

Charter of the Unmanned and Autonomous Flight Advisory Committee U.S. Department of Transportation

- 1. Advisory Committee's Official Designation.** The committee's official designation is the Unmanned and Autonomous Flight Advisory Committee (UAFAC).
- 2. Authority.** The UAFAC is established under the authority of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization Act of 2024, Pub. L. 118-63, Section 916 in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) Pub. L. 92- 463, as amended, 5 U.S.C. ch. 10.
- 3. Objectives and Scope of Activities.** As prescribed in Section 916, UAFAC provides the Administrator with advice on policy and technical-level issues related to unmanned and autonomous aviation operations and activities, including, at a minimum, the following:
 - a. The safe integration of unmanned aircraft systems and autonomous flight operations into the national airspace system, including feedback on the following:
 - 1) The certification and operational standards of highly automated aircraft, unmanned aircraft, and associated elements of such aircraft.
 - 2) Coordination of procedures for operations in controlled and uncontrolled airspace; and communication protocols.
 - b. The use cases of unmanned aircraft systems, including evaluating and assessing the potential benefits of using unmanned aircraft systems.
 - c. The development of processes and methodologies to address safety concerns related to the operation of unmanned aircraft systems, including risk assessments and mitigation strategies.
 - d. Unmanned aircraft system training, education, and workforce development programs, including evaluating aeronautical knowledge gaps in the unmanned aircraft system workforce, assessing the workforce needs of unmanned aircraft system operations, and establishing a strong pipeline to ensure a robust unmanned aircraft system workforce.
 - e. The analysis of unmanned aircraft system data and trends.
 - f. Unmanned aircraft system infrastructure, including the use of existing aviation infrastructure and the development of necessary infrastructure.

Additionally, UAFAC will provide advice on equipping and enabling communities to inform about how unmanned aircraft systems, autonomous aviation operations, and other technologies may operate in ways that are least impactful to those communities. In response to FAA requests, UAFAC may provide FAA with information that may be used

for tactical and strategic planning purposes.

- 4. Description of Duties.** The UAFAC acts solely in an advisory capacity and will not exercise program management responsibilities. Decisions directly affecting the implementation of transportation policy will remain with the FAA Administrator. The UAFAC will do the following:

 - a. Undertake only tasks assigned by FAA.
 - b. Deliberate on and approve recommendations for assigned tasks in meetings that are open to the public.
 - c. Respond to ad-hoc informational requests from FAA and/or provide input to FAA on the overall UAFAC structure, including the structure of subcommittees and/or task groups.
- 5. Agency or Federal Officer Receiving the Advisory Committee's Advice/ Recommendation.** The UAFAC reports to the Secretary of Transportation through the FAA Administrator.
- 6. Support.** The FAA will provide support, including funding for UAFAC. The unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) Integration Office is the primary entity within FAA responsible for supporting UAFAC.
- 7. Estimated Annual Operating Costs and Staff Years.** The estimated annual operating costs to support UAFAC for the period and scope specified by the charter is approximately \$250,000, which includes 1.5 full-time equivalent salary and benefits at \$252,500, plus \$47,000 for meeting, travel, and miscellaneous expenses.
- 8. Designated Federal Officer (DFO).** The FAA Administrator will appoint a full-time or permanent part-time Federal employee to serve as the DFO. The DFO will ensure that administrative support is provided for all UAFAC activities and perform the following duties:

 - a. Ensure UAFAC activities comply with FACA, the FACA Final Rule, agency administrative procedures, and any other applicable laws and regulations.
 - b. Approve or call all UAFAC and subcommittee meetings.
 - c. Formulate and approve, in consultation with the chair, all UAFAC and subcommittee agendas.
 - d. Attend all UAFAC and subcommittee meetings for their duration.
 - e. Notify all UAFAC members of the time, place, and agenda for all meetings.

