

Policy on Uncrewed Aircraft Systems

Policy Title	Policy on Uncrewed Aircraft Systems
Policy #	02.102.2
Policy Owner	Director of Emergency Management
Contact Information	Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Director of Emergency Management at (401) 874-4974
Approved By	Administrative Policy Committee
Effective Date	April 12, 2022
Next Review Date	No later than June 30, 2027
Who Needs to Know About this Policy	All faculty, staff, and students of the University, as well as any Affiliates, contractors, or visitors who intend to use Uncrewed Aircraft Systems on or over University Property.
Definitions	<p>Model Aircraft. An Uncrewed Aircraft that is (a) capable of sustained flight in the atmosphere, (b) flown within visual line of sight of the person operating the Aircraft, and (c) flown for hobby or recreational purposes.</p> <p>Operator. The person responsible for the direct control of the Uncrewed Aircraft system; this person may not necessarily be the Remote Pilot in Command.</p> <p>Remote Pilot in Command. The person directly responsible for and is the final authority as to the operation of the Small Uncrewed Aircraft System.</p> <p>Small Uncrewed Aircraft. An Uncrewed Aircraft weighing less than fifty-five (55) pounds on takeoff including everything that is on board or otherwise attached to the aircraft.</p> <p>Small Uncrewed Aircraft System (Small UAS). A small Uncrewed Aircraft and its associated elements (including communication links and the components that control the Small Uncrewed Aircraft) that are required for safe and efficient operation.</p> <p>University-Related Activity. Any activity undertaken by University of Rhode Island faculty, staff, students, Affiliates, recognized student groups, or contractors or agents of the University that relate to any academic, research, public service, administrative, or other University function performed under the auspices of the University of Rhode Island.</p> <p>Uncrewed Aircraft. An aircraft operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft. The FAA term for an Uncrewed Aircraft is “Uncrewed Aircraft”; the terms are interchangeable for the purposes of this policy.</p>

	<p>University Affiliate. Any individual who is not a faculty member, staff, or student who otherwise has a formal relationship with the University, including but not limited to visiting scholars, visiting students, research fellows, professional program participants, club sports coaches, and volunteers as well as employees and associates of the URI Foundation and Alumni Engagement, URI Research Foundation, and members of the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees. Vendors and contractors are not considered University Affiliates, except for those with an ongoing presence on the University campus as regular operations support staff.</p> <p>University Property. Property belonging to the State of Rhode Island and held in trust by the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees; property held by the University of Rhode Island or any of its component units in its own name; and property owned by third parties but assigned to, occupied by, or managed by the University or any of its component units. For the purposes of this policy, University Property includes the airspace above such property.</p>
<p>Statutes, Regulations, and Policies Governing or Necessitating This Policy</p>	<p>14 CFR Part 107 (Operation and Certification of Small Uncrewed Aircraft Systems FAA Guidance Issued 5/4/16, Educational Use of Uncrewed Aircraft Systems RIGL §§ 1-1–4 (Uniform Aeronautical Regulatory Act) Rhode Island Airport Corporation “Aeronautics Regulations”</p>
<p>Reason for Policy/Purpose</p>	<p>To ensure that every use of a Small Uncrewed Aircraft Systems is appropriately permitted by the University and in conformance with the terms of this policy.</p>
<p>Forms Related to this Policy</p>	<p><i>URI Small Uncrewed Aircraft Systems Flight Permit Application</i> <i>Small UAS Flight Notification</i></p>

Policy Statement

Permitted Uses

The University of Rhode Island authorizes the use of Small Uncrewed Aircraft Systems (“Small UAS”) on University Property and in conjunction with University-Related Activities via a permitting process on an individual, project-driven basis. Annual permits may be issued to qualified University-sponsored researchers and public safety users. The use of other categories of Uncrewed Aircraft systems are prohibited, unless otherwise provided by this policy.

Through a permitting process, the University may authorize individuals to operate Small Uncrewed Aircraft Systems over University Property or in connection with University-Related Activities when authorized by the FAA for the type of aircraft and purpose of flight(s) being conducted. Small UAS operations under this policy will be permitted under the following types of FAA authorization:

- Public aircraft operations under a Public Certificate of Authorization
- Civil aircraft operations Under 14 CFR Part 107
- Civil aircraft operation under a Section 333 Exemption and Commercial Certificate of Authorization
- Civil aircraft – Model Aircraft operations

NOTE: Flights made for business, commercial, or professional purposes do not qualify as a Model Aircraft operations and must therefore meet the requirements for civil or public aircraft operations as described above. Additionally, University employees who fly Small UASs as part of their job duties or in furtherance of their professional activities do not qualify as Model Aircraft Operators.

