



Interagency Aviation Information Bulletin



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Subject: Southern Border Flight Operations

Area of Concern: Flight Safety

Distribution: All Aviation Operations

Discussion: The current effort involving the [secure border initiatives](#) include significant areas of airspace along the southern border. As a result, the southern border region is currently experiencing a significant increase in military and Customs & Border Protection (CBP) aviation operations with crewed and uncrewed aircraft that may impact wildland fire suppression operations.

The first executive action declares that a national emergency exists at the U.S. southern border and directs DoD to utilize personnel and resources to support the U.S. government's response to the emergency.

Additionally, "the Secretary of Transportation and the Federal Communications Commission shall, consistent with applicable law, consider waiving all applicable Federal Aviation Administration and Federal Communications Commission regulations or policies, respectively, that restrict the Department of Homeland Security's ability to counter unmanned aerial systems within 5 miles of the southern border".

While wildfire aviation operations and airspace deconfliction will continue to be coordinated with the military and CBP by interagency dispatch centers and aviation managers, "See and Avoid" is fundamental to aviation safety and emphasizes the responsibility of aircrew to actively and continuously scan their surroundings. Non-firefighting aircraft (including UAS) will be present at various altitudes near the border, sometimes operating at high speed. It's important to remember that "See and Avoid" has limitations including weather, sun glare, and blind spots created by an aircraft's structure.

As a reminder, the Sierra Vista Municipal Airport-Libby Army Airfield (KFHU) Tower and Approach Control is not operational on weekends. During those periods, common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF) procedures apply. If you use this airport, expect to coordinate your arrival and departures with military, law enforcement, and civilian aircraft. Make sure you check the NOTAMs for any updates.

If you're operating along the border, don't assume all aviation assets in the area are aware of your presence or mission. Thorough planning, vigilant situational awareness, aggressive airspace coordination and deconfliction is critical to flight safety.

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