

Over the last few years, Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) have become increasingly popular and more affordable. These devices enable an operator to fly over areas and take photos or video, and have become common sight in many places, including the City of Los Angeles. As the numbers of UAS have increased, so too have complaints about them. Often, operators of these devices fly them in dangerous ways, such as operating them over crowds or near manned aircraft, or over areas that they should not be. There have been numerous sightings of UAS flying over wildfires, which disrupts fire suppression efforts by helicopters and tankers. As these devices become more widespread, these issues will become more common, and regulation is needed now to ensure that UAS operators are aware of how these devices should be safely flown. Further, the Police Department (LAPD) and City Attorney's Office need to be able to charge individuals who operate UAS in a reckless or dangerous manner with a crime.

UAS operated by hobbyists are known as Model UAS, and the use of these devices is not currently regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration. This is different from Civil UAS, which can be larger and are operated by commercial entities, such as engineering firms or film companies. The operation of Civil UAS is regulated by the FAA. However, an individual who operates a Civil UAS in a reckless manner in the City of Los Angeles cannot be charged with any crime. An ordinance is needed to define the safe operation of Model UAS, as well as to prohibit the unsafe use of both Model and Civil UAS in the City.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Attorney, with the assistance of the Police Department (LAPD) and Fire Department (LAFD), be requested to draft an ordinance to regulate the use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), by requiring that individuals operating a Model UAS obtain air traffic control authorization to operate within five miles of any airport, give the right-of-way to any full-scale aircraft in flight, only fly within visual line of sight and comply with all FAA rules and regulations regarding classes of airspace. The ordinance should also prohibit the use of Civil or Model Aircraft UAS in violation of any temporary flight restrictions (TFRs) or notices to airmen (NOTAMS) issued by the FAA, and also prohibit the operation of any Civil or Model UAS in a careless or reckless manner.

PRESENTED BY: 
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PRESENTED BY: 
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SECONDED BY: 

ORIGINAL