

FAA MAKES SEARCHING FOR NOTAMS EASIER

The FAA has established a new Website which works partially now but will be fully functional by late 2015. It makes searching for NOTAMs along your planned flight path much easier. According to [AOPA](#) “Finding the notams relevant to your planned flights just got easier. The FAA's new online search tool streamlines the burdensome and confusing process of wading through scores of safety notices filled with obscure acronyms.” The Website will also be able to be used with in-cockpit portable devices “When it’s fully complete in late 2015, the FAA says the search tool will make notams easier and quicker to submit, and pilots will be able to retrieve the information on a wide variety of devices.” AOPA Air Safety Institute Senior Safety Advisor Bruce Landsberg said the new FAA system makes progress, but he urged the agency to do more. He wrote “If everything is important, nothing is important,” he said. “Prioritization is the key. If I’m flying day VFR, I don’t need to be inundated with changes to IFR procedures or unlit towers.”



An example for working with this site is to use the closing of the two acre apron on December 6th at the Wrens Memorial Airport. Imagine you are flying from Daniel field – [KDNL](#) – to stop at Wrens – [65J](#) – to go to Sandersville – [KOKZ](#). Click on [NOTAM SEARCH](#). On that Website in the top middle space type the airport designators separated by commas **DNL, 65J, OKZ** then click the **Search** button at the right. Instantly you will get all the NOTAMs applicable to the airports in your flight path. On the top of the screen there are two buttons: **List View** and **Table View**. Table View shows all the NOTAMs and gives a square at the left of each for you to check to see a PDF file containing all the NOTAMs checked. List View shows you all the NOTAMs without you having to get the PDF versions. In our example you notice that for 65J (Wrens) you will get:

12/080 Class: Aerodrome Start Date UTC: 12/06/2014 1200 End Date UTC: 12/06/2014 2300
APRON ALL CLSD 1412061200-1412062300

For those who hate that FAA jargon (now actually out of date) the FAA has a Box to check that has the words “**Plain Language**” which will give you:

Issuing Airport:	(65J) Wrens Memorial
NOTAM Number:	12/080
Effective Time Frame	
Beginning:	Saturday, December 6, 2014 0700EST
Ending:	Saturday, December 6, 2014 1800EST
Affected Areas	
Runway:	Apron
Visual Approach Lighting Type:	
Operating Status:	Closed

So you now know that you won't want to land at Wrens on Saturday, December 6. This **Plain Language** box does not work correctly all the time (yet) but probably will during 2015. On the Website the FAA does have this disclaimer:

Welcome to NOTAM Search

This site is informational in nature and is designed to assist pilots and aircrews for flight planning and familiarization. It may be used in conjunction with other pre-flight information sources needed to satisfy all the requirements of 14 CFR 91.103 and is not to be considered as a sole source of information to meet all pre-flight action.

AOPA suggests “Pilots might consider bookmarking the website for convenience.”

The site's URL is: <http://notams.aim.faa.gov/notamSearch/nsapp.html#/>

Play with the site! For instance, after clicking on the above URL and putting in **DNL, 65J, OKZ** choose “Flight Path” in the drop-down box at the left. You will then get more appropriate choices. Again, all the parts don't work yet.

(Information adapted from [AOPA News & Video](#), 12/03/14 , [FAA](#))



WITH CHRISTMAS COMING: WATCH OUT FOR DRONES!

