

"To improve aviation safety in Alaska through education, advocacy, and research."



ALASKAN AVIATION SAFETY FOUNDATION

WINTER 2024

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER, JANUARY 2024



Greetings Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation Members,

Welcome to 2024. Another year has come and gone, and I hope all had a pleasant holiday season. For those of you with hangars, we've had some pretty good flying weather lately. For those of us without hangars, let's just say it's been difficult to keep up with the snowfall this winter. I'm doing my best to keep the tail off the ground, snow off the wings and a positive attitude knowing that our days are getting longer.

Articles: Marshall Severson did some research and wrote a piece to try and answer the question, "Has aviation safety in Alaska improved from 1984 to 2021." It's a good read. I'm not giving you any clues as to what he found. Meanwhile, I did some research and made a few observations on the Alaskan Part 91 and 135 accidents in the NTSB database for 2023. Finally, Mary introduces you to our most recent scholarship winners.

Time to Renew Membership: If you haven't already, it's time to renew your membership for 2024. You can renew online now at: www.aasfonline.org/membership. A new feature with online renewal is the option to sign up for annual auto-renewal. If you choose this option, your credit card will automatically be charged for your AASF membership each January. If your credit card or billing information changes, there is an option on the page to update your account information. To cancel your auto-renewal, you will need to contact the AASF office at aasfonline@gmail.com before December 1st to avoid charges for the following year. If you also elect to give a donation when signing up for auto-renewal, the donation will not be included in the auto-renewal charge for subsequent years, only the cost of your membership dues. A stand-alone donation can be given at any time through the same portal. Note that anyone who signs up for auto-renewal after October 31st will be credited with membership for the following year and dues will not be billed until January. (*Payments processed securely by Square.*)

Pick-Click-Give: It's a new year and time to file for your PFD. Please consider contributing to the Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation through the Pick-Click-Give option. Your contributions help fund our scholarships. Our three \$2000 scholarship winners for 2023 appear on the last page of this newsletter. When you are searching for us at the Pick-Click-Give site, remember to include the 'n' in Alaskan. There's a long alphabetical listing of organizations that begin with Alaska.

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Survey: AASF is conducting a membership survey. By now you should have received a separate email with a link www.surveymonkey.com/r/AASF_Survey to our survey. If you haven't already responded, please take the time to complete the survey. Your response will help vector us in the right direction.

As a 100% volunteer organization, we are always looking for help from our membership. If you would be willing to help us organize or execute one of our seminars, please email us at aasfonline@gmail.com with the subject Volunteer. Most of us have had "teachable incidents" in our aviation careers. Have you had one that you are willing to share with your fellow pilots? If so, we encourage you to contribute to one of our monthly "Safety Spots." We'll be happy to help you write up your story and, if you'd prefer to remain anonymous, that isn't a problem.

I'm looking forward to seeing you all again in April.

*Fly Safe,
Rocky Capozzi
Chairman of the Board*

Pick.
Click.
Give.

Pick.Click.Give. is a great way for Alaskans to support eligible non-profit organizations by donating a portion of their Permanent Fund Dividend to Alaskan causes important to them. We hope you will consider the Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation this year! Your gift to the Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation will help us to continue our mission to 'improve aviation safety through education, advocacy and research,' and can be made in increments of \$25 up to the full amount of your dividend.



Pick.Click.Give. donations can easily be applied during your PFD enrollment (Jan. 1 – Mar. 31) or you can update your already filed PFD application to include a Pick.Click.Give. donation any time until Aug. 31.

Scan the code or go to www.pickclickgive.org for more information on **Pick.Click.Give.** And please remember the Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation when giving this year!

Thank you and Happy New Year!

NEW KENAI/SOLDOTNA CTAF AREA

The FAA is creating a new CTAF Area on the Kenai Peninsula to help reduce the potential of mid-air collisions. The CTAF frequencies of more than two dozen airports changed on December 28, however charting changes won't be made until late March. For more details, and an unofficial map of the area, see:

<https://alaskaairmen.org/faa-establishes-soldotna-ctaf-area-2/>



AIR SAFETY MEMORIES AND ANALYSIS: ARE GENERAL AVIATION AND AIR TAXI FLYING IN ALASKA REALLY SAFER TODAY COMPARED TO THE PAST?

