



**SMALL UAV
COALITION**
*A Partnership for
Safety & Innovation*

NEWS RELEASE
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SMALL UAV COALITION APPLAUDS THE FAA FOR IMPROVING ITS COMMERCIAL DRONE APPROVAL PROCESS

*The Coalition welcomes both the FAA's reforms to the section 333 process, but
urges it to undertake additional improvements*

WASHINGTON, DC – March 31, 2014 – The Small UAV Coalition applauds the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for taking important steps to improve the section 333 process, and especially for implementing some measures the Coalition recommended in a [letter](#) to the FAA earlier this month. Until the FAA issues its final rule for small unmanned aircraft systems, expected in 2016 or 2017, the section 333 process is the only way by which small UAVs may be legally authorized to operate commercially.

First, the Small UAV Coalition joins other industry stakeholders in praising the FAA for its decision to streamline the process by which approved operators receive Certificates of Authorization (COAs). Approved petitioners under section 333 will now receive a “blanket COA” to operate anywhere in the United States under 200 feet, although they still must file a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM), may only operate during the day, and must keep certain distances from airports. The Coalition has long urged the FAA to dispense with the COA requirement for operations in Class G airspace.

The Small UAV Coalition also commends the FAA for taking additional important steps that it did not announce. In the petitions it approved last week, the FAA is no longer requiring a medical certificate, nor is it requiring a private pilot certificate (the FAA will accept a recreational or sport pilot certificate). The FAA has taken the “me, too” reform the Coalition has long suggested, meaning that it will streamline approval of petitions that are in all material respects similar to those that have been previously granted.

Michael Drobac, executive director of the Small UAV Coalition, championed the FAA's reforms by calling the changes “a good start” while pledging that the Coalition will continue to promote additional reforms that will reduce bureaucratic hurdles and aid the industry's growth while maintaining an equivalent level of safety.

“The steps taken recently to reform the exemption process for small UAVs are a welcome development, and we recognize that the FAA has taken big steps toward greater efficiency and transparency,” said Drobac. “However, more must be done. Over 600 petitions remain pending and the delays and restrictions are going to have a negative impact on the United States economy. More importantly, if responsible operators are prohibited from operating commercially here, the U.S. leadership in technology and innovation in this space will be in jeopardy. Small UAV operators around the country are interested in working with the FAA to help regulators understand the potential of the industry and the importance of implementing smart, workable reforms to the current permitting process.”

The Small UAV Coalition is the nation's leading advocate for the commercial, civil, recreational, and philanthropic use of small unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

For more information on the Small UAV Coalition, please visit www.smalluavcoalition.org, contact press@smalluavcoalition.org, or follow @smallUAVs on Twitter.

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