



2022

RC Balloon Operations Manual
Rules & Regulations

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Section 1

Remote Controlled (RC) Model Balloon Operations Manual

A. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This Operations Manual is intended to establish the operating rules for the pilots and crews participating in the 2nd Fiesta de Los Globitos event. This event is being held during the 50th Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, October 1-9, 2022 at Balloon Fiesta Park. The event organizer, Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, Inc. (AIBF) coordinates field preparation and activities, appoints the Balloonmeister and other key officials, and approves the information supplied to the participants including this Operations Manual.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

A. DUTIES OF AIBF PERSONNEL:

- 1. Director of Operations (Sam Parks):** Is in overall operational charge of the AIBF flight operations and is responsible for effective management, efficient and safe running of all flying Events. The Director of Operations coordinates all flight activities, coordinates with the FAA concerning flight activity during the event, works directly with AIBF's Executive Director and President to determine any need for cancellation, prepares the application for Waiver, rules and pilot information for approval by the AIBF Board of Directors and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).
- 2. Associate Event Director (Jennifer Garcia):** Will assist the Director of Operations in all areas related to the effective management of all flying events and Glows and is responsible for the Pilot Headquarters, providing management of all Pilot/Crew social functions. Coordinates registration and pilot documentation plus FAA review. The Associate Event Director organizes pilot rosters for Albuquerque Aloft, Government, Media and VIP flights and coordinates pilot hotel rooms and pilot packs.
- 3. Balloonmeister, (Henry Rosenbaum):** Is responsible for implementing and carrying out the operational decisions of the Director of Operations, coordinates all flight activities, coordinates with the Director of Operations during the event; briefs pilots on conditions for the day's flight, including restrictions that may apply; and recommends to close Balloon Fiesta Park for launches if unfavorable conditions for flight exist, is responsible for and directs all officials and is the point of contact for pilots and officials regarding problems, safety concerns, or competition related protests.
- 4. Globitos Balloonmeister (Melissa Bond):** Is responsible for implementing and carrying out the operational decisions of the Director of Operations, coordinates all Fiesta de Los Globitos flight operations. Coordinates with the AIBF Director of Operations and AIBF Balloonmeister to ensure that there are no conflicts with other flying or entertainment events on the launch field. Receives weather information from the AIBF Weather Team to brief pilots and make flight operations decisions best suited for the Fiesta de Los Globitos event.
- 5. Globitos Safety Official(s):** Coordinates with the Globitos Balloonmeister on all matters pertaining to flight safety, monitors the safety of flight operations, and works to detect and correct potentially unsafe operations. Coordinates with AIBF Safety Officials and any on-field law enforcement when assistance is needed.

B. Balloon Registration and Airworthiness Determination

1. All RC balloons and pilots participating in the 2022 Fiesta de Los Globitos event(s) must be registered and approved by the AIBF Personnel listed above.
2. All balloons and operations will be governed by the Code of Federal Regulations Title 14, Part 101, Subparts A, B and E. A copy of CFR 14, Part 101 is included as Appendix A of this document. Pilots must ensure that all required standards are met.
3. AIBF Personnel have the right to inspect the balloon systems at any time deemed necessary.
4. All balloons must be in a physical condition such that it is able to be operated in a manner that does not present an undue hazard to person(s) or property on the ground.

C. Required Equipment

1. Fire Extinguishers
 - i. Each balloon system must have a minimum of one (1) Class B fire extinguisher within five (5) feet of the launch point.
 - ii. One crew member must be assigned to the Fire Extinguisher.
 - iii. Each Safety Officer will carry with them a minimum of a 1LB Fire Extinguisher while on the field during the operations of the event.
2. Tether Line
 - i. Each balloon system must have a tether line, attached to the basket, whether flying or static display.
 - ii. Tether line must have bright, high visibility flags attached every 25 feet.
 - iii. Tether line must have 550lb minimum strength, e.g. paracord 550
3. Tank Securement
 - i. Each basket must have a system to secure fuel tanks in the basket

D. Balloon Damage

1. If a balloon is damaged during the Fiesta de Los Globitos event(s), and or during any other operation outside of the listed events, the following procedure shall be followed:
 - i. The pilot of a balloon that is damaged while in flight, to the extent of affecting its airworthiness and safety of others, must land.
 - ii. All damage must be reported to the Globitos Balloonmeister or the Globitos Safety Officials the day of the incident.
 - iii. Repairs must be inspected by the Globitos Balloonmeister and or the Globitos Safety Official for safe condition before participation can resume.
 - iv. It is recommended that Globitos Balloonmeister and or Globitos Safety Officials be consulted in the event of any damage to a balloon to ensure agreement that the balloon is airworthy.

