



NEWS RELEASE

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City receives operational authorization from FAA to begin UAS training

Public may see FAA authorized, City UAS aircraft flying above Barfield Park

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. — The City of Murfreesboro has received a Certificate of Authorization (COA) to begin training Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) vehicles in an FAA approved area for governmental operations. The training by an FAA-certified pilot will be conducted in Barfield Crescent Park beginning October 14, 2015. The public may see UAS training flights for testing capabilities flying in uncontrolled airspace over the park.

“UAS technology is growing daily in uses and applications that make governmental operations more effective, efficient and potentially life-saving,” said City I-T Director Chris Lilly. “The City of Murfreesboro has secured proper FAA certification to not only ensure that privacy, civil rights and liberties are protected but that city personnel who operate UAS are appropriately trained and supervised under certified guidelines.”

The City of Murfreesboro has received approval for civilian-operated aircraft to train for a wide range of roles. The current program will be for training only. If approved for more than training purposes, the City hopes to utilize UAS for a wide range of support services including Water & Sewer Department surveying, GPS land mapping, fire suppression, searches for missing persons, and disasters.

The City of Murfreesboro began the lengthy process of certification with the organization of an advisory group in the fall of 2014 to research the requirements for public operations or “governmental” operations of UAS. Additional information can be found on the FAA website at <http://www.faa.gov/uas>. Below is a brief description of public aircraft operations under federal statute.

[Public Aircraft Operations](#) are limited by federal statute to certain government operations within U.S. airspace. Title 49 U.S.C. § 40102(a)(41) provides the definition of "Public Aircraft" and § 40125 provides the qualifications for public aircraft status. Whether an operation qualifies as a public aircraft operation is determined on a flight-by-flight basis, under the terms of the statute. The considerations when making this determination are aircraft ownership, the operator, the purpose of the flight, and the persons on board the aircraft.

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For public aircraft operations, the FAA issues a Certificate of Authorization (COA) that permits public agencies and organizations to operate a particular aircraft, for a particular purpose, in a particular area. COAs usually are issued for a specific period. The City of Murfreesboro received FAA authorization Aug. 5, 2015 for a 2-year certificate ending Aug. 4, 2017.

The 22-page COA includes a list of policies and procedures for the City's UAS System operations. Among the FAA requirements for training, pilots must complete Private Pilot Ground School and pass a knowledge exam. Pilots must also receive a Class 2 Medical Certificate before flying the aircraft for training purposes. The City's UAS training will be conducted with a unique UAS test vehicle known as a YUNEEC Q500 model.

Under FAA regulations, UAS are restricted from flying over 400 feet above ground level (AGL) to avoid contact with small engine planes which must fly above 500 feet. All flights will have a limit of ½ of a nautical mile.

To maintain safety, the UAS pilot must file a Notice to Airmen known as a NOTAM before flying. For the City of Murfreesboro the NOTAM will be via telephone 72 to 48 hours before the training flight. The pilot must also have the ability to maintain constant communications with the Murfreesboro Municipal and Nashville International airports during training operations.

Among other policy requirements:

- A maximum of one unmanned aircraft will be controlled.
- A Pilot-in-Command (PIC) is the person who has final authority and responsibility for the operation and safety of flight.
- The PIC must conduct a pre-takeoff briefing as applicable prior to each launch.
- All operations will be conducted in compliance with Title 14 CFR Part 91.
- All operations must be conducted in visual meteorological conditions.

To access a complete list of the policy and procedures, including the full 22-page City of Murfreesboro Certificate of Waiver or Authorization (COA), simply click this link <http://www.murfreesborotn.gov/certificate>.

For City News online, visit www.Murfreesborotn.gov.

Photos attached:

1. *Yuneeec Q500.jpg*
2. *Yuneeec Q5002.jpg*

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