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

800 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20591

July 14, 2015

Exemption No. 12025
Regulatory Docket No. FAA–2015–1524

Mr. Jesse Lasky
155 Exchange Street
Albany, NY 12205

Dear Mr. Lasky:

This letter is to inform you that we have granted your request for exemption. It transmits our decision, explains its basis, and gives you the conditions and limitations of the exemption, including the date it ends.

By letter dated May 1, 2015, you petitioned the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for an exemption. The petitioner requested to operate an unmanned aircraft system (UAS) to conduct aerial photography, videography, and survey operations.

See Appendix A for the petition submitted to the FAA describing the proposed operations and the regulations that the petitioner seeks an exemption.

The FAA has determined that good cause exists for not publishing a summary of the petition in the Federal Register because the requested exemption would not set a precedent, and any delay in acting on this petition would be detrimental to the petitioner.

Airworthiness Certification

The UAS proposed by the petitioner is a DJI Inspire 1.

In accordance with the statutory criteria provided in Section 333 of Public Law 112−95 in reference to 49 U.S.C. § 44704, and in consideration of the size, weight, speed, and limited operating area associated with the aircraft and its operation, the Secretary of Transportation has determined that this aircraft meets the conditions of Section 333. Therefore, the FAA finds that relief from 14 CFR part 21, *Certification procedures for products and parts,*

Subpart H—Airworthiness Certificates, and any associated noise certification and testing requirements of part 36, is not necessary.

The Basis for Our Decision

You have requested to use a UAS for aerial data collection[1]. The FAA has issued grants of exemption in circumstances similar in all material respects to those presented in your petition. In Grants of Exemption Nos. 11062 to Astraeus Aerial (*see* Docket No. FAA−2014−0352), 11109 to Clayco, Inc. (*see* Docket No. FAA−2014−0507), 11112 to VDOS Global, LLC (*see* Docket No. FAA−2014−0382), and 11213 to Aeryon Labs, Inc. (*see* Docket No. FAA−2014−0642), the FAA found that the enhanced safety achieved using an unmanned aircraft (UA) with the specifications described by the petitioner and carrying no passengers or crew, rather than a manned aircraft of significantly greater proportions, carrying crew in addition to flammable fuel, gives the FAA good cause to find that the UAS operation enabled by this exemption is in the public interest.

Having reviewed your reasons for requesting an exemption, I find that—

- They are similar in all material respects to relief previously requested in Grant of Exemption Nos. 11062, 11109, 11112, and 11213;
- The reasons stated by the FAA for granting Exemption Nos. 11062, 11109, 11112, and 11213 also apply to the situation you present; and
- A grant of exemption is in the public interest.

Our Decision

In consideration of the foregoing, I find that a grant of exemption is in the public interest. Therefore, pursuant to the authority contained in 49 U.S.C. 106(f), 40113, and 44701, delegated to me by the Administrator, Mr. Jesse Lasky is granted an exemption from 14 CFR §§ 61.23(a) and (c), 61.101(e)(4) and (5), 61.113(a), 61.315(a), 91.7(a), 91.119(c), 91.121, 91.151(a)(1), 91.405(a), 91.407(a)(1), 91.409(a)(1) and (2), and 91.417(a) and (b), to the extent necessary to allow the petitioner to operate a UAS to perform aerial data collection. This exemption is subject to the conditions and limitations listed below.

Conditions and Limitations

In this grant of exemption, Mr. Jesse Lasky is hereafter referred to as the operator.

[1] Aerial data collection includes any remote sensing and measuring by an instrument(s) aboard the UA. Examples include imagery (photography, video, infrared, etc.), electronic measurement (precision surveying, RF analysis, etc.), chemical measurement (particulate measurement, etc.), or any other gathering of data by instruments aboard the UA.

Failure to comply with any of the conditions and limitations of this grant of exemption will be grounds for the immediate suspension or rescission of this exemption.

