The Leader In Recreational Aviation

Chapter 736 Newsletter for October 2017

FAA SEEKS 'EMERGENCY' ACTION ON DRONES

The FAA has been swamped with requests from Part 107 drone pilots seeking to navigate controlled airspace, and reports of drone safety incidents have also surged. Believing that frustrated drone pilots are flying near airports without waiting for airspace authorization, the agency has sought "emergency" clearance to quickly implement electronic authorization.

In a Federal Register notice published Oct. 11, the FAA sought from the White House Office of Management and Budget authority to put electronic authorization of drone flights in controlled airspace on a fast track. The agency stated that with delays of up to 90 days for approvals, "non-compliant" operations have increased sharply, and the FAA now receives an average of more than 250 drone-related safety reports per month, and about 1,500 over a six-month period.

The FAA implemented Part 107 in August 2016 after a lengthy rulemaking process, and this year began publishing "grids" developed in collaboration with airport tower staff that depict the maximum safe and permissible altitudes for unmanned aircraft operations. The FAA published those maps through an online portal for delivering unmanned aircraft data to aviators, and has long planned to use the UAS maps to automate airspace authorization requests through the Low Altitude Authorization and Notification Capability (LAANC) system. Remote pilots certificated under Part 107 who submit requests that comport with the published limitations through the current system can expect approval, the FAA has said.

The FAA had expected to take until the end of the year to implement the electronic authorization of LAANC, but the abundance of reported safety incidents and the backlog of airspace authorization requests received online created a logjam that the FAA hopes to clear by expediting the LAANC implementation.

"Due to the pressing safety consideration of reducing safety reports due to non-compliant UAS operations, the FAA cannot wait the normal 90 days of public comment," the agency stated in the *Federal Register* notice Oct. 11. "Therefore, FAA is requesting (Office of Management and Budget) approval of this collection of information 7 days after publication of this Notice in the Federal Register. Upon OMB approval of its Emergency clearance request, FAA will follow the normal clearance procedures for the information collection associated with LAANC."

The FAA said LAANC will enable the agency to grant "near-real time authorizations for the vast majority of operations," and called immediate implementation of LAANC "vital to the safety of the National Airspace System because it would (1) encourage compliance with 14 CFR 107.41 by speeding up the time to process authorization requests (2) reduce distraction of controllers working in the Tower, and (3) increase public access and capacity of the system to grant authorizations."

The FAA expects LAANC will reduce "non-compliant" operations by at least 30 percent, cutting the number of reported safety incidents by 450 in the coming six months.

The FAA notice was published a week after the NTSB confirmed the first midair collision involving a drone and a manned aircraft, a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter that was patrolling New York Harbor during the United Nations General Assembly in September. The helicopter landed safely despite main rotor damage, and a piece of the drone was recovered from inside the helicopter that led investigators to the operator with help from drone maker DJI.

The area where the Sept. 21 collision took place does not appear to be within an area where a drone flight could have been authorized, given the tightly controlled New York Class B airspace and the presence of flight restrictions to protect the U.N. General Assembly. The U.S. Army, NTSB, and FAA are all investigating, and no sanctions have been announced against the pilot, who is cooperating with the investigation, NTSB officials said.

The FAA expects to process 124,000 airspace authorization requests in 2017, increasing 35 percent per year in following years. From September 2016 through July, 20,566 authorization requests had been received, and more than 6,000 remain in the process. The FAA expects that backlog will exceed 25,000 requests within the coming six months in the absence of a more automated system.

FAA Safety Team | Safer Skies Through Education

Wrong Surface Landing Incidents
Notice Number: NOTC7400

Recently, the FAA Air Traffic Organization (ATO) has advised of an increase in, "Wrong Surface Landing Incidents" in the National Airspace System (NAS).