All aircraft operated under this policy must have a valid current FAA registration.

Eligible Individuals

Eligible individuals may be provided permits to operate Small UAS over University Property or in connection with University- Related Activities for the following purposes: public safety surveillance, agricultural and environmental monitoring, infrastructure inspection, mapping, education, research and development, promotion, marketing, student enrichment, and recreation. Operators of Small UASs follow all applicable limitations and conditions placed on flight by the FAA.

The following categories of individuals may be authorized by the University to operate a Small Uncrewed Aircraft System over University Property or in connection with University-Related Activities:

- Individual members of the URI Community (faculty, researchers, staff, students).
- Vendors hired by the University to perform a service that requires the operation of a Small Uncrewed Aircraft System.
- Outside parties (e.g., news organizations) wishing to operate an Uncrewed Aircraft system over University Property for a purpose that the University, at its sole discretion, has approved via the permitting process.
- Government entities operating under their own statutory authority.

Flights by University Vendors

Small UAS operations may be conducted by vendors hired by the University. Vendors operating any aircraft on behalf of the University must acquire all necessary state and federal approvals such as a Section 333 Exemption or a Part 107 Remote Pilot Certificate as well as any waivers required under 14 CFR §107.205. Vendors must observe all applicable state and federal regulations regarding Small UAS operation as well as the requirements of this policy. In addition, a University sponsor (i.e., a named individual employed by the University) must be identified who supports the proposed vendor operations, acts as a liaison to the vendor, and takes responsibility for assisting with the application process and coordinating the vendor's operations.

Limitations

The University of Rhode Island permits only the use of Small UAS on its campuses and/or in its activities. The operation of other categories of Uncrewed Aircraft systems are prohibited.

Model Aircraft may not be flown for any purpose over University Property except in the following circumstances and with the prior approval of the University:

- Operations by individual University students and employees in film, photography, or aviation-related classes at URI; these individuals may apply to the University for an exception to operate a Model Aircraft in connection with these classes.
- Operations by University students and employee members of an officially recognized University student group or club; these individuals may apply to the University for an exception to operate a Model Aircraft in connection with the group's authorized activities.

All students and employees in the above categories must follow the FAA's "Interpretation of the Special Rule for Model Aircraft," which explains what parts of the Federal Aviation Regulations apply to these flights.

Flight Permitting

The Small UAS Remote Pilot in Command must obtain a URI Small UAS Flight Permit for all Small UAS operations over University Property or in connection with any University-Related Activity. When necessary, this application must include the identified University sponsor.

The URI Small UAS Flight Permit, which shall be issued by the Emergency Management Director, is specific to the aircraft, location, date(s)/time(s), Remote Pilot in Command, and the flight purpose(s) indicated in the application. Vendors and third-party Small UAS Operators may only request flight permits on a per-flight basis. Members of the University community may request a flight permit covering multiple flights over a period of up to one (1) year for the same Remote Pilot in Command, aircraft, location, and purpose. Additionally, university-sponsored researchers and public safety personnel may apply for a blanket annual permit.

The Department of Public Safety must be notified in advance of each individual flight operation conducted under the permit. NOTE: For other than blanket annual permits, Small UAS flight operations conducted for a different purpose or at a location other than that specified in the original permit will require either a new permit application or an amendment to the existing permit.

In instances where the Small UAS Operator is different from the Small UAS Remote Pilot in Command, the Remote Pilot in Command must at all times supervise the Operator as required by FAA regulations. The Remote Pilot in Command will be responsible for any Operators under their supervision, and all Operators are required to comply with this policy.

Enforcement

Depending on their association with the University, individuals violating this policy may be subject to sanctions/remedies that can include, but are not limited to, disciplinary action (for students, faculty, and staff of the University), civil action, and/or prohibition from conducting future Small UAS operations on University Property or in conjunction with University-Related Activities.

Exceptions

Certain exceptions are noted above under Limitations.

In cases of a public safety emergency, a Small UAS may be operated by authorized representatives of the University's Public Safety Department (in accordance with all applicable FAA compliant Conditions of Use) without prior permission.

Policy Review and Revisions

(Versions earlier than the first policy number may be paper only)

Policy #	Effective Date	Reason for Change	Changes to Policy
02.102.1	July 20, 2018	n/a	n/a
02.102.3	April 12, 2022	Scheduled Review	Language clarification; Title change