E. Event Documentation

The event organizer shall maintain a roster containing the name, address, for each registered pilot and the manufacturer, model and date of manufacture for each aircraft participating in the event.

F. Pilots' Responsibilities

1. All pilots are required to sign a statement indicating that they have read and understand the rules, regulations, and provisions of this Operations Manual prior to any flight.
2. No one other than the registered primary or secondary pilot, is allowed to operate any registered balloon.

3. Each Pilot has full and complete authority over the balloon and is responsible for all decisions to be made associated with the balloon on the ground and in the air. Each Pilot must ensure that their crew, their equipment, and their own level of skill and experience are suitable for the conditions in their own judgment. A Pilot is responsible for all the actions of their crew during the event.
4. It is recommended that the pilot and/or owner of participating balloons have personal liability and theft coverage for their balloon operations during the Fiesta de Los Globitos events. The event organizer does not provide coverage to participants.

G. Crew Member Responsibility

1. Regardless of size, each balloon must have no less than 2 (two) crew members in addition to the pilot for all operations on the field.
2. One crew member must be assigned to inflation fan and must remain in control of fan at all times while the fan is in operation.
3. One crew member must be assigned to control Fire extinguisher at all times while on the field.
4. For 2) and 3) above, both responsibilities may be assigned to one crew member, and is at the discretion of the Pilot-In-Command (PIC).
5. One crew member must control tether line attached to basket at all times during flight. This crew member shall also act as the visual spotter for duration of flight.
6. Crew members are under the direct supervision of the Pilot-In-Command (PIC), and must follow all instructions given by the PIC. Parking and admission pass to the park are to be received from the PIC.

H. Pilot/Crew Briefing Responsibilities

1. Pilots must review and confirm complete understanding of this operations manual and attend applicable pilot briefings held on the launch field prior to acting as Pilot-In-Command (PIC).
2. Crew members during the event must have been briefed by the Pilot-In-Command (PIC) of the balloon. The total number of crew members is limited to five (5), including the pilot.
3. Before each flight all pilots are required to attend the flight briefing, and relay all important information on to crew members.

III. GROUND OPERATIONS

A. Pre-Flight Inspections and Equipment Check

1. All pilots must perform a pre-flight check to include at least these provisions:
 - i. Hook-Up tanks
 - ii. Turn on valves at tank
 - iii. Sniff check for any leaks
 - iv. Turn on pilot valve
 - v. Light pilot flame
 - vi. Turn on radio system
 - vii. Test burn
 - viii. Turn off main burner tanks
 - ix. Bleed main burner line
 - x. Turn off pilot burner
 - xi. Shut off radio system
2. Must perform a walk around inspection of balloon envelope during cold inflation, including a check of the balloon material for obvious tears or other visible damage.
3. Must check cables and attachment points.

B. Spectator (Guest) Areas

1. Event guests will have unrestricted access to the launch field during inflation and launch procedures except as limited below.
 - i. Each Pilot-In-Command (PIC) shall be responsible for crowd control in the immediate vicinity of their balloon during the inflation and launch. The PIC and the crew are responsible for the protection of their property. The PIC shall also take measures to protect guests from any dangers associated with balloon operations. Globitos Balloonmeister, Globitos Safety Officials and other Event Officials will aid in crowd control if an emergency should occur.

IV. FLIGHT OPERATIONS

A. Area of Operations

1. Balloon Fiesta Park: The primary location for the Fiesta de Los Globitos balloon events during the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta is Balloon Fiesta Park. A map of the launch sites is attached as Appendix B.

B. RC Ascensions

1. Fiesta de Los Globitos will consist of ascensions taking into consideration the conditions at hand and forecasted weather to develop during the anticipated flight times.
2. R/C Model Mass Ascensions are events where officially registered model balloons launch from Balloon Fiesta Park-North may be in conjunction with Full Size Ascensions after Ride Balloons depart.

C. Altitudes

1. This rule provides that registered balloons will be permitted to fly at altitudes as follows:
 - i. Under no circumstances will R/C balloons be allowed to fly at an altitude no more than 50 ft. above ground level during any event.
 - ii. During full size Balloon mass ascension, (7am to 8:30am) no R/C balloon may fly at an altitude above 25 ft above ground.
 - iii. RC Balloons may be allowed to fly at higher altitudes during tailgating times.