Incidents include:

Landing on a runway other than the one specified in the ATC clearance (frequently after the pilot provides a correct read back)

Landing on a Taxiway

Lining up with the wrong runway or with a taxiway during approach

Landing at the wrong airport

Investigations of these incidents reveal some common factors that pilots should be aware of so we can try and reduce future occurrences:

Airports with parallel runways are prone to wrong surface landings

Parallel runways with different dimensions and/or surface color may confuse pilots

Offset parallel runways may be problematic due to the potential of the longer or wider runway being more prominent

Airports with similar configurations and in close proximity are prone to wrong airport landings

Air Traffic Controllers do their best to monitor aircraft position but cannot always visually confirm which runway a pilot is lined up with (particularly with close parallel runways)

Pilots with previous experience or knowledge at an airport may be prone to "Expectation Bias" which will lead them to identify the runway they are expecting versus the runway assigned

Pilots' assigned runways that are rarely used may have difficulty identifying the correct surface and are prone to error even if they use the airport frequently

Cockpit distractions during approach and landing phase of flight are frequent factors in wrong surface landings

Pilots of any rating or experience level may be prone to a wrong surface landing, but reports indicate that pilots with less experience are more frequently cited

Best Operating Practices pilots can use to help avoid wrong surface landings:

Be prepared! Preflight planning should include familiarization with destination and alternate airports to include airport location, runway layout, NOTAMs, weather conditions (to include anticipated landing runway)

All pilots should recognize they are prone to a wrong surface landing and take steps to prevent errors on <u>every</u> approach and landing

Reduce cockpit distractions during approach and landing phase of flight. Avoid all unnecessary conversation with passengers. Full attention to flying duties!

Have a technique to verify you are approaching the correct airport and lined up with the correct runway and practice this on every flight

Use visual cues such as verifying right versus left runways; runway magnetic orientation; known landmarks versus the location of the airport or runway

Be on the lookout for "Expectation Bias"   If approaching a familiar airport, ATC might clear you for a different approach or landing runway. Be careful not to fall back on your past experiences. Verify!

Pay attention to in flight updates including ATIS and possible runway changes based on wind or other factors

Always include the assigned landing runway and your call sign in the read back to a landing clearance

When cleared to land early or prior to entering the pattern, exercise care and verify with ATC if there is any doubt as you get closer to the airport

Reduction in visibility including the glare from the sun can create visual challenges that lead to errors

Night time conditions also create visual challenges that can trick even an experienced professional pilot. Be prepared!

Utilize navigation equipment such as Localizer/GPS (if available) to verify proper runway alignment

Request assistance from ATC if experiencing any disorientation or if unsure of position

On short final, make final verification of correct runway and ensure that no vehicles or aircraft are present

If you are ever in doubt of your approach or landing on the assigned runway, perform a go around procedure and promptly notify ATC

When pilots approach a towered airport for landing, an assigned runway is issued followed by the pilot's visual identification of the surface. Subsequently a landing clearance is issued by ATC to be followed by landing on the correct runway. The goal of this sequence is to ensure safe separation of aircraft at locations with high concentrations of air traffic. In each phase of the process there are chances of miscommunication and visual mistakes which can lead to the aircraft arriving on the wrong surface. The subsequent risks involve traffic conflicts and possible collisions which are unacceptable in the National Airspace System (NAS).

All human beings are capable of error and mistakes can have a way of appearing when we least expect them. It is vitally important for all airmen to prepare themselves and take proactive steps to prevent error and also to recognize it, when necessary, followed by immediate corrective action.

In conclusion, this Notice/FAASTBLAST is to alert pilots to hazards associated with landing at the wrong airport or on the wrong surface at the destination. Fortunately, there have been no recent accidents associated with this issue, but the risk remains and should be a priority for all airmen. Please exercise care on every approach/landing and help prevent Wrong Surface Landings in the NAS!

For more information please refer to SAFO 17010 Incorrect Airport Surface Approaches and Landings
 https://www.faasafety.gov/files/notices/2017/Oct/SAFO17010.pdf

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held in the Spring of 2018.

With a paucity of members still up north, we will take a respite from monthly meetings until the "snowbirds" fly home. The announcement of when and where will be seen here in a few months.

Have a nice winter.