

NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N 8900.777

National Policy

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6/1/26

Cancellation Date:
6/1/27

SUBJ: Certification and Oversight of Unmanned Aircraft Systems and Advanced Air Mobility Aircraft

1. Purpose of This Notice. This notice informs Flight Standards Service (FS) offices of the change to certification and oversight of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) and Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) aircraft, their associated systems, authorized training tools, and other elements. This includes, but is not limited to, operations under Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) parts 91, 107, 133, 135, 137, 141, and 142, and maintenance under 14 CFR part 145.

2. Audience. The primary audience for this notice is personnel within the Office of Safety Standards (OSS) and the Office of General Aviation Safety Assurance (GASA). The secondary audience includes the Foundational Business offices.

3. Where You Can Find This Notice. You can find this notice on the MyFAA employee website at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices and the Dynamic Regulatory System (DRS) at <https://drs.faa.gov>. Operators and the public can find this notice on the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) website at https://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices and DRS.

4. Background.

a. FS established the Emerging Technologies Division (AFS-700) on September 24, 2023. AFS-700 responsibilities initially included UAS policy, technical evaluation, airworthiness, operational oversight, and safety assurance functions under a unified structure. The division manages certification, certificate management, oversight, surveillance activities, waivers, exemptions, policy development, and rulemaking for UAS, including 14 CFR part 135 air carriers (cargo/package delivery) and 14 CFR part 137 UAS-only certificate holders (CH).

b. On October 31, 2025, the Executive Director of Flight Standards Service (AFX-1) established responsibility for FS's AAM functions in AFS-700. AFS-700 has demonstrated a successful and scalable model for managing emerging aviation technologies through its work on UAS. Unifying all FS AAM functions within one division streamlines subject-matter expertise and workflows, eliminates duplicative processes, and builds on the successful model in place for UAS. Moreover, industry stakeholders benefit from a clear, singular point of contact within FS for AAM. The establishment of AAM work in AFS-700 involved a clear transfer of responsibilities from the Aircraft Evaluation Division (AFS-100), Air Transportation Division

(AFS-200), Aircraft Maintenance Division (AFS-300), Flight Technologies and Procedures Division (AFS-400), General Aviation and Commercial Division (AFS-800), and GASA to AFS-700.

5. Discussion. With the unification of all FS AAM functions within AFS-700, the following changes have taken place:

a. AFS-700 Responsibilities.

- (1) FS established responsibility for all FS AAM functions within AFS-700 in the OSS.
- (2) AAM is commonly considered to include electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) and powered-lift aircraft. AAM also includes other new and novel concepts for both passenger-carrying and cargo operations, and beyond.
- (3) AFS-700 will focus on new and novel product development, to include Simplified Vehicle Operations (SVO). AFS-700 will be responsible for Special Airworthiness Certificate amendments, in coordination with Aircraft Certification Service (AIR), for AAM aircraft that have not been issued a type certification and are working towards type certification. Since the nature of these aircraft working towards type certification will involve operations including research and development, AFS-700 will also be responsible to approve requests for the issuance of certificates of waiver and/or authorization of these aircraft. The Flight Standards District Offices (FSDO) will continue to be responsible for Special Airworthiness Certificate amendments for UAS/AAM aircraft that have not been issued a type certificate and are not working toward type certification.
- (4) Air Carrier, Air Operator, and Air Agency Certificates completely or primarily composed of AAM aircraft or held by AAM manufacturers will be transferred to AFS-700 as discussed below.
- (5) AAM-related certifications will be managed out of AFS-700 until AAM emerging technologies become normalized. AAM-related certificates may include, but are not limited to, 14 CFR parts 133, 135, 137, 141, 142, and 145.
- (6) Certificates that hold a mix of traditional manned aircraft and UAS or AAM aircraft will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine the appropriate Certificate Management Team (CMT).

b. Regulatory Oversight.

(1) Regulatory oversight of certificated UAS and AAM operators is the responsibility of the Safety Assurance Branch (AFS-760). (GASA retains oversight of 14 CFR part 107 operations.) For CHs that operate manned aircraft in addition to UAS/AAM aircraft, certificate management will be determined on a case-by-case basis and may involve certificate management responsibilities being held by a FSDO with the support of AFS-760. This change is intended to improve consistency, standardization, and service of regulatory oversight for these operations while new policies are being created for aircraft with emerging technologies.