D. Weather Requirements

1. The decision for flight is the sole responsibility of the pilot in command (PIC)
2. Parameters for wind and safe operation
 - i. Winds below 4 knots- flight open
 - ii. Winds 4 knots to 7 knots – flight at pilots' discretion
 - iii. Winds above 7 knots – flights prohibited

E. Launch Operations

1. RC Balloons shall operate under Visual Flight Rules with the following weather conditions:
 - i. Surface winds at Balloon Fiesta Park not in excess of 7 knots
 - ii. No other known conditions contrary to the safety of flight operations at the time of launch.
 - iii. The Globitos Balloonmeister, after consultation with the Director of Operations and appropriate Officials, shall cancel Mass Ascensions and events already underway if weather conditions are outside the limits outlined above.

F. Communications Requirements

1. In accordance with Balloon Fiesta rules daily Pilot briefings are mandatory and will be conducted at designated spot beginning each morning at 0630 hours.
2. A Public Address (PA) system installed at Balloon Fiesta Park-North, KKOB Radio 770, a text messaging service, and Event Officials will be used to inform pilots of the status of their flight and updated weather information. Each pilot and crew will also be supplied with appropriate emergency phone numbers.
3. In case of emergencies, the Globitos Balloonmeister and Safety Officials are able to communicate with AIBF Public Safety, who can dispatch law enforcement or emergency personnel to respond to situations as needed.

Section 2

Rules & Regulations

I. PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

A. Pilots

1. Entry: Pilots must be officially registered with the event, participating in “Fiesta de Los Globitos” which is scheduled to take place on Sunday, October 2, Wednesday, October 5 and Friday, October 7. Other events maybe announced/scheduled weather permitting.
2. PIC Responsibilities: The Pilot-In-Command (PIC) is responsible for compliance with all of event rules. The PIC will brief all designated crewmembers prior to their flight and ensure that they understand their duties. No flight or event is mandatory and all flights are made at the discretion of the PIC.
3. Acknowledgement: Pilots must know, understand and abide by all of event rules and regulations, including any rules that are added or modified during the event and announced during any official pilot briefing.
4. Release of Liability: The Pilot, by entering the event, agrees that the Organizer and sponsors of this event, competition officials, officers, trustees, agents and/or members of these entities are providing the Participant with the facilities and means for participation in this event and in no way do they supersede the responsibility of the pilot in command or otherwise.

The Participant releases the Organizer and sponsors of this event, competition officials, officers, trustees, agents and/or members of these entities from liability for their actions or inactions in relation to the event which may arise out of or result from or in any manner be connected with the balloon flight or activity in which the Participant participates as a pilot in command.

5. Liability to Third Parties: By entering the event, a Participant assumes all liability for injury, loss or damage to third parties or their property caused by themselves or their crew.

6. Safety: All meteorological reports, forecasts, and other safety information are provided in good faith for the guidance of Participants. AIBF assumes no responsibility for the completeness or accuracy of such information. It is the pilot's decision whether to rely on that information or acquire additional information.
7. Safety Officials: Officials will be appointed to monitor the inflation and operation of balloons at event location. However, nothing shall diminish the responsibility of each pilot under this section.
8. Recall: Flight cancellation and other critical safety information will be communicated through Globitos Balloonmeister and Safety Officials or texts through the Event Texting system.
9. Responsibility: Each Pilot has full and complete authority over the balloon and is responsible for all decisions to be made associated with the balloon on the ground and in the air. Each Pilot must ensure that their crew, their equipment, and their own level of skill and experience are suitable for the conditions in their own judgment. The Pilot is responsible for all the actions of their crew during the event.
10. Conduct: Pilots and their crews are required to behave in a sportsmanlike manner and to comply with the directions of the Event Officials. Profanity or unsportsmanlike conduct directed at any Official or event Navigator (volunteer) will be grounds for expulsion of the pilot from this event and/or future events.

B. Balloons

1. Must be registered with Balloon Fiesta for the Fiesta de Los Globitos events.
2. Pilots must fly the balloon in which they registered and be on the field for any flights which they are scheduled
3. Airworthiness: The Organizer and/or Globitos Balloonmeister, and Safety Officials are authorized to visually inspect and/or reject any aerostat which in their opinion is not of a reasonable standard of airworthiness.
4. Damage to Balloon: The pilot of a balloon that is damaged while in flight, to the extent of affecting its airworthiness is subject to inspection.
5. Serious Infringements, Unsporting Behavior: Serious Infringements include dangerous or hazardous actions or repetitions of lesser infringements may be subject to no flight or removal from event.
6. Altitude Violations: Violations of maximum flight altitudes will result in a penalty up to revocation of flying privileges/propane.
 - i. Under no circumstances will R/C balloons be allowed to fly at an altitude above 50 ft above ground level during scheduled events.
 - ii. During full size Balloon mass ascension, (7am to 8:30am) no R/C balloon may fly at an altitude above 25 ft above ground level.

II.