- f. Fulfill the requirements under § 10(b) of the Act (codified at 5 U.S.C. 1009(b));
 - g. Ensure efficient operations, including maintaining itemized contractor invoices.
 - h. Maintain all UAFAC records and files, including those related to membership.
 - i. Adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines it to be in the public interest.
 - j. Chair any meeting when directed to do so by the FAA Administrator.
 - k. Maintain information on advisory committee activities and provide such information to the public, as applicable; and
 - l. Ensure advisory committee members and subcommittee members, as applicable, receive the appropriate training (e.g., FACA overview, ethics training) for efficient operation and compliance with FACA and the FACA Final Rule.
- 9. Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings.** UAFAC anticipates meeting three times per year to carry out its responsibilities. Unless otherwise required by law or approved by the Secretary, all meetings will be held virtually (or in a hybrid forum that does not require additional use of Federal funds). UAFAC meetings will be open to the public, except as provided under Section 10(d) of FACA.
- 10. Duration.** Continuing, subject to renewal every 2 years.
- 11. Termination.** The charter expires 2 years after its effective date unless renewed in accordance with FACA and other applicable regulations. If the UAFAC charter expires, FAA will give as much advance notice as possible of such action to all participants.
- 12. Membership and Designation.** UAFAC comprises no more than 12 members upon recommendation by the FAA Administrator. All UAFAC members serve at the pleasure of the Secretary of Transportation.
- a. UAFAC membership will include at least one representative of each of the following:
 - 1) Commercial operators of unmanned aircraft systems
 - 2) Unmanned aircraft system manufacturers
 - 3) Counter-UAS manufacturers
 - 4) FAA-approved unmanned aircraft system service suppliers
 - 5) Unmanned aircraft system test ranges under section 44803 of title 49, United States Code
 - 6) Unmanned aircraft system physical infrastructure network providers
 - 7) Community advocates with safety, privacy and noise interests related to unmanned and autonomous aviation operations and activities.
 - 8) Certified labor organizations representing commercial airline pilots, air traffic

control specialists employed by the Administration, certified aircraft maintenance technicians, certified aircraft dispatchers, or aviation safety inspectors

9) Academia or a relevant research organization

- b. Members will serve without charge and without government compensation. Members who represent a particular interest of employment, education, experience, or affiliation with a specific aviation-related organization will serve as representatives. Members appointed solely for their expertise serve as Special Government Employees (SGE).
- c. Member representatives and SGEs are appointed for a 2-year term but can continue to serve until being replaced or reappointed.
- d. Members will not reference or otherwise utilize their membership on the committee in connection with public statements in their personal capacities without a disclaimer that the views they express are their own and do not represent the views of the committee, the Federal Aviation Administration, or the U.S. Department of Transportation.
- e. As prescribed in Sec. 916, the Administrator may invite appropriate representatives of other Federal agencies to observe or provide input on the work of UAFAC but will not allow such representatives to participate in UAFAC's decision making.

13. Subcommittees. The FAA Administrator has the authority to create and dissolve subcommittees as needed. Subcommittees must not work independently of UAFAC, and they must provide recommendations and advice to UAFAC, not FAA, for deliberation, discussion, and approval. Subcommittees are comprised of subject matter experts from multiple stakeholder groups to include traditional, pilotless, and advanced aviation communities, and they will include experts on a range of policy matters, including security, safety, and privacy.

14. Recordkeeping. The records of UAFAC are handled in accordance with the National Archives and Records Administration General Records Schedule 6.2 or other approved agency records disposition schedules. Subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552, the records, reports, transcripts, minutes, and other documents that are made available to or prepared for or by UAFAC will be available for public inspection at www.faa.gov/uas/programs_partnerships/UAFAC.

15. Filing Date. This charter is effective January 14, 2025, which is the filing date. This amended charter is effective on June 9, 2025. If not renewed, this charter will expire on January 14, 2027.

