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1. OBJECTIVE

Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) and their operation are subject to a number of regulations. There are also a number of social obligations, which, while not a regulator requirement, are in the Universities best interests to acknowledge.

This document provides guidance on the regulatory and social responsibilities for safely flying RPA's and how these responsibilities can be met. Additionally, this document must be used to ensure all RMIT RPA operations are compliant with applicable safety legislation and are conducted in a safe, professional and socially responsible manner.

2. BACKGROUND

N/A

3. SCOPE

This process applies to all RMIT Staff and Students globally. It has a dual purpose of providing guidance as well as a procedure for 'How to' do the task safely.

This document does not include guidance on:

- a) Operation of RPA's
- b) Operation in populous areas
- c) Design specifications
- d) Any other operational requirements involved in using RPA's.

It is not applicable to staff and students who are:

- a) Flying their own RPA for personal use;
- b) Not on RMIT property
- c) Not in any way associated with their work or studies.

4. WHAT MUST GO RIGHT?

The expected outcomes – known as 'what must go right' – will be that:

- Flying will only be undertaken during the day and the RPA be kept within the operators visual line of sight.
- Operations carried out in a controlled airspace, must refer to local aviation regulations.
- RPA's are not permitted to fly higher than 120metres above ground.
- RPA operations must be kept at least 30 metres away from other people
- RPA operations will not fly over populous areas such as beaches or parks.

Note: These are CASA minimum standards, users must ensure they check local regulation to ensure the standard is met or exceeded.

5. PROCEDURE/IMPLEMENTATION

5.1. What are Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA)

Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) are also referred to as unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV's) or drones. For the purpose of this document the definition for RPA's will be:

“An unmanned aircraft, other than a balloon or kite, where the pilot flying is not on board the aircraft” (CASA, 2017).

RPA’s cover a diverse array of flying machines. This process does not discriminate and each type of RPA has its own particular requirements under local regulations.

This process addresses only those regulations and rules relating to the safe operation of RPA’s. It is important to note that any activity involving the manufacture and use of RPA’s is also subject to RMIT University’s HSW Policy and relevant documents.

IMPORTANT:

In some cases there is almost no discernible physical or technical distinction between a model aircraft and an RPA. Operations for the purpose of research, training or teaching are considered as aerial work, and therefore are considered RPA operations.

5.2. Safe and Compliant operation of RPA

All RPA operations must be completed in accordance with local regulations. See the regulators local website for more details.

- Prior written approval must be sought by the land owner (Land not owned by RMIT) to operate RPA.
- Risk assessments must be completed prior to operation of any RPA. The risk assessment must be:
 - a) Accurate and comprehensive;
 - b) Judged as acceptable when risks are found;
 - c) Approved by a staff member responsible for the conduct of the activity.
- Safe operating procedures must be developed (Including emergency procedures) for the activity and approved.
- The operation is being undertaken by an appropriately skilled individual that meets the local regulators standards and requirements.
- Operation of RPA’s may have insurance implications or be covered under an insurance policy. Check with the relevant local insurer for conditions.
- The operation is to be conducted in an approved area (See earlier requirements)

5.3. Training

As part of operating RPA’s at RMIT, it is a requirement for the school or department to create, implement and maintain records of training of staff/students involved in the operation of RPA’s. As described earlier, check with the local aviation authority for availability of recommended training materials that could be used. Operation of RPA’s and maintenance are not included and may need to be covered elsewhere.

Australia only:

It is highly recommended operators undertake basic training available via the CASA website (http://services.casa.gov.au/elearning/casa_101/).

Important:

For flying at night, you must hold a RPA Operator Certificate (ReOC). For more information please refer to the CASA website. In all other instances, flying at night is prohibited.

5.4. Professional and Socially responsible RPA operations

During the planning, approval and conduct of RMIT RPA operations, consideration must be given to the following:

- Minimising noise and potential intrusion to people (whether perceived or actual) in proximity to the area.
- Protection of individuals right to privacy in particular operations around populous areas.
- Managing public concerns (perceived hazards)
- Promoting the professionalism of the university and the broader RPA industry through practice.

