



**SMALL UAV
COALITION**
*A Partnership for
Safety & Innovation*

NEWS RELEASE

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SMALL UAV COALITION URGES SWIFT APPROVAL OF SENSEFLY'S PETITION FOR EXEMPTION

Approval of the petition would pave efficient way for manufacturers to certify operators in the United States

WASHINGTON, DC – OCTOBER 28, 2014 – The Small UAV Coalition filed comments yesterday in support of [senseFly](#)'s recent [petition](#) to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), in which senseFly requested permission for it and its operators to operate its [eBee](#) in the United States for precision agriculture purposes. Although the Coalition has filed comments in support of 31 other petitions, this petition is notable in that its approval would create a path for other companies to operate the senseFly eBee for similar purposes without requiring these companies to obtain their own exemption. The FAA's position to date is to entertain petitions only from individual operators – meaning that each operator of the eBee separately would have to undergo the 4-month petition process even after the FAA approved 1.5 lb eBee for operation by senseFly.

Although the eBee is currently in operation in over 50 other countries, farmers in the United States are still generally prohibited from using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) as tools to increase their yields. The Small UAV Coalition disagrees with the FAA's current position that every operator should be required to submit a petition for exemption, and believes that products like the eBee will continue to be operated safely if operators follow guidelines laid out by manufacturers. In its petition, senseFly asked in the alternative that the FAA should grant an exemption to any operator proposing to use the eBee that notifies the FAA in writing that it will abide by the terms and conditions of the SenseFly exemption and the eBee operations manual, without the operator having to wait four months or more.

"We urge the FAA to swiftly approve senseFly's petition for itself and other operators. This will avoid duplicative filings and thus reduce the workload for the UAS Integration Office and increase the efficiency of the exemption process, while maintaining an equivalent level of safety," said executive director Michael Drobac.

The FAA has currently approved only seven commercial entities to use UAVs in the United States, under very restrictive conditions.

The members of the Small UAV Coalition are (in alphabetical order): [3DR](#), [Aerialtronics](#), [Airware](#), [Amazon Prime Air](#), [DJI Innovations](#), [Google\[x\]'s Project Wing](#), [GoPro](#), [Parrot](#), [PrecisionHawk](#), and [SkyWard](#). The Coalition is supported by a team of experienced attorneys at Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP.

For more information on the Small UAV Coalition, please visit www.smalluavcoalition.org, contact_press@smalluavcoalition.org, or follow @smallUAVs on Twitter.

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