As you crack the spine of this book and enter the ever-dynamic world of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), it is imperative to keep in mind that no sooner did I put fingers to keyboard to draft this text, the entire nation, much like the rest of the world, was still developing the regulations governing their use and operation. Hence, my words of caution are to read the footnotes and be sure to update your knowledge accordingly to ensure you are abreast of the most recent developments. For example, when the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) updates its Orders and Circulars, the newer versions are followed by letters, A, B, C, etc. You can see that clearly in Advisory Circular (AC) 91-57A.

Furthermore, the FAA has just recently promulgated 14 CFR Part 107 for the purpose of regulating commercial UAS operations weighing less than 55 pounds. The FAA anticipates the development of further regulations to address beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS), heavier UAS, and more risky operations. The Remote Pilot in Command (PIC) certificate currently makes mention of a small UAS rating, meaning there may even be a large UAS rating in the future, or even a micro UAS category. Thus, this book is by no means a complete work.

It is also anticipated that more states and cities will develop rules to accommodate among others, privacy issues. And finally, as the technology unfolds, seemingly exponentially, these rules will have to adapt to keep pace. It is my sincere hope that this book will whet your appetite for more knowledge in this field, as it is just the beginning of an exciting chapter in aviation much like the early Wright Brother days when manned flight was becoming commercially viable.

Finally, I welcome your feedback and suggestions in anticipation of a second edition or online updates. Please do not hesitate to contact me! In my finest captain’s voice, I now urge you to sit back, relax, and enjoy the flight (book)!

INTRODUCTION