1. Operations authorized by this grant of exemption are limited to the DJI Inspire 1when weighing less than 55 pounds including payload. Proposed operations of any other aircraft will require a new petition or a petition to amend this exemption.

2. Operations for the purpose of closed-set motion picture and television filming are not permitted.

3. The UA may not be operated at a speed exceeding 87 knots (100 miles per hour). The exemption holder may use either groundspeed or calibrated airspeed to determine compliance with the 87 knot speed restriction. In no case will the UA be operated at airspeeds greater than the maximum UA operating airspeed recommended by the aircraft manufacturer.

4. The UA must be operated at an altitude of no more than 400 feet above ground level (AGL). Altitude must be reported in feet AGL.

5. The UA must be operated within visual line of sight (VLOS) of the PIC at all times. This requires the PIC to be able to use human vision unaided by any device other than corrective lenses, as specified on the PIC's FAA-issued airman medical certificate or U.S. driver's license.

6. All operations must utilize a visual observer (VO). The UA must be operated within the visual line of sight (VLOS) of the PIC and VO at all times. The VO may be used to satisfy the VLOS requirement as long as the PIC always maintains VLOS capability. The VO and PIC must be able to communicate verbally at all times; electronic messaging or texting is not permitted during flight operations. The PIC must be designated before the flight and cannot transfer his or her designation for the duration of the flight. The PIC must ensure that the VO can perform the duties required of the VO.

7. This exemption and all documents needed to operate the UAS and conduct its operations in accordance with the conditions and limitations stated in this grant of exemption, are hereinafter referred to as the operating documents. The operating documents must be accessible during UAS operations and made available to the Administrator upon request. If a discrepancy exists between the conditions and limitations in this exemption and the procedures outlined in the operating documents, the conditions and limitations herein take precedence and must be followed. Otherwise, the operator must follow the procedures as outlined in its operating documents. The operator may update or revise its operating documents. It is the operator's responsibility to track such revisions and present updated and revised documents to the Administrator or any law enforcement official upon request. The

operator must also present updated and revised documents if it petitions for extension or amendment to this grant of exemption. If the operator determines that any update or revision would affect the basis upon which the FAA granted this exemption, then the operator must petition for an amendment to its grant of exemption. The FAA's UAS Integration Office (AFS−80) may be contacted if questions arise regarding updates or revisions to the operating documents.

8. Any UAS that has undergone maintenance or alterations that affect the UAS operation or flight characteristics, e.g., replacement of a flight critical component, must undergo a functional test flight prior to conducting further operations under this exemption. Functional test flights may only be conducted by a PIC with a VO and must remain at least 500 feet from other people. The functional test flight must be conducted in such a manner so as to not pose an undue hazard to persons and property.

9. The operator is responsible for maintaining and inspecting the UAS to ensure that it is in a condition for safe operation.

10. Prior to each flight, the PIC must conduct a pre-flight inspection and determine the UAS is in a condition for safe flight. The pre-flight inspection must account for all potential discrepancies, e.g., inoperable components, items, or equipment. If the inspection reveals a condition that affects the safe operation of the UAS, the aircraft is prohibited from operating until the necessary maintenance has been performed and the UAS is found to be in a condition for safe flight.

11. The operator must follow the UAS manufacturer's maintenance, overhaul, replacement, inspection, and life limit requirements for the aircraft and aircraft components.

12. Each UAS operated under this exemption must comply with all manufacturer safety bulletins.

13. Under this grant of exemption, a PIC must hold either an airline transport, commercial, private, recreational, or sport pilot certificate. The PIC must also hold a current FAA airman medical certificate or a valid U.S. driver's license issued by a state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, a territory, a possession, or the Federal government. The PIC must also meet the flight review requirements specified in 14 CFR § 61.56 in an aircraft in which the PIC is rated on his or her pilot certificate.

