

**Department of Transportation  
Federal Aviation Administration**

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT  
Small Unmanned Aircraft Registration System  
2120-0765**

**INTRODUCTION**

This information collection is submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to request an emergency clearance for the information collection entitled Small Unmanned Aircraft Registration System. This update to the clearance accounts for the use of a paper form to permit owners operating exclusively in compliance with section 336 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act to delete their registration information from the database and receive a refund if they wish.

**Part A. Justification**

**1. Circumstances that make collection of information necessary.**

The Secretary of the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) affirmed that all unmanned aircraft, including model aircraft, are aircraft. As such, in accordance with 49 U.S.C. 44101(a) and as further prescribed in 14 CFR part 47, registration is required prior to operation. *See* 80 FR 63912, 63913 (October 22, 2015). Aircraft registration is necessary to ensure personal accountability among all users of the national airspace system. Aircraft registration also allows the FAA and law enforcement agencies to address non-compliance by providing the means by which to identify an aircraft's owner and operator.

Subject to certain exceptions discussed below, aircraft must be registered prior to operation. *See* 49 U.S.C. 44101-44103. Upon registration, the Administrator must issue a certificate of registration to the aircraft owner. *See* 49 U.S.C. 44103

Registration, however, does not provide the authority to operate. Persons intending to operate a small unmanned aircraft exclusively as model aircraft must operate in compliance with section 336 of Public Law 112-95, and as discussed below, are not required to register. Persons intending to operate their small unmanned aircraft not exclusively in compliance with section 336 must operate in accordance with part 107, in accordance with a waiver issued under part 107, in accordance with an exemption issued under 14 CFR part 11 (including those persons operating under an exemption issued pursuant to section 333 of Public Law 112-95), or in conjunction with the issuance of a special airworthiness certificate, and are required to register.

With respect to this update to the information collection, as a result of the May 19, 2017 ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, the Small UAS Registration and Marking interim final rule was vacated to the extent it applies to model aircraft. Model aircraft must meet the definition and operational requirements provided in section 336 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act. Owners who are operating exclusively in compliance with section 336 who wish to de-register and receive a refund of the registration fee may do so by

requesting de-registration from the FAA, which requires the FAA to collect their payment information.

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

The information collected as part of the small unmanned aircraft (sUAS) registration system will identify to the FAA those persons owning small unmanned aircraft, whether the intended use is as a model aircraft, or as other than a model aircraft. It will also allow the FAA to provide those persons with educational materials regarding safety of flight in the National Airspace System (NAS) to promote greater accountability and responsibility of these new users of the NAS.

With respect to the update for the amendment, owners of small unmanned aircraft operating exclusively in compliance with section 336 may submit a request to receive a refund and de-register by deleting their Privacy Act entry. The information collected for this purpose will be collected on a paper form for the purposes of refunding the \$5 fee paid during the registration process.

## **3. Extent of automated information collection.**

The part 48 small unmanned aircraft registration system is a fully automated, web-based online registration system. The part 47 process will remain available as an alternative process for small unmanned aircraft owners who wish to use a paper-based registration system.

The request to receive a refund and de-register by amending their Privacy Act entry by owners operating exclusively in compliance with section 336 is currently a paper-based form. The FAA may eventually utilize an automated refund process, however, in order to comply in a timely fashion with the mandate of the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, the FAA is only able to process refunds manually.

## **4. Efforts to identify duplication.**

The registration of small unmanned aircraft is within the purview of the FAA. Title 49, United States Code, 44101-44106 and 44110-44113 require aircraft to be registered as a condition of operation and establish the requirements for registration and registration processes. No other Federal agency has similar requirements, thus there is no duplication.

The agency expects small unmanned aircraft owners to complete aircraft registration using the part 48 registration process identified in the Interim Final Rule, "Registration and Marking Requirements for Small Unmanned Aircraft", RIN 2120-AK82 (part 48). Alternatively, small unmanned aircraft owners may choose to register their aircraft by using the existing part 47 registration process (OMB Control No. 2120-0042).

Similarly, there is no duplicative process for removing an owner's Privacy Act information from the registration database.

## **5. Efforts to minimize the burden on small businesses.**

The information required to be collected from persons intending to register small unmanned aircraft as other than model aircraft is minimal:

- (1) Applicant name and, for an applicant other than an individual, the name of the authorized representative applying for a Certificate of Aircraft Registration.
- (2) Applicant's physical address and, for an applicant other than an individual, the

physical address for the authorized representative. If the applicant or authorized representative does not receive mail at their physical address, a mailing address must also be provided.

