VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY PROTOCOLS GOVERNING THE OPERATION OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS AT AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EXTENION CENTERS

I. Purpose

This document is supplemental to the *Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University Policy Governing the Operation of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)* and serves to outline the Protocols for conducting UAS operations on University-controlled property. This protocol document establishes the minimum qualifications to operate in each location, specific flight authorizations may require additional qualifications.

II. Protocol

Operations on University Agricultural Research and Extention Centers (ARECs)

The 12 ARECs managed by Virginia Tech are at the forefront of agricultural research and as a result, operations using unmanned aircraft are common. Flights for agricultural research occur both at the center farms and at farming operations surrounding the centers; in general these are rural locations where flights pose a minimal risk to the public. Many of these flights occur with little advanced notice as scouting activity does not always find a problem before it must be immediately documented. Weather is also a factor, making prediction of flight days and times difficult.

Because of the need for "on-demand" flights at these centers, researchers are only required to provide an application for flight operations at the beginning of the growing season showing where flights are planned in the next 12 months to the UAS Safety Office. Each AREC Director will submit a summary 12-month flight area plan to the UASOC for approval that includes all research activity by AREC personnel during the one-year period. Once the flight areas have been approved, flight operations can occur without further review by the UASOC or Safety Office.

- Operators must comply with an applicable COA, an applicable Section 333 exemption or Part 107 flight rules and hold a minimum of a FAA Remote Pilot certification.
- Operators must have completed the VT UAS training program.
- UAS operations must receive the permission from the AREC Director/Supervisor or the Associate Dean of the Agricultural Experiment Station prior to flight operations at the respective AREC.

ARECS checklist

- ✓ FAA Pilot Certificate or meet the specific FAA flight authorization qualifications
- ✓ VT UAS Training completion
- ✓ Aircraft registration with Virginia Tech Risk Management Office
- ✓ Written AREC Director approval
- ✓ Written Approval of 12-month plan from UAS Safety Office

Please submit inquiries concerning UAS operations to the UAS Safety Office at at uassafety@vt.edu or (540) 231-7484 / 7303.

This Protocol has been reviewed and approved by the Virginia Tech Unmanned Aircraft Systems Oversight Committee.

Michael J. Mulhare
Assistant Vice President for
Emergency Management

05/24/2018
(Date)

Kevin L. Foust
Chief of Police and Director of Security

5/31/18
(Date)

Mark T. Blanks
Director, Mid-Atlantic Aviation Partnership
and Unmanned Aircraft Systems

6/25/18
(Date)

Craig Woolsey
Aerospace and Ocean Engineering

7/5/18
(Date)

Ellen S. Douglas
Director, Risk Management

6/14/18
(Date)

Van Coble
Assistant Provost for Academic Space

6-28-18
(Date)

Gary B. Sherman
Associate Vice President for
Government Relations and Interim
Associate Vice President for Research
Compliance

6/29/18
(Date)