

Participants will navigate a structured NIST Open Lane course. The NIST Level 1 course is a standardized drone-pilot skills test that challenges students to complete precise takeoff, navigation, and camera-based tasks used in real law-enforcement missions. This course provides a safe, controlled way for high school competitors to demonstrate foundational flight skills, follow safety procedures, and be scored on consistent, repeatable performance.

## Entry Requirements

- Teams must be composed of 2 members.
- Chapters can only register 2 teams to compete.
- **FAA Trust Certification**  
Both members of the team must have their FAA Trust Certification. Certification Link: <https://trust.pilotinstitute.com/>

## Materials

Competitors can/should provide the following materials. Competitors are only permitted to bring in the below materials to the competition. TPSA does not provide the below materials.

- **Photo Identification**  
Reference [the rulebook](https://tpsa.info/rulebook) (<https://tpsa.info/rulebook>) for details
- **Proof of FAA TRUST Certification**
- **Approved Drone Equipment**  
Small Unmanned Aircraft System (sUAS) with functional camera  
Controller with screen/tablet for live feed (if applicable)  
Extra batteries & charging equipment
- **Safety Equipment**  
High-visibility vest (for visual observer)
- **Logbook or Notepad (For recording search & rescue data)**
- **Drones must comply with FAA regulations and event safety standards.**
- **Blank SD Card**  
A blank SD card that is compatible with your drone.

## Supplemental Documents

- [Nist Level 1 Basic Proficiency](#)

## Procedures and Timeline

- **Check In (10 min Time Limit)**  
Teams must check in at their designated time. Late arrivals (beyond 10 minutes) will be marked as no-shows and disqualified
- **Pre-Event Briefing (5 min Time Limit)**  
After check-in, competitors will be guided to the designated event area. Once there, the moderator will provide a comprehensive briefing, detailing the event's instructions, rules, and procedures. This briefing ensures that each competitor is well-informed and prepared for the subsequent stages of the competition.
- **Scenario Briefing (5 min Time Limit)**  
The judge presents a detailed briefing of the scenario. The judge will read directly from the hard copy scenario document.
- **NIST Open Lane Course (Lvl 1) (15 min Time Limit)**
  - 1). Operators will be given ten minutes to complete the NIST Level 1 Open Lane Course.
  - 2). Competitors will place their drone in the designated starting point.
  - 3). The competitor will then begin their pre-flight checks
  - 4). Once the competitor calls out "props hot" and the drone begins its flight the moderator will start the time.
  - 5). The judge will call out each objective for the competitor.
  - 6). Each call out from the judge will require a picture to be taken.
  - 7). On the last objective the judge will signal to the moderator to stop the time.
  - 8). The competitor will then hand their SD card to judge for review
  - 9). The judge will be provided 5 minutes to:
    - score the competitors documentation/review photos
    - ensure all photos are deleted from the competitor's drone/ SD card.
    - The competitors may remain in the same area during scoring, however competitors may not interact with the judge or view score cards

- The judge will not provided feedback at this time.
- **Evaluation and Scoring (5 min Time Limit)**  
Judges will score competitors based on a standardized rubric. Scoring is conducted without competitors present to ensure objectivity. Once all assessments are finalized, scores will be recorded for each Competitor.

## Professional Dress Guidelines

To secure professionalism points, competitors should dress in attire that accurately reflects what professionals in the respective public safety careers would wear while performing the tasks associated with the event. Competitors are also expected to consult and follow the professional dress guidelines in the rulebook to qualify for points. Additionally, participation is contingent upon meeting all prescribed safety protocols.

## Safety Protocols

- **Designated Airspace**  
Drones must remain within the designated competition area.
- **Unsafe flying**  
Collisions or unsafe flight will result in disqualification.
- **Compliance With Staff Instructions**  
Teams must follow event staff and judge instructions at all times
- **Visual Observer Responsibilities**  
Visual observers must maintain situational awareness and assist the flyer.
- **Safety Compliance & Disqualification Policy**  
If the judge determines a safety violation, the team may be disqualified
- **Safety Vest Requirement**  
The Visual Observer must wear a safety vest at all times during competition.
- **Shirt Sleeves**  
IF Long sleeve shirts are worn, they shall fit closely at the wrist and not extend past the wrist.
- **Emergency Stop Command: 'Index'**  
If the 'Index' command is issued by a Judge, Staff Member, Actor, or other designated authority, all Competitors must immediately cease all activities and actions. This includes stopping any ongoing tasks, disengaging from any current simulations, and discontinuing any interactions with other participants. If an Actor issues the 'Index' command while handcuffed, they must be immediately released from the handcuffs by the nearest Competitor or event staff member. All Competitors must promptly secure and holster any weapons they may be handling. After holstering, Competitors should adopt a neutral, attentive posture and await further instructions from event officials. Failure to promptly and accurately comply with the 'Index' command may result in immediate disqualification and/or other appropriate actions as determined by event officials.
- **Shoes**  
Competitors must wear low-heeled, closed-toed footwear for this event.
- **Prohibited Materials**  
Flash bangs, live munitions, or any type of projectiles are prohibited during the event. Use of any prohibited item will result in disqualification. Any damages that result from the use of prohibited items will be the financial responsibility of the competitors school. The chapter's membership shall be suspended.
- **Hair**  
All hair must be secured out of the eyes for the duration of the event. Competitors with hair extending past the top of the shoulder shall wear their hair secured neatly in a bun or ponytail ensuring that no hair extends below the collar of the uniform. It is not an exception to the rule that a Competitor's chosen hair style is too thick to be secured above the collar.
- **Unusual Assaults or Tactics**  
Unusual assaults or tactics may not be used during the event, if the team is unsure they should consult the Judge before the event begins.

## Judge Qualifications

- All judges need to have NIST course experience.

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Penalty	Seconds Added
<b>Fail to Conduct Pre-Flight Safety Check</b> Competitors fail to ensure the drone is in working condition, complete all safety checks, and verify a safe takeoff area.	<b>No Penalty</b> <b>+ 10 secs</b>
<b>Fails Check Airspace Restrictions/ Weather Verification</b> Competitor(s) fails to check weather/airspace restrictions prior to takeoff	<b>No Penalty</b> <b>+ 10 secs</b>
<b>Fails to take photograph:</b> Fails to take a photograph on any section required to take a picture. 5 Second penalty for EACH missed photo.	<b>No Penalty</b> <b>+ 5 secs</b>
<b>Broken Picture(s)</b> Any broken pictures as describe in the NIST scorecard. EACH broken picture is a 2 second penalty.	<b>No Penalty</b> <b>+ 2 secs</b>
<b>Fails to issue warning that Drone will be turned on</b> Competitor does not verbalize "props hot" or another term singling the drone is about to be turn on	<b>No Penalty</b> <b>+ 5 secs</b>
<b>Visual Observer does not wear a safety vest</b> V.O does not wear a safety vest during event	<b>No Penalty</b> <b>+ 20 secs</b>

Penalty Seconds: 0 secs

Recorded Time: 0 mins 0 secs 0 ms

Final Time (with Penalty):

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