By Marshall Severson, AASF Board Member

My recollections of aircraft accident rates from my youth and early adulthood are of frequent crashes and fatalities in Alaska. In 1974, while packing my parachute for a jump at Oberg Field in Peters Creek, I witnessed the jump plane suffer a low-level engine failure followed immediately by the exiting of all aboard except the pilot, whom we soon found alive with his broken airplane down in the trees by Peters Creek. The results would have been tragic if the unbelted occupants had ridden the Cessna 185 all the way down. They had just enough time to get their canopies open and land safely. Back then there were also numerous crashes where the aircraft structure was basically left intact, but the occupants suffered fatal head injuries from not having restraining shoulder harnesses, and consequently impacting the panel. www.nts.gov/Pages/brief.aspx?ev_id=26091&key=0

Death was no stranger to young families who lost parents, siblings, relatives, and friends. In my mind, and with deepest respects to all who have suffered recent or long ago losses, today is much safer for general aviation (GA) operations than it was in the 70's and 80's. And, also in my mind, there was significantly more flying taking place. I remember one time flying out of Merrill Field over the congested Point Mackenzie area where traffic to and from Merrill, Elmendorf, Anchorage International, and Lake Hood is funneled. I had traffic in every direction, a mix of heavies, fighters and GA aircraft. My windows seemed filled with airplanes and there was literally no direction to turn to make a clean break. I was reminded of when Merrill Field hosted an open land fill on its south side and where numerous gulls loitered about aloft, crowding the pattern. Well, at least drones were not a factor, unlike my near encounter with one years later. www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJwwOHWBW9o There are strategies and techniques to avoid collisions, but that is not the point here. It does seem it was less safe back then. As an opposing consideration, I have been told anecdotally that the current decrease in accidents is due in part to fewer hours flown and in larger capacity aircraft, think PC-12s and Cessna Caravans. Flight hours tell the tale.

Information overload is a common occurrence these days. Being data driven can be enlightening or lead to false assumptions. The advent of smart phones and plethora of broadcast and internet news or pseudo news reporting on a continuous basis might lead some members of the general public to believe GA safety today is deteriorating, and as a colleague of mine in the early 80's was quoted: "...airplanes are falling out of the sky like rain drops." Contributing to angst are reports with actual audio recordings of deteriorating safety due to ATC lapses, operational errors, mechanicals and fatigue.

Since I feel it is much safer to fly today, I thought I would look at some basic statistics on accidents from about 40 years ago and the latest recent data I could find. COVID undoubtedly affected flight hours in 2021, the most recent year flight hour estimates are available, however no extrapolation regarding COVID is included in the calculations.

According to AOPA "...more than 90% of civil aircraft registered in the United States are general aviation aircraft. And, more than 80% of pilots certificated in the U.S. fly general aviation aircraft." The results I have calculated do not discriminate by factors such as maintenance, weather reporting, tail dragger, turbine, personal, business, air taxi, pilot toxicology, or technical progress, etc. They are all in the mix here, just like in real life.

Nationally, AOPA's Air Safety Institute recently issued the newly named McSpadden Report (formerly Nall Report) stating: "The year 2021 saw an increase in total accidents (1,124) of which 202 were fatal. The overall total and fatal accident rates for 2021 continued trending downward, finishing with a total accident rate of 4.28 per 100,000 hours and a fatal accident rate of 0.77 per 100,000 hours. A large increase in flight activity helped mitigate increases in accidents. Overall, flight activity rose from 22.4 million hours in 2020 to 26.4 million hours in 2021." Alaska, "the Flyingest State" accounted for less than 3 percent of all U.S. flight hours.

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(Air Safety Memories continued from page 3)

Nationally, aviation is getting safer, but what about Alaska? For purposes of this Alaska-centric safety analysis, I looked at the FAA General Aviation and Air Taxi Activity surveys for calendar years 1984 and 2021, as well as NTSB accident data. The flight hour information is based on the survey estimates.

Here are some facts:

In calendar year 1984, there were 7684 active GA aircraft in Alaska, flying an average of 162.2 hours each annually for a total of 1,246,714 hours. The NTSB reported 211 Alaskan accidents, of which 21 were fatal.

In calendar year 2021, there was a decrease to 6271 active GA aircraft in Alaska flying a lesser average of 112.3 hours each annually for a total of 704,222 hours (over a half million less total hours flown than in 1984). According to the NTSB, there were 92 accidents of which 7 were fatal.

