

Alicia Calzada for Texas Press Messenger: Know the State's Rules Before Launching Drones in Texas

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The journalism world celebrated this summer when the Federal Aviation Administration enacted its long-awaited drone rules, clearing the way for the use of unmanned aerial systems (UAS or drones) for newsgathering.

But before journalists — particularly those in Texas — deploy drones as reporting tools, they should first familiarize themselves with key aspects of the FAA's drone regulations and other laws. Texas has its own UAS restrictions.

Drone journalists must obtain a "Remote Pilot Certificate." Most journalists will do this by passing an "aeronautical knowledge test" at an FAA-approved testing center, a list of which can be found at this link: https://www.faa.gov/training_testing/testing/media/test_centers.pdf

Once certified, journalists still face limits on when and where they can fly drones. Without a waiver, for example, drones can only be operated in the daytime and may not be operated "over" people who are not involved in flying the UAS. Notably, the rule does not provide a limit as to how close to people the UAS can get, so long as it is not "over" people. The FAA has specifically noted in an FAQ that the news media can request a waiver of these sorts of limitations but "will need to provide sufficient mitigations to ensure public safety".

Texas journalists take note: the state has its own UAS restrictions, which, arguably, limit the use of drones by journalists.

Excerpted from *Texas Press Messenger*. To read the full article, please [click here](#).