

**Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration**

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
B4UFLY Smartphone App**

INTRODUCTION

This information collection is submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to request an emergency approval for the information collection entitled “B4UFLY Smartphone App”.

Part A. Justification

1. Circumstances that make collection of information necessary.

The FAA documented over 1,200 pilot, law enforcement, and private citizen reports of unmanned aircraft ‘events’ in 2015. This is more than a 500% increase from 2014, during which the FAA received 238 of these reports. This increase in reports, particularly in close proximity to airports, suggests that many unmanned aircraft system (UAS) operators are unaware of safety guidelines and policies and are unaware of the potential hazards these operations may pose to manned aircraft operations.

The FAA’s B4UFLY smartphone app will provide situational awareness of flight restrictions – including locations of airports, restricted airspace, special use airspaces, and temporary flight restrictions – based on a user’s current or planned flight location. The risk posed to the National Airspace System (NAS) by increasingly unsafe UAS operations makes the immediate release of this app vital. The iOS version and a beta Android version of the app were released on January 6, 2016. The full release for iOS and Android is estimated by March 15, 2016.

In addition, Public Law 112-95, Section 336 requires model aircraft operators to notify the airport operator and air traffic control tower (if one is located at the airport) prior to operating within 5 miles of an airport. Currently, there is no established process to facilitate this exchange of information. The B4UFLY app’s initial concept included providing phone numbers for users to call air traffic control towers (ACTCs) to fulfill this notification requirement. However, further analysis showed that frequent calls to an ACTC could disrupt normal tower functions and possibly create a safety risk. Therefore, the FAA intends to develop a technology-based notification process, using the functionality in and data collected through the B4UFLY app to make informed policy decisions.

Users will not be able to fulfill the statutory requirement for notification using the current versions of B4UFLY released on January 6, 2016. These versions will collect flight data from users, which will help inform an FAA decision related to the future development of an electronic

notification solution. It is envisioned that a notification process will need to leverage a technological solution to ultimately give air traffic personnel real-time information about potentially unsafe UAS operations around airports, enabling immediate safety mitigation activities. It will also make notification easier for the public, and thus increase compliance with the law.

In order to maintain NAS safety in proximity to airports, air traffic control personnel would need certain basic information about a UAS operator's intended flight in order to assess whether the UAS may disrupt or endanger manned air traffic. This is the same information a user would be asked to provide if they called an ATCT. The data collected by the B4UFLY app will help the FAA determine requirements and procedures for a technology-driven notification process.

This information collection supports the Department of Transportation's strategic goal of safety.

2. How, by whom, and for what purpose is the information used.

The data collected will be used:

1. By the FAA to inform policy and requirements decisions for the development of the technology-driven notification system in accordance with Section 336 of the FAA's 2012 Reauthorization
2. By the FAA to make more informed decisions about UAS operations which may pose a risk to the safety of the NAS, and thereby determine in what circumstances notification is essential.

3. Extent of automated information collection.

This data collection will be 100% electronic and relatively automated for the user. The user is able to quickly tap multiple choice options, and the B4UFLY app automatically pulls the user's location from their smartphone.

Additionally, the implementation of the B4UFLY app could eventually reduce the burden on any user attempting to fly within 5 miles of multiple airports – rather than having to notify each airport air traffic control tower individually, users may be able to provide a single notification that will be routed to all relevant safety personnel within the FAA.

The FAA anticipates data collected via B4UFLY may help with the development of further automation on back end systems, such that ATCT personnel are only alerted to operations that potentially disrupt or endanger NAS safety, and UAS users are not prevented from flying in safe areas.

4. Efforts to identify duplication.

There is no duplication. The FAA has never attempted to systematically collect this type of information from UAS users, who represent a relatively new NAS user group.

5. Efforts to minimize the burden on small businesses.

The implementation of the B4UFLY app should not impact small business. The app is free and although it is designed to provide situational awareness specifically to model aircraft operators, who, by definition, only fly for hobby or recreational purposes, it may also be used by commercial operators as a situational awareness tool.

6. Impact of less frequent collection of information.

Data collection through the B4UFLY app will be completely voluntary, as the data collection will not constitute the statutory requirement to provide notification in P.L. 112-95, Sec. 336. The FAA cannot reliably estimate how frequently users submit data through the app.

7. Special circumstances.

There are no special circumstances that would require this collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the points presented in 5 CFR section 1320.5(d)(2)(i)(viii).

8. Compliance with 5 CFR 1320.8:

Given the recent uptick in pilot reports of unmanned aircraft around airports, the FAA believes the B4UFLY app is necessary to increase operator situational awareness and help maintain the safety of the NAS.

The FAA published a Federal Register Notice for public comment on November 24, 2015 (80 FR 73265) There were no comments received.

9. Payments or gifts to respondents.

No payments or gifts were provided to respondents.

10. Assurance of confidentiality:

No assurance of confidentiality is provided.

11. Justification for collection of sensitive information:

No sensitive information is collected.

12. Estimate of burden hours for information requested:

There is little basis for reliably estimating how many users will download the full release of the iOS B4UFLY and beta Android. The FAA also cannot reliably estimate how frequently users will submit data, as it is completely voluntary. However, to date, more than 300,000 people have registered their UAS in accordance with the small UAS registration requirement that went into effect on December 21, 2015. Since these operators are specifically hobby or recreational flyers, and the B4UFLY app was developed specifically for hobby or recreational flight, we are comfortable with a benchmark estimate that perhaps a quarter of them (50,000) will eventually download B4UFLY. Consultation with testers has indicated submitting the data request form requires no longer than 90-120 seconds (approximately 0.025-0.033 hours) per respondent per

submission.

If respondents choose to send data 3 times per week on average, the time burden would be:

3 submissions/wk x 0.025 hours/submission =
0.075hours/user x 50,000 users = 3,750 hours/wk

For entry into the ROCIS system, FAA is using the high-end calculations of:

3 submissions/wk x 0.033 hours x 50,000 users = 4,950 hours.

13. Estimate of total annual costs to respondents.

There are no additional costs other than those described in question 12 above.

14. Estimate of cost to the Federal government.

There is no way to reliably estimate the cost to the federal government, because the FAA cannot reliably estimate how frequently users will submit data. As the data will not be provided to ATCTs to make real-time decisions during the beta test, it will likely be pulled and reported to analysts no more than bi-weekly. This should require no more than 1-2 hours weekly to technical support analysts.

1.5 hrs weekly x \$60/hr = \$90/wk

15. Explanation of program changes or adjustments.

This is a new collection activity, therefore it is a program change.

16. Publication of results of data collection.

Based on public concern over privacy protection during the beta test, the FAA does not intend to publish the data it receives through the B4UFLY app.

17. Approval for not displaying the expiration date of OMB approval.

B4UFLY is not seeking approval to not display the expiration date.

18. Exceptions to certification statement.

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.