

FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 -- "Arctic" Language
Legislative Language

Section 331 of the Act defines "Arctic" as the United States zone of the Chukchi Sea, Beaufort Sea, and Bering Sea north of the Aleutian chain. This is assumed to mean "Arctic"; UAS operations shall be confined to U.S. controlled airspace and the U.S.-managed Anchorage Flight Information Region (FIR) encompassing the defined area.

Section 332(d) ("Expanding Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems in Arctic") of the Act reads as follows:

(1) IN GENERAL. Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop a plan and initiate a process to work with relevant Federal agencies and national and international communities to designate permanent areas in the Arctic where small unmanned aircraft may operate 24 hours per day for research and commercial purposes. The plan for operations in these permanent areas shall include the development of processes to facilitate the safe operation of unmanned aircraft beyond line of sight. Such areas shall enable over-water flights from the surface to at least 2,000 feet in altitude, with ingress and egress routes from selected coastal launch sites.

(2) AGREEMENTS. To implement the plan under paragraph (1), the Secretary may enter into an agreement with relevant national and international communities.

§ 195;

(3) AIRCRAFT APPROVAL. Not later than 1 year after the entry into force of an agreement necessary to effectuate the purposes of this subsection, the Secretary shall work with relevant national and international communities to establish and implement a process, or may apply an applicable process already established, for approving the use of unmanned aircraft in the designated permanent areas in the Arctic without regard to whether an unmanned aircraft is used as a public aircraft, a civil aircraft, or a model aircraft.