

TYPES NOT MAPPED YET December 22, 2014 | TTR not mapped yet | Sean McGowan, Tyler Black

# ‘Tis the season: FAA launches safety campaign for unmanned aircraft

In a December 22, 2014, teleconference, representatives from three private unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) organizations, along with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Administrator Michael Huerta, announced a new small UAS safety campaign, “[Know Before You Fly](#).” The campaign was founded by the [Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International](#), the Academy of Model Aeronautics, and the [Small UAV Coalition](#), in partnership with the FAA.

“Know Before You Fly” targets new small UAS users, many of whom will receive small UAS as gifts this holiday season. The campaign’s goal is to educate prospective users (e.g.: children, teens, their parents, and adults both young and old) about the most important safety considerations when operating small UAS in American skies.

Because many new UAS operators may be uneducated about aviation safety rules, the campaign is designed to inform the public about the right and wrong uses (the “dos and don’ts”) of UAS with the hope of voluntary compliance. FAA Administrator Huerta detailed five of the campaign’s most important safety points:

- Fly small UAS at or below 400 feet above ground level
- Keep the aircraft in sight of the operator at all times
- Do not fly near people, aircraft, or vulnerable property
- Do not fly within five miles of an airport unless prior approval from the airport has been granted
- Respect people’s privacy – do not take photos or video of people with small UAS when those people would not expect it

The [“Know Before You Fly” website](#) lists several additional safety guidelines:

- Follow community-based safety guidelines developed by private UAS organizations
- Do not fly in bad weather (high winds, poor visibility, etc.)
- Do not fly while under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Take steps to ensure the operating environment is safe and the operator is knowledgeable
- Do not fly close to “sensitive” infrastructure like power stations, water treatment facilities, correctional facilities, heavily traveled roadways, government facilities, etc.

Mr. Huerta reminded the public that small UAS operation is for recreational, not commercial, use. Businesses hoping to operate UAS must first undergo an authorization process pursuant to Section 333 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012. Mr. Huerta also stressed the importance of joining recreational UAS flying clubs to enhance safety awareness and voluntary compliance.

Finally, the “Know Before You Fly” representatives fielded questions from various media outlets about the safety campaign and the overall UAS regulatory environment. The campaign founders hope that the example and presence of more safety-conscious operators will deter rogue UAS operators from dangerous flying practices. Unless the public knows what constitutes unsafe flying, dangerous conduct may go unreported. Mr. Huerta would



not say when the agency's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking would be announced, but maintained that it would be released as quickly as possible.

So, in these last few days before Santa receives FAA clearance for flight and takes to the skies, take a moment to review the "Know Before You Fly" website and this [short video](#) on the UAS dos and don'ts. And if someone you know gives or receives a small UAS this holiday season, be sure to direct them to the "Know Before You Fly" website. It will be time well spent.

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