

AASA RPA (Drones) Policy Appendix 11

For AASA sanctioned events V1.0

Background

The recent availability of affordable Remote Piloted Aircraft (RPA) or drones capable of capturing images and video has brought many benefits to the sport of automobilism. It allows the capture of events from viewpoints that have been largely been inaccessible in previous years. Nonetheless, the use of RPA poses hazards to competitors, officials and spectators.

The piloting and use of RPA is regulated by the **Civil Aviation Safety Regulations Part 101**. These regulations impose various restrictions on their operation and all users are bound by these regulations. There are significant penalties in place for breaches of these Regulations.

The present document provides a policy statement by the AASA on the specific use of RPA at AASA Sanctioned motorsport events that is supplementary to the **CASR**.

Hazards

The AASA has assessed that the use of RPA presents hazards to spectators, competitors and officials. Amongst these hazards are the following:

- RPA strikes or is struck by a competing automobile
- RPA strikes or is struck by a spectator or official automobile
- RPA strikes an Event Official
- RPA strikes a crew member or spectator
- RPA operation creates a distraction to driver or rider of a competition automobile
- RPA causes injury to its operator during launch, recovery or maintenance operations
- RPA operator can be injured by automobiles, officials, crew members whilst concentrating on operation of the RPA
- RPA operator causes distraction or offence to spectators.

The above list is neither exhaustive nor extensive.

General Policy

The general policy of the AASA is that the use of RPA by any person is prohibited at all events unless the Operator is specifically authorised in writing by the AASA and Event Organiser.

Events held at Circuits or other closed environs

Where a motorsport event is held in closed environs such as racetracks, event organisers should take reasonable precautions against the use of unauthorised RPA (Drones) within that space, including operations controlled from outside of the perimeter boundaries. Unsafe operations, including over sporting areas or public gatherings are prohibited by law and such operations should always be reported to CASA.

Entry Notice

At each entrance to the event, the event promotor shall cause signs to be prominently placed with the following wording.

“THE USE OF DRONES IS PROHIBITED.

It is a condition of entry that each person agrees not to operate a Remote Piloted Aircraft (including a drone, quadricopter etc) within the confines of the event precinct without first obtaining written authorisation from the Event Organiser.”

Boundary Notifications

It is suggested that Event Organisers cause signs to be placed at intervals on boundary fences, particularly where visual access to the event may be possible. It is suggested that the following text be used on the signs:

“The use of Remote Piloted Aircraft (Drones) is regulated by the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations (Part 101). The unauthorised use of RPA over Sporting Events or Public Gatherings may lead to penalties up to \$9000. All unauthorised RPA operation over this venue will be reported to CASA.”

Events held on Closed Public Roads

The AASA recognises that the close regulation of drone operation along the course of a closed road section is impractical. Nevertheless, the AASA holds that all drone operations, other than those authorised in writing by Event Organisers and the ASAA, present a hazard to competing crews and officials. The unsafe operation of RPA is an offence under the ***Civil Aviation Safety Regulations (Part 101)***. Event Organisers are strongly encouraged to report all unauthorised Drone operations that are detected to CASA.

It is suggested that Boundary Notification signs as per the above be placed at road closure points, boundary fences where public access may be expected, and in the assembly areas. Road closure officials should be briefed on notifications procedures.

Events held on private property

Events held on private property, such as Off Road events should be treated the same as for circuit events. The property owner/leaseholder has some additional rights to fly an RPA without requiring permission from the AASA or Event Organiser, but must comply with all standard operating requirements as defined under ***Advisory Circular AC101-10***.

Requirements for gaining AASA Authorisation

All RPA operations at motorsport events sanctioned by the AASA will be deemed as Commercial Operations. As a general principle, only the use of very small (less than 2.0kg) RPA will be approved.

Each person who seeks authorisation from the AASA to conduct RPA operations at a motorsport event shall provide to the AASA the following information:

- Their Aviation Reference Number (ARN) issued by CASA
- A receipt of their notification to CASA for conducting very small RPA Commercial Operations
- A completed Risk Assessment of their operations specific to each type of event at which they intend to undertake RPA operations.
- A copy of their RPA Operators Certificate (ReOC), if held.

