

## FAA Acknowledges AMA as a CBO and our Safety Program

Our hobby has faced many challenges this year as we address an increase in government intervention and proposed regulations. AMA has been aggressively advocating for our hobby, and during the past few weeks, we've been happy to report successful progress.

Today, our members have yet another AMA government advocacy victory to celebrate.

There has been confusion among our members as to whether operations above 400 feet are permitted by the FAA. AMA has remained steadfast that the Special Rule for Model Aircraft (Section 336 of the 2012 FAA Modernization and Reform Act) permits operations above 400 feet if conducted within our safety program requiring the pilot to be an AMA member, to avoid and not interfere with manned aircraft, and to keep the model in visual line of sight of the pilot/observer. **It should be noted that the AMA Safety Code requires model aircraft to remain below 400 feet above the ground when within 3 miles of an airport unless there is an agreement with the airport that allows models to safely go higher.**

In January of this year, the AMA requested that the FAA clarify the 400-foot issue in writing. We are happy to share that in a recent letter to the AMA, the FAA recognized AMA's role as a community-based organization and acknowledged our safety program, including allowing flight above 400 feet under appropriate circumstance.

In this letter, dated July 7, 2016, the FAA states:

- *"...model aircraft may be flown consistently with Section 336 and agency guidelines at altitudes above 400 feet when following a community-based organization's safety guidelines."*
- *"Community-based organizations, such as the Academy of Model Aeronautics, may establish altitude limitations in their safety guidelines that exceed the FAA's 400 AGL altitude recommendation."*

Essentially, this letter confirms that sailplanes, large model aircraft, turbines, and other disciplines can responsibly operate above 400 feet if the AMA member is operating within our safety programming. Equally important, the FAA again acknowledges AMA as a community-based organization.

This victory falls on the heels of other successful AMA efforts, including an AMA member exemption from the FAA's Final sUAS Rule (Part 107), the removal of problematic text in the 2016 FAA Reauthorization Bill, and preserving the Special Rule for Model Aircraft through 2017.