

Flying a Drone in USVI Skies in 2022 Will Require Drone Identification and Location Tracking Tech

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The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announced Monday final rules for Unmanned Aircraft (UA), commonly known as drones. The new rules will require Remote Identification (Remote ID) of drones and allow operators of small drones to fly over people and at night under certain conditions. These rules come at a time when drones represent the fastest-growing segment in the entire transportation sector – with currently over 1.7 million drone registrations and 203,000 FAA-certificated remote pilots.

Simply put, in 2022, the U.S. government will require drones to broadcast their location, which will include an identification number that can be cross-referenced with the drone's registration number. The new rules also require that the drones reveal their speed and altitude. In 2023, unless some drones are retrofitted to include the aforementioned broadcast equipment, they will not be

allowed to fly.

According to the FAA, [Remote ID](#) will help mitigate risks associated with expanded drone operations, such as flights over people and at night, and both rules support technological and operational innovation and advancements.

“These final rules carefully address safety, security and privacy concerns while advancing opportunities for innovation and utilization of drone technology,” said U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao.

The FAA described Remote ID is a major step toward the full integration of drones into the national airspace system. “Remote ID provides identification of drones in flight as well as the location of their control stations, providing crucial information to our national security agencies and law enforcement partners, and other officials charged with ensuring public safety. Airspace awareness reduces the risk of drone interference with other aircraft and people and property on the ground,” said the agency.

Equipping drones with Remote ID technology builds on previous steps taken by the FAA and the drone industry to integrate operations safely into the national airspace system. [Part 107 of the federal aviation regulations](#) currently prohibits covered drone operations over people and at night unless the operator obtains a waiver from the FAA. The new FAA regulations jointly provide increased flexibility to conduct certain small UAS without obtaining waiver.

“The new rules make way for the further integration of drones into our airspace by addressing safety and security concerns,” said FAA Administrator Steve Dickson. “They get us closer to the day when we will more routinely see drone operations such as the delivery of packages.”

The Remote ID Rule applies to all operators of drones that require FAA registration. There are three ways to comply with the operational requirements:

1. Operate a standard Remote ID drone that broadcasts identification and location information of the drone and control station;
2. Operate a drone with a Remote ID broadcast module (may be a separate device attached to the drone), which broadcasts identification, location, and take-off information; or
3. Operate a drone without Remote ID but at specific FAA-recognized identification areas.

The [Operations Over People and at Night](#) rule (PDF) applies to Part 107 operators. The ability to fly over people and moving vehicles varies depending on the level of risk a small drone operation presents to people on the ground. Operations are permitted based on four categories, which can be found in the executive summary accompanying the rule. Additionally, this rule allows for operations at night under certain conditions.

The final rule requires that small drone operators have their remote pilot certificate and identification in their physical possession when operating, ready to present to authorities if needed, said the FAA. This rule also expands the class of authorities who may request these forms from a remote pilot. The final rule replaces the requirement to complete a recurrent test every 24 calendar months with the requirement to complete updated recurrent training that includes operating at night in identified subject areas.

Both rules will become effective 60 days after publication in the Federal Register. The Remote ID rule includes two compliance dates. Drone manufacturers will have 18 months to begin producing drones with Remote ID, with operators having an additional year to start using drones with Remote ID.

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