



DBF Frequently Asked Questions



Please check the FAQ and Q&A sections often during the competition. **Please note that rules interpretation questions are not answered by e-mail until after the entry date (when all participant e-mail address are known), so that all teams will have equal access to all rules information.**

***** All Rulings in This FAQ Supplement The Official Rules! *****

General Notes:

2.4 GHz band radios are recommended for the contest. We will accept an email request to use a 72 MHz style radio from teams with accepted entries following the close of the entry submission period.

Flight / Mission Questions:

Question: Do we have to fly all of the different missions to get a score?

Answer: You will get a score for each mission you successfully complete. The flights must be completed in the order specified to obtain a score.

Question: If the airplane is damaged on a flight can we use another copy of the aircraft which has the same design?

Answer: No, you must repair the original aircraft.

Question: Can we tailor the configuration of the aircraft differently for the different missions? For example, could we use different sized propulsion systems for each flight?

Answer: You cannot change the hardware configuration of the aircraft for the different missions.

Question: What constitutes a successful landing?

Answer: The aircraft must touch down ON the runway. It may roll/slide, not bounce, off the runway after touchdown.

Question: Is there a minimum altitude for flying the course?

Answer: No. Altitude must be high enough for safe flight as set by the discretion of the Contest Director.

Question: What would constitute “non-critical” versus “significant damage” on landing as described in the rules?

Answer: The decision will be at the discretion of the flight line judges. In general, “non-critical” damage would allow the aircraft to be easily returned to safe flight status. A couple of examples of “non-critical” damage would be a broken propeller, bent landing gear, sheared nylon bolts or minor scratches to the finish. If any component is structurally damaged and would be considered a hazard to safe flight then it will be considered as “significant damage”.

Question: At what wind speed will the contest be called.

Answer: It will be up to each team to determine whether they want to fly or not. The contest director will determine if it becomes unsafe for teams to fly. Wind speed is not the only factor that may be considered.

Aircraft Configuration Questions:

Questions: Can there be thrust vectoring via rotating the engine, nozzles, blown surfaces etc.?

Answer: Yes. Any of the above options is allowed and may be varied during flight. However, "rotary wing" vehicles are not allowed, so you may need to consult the judges with your specific design doesn't cross over the line into vertical flight capability.

Question: Can we change the aircraft geometry, such as wing sweep or span, for different missions?

Answer: Variable geometry is allowed provided it is controlled remotely through the RC control system. You may not "swap out" parts for different missions.

Question: Do the external fuse accessibility requirements (from behind if tractor, from the front if pusher) exclude the use of a pusher-puller type multi-engine configuration?

Answer: You may use a push-pull configuration but must locate the fuse(s) such that they can be accessed by the crew member without having to reach over or around either propeller or being in the propeller disk plane of either propeller.

Question: Are folding propellers allowed?

Answer: Yes, commercial, folding propellers are allowed.

General Questions:

Question: Is it safe to assume that if the rules do not explicitly forbid something, it is allowed?

Answer: The rules are intentionally designed to not impose too many limitations while allowing each team an equal chance. If something adheres to the "spirit" of the rules it is likely to be allowed. If you have any specific questions you would like clarified they may be addressed in a private e-mail to the contest administrator. Ideas will not be disclosed to other teams if they represent a legal and innovative approach. If it is deemed to be not legal, it may be added to this FAQ or posted to the other teams at the administrator's discretion.

Question: Do all of the team members need to be student members of AIAA?

Answer: Since the DBF is part of the AIAA competitions sanctioned by the Student Activities Committee and the AIAA Foundation, all team members should be student members of the AIAA.

Question: What is the maximum number of people that can make-up a team?

Answer: There is no specific limit on team size. It is up to the team itself to determine a size sufficient to meet the required tasks and small enough to remain manageable.

Question: Is it necessary to list all team members on the entry.

Answer: Yes, we need to know all the team members to verify that at least 1/3 of the team members are Freshmen, Sophomores or Juniors. Team members may be updated/changed at any time during the contest but must always comply with the 1/3 rule.

Question: Can we change team members during the contest year?

Answer: You may change team members anytime during the contest year as long as you continue to meet the team composition rules.

Question: Is it allowed to have/declare more than 1 pilot in a team (in case one of them cannot go to the contest, or simply have a back-up pilot)?

Answer: Yes, teams may register multiple pilots as long as each meets the requirements listed in the rules.

Question: Can we have corporate sponsors? If so, can we put their logo on the aircraft at any place that pleases them?

Answer: Teams may solicit and accept sponsorship in the form of funds or materials and components from commercial organizations. All design, analysis and fabrication of the contest entry is the sole responsibility of the team members. Sponsor and university decals or logos may be placed as desired.