(3) Applicant's e-mail address or, for applicants other than individuals, the e-mail address of the authorized representative.

(4) The aircraft manufacturer and model name.

(5) The aircraft serial number, if available.

The FAA believes that the minimal information requested, as well as efforts under way to permit registration of multiple aircraft in one transaction, will significantly reduce any burden this registration system might impose.

The FAA emphasizes that the minimal nature of the information being collected under the small unmanned aircraft registration system discussed in this information collection should be viewed in comparison with the current requirement that persons intending to use small unmanned aircraft other than as model aircraft comply with the significantly more paperwork-intensive requirements of 14 CFR part 47 and OMB information collection 2120-0042. That information collection is estimated to take 30 minutes per response, as compared with the estimate of 5 minutes per response for this information collection.

Additionally, those persons who will request to have their registration information deleted as a result of this update to the information collection are individuals and are therefore not considered small businesses.

#### **6. Impact of less frequent collection of information.**

Persons who own small unmanned aircraft are required to register with the FAA prior to operation of those small unmanned aircraft. Registration is effective for three years and must be renewed if the person wishes to continue to use small unmanned aircraft upon the expiration of the Small Unmanned Aircraft Certificate of Registration. The registration instrument was last approved on August 31, 2016 for three years. This update is requesting an emergency revision for six months.

#### **7. Special circumstances.**

There are no special circumstances for this information collection.

#### **8. Compliance with 5 CFR 1320.8.**

A Notice was published in the Federal Register on March 1, 2016 (81FR1-702), requesting public comment on the renewal. No comments were received.

This information collection has been revised to permit the collection of banking information to allow refunds of registration fees in accordance with the decision of the D.C. Circuit in *Taylor v. Huerta*. The FAA is seeking emergency approval from the Office of Management and Budget to implement this revision based on the court decision.

#### **9. Payments or gifts to respondents. Explain any decision to provide a payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.**

No gifts or payments are provided for the registration of small unmanned aircraft.

**10. Assurance of confidentiality.**

The Privacy Act System of Records Notice DOT/FAA 801 Aircraft Registration Records, provides notice to the public of the agency’s privacy practices regarding the collection, use, sharing, safeguarding, maintenance, and disposal of information that affects individuals and their personally identifiable information (PII). The SORN identifies the routine uses for the PII collected for small unmanned aircraft registration. An updated SORN that addresses the disclosure of the small unmanned aircraft owner’s name and address was published to the Federal Register on December 15, 2015 (80FR77697).

Individuals may request the deletion of their small unmanned aircraft (sUAS) registration from the Small Unmanned Aircraft Registration Service pursuant to Section 336 of Pub. L. 112-95 and 5 U.S.C. 552a(d)(2). The principal purpose for which information collected is to verify that the owner’s sUAS is not required to be registered under 14 CFR 48 because it qualifies as a model aircraft under Section 336 of Pub. L. 112-95. The failure to provide the required information will prevent the FAA from deregistering your sUAS from the Small Unmanned Aircraft Registration Service. The information collected to deregister sUAS and complete the refund request to those owners who qualify and wish to delete their information is included in two Privacy Act System of Records known as DOT/ALL 7 and DOT/ALL 17. Records from these systems of records may be disclosed in accordance with the routine uses that appear in DOT/ALL 7, and DOT/ALL 17, available at <https://www.transportation.gov/individuals/privacy/privacy-act-system-records-notice>.

**11. Justification for collection of sensitive information.**

This information collection does not collect information of a sensitive nature. Only basic identifying information in the form of name, physical and mailing address (if different than physical address), and email address are collected. The rule requires that persons using the system must be at least 13 years of age to register the small unmanned aircraft.

The paper-based form for de-registration and refund of the \$5 fee will collect electronic funds transfer information to ensure that the refund is issued in accordance with Federal guidelines for issuing payment.

**12. Estimate of burden hours for information requested.**

The following table shows the total number of new registrations beginning January 2016 through May 2016, their time, and their costs to fill out the online system. There is no differentiation between modelers and non-modelers.

The average monthly number of respondents is 63,748 (318,739/ 5 months) and estimated annual respondents are 764,976 (63,748 x 12 months) with estimated annual time burden of 63,746 hours (5312 average monthly hours x 12).

Month	# of Registrations	Minutes per response	Hours
Jan	165,389	5	13,782
Feb	69,056	5	5,755
Mar	32,118	5	2,676

Apr	27,128	5	2,261
May	25,048	5	2,087
<b>Total</b>	<b>318,739</b>		<b>26,561</b>

\*Hour time burden calculation: # of registrations x 5 minutes / 60\*

Assuming a 10% increase each year and inclusion of renewals for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year (at least 90% assumed), the Average Annual Respondents: 1,328,508 (2,532,071 + 1,453,454 / 3); Average Annual Time Burden: 110,709 Hours (211,006 + 121,121 / 3).

