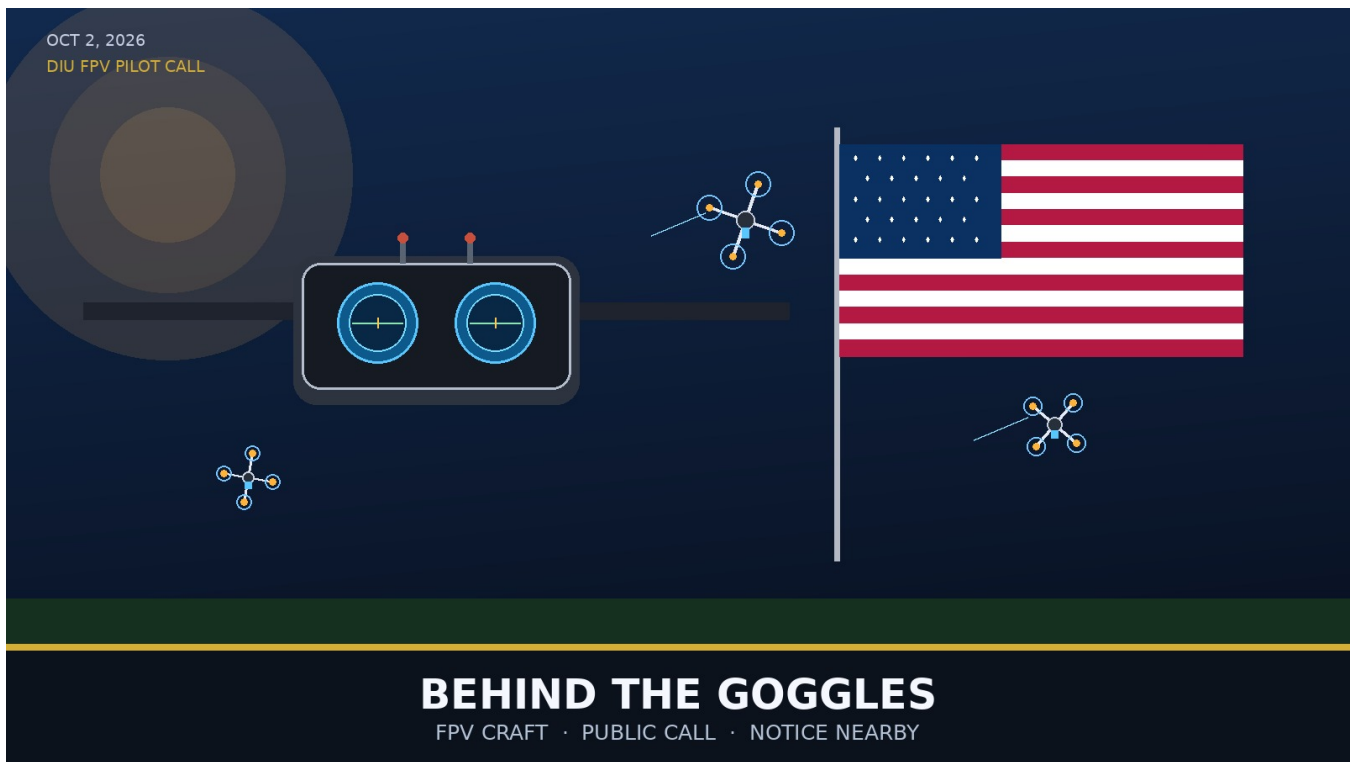




Calling All FPV Pilots — What It’s Like Behind the Goggles

Public paper · October 2, 2026 · long read · Ryan Standley / Record of Sale, LLC / Notice Nearby

DIU’s public call for FPV pilots meets a day-in-the-life look at the craft behind the goggles — skill, notices, and why the radio still matters.

You strap on the goggles, and the world shrinks to a tiny camera racing through trees at the speed of a good idea.

That is the joke pilots tell each other — and the truth. First-person-view (FPV) flying is not “drone tourism.” It is hand-eye craft: throttle, yaw, pitch, and roll under a headset while the aircraft is somewhere else entirely. On Friday, October 2, 2026, the Defense Innovation Unit’s public account (@DIU_x) posted a short recruitment notice aimed at service members who already have that craft: FPV experience, considered for future Gauntlets and related efforts under the Drone Dominance Program. The post pointed readers to DroneDominance.mil and the program’s announcements page.

Notice Nearby’s beat is the public record — FAA notices, range notices, procurement notices, the plain-text calls that ask people to show up with a skill. This paper is a fun walk through what FPV operators actually do, then a clean cite of that public DIU call. No invented budgets. No classified claims. Just the craft, and the notice.

What “behind the goggles” actually means

In FPV, the pilot wears video goggles (or a headset) fed by a camera on the aircraft. The view is not a map overlay first — it is a live video pipe. Your hands fly what your eyes see. That is why FPV feels closer to piloting than to phone-app “follow me” modes. The skill is continuous: keep the horizon honest, manage battery, leave yourself an abort, and still hit the line you meant to hit.

Racers talk about gates and splits. Freestyle pilots talk about gaps and power loops. Film and inspection pilots talk about smooth arcs and not scaring the neighbors. Different missions, same core: you are flying a small unmanned aircraft system (UAS) by feel, through a video link, while your feet stay on the ground.

The kit that teaches humility

A typical trainer stack is boring in the best way: a durable frame, a flight controller, electronic speed controllers, motors, props, a video transmitter, a radio receiver, goggles or a monitor, and a radio that fits your hands. Batteries are the quiet tyrant. Voltage sag, cold mornings, and “one more pack” are how good days become tow-truck days for a tangled quad in a tree.