Reads like it is safer flying today, eh?

Let’s look a little closer at the accident rates and see how much safer it may be these days than it was way back when! We get the rate by comparing the number of accidents annually with the number of hours flown. Rather than providing an analysis utilizing a base of 100,000 hours flown, I will use totals for 1984 and 2021. I am not limiting the accidents to fatal and serious injuries, but rather all NTSB recorded accidents for the periods. Figure 1 shows an approximate 44% decrease in total annual flight hours by GA and air taxi pilots in Alaska from 1984 to 2021.

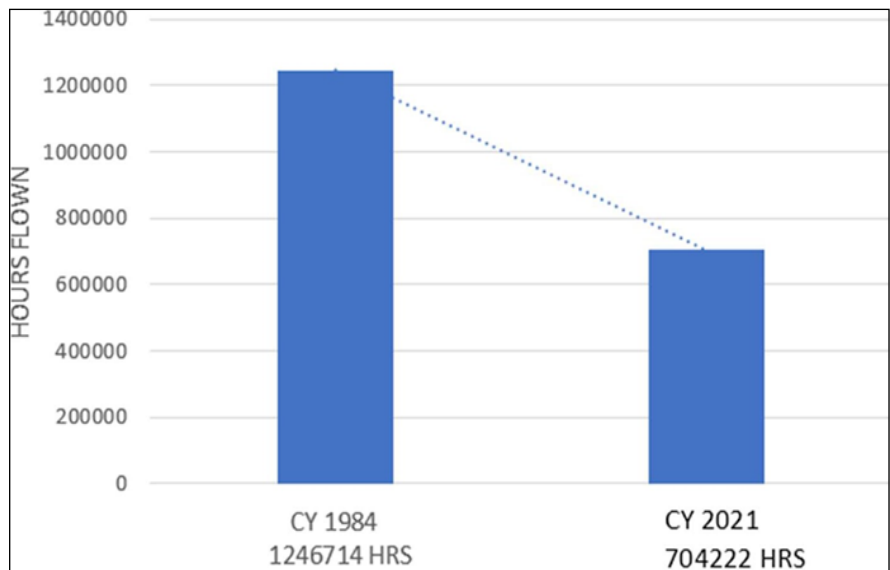


Figure 1. Alaska GA and Air Taxi Hours Flown, 1984 to 2021.

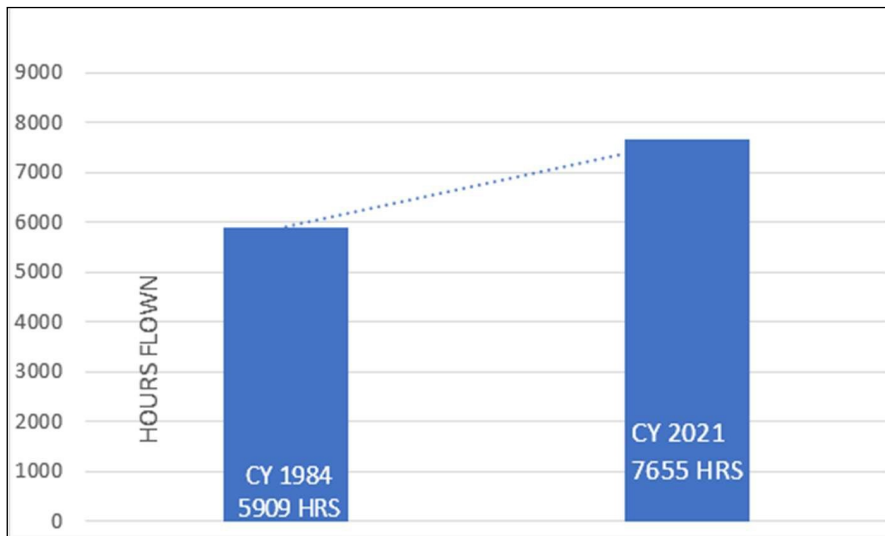


Figure 2. Alaska GA and Air Taxi Hours Flown per Accident, 1984 and 2021.

When we look at the number of accidents compared to the number of hours flown (# hours flown/# accidents), we can see approximately a 30% increase in hours flown per accident in Alaska from 1984 to 2021, as shown in Figure 2. Of note is the significant decrease in total hours flown. There was significantly more flying in 1984 than in 2021.

