

Washington Skies

Washington State Department Of Transportation Aviation Division

May 2018

FAA begins testing drone tracking system

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) UAS Data Exchange is an innovative, collaborative approach between government and private industry facilitating the sharing of airspace data between the two parties. It's coming to the Western Region of the U.S. to include Washington state starting May 24.

Under the FAA UAS Data Exchange umbrella, the FAA will support multiple partnerships, the first of which is the Low Altitude Authorization and Notification Capability (LAANC). LAANC is a collaboration between the FAA and Industry.

It directly supports UAS integration into the national airspace by providing access to controlled airspace near airports through near real-time processing of airspace authorizations below approved altitudes in controlled airspace.

LAANC also provides FAA's Air Traffic visibility into where and when planned drone operations will take place.

LAANC automates the request and approval process for airspace authorizations by using automated applications.

Requests are checked against airspace data in the FAA UAS Data Exchange such as temporary flight restrictions, Notice to Airman (NOTAMS) and the UAS Facility Maps. Pilots receive their authorization in near-real time.

Through LAANC pilots and drone companies can apply to receive a near real-time authorization for operations under 400 feet in controlled airspace around airports and request to fly above the designated altitude ceiling in a UAS Facility Map, up to 400 feet.

Applicants may apply up to 90 days in advance of a flight and the approval is coordinated manually through the FAA.

LAANC will deploy in waves regionally. By September 2018, LAANC will be available at nearly 300 air traffic facilities covering approximately 500 airports.

For more information, visit www.faa.gov/uas/programs_partnerships/uas_data_exchange.

Having a new 406 MHz ELT greatly improves your odds in an emergency

On May 2, 2018 a Cessna 172 crash landed on the side of Mount Angeles in the Olympic National Park after reportedly experiencing a severe downdraft. What happened next was an example of how effective having a 406 ELT can be in finding and rescuing you.

At 7:56 a.m., a signal was received from the Search and Rescue Satellite System (SARSAT) at the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center (AFRCC) at Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida moments after the Cessna came to a stop on the mountain.

Because it was a properly registered 406 ELT, the owner, type of aircraft, tail number, and emergency contact information was available to the mission coordinator to quickly access and execute the Search and Rescue (SAR) mission. In contrast, older analog 121.5 MHz ELT signals can take hours to be detected, reported, and subsequently have the SAR system respond to it.

By approximately 9:00 a.m., the NAS Whidbey helicopter was over the Cessna and lowering rescue personnel to find the pilot. By 9:30 a.m. the stranded pilot was delivered to the Olympic Medical Center in Port Angeles for evaluation.

Time is everything when an aircraft goes down in a remote area. Putting better odds on your side with a 406 MHz ELT that is properly registered can be the difference between a quick response and rescue or a protracted search mission.

New Aviation Economic Impact Study

WSDOT Aviation's mission is to foster the development of aeronautics and the state's aviation system in order to support sustainable communities and statewide economic vitality.

This includes ensuring that the needs of commerce and communities across Washington are met by the state's 136 public-use airports that comprise the Washington Aviation System.

With that in mind, consulting firm Kimley Horn will conduct the next aviation economic impact study as part of the Washington Aviation System Plan. The last statewide aviation economic impact study was completed in 2012.

The primary objective of the study is to determine the economic impact of direct, indirect and induced economic activity for the Washington Aviation System and update the online Economic Impact Calculator. WSDOT intends for summaries pertinent to individual airports to be made available at the end of the study.

Kimley Horn's main tasks include: Data Collection and Surveys; Estimating Economic Impacts; Economic Scenario Forecasts; Economic Performance Measures; Case Studies; WSDOT Airport Information System Database; Geographic Information System Database Development.

The study commences in June 2018, with completion tentatively scheduled for Dec. 31, 2019.

Aviation Revitalization Loan Program

WSDOT Aviation is launching a new Aviation Revitalization Loan Program to assist airports fund infrastructure needs that will stimulate economic development at or around their airports.

The Washington state legislature and governor passed a \$5 million appropriation (ESSB 6095) to create a revolving loan account to help airport sponsors take advantage of growth opportunities to generate jobs and business revenue.

WSDOT Aviation is creating a Community Aviation Revitalization Board to develop criteria for selecting loan recipients. The 11 member board will be comprised of legislative transportation committee members, representatives from WSDOT and Commerce, county and city officials, and a representative from both the airport managers and a general aviation pilots association.

Over the next couple months, the board will establish the loan application and instructions with an anticipated target date of Oct. 1, 2018 to begin accepting applications. You may expect continued updates as the deadline approaches.

June 28 UAS/Drone workshop

The Center for Regional Disaster Resilience, under the umbrella of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region, is hosting a drone workshop at Clover Park Technical College in Lakewood June 28 with WSDOT Aviation.

The goal of this workshop is the establishment of a more centralized effort in understanding drone use within the northwest, knowledge of current and pending Federal Aviation Administration regulations and a baseline for existing drone issues such as privacy concerns, countering drones, and access to airspace.

This event is open to working professionals representing: City and County Government, State Agencies, Elected Officials, Industry, Vendors and Contractors, Ports and Special Purpose Districts, Law Enforcement and First Responders.

If you believe this forum might be beneficial to your organization, please consider attending.

To RSVP and for more information, visit www.regionalresilience.org/droneworkshop.html.