

Chapter 63.

Aeronautics.

Article 1.

Municipal Airports.

§ 63-1. Definitions; singular and plural.

(a) Definitions. – For the purpose of this Chapter the following words, terms, and phrases shall have the meanings herein given, unless otherwise specifically defined, or unless another intention clearly appears, or the context otherwise requires:

- (1) "Aeronautics" means transportation by aircraft; the operation, construction, repair, or maintenance of aircraft, aircraft power plants and accessories, including the repair, packing, and maintenance of parachutes; the design, establishment, construction, extension, operation, improvement, repair, or maintenance of airports, restricted landing areas, or other air navigation facilities, and air instruction.
- (2) "Aeronautics instructor" means any individual engaged in giving instruction or offering to give instruction in aeronautics, either in flying or ground subjects, or both, for hire or reward, without advertising such occupation, without calling his facilities an "air school" or anything equivalent thereto, and without employing or using other instructors. It does not include any instructor in any public school or university of this State, or any institution of higher learning duly accredited and approved for carrying on collegiate work, while engaged in his duties as such instructor.
- (3) "Aircraft" means any contrivance now known, or hereafter invented, used or designed for navigation of or flight in the air.
- (4) "Air instruction" means the imparting of aeronautical information by any aeronautics instructor or in or by any air school or flying club.
- (5) "Airman" means any individual who engages, as the person in command, or as pilot, mechanic, or member of the crew, in the navigation of aircraft while underway and (excepting individuals employed outside the United States, any individual employed by a manufacturer of aircraft, aircraft engines, propellers, or appliances to perform duties as inspector or mechanic in connection therewith, and any individual performing inspection or mechanical duties in connection with aircraft owned or operated by him) any individual who is directly in charge of the inspection, maintenance, overhauling, or repair of aircraft engines, propellers, or appliances; and any individual who serves in the capacity of aircraft dispatcher or air traffic control tower operator.
- (6) "Air navigation" means the operation or navigation of aircraft in the air space over this State, or upon any airport or restricted landing area within this State.
- (7) "Air navigation facility" means any facility other than one owned or controlled by the federal government, used in, available for use in, or designed for use in aid of air navigation, including airports, restricted landing areas, and any structures, mechanisms, lights, beacons, marks, communicating systems, or other instrumentalities or devices used or useful as an aid, or constituting an advantage or convenience to the safe taking off, navigation, and landing of

- aircraft, or the safe and efficient operation or maintenance of an airport or restricted landing area, and any combination of any or all of such facilities.
- (8) "Airport" means any area of land or water, except a restricted landing area, which is designed for the landing and take off of aircraft, whether or not facilities are provided for the shelter, servicing, or repair of aircraft, or for receiving or discharging passengers or cargo, and all appurtenant areas used or suitable for airport buildings or other airport facilities, and all appurtenant rights-of-way, whether heretofore or hereafter established.
 - (9) "Airport hazard" means any structure, object of natural growth, or use of land, which obstructs the air space required for the flight of aircraft in landing or taking off at any airport or restricted landing area or is otherwise hazardous to such landing or taking off.
 - (10) "Airport protection privileges" means easements through, or other interests in, air space over land or water, interests in airport hazards outside the boundaries of airports or restricted landing areas, and other protection privileges, the acquisition or control of which is necessary to insure safe approaches to the landing areas of airports and restricted landing areas and the safe and efficient operation thereof.
 - (11) "Air school" means any person engaged in giving or offering to give instruction in aeronautics, either in flying or ground subjects, or both, for or without hire or reward, and advertising, representing, or holding himself out as giving or offering to give such instruction. It does not include any public school or university of this State, or any institution of higher learning duly accredited and approved for carrying on collegiate work.
 - (12) "Civil aircraft" means any aircraft other than a public aircraft.
 - (13) "Flying club" means any person other than an individual which, neither for profit nor reward, owns, leases, or uses one or more aircraft for the purpose of instruction or pleasure, or both.
 - (14) "Municipality" means any county, city, or town of this State, and any other political subdivision, public corporation, authority, or district in this State, which is or may be authorized by law to acquire, establish, construct, maintain, improve, and operate airports and other air navigation facilities.
 - (15) "Navigable air space" means air space above the minimum altitudes of flight prescribed by the laws of this State, or by regulations of the Commission consistent therewith.
 - (16) "Operation of aircraft" or "operation aircraft" means the use of aircraft for the purpose of air navigation and includes the navigation or piloting of aircraft. Any person who causes or authorizes the operation of aircraft, whether with or without the right of legal control (in the capacity of owner, lessee, or otherwise) of the aircraft, shall be deemed to be engaged in the operation of aircraft within the meaning of the statutes of this State.
 - (17) "Person" means any individual, firm, partnership, corporation, company, association, joint stock association, or body politic; and includes any trustee, receiver, assignee, or other similar representative thereof.
 - (18) "Public aircraft" means an aircraft used exclusively in the service of any government or of any political subdivision thereof, including the government

of any state, territory, or possession of the United States, or the District of Columbia, but not including any government owned aircraft engaged in carrying persons or property for commercial purposes.