Membership Balance Plan

(1) Advisory Committee's Official Designation
Unmanned and Autonomous Flight Advisory Committee (UAFAC)
(2) Authority
The statutory committee is established as directed in Section 916 of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization Act of 2024, Pub. L. 118-63 in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, Pub. L. 92-463, 5 U.S.C. ch. 10.
(3) Objectives and Scope of Activities
<p>The UAFAC will provide the Administrator advice on policy- and technical-level issues related to unmanned and autonomous aviation operations and activities, including, at a minimum, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The safe integration of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) and autonomous flight operations into the national airspace system, including feedback on—<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the certification and operational standards of highly automated aircraft, unmanned aircraft, and associated elements of such aircraft.ii. coordination of procedures for operations in controlled and uncontrolled airspace and communication protocols.b. The use cases of unmanned aircraft systems, including evaluating and assessing the potential benefits of using unmanned aircraft systems.c. The development of processes and methodologies to address safety concerns related to the operation of unmanned aircraft systems, including risk assessments and mitigation strategies.d. Unmanned aircraft system training, education, and workforce development programs, including evaluating aeronautical knowledge gaps in the unmanned aircraft system workforce, assessing the workforce needs of unmanned aircraft system operations, and establishing a strong pipeline to ensure a robust unmanned aircraft system workforce.e. The analysis of unmanned aircraft system data and trends.f. Unmanned aircraft system infrastructure, including the use of existing aviation infrastructure and the development of necessary infrastructure. <p>Additionally, the UAFAC will provide advice on equipping and enabling communities to inform how UAS, autonomous aviation operations, and other technologies may operate in ways that are least impactful to those communities. In response to FAA requests, the UAFAC may provide the FAA with information</p>

that may be used for tactical and strategic planning purposes.

(4) Points of View

Section 916 of Pub. L. 118-63 prescribes the membership composition of the UAFAC, which the FAA will use as the basis to identify the points of view necessary for this advisory committee. Specifically, the UAFAC will comprise of no more than 12 members and will include at least one representative from the following designated stakeholder groups.

- i. Commercial operators of unmanned aircraft systems.
- ii. Unmanned aircraft system manufacturers.
- iii. Counter-UAS manufacturer.
- iv. FAA-approved unmanned aircraft system service suppliers.
- v. Unmanned aircraft system test ranges under section 44803 of title 49, United States Code.
- vi. Unmanned aircraft system physical infrastructure network provider.
- vii. Community advocates.
- viii. Certified labor organizations representing commercial airline pilots, air traffic control specialists employed by the Administration, certified aircraft maintenance technicians, certified aircraft dispatchers, or aviation safety inspectors.
- ix. Academia or a relevant research organization.

The FAA finds that the points of view of the drone and advanced aviation stakeholders prescribed in Section 916 of Pub. L. 118-63 will promote a fairly balanced advisory committee membership. Membership balance is not static, and the points of view needed may change depending on the work of the advisory committee.

(5) Broad Outreach

The FAA will solicit members using formal and informal methods (e.g., Federal Register Notices, social media, and industry and trade association recommendations) to ensure a broad cross-section of levels of expertise and interests are represented. Membership is based on the ability to represent the interests of an organization or constituency authoritatively and effectively. The UAFAC Chair and Designated Federal Officer (DFO) will review UAFAC membership annually to ensure balanced representation that equitably represents, to the extent feasible, the drone and advanced air mobility stakeholder communities.

(6) Candidate Selection

The FAA will score the nominations using a set of criteria that ensures points of view identified in Paragraph 4 – Points of View, create a fairly balanced membership. Nominees for committee membership will only be compared within their selected stakeholder group.

The UAFAC DFO will review and recommend the proposed candidates for membership. The FAA Office of Chief Counsel will review the recommended candidates to determine whether they qualify to serve on the advisory committee as a Representative Member or a Special Government Employee. Upon approval from the FAA Administrator, the FAA will submit membership recommendations to the Secretary for consideration. Final membership selections, including the UAFAC chair, are at the discretion of the Secretary. The committee is structured to ensure a balance of various drone and advanced aviation stakeholders.

The term of the UAFAC chair is 2 years; however, the UAFAC chair may be invited by the Secretary to serve multiple consecutive terms. UAFAC members are appointed for 2-year terms. The Secretary may invite members to serve multiple consecutive 2-year terms after the initial 2-year term. Depending on the urgency of filling a vacancy, the FAA may either issue a new solicitation notice or directly recommend a

candidate for membership. UAFAC membership vacancies will be filled within four months to sustain the continuity of a long-term membership balance.

(7) Subcommittee Balance

For any established subcommittee under the UAFAC, the FAA will use the same process for membership as the UAFAC to ensure a fairly balanced membership to address the assigned task.

(8) Date Prepared/Updated

June 9, 2025