



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Memorandum

Subject: **INFORMATION:** Issuing Experimental Certificates to
Unmanned Aircraft Systems

Date: JUN 17 2005

From: Manager, Production and Airworthiness
Division, AIR-200

Reply to
Attn. of:

To: All Manufacturing Inspection Offices, Manufacturing
Inspection District/Satellite Office, Certificate Management
Offices/Units

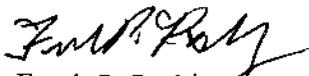
The purpose of this memorandum is to inform you that operators of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, referred to hereafter as Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), are authorized to apply for a Special Airworthiness Certificate in the Experimental category and operate in the National Airspace System (NAS). This activity is one of the strategies identified in the Administrator's Flight Plan for, "implementing technologies and systems that will help pilots operate aircraft as safely as possible."

AIR-200 has been tasked to be the focal point initially, for all applicants applying for experimental certificates for UAS. The reason behind this decision is to gain experience with applicants, which will allow us to develop policy and procedures for Aviation Safety Inspectors (ASI), and eventually for designees, to follow. We are coordinating experimental certificate program letters with the Flight Standards Service (AFS) and the Air Traffic Organization (ATO) because of the unique aspects and precedent setting implications of an unmanned aircraft flying in the NAS.

Therefore, AIR-200 will be working directly with the appropriate Manufacturing Inspection Offices, Manufacturing Inspection District/Satellite Office, or Certificate Management Offices/Units during the issuance of the first 3-4 experimental certificates. It is AIR-200's intention that the experimental certificate will be issued by the local field office with our involvement. After we gain experience with the first applicants, and policy and procedures have been clarified from lessons learned, the field offices will take the lead in this process and only require coordination with AIR-200.

Because of the unique technologies involved, and the need to involve our colleagues in AFS and ATO, AIR-200 has asked applicants to provide a draft program letter for review prior to submitting an application for a Special Airworthiness Certificate. Program letters or applications received by field offices should be referred to AIR-200.

Thank you for your cooperation and your support in this exciting new regulatory challenge in civil aviation. If there are any questions, please contact John Thaxton, at (202) 267-7995.


Frank P. Paskiewicz