

# Top Issues in 2020: Drones and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

## PART 107 OPERATIONAL WAIVERS

While Part 107 is not expected to go through any major changes in 2020, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has indicated increasing interest in advancing flights beyond the visual line of sight (BVLOS), at night, and over people. Current FAA regulations ban flights outside the operator's BVLOS and flights taking place at night and/or over people, unless a specific Part 107 operational waiver is granted. Commercial operators seeking Part 107 waivers are on the rise with over 3,480 granted. Those seeking to conduct Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) operations outside of Part 107 regulations should be advised to set up an account with the FAA's DroneZone to begin the process.

## LAANC EXPANDED TO NEW AIRPORTS AND RECREATIONAL OPERATORS

The FAA has approved the Low Altitude Authorization and Capability (LAANC) system for recreational UAV operators. LAANC provides quick airspace authorizations for flights at or below 400 feet in controlled airspace by cross-checking requests for flight against multiple data sources. Approved flights are provided a nine-digit authorization code permitting flight at or below 400 feet in the approved airspace. LAANC is available through various third-party apps approved by the FAA. LAANC is available in and around 400 air traffic facilities covering about 600 airports nationwide, for a full listing of airports participating in LAANC, visit <http://faa.gov/uas>.

## RULE ON REMOTE IDENTIFICATION

On December 31, 2019, the FAA released its Notice of Proposed Rulemaking ("NPRM") pertaining to Remote ID. Remote ID refers to the ability of a UAV to provide in-flight, real time identification and location information that people on the ground (e.g. law enforcement and air traffic control) can receive. This is an important building block in UAV air traffic management and general situational awareness in a sky full of drones. More information on this NPRM is forthcoming. In the meantime, any comments should be submitted to the FAA on or before March 2, 2020.

## MEDICAL SAMPLE DELIVERY PROVEN POSSIBLE IN NORTH CAROLINA

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NC DOT) was awarded an Integrated Pilot Program (IPP) in 2018 to test medical sample deliveries via drone. In March 2019, UPS partnered with the NC DOT and related UAV partners and began delivering medical samples via UAV. These flights provide valuable data to the FAA and industry stakeholders regarding flights outside BVLOS and over people, while also navigating other air traffic, such as medical helicopters. These efforts will continue to expand in 2020 as the NC DOT plans to test medical sample UAV deliveries from one medical campus to another, covering over 10 miles.



## HOW WE CAN HELP

UAV companies need a variety of services from navigating the regulatory realm of FAA, state, and local laws, to protecting invaluable technology and data, to raising venture capital, managing contracts, and addressing corporate growth and related HR demands. The services, provided by Michael Best and Michael Best Strategies, can help bolster the industry by providing necessary education and support from the inside out.

## Primary Contacts

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