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Title 14 - Aeronautics and Space

Chapter I - Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation

Subchapter C - Aircraft

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PART 48 - REGISTRATION AND MARKING REQUIREMENTS FOR SMALL UNMANNED AIRCRAFT

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Subpart A - General

§ 48.1 Applicability.

- (a) This part provides registration and identification requirements for small unmanned aircraft that are part of a small unmanned aircraft system as defined in § 1.1 of this chapter.
- (b) Small unmanned aircraft eligible for registration in the United States must be registered and identified in accordance with either:
 - (1) The registration and identification requirements in this part; or
 - (2) The registration requirements in part 47 and the identification and registration marking requirements in subparts A and C of part 45.
- (c) Small unmanned aircraft intended to be operated outside of the territorial airspace of the United States, or registered through a trust or voting trust, must be registered in accordance with subparts A and B of part 47 and satisfy the identification and registration marking requirements of subparts A and C of part 45.

§ 48.5 [Reserved]

§ 48.10 Definitions.

For purposes of this part, the following definitions apply:

Citizen of the United States or U.S. citizen means one of the following:

- (1) An individual who is a citizen of the United States or one of its possessions.
- (2) A partnership each of whose partners is an individual who is a citizen of the United States.
- (3) A corporation or association organized under the laws of the United States or a State, the District of Columbia, or a territory or possession of the United States, of which the president and at least two-thirds of the board of directors and other managing officers are citizens of the United States, which is under the actual control of citizens of the United States, and in which at least 75 percent of the voting interest is owned or controlled by persons that are citizens of the United States.

Registry means the FAA, Civil Aviation Registry, Aircraft Registration Branch.

Resident alien means an individual citizen of a foreign country lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States as an immigrant in conformity with the regulations of the Department of Homeland Security (8 CFR Chapter 1).

§ 48.15 Requirement to register.

No person may operate a small unmanned aircraft that is eligible for registration under 49 U.S.C. 44101-44103 unless one of the following criteria has been satisfied:

- (a) The owner has registered and marked the aircraft in accordance with this part;
- (b) The aircraft is operated exclusively in compliance with 49 U.S.C. 44809 and weighs 0.55 pounds or less on takeoff, including everything that is on board or otherwise attached to the aircraft; or
- (c) The aircraft is an aircraft of the Armed Forces of the United States.

[Doc. No. FAA-2015-7396; Amdt. No. 48-1; 80 FR 78645, Dec. 16, 2015, as amended by Doc. No. FAA-2019-1100; Amdt. No. 48-3; 86 FR 4504, Jan. 15, 2021]

§ 48.20 Eligibility for registration.

A small unmanned aircraft may be registered under 49 U.S.C. 44103 and under this part only when the aircraft is not registered under the laws of a foreign country and is -

- (a) Owned by a U.S. citizen;
- (b) Owned by an individual citizen of a foreign country lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States;
- (c) Owned by a corporation not a citizen of the United States when the corporation is organized and doing business under the laws of the United States or a State within the United States, and the aircraft is based and primarily used in the United States; or
- (d) An aircraft of -
 - (1) The United States Government; or
 - (2) A State, the District of Columbia, a territory or possession of the United States, or a political subdivision of a State, territory, or possession.

§ 48.25 Applicants.

- (a) To register a small unmanned aircraft in the United States under this part, a person must provide the information required by § 48.110 to the Registry in a form and manner prescribed by the Administrator. Upon submission of this information, the FAA issues a Certificate of Aircraft Registration to that person.
- (b) A small unmanned aircraft must be registered by its owner using the legal name of its owner, unless the owner is less than 13 years of age. If the owner is less than 13 years of age, then the small unmanned aircraft must be registered by a person who is at least 13 years of age.
- (c) In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 44103(c), registration is not evidence of aircraft ownership in any proceeding in which ownership of an unmanned aircraft by a particular person is in issue.
- (d) In this part, "owner" includes a buyer in possession, a bailee, a lessee of a small unmanned aircraft under a contract of conditional sale, and the assignee of that person.

[Doc. No. FAA-2015-7396; Amdt. No. 48-1; 80 FR 78645, Dec. 16, 2015, as amended by Doc. No. FAA-2019-1100; Amdt. No. 48-3; 86 FR 4504, Jan. 15, 2021]

§ 48.30 Fees.

- (a) The fee for issuing or renewing a Certificate of Aircraft Registration as described in § 48.100 is \$5.00 per aircraft.
- (b) The fee for issuing or renewing a Certificate of Aircraft Registration as described in § 48.105 is \$5.00 per certificate.
- (c) Each application for and renewal of a Certificate of Aircraft Registration must be accompanied by the fee described in paragraphs (a) and (b), as applicable, paid to the Federal Aviation Administration through the web-based aircraft registration system, or in another manner if prescribed by the Administrator.

