Federal Aviation Administration, DOT

§ 101.23 Rapid deflation device.

No person may operate a moored balloon unless it has a device that will automatically and rapidly deflate the balloon if it escapes from its moorings. If the device does not function properly, the operator shall immediately notify the nearest ATC facility of the location and time of the escape and the estimated flight path of the balloon.

Subpart C—Amateur Rockets

§ 101.21 Applicability.

(a) This subpart applies to operating unmanned rockets. However, a person operating an unmanned rocket within a restricted area must comply with §101.25(b)(7)(ii) and with any additional limitations imposed by the using or controlling agency.

(b) A person operating an unmanned rocket other than an amateur rocket as defined in §1.1 of this chapter must comply with 14 CFR Chapter III.


§ 101.22 Definitions.

The following definitions apply to this subpart:

(a) Class 1—Model Rocket means an amateur rocket that:

(1) Uses no more than 125 grams (4.4 ounces) of propellant;

(2) Uses a slow-burning propellant;

(3) Is made of paper, wood, or breakable plastic;

(4) Contains no substantial metal parts; and

(5) Weighs no more than 1,500 grams (53 ounces), including the propellant.

(Sec. 8(c), Department of Transportation Act (49 U.S.C. 1655(c)))


§ 101.23 General operating limitations.

(a) You must operate an amateur rocket in such a manner that it:

(2) More than 500 feet above the surface of the earth;

(3) From an area where the ground visibility is less than three miles; or

(4) Within five miles of the boundary of any airport.

(b) Paragraph (a) of this section does not apply to the operation of a balloon or kite below the top of any structure and within 250 feet of it, if that shielded operation does not obscure any lighting on the structure.

§ 101.15 Notice requirements.

No person may operate an unshielded moored balloon or kite more than 150 feet above the surface of the earth unless, at least 24 hours before beginning the operation, he gives the following information to the FAA ATC facility that is nearest to the place of intended operation:

(a) The names and addresses of the owners and operators.

(b) The size of the balloon or the size and weight of the kite.

(c) The location of the operation.

(d) The height above the surface of the earth at which the balloon or kite is to be operated.

(e) The date, time, and duration of the operation.

§ 101.17 Lighting and marking requirements.

(a) No person may operate a moored balloon or kite, between sunset and sunrise unless the balloon or kite, and its mooring lines, are lighted so as to give a visual warning equal to that required for obstructions to air navigation in the FAA publication “Obstruction Marking and Lighting”.

(b) No person may operate a moored balloon or kite between sunrise and sunset unless its mooring lines have colored pennants or streamers attached at not more than 50 foot intervals beginning at 150 feet above the surface of the earth and visible for at least one mile.

(Rev. 1-15)
§ 101.25 Operating limitations for Class 2-High Power Rockets and Class 3-Advanced High Power Rockets.

When operating Class 2-High Power Rockets or Class 3-Advanced High Power Rockets, you must comply with the General Operating Limitations of §101.23. In addition, you must not operate Class 2-High Power Rockets or Class 3-Advanced High Power Rockets—
(a) At any altitude where clouds or obscuring phenomena of more than five-tenths coverage prevails;
(b) At any altitude where the horizontal visibility is less than five miles;
(c) Into any cloud;
(d) Between sunset and sunrise without prior authorization from the FAA;
(e) Within 9.26 kilometers (5 nautical miles) of any airport boundary without prior authorization from the FAA;
(f) In controlled airspace without prior authorization from the FAA;
(g) Unless you observe the greater of the following separation distances from any person or property that is not associated with the operations:
(1) Not less than one-quarter the maximum expected altitude;
(2) 457 meters (1,500 ft.);
(h) Unless a person at least eighteen years old is present, is charged with ensuring the safety of the operation, and has final approval authority for initiating high-power rocket flight; and
(i) Unless reasonable precautions are provided to report and control a fire caused by rocket activities.

§ 101.27 ATC notification for all launches.

No person may operate an unmanned rocket other than a Class 1—Model Rocket unless that person gives the following information to the FAA ATC facility nearest to the place of intended operation no less than 24 hours before and no more than three days before beginning the operation:
(a) The name and address of the operator; except when there are multiple participants at a single event, the name and address of the person so designated as the event launch coordinator, whose duties include coordination of the required launch data estimates and coordinating the launch event;
(b) Date and time the activity will begin;
(c) Radius of the affected area on the ground in nautical miles;
(d) Location of the center of the affected area in latitude and longitude coordinates;
(e) Highest affected altitude;
(f) Duration of the activity;
(g) Any other pertinent information requested by the ATC facility.

§ 101.29 Information requirements.

(a) Class 2—High-Power Rockets. When a Class 2—High-Power Rocket requires a certificate of waiver or authorization, the person planning the operation must provide the information below on each type of rocket to the FAA at least 45 days before the proposed operation. The FAA may request additional information if necessary to ensure the proposed operations can be safely conducted. The information shall include for each type of Class 2 rocket expected to be flown:
(1) Estimated number of rockets,
(2) Type of propulsion (liquid or solid), fuel(s) and oxidizer(s),
(3) Description of the launcher(s) planned to be used, including any airborne platform(s),
(4) Description of recovery system,
(5) Highest altitude, above ground level, expected to be reached,
(6) Launch site latitude, longitude, and elevation, and