(2) Oversight of existing 14 CFR part 133, 135, 137, 141, and 142 operators intending to exclusively use AAM aircraft, and 145 CHs maintaining AAM aircraft including the oversight of AAM manufacturers with AAM aircraft working towards type certification, will be transferred from FSDOs to AFS-760. The transfer of certificates will occur in accordance with FAA Order 8900.1, Volume 10, Chapter 10, Section 1, Safety Assurance System: Certificated and Non-Certificated Transfer Process. The CHs will continue operations as normal, and there will be no interruption to the services being provided. The FSDOs and AFS-760 will work together to make the transition of oversight as seamless as possible.

(a) AFS-760 will oversee 14 CFR part 133, 135, 137, 141, 142, and 145 certificates associated with UAS/AAM with sufficient resources positioned to perform these duties. However, on occasion, AFS-760 will request assistance from FSDOs for time-sensitive surveillance/investigations, initial response to accidents, incidents, and other such functions in accordance with FAA policies similar to how FSDOs currently coordinate with other FSDOs and FS certificate management offices (CMO). Reliance on FSDOs to perform this work will be monitored and kept to a minimum.

(b) While rules tailored specifically for these operators are in development, oversight in AFS-760 will allow the FAA to accelerate and streamline adjustments and standardization in real time to align with upcoming rulemaking. Management of these certificates is intended to be transferred back to GASA once policy, rules, guidance, and training tailored for these new entrants are in place.

c. Certification.

(1) AFS-760 will accomplish the certifications for 14 CFR part 133, 135, 137, 141, 142, and 145 applicants that utilize UAS or AAM aircraft.

(2) When a request is made to add the authority to operate UAS or AAM aircraft to an existing certificate that is composed of aircraft that are not emerging technology aircraft, a case-by-case decision will be made to determine if certificate management will remain with the current FSDO or be transferred to AFS-760. If the decision is made to maintain certificate management with the current FSDO, AFS-700 will assist with the process of adding the new UAS or AAM aircraft and associated surveillance activities.

(3) Applicants that intend to utilize only UAS or AAM aircraft will be referred directly to AFS-760 at 9-AVS-AFS760-Requests@faa.gov. These new certificates will be issued and overseen by AFS-760, which will be considered the responsible Flight Standards office for these operators. A similar process occurred for 14 CFR part 137 UAS-only agricultural operator certification and oversight.

d. Deviations. Title 14 CFR § 119.71(f) requires the manager of AFS-200 or AFS-300, as appropriate, to conduct a review when receiving a request for a deviation for a position of Director of Operations (DO), Director of Maintenance (DOM), or Chief Pilot, because the candidate does not meet the appropriate airman, managerial, or supervisory experience requirements of § 119.71, but has comparable experience and can effectively perform the functions associated with the procedures outlined in the CH's manual.

(1) AFS-200 and AFS-300 have delegated deviation granting authority to the General Aviation Division I, Standardization Branch (AFG-950) for manned general aviation management deviations, to the Air Carrier Division F, Standardization Branch (AFC-640) for manned air carrier management deviations, and AFS-700 for UAS and AAM management deviations. When a management deviation is requested by a Flight Standards office that holds a certificate with UAS or AAM aircraft, the request should be sent to AFS-700 at 9-AVS-AFS760-Requests@faa.gov and AFS-700 will facilitate the response.

(2) The Air Transportation Branch (AFS-740) will review DO and Chief Pilot positions while the Maintenance Branch (AFS-710) will review DOM positions to determine if they exhibit comparable experience and can effectively perform the functions associated with the position, in accordance with the requirements of 14 CFR part 119 and the procedures outlined in the CHs' manuals.

6. Action. This notice is informational only and no action is required. However, if an UAS/AAM applicant applies in the Safety Assurance System (SAS) and a FSDO receives the application, the FSDO should transfer the application to AFS-760, which is listed as "FS70" in SAS. FSDOs that perform oversight described in this notice will be contacted by AFS-700 to further plan any associated transfers.

7. Disposition. We will not incorporate the information in this notice into Order 8900.1 before this notice expires. Direct questions or comments concerning the information in this notice to AFS-700 at 9-AVS-FS-AFS-700-Correspondence@faa.gov.



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