



FAA UAS Registration Frequently Asked Questions

Last updated February 4, 2016

Please check www.modelaircraft.org/gov for current updates

Q: How do I register?

A: You can register at www.faa.gov/uas/registration/. If you need assistance, please call 877 396 4636.

Q: Do I have to register every aircraft?

A: No, you only need to register your name, physical address, and email address.

Q: Do I need to list both my AMA number and my federal registration number on my aircraft?

A: Yes, you need to list both your AMA number and Federal registration number on your aircraft. We are advocating to allow members to use their AMA numbers. We believe an AMA membership already meets the intent of registration, but at this time place both numbers on your aircraft.

Q: How does UAS registration affect my membership?

A: AMA club or member benefits are not contingent on UAS registration. We encourage all members to follow Federal regulations, but we are not policing UAS registration.

Q: Is my club expected to police UAS registration?

A: We do not expect clubs to police UAS registration, that decision is left to each individual club and the clubs leadership.

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Q: Am I required by law to comply with the guidelines listed on the UAS Registration site?

A: The FAA acknowledged that AMA members should continue to follow AMA's community-based safety code. We also discussed and the FAA confirmed that the language on the FAA registration site is a guideline, not regulation. This guideline is not directed at the AMA community but rather, it is a simplified set of safety guidelines geared to the general public.

Q: Why did AMA change its position on registration? Why are they telling members to register now?

A: AMA has not changed its position. We continue to be disappointed with the registration rule and believe it is contrary to Congress's intent within the Special Rule for Model Aircraft, which is part of the 2012 FAA Modernization and Reform Act. We have been working with our legal counsel and the FAA to find a solution for our members on the registration rule. To date, the FAA has agreed in principle to several items that will help ease this process for our members.

However, we want to emphasize that this is not the end of our efforts to protect AMA members from this overreaching regulation. We are continuing to explore all legal and political options available, but these conversations may take time and a definitive solution is unlikely before the February 19 registration deadline. For this reason, we are suggesting that AMA members may wish to take advantage of free registration period, which is available until January 21.

Q: Is the AMA giving up? Why doesn't the AMA take this matter to court?

A: AMA is by no means giving up. We are resolute in our commitment and will continue to advocate on behalf of our members.. We are continuing to fight for the aeromodelling community and working to protect modelers from unnecessary and burdensome regulation. AMA is exploring several legal options that would address the registration rule as well. These legal strategies will take time to develop and pursue. We ask for your continued loyalty and patience as we work closely with our legal counsel to find the best path forward.

Q: I am already registered through the AMA, why do I have to register twice?

A: We understand the concern of our members and, while the FAA is open to streamlining the registration for our members, unfortunately the technical issues involved will not be resolved before February 19. Therefore, it will be necessary for current AMA members to register separately with the FAA. For future AMA members, we are working on an agreement with the FAA where for new members federal registration will automatically be fulfilled when they join the AMA, thereby creating one simple registration.

Q: Do only drones and multicopter operators need to register?

A: No. Everything that uses a ground-control system with a communications link, such as an RC transmitter that is over 0.55 lbs (or 250 grams) and under 55 lbs, is required to register. This includes operators who fly fixed-wing RC aircraft and helicopters, not just multicopters or drones.

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Q: Am I permitted to fly above 400 feet? What if I had to check a box saying otherwise on the federal registration website?

A: Yes. AMA members who abide by the AMA Safety Code, which permits flights above 400 feet under appropriate circumstances, and are protected by the Special Rule for Model Aircraft under the 2012 FAA Modernization and Reform Act. Checking the box on the federal registration webpage signifies an understanding of the 400 foot guideline. This is an important safety principle that all UAS operators need to be aware of, and is the same guideline established in AC 91-57 published in 1981. However, the placement of this guideline on the FAA website is intended as an educational piece and more specifically intended for those operating outside of AMA's safety program. We have been in discussions with the FAA about this point and the agency has indicated that it will be updating its website in the next week to make clear that this altitude guideline is not intended to supplant the guidance and safety procedures established in AMA's safety program.

Q: I am an Affiliate Member, do not live in the US, or I am not a US Citizen. How do I register?

A: Everyone, including foreign nationals and tourists, who operate a UAS for hobby or recreational purposes outdoors in the U.S. must use the FAA's online registration system. These non-U.S. citizens or non-permanent U.S. residents will receive the same registration certificate as U.S. Citizens or permanent U.S. residents. However, this certificate will function as a "recognition of ownership" document. This document is required by the Department of Transportation for foreign nationals to operate legally in the US.

In the near future, the www.faa.gov/uas/registration website will begin allowing non-citizens and non-residents to register. For now you can only use a computer with a United States IP address. For assistance you can call 877 396 4636 or email FAAHotline@faa.gov.

Q: I only fly CL or FF, do I need to register?

A: No. If you exclusively fly FF or CL and never plan on using a model that involves a transmitter, then you do not need to register.

Q: Can I fly my large model aircraft? Turbine jets?

A: Yes. The Special Rule for Model Aircraft, which is part of the 2012 FAA Modernization and Reform Act, allows AMA members to operate model aircraft over 55 lbs as long as they are operating in accordance with AMA's Large Model Aircraft safety program. AMA members can also fly turbine jets provided the operator holds a current AMA Turbine Waiver.

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Q: Does my large model aircraft require an N number?

A: AMA representatives, including AMA's legal counsel, met with the FAA on January 15, 2016, and this was one of the many questions that were raised. The FAA representatives verbally indicated to our representatives that AMA member, operating models under the Large Model Airplane Program, should not have to apply for an N number, and that they would address/change their information accordingly.

At the end of the January meeting there was an understanding that FAA would provide written acknowledgement of the items discussed for AMA to share with its members. Although we have not yet received the document(s) from the FAA, we were told to advise AMA members in good faith that an N number registration is not required for their LMA models.

Q: Am I permitted to fly first person view (FPV)? Can I fly at night?

A: Yes. AMA members are still protected by the Special Rule for Model Aircraft, which is part of the 2012 FAA Modernization and Reform Act. As long as AMA members continue to follow AMA's safety guidelines for these activities, they can continue to fly. The guidelines listed on the FAA UAS website do not negate the modeling activities and related safety procedures established in AMA's community-based safety program.

Q: Should clubs require all members to be registered?

A: No, we are not asking our clubs to police UAS Registration. That decision is up to each individual club and club leaders.

Q: What happens if I don't register by February 19?

A: According to the FAA, failure to register an unmanned aircraft may result in regulatory and criminal sanctions.

Q: Can I register by paper?

A: We understand there are AMA members who do not have a computer. The FAA offers a paper application, which currently is only available at local FAA Flight Standards District Offices (FSDO). Unlike the online application, the paper application requires pilots to register every single aircraft separately. If a member does not have a computer, we encourage them to have a club member help create and email and register or visit a local library.

Q: I do not want to give my credit card information over the internet or have a computer? What should I do?

A: As for members who cannot or do not want to submit credit card information online, the FAA has agreed to accept gift credit cards such as Visa or Mastercard. You can purchase these gift cards, which closely resemble a credit card, through many retailers.