[Doc. No. FAA-2015-7396; Amdt. No. 48-1; 80 FR 78645, Dec. 16, 2015, as amended by Doc. No. FAA-2019-1100; Amdt. No. 48-3; 86 FR 4504, Jan. 15, 2021]

Subpart B - Certificates of Aircraft Registration for Small Unmanned Aircraft

§ 48.100 Registration: Small unmanned aircraft operated for any purpose other than exclusively limited recreational operations.

- (a) **Certificate of Aircraft Registration.** A Certificate of Aircraft Registration issued in accordance with § 48.110 to a small unmanned aircraft used for any purpose other than operating exclusively in compliance with 49 U.S.C. 44809 constitutes registration for the small unmanned aircraft identified on the application.
- (b) **Effective date of registration.** An aircraft is registered when the applicant receives a Certificate of Aircraft Registration for the specific aircraft. The effective date of registration is shown by the date of issue on the Certificate of Aircraft Registration issued for the aircraft.
- (c) **Registration renewal.** A Certificate of Aircraft registration issued under this part expires 3 years after the date of issue unless it is renewed.
 - (1) The holder of a Certificate of Aircraft Registration must renew the Certificate by verifying, in a form and manner prescribed by the Administrator, that the information provided in accordance with § 48.110 is accurate and if it is not, provide updated information. The verification may take place at any time within the six months preceding the month in which the Certificate of Aircraft registration expires.
 - (2) A certificate issued under this paragraph expires three years from the expiration date of the previous certificate.
- (d) **Other events affecting effectiveness of Certificate.** Each Certificate of Aircraft Registration issued by the FAA under this subpart is effective, unless registration has ended by reason of having been revoked, canceled, expired, or the ownership is transferred, until the date upon which one of the following events occurs:
 - (1) Subject to the Convention on the International Recognition of Rights in Aircraft when applicable, the aircraft is registered under the laws of a foreign country.
 - (2) The small unmanned aircraft is totally destroyed or scrapped.
 - (3) The holder of the Certificate of Aircraft Registration loses U.S. citizenship.
 - (4) Thirty days have elapsed since the death of the holder of the Certificate of Aircraft Registration.
 - (5) The owner, if an individual who is not a citizen of the United States, loses status as a resident alien, unless that person becomes a citizen of the United States at the same time.
 - (6) The owner is a corporation other than a corporation which is a citizen of the United States and one of the following events occurs:
 - (i) The corporation ceases to be lawfully organized and doing business under the laws of the United States or any State thereof; or
 - (ii) The aircraft was not operated exclusively within the United States during the period of registration under this part.

[Doc. No. FAA-2015-7396; Amdt. No. 48-1; 80 FR 78645, Dec. 16, 2015. Redesignated and amended by Doc. No. FAA-2019-1100; Amdt. No. 48-3, 86 FR 4504, Jan. 15, 2021]

§ 48.105 Registration: Small unmanned aircraft intended exclusively for limited recreational operations.

- (a) **Certificate of Aircraft Registration.** A Certificate of Aircraft Registration issued in accordance with § 48.110 for small unmanned aircraft to be operated exclusively in compliance with 49 U.S.C. 44809 constitutes registration for all the small unmanned aircraft used exclusively for operations in compliance with 49 U.S.C. 44809 owned by the individual identified on the application.
- (b) **Effective date of registration.** An aircraft is registered when the applicant receives a Certificate of Aircraft Registration. The effective date of registration is shown by the date of issue on the Certificate of Aircraft Registration issued under this part.
- (c) **Registration renewal.** A Certificate of Aircraft registration issued under this part expires 3 years after the date of issue unless it is renewed.
 - (1) The holder of a Certificate of Aircraft Registration must renew the Certificate by verifying, in a form and manner prescribed by the Administrator, that the information provided in accordance with § 48.110 is accurate and if it is not, provide updated information. The verification may take place at any time within the six months preceding the month in which the Certificate of Aircraft registration expires.
 - (2) A certificate issued under this paragraph expires three years from the expiration date of the previous certificate.
- (d) **Other events affecting effectiveness of Certificate.** Each Certificate of Aircraft Registration issued by the FAA under this part is effective, unless registration has ended by reason of having been revoked, canceled or expired, or until the date upon which one of the following events occurs:
 - (1) The holder of the Certificate of Aircraft Registration loses U.S. citizenship.
 - (2) Thirty days have elapsed since the death of the holder of the Certificate of Aircraft Registration.
 - (3) The owner, if an individual who is not a citizen of the United States, loses status as a resident alien, unless that person becomes a citizen of the United States at the same time.

[Doc. No. FAA-2015-7396; Amdt. No. 48-1; 80 FR 78645, Dec. 16, 2015. Redesignated and amended by Doc. No. FAA-2019-1100; Amdt. No. 48-3, 86 FR 4504, Jan. 15, 2021]

§ 48.110 Application.