Year	# of Registrations	Minutes per response	Hours	Renewal of year 1 Registrations	Minutes per response	Hours
1	764,976	5	63,748			
2	841,474	5	70,123			
3	925,621	5	77,135	1,453,454	5	121,121
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,532,071</b>		<b>211,006</b>			

With respect to the update to this information collection, the FAA estimates that there are currently 700,000 persons who are registered under section 336. The FAA further estimates that 1%, 7,000, of those persons will choose to de-register. The FAA estimates that half of those individuals requesting to de-register will have registered during the initial grace period and have therefore already received their refund, therefore the FAA estimates that 3500 individuals will receive a refund of their \$5 registration payment as a result of the deregistration process. Finally, the FAA estimates that it will take each person 2 minutes to complete the de-registration form.

7,000 persons \* 2 minutes to complete form = 14,000 minutes or 233.33 hours

### **13. Estimate of total annual costs to respondents.**

For persons registering an aircraft, the only costs to the respondents are the paperwork costs. There are no capital or operation/maintenance costs for the respondents because of this rule.

The form to de-register is only available as a paper form. Therefore, persons wishing to de-register must print this form, complete it, and mail it to the FAA. For persons de-registering an aircraft, the FAA estimates that costs to de-register include an envelope and the cost of a first-class stamp. The FAA estimates these costs at \$0.75 per person de-registering.

7,000 persons \*\$0.75 = \$5,250

### **14. Estimate of cost to the Federal government.**

The following table shows the total and present value costs to the government. An external consultant estimated these costs based on the time and effort it would take to build the registration system.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Calendar Year</b>	<b>FAA Costs (M\$)</b>	<b>7% P.V.</b>
0	2015	\$3.9	\$3.9
1	2016	\$5.0	\$4.7
2	2017	\$3.2	\$2.8
3	2018	\$3.4	\$2.8
4	2019	\$3.0	\$2.3
5	2020	\$2.6	\$1.9
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$21.2</b>	<b>\$18.4</b>

Note: numbers may not add due to rounding

The cost of the information collection for the requested approval period is \$15.5 million dollars, averaged at \$5.167M.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Calendar Year</b>	<b>FAA Costs (\$M)</b>	<b>7% P.V.</b>
0	2015	\$3.9	\$3.9
1	2016	\$5.0	\$4.7
2	2017	\$3.2	\$2.8
3	2018	\$3.4	\$2.8
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$15.5</b>	<b>\$14.2</b>

There are costs associated with the de-registration of persons registered under section 336. First, the FAA estimates that it will be required to refund half of the persons de-registering the \$5 registration fee. (The FAA assumes that the other half will have registered during the grace period and thus was previously provided a refund of the cost of registration.)

Cost to FAA of refunding registration fees:  
 $7,000/2 = 3,500 * \$5 = \$17,500$

Second, the FAA must estimate the time it takes the government to process the de-registration forms. The FAA estimates that it will take about five minutes to process a form that is only a deletion of registration information and about ten minutes to process a form that also includes a refund.

Time to process registration deletion forms and refunds:  
 $7,000/2 = 3,500 * 5 \text{ minutes} = 17,500 \text{ minutes}$   
 $3,500 * 10 \text{ minutes} = 35,000 \text{ minutes}$

$17,500 + 35,000 = 52,500 \text{ minutes.}$

**15. Explanation of program changes or adjustments.**

Burden excludes actual registrations for the first 5 months of system activation. The 1st year estimates are based on registrations for the final 7 months of the first year, as well as the

following 2 years with an assumption of 10% increase per year. The 3rd years add renewals from year 1 with an assumption of 90% renewing.

This information collection is being revised to permit persons operating under section 336 of Public Law 112-95 to de-register from the small unmanned aircraft registration system and to request a \$5 refund, if applicable. The FAA emphasizes that de-registration is voluntary; the FAA estimates the number of persons who desire to delete their registration will be about 1%, or 7,000.

**16. Publication of results of data collection.**

Members of the public may search the collection by registration number only. The results of the search will be limited per the Department's Privacy Act notice DOT/FAA 801 – Aircraft Registration Records. Information for Small UAS owners who delete their registration will not be available once the deletion of their registration information has been processed.

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

The FAA is not seeking approval not to display the date of expiration of this information collection.

**18. Exceptions to certification statement.**

There are no exceptions to the certification statement for this information collection.