

- U.S.: Illegal to aim laser pointer beams at aircraft or their flight path; up to 5 years in prison and up to \$250,000 fine

[The language below was signed into law by President Obama on February 14 2012. We are presenting it as it appears in the United States Code, which lists U.S. laws. The penalty for violating this law is up to 5 years in federal prison and/or up to a \$250,000 fine.]

U.S.C. TITLE 18, CHAPTER 2

Sec. 39A. Aiming a laser pointer at an aircraft

(a) OFFENSE -- Whoever knowingly aims the beam of a laser pointer at an aircraft in the special aircraft jurisdiction of the United States, or at the flight path of such an aircraft, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 5 years, or both.

(b) LASER POINTER DEFINED -- As used in this section, the term 'laser pointer' means any device designed or used to amplify electromagnetic radiation by stimulated emission that emits a beam designed to be used by the operator as a pointer or highlighter to indicate, mark, or identify a specific position, place, item, or object.

(c) EXCEPTIONS -- This section does not prohibit aiming a beam of a laser pointer at an aircraft, or the flight path of such an aircraft, by--

(1) an authorized individual in the conduct of research and development or flight test operations conducted by an aircraft manufacturer, the Federal Aviation Administration, or any other person authorized by the Federal Aviation Administration to conduct such research and development or flight test operations;

(2) members or elements of the Department of Defense or Department of Homeland Security acting in an official capacity for the purpose of research, development, operations, testing or training; or

(3) by an individual using a laser emergency signaling device to send an emergency distress signal.

(d) The Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary of Transportation, may provide by regulation, after public notice and comment, such additional exceptions to this section, as may be necessary and appropriate. The Attorney General shall provide written notification of any proposed regulations under this section to the Committees on the Judiciary of the House and Senate, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure in the House, and the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation in the Senate not less than 90 days before such regulations become final.