

Low Flying Aircraft Complaints:

If you witness a drone or aircraft operation that you believe is currently presenting a danger to you or other persons, or is being used to commit a crime, please report it immediately to your local law enforcement first responders. They can protect public safety and can help discourage dangerous or illegal activities.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is the government agency responsible for aviation safety. We welcome information from citizens that will enable us to take corrective measures against individuals violating Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) also known as the Federal Aviation Regulations. It is FAA policy to investigate citizen complaints of low-flying aircraft operated in violation of the regulations that might endanger persons or property.

We will need facts before we conduct an investigation. There are publicly accessible smart phone software applications (<https://flightaware.com/>, <https://www.flightradar24.com/>, and others) that may be able to identify aircraft that are overflying you currently. Below are examples of the information we will need to complete an investigation.

- **Photographs** – Photographs or video is some of the best evidence we can obtain to start our investigation. Even cell phone recordings will assist greatly.
- **Identification** – Can you identify the aircraft? Did you record the registration number which appears on the side of the aircraft or tail? On U.S. registered civilian aircraft, that number will be preceded with capital ‘N’). Was it a helicopter or a fixed-wing aircraft? What was the color? Did it have propellers or was it a jet aircraft? Was it a high or low-wing aircraft? Did it appear military or civilian?
- **Time and Place** – Exactly when did the incident occur? Where did this happen? What direction was the aircraft flying?
- **Altitude** – How high (elevation above the surrounding terrain) was the aircraft flying? On what do you base your estimate? Was the aircraft level with or below the elevation of a prominent object such as a tower or building? Did you obtain photographs? Are there witnesses who can confirm your estimate – do you have their names, addresses and telephone numbers?
- **Supporting Evidence** – Do you know any other witnesses? The more the better. Do you have their names and addresses? Where may they be contacted? Are local police aware of the problem? While they have limited authority in aviation matters, police officers are considered ‘trained observers’ by the courts and their written statements or reports make excellent evidence should our enforcement go to trial.

Altitude Regulations:

Below is an excerpt from 14 CFR §91.119 of the General Operating and Flight Rules regarding minimum safe altitudes. **Except when necessary for takeoff or landing**, no person may operate an aircraft below the following altitudes:

- a. **Anywhere** – An altitude allowing, if a power unit fails, an emergency landing without undue hazard to persons or property on the surface.
- b. **Over congested areas** – Over any congested area of a city, town or settlement, or over any open-air assembly of persons, an altitude of 1,000 feet above the highest obstacle within a horizontal radius of 2,000 feet of the aircraft.
- c. **Over other than congested areas** – An altitude of 500 feet above the surface except over open water or sparsely populated areas. In that case, the aircraft may not be operated closer than 500 feet to any person, vessel, vehicle, or structure.
- d. **Helicopters** – Helicopters may be operated at less than the minimums prescribed in paragraph (b) or (c) of this section if the operation is conducted without hazard to persons or property on the surface. In addition, each person operating a helicopter shall comply with routes or altitudes specifically prescribed for helicopters by the Administrator.

Helicopter operations may be conducted below the minimum altitudes set for fixed-wing aircraft. The reason: they have unique operating characteristics, the most important of which is their ability to execute pinpoint emergency landings during power-out emergencies. Furthermore, the helicopter's increased use by law enforcement and emergency medical service agencies requires added flexibility.

Agricultural Aircraft Operations (crop dusting):

Below is an excerpt from 14 CFR §137.49 regarding Agricultural Aircraft Operations.

During the actual dispensing operation, including approaches, departures, and turnarounds reasonably necessary for the operation, an aircraft may be operated over other than congested areas *below* 500 feet above the surface and closer than 500 feet to persons, vessels, vehicles, and structures, if the operations are conducted without creating a hazard to persons or property on the surface.

For further guidance or to file a complaint with the Reno Flight Standards District Office, please call (775) 858-7700, or email 7-AWP-RNO-FSDO@faa.gov. For aircraft that are operated outside of the listed regulations, please see the Low Flying Aircraft Information Form on the following page. For complaints which are able to identify a specific aircraft by registration (N-number), flight number, drone owner/operator, or drone registration, you may also file an FAA Safety Hotline by visiting: <https://www.faa.gov/contact>.

Other Complaints:

- Noise Complaints – <https://noise.faa.gov/noise/pages/noise.html>
- Drone Information – https://www.faa.gov/uas/contact_us/report_uas_sighting/
- Consumer/Airline service-related issues – <https://www.transportation.gov/airconsumer/file-consumer-complaint>
- Pets/Service animals on passenger flights – www.faa.gov/travelers/fly_pets/cabin_pets
- Security/Screening of passengers, aircraft, cargo, ramp operations, etc. – www.tsa.gov/contact/customer-service
- Laser incidents – www.faa.gov/aircraft/safety/report/laserinfo
- Bird/Wildlife Strikes – <https://wildlife.faa.gov/home>
- Condensation trails – https://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/apl/noise_emissions/contrails/