

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

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**IN THE MATTER OF**

**Safety Management System Data**

**Docket No. FAA-2021-0733**

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**COMMENTS OF THE SMALL UAV COALITION**

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**COMMENTS OF THE SMALL UAV COALITION**

The Small UAV Coalition (“Coalition”)<sup>1</sup> is pleased to support the Federal Aviation Administration (“FAA”) proposal to designate certain reports and information created as part of the development and implementation of a safety management system (SMS) as information protected from public disclosure when provided voluntarily to the FAA. 86 Fed. Reg. 60080 (Oct. 29, 2021).

The development and use of safety management systems have significantly increased the safety of operations in every field they are used. Each of the four components – (1) safety policy; (2) safety risk management; (3) safety assurance; and (4) safety promotion – are proactive measures to avoid accidents and incidents before they occur. Aviation safety regulation for decades was more the product of post-accident investigations than an analysis of systems, the risks inherent in such systems, and the means to eliminate or reduce such risks. The advent of SMS has reduced accidents and incidents. By leveraging SMS, the commercial drone industry can reduce the likelihood of accidents and incidents and can foster the safety culture that is the cornerstone of the aviation industry.

The Coalition supports the FAA’s notice in full. In particular, the Coalition agrees with the FAA that providing SMS data to the FAA “facilitate[s] ongoing compliance and oversight processes such as approvals, acceptance, and certification of proposed actions” and that disclosure of certain data “could harm the certificate holder in terms of publicity and litigation.” 86 Fed. Reg. 60082. The Coalition also agrees that corrective action under an SMS “can be accomplished without disclosure of protected information.” *Id.* Further, ensuring the confidentiality of business sensitive information encourages certificate holders to voluntarily provide such information to the FAA.

The FAA proposes to issue an order that such reports and information are protected from public disclosure under 49 U.S.C. 44735(b)(5), 40123, and 49 C.F.R. Part 193. The Coalition supports

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<sup>1</sup> Members of the Small UAV Coalition are listed at [www.smalluavcoalition.org](http://www.smalluavcoalition.org).

the FAA's decision to protect this information from public disclosure unless de-identified and disclosed under the limited circumstances set forth in the notice.

Respectfully submitted,



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