



Revised – October 15, 2015

## Requirements for the Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) When Filming on State Property

In order for a production to be considered for a permit involving a UAS, the following documentation is required:

1. Proof that the production is using a UAS operator who has received an FAA exemption.

*We had previously listed aerial production companies allowed to operate UAS for filming in the United States, but there are now so many companies receiving exemptions to operate drones, it's difficult to keep the list current. So instead of the list, we are now recommending that you confirm that the drone operator you want to use has the appropriate FAA exemption by clicking on the following link:*

*[https://www.faa.gov/uas/legislative\\_programs/section\\_333/333\\_authorizations](https://www.faa.gov/uas/legislative_programs/section_333/333_authorizations)*

*Use this link to search for a company by name or scroll down through the names of companies listed on the home page. Verify that the company has been granted an exemption to operate drones for **motion picture, television and new media filming** as well as **still photography**. (Some may also be approved for "**aerial cinematography**".) Be sure to click on (and read) the PDF, so you can **make sure their exemption is for commercial filming**, as a number of these companies have been approved to fly drones for other purposes, such as aerial surveillance of pipelines, crops, real estate, etc. Those companies would therefore not be approved for filming.*

2. A copy of the operator's **Certificate of Authorization** (COA).

NOTE: UAS operators had originally been required to apply for and receive a COA for each particular block of airspace (location), but the FAA has recently streamlined their process, and now exempted operators are being granted **blanket COAs** for flights at or below 200 feet, as long as they're not flying in the vicinity of airports or in other restricted airspace.

3. A copy of the operator's written Plan of Activities (POA).
4. Proof of insurance coverage as follows:

Evidence of coverage for the use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) must be provided by the **UAS operators** (only those granted FAA exemptions).

Each UAS operating entity must submit proof of **Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)** insurance with a limit of at least **\$2,000,000**. The certificate of insurance must include a **separate** policy endorsement showing proof of **UAS** coverage. A **second** (separate) endorsement must be submitted naming the State of California, its officers, agents and employees as Additional Insured. NOTE: Each of these **two** endorsements require a **separate** attachment to the certificate of insurance.

## IMPORTANT NOTES

- **Please be advised that at this time, CALTRANS is not issuing any encroachment permits for UAS filming (on Caltrans properties) until an official Caltrans policy is drafted and approved.**
- State Parks is evaluating requests for the use of UAS on a case-by-case basis.
- Other state agency partners may have their own requirements regarding the use of UAS on their properties. Please check with all relevant agencies or with the CFC before submitting your permit application.
- UAS operators must have all pertinent documentation **on set with them at all times**. This includes their Certificate of Authorization (COA), Plan of Activities (POA), pilot certificate and third-class medical certificate.
- The use of a UAS is permitted only when all qualifications have been met, all necessary approvals have been obtained, and use of a UAS is noted on the production's permit. If a production is found to be operating a UAS without the proper permit, an FAA Administrator, the assigned Fire Safety Officer or law enforcement official may immediately suspend the UAS activities and/or the production may be subject to a fine.
- The use of a UAS as a **PROP** (that is being flown) is subject to the same regulations as those used for filming.
- The FAA does not regulate the use of UAS indoors (their jurisdiction covers U.S. airspace, not under the roofs of private structures). Be advised that approval for the use of UAS in a stage or building may fall under the authority of other jurisdictions. Also note that when interior filming is involved, the CFC recommends that UAS be flown by FAA-exempted operators.

- The City of Los Angeles is currently working on a local ordinance regarding the use of UAS, and the LAPD is developing their own municipal code pertaining to the use of UAS.
- Please be aware that new regulations for the commercial use of small UAS have been introduced by the FAA. These laws, if passed, would supersede current guidelines. The FAA anticipates that it will be 12-18 months before any new rules would take effect. In the meantime, an overview the proposed new rules can be found at: [http://www.faa.gov/regulations\\_policies/rulemaking/media/021515\\_sUAS\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/rulemaking/media/021515_sUAS_Summary.pdf). The public may submit comments on the proposed regulations until April 24, 2015.