AASA Authorisation

Once the AASA has received the above information, it will assess the person's application. The AASA reserves the right to accept or reject any application without providing reasons. If approved, the AASA shall provide the applicant with a written authorisation and Card. Each authorisation shall expire after a 12-month period. (See Appendix 11A for Application Form)

Holders of AASA authorisation, but who do not hold a ReOC shall comply with the Standard Operating Conditions (SOC) as defined under **Advisory Circular AC101-10**. Holders of AASA authorisation who also hold a ReOC shall comply with the terms of their Operators Certificate.

Organiser's Authorisation

Before attending each event at which they intend to conduct RPA operations, the holder of the AASA Authorisation must contact the Event Organiser and obtain their written permission prior to the commencement of the Event. (See Appendix 11B for a sample document)

Guidelines for Event Organisers

Event Organisers have the right to reject each or any request to conduct RPA Operations at events under their control, regardless of whether or not the person holds AASA or CASA authorisation.

The organisers of events held under AASA sanction must not approve applications from persons who have not been authorised by the AASA. The procedure for AASA authorisation is not onerous, but ensures that the operator has met the basic requirements and is familiar with the conditions imposed by the AASA and the **CASR** for the safe use of RPA.

Once approved, the Event Organiser shall issue an authority in writing to the RPA Operator (Pro-Forma document attached). This shall contain the Operator's Name, their AASA Approval number, and details of any additional restrictions with which the operator is required to comply, if any.

Where RPA Operations are authorised by the Event Organisers, the Organisers must provide a briefing to both the RPA Operator and competitors. These briefings may form part of the relevant Driver's or Media Briefings. In the Driver's Briefing, competitors must be informed of the location and nature of each RPA operation that they may observe. This will reduce the likelihood of distraction due to the presence of the RPA causing an incident.

Handling unauthorised RPA Operations.

Event officials should be briefed on any authorised RPA Operations. If event officials detect an RPA being operated within the event precincts that they have reason to believe is not authorised, the following steps should be taken:

- They should note the time, location and any details of the aircraft, such as its colour and any markings.
- If the operator is visible, it is recommended that they be photographed or videoed using a mobile phone or similar.
- DO NOT approach the RPA Operator whilst they are flying the aircraft, as this may cause them to lose control and create a dangerous situation. Event officials should only approach RPA operators when the craft is back on the ground.
- Ask the Operator for a copy of their approval from the Event Organiser.
- If no authorisation is provided, the person should be cautioned against further use of the drone.

- Repeated breaches should be dealt with promptly, but again, do not approach the operator whilst they are flying. It is suggested that a repeat offender be removed from the event precinct using normal protocol for such actions.
- If the operator is not within the confines of the event boundaries, event officials should photograph/video the operator if possible. Details such as vehicle registration numbers should be noted to assist with any subsequent CAS prosecution.
- If it is possible to access and approach an operator outside of the event boundaries, they should be cautioned that their operation might be in breach of Civil Aviation Safety Regulations. They should be asked to refrain from further operation. Any repeated breaches should be reported to CASA as detailed in a following section.

Cautions

The AASA provides the following cautions:

- Never approach an operator whilst they are flying the Drone
- Do not attempt to confiscate private property.
- Do not attempt to damage or “take down” unauthorised Drones
- Record details when possible to aid future prosecutions

Reporting Breaches of Drone Operation

CASA takes breaches of RPA regulations seriously. It has developed an on-line form for reporting inappropriate or dangerous drone operation. Event Organisers should familiarise themselves with the procedure. It is suggested that Organisers manage the lodgement of the complaint rather than leave it to an individual official, such as a road closure marshall. The address of the complaint form is:

<https://www.casa.gov.au/webform/unsafe-drone-operations-complaint-form>

A search under “CASA Unsafe Drone Operation” will quickly find this link. Evidence will be required to be submitted, and the more comprehensive/accurate the evidence the greater chance that a prosecution will be successful.

- Date, Time and Location of observed operation
- Details of the RPA (Helicopter, multi-rotor, aircraft, balloon?)
- Details of operation, such as over crowds or over the track or course
- Whether the operator was in line of sight of the drone
- Details of the operator (physical description, apparel)
- What, if any, warnings/cautions were issued to the operator
- Location of Operator (Trackside, Off-Site etc.)

Supplementary Documents

Appendix 11A – Application for AASA Authorisation to permit RPA Operations

Appendix 11B – Pro-Forma document for Organisers Approval of RPA Operations