

Rotor Rate

User Guide

The end-to-end companion for new Part 107 commercial drone pilots — research, pricing, and business admin in one workflow.

Version 1.2

rotorrate.com

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Getting started

Rotor Rate helps commercial drone pilots quote profitable jobs, track missions, log mileage for taxes, and stay current with Part 107 requirements.

Five minutes to your first bid:

- 1 Sign up and confirm your email.
- 2 Open **Settings** from the header menu and enter your home base address, hourly rate, gas price, and Part 107 issue date.
- 3 Pick the **Bid Calculator** if you set the price, or the **Flat-Rate Evaluator** if a client gave you a number.
- 4 Fill in job inputs and review the verdict.
- 5 Save the job to track it through Missions and Workspace.

Most screens have a small ? help icon next to the title that deep-links to the matching section of this guide.

Bid Calculator

Use the Bid Calculator when you control the price.

Enter industry, location, hours on site, drive time, payload, and platform. Rotor Rate computes your suggested bid based on hourly rate, fuel cost, out-of-pocket expenses, payload multiplier, and the platform's processor fee.

The verdict shows your effective hourly rate, gross and net revenue, and a full cost breakdown so you can defend the number to a client.

Per-hour vs. per-acre

Most jobs price per hour. For ag and survey work, toggle **Per-acre** and enter the acreage and your per-acre rate — Rotor Rate still factors drive, fuel, and processor fees.

Flat-Rate Evaluator

When a client offers a fixed price, drop it into the Flat-Rate Evaluator. You'll get a green / yellow / red verdict, your effective hourly rate after expenses, and a recommendation on whether to accept, counter, or pass.

Toggle **Project** for fast no-drive jobs (training, indoor, post-only work) so the evaluator doesn't penalize you for missing drive time.

Job inputs explained

- **Industry** — drives the benchmark range and tax-quarter categorization.
- **Address** — autocompletes via Google Maps and auto-fills drive distance and one-way hours from your home base.
- **Hours on site** — the time you're actively flying or on-location.
- **OOPE** — out-of-pocket expenses for the job (props, batteries, tolls, etc.).
- **Platform** — applies the right processor fee automatically; you can also turn the fee off per-job.
- **Payload / sensor** — pick the camera or sensor the job actually requires (RGB, thermal, multispectral, LiDAR, etc.). Specialty payloads apply a rate multiplier on top of your hourly rate to reflect the premium the work commands.

Avoiding sensor double-counting

Important. If you've already baked a specialty premium into your default hourly rate or industry rate override, leave the payload set to **RGB**. Selecting a specialty sensor on top of an already-inflated rate stacks the premium twice and will over-quote the job.

Rotor Rate watches for this. When your entered rate is significantly above your baseline default and you've also picked a specialty payload, the sensor selector shows a warning that highlights the likely double-count and explains the math (for example: *"Your \$100/hr is 54% above your default \$65/hr — your Thermal multiplier may already be priced in."*).

Rule of thumb: keep specialty premiums in *one* place — either the payload multiplier, or your rate. Never both.

Platforms & payment processors

Rotor Rate ships with the most common drone-work platforms and their fee structures (DroneBase, Zeitview, Aerodyne, DroneDeploy marketplace partners, direct invoice, Stripe, PayPal, etc.).

Add your own under **Settings** → **Custom platforms**: name it, set the percentage fee and any fixed component, and it appears in every calculator with the right math applied automatically.

Per-job override

Even with a platform selected, you can untick *Apply processor fee* on an individual job — useful for cash deals or direct-pay clients on a platform that normally charges a fee.

Saving, recurring & linked jobs

Save any job to keep it on your **Workspace** and **Missions** pages. Jobs flow through statuses: *pending* → *awarded* / *in-work* → *completed* (or *lost*).

Recurring jobs

Set up a series (weekly, monthly, custom) that auto-materializes upcoming occurrences. A recurring contract is one decision: marking any occurrence *awarded* / *in-work* or *completed* cascades the same status to every sibling in the series, and the Missions board collapses siblings into a single representative row.

Linked jobs

Group multiple stops on the same day so drive time and fuel are split fairly across clients — no client subsidizes another's windshield time.

Reflies

When a client needs a mission reflown, hit the **Refly** button on the completed row. Rotor Rate creates a new awarded mission tagged as a reflly so the extra drive, fuel, and flight time get tracked — the original completed record stays intact.

