

**BEFORE THE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

IN THE MATTER OF

Petition of Firestorm UAV for Amendment to Exemption No. 12212

Docket Number: FAA-2015-0931

COMMENTS OF THE SMALL UAV COALITION

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The Small UAV Coalition¹ is pleased to provide its comments in support of Firestorm UAV's ("Firestorm") petition for amendment to Exemption No. 12212 to authorize Firestorm to operate the DJI Spreading Wings S1000+ small unmanned aircraft system ("sUAS") modified by Troy Built Models called TigerStrike® TF under nighttime conditions to provide emergency services such as search and rescue, preventing runaways of persons with dementia, and geo-locating a firefighter in smoke-filled building.

Members of the Small UAV Coalition share an interest in advancing regulatory and policy changes that will permit the operation of small UAVs in the near term, within and beyond the line of sight, with varying degrees of autonomy, for commercial, consumer, recreational and philanthropic purposes. We applaud the Federal Aviation Administration ("FAA") for accelerating the pace of exemptions. The Coalition believes there are additional steps the FAA can take to broaden the authority to conduct commercial operations. In particular, the FAA has the authority and the discretion to grant the relief requested by Firestorm in its petition for amendment.

In comments on the FAA's sUAS NPRM, the Coalition urged the FAA to revise proposed section 107.29 to allow sUAS operations beyond the proposed window between the hours of official sunrise and official sunset. We stated that FAA should allow nighttime sUAS operations where such operations may be conducted safely without any appreciable increase in risk to other

¹ Members of the Small UAV Coalition include 3D Robotics, AirMap, AGI, Amazon Prime Air, Botlink, DJI Innovations, Drone Deploy, Flirtey, Google[x] Project Wing, GoPro, Intel, Kespry, Parrot, PrecisionHawk, Strat-Aero, Verifly, Verizon Ventures, and Zero Tech.

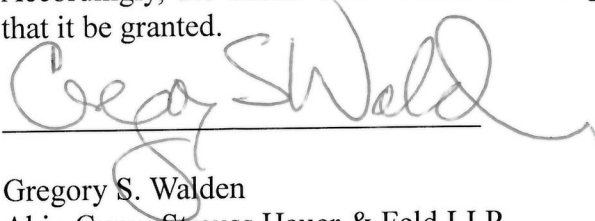
aircraft or persons on the ground and where the sUAS operator is able safely to perform the see-or detect-and-avoid responsibilities.

Accordingly, the Coalition urged the FAA to revise this section to allow the Administrator or his delegate to authorize nighttime operations, through exemption, deviation authority (certificate of waiver or authorization), or certification, upon a demonstration of a level of safety equivalent to daylight operations, in consideration of the technological capabilities of the sUAS – including any lighting equipage – the capability of the sUAS operator, the presence of one or more visual observers, the particular use scenario, and the operating environment, including the degree of illumination. The Coalition believes the authority Congress provided in section 333 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 gives the FAA the discretion to authorize nighttime operations in advance of and independent of its sUAS rulemaking.²

Firestorm explains that its sUAS will be lighted sufficiently to be seen by the operator, other aircraft operators in the same airspace, and persons on the ground.

The Coalition believes Firestorm’s proposed operations at night may be conducted safely and thus should be authorized. The Coalition supports reasonable distance requirements and other conditions to ensure the takeoff and landing areas are clear and that the sUAS operators are properly trained in nighttime operations.

Accordingly, the Small UAV Coalition strongly supports Firestorm’s petition and recommends that it be granted.



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² The Coalition has previously supported the petitions of Industrial Skyworks (FAA 2014-1060), Ars Electronica (FAA 2014-1095), Aerobo (FAA 2014-0400), SkyPhilly (FAA 2014-0908), and Alaska Aerial Media LLC (FAA 2015-0173) to conduct nighttime operations.