**The following are 15 of the most pertinent TERMS & CONDITIONS (to those on-set) required of (FAA-exempted) UAS operators.**

1. The UAS must weigh less than 55 pounds, including energy source(s) and equipment.
2. The UAS may not be flown at a speed exceeding a ground speed of 50 knots.
3. Flights must be operated at an altitude of no more than 400 feet above ground level (AGL).
4. The UAS must be operated within visual line of sight (VLOS) of the pilot in command at all times.
5. All operations must utilize a visual observer (VO).
6. The pilot must possess at least a private pilot certificate and at least a current third-class medical certificate.
7. The UAS may not be operated directly over any person, except authorized and consenting production personnel, below an altitude that is hazardous to persons or property on the surface in the event of a UAS failure or emergency.
8. Regarding the distance from participating persons, the operator's manual has safety mitigations for authorized and consenting production personnel. At all times, those persons must be essential to the closed-set film operations. Because these procedures are specific to participating persons, no further Flight Standards District Office or Aviation Safety Inspector approval is necessary for reductions to the distances specified in the petitioner's manuals.

9. Regarding distance from non-participating persons, the operator must ensure that no persons are allowed within 500 feet of the area except those consenting to be involved and necessary for the filming production. This provision may be reduced to no less than 200 feet if it would not adversely affect safety and the FAA Administrator has approved it. For example, an equivalent level of safety may be determined by an aviation safety inspector's evaluation of the filming production area to note terrain features, obstructions, buildings, safety barriers, etc. Such barriers may protect non-participating persons (observers, the public, news media, etc.) from debris in the event of an accident.
10. The operator must obtain an Air Traffic Organization issued Certificate of Waiver or Authorization prior to conducting any operations under this grant of exemption. This Certificate of Authorization will also require the operator to request a *Notice to Airman* not more than 72 hours in advance, but not less than 48 hours prior to the operation.
11. At least three days before scheduled filming, the operator of the UAS affected by this exemption must submit a written *Plan of Activities* to the local Flight Standards District Office with jurisdiction over the area of proposed filming. The 3-day notification may be waived with the concurrence of the Flight Standards District Office. The plan of activities must include at least the following:
  - Dates and times for all flights
  - Name and phone number of the operator for the UAS filming production conducted under this grant of exemption
  - Name and phone number of the person responsible for the on-scene operation of the UAS
  - Make, model and serial or N-number of UAS to be used
  - Name and certificate number of UAS pilots involved in the filming production event
  - A statement that the operator has obtained permission from property owners and/or local officials to conduct the filming production event; the list of those who gave permission must be made available to the inspector upon request.
  - Signature of exemption-holder or representative
  - A description of the flight activity, including maps or diagrams of any area, city, town, county and/or state over which filming will be conducted and the altitudes essential to accomplish the operation.
12. UAS operations may not be conducted at night.
13. The UAS cannot be operated by the pilot from any moving device or vehicle.
14. The UAS may not operate in Class B, C, or D airspace without written approval from the FAA. The UAS may not operate within 5 nautical miles of

the geographic center of a non-towered airport as denoted on a current FAA-published aeronautical chart unless a letter of agreement with that airport's management is obtained, and the operation is conducted in accordance with a *Notice to Airman* as required by the operator's Certificate of Authorization. The letter of agreement with the airport management must be made available to the Administrator upon request.

15. The documents required under 14 CFR § 91.9 and § 91.203 must be available to the pilot at the ground control station of the UAS any time the aircraft is operating. These documents must be made available to the Administrator or any law enforcement official upon request.

For a full list of Terms & Conditions and to view the FAA's exemption grants, go to: [http://www.faa.gov/uas/legislative\\_programs/section\\_333/](http://www.faa.gov/uas/legislative_programs/section_333/)

For more information on the FAA and UAS, go to:  
<http://www.faa.gov/about/initiatives/uas/>  
<http://www.faa.gov/uas>