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(Air Safety Memories continued from page 4)

Table 1 shows a comparison of aircraft, pilots, hours, accidents, and fatal accidents in Alaska between 1984 and 2021. There were 57% fewer accidents in 2021 compared to 1984, and 66% fewer fatal accidents in 2021 than 1984.

Alaska GA & Air Taxi Comparisons Year to Year	Year	
	1984	2021
Total Pilots- All Certificates except Remote	11959	9153
Active GA Aircraft	7684	6271
Average Hours Flown Per Aircraft	162.2	112.3
Accidents	211	92
Fatal Accidents	21	7
Hours Flown per Accident	5,908.6	7,654.6
Hours Flown per Fatal Accident	59,367.3	100,603

Table 1. Alaska GA & Air Taxi Comparison, Calendar Years 1984 and 2021

Conclusion: Certain flight risks will always challenge flying in Alaska, but technological innovation and better-informed aeronautical decision making can help mitigate the risks. Although we don't know how much a part air taxis or GA have played in the improved safety statistics, many advances have been accomplished to make aircraft and the aviation infrastructure safer since 1984, such as weather cameras, landing area upgrades, widespread use of GPS, ADS-B, and better communications capabilities between pilots and Flight Service Stations and air traffic. There are many other factors, such as the potential for fewer hours flown due larger capacity aircraft, which may also contribute to these findings.

Utilizing a comparison of total hours flown per accident, it was indeed safer to fly GA during 2021 in Alaska compared to 1984. (See Figure 2). If you have thoughts about what has made aviation safer, ideas on how to keep the safety improvements coming, or would like to reminisce, or do some hangar flying about the old days of flying in Alaska, please contact the Safety Foundation at aasfonline@gmail.com

Websites utilized for this study:

<https://carol.nts.gov/>

<https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA168582.pdf>

<https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA156326.pdf>

https://www.faa.gov/data_research/aviation_data_statistics/general_aviation/cy2021

<https://www.aopa.org/training-and-safety/air-safety-institute/accident-analysis/richard-g-mcspadden-report/mcspadden%20report%20figure%20view?category=all&year=2021&condition=all&report=true>



Note: The data in this study consists of estimates, roundings, and reports subject to process accuracy and may differ from other sources.

2023 AASF SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Thanks to our members and the generous donors who contribute to the Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation's scholarship fund, this year we were able to provide three scholarships in the amount of \$2,000 each in memory of Tom Wardleigh, Ginny Hyatt, and Ellen Paneok. These scholarships are available for people working toward careers in Alaska as maintainers, pilots, air traffic controllers, or aviation management. We are pleased to announce the scholarship winners for 2023:

The **Tom Wardleigh Memorial Scholarship** winner was **Manuela Jay**. She lives in Eagle River and is finishing her master's degree in environmental science at Alaska Pacific University and plans to become a pilot biologist for the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, or Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Manuela will use the scholarship to help obtain her commercial certificate.

Ginny Hyatt Memorial Scholarship was awarded to **Debra Ylijoki**. Debra lives in Anchorage and has her private pilot certificate and will use the scholarship to continue her flight training at Merrill Field. Her goal is to become a medevac pilot in Alaska where she can serve and connect Alaskan communities through aviation.

Ghinali Seyrak was the recipient of the **Ellen Paneok Memorial Scholarship**. After starting pilot ground school in Unalakleet, Ghinali moved to Anchorage and will use the scholarship to complete her flight instructor certificate while enrolled at UAA. She would like to instruct in Alaska and inspire other women to fly.

We are inspired by the enthusiasm and energy of these pilots, and we wish them safe, happy, and rewarding careers in Alaska. Thanks again to our members who help tomorrow's aviation leaders accomplish their goals. If you would like to contribute to the scholarship fund, please click [here](#). If you or someone you know could use some help in the form of a scholarship, and are 1) Participating in an aviation related program with a qualified instructor or at an accredited college, university, trade school, or training center, 2) Intend to make aviation a career in Alaska, 3) Has spent at least two of the past three years in continuous official residency in Alaska, and 4) Has completed at least two semesters, or 30% of the work towards their professional goal, please click [here](#) to apply. The application deadline is July 31, 2024.



