




UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST POLICE DEPARTMENT

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| Subject: Policy on the Use of Drones Number: PAT- 48 | |
| Category: Patrol | Type: Policy |
| Effective Date: February 22, 2017 | |
| Issuing Authority: Chief Tyrone Parham  | |
| Reviewing Responsibility: DCA Cyr | Due: 09/01/Annually |
| Amends or rescinds: N/A | |
| References: | |

Background

The operation of unmanned aerial systems, including drones and model aircraft is regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and relevant laws. The University of Massachusetts Amherst seeks to permit drones, otherwise known as small Unmanned Aerial Systems (sUAS) on or over lands of the University of Massachusetts Amherst campus in compliance with all applicable federal, state, local laws and University policy to insure individual privacy rights while reducing the risk to campus safety, privacy and security.

Definition

Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (sUAS), otherwise known as drones, are defined as any aircraft weighing between .55 lbs. (250 grams) and less than 55 lbs. (25 kg) along with its associated elements, operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft. Where required by law, these aircraft must be registered with the FAA to be in compliance with this policy. Model Aircraft are defined as a sUAS that is flown within visual line of sight of the person operating the aircraft, and is flown for hobby or recreational purposes.

Scope

The scope of this policy applies to, but is not limited to, the operation of drones on or over the lands of University of Massachusetts Amherst property, University controlled property, or for University-affiliated events held elsewhere. The scope of this policy encompasses civil, commercial, hobby or research purposes. This policy does not apply to use by law enforcement within the scope of their duties.

Policy

Any University of Massachusetts student or employee wishing to operate a drone as part of their University employment or as part of a University recognized educational program must either obtain an authorization from the FAA for a Section 333 Exemption, or comply with federal regulations governing pilot certification and registration of sUAS's.

Penalties and Guidelines

On June 28, 2016, the FAA announced new regulations governing pilot training and qualifications, as well as registration requirements for sUAS's. The regulations can be found at 14 CFR Part 107.

Online registration requirement applies to all individual hobbyist owners of drones weighing more

than 0.55 lbs. (250 grams) and less than 55 lbs. (25 kg), including associated elements such as on-board cameras. Registration must be completed prior to filing an Operations Plan with the University Police Department and approved by the Chief of Police or his/her designee. Contact information for the Chief's Office is (413) 545 2125. Links to this policy and additional contact information can be found on the UMPD website at <http://www.umass.edu/umpd/>

All drone owners and operators are personally responsible for compliance with FAA, federal, state, local and University policies. The FAA may assess civil and criminal penalties to include fines of up to \$250,000 and/or imprisonment for up to three years.

1. Drones may not be operated in any way that would create a public safety hazard, an undue hazard to persons or property or to privacy, or in such a way that unduly or negatively effects the environment of those on campus.
2. Operators must be under the control of the aircraft at all times, remain within the line of sight of the aircraft, and flown only during daylight hours.
3. Registration of drones can be found at registermyuas.faa.gov. Operators must have proof of FAA registration in their possession during flight operations.
4. All drones must have their unique FAA registration number noted somewhere on the aircraft.
5. Drones may not be operated directly above any public, open-air events including all sporting events. See Football Gameday 101 - Tailgating Rules and Regulations at <http://www.umassathletics.com/sports/2016/7/1/sports-m-footbl-gameday-101-html.aspx>
6. Efforts should be made to limit use of drones over public ways at all times, with special care so as to not distract the attention of a vehicle occupants.
7. Drones cannot be flown within 30 feet of any building or other structure.
8. For purposes of protecting individual privacy rights, drone operators shall not intentionally photograph or otherwise video-record any individual or group inside a building or motor vehicle. This also holds true for recording inside any unoccupied building or vehicle.
9. Per FAA regulations, drones may not exceed a flying height of 400 feet or be operated within a 5 mile radius of any airport without prior notice to the airport operator and air traffic controller.
10. Drones with metal blade propellers are prohibited.
11. Drones will not be operated while under the influence of any level of alcohol or drugs.
12. Drones will not be operated during inclement weather that would jeopardize operational control.
13. At the direction of any University Police Officer or Environmental Health and Safety Officer (F1) a flight can be terminated at any time.
14. All drone operators/owners shall submit a written Operations Plan to the University of Massachusetts Chief of Police or his/her designee at least 14 days prior to the planned flight.
15. The applicant will be notified and advised of any additional restrictions that will be required. All approved Operations will be provided with a copy of this policy.
16. The Chief of Police or his/her designee reserves the right to rescind any previously approved use of a drone at any time.
17. It is the responsibility of both the owner and/or operator of each drone to assure these guidelines are taken into account and addressed at all times.
18. There may be liability and property insurance considerations for bodily injury, personal

injury, and property damage depending upon the size, weight, and flying altitude of the drone; privacy violations or other unlawful use.

19. More information on responsible flight can be found at knowbeforeyoufly.org

Operations Plan

The written Operations Plan must be received 14 days prior to the planned flight and will include the following information.

- a. The drone to be used including the make, model and weight
- b. The total date and time of the flight to include start and end times and backup plan if weather conditions prohibits flight
- c. Flight path with an accompanying campus map
- d. Purpose of the flight – civil, commercial, research, hobby, etc.
- e. The identity of the owner and operator with contact information for both, including cellphone numbers
- f. A copy of the proof of FAA registration
- g. If the intent of the flight is to collect photography or video recording this must be stated in the Operations Plan

The Plan can be emailed to ipc@umass.edu or sent via US Mail to the University of Massachusetts Amherst Police Department, Chief's Office, 585 East Pleasant Street, Amherst, MA 01003-9600

Amended: June 21, 2019; November 30, 2020

Since implementation of this policy a frequent user of drones on campus has been UMassAir, an interdisciplinary team of faculty, scientist, students and professionals conducting scientific research and educational activities related to unmanned aerial systems (UAS). They fly drones on campus on a weekly basis. Each member of the organization is confirmed to be a certified and licensed pilot and their drones are FAA registered. These licenses and registrations are on file with the Deputy Chief of Administration.

Because of the frequency of flights members of UMassAir have been provided with a blanket approval for flights on campus. It is not required that they file a flight plan for every flight. It is agreed that pilots associated with UMassAir will wear yellow safety vest to identify themselves as members of the organization, in this way officers will be aware they are pre-approved.

For issues or concerns with UMassAir operations, contact Professor Charlie Schweik, Department of Environmental Conservation & School of Public Policy.

UMassAir website:

<https://www.umasstransportationcenter.org/umtc/UMassAir1.asp>

Amherst Fire Department has also been provided a blanket approval for their drone use. For issues or concerns with Amherst Fire Department operations, contact Asst. Chief Lindsay Stromgren.