- (a) **Required information.** Each applicant for a Certificate of Aircraft Registration issued under this part must submit all of the following information to the Registry:
 - (1) Applicant's 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 of the authorized representative. If the applicant or authorized representative cannot receive mail at a physical address, then provide a mailing address.
 - (3) Applicant's email address or, for applicants other than individuals, the email address of the authorized representative.

- (4) Applicant's telephone number(s) and, for an applicant other than an individual, the telephone number(s) of the authorized representative.
 - (5) The aircraft manufacturer and model name.
 - (6) For any standard remote identification unmanned aircraft, the serial number issued by the manufacturer of the unmanned aircraft in accordance with the design and production requirements of part 89 of this chapter. The serial number provided in this application must not be listed on more than one Certificate of Aircraft Registration at the same time.
 - (7) For any unmanned aircraft equipped with a remote identification broadcast module, the serial number issued by the manufacturer of the remote identification broadcast module in accordance with the design and production requirements of part 89 of this chapter. An applicant may submit the serial number of more than one remote identification broadcast module as part of the application for aircraft registration under § 48.105. The serial number of a remote identification broadcast module provided in this application must not be listed on more than one Certificate of Aircraft Registration at the same time.
 - (8) Other information as required by the Administrator.
- (b) **Provision of information.** The information identified in paragraph (a) of this section must be submitted to the Registry through the web-based small unmanned aircraft registration system in a form and manner prescribed by the Administrator.
- (c) **Issuance of Certificate of Aircraft Registration.** The FAA will issue a Certificate of Aircraft Registration upon completion of the application requirements provided in paragraph (a) of this section.

[Doc. No. FAA-2015-7396; Amdt. No. 48-1; 80 FR 78645, Dec. 16, 2015. Redesignated and amended by Doc. No. FAA-2019-1100; Amdt. No. 48-3, 86 FR 4504, Jan. 15, 2021]

§ 48.115 Requirement to maintain current information.

- (a) The holder of a Certificate of Aircraft Registration must ensure that the information provided under § 48.110 remains accurate.
- (b) The holder of a Certificate of Aircraft Registration must update the information using the web-based small unmanned aircraft registration system within 14 calendar days of the following:
 - (1) A change in the information provided under § 48.110.
 - (2) When aircraft registration requires cancellation for any reason including sale or transfer, destruction, or export.

[Doc. No. FAA-2015-7396; Amdt. No. 48-1; 80 FR 78645, Dec. 16, 2015. Redesignated and amended by Doc. No. FAA-2019-1100; Amdt. No. 48-3, 86 FR 4504, Jan. 15, 2021]

§ 48.120 Invalid registration.

The registration of a small unmanned aircraft is invalid if, at the time it is made -

- (a) The aircraft is registered in a foreign country;
- (b) The applicant is not the owner, except when the applicant registers on behalf of an owner who is under 13 years of age;

- (c) The applicant is not eligible to submit an application under this part; or
- (d) The interest of the applicant in the aircraft was created by a transaction that was not entered into in good faith, but rather was made to avoid (with or without the owner's knowledge) compliance with 49 U.S.C. 44101-44103.

§ 48.125 Foreign civil aircraft.

Except for corporations eligible to register under § 48.20(c), the FAA will issue a recognition of ownership to persons required to comply with the provisions of this part pursuant to an authorization to operate issued under part 375 of this title. The recognition of ownership does not have the effect of U.S. aircraft registration.

Subpart C - Aircraft Marking

§ 48.200 General.

- (a) No person may operate a small unmanned aircraft registered in accordance with this part unless the aircraft displays a unique identifier in accordance with the requirements of § 48.205 of this subpart.
- (b) A unique identifier is one of the following:
 - (1) The registration number issued to an individual or the registration number issued to the aircraft by the Registry upon completion of the registration process provided by this part; or
 - (2) If authorized by the Administrator, the small unmanned aircraft serial number provided with the application for Certificate of Aircraft Registration under § 48.110(a).

[Doc. No. FAA-2015-7396; Amdt. No. 48-1; 80 FR 78645, Dec. 16, 2015. Redesignated and amended by Doc. No. FAA-2019-1100; Amdt. No. 48-3, 86 FR 4504, Jan. 15, 2021]

§ 48.205 Display and location of unique identifier.

- (a) The unique identifier must be maintained in a condition that is legible.
- (b) The unique identifier must be affixed to the small unmanned aircraft by any means necessary to ensure that it will remain affixed for the duration of each operation.
- (c) The unique identifier must be legibly displayed on an external surface of the small unmanned aircraft.

[Doc. No. FAA-2015-7396; Amdt. No. 48-1; 80 FR 78645, Dec. 16, 2015, as amended by Doc. No. FAA-2018-1084, 84 FR 3673, Feb. 13, 2019]