



Drone Exploring: Career Spotlights

Logistics — Post

Overview: This session looks seriously at drone delivery as a career and an industry, including the roles involved (pilot, operations, logistics), the FAA Part 107 certification required to operate commercially, the added complexity of Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) operations used by major delivery companies, and realistic pay across entry-level and advanced roles. Explorers plan a mock delivery operation, including a go or no-go weather decision and a route around real-world obstacles.

OBJECTIVES

- Understand the roles and skills involved in the drone delivery industry: pilot, logistics and dispatch, and operations.
- Learn what the FAA Part 107 Remote Pilot Certificate requires and why Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) authorization matters for delivery operations.
- Identify companies operating in this space and realistic pay ranges from entry-level to experienced roles.
- Practice planning a mock delivery mission, including a weather go or no-go decision and route planning.

SUPPLIES

- Laptop and projector to show sample delivery-drone operations footage
- Printed handouts: Career Pathway — Drone Delivery Operator and Mission Planning Worksheet
- Whiteboard or flip chart and markers
- Optional: a local weather forecast pulled up for the mission-planning activity
- Optional: printed or digital copy of FAA's free Part 107 study guide ([faa.gov/uas](https://www.faa.gov/uas))

ADVISOR NOTES

- This session is career-focused: Use real company examples, real certification requirements, and real pay ranges rather than a hobbyist framing.
- BVLOS (Beyond Visual Line of Sight) is what makes large-scale drone delivery possible. Most delivery companies operate under special FAA waivers or exemptions for this.
- Encourage Explorers who are 16 or older and interested to look at the FAA Part 107 study guide as a concrete next step after this session.
- Consider inviting a guest speaker who works in drone delivery, logistics, or UAS operations to share their career path. See Optional Extensions.
- If no guest speaker is available, Advisors can run the entire session using this outline, the Career Pathway handout, and the resource links below.

SESSION OUTLINE

- **Welcome and Icebreaker** (10 min)
 - “What would you want delivered by drone, and why does speed matter for that item?” (example: medicine vs. a book).
- **Safety and Regulatory Moment: Part 107 and BVLOS** (10–15 min)
 - Review the FAA Part 107 Remote Pilot Certificate: minimum age 16, required knowledge test.
 - Explain Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS): flying a drone beyond where the pilot can see it, which requires special FAA authorization and is essential for most real delivery operations.
 - Discuss why weather, airspace, and payload weight limits matter for safe delivery flights.
- **Mini-Lesson: The Business of Drone Delivery** (15–20 min)

- Roles in the industry: remote pilot, flight operations and dispatch, logistics coordinator, drone maintenance technician.
 - Companies operating drone delivery services for packages, food, and medical supplies.
 - Typical pay: Entry-level hourly delivery-support roles average roughly \$16-\$19/hour; experienced pilots in BVLOS, mapping, or inspection roles can earn \$70,000-\$130,000+ annually.
- **Activity: Mission Planning — Go or No-Go Decision** (20 min)
 - Using a sample or current local weather forecast, small groups decide whether a delivery mission is a “go” or “no-go” and justify their decision using wind, visibility, and precipitation.
 - **Activity: Plan a Delivery Operation** (20–25 min)
 - Using the Mission Planning Worksheet, groups plan a mock delivery: route, payload weight limit, obstacles or no-fly areas, and estimated flight time.
 - **Wrap-Up Discussion** (10 min)
 - Groups present their mission plans.
 - Discuss the concrete steps (certification, experience, company research) needed to pursue this as a career.

REFLECTION SECTION

Advisor Note: Some sample questions are below. They are designed to help the participants apply what they have learned to their own interests. You are welcome to use these questions or develop your own.

Focusing Questions

- What surprised you about how much planning goes into a single delivery flight?
- Which role in the delivery industry (pilot, dispatch, logistics, maintenance) sounds most interesting to you?

Analysis Questions

- Why is BVLOS authorization such a big deal for the drone delivery industry?
- What factors would make a delivery mission a ‘no-go’ even if the drone itself is working fine?

Generalization Questions

- How is planning a delivery mission like planning a project or trip in your own life?
- What other careers require this kind of careful, safety-first planning?

Challenge: This week, research one company operating drone delivery services and identify what roles they hire for and what qualifications they require.

OPTIONAL EXTENSIONS

Guest Speaker: Invite someone working in drone delivery, logistics, or UAS operations to share their career path and take questions, in person or by video call.

Advisor-Led Option: If no guest speaker is available, Advisors can run the full session using this outline, the Career Pathway handout, and the resource links below. No outside expert is required.

Resource Links: FAA Part 107 overview ([faa.gov/uas/commercial_operators](https://www.faa.gov/uas/commercial_operators)); FAA information on BVLOS waivers and operations; company career pages for current drone delivery job openings.

Extension Project: Explorers who are 16 or older can begin studying for the actual Part 107 knowledge test using the FAA’s free study guide.

Handout: Career Pathway — Drone Delivery Operator

Delivery — Post

A typical path into this career looks like this:

1. Interest and Hobby Flying

Learn basic drone operation and get comfortable with GPS-based flight planning.

2. FAA Part 107 Certification (Age 16+)

Pass the FAA knowledge test to legally fly for pay.

3. Entry-Level Roles

Ground support, warehouse and logistics coordination, or entry-level piloting roles; average pay roughly \$16-\$19/hour.

4. Advanced Certifications and Experience

Gain experience with BVLOS operations, larger aircraft, or fleet operations software.

5. Experienced Pilot and Operations Roles

Experienced pilots in BVLOS, mapping, or inspection work can earn \$70,000-\$130,000+ annually.

Handout: Mission Planning Worksheet

Delivery — Post

Use this worksheet to plan your mock delivery mission.

Planning Item	Your Plan	Notes and Risks
Route (start to landing zone)		
Obstacles and no-fly areas		
Payload weight limit		
Weather go or no-go decision		
Estimated flight time		