



Drones Policy

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General Description

Purpose:

To define the requirements for the use of Drones, also known as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and/or Unmanned Aerial Systems (UASs), in compliance with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and all applicable federal, state and local laws.

Scope:

Drones, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), and Unmanned Aerial Systems (UASs), are defined as any contrivance invented, used or designed to navigate or fly in the air that is operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft. The scope of this policy applies to, but may not be limited to, the operation on of Drones, UAVs, or UASs on Trinity University property, University controlled property, or for University-affiliated events held elsewhere. All Drones, UAVs and UASs must be registered and approved through the Director of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) at least 15 business days prior to flight.

Exceptions:

None.

Policy Content

Summary

To ensure the safety and privacy rights of individuals and ensure the legal operation of Drones, UAVs and UASs on the Trinity University campus, on University controlled property, or at University-affiliated events held elsewhere, the use of all Drones, UAVs and UASs must be approved by the Director of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) at least 15 business days prior to flight. All Trinity University community members are personally responsible for compliance with FAA regulations, state and federal laws, and University policies. Due to the propensity for faculty and staff use of drones to be considered commercial use, all faculty and staff that request to fly a drone in the course of business will be responsible for obtaining a Special Airworthiness Certificate and the Pilot Certification.

Registration and Exemption Requirements

The FAA is responsible for regulating and overseeing the use of all aircraft, to include Drones, UAVs, and UASs, hereinafter collectively referred to as Drones, and recognizes that Drones may be used for recreational/hobby purposes or for commercial use.

The FAA allows recreational use of Drones within statutory parameters. Effective Dec. 21, 2015, the FAA announced new regulations requiring all owners of Drones to register their Drone on the FAA website. This online registration requirement applies to all individual hobbyist owners of small Drones weighing more than 0.55 pounds and less than 55 pounds (for drones over 55 pounds [register here](#)), including payloads such as on-board cameras. The cost of registration is \$5.

The FAA considers non-recreational use of Drones commercial use.

In May, 2016, the FAA provided an **Educational Use Clarification** for institutional use of Drones. The clarification states that:

- Operators of Drones at educational institutions will be considered hobbyists if they are not compensated directly or indirectly for operating the aircraft. Faculty members are generally considered compensated, except for the example below.
- Faculty teaching aviation-related courses at accredited institutions may assist students operating model aircraft for the course if the student maintains operational control of the aircraft.

Faculty member Drone operations outside of the exception above are considered commercial use. As a result, all faculty and staff use of Drones in the course of business must adhere to the following, in addition to the registration of the Drone:

The new Small UAS Rule effective August 29, 2016 requires:

- A Special Airworthiness Certificate for any civil (commercial) use of a Drone.
- Remote Pilot Certification for any commercial or governmental operation of a Drone.
- Commercial Drone operators must be at least 16 years old.

Penalties:

Failure to register an aircraft may result in regulatory and criminal sanctions. The FAA may assess civil penalties up to \$27,500. Criminal penalties include fines of up to \$250,000 and/or imprisonment for up to three years.

Other Requirements for Approved Operation

In addition to the Registration, Exemption, and Certification requirements above, the following must be met for approved operation of a Drone and fall under the following categories.

Private/Hobbyist Use for Educational Purposes:

1. Operators must complete the [Drone Request Form](#) at least 15 days prior to operation of the Drone.
2. Operators must obtain approval from the Director of Environmental Health and Safety.
3. Operators must comply with all applicable federal (FAA), state, and local laws.
4. May not be operated in any way that would create a public safety hazard, an undue hazard to property or privacy, or in such a way that unduly affects the environment of those working or living within a building, to those entering or exiting a building, or those moving about the property.
5. Must be under the control of the operator at all times, remain within the line of sight of the operator, and flown only during daylight hours. Operators may operate only one Drone at a time.
6. May not be operated above public open-air events (over crowds or sporting events), inside public venues, or above thoroughfares. Drones operated for commercial purposes may not be operated over any persons not directly participating in the operation, under a covered structure, or inside a covered stationary vehicle.
7. Faculty and staff may only operate a drone as part of their employment or as part of an academic/research program.
8. Students may only operate a drone if it is part of their coursework and only if supervised by a Trinity faculty member. Students must follow all applicable FAA regulations and Trinity's Drone Policy.
9. Per FAA regulations, Drones should not exceed 7 pounds, may not exceed a flying height of 400 feet or be operated within a certain radius of any airport designated by the FAA without prior notice to the airport operator and air traffic controller by the owner. In San Antonio, Drones may not be operated within a 5 mile radius of the San Antonio International Airport without approval of the Airport Operator and the Air Traffic Controller.
10. Drones may not be operated in or around residential housing.

*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; the purpose for its use; if it will be assembled, housed, or transported by Trinity University; privacy violations or other unlawful use.

*The privacy rights of others must be given priority.

Third Party Contractor:

1. The Office of Risk Management and Insurance must be contacted (riskmanagement@trinity.edu or 210-999-8919) if the operation will be under the control of a

contractor or another third-party to ensure compliance with University contract, insurance, and other University policies. Contractors must complete and return the [Contractor-Third Party Release and Indemnification](#) for the Operation of a Drone in addition to the Drone Request Form.

Performance Evaluation

Consequences of Policy Violation:

Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action up to, and including termination.

Attachments

[Contractor/Third Party Release and Indemnification](#)

Related Documents

Related Content:

[FAA Website](#)

[Registration of Drones Over 55 Pounds](#)

Revision Management

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Vice President Approval:

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