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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ready Made RC, LLC Responds to the FAA's "Interpretation of the Special Rule for Model Aircraft"

June 26, 2014 - Model aircraft have been operated safely in the United States for well over 75 years. With the guidance of longstanding, comprehensive safety rules from the Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA), the world's leading community based organization, hundreds of thousands of hobbyists young and old have learned about aviation, new technologies, and gained technical skills while enjoying a wholesome hobby in the outdoors.

The joy and fun of model aviation has always generated public interest in aviation and, most recently, has spurred new innovation and interest in electronics systems, robotics, programming, aerospace design, and other technical fields. The result is a whole new level of interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields for both young and old, which our country needs to compete in the world. These advancements at the hobby level have led to the availability of low-cost, reliable, light weight, and safe technology that, in addition to being used for hobby and enjoyment, can be used for search and rescue, crop inspection for farmers, disaster assistance, and in many other applications that will be helpful for the country as a whole.

In 2012, The FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-95) was signed into law, requesting that the FAA create new regulations for unmanned aircraft systems. That statute included Section 336, "a special rule for model aircraft." This provision was specifically included to protect the model aircraft hobby and industry from any over-reaching and onerous regulation that might be created in the future by the FAA, as the FAA set out to create new rules for large commercial unmanned aircraft. The law exempts recreational model aircraft from any new regulation, instead preserving for our communities their existing historical role of offering safety guidance, pilot instruction, flying site establishment, and event supervision, while preserving the FAA's limited taxpayer resources for other important regulatory functions.

This week, the FAA published a Notice of an Interpretation concerning model aircraft. The FAA's "interpretation" of the law is not only incorrect, it is in direct violation of the statute, and is of great concern to us. The FAA's Notice improperly uses a statute that was always intended to prevent the creation of new regulations as a justification for subjecting model aviation to brand new rules, including an unknown number of regulations that were created to apply to passenger aircraft weighing tens of thousands of pounds carrying human lives. The FAA has also stated that it may take enforcement action against hobbyists if it deems a model aircraft to pose any kind of safety issue to anyone or anything –

without telling the community what its safety parameters actually are. This is an attempt to write Section 336 out of the statute and opens the door to arbitrary enforcement.

As one example of the agency's overreaching, the FAA has stated that compensated model aircraft demonstrations and contests are illegal, even though they have been safely conducted by communities for decades and are an important part of attracting talented individuals into the model aircraft industry. Some of those "sponsored" pilots have revolutionized the model aircraft industry with their innovative designs using new materials (such as foam-and-carbon fiber construction -- a safety enhancement) and new flying techniques. The FAA's interpretation, which can only be described as a brand new rule, could rock the nation's hobby industry as a whole.

We are particularly concerned by the FAA's rewriting of language in the statute concerning "visual line-of-sight," apparently so as to limit or prohibit certain methods of control of recreational model aircraft. With this revision, the FAA is apparently rejecting the carefully thought-out safety rules set forth by the AMA regarding First Person View (FPV) flight, contained in the AMA's Document 550. Document 550 permits FPV flight using video glasses and a spotter who monitors the airspace, and is a safe (and even conservative) approach to FPV flight. The FAA's Notice calls this framework into question, by suggesting that video piloting with the aid of an airspace "spotter" may constitute some kind of safety hazard compared to regular line-of-sight control. We are not aware of any model flight conducted pursuant to Document 550 that has ever posed a safety hazard to persons on the ground or to airplanes in the sky that is any greater than the miniscule risk posed by regular model aircraft operation. The AMA, as a community based organization, recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the FAA regarding establishment of safe operating rules and procedures. Yet this week's FAA Notice appears to be an inexplicable rebuke of the AMA's thoughtful guidance on FPV operations. The FAA is bound by the law to allow the AMA and other community based organizations to set their own rules allowing for safe operation of model aircraft.

In our over 26 years of combined FPV experience, along with over 75 years of combined model aircraft experience here at Ready Made RC, LLC, we have found that operating model aircraft using video glasses or "goggles" is a safe way to enjoy recreational model aircraft. FPV video glasses offer much more precise control of the model in flight and, when combined with a spotter, offer a much greater situational awareness than simply flying a model from a single operator's perspective viewing the model aircraft directly from the ground. A line of sight operator by necessity focuses nearly all of his attention on the model as seen from the ground, as opposed to an FPV operator who is focused on the airspace ahead in the direction of the model's flight. For this and other reasons, in our opinion, FPV operations are as safe as, if not safer than, traditional model aircraft operations, which are themselves extraordinarily safe. The FAA is unfortunately confusing the choice of where someone might fly a model aircraft with the method of control, and in the process is misreading the 2012 statute which concerned only the location of model aircraft operations. We also cannot believe that the FAA actually has studied the way FPV works or else it would come to the same conclusions as we have about safety. (In the United Kingdom, for example, the CAA permits FPV flight using video goggles and an observer, up to an altitude of 1,000 feet.)

As stated by the AMA's official statement, we agree that the current FAA stance is "at best ill-conceived and at worst intentionally punitive and retaliatory." We will use all resources possible to protect the continued freedom of safe operation of model aircraft, including FPV operations, against unnecessary and invalid regulation by the FAA. We encourage our customers and all model aircraft enthusiasts to submit thoughtful comments responding to the FAA's Notice at Regulations.gov during the 30 day

comment period. While we disagree with the FAA's interpretive notice, we always encourage all model aircraft operators to operate in a safe manner.

About Ready Made RC, LLC

Ready Made RC, LLC was founded in 2009 by Tim Stanfield, an electrical engineer and lifetime aviation enthusiast. Now with an entire crew of model aviation enthusiasts, we specialize in the development and marketing of First Person View (FPV) equipment, remote controlled vehicles, and hobby electronics. Headquartered and operated in Lewis Center, OH, we have long been a supporter of the hobby community and have always encouraged safe operations in the United States. Media or other contact can be made through our support system at www.readymaderc.com/support or via the press contact email listed on the following web page www.readymaderc.com/FAA.

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