Missions, pipeline & calendar invites

The Missions page is the schedule-focused view. The default **Pipeline** tab is a kanban board with three columns — Pending, Awarded / In-Work, Completed — so you can advance any mission with one click without opening the calculator.

Other tabs cover Upcoming, Recurring, and Completed-only views.

Calendar invites

Each mission can generate a .ics calendar invite that works with Google Calendar, Apple Calendar, and Outlook — including proper timezone and DST handling. Re-download anytime; invites regenerate from the current job data.

Locked rates

When a mission flips to **completed** (or **lost**), Rotor Rate freezes the rates that were live at that moment — fly rate, travel rate, MPG, gas price, processor fees, IRS mileage rate, and the weather snapshot — onto the record. Updating your global settings later won't rewrite history. Reopening a completed mission preserves the locked rates so the original economics always travel with the job.

Settings

- Home base address and coordinates
- Hourly rate, travel rate, mileage rate, default OOPE
- Gas price (with optional local-price override per job)
- MPG / fuel economy for your vehicle
- Custom platforms and fee structures
- Industry-specific rate overrides
- Part 107 issue date for currency tracking
- Tax quarter preferences and notification settings
- Display: Light / Dark / System theme for the in-app surfaces

All settings are stored to your account and sync across devices as soon as you sign in.

Quarterly tax estimator

Rotor Rate aggregates your **completed** jobs by IRS quarter and estimates what to set aside.

Use the widget on the Workspace page to see year-to-date earnings, deductible mileage, and an estimated federal liability per quarter. Awarded / In-Work-but-not-completed work doesn't count yet — only finished missions feed the totals, so your estimate only firms up as revenue is actually realized.

This is an estimate, not tax advice. State, local, and self-employment thresholds vary — confirm with your accountant before sending quarterly payments.

Mileage log & exports

When you mark a mission **completed**, Rotor Rate auto-creates a mileage entry using the IRS standard rate (or your custom rate).

Edit actual miles after the trip, add manual entries for ad-hoc trips like scouting or equipment runs, and export the full log as CSV for your tax software or accountant.

Mileage rows linked to a job only count toward your totals while that job remains completed — reverting status removes the auto-logged miles. Manual entries are always preserved.

Airspace, weather & local gas

For any job address, Rotor Rate runs the pre-bid research for you so you're not juggling five tabs to size up a gig:

- Airspace classification with a one-tap LAANC deep-link.
- Google Maps + Street View site preview.
- Weather forecast for the mission window.
- Local fuel prices used to refine your fuel-cost estimate.

On completion, the weather forecast is frozen alongside the locked rates so the historical record always shows the same verdict — even after the live forecast horizon rolls past.

Industry benchmarks

See low / average / high pricing for your industry and region, sourced from real market data and refreshed periodically. The benchmark card appears alongside your verdict so you can see whether your bid is competitive — or whether you're leaving money on the table.

Benchmarks vary by payload, so a thermal roof inspection and an RGB roof inspection draw on different ranges.

Part 107 currency

Rotor Rate tracks your Part 107 24-month recurrent training window and warns you in-app and by email when you're approaching the deadline.

Update your last training date under **Settings** → **Part 107** whenever you complete a recurrent online course. Letting currency lapse grounds your commercial operations until you retake the test — Rotor Rate's job is to make sure that doesn't sneak up on you.

Account & subscription

Manage your plan, payment method, and billing history from **Settings** → **Subscription**.

Annual billing is roughly 58% off monthly. You can pause, switch plans, or cancel anytime — cancellations take effect at the end of the current billing period, so you keep access to everything you've already paid for.

New accounts get a 7-day full-access trial — no card required to start.

Tips & troubleshooting

- **Drive distance not auto-filling?** Make sure your home base coordinates are set in Settings — the address-only field isn't enough.
- **Calendar invite missing details?** Re-download — invites regenerate from current job data each time.
- **Verdict feels too high after picking a specialty sensor?** Check your hourly rate. If you've already baked the premium into your rate, switch the payload to RGB to avoid double-counting.
- **Completed mission shows unexpected economics?** That row uses the rates locked at completion. Reopen it and re-complete only if you actually want to restamp with today's settings.
- **Need a feature or hit a bug?** Use the **Feedback** button in the bottom corner — it goes straight to the team.