Seasoned pilots obsess over fail-safes, antenna placement, and whether the video feed will hold when you bank hard behind a building. That obsession is not drama — it is craftsmanship. The best FPV operators look calm because they already lost a dozen packs learning where calm comes from.

Where public notices meet the flight line

Civilian FPV lives inside a world of public notices. The Federal Aviation Administration publishes airspace, Temporary Flight Restrictions, and recreational guidance that operators are expected to check before they fly. Local clubs post field rules. Ranges and test sites post access notices. Cities and counties post ordinances about where small UAS may operate. None of that is as fun as a clean power loop — and all of it is how neighbors keep sharing the sky.

Procurement notices are the other half of the civic picture. When a government program asks for vendors, pilots, or evaluators in public text, that is a notice in the same family as a bid opening or a range schedule: a dated call, a place to read more, and a clear ask. DIU's October 2 post fits that pattern. It is a recruitment notice for service members with FPV experience, not a classified brief and not a rumor thread.

The DIU call, in the program's own public words

On October 2, 2026, @DIU_x wrote: “Are you an FPV pilot? We want to hear from you!” The Drone Dominance Program, the post said, is recruiting service members with FPV experience who would like to be considered as pilots for future Gauntlets and related efforts. Interested readers were pointed to <https://DroneDominance.mil> and <https://dronedominance.mil/announcements.html?post=calling-all-warfighters>. The post is public at https://x.com/DIU_x/status/2106010749982179836.

The program's public site describes Drone Dominance as a challenge-based effort jointly administered by the Test Resource Management Center (TRMC) and the Defense Innovation Unit (DIU), with Gauntlet events as the competition spine. Military operators fly and evaluate small UAS systems in mission scenarios across phased Gauntlets. Those are the program's own published framing points — read them on the site rather than from secondhand summary. This paper does not invent force sizes, classified performance, or off-book budgets.

Why FPV skill transfers (without the hype)

Ask a good FPV pilot what transfers from the hobby field to any serious evaluation pit, and you hear the same short list: smooth sticks under stress, honest battery management, fast visual acquisition, and the humility to land or abort when the video gets ugly. Gauntlets, races, and club days all punish the same errors — overconfidence on a low pack, flying past your video link, ignoring the wind you felt on the walk out.

That is why a public call for pilots with FPV experience makes civic sense even to readers who will never wear goggles. The notice is asking for a practiced skill, the way a county notice asks for licensed electricians or a

range notice asks for qualified range safety officers. Skill first. Theater second.

A day on the sticks (the fun version)

Morning: check the weather, the NOTAMs you care about, and whether the field is open. Pack charged batteries, spare props, tools, and water. Afternoon: arm on the bench, hover out, then commit to the line you planned — or the freestyle gap your friends are filming. Evening: log what broke, what sang, and which tune made the craft feel like an extension of your thumbs.

Somewhere in that day is the quiet pride of a clean landing after a messy midair save. Somewhere else is the communal laugh when someone's "definitely still got voltage" pack dies over the tallest tree on the property. FPV culture runs on both: excellence and good-natured wreckage.

Flags, fields, and keeping it neighborly

American FPV culture is full of flags at the field, unit patches on radio bags, and kids watching their first freestyle pack rip past the picnic tables. That energy is allowed to be proud without becoming partisan. The craft is the craft: airworthiness, courtesy, and showing up ready. Public notices — FAA, local, range, or program recruitment — are how that craft stays welcome next to other people's weekends.

If you fly recreationally, follow the rules that apply to you and the field you use. If you are a service member who already flies FPV and the DIU notice is aimed at you, read the program pages yourself and follow the program's published instructions. Notice Nearby is not the application desk.

What this paper is — and is not

This is a Notice Nearby public paper by Ryan Standley / Record of Sale, LLC / Notice Nearby. It celebrates FPV craft for public readers and cites a public recruitment notice from @DIU_x and DroneDominance.mil. It is not legal advice, not recruiting counsel, not a newspaper, and not Legal Publication. It does not invent program numbers, classified capabilities, or claims beyond what those public pages and the cited post say.

If the goggles call to you as a hobbyist, start with safety, a mentor, and the public rules for your airspace. If the DIU notice calls to you as a service member with FPV hours already on the sticks, the public door is the one the program posted. Either way, the radio still matters — and so does reading the notice before you arm.

Where to verify

- DIU / @DIU_x post (Oct 2, 2026): https://x.com/DIU_x/status/2106010749982179836

- Drone Dominance program site: <https://DroneDominance.mil>

- Program announcements (Calling All Warfighters post):
<https://dronedominance.mil/announcements.html?post=calling-all-warfighters>

- Program public contact listed on site: OSW-dronedominance@mail.mil

Read the primary pages for current Gauntlet timing, eligibility, and how to respond. This brief is a civic plain-English companion, not a substitute for the program's own text.

Notes

- Spark: Defense Innovation Unit (@DIU_x) public post Oct 2, 2026 recruiting service members with FPV experience for future Gauntlets — https://x.com/DIU_x/status/2106010749982179836
 - Program pages: <https://DroneDominance.mil> and <https://dronedominance.mil/announcements.html?post=calling-all-warfighters> — public facts only; no invented budgets or classified claims.
 - Author: Ryan Standley / Record of Sale, LLC / Notice Nearby.
 - Discussed on @NoticeNearYou: (pending — fill xPostUrl after live post).
 - Not legal advice. Not a newspaper. Not Legal Publication. Record of Sale, LLC (Oregon).
- Public papers shelf · FPV craft + DIU Drone Dominance pilot call. Unique goggles/flag mural. @NoticeNearYou post pending.
- xPostUrl: (null — fill after @NoticeNearYou post)

noticenearby.com/papers/fpv-pilot-drone-dominance-call-2026