PHOTO TO LEFT: 2023 Scholarship Recipients (L to R): Debra Ylijoki, Hyatt Scholarship Recipient, Ghinali Seyrak, Paneok Scholarship Recipient; and Manuela Jay, Wardleigh Scholarship Recipient.



PHOTO TO RIGHT: AASF Board Members and 2023 Scholarship Recipients (L to R): Marshall Severson, Board Member; Rocky Capozzi, Board Chair; Debra Ylijoki, Hyatt Scholarship Recipient, Ghinali Seyrak, Paneok Scholarship Recipient; Manuela Jay, Wardleigh Scholarship Recipient; Mary O'Connor, Board Secretary; Gary Bennett, Board Member.

A LOOK BACK AT ALASKA PART 91 AND PART 135 ACCIDENT EXPERIENCE IN 2023

By Rocky Capozzi, Chairman of the Board

Through the end of November 2023, Part 91 Airplane operations produced a single fatal accident resulting in 2 fatalities. 45 Part 91 airplane accidents had no injuries. On a less cheerful note, 30 of the 54 Part 91 airplane accidents occurred during the landing phase of flight. Of the 30 landing accidents, 18 were off airport and 12 were on an airport or seaplane base. Fortunately, nothing greater than minor injuries were associated with the landing accidents.

The airplanes didn't fare as well as the pilots, most were substantially damaged and some totaled. Commonalities included loss of control on the ground, nose-overs, and crosswind control problems. Poor runway definition of snow-covered runways and some flat light conditions were factors in winter landing and takeoff accidents. Pilots experienced problems judging the depth of the snow and identifying runway edges. In all seasons, tail-wheel accidents far outnumber tricycle gear accidents. Several pilots admitted that they would not attempt to land or takeoff under similar circumstances in the future.

Two of the highest profile Alaskan accidents in 2022 were the [Jim Tweto](#), accident located about 30 miles northeast of Shaktoolik, and the [Eugene Peltola Jr](#) accident, located about 70 nautical miles northwest of Holy Cross. The two accidents shared some commonalities. Both flights were Part 135 flights shuttling hunters, gear, and meat from remote strips. Both airplanes departed from remote strips of less than 1000 feet on sloping uneven ground. Both crashes occurred shortly after takeoff on the second flight of the day from their respective strips.



Image from the Peltola preliminary report.

Both takeoffs were witnessed by ground party. In both cases, the ground party said the winds were gusty and variable as did other pilots operating in the area that day. Neither ground party heard anything abnormal with respect to engine operation. Preliminary review of the wreckage indicates both engines were producing power at impact.

Both pilots were veterans operating at the “varsity” level of Alaska back country piloting. Based on the ground party observations, I’m inclined to believe they both fell victim to gusting winds and or downdrafts shortly after breaking ground. It stands to reason that they couldn’t have been too far above stall speed at liftoff when taking off with a heavy load from a short, rough strip. My takeaway is simple, if the wind can bring down these two veterans, I know it can get me, too. It’s killed too many pilots over the years. See the [August 2022 Safety Spot](#) article, “Wind is Weather, Too.”

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(Accident Experience in 2023 continued from page 7)

The data below is derived from the NTSB accident data base that can accessed at this link [NTSB Aviation Investigation Search](#). The accident date range is 1 January – 29 November 2023.

Alaska Airplane Accident Summary 1 January – 29 November 2023				
Part 91 Airplane Accidents - 54 Total				
Accident Highest Injury Category				
Fatal	Serious	Minor	None	Total Fatalities
1	1	7	45	2
Phase of Flight (top 3)				
Landing	Takeoff	Maneuvering		
30	12	4		
Part 135 Airplane Accidents - 12 Total				
Accident Highest Injury Category				
Fatal	Serious	Minor	None	Total Fatalities
4	0	1	7	7
Phase of Flight (top 3)				
Takeoff*	Landing	Enroute		
4	3	2		

* The NTSB uses ICAO phase of flight definitions placing the Tweto accident in the “Climb” phase. Without detailed knowledge of the ICAO phase of flight definitions, most pilots would classify it as a Takeoff accident. I placed the Tweto accident in the “Takeoff” phase because the description of his accident is like the description of the Peltola accident. Both accidents occurred shortly after breaking ground.

