

NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N 8900.296

National Policy

Effective Date:
5/4/15

Cancellation Date:
5/4/16

SUBJ: Inspection and Maintenance Program Requirements for Civil Unmanned Aircraft Systems Operating Under 55 Pounds

1. Purpose of This Notice. This notice provides guidance regarding the exclusion of the Continuing Airworthiness Program requirement contained in Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Order 8900.1, Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS), Volume 16, Chapter 3, Section 1, Continuing Airworthiness Public and Civil Aircraft Operations. This notice will address the inspection and maintenance program requirements of civil small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (sUAS) with an operating weight of less than 55 pounds under a Certificate of Authorization (COA). The COA facilitates the operation of the sUAS in the National Airspace System (NAS). This notice supports a deviation issued by the Aircraft Certification Service (AIR), Memorandum Number AIR100015-110-DM44, regarding the airworthiness certification of UAS and optionally piloted aircraft. This notice also supports the inspection and maintenance program requirements contained in Notice N 8900.291, Inspection and Maintenance Program Requirements for Airworthiness Certification of Unmanned Aircraft Systems Operating Under 55 Pounds, dated March 3, 2015, concerning sUAS with an operating weight of less than 55 pounds.

2. Audience. The primary audience for this notice is Flight Standards Service (AFS) aviation safety inspectors (ASI), their managers and supervisors, and other operational and administrative employees. The secondary audience includes AFS branches, divisions, and field offices in the regions and in headquarters (HQ).

3. Where You Can Find This Notice. You can find this notice on the MyFAA employee Web site at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices. Inspectors can access this notice through the Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS) at <http://fsims.avs.faa.gov>. Operators can find this notice on the FAA's Web site at <http://fsims.faa.gov>. This notice is available to the public at http://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices.

4. Background. Because UAS are inherently different from manned aircraft, the introduction of UAS into the nation's airspace is challenging for both the FAA and the aviation community. Safe integration of UAS involves gaining a better understanding of operational issues, such as training requirements, operational specifications, airworthiness requirements, and technology considerations. Unmanned aircraft (UA) are now flying in the NAS under very controlled

conditions. All UAS must be in an Airworthy condition to conduct flight operations in the NAS. An “Airworthy condition for UAS subject to a COA” means that the applicant must show that the UAS are maintained in a condition that will ensure that only Airworthy UAS are operated in the NAS, and in compliance with the applicable requirements of Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 91. The FAA recognizes that some of the requirements can differ from those for manned aircraft, and appropriate changes can be defined.

5. Action. AFS personnel who participate in the review of COA applicants’ UAS maintenance and inspection requirements must adhere to the guidance in Order 8900.1, Volume 8, Chapter 5, Section 13, Support for Issuing an Airworthiness Certificate for Unmanned Aircraft Systems.

6. Deviation to This Notice. It will be necessary to adhere to this notice until Order 8900.1, Volume 16, Chapter 3, Section 1 is revised to reflect the information contained herein. Any deviation to the requirements will require an FAA notice approved by the UAS Integration Office (AFS-80).

7. Distribution. This notice will be distributed throughout AFS, including regional and local Flight Standards District Field Offices.

8. Suggestions or Comments. AFS-80 welcomes and will consider all comments regarding this notice. Please use FAA Form 1320-19, Directive Feedback Information, at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/forms/ and send your feedback to the attention of Joe Morra, Manager, AFS-84, at Joseph.Morra@faa.gov.

9. Disposition. We will incorporate the information in this notice into Order 8900.1 before this notice expires. Direct any questions or comments to AFS-80 at 202-267-6521.

ORIGINAL SIGNED by

/s/ John Barbagallo
Deputy Director, Flight Standards Service