FLIGHT OPERATIONS

- A. Flight Briefings: Attendance at the applicable daily pilot briefings for the events in which you are participating are mandatory and will be conducted beginning each morning at 06:45 hours at designated area.
- B. Pilot in Command (PIC): The PIC will brief all Flight Crewmembers as to their duties.
- C. The total number of RC Balloon Crewmembers is five (5). Pilot and four (4).
- D. The PIC shall not allow any items to be dropped from the balloon.
- E. Inflation Fans
 - 1. All inflator fans must have appropriate safety cages. Pilots must ensure safe operation of the fan and prevent non-crewmembers' access to it.
 - 2. At all times one (1) crewmember should be assigned to the inflator fan operation during inflations at all events.
- F. Launch
 - 1. Your Launch site at Balloon Fiesta Park has been assigned and is indicated on your pilot badge. When flying/launching from the park, you must inflate from your assigned site, unless you receive specific permission from the Globitos Balloonmeister to do otherwise.
 - 2. A Pilot shall maintain control of their balloon at all times. Should an emergency occur, the pilot shall deflate immediately.
 - 3. There is more than one balloon assigned to each launch site, please be cooperative.
 - 4. Only the vehicle transporting the balloon designated with adhesive number affixed to the windshield of the chase vehicle, supplied with the basket banner is allowed on the Launch Field during inflations. Penalty for infringement may be up to loss of flying privileges and propane.
- G. During Flight Tank Change
 - 1. No propane cylinders shall be replaced while the balloon is inflated, without appropriate precautions taken.
 - 2. Pilot must land and remain at ground level during complete refueling process.
 - i. Turn off main burner tanks
 - ii. Operate burner to bleed down/burn off the line
 - iii. Turn off pilot light tank
 - iv. Replace main burner tanks
 - v. Turn on main burner tanks
 - vi. Perform sniff test, smell for propane leaks
 - vii. Turn on pilot light tank
 - viii. Turn on pilot light valve
 - ix. Light Pilot
 - x. Test main burners
 - xi. Commence flight if appropriate

- H. Tether Line: Tether lines are to be marked with bright, high visibility flags every 25 feet. This is to ensure height/altitude restrictions. Penalty may be loss of flying privileges/propane.
- I. Behavior: Participants are required to fly with proper consideration for persons on the ground and to follow good etiquette and the code of conduct. Inconsiderate behavior by crewmembers may be penalized up to expulsion from the event.

III. FIELD OPERATIONS

- A. Crowd Control: Each Pilot-In-Command (PIC) shall be responsible for crowd control in the immediate vicinity of their balloon during the inflation and launch. The PIC and crew are responsible for the protection of their property. The PIC shall also take measures to protect guests from any dangers associated with balloon operations. Safety Officials and other event Officials will aid in crowd control if an emergency should occur.
- B. No Drive Zone: No driving or parking is allowed on Main Street (Concession Concourse). Repeated violation of this will result in loss of flying privileges/propane.
- C. Propane Venting: NEVER vent raw propane on Balloon Fiesta Park! Penalty for infringement may be up to one day's flying privileges/propane.
- D. Fueling on the Field: Penalty for Violation will be automatic withdrawal from event.
- E. Propane Cylinder Filling:
 - 1. After each scheduled event is completed, pilot must drop off empty tanks with a designated propane official.
 - 2. Empty tanks must have event registration number written legibly with permanent marker on it.
 - 3. Full tanks will be returned in the morning prior to pilot briefing at designate spot.
- F. Unauthorized and/or Unattended Vehicles: Unauthorized vehicles on the Balloon Fiesta Launch Field create unnecessary congestion and will be towed at owner's expense. During balloon launches from Balloon Fiesta Park, unattended vehicles, whether or not authorized to be on the launch sites, may be towed at owner's expense if the vehicle is deemed by Balloon Fiesta officials to pose a hazard to balloons, guests or field operations. This includes balloon trailers and recreational vehicles. Violation of this rule may result in the loss of flying privileges/propane.
- G. Propane/Fueling Operations
 - 1. The Director of Operations or Chief Safety Official are the only person(s) who may approve an exception to these propane rules.
 - 2. Each propane cylinder must have registration number written on cylinder with permanent marker.
 - 3. Pilots will come to event with cylinders full, and will leave, after event completion, with full cylinders.

4. Empty Propane cylinders will be dropped off with event staff (designated person to be stated at pilot briefing) after each day's flight.
5. The Full cylinders must be picked up from same staff member prior to pilots briefing on day of flight.
6. After final event flight, pilots will turn in empty cylinders, and pick them back up at designated time after staff has filled cylinders for the final time.
7. **Raw propane may never be vented on Balloon Fiesta Park.**