The only Part 91 fatal accident, a [B36TC](#) , is a bit mysterious. The pilot was on an IFR flight plan talking to ATC between 14,000 and 15,000 feet when communications were lost. The pilot had previously confirmed he had oxygen on board. The crash site was eventually located on snow- and ice-covered terrain.

Overall, Alaskan Part 91 airplane pilots’ accident experience in 2023 was better than 2022. Through the end of November 2023 there were 54 Part 91 accidents versus 62 over the same period in 2022. There were 7 Fatal accidents with 7 fatalities in 2022 versus a single fatal with 2 fatalities in 2023.



Figure 2 Aerial view of fragmented wreckage, partially submerged in Lake Itinik (North Slope Borough Search and Rescue photo).

Part 91 and 135 Helicopter Accidents: The most significant helicopter accident of the year occurred on July 20, 2023, resulting in 4 fatalities. The [Bell 206L-4](#) operating under Part 135 crashed while transporting 3 State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources personnel.

The helicopter crashed in the shallow waters of Lake Itinik located about 30 miles east of Wainwright. The crash site was located the next day by the North Slope Borough Search and Rescue. The wreckage was recovered for further examination. The cause remains undetermined as of November 29, 2023.

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(Accident Experience in 2023 continued from page 8)

Part 91 Helicopter Accidents - 1 Total				
Accident Highest Injury Category				
Fatal	Serious	Minor	None	Total Fatalities
0	0	0	1	0
Phase of Flight		Takeoff - 1		
Part 135 Helicopter Accidents - 3 Total				
Accident Highest Injury Category				
Fatal	Serious	Minor	None	Total Fatalities
1	0	2*	0	4
Phase of Flight		Enroute - 3		

*One helicopter operating under Part 135 experienced a mid-air collision with an airplane operating under Part 91. Separate reports were generated for each aircraft. The summary table above counts the mid-air helicopter accident in Part 135.

A second helicopter crash was notable for good fortune. A [Bell 206L-4](#) operating Part 135 crashed following a mid-air collision with a Beaver Mid-Air. Fortunately, the pilot suffered only minor injuries. The Beaver landed successfully. The picture to the right comes from the NTSB preliminary report.



Figure 2. Bell 206L-4 N193AL at accident site. Photo courtesy of Opera-

Overall, there were 4 helicopter accidents in both 2022 and 2023. Each year produced a single fatal accident resulting in 4 fatalities in 2023 and 1 fatality in 2022.

Observations: I gained no profound insights from studying the 2023 accidents, but the data leads me to make several observations. Landing accidents are generally low energy and highly survivable.

- 1) If you find water in your fuel during preflight, think hard about whether you need to fly.
- 2) Sumping a single tank until the fuel is clear is no guarantee that the rest of the fuel system and or carburetor are water free. See the [September 2022 Safety Spot article](#), “Contaminated Fuel.”
- 3) Engines losing full or partial power contribute to a good number of accidents every year. At the first sign of engine trouble, get it on the ground and let your mechanic sort it out. If you are on the ground and the engine is acting funny, stay on the ground. No test flights.
- 4) Don’t fly in the back country without a reliable satellite communication device. If you have not or cannot file a flight plan, it’s essential to let someone reliable know what your plan is and when they can expect to hear from you.

That’s all for now. Safe travels,

Rocky A Gypso

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS (UAS) REGISTRATION AND REMOTE IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

If you plan to operate a drone in United States airspace and if it weighs more than 250 grams (.55 lbs.) it must be registered. Also, as of September 16, 2023, FAA's remote identification requirements for drones became effective. However, FAA has recognized compliance roll-out limitations and "will consider all factors in determining whether to take enforcement action through March 16, 2024." One roll-out limitation cited was: "...lack of approved FAA -Recognized Identification Areas (FRIAs)". FRIAs are areas where drones can be flown without Remote ID. Another factor cited was limited availability of broadcast modules.