With the season of the Christmas gift-giving now here, pilots are reminded to watch out for what might be a “hot seller”



An experimental Google delivery drone in Queensland, Australia.

this year: **drones**. No, Amazon is not yet delivering gifts that way and you can't order pizza from Pizza Hut to be dropped on your doorstep, but the ordinary Joe Citizen will be receiving them. According to articles in the New York Times, the Washington Post, and the Wall Street Journal, the FAA - the Federal Aviation Administration - released a report on November 26, 2014, that compiles data on drone incidents reported to it this year through air traffic control facilities around the country. The FAA said that the list is not complete since it comes from reports



A drone flies over the scene of an explosion that leveled two apartment buildings in the East Harlem neighborhood of New York on March 12, 2014. (Mark Lennihan/AP)

to law enforcement agencies. For recreational purposes, as long as pilots keep them below 400 feet, away from airports, and avoid traditional airplanes, the drones are legal. But the FAA says it “received about 25 reports a month from pilots who had seen drones, including fixed-wing and helicopter varieties of the devices, operating near their manned aircraft.” For example, On July 29, a US Airways shuttle flight that had departed from Reagan National Airport reported an “extraordinarily narrow encounter” with a yellow drone with a four-foot wingspan that suddenly passed within 50 feet of the aircraft while it was approaching LaGuardia. Then, on September 30, air-traffic controllers at LaGuardia Airport in New York reported that Republic Airlines Flight 6230 was “almost hit” by a brightly colored small drone at an altitude of 4,000 feet as the passenger plane was descending to land. There are many more examples. Rapid advances in technology have made small drones affordable and easy for people to fly right out of the box. Some models cost less than \$500, about what many spend for a Christmas gift. Teal Group, an aerospace research firm, estimates the global civilian drone market to be worth \$450 million this year, up 45 percent from last year. Most drones come with powerful miniature cameras that can film striking video scenes while hovering over back yards, stadiums, outside your bedroom window, and anything else that a non-pilot may want to look at.

“All it’s going to take is for one to come through a windshield to hurt some people or kill someone,” said Kyle Fortune, who was flying a four-seat Cirrus SR-22 near Medford, Oregon, on September 22, when he said a drone about four feet in diameter suddenly appeared 100 feet underneath his plane. He was flying at an altitude of 4,000 feet — about 10 times higher than the FAA’s height restrictions for small drones. Mike Gilbert, chief flight instructor at a flight school based in Manassas, Virginia, was flying a Cessna with a student and another passenger about 9:45 p.m. on September 17 when a small drone with two red lights suddenly appeared about 200 feet overhead. “It came seemingly out of nowhere,” Gilbert said. “As pilots, at a minimum it’s distracting. If one of them hits us, we’re coming down. We’re trained to deal with dead engines, but we’re afraid it’s going to hit a propeller, which would be a disaster, or the airframe.”

According to the *Times* and the *Post*, as well as the aviation organizations such as AOPA and EAA, manufacturers and businesses that want to fly drones — including real estate agents, delivery firms, photographers, and farmers — have criticized the FAA for moving too slowly to develop rules of the sky for using the new technology. They say the absence of clear regulations for certifying drone pilots and aircraft has contributed to a rise in reckless behavior by untrained drone enthusiasts.



Non-pilot Joe Citizen and his Christmas drone.

According to a recent [Wall Street Journal article](#), proposed regulations regarding commercial use of small unmanned aerial systems (sUAS) will require sUAS operators to possess at least a private pilot certificate and operate the devices in daylight, under 400 feet AGL, and within visual line of sight. The FAA expects to release the notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to the public by the end of the year. According to EAA “the speculated upcoming regulations are consistent with previous FAA rulings and provisions of [Advisory Circular 91-57](#), which is the FAA’s guidance for operating model aircraft. The agency granted permission to six Hollywood studios to use camera-equipped sUAS for commercial purposes in September, stipulating that the operators must possess at least a private pilot certificate and fly day VFR within line of sight. So-called “first person view” setups, which allow sUAS operators to wear a set of video goggles that display real-time streaming video from the device and create the illusion that the operator is aboard the aircraft, are prohibited for studio operators and are expected to be similarly prohibited in the NPRM.”

(Information adapted from [New York Times](#) 11/26/14, [Washington Post](#) 11/26/14, [Wall Street Journal](#) 11/26/14, [EAA Hotline](#) 11/26/14, the FAA [Model Aircraft](#))