

NEWS

DEBORAH D. MCADAMS /
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Drone Maker DJI Adds D.C. No-Fly Zone

Firmware update prevents flight in restricted areas

HONG KONG—The DJI Phantom will soon land itself in downtown Washington, D.C., if it happens to lose GPS contact long enough to get in. DJI, maker of the popular Phantom drones, added Washington, D.C., to its list of restricted flight zones after one of their devices landed on the White House lawn this week.

"We are updating the no fly zones to include the D.C. metropolitan area in accordance with FAA guidelines," said Michael Perry, spokesman for the company. "This was in the works for a while along with a larger push for airport no-fly zones. We are pushing this out a bit earlier to lead in encouraging responsible flight."

The company announced Wednesday that it would release a "mandatory firmware update for the Phantom 2, Phantom 2 Vision, and Phantom 2 Vision+ to help users comply with the FAA's Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) 0/8326, which restricts unmanned flight around the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area."

The firmware update, vers. 3.10, will be released in the coming days and will add a 15.5 mile no-fly radius around downtown D.C. Phantom drones will not be able to take off or fly in the restricted airspace, DJI said. The system relies on GPS tracking to determine its airspace location.

"We have developed a flight-limitation system, that will prevent your Phantom from flying in restricted areas such as airports," Perry said in a YouTube video post last April, when DJI announced the system. "The update will download a global GPS database of restricted locations into your Phantom. This feature will only be active if your Phantom has a sufficient GPS signal, regardless of what mode you're flying in."

The no-fly zones mostly comprise airports divided into two categories. Category A encompasses large international airports. Airspace around Cat A airports is restricted within a five-mile radius, with takeoffs completely restricted within 1.5 miles. From 1.5 to five miles, an increasing height limit is imposed, starting with 35 feet at 1.5 miles and rising to 400 feet at five miles. The Vision or Ground Station app warns pilots if they are within 330 feet of a Cat A no-fly zone.

Category B comprises smaller airports where the restricted zone is 0.6 miles.

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If the Phantom loses the GPS signal and flies into a zone restricted for takeoff, it will land immediately once the GPS connection is restored. The pilot will be able to control the drone until it's on the ground, except for flying it higher. It will also automatically descend to the approved height when in a height-restricted area. The default height (above ground) limit of the Phantom is 1,300 feet with GPS; 394 feet without. The default distance limit is one mile. These can be adjusted for local flight regulations.

"These extended no fly zones will include over 10,000 airports registered with the International Air Transport Association, and will expand no-fly zones to ensure they cover the runways at major international airports," the company said.

DJI said it continues to update the no-fly zone list according to local regulations, and is adding data to prevent drones from crossing international borders. Perry told *The Wall Street Journal* that the border restriction arose from a [news story](#) last week about Mexican authorities finding one of DJI's drones crashed in a supermarket parking lot carrying 3 kilos of meth. (The same story describes a different incident where a drone was found outside of a prison fence in South Carolina laden with cellphones, marijuana and tobacco.)

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CHAPTER 38

MEETING MINUTE

DATE 1/13/2015 LOCATION: **GRAND CHINA BUFFET**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 12:37 PM, BY ANTONIO CASTRO, THERE WERE 12 MEMBERS.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY: MINUTES IN THE JANUARY NEWS-LETTER. ACCEPTED BY DAVID HALPERIN, SECOND BY CARLOS SOSA.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER: \$5,535.74 IN THE BANK. ACCEPTED BY MARIO JIMENEZ, SECOND BY JUAN BARRERA.

REPORT OF THE CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE: RECOMMENDED TO ATTEND THE WEBMINAR FROM SBE.

REPORT OF THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: INVOICES FOR LOCAL MEMBERS PRESENTED. WILL SEND FOR SUSTAINING MEMBERS.

REPORT OF THE FREQUENCY COORDINATOR COMMITTEE: NO REPORT.

REPORT OF THE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE: NO REPORT.

REPORT OF THE WEBSITE COMMITTEE: 1810 HITS AT THIS POINT

REPORT OF THE EAS CHAIRMAN: TEXAS AND NEW MEXICO EAS MONTHLY TEST CAME FINE, ALSO THE VERSION FOR IPOD

REPORT OF THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE: LOOKING FOR PRESENTERS.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS OR ANY ITEMS FOR THE CHAPTER INTERES: ELECTION FOR OFFICIALS IN FEBRUARY MEETING

NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION: FEBRUARY 10, 2015, NOON AT THE EL ARRIERO MEXICAN BUFFET, 4151 NORTH MESA

MEETING ADJOURNED: AT 13:05:00 PM. AND THEN THE PRESENTATION STARTS

Note from the treasurer:

FOR THOSE MEMBERS THAT HAVE NOT PAID, PLEASE BRING YOUR \$ 12.00 FOR THE 2015 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL, EITHER CASH OR CHECK.

FEBRUARY PROGRAM

EDDY VANDERKERKEN, general Manager of **SOURCERER** was our host for the great January presentation. It was at the Grand China Buffet, Sunland Park.

There is no presentation for this month because we need to have Our regular chapter meeting and one of the major issues is the election of new officials.

Please, members, we must be Present in order to select and elect Chairman, Vice Chairman and Treasurer positions.

We urge the presence of former Election Tellers (three at least).

See you at **EL ARRIERO** Mexican buffet, 4151 N. Mesa (at the **MESA INN**)

TUESDAY FEBRUARY THE 10th
At NOON (12:00 PM)



A DJI Phantom was found on the grounds of the White House early Monday morning after an enthusiast crashed it there. The pilot, an employee of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, according to [WSJ](#), called the Secret Service and explained the crash was intentional, [The Washington Post](#) said. President Obama nonetheless said more drone regulations were needed.

"The drone that landed in the White House you buy in Radio Shack," he said in a [CNN interview](#).

Drones are currently regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration as model aircraft and legally cannot be used for commercial purposes. Congress has ordered the FAA to craft specific rules for commercial drone applications by September. Several exemptions have already been granted, including use in TV and film production (though not specifically covering television news). Based on these exemptions, the rules may require a licensed pilot at the controls, much like manned flight.



- See more at: <http://www.tvtechnology.com/news/0086/drone-maker-dji-adds-dc-no-fly-zone/274315#sthash.CtOZAIMz.dpuf>