14. The operator may not permit any PIC to operate unless the PIC demonstrates the ability to safely operate the UAS in a manner consistent with how the UAS will be operated under this exemption, including evasive and emergency maneuvers and maintaining appropriate distances from persons, vessels, vehicles and structures. PIC qualification flight hours and currency must be logged in a manner consistent with 14 CFR § 61.51(b). Flights for the purposes of training the operator's PICs and VOs

(training, proficiency, and experience-building) and determining the PIC's ability to safely operate the UAS in a manner consistent with how the UAS will be operated under this exemption are permitted under the terms of this exemption. However, training operations may only be conducted during dedicated training sessions. During training, proficiency, and experience-building flights, all persons not essential for flight operations are considered nonparticipants, and the PIC must operate the UA with appropriate distance from nonparticipants in accordance with 14 CFR § 91.119.

15. UAS operations may not be conducted during night, as defined in 14 CFR § 1.1. All operations must be conducted under visual meteorological conditions (VMC). Flights under special visual flight rules (SVFR) are not authorized.

16. The UA may not operate within 5 nautical miles of an airport reference point (ARP) as denoted in the current FAA Airport/Facility Directory (AFD) or for airports not denoted with an ARP, the center of the airport symbol as denoted on the current FAA-published aeronautical chart, unless a letter of agreement with that airport's management is obtained or otherwise permitted by a COA issued to the exemption holder. The letter of agreement with the airport management must be made available to the Administrator or any law enforcement official upon request.

17. The UA may not be operated less than 500 feet below or less than 2,000 feet horizontally from a cloud or when visibility is less than 3 statute miles from the PIC.

18. If the UAS loses communications or loses its GPS signal, the UA must return to a pre-determined location within the private or controlled-access property.

19. The PIC must abort the flight in the event of unpredicted obstacles or emergencies.

20. The PIC is prohibited from beginning a flight unless (considering wind and forecast weather conditions) there is enough available power for the UA to conduct the intended operation and to operate after that for at least five minutes or with the reserve power recommended by the manufacturer if greater.

21. Air Traffic Organization (ATO) Certificate of Waiver or Authorization (COA). All operations shall be conducted in accordance with an ATO-issued COA. The exemption holder may apply for a new or amended COA if it intends to conduct operations that cannot be conducted under the terms of the attached COA.

22. All aircraft operated in accordance with this exemption must be identified by serial number, registered in accordance with 14 CFR part 47, and have identification (N−Number) markings in accordance with 14 CFR part 45, Subpart C. Markings must be as large as practicable.

23. Documents used by the operator to ensure the safe operation and flight of the UAS and any documents required under 14 CFR §§ 91.9 and 91.203 must be available to the PIC at the Ground Control Station of the UAS any time the aircraft is operating. These documents must be made available to the Administrator or any law enforcement official upon request.

24. The UA must remain clear and give way to all manned aviation operations and activities at all times.

25. The UAS may not be operated by the PIC from any moving device or vehicle.

26. All Flight operations must be conducted at least 500 feet from all nonparticipating persons, vessels, vehicles, and structures unless:
    a. Barriers or structures are present that sufficiently protect nonparticipating persons from the UA and/or debris in the event of an accident. The operator must ensure that nonparticipating persons remain under such protection. If a situation arises where nonparticipating persons leave such protection and are within 500 feet of the UA, flight operations must cease immediately in a manner ensuring the safety of nonparticipating persons; and
    b. The owner/controller of any vessels, vehicles or structures has granted permission for operating closer to those objects and the PIC has made a safety assessment of the risk of operating closer to those objects and determined that it does not present an undue hazard.

    The PIC, VO, operator trainees or essential persons are not considered nonparticipating persons under this exemption.

27. All operations shall be conducted over private or controlled-access property with permission from the property owner/controller or authorized representative. Permission from property owner/controller or authorized representative will be obtained for each flight to be conducted.

28. Any incident, accident, or flight operation that transgresses the lateral or vertical boundaries of the operational area as defined by the applicable COA must be reported to the FAA's UAS Integration Office (AFS−80) within 24 hours. Accidents must be reported to the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) per instructions contained on the NTSB Web site: www.ntsb.gov.

