are two basic routes:

1. Fixed sites are locations specifically authorized by the FAA, which are posted at the FAA's interactive map on the UAS Data Delivery System (UDDS). On the map, small blue circles depict the location of these sites in controlled airspace and the altitude limits imposed on those sites. The altitude restrictions are derived from the UASFM which form the basic structure of LAANC and its operating procedures. Recreational flyers can access site-specific information by clicking on the blue circle.

NOTE-

These sites have existing letters of agreement or authorization (LOA) with the FAA. For the CBO to operate in controlled airspace, an airspace authorization agreement between the CBO and the FAA must be in place. Certain sites may have access restrictions or other operating limitations, which are available from the site sponsor.

2. By request, through the LAANC Application. LAANC provides the recreational pilot with access, when permissible, to controlled airspace at or below posted UASFM altitudes in near-real time. LAANC also gives the recreational flyer the ability to stay notified of airspace restrictions and prohibitions. See paragraph 11-8-7 of this chapter for information on downloading the LAANC application.

d. CBO Sanctioned Events. Sanctioned events, also called sponsored events are generally of short duration and take place at an existing fixed site or temporary fixed site established specifically for the event.

1. CBO's requesting a sanctioned or sponsored event authorization within Class B, C, D, or within the lateral boundaries of the surface area of Class E airspace designated for an airport are obligated to make the location known to the FAA Administrator. Mutually agreed-upon operating procedures must be established with the event organizer. This is accomplished through a fixed site application in DroneZone.

2. CBO operations and events occurring at 400 feet AGL and below in Class G airspace do not require FAA review, approval or authorization. CBO's intending to conduct events in Class G airspace that may exceed 400 feet AGL must contact the FAA for further information.

11-4-2. 14 CFR Part 107 and Waivers to 14 CFR Part 107

a. 14 CFR Part 107 was the first new rule dedicated to UAS operations. It was designed to provide a path for integration into the NAS for sUAS, flown under VLOS, and operated for non-recreational purposes. Part 107