



Frequently Asked Questions

Higher Altitudes for AMA Sanctioned Events in Uncontrolled Airspace

March 7, 2023

Q: Do all sanctioned events receive higher altitudes?

A: We anticipated higher altitudes will be provided to most of our sanctioned events in [uncontrolled airspace](#); however, events in controlled airspace need to continue comply with the altitudes established through the flying site's letter of agreement with Air Traffic Control or LAANC.

Q: How much altitude could a sanctioned event receive?

A: Sanctioned events in uncontrolled airspace would likely be approved to 700 or 1,200 feet above ground level, which is the floor of FAA's Class E5 airspace.

Q: How do I know whether a location will receive a 700- or 1,200-foot altitude?

A: Visit the [FAA Facilities Map](#) and unselect all layers except Class E5. When you enter your event address, you can click on the map to identify the "Lower Limit Value" as either 700 or 1,200 feet. You can also call AMA at (765) 287-1256, ext. 252 or email competitions@modelaircraft.org for help.

Q: How can I receive more than 700- or 1,200-foot altitudes at an event?

A: Although these altitudes are sufficient for most events, we recognize that Soaring and other disciplines might need higher altitudes. This is just one of many steps to secure higher altitudes. Our work is not done.

Q: How can I sanction an event so I can receive higher altitudes?

A: A Contest Director (CD) or Event Manager (EM) can apply for a sanction through [AMA's online sanction portal](#). To learn more about being a CD or EM, visit www.modelaircraft.org/events/become-an-organizer.

Q: Can we sanction a club event to receive higher altitude consideration, even if we don't need all the protections that come with a traditional competition sanction?

A: We recommend applying for a Class B sanctioned event through [AMA's online sanction portal](#). You can learn about all the different sanction classifications in our [Contest Director Guide](#).

Q: How long can a sanctioned event run?

A: Generally, sanctioned events are only for a few days or a week at a time. If you anticipate hosting a sanctioned event every weekend, you should apply for multiple sanctions.

Q: How long does it take to process a sanctioned application?

A: AMA asks for a minimum of 30 days to process sanctioned applications. Applications should be submitted 90 days in advance if the event is to be printed in *Model Aviation* magazine.



Q: I previously submitted a sanction application; do I have to reapply to fly at higher altitudes?

A: No. For previously approved sanctioned events, AMA will send a second notification in the coming weeks notifying CDs of their approval to fly at higher altitudes.

Q: Does this apply to Control Line and Free Flight events?

A: AMA maintains that Control Line and Free Flight do not meet the definition of unmanned aircraft systems.

Q: Why are only events receiving higher altitudes and not club flying fields or operations in my backyard?

A: This is just one of many efforts from AMA to secure higher altitudes. AMA has been successfully securing higher altitudes for many of our clubs in controlled airspace through safety risk management panels. We will continue to advocate for higher altitudes to safely enjoy this hobby.

Q: Where can I learn more about being a CD or EM so I can sanction an event?

A: You can learn more at www.modelaircraft.org/events/become-an-organizer.

Q: How do I know if my event is in controlled or uncontrolled airspace?

A: [This AMA blog](#) can help you determine what classification of airspace you will be flying in. Feel free to contact AMA at (765) 287-1256 if you need assistance.