If this exemption permits operations for the purpose of closed-set motion picture and television filming and production, the following additional conditions and limitations apply.

29. The operator must have a motion picture and television operations manual (MPTOM) as documented in this grant of exemption.

30. At least 3 days before aerial filming, the operator of the UAS affected by this exemption must submit a written Plan of Activities to the local Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) with jurisdiction over the area of proposed filming. The 3-day notification may be waived with the concurrence of the FSDO. The plan of activities must include at least the following:
    a. Dates and times for all flights;
    b. Name and phone number of the operator for the UAS aerial filming conducted under this grant of exemption;
    c. Name and phone number of the person responsible for the on-scene operation of the UAS;
    d. Make, model, and serial or N−Number of UAS to be used;
    e. Name and certificate number of UAS PICs involved in the aerial filming;
    f. A statement that the operator has obtained permission from property owners and/or local officials to conduct the filming production event; the list of those who gave permission must be made available to the inspector upon request;
    g. Signature of exemption holder or representative; and
    h. A description of the flight activity, including maps or diagrams of any area, city, town, county, and/or state over which filming will be conducted and the altitudes essential to accomplish the operation.

31. Flight operations may be conducted closer than 500 feet from participating persons consenting to be involved and necessary for the filming production, as specified in the exemption holder's MPTOM.

Unless otherwise specified in this grant of exemption, the UAS, the UAS PIC, and the UAS operations must comply with all applicable parts of 14 CFR including, but not limited to, parts 45, 47, 61, and 91.

This exemption terminates on July 31, 2017, unless sooner superseded or rescinded.

Sincerely,

/s/
John S. Duncan
Director, Flight Standards Service

Enclosures

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May 1, 2015

U.S. Department of Transportation
Docket Management System
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Request for Exemption Per PL 112-95 §333 from 14 CFR 61.113(a) and (b), 14 CFR 91.103, 14 CFR 91.109, 14 CFR 91.119, 14 CFR 91.121, 14 CFR 91.151(a), 14 CFR 91.405(a), 14 CFR 91.407(a)(1), 14 CFR 91.409(a)(2), 14 CFR 91.417(a) and (b)

The following documents have been included in order to provide supplemental information for this petition's request for exemption:

1. *Inspire_1_Safety_Guidelines*
2. *Inspire_1_User_Manual_v1.2*
3. *Inspire_1_Maintenance_ManualV1.0*

Dear Sir or Madam,

This letter will serve as a request for an exemption of the above sections of title 14 CFR for myself, Jesse Lasky, henceforth referred to as the petitioner, for the purpose of conducting commercial "aerial photography, videography, and survey operations" using a small Unmanned Aircraft System (sUAS) in FAA controlled airspace. As described herein, Jesse Lasky, is an experienced user of multicopter sUAS for hobby operations, flying multicopters of varying sizes under 55 pounds using both Visual Line Of Sight (VLOS) and on board camera controls. The following petition provides all necessary information to justify an exemption from the above listed Federal Aviation Regulations.

The Unmanned Aircraft System

The petitioner will be flying a DJI Inspire 1 that is equipped with 4 propellers, onboard camera, and onboard flight control systems that utilize both GPS and ground movement to stabilize the aircraft. The Inspire 1 is operated via remote control in the 2.4ghz spectrum.

The sUAS has built in functionality that can limit the height it flies above the ground, limit the distance between the aircraft and PIC, and restrict the sUAS from flying in class B, C, and D airspace. The aircraft also comes preinstalled with the ability to automatically return to the PIC and land if any of the previous restrictions are violated, or if the connection to the wireless controller is lost.

The sUAS weighs 2935 grams (just under 6 pounds) while carrying all necessary batteries and cameras. It also has a max speed of 22 meters per second (just under 43 knots) that can be limited prior to takeoff.

The aircraft is powered via a lithium polymer battery which supplies electricity to the 4 brushless onboard motors.

