THE DRONE PILOT BRIEF · FIELD CHECKLIST

Two-person crew callouts

RPIC = remote pilot in command. VO = visual observer, who scans the airspace (14 CFR 107.33).

Verified as of 22 Oct 2026 against the live article

NOT AN FAA DOCUMENT

Job / site: _____ Date: _____ Remote pilot in command: _____

BEFORE THE NEXT MISSION

- [ ] **Brief the callouts:** review the clock-code traffic protocol with your VO before powering up the ground station.
- [ ] **Enforce the sterile zone:** no client chat, phone calls or secondary tasks during takeoff, the climb to 50 feet and the final 50-foot descent.
- [ ] **Emergency abort zone:** agree on a clear turf or gravel patch to put the drone down if an unannounced aircraft forces an immediate descent.
- [ ] **Traffic format:** [TARGET] + [CLOCK POSITION] + [ALTITUDE/TREND] + [PROXIMITY]. e.g. “Traffic, low-wing Cessna, 2 o'clock, level at 500 feet, 1 mile closing.”

THE FIVE CREW CALLOUTS

Phase	Who	Callout	Response
Pre-arm / spin-up	RPIC	“Arming motors. Clear prop.”	VO: “Pad is clear. Airspace clear.”
Airspace conflict	VO	“TRAFFIC, Helicopter, 10 o'clock, descending, closing fast.”	RPIC: “Visual / Yielding right-of-way, descending to 50 feet.”
Visual line of sight	VO	“Blind. Lost visual contact.”	RPIC halts forward flight: “Holding in place. Climbing 30 feet.”
Critical voltage	RPIC	“Low battery, 25%. Aborting grid, returning home.”	VO: “Inbound corridor clear. Landing zone secure.”
Touchdown	RPIC	“Touchdown. Motors disarmed.”	VO: “Aircraft safe.”

> The VO's duty is to scan the surrounding airspace, not just watch the drone. When the RPIC is heads-down on a screen, the VO is the primary line of defense.

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