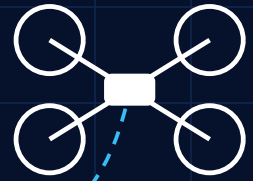


SKYEYES

Drone Business Library



Start and Run a Drone Services Business

Certification, airspace, insurance, pricing models, contracts, safety and scaling, with worksheets.

FLAGSHIP GUIDE

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*Educational guide, not legal, tax or insurance advice. Rules change; every rule cited links to its official source.
No earnings claims, no invented market rates.*

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CHAPTER 2

Part 107 remote pilot certification

To fly commercially under Part 107 you need a Remote Pilot Certificate with a small UAS rating, and you must carry it (with identification) whenever you exercise its privileges ^[1]. Someone without a certificate may manipulate the controls only under the direct supervision of a certificated remote pilot in command who can immediately take over ^[1].

Eligibility

Under §107.61 and the FAA's pilot page, you must be at least 16 years old, be able to read, speak, write and understand English, and be in a physical and mental condition to fly safely ^[1,10].

The process, step by step

1. **Get an FAA Tracking Number (FTN)** by creating a profile in IACRA, the FAA's airman application system ^[10,11].
2. **Schedule the knowledge test** at an FAA-approved Knowledge Testing Center. The test is called "Unmanned Aircraft General – Small (UAG)" ^[10].
3. **Pass the test.** Study from the Remote Pilot Airman Certification Standards (ACS), which lists every knowledge area the test draws from ^[12].
4. **Complete FAA Form 8710-13** in IACRA using the 17-digit exam ID from your test report. The FAA notes the ID can take up to 48 hours to appear in the system ^[10].
5. **TSA security check.** The application goes through a security background check ^[10].
6. **Temporary, then permanent certificate.** You can print a temporary certificate from IACRA once it is issued; the permanent card arrives by mail ^[10].

What the test covers

The ACS organizes the knowledge test into areas including regulations, airspace and operating requirements, weather, loading and performance, and operations (for example radio communications, airport operations, emergency procedures, crew resource management, aeronautical decision-making, physiology and maintenance) ^[12]. Learn to read a sectional chart: airspace questions are a large part of what you will use every working day.

Already a manned-aircraft pilot?

If you hold a Part 61 pilot certificate (other than student) and are current on your flight review, you can take the FAA's free online initial training course (ALC-451) instead of the knowledge test, then apply through IACRA ^[10,1].

Staying current: recurrent training

To keep exercising your certificate you must complete recurrent training every 24 calendar months ^[1,10]. The FAA offers it free online through the FAA Safety Team: ALC-677 for most remote pilots, ALC-515 for Part 61 pilots ^[10,13]. Put the due date on your calendar the day you finish; your insurance carrier and some clients will ask for proof.

Pilots who earned their certificate before April 6, 2021 need to have completed updated training or testing after that date to fly at night under §107.29 ^[1]. The current recurrent course covers it.

Worksheet 1. Certification tracker

Fill this in as you go. Keep a copy with your business records.

FTN (FAA Tracking Number) and IACRA username

Testing center, test date and time

Study plan: ACS areas I am weakest in

Knowledge test passed on (date) and 17-digit exam ID

Form 8710-13 submitted on (date)

Temporary certificate printed on (date) / permanent card received on (date)

Certificate number

Recurrent training completed (course, date) and next due date (24 calendar months)

CHAPTER 12

Pricing models

We do not publish rates. Drone service pricing varies by region, niche, deliverable and risk, and we have not found an authoritative, current public source for it. What follows are the common models and a method for building your own price from real costs.

Model	How it works	Fits	Watch out for
Hourly	Billed per hour on site and, sometimes, in editing.	Open-ended shoots, training, consulting.	Clients cannot predict cost; undervalues efficiency.
Day / half-day rate	A block of time with defined crew and gear.	Film, events, larger inspections.	Define overtime, travel and weather days.
Per project (fixed)	One price for a defined scope and deliverable.	Real estate, roof reports, single maps.	Scope creep; write the deliverable list precisely.
Per unit	Per acre, per structure, per listing, per visit.	Mapping, agriculture, portfolios of properties.	Minimum charges for small jobs.
Retainer / subscription	Recurring fee for scheduled visits or a monthly allowance.	Construction progress, property managers, ag seasons.	Define cancellations, rollovers and weather.
Packages	Tiers (for example stills only; stills plus video; full media).	Real estate, weddings.	Keep tiers few and clear.

Build a price from your costs

A price that ignores costs is a guess. Use Worksheet 9 to calculate your cost per job, then compare it with what your local market will pay. If your cost-based price is above what the market pays, change the scope, the niche or the cost structure. Do not just drop the price.

1. Add up yearly fixed costs: insurance, software subscriptions, equipment replacement (purchase cost divided by the expected working life you choose), phone and internet share, website, training and memberships, accounting.
2. Estimate billable jobs per year honestly. Count weather days, travel, admin and sales time.
3. Fixed cost per job = yearly fixed costs ÷ jobs per year.
4. Add direct costs for this job: travel, permits, assistants or visual observers, rentals, processing credits, storage.
5. Add your labor: hours on site + travel + editing/processing + admin, times the hourly wage you want to pay yourself.
6. Add a margin for profit and risk (re-flights, weather, equipment failure).
7. Compare with the market and decide.

Worksheet 9. Cost-based price builder

Fill in with your own numbers. Keep the sheet; update it every year.

A. Yearly fixed costs (list and total)

B. Billable jobs per year (honest estimate)

C. Fixed cost per job = $A \div B$

D. Direct costs for this job

E. Labor hours (site + travel + processing + admin) $\times$ my hourly wage

F. Profit and risk margin

G. Price = $C + D + E + F$, and how it compares with the local market

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