(For more specifications, please refer to the attached owner's manual [Inspire_1_User_Manual_v1.2]. Pre-flight and post-flight inspections will be consistent with the attached Safety Guidelines and Maintenance Manual [Inspire_1_Safety_Guidelines] [Inspire_1_Maintenance_ManualV1.0])

The Unmanned Aircraft PIC

Jesse Lasky, the PIC of the DJI Inspire 1 is an experienced sUAS pilot, especially piloting multi-rotor aircraft. The petitioner has been a hobbyist sUAS pilot for over 5 years, and has piloted this particular aircraft on numerous occasions without incident. To improve safety and comply with the FAA's requests, a trained observer will be present at all times during the flight. The petitioner is also experienced with maintaining a controlled area of operations, ensuring the safety of all nearby persons and property.

sUAS Operation Overview

The sUAS will be operated to provide aerial photography, videography, and survey services to the public sector, particularly for the purposes of real estate, weddings, events, and property surveys.

Prior to the operation, flight restrictions will be programmed into to sUAS to prevent it from flying 400 feet above ground level or 1500 away from the PIC. Before takeoff, the operator and observer will review the pre-flight checklist (found in Inspire_1_Safety_Guidelines) and survey the area to determine if weather/cloud conditions are suitable for flight and what the emergency landing sites would be. All nearby persons in the operations area will be made aware of the flight in progress. Flights will not take place over densely populated areas or private property without the owner's permission. Once the operation is complete, the sUAS will be inspected to determine if any maintenance will be needed before the next operation.

Compared to traditional flights using manned aircraft, flights using sUAS are much less dangerous and therefor would not adversely affect safety:

- The nature of these flights will restrict the use of the sUAS to a small area where all nearby persons can be aware of the ongoing flight.
- The sUAS carries no explosive materials or combustible liquid fuel.
- The light weight of the sUAS would cause minimal damage in the event of an airborne failure, especially when compared to traditional manned aircraft with airworthiness certificates.
- The small size of the sUAS would allow for all operations to be conducted within a clearly defined area, including takeoffs and landings.

All flights by the PIC will begin and remain outside of a 5 mile radius of any airport. The sUAS has a mandatory, built-in functionality to restrict the aircraft from flying within this radius and will automatically land if it inadvertently violates this restriction. Any and all precautions will be taken by the PIC and the accompanying Observer to prevent midair collisions with objects and other aircraft, even outside the 5km radius of airports.

All planned operations utilizing the sUAS will be completed safely. With the combination of the preflight safety risk assessments previously discussed and the inherently reduced risk of flying a sUAS compared to a traditional manned aircraft, the PIC will be able to provide a level of safety greater than the traditional method of performing aerial based photography, videography, and survey operations.

Benefit to Public Interest

The services provided by the petitioner would be a great benefit to the public as a whole. Granting this exemption would reduce the need for traditional forms of aerial photography, videography, and surveys which, as previously discussed, are much more dangerous than operations performed by sUAS. The cost of sUAS operations is also significantly lower than traditional aerial photography flights, making these services available to smaller businesses or individuals that otherwise may not be able to afford them. This in turn allows businesses to better serve their clients, increasing the public benefit as a whole.

Conclusion

All commercial sUAS flights by the petitioner shall satisfy the criteria provided in Section 333 of the Reform Act of 2012, including: size, weight, speed, flight within VLOS, distance from PIC, distance from airports, operation capabilities, maintaining safety, and the benefit to the public. In accordance with the FAA's announcement on March 23rd, 2015, the petitioner will apply for a Certificate of Waiver or Authorization for all flights over 200 feet above the ground. These qualifications more than justify granting the petitioner, Jesse Lasky, with an exemption to the stated sections of title 14 CFR.

The requests of this petition are similar to those of Marcus D. Melhus, Ralph J. Apel, and Saratoga Aerial and Video, all of whom have received Section 333 exemptions for use of comparable aircraft for similar operations.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jesse C. Lasky
Petitioner