- (19) "Restricted area" means any area of land, water, or both, which is used or is made available for the landing and take off of aircraft, the use of which shall, except in case of emergency, be only as provided from time to time by the Commission.
- (20) "State" or "this State" means the State of North Carolina.
- (21) "State airway" means a route in the navigable air space over and above the lands or water of this State designated by the Commission as a route suitable for air navigation.

(b) Singular and Plural. – The singular shall include the plural, and the plural the singular. (1945, c. 490, s. 1; 1949, c. 865, s. 3; 1971, c. 936, s. 2.)

§ 63-2. Cities and towns authorized to establish airports.

The governing body of any city or town in this State is hereby authorized to acquire, establish, construct, own, control, lease, equip, improve, maintain, operate, and regulate airports or landing fields for the use of airplanes and other aircraft, either within or without the limits of such cities and towns and may use for such purpose or purposes any property suitable therefor that is now or may at any time hereafter be owned or controlled by such city or town. (1929, c. 87, s. 2.)

§ 63-3. Counties authorized to establish airports.

The governing body of any county in this State is hereby authorized to acquire, establish, construct, own, control, lease, equip, improve, maintain, operate, and regulate airports or landing fields for the use of airplanes and other aircraft within or without the limits of such counties, and may use for such purpose or purposes any property suitable therefor that is now or may at any time hereafter be owned or controlled by such county. (1929, c. 87, s. 3.)

§ 63-4. Joint airports established by cities, towns and counties.

The governing bodies of any city, town and county in this State are hereby authorized to jointly acquire, establish, construct, own, control, lease, equip, improve, maintain, operate, and regulate airports or landing fields for the use of airplanes and other aircraft within or without the limits of such cities, towns and counties, and may use for such purpose or purposes any property suitable therefor that is now or may at any time hereafter be jointly owned or controlled by such city, town and county. (1929, c. 87, s. 4.)

§ 63-5. Airport declared public purpose; eminent domain.

Any lands acquired, owned, controlled, or occupied by such cities, towns, and/or counties, for the purposes enumerated in G.S. 63-2, 63-3 and 63-4, shall and are hereby declared to be acquired, owned, controlled and occupied for a public purpose, and such cities, towns and/or counties shall have the right to acquire property for such purpose or purposes under the power of eminent domain as and for a public purpose. (1929, c. 87, s. 5.)

§ 63-6. Acquisition of sites; appropriation of moneys.

Private property needed by a city, town and/or county for an airport or landing field may be acquired by gift or devise or shall be acquired by purchase if the city, town and/or county is or are able to agree with the owners on the terms thereof, and otherwise by condemnation, in the manner provided by Chapter 40A. The purchase price, or award for property acquired for an airport or landing field may be paid for by appropriation of moneys available therefor, or wholly or partly from the proceeds of the sale of bonds of the city, town and/or county, as the governing body and/or bodies of such city, town and/or county shall determine. (1929, c. 87, s. 6; 1981, c. 919, s. 7.)

§ 63-7. Airports already established declared public charge; regulations and fees for use of.

The governing body or bodies of a city, town and/or county which has or have established an airport or landing field, and acquired, leased, or set apart real property for such purpose, may construct, improve, equip, maintain, and operate the same. The expenses of such construction, improvement, maintenance, and operation shall be a city, town and/or county charge as the case may be. The governing body or bodies of a city, town and/or county may adopt regulations and establish fees or charges for the use of such airport or landing field. (1929, c. 87, s. 7.)

§ 63-8. Appropriations.

The governing body or bodies of a city, town and/or county to which this Article is applicable, having power to appropriate, individually or jointly, money therein, are hereby authorized to annually appropriate and cause to be raised by taxation in such city, town and/or county or to use from the net proceeds derived from the operation, by such city, town or county, of any public utility a sum sufficient to carry out the provisions of this Article in such proportion and upon such pro-rata basis as may be determined upon by a joint board to be appointed by and from the governing body or bodies of the city, town and/or the county or individually as the case may be. Provided, nothing herein shall be construed to permit the governing bodies of any county, city or town to issue bonds under the provisions of this Article without a vote of the people. (1929, c. 87, s. 8.)

§ 63-8.1. Repealed by Session Laws 1973, c. 803, s. 3.

§ 63-9. Partial invalidity.

If any part or parts of this Article shall be held to be unconstitutional, such unconstitutionality shall not affect the validity of the remaining parts of this Article. The General Assembly expressly declares that it would have passed the remaining parts of this Article, if it had known that such part or parts thereof would be declared unconstitutional. (1929, c. 87, s. 9.)