5.5. Australia Only: Commercial drones weighing less than 2kg's

- An RPA commercially can be flown providing CASA is notified and the standard operating procedures are followed (See Amendments 101 & advisors circular (AC) 101-10)
- Further information can be found on the CASA website (casa.gov.au/rpa) or contact rpas@casa.gov.au

Commercial drones weighing less than 2kg's

- An RPA commercially can be flown providing you follow the local regulatory authorities standard operation procedures are followed.
- To operate commercially outside of these requirements, a licence and registration is required
- Standard Operation Procedures (Not an exhaustive list):
 - a) Only fly during the day and keep the RPA within visual line of sight
 - b) In controlled airspace, please refer to local aviation regulations (Australia: Don't fly higher than 120metres).
 - c) Keep the RPA at least 30 metres away from other people
 - d) Do not fly over populous areas such as beaches or parks.

Australia Only:

It is a breach of the regulation to fly within populous areas. Please consider what measures can be put in place to mitigate the area being populous i.e. operating early in the morning, on weekends or when there are few people or cars etc. around.

Cordoning off an area, having additional spotters or crowd controllers, tethering the aircraft, confining it to the property boundaries, are other control measures that need to be included in the risk assessment.

CASA RPA team (2017)

Australia Only:

Any time an RPA is operated for anything other than fun or pleasure; it is considered an aerial work operation. Aerial Work Operations are commercial operations that may require a certificate and licence.

Questions can be referred to CASA at rpas@casa.gov.au

5.6. Drones +2Kg (Commercial and Personal use)

- Special requirements must be implemented including but not limited to:
 - a) Nomination of a Chief Remote Pilot (Australia)
 - b) Nomination of a Chief Remote Maintenance Engineer (Australia)

- c) Compliance with additional local regulations

IMPORTANT:

Any works in this space must be risk assessed and signed off by the appropriate senior manager for the school/department as well as applicable stakeholders for example Human Resources (HSW team).

6. Responsibilities

6.1. RPA Operator or Program Co-Ordinator

- Follow the requirement and process outline in this document, which includes the development of risk assessment and operating procedures and obtaining the appropriate approval before the intended activity takes place
- The conduct of RPA operations in accordance with RMIT university guidelines, process's and local regulations
- Complete any relevant documentation and reporting involved in RPA operations.
- Report unsafe use of RPA's using the RMIT internal reporting system (P.R.I.M.E).
- Adapt and create a local procedure for the school/department the position works under.

6.2. Chief Remote Pilot (Not a requirement; highly recommended)

- Ensure all RMIT University RPA activities are conducted safely.
- Ensure compliance with internal and external policies and regulations; and
- Ensure the Universities RPA activities are conducted in a professional and socially responsible manner

7. Definitions

Defines any key terms and acronyms relating to the process where they apply.

Term / acronym	Definition
Approved area (Australia Only)	The area approved under regulation 101.030 as an area approved for the operation of remotely piloted aircraft (RPA).
Hire or reward (Commercial use) (Australia Only)	The term adopted by CASA to define commercial UAV/UAS/RPAS use (Check local regulations in your area as the definition may have changed). Any form of remuneration for flying an unmanned aircraft in an aerial work Operation (AWO), however small the AWO task, the reward or UAV; it constitutes 'hire & reward' and is therefore defined as commercial. Refer to CASR101.270.
Hazardous operations (Australia Only)	A person must not operate an unmanned aircraft in a way that creates a hazard to another aircraft, person or property. Refer to CASR 101.055.
Populous area (Australia Only)	An area with a sufficient population density that if a fault in, or failure of, the unmanned aircraft (or rocket) poses an unreasonable risk to the life, safety or property of a person in the area who is not connected with the operation. Refer to CASR101.025.
Visual line of sight (VLOS)	Keeping the unmanned aircraft in visual line of sight at all times unaided (except for prescription glasses or sunglasses) without the use of binoculars, telescopes or zoom

lenses i.e. not flying the into clouds or fog, behind trees, buildings or other (even partial) obstructions

8. Supporting Documents

- Remotely piloted aircraft systems - licensing and operations (AC101-01)
- Model aircraft (and recreational drone use) (AC101-3)
- Civil Aviation Legislation Amendment (Part101) Regulation 2016
- Civil Aviation Act 1998
- Concept of Operations for RPA (Template)