For those manned aircraft operators who might wish to be able to see drone traffic similar to an ADS-B presentation on an iPad, be aware that due to the potential for frequency saturation "... unmanned aircraft operators, with limited exceptions, are prohibited from using ADS-B Out or transponders."

https://www.faa.gov/uas/getting_started/remote_id



FAA, ALASKA FLIGHT SERVICE ADDS inREACH DEVICES TO 2 WAY TEXTING

Previously limited to cellular phones or SPOT X satellite messaging devices, FAA Alaska Flight Service recently expanded their 2 Way Texting capabilities to include inReach satellite devices. A master flight plan must be on file to participate. In addition to SOS messaging, flight plans can now be activated, amended or closed via the devices.

https://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/ato/service_units/systemops/fs/alaskan/alaska/esrs-ak

VIRGINIA HAS SAR ADS-B COVERAGE DOWN TO 500 FEET

The Civil Air Patrol in partnership with uAvionix Corporation has deployed an ADS-B SAR receiver network on both 1090Mhz and 978Mhz in Virginia that allows them ADS-B low altitude aircraft position reception. The data is transmitted to the CAP's National Radar Analysis Team server at Maxwell Air Force Base where the information is integrated with FAA data, in order to reduce SAR response times.

In Alaska, the challenges of masking terrain, harsh/roadless/wilderness environment, and lack of stable power access, may make such an accomplishment only an unfulfilled dream here, until ground-based units are superseded by satellite service.

<https://www.gpsworld.com/uavionix-cap-collaborate-to-expand-low-altitude-aircraft-data-for-search-and-rescue-missions/#:~:text=Virginia%20is%20the%20first%20state,Ramsey%2C%20managing%20director%2C%20uAvionix>

CONVECTIVE WEATHER PRODUCT SURVEY

The FAA's Aviation Weather Demonstration and Evaluation (AWDE) Services team is gathering feedback, via a survey, on convective weather products. The goal is to get user feedback to aid in determining overall preference of convective weather products, identify information requirements needed to support decision making, and identify which, if any, convective weather products are not being used. The data collected will be analyzed and reported as group data. No personal identifying information will be collected or reported. The survey should not take more than 5 minutes to complete.

The link to the survey can be found below and is active as of the time this item was written.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QSV8269>

Contact: Jill.F-ctr.Miller@faa.gov

WANT TO INCREASE YOUR OPPORTUNITIES IN AVIATION? CONSIDER A REMOTE PILOT LICENSE!

Winter can be a tough time to feel like an aviator – time spent sweeping airplane wings, shoveling tie downs, and watching snow fall can leave us feeling like spectators instead of pilots. One way to freshen up your flight knowledge and exercise the aviation half of your brain is to obtain a remote pilot certificate (RPC). If you are a pilot (any level except a student pilot) with a current flight review (within the past 24 months) you can take an [online course](#), print a copy of the course completion certificate, and apply for the remote pilot certificate through IACRA or using a paper application, meet with a flight instructor, a designated pilot examiner, or the Flight Standards District Office and receive your temporary certificate. With that, you can start exercising the privileges of the remote pilot certificate.



Photo credit: FAA

Obtaining a remote pilot license requires pilots to learn new information or refresh their knowledge about drone operation, airspace regulations, and safety procedures. Developing the skills to takeoff, fly, and land a drone, or an unmanned aerial vehicle can be a worthy initial goal, but beyond that, opportunities for working with drones are constantly growing. In addition to the obvious applications for aerial photography and last mile delivery of items, drones are being used by construction companies to [inspect churches](#) and other buildings for repairs, on farms to [monitor crop growth](#), by insurance companies to [determine claim payouts](#), by search and rescue teams to [locate lost people](#) and animal response teams to [locate lost pets](#), and by Alaska's Department of Transportation to [monitor avalanches](#). The wide variety of operations means opportunities to employ drones for tasks that are dirty,

dangerous, or dull will only increase. With the rise of drone technology, there has been an increase in demand for remote pilots, and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requires remote pilots to obtain a license before operating a drone for commercial purposes. Having a remote pilot license can open up new job prospects, with earning potential, time commitments, experience, and skill level requirements dependent on the services provided. Obtaining a remote pilot license can be a great way for pilots to refresh their aviation knowledge, expand their horizons, and explore new opportunities. It can provide legal compliance, increased job opportunities, improved safety, increased earning potential, flexibility, and new skills. If you are a pilot looking to explore new opportunities, obtaining a remote pilot license is worth considering.

For more information from the FAA about everything drone, click [here](#). AOPA has some great information on remote pilot certification [here](#), and for ideas on what you can do with a remote pilot license, click [here](#).

The Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation supports and welcomes remote pilots. If you'd like to see or hear more about operations and opportunities, please let us know at aasfonline@gmail.com!



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