

The following question was received on the Feedback Form from February 12 seminar.

Any information regarding BVLOS pertinent to GA.

Here's the version of BVLOS that actually matters to a GA pilot — not the drone-industry marketing gloss, but the operational, regulatory, and airspace-integration angles that affect you when you're flying a piston single through the NAS.

BVLOS is ultimately an **airspace-sharing** problem, not a gadget problem.

1. What “BVLOS” Actually Means in the Context of GA

BVLOS = **Beyond Visual Line of Sight** unmanned aircraft operations.

For GA, the key issue is simple:

BVLOS introduces aircraft you *cannot* see and that *cannot* see you unless the system is engineered to compensate.

That's why the FAA treats BVLOS as a **detect-and-avoid** and **airspace-integration** problem, not a drone problem.

2. Why BVLOS Matters to GA More Than Most Pilots Realize

2.1. BVLOS aircraft will operate in the same low-altitude layers GA uses

- 400–1,500 ft AGL corridors
- Airport surface areas
- Transition zones
- Class E to surface areas
- Rural corridors where GA often flies VFR

This is the first time the FAA is integrating **non-see-and-avoid aircraft** into the same layers where GA relies heavily on see-and-avoid.

2.2. BVLOS aircraft may be *fast*

Not all drones are quadcopters.

BVLOS includes:

- Fixed-wing UAS
- Cargo drones
- eVTOL/AAM aircraft
- High-speed inspection platforms

Some cruise at **60–120 knots**, which puts them squarely in the GA performance envelope.

3. The FAA’s Current BVLOS Framework (as it affects GA)

3.1. BVLOS is not yet broadly legal

Today, BVLOS requires:

- A waiver
- A specific COA
- Or operation inside a defined corridor/test site

The FAA is working toward a **rulemaking package** that would allow routine BVLOS, but it’s not implemented yet.

3.2. The FAA’s BVLOS ARC (Aviation Rulemaking Committee) recommendations

These are the big ones for GA:

- **Right-of-way rules:**
BVLOS aircraft would NOT automatically have right-of-way over crewed aircraft. GA retains priority in mixed airspace.
- **Shielded operations:**
BVLOS drones could operate close to obstacles (powerlines, railways, roads) without needing full detect-and-avoid capability.
- **Corridor-based operations:**
Think of them as “mini airways” for drones.
- **Detect-and-avoid requirements:**
The FAA is leaning toward **electronic conspicuity** rather than visual detection.

4. The Real Collision-Risk Mechanics (Aerodynamic + Operational)

4.1. GA relies on see-and-avoid

BVLOS aircraft cannot see you.

You may not see them.

This breaks the fundamental assumption of VFR.

4.2. Closing speeds

A 100-knot GA aircraft and a 60-knot BVLOS fixed-wing drone have a **160-knot closing speed**.

At 1 NM separation, that's **22 seconds** to impact.

4.3. Radar and ATC coverage

Below 500–700 ft AGL, radar coverage is often poor.

BVLOS drones may operate there routinely.

4.4. Wake turbulence

Large cargo drones (300–1,000 lb class) generate wake.

This is not theoretical — it's already been observed in test corridors.

5. How BVLOS Will Change the GA Operating Environment

5.1. Expect more “UAS corridors”

These will be:

- Charted
- Altitude-defined
- Possibly time-segmented
- Integrated into sectional charts and NOTAMs

5.2. Expect more electronic conspicuity pressure

The FAA is already signaling that:

- ADS-B Out
- Remote ID

- UAS detect-and-avoid systems

...will eventually converge into a **shared traffic-awareness ecosystem**.

5.3. Expect more NOTAM modernization tied to BVLOS

You've already been tracking NOTAM modernization.

BVLOS is one of the drivers — the system must be able to publish:

- Temporary UAS corridors
- Pop-up BVLOS operations
- Dynamic airspace reservations

This is why NOTAM modernization and BVLOS rulemaking are happening in parallel.

6. Where BVLOS Intersects With AAM (and why GA should care)

AAM aircraft (eVTOLs) are not technically “BVLOS,” but they operate:

- In low-altitude corridors
- On RNAV-defined tracks
- With heavy automation
- With detect-and-avoid systems

This means GA will be sharing:

- Vertiport transition routes
- Urban corridors
- Low-altitude arrival/departure paths

The FAA is already modeling **mixed GA + AAM + BVLOS** environments.

7. The Practical Takeaways for a GA Pilot

7.1. Expect more low-altitude structure

The “free-maneuvering” VFR world below 1,200 ft AGL will become more structured.

7.2. Expect more electronic traffic requirements

Not immediately, but the trajectory is clear.

7.3. Expect more coordination around airports

BVLOS operations near airports will require:

- Surface surveillance
- Geofencing
- ATC integration

7.4. Expect more NOTAMs and chart updates

BVLOS corridors will appear in:

- NOTAMs
 - Sectionals
 - UAS facility maps
 - Chart supplements
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