

## 10.7.8 – DRONES AND REMOTELY PILOTED AIRCRAFT – CHIEF COMMISSIONER’S DIRECTIVE & STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

### Acknowledgements

Acknowledgment is given to Ross McConnell (dec.) who contributed to the development of this SOP. This document has been reviewed by the Scouts ACT Adventurous Activities Team.

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### 1 Purpose

Drones or remotely piloted aircraft are a simple and low cost way for young people to learn about aviation. They are now widely available and have both recreational and commercial uses. They are subject to regulation by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) and there are significant penalties for operating them outside the rules. They can also pose a risk to the life and safety of others if not operated responsibly and within the rules.

In this document, the term ‘drone’ includes ‘remotely piloted aircraft’.

Note: Within Scouts ACT, SOP’s are co-named as Chief Commissioner’s Directives. This administrative arrangement supports an appropriate delegation and approval process for such documents.

### 2 Scope

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) provides direction on the flying of drones by members of Scouts ACT during Scouting activities.

The SOP considers only recreational (non-commercial operations) by drones or remotely piloted aircraft in the micro to small categories (100g or less to less than 25kg). It covers drones owned by Scouts ACT (including Groups) and drones owned by members or third parties being used at Scouting activities.

Scouts ACT owned drones may not be used commercially.

### 3 Definitions

Drone	also remotely piloted aircraft: an unmanned aircraft, other than a balloon or a kite, where the pilot flying is not on board the aircraft.
Leader	a person holding a Certificate of Adult Appointment who is willing and able to be responsible for drone flights during a Scouts ACT activity.
Pilot	the person who manipulates the flight controls of the drone and is responsible for its safe conduct during flight time.

### 4 Operating Procedures

Drones may be used at Scouts ACT activities to provide youth members with the opportunity to participate in a growing part of aviation. Apart from recreational use, drones are rapidly developing a wide variety commercial applications and this is resulting in new career opportunities.

As at the time of publishing this SOP, Scouts Australia does not have any specific drone components of the program nor offer any formal training or qualifications. Drones can, however, contribute to youth members achieving some of the air activities components of the program through the aviation experience and knowledge that can be obtained. Older youth members (Venturers and Rovers) can, through external third parties, gain formal drone flight qualifications which may count towards achieving some of their section's program.

Recreational drone flying conducted as part of a Scouts ACT activity must meet the following requirements:

- Be conducted in accordance with the Scout Promise and Law. In particular, drones must not be used to harass wildlife, fly over private residences without express approval of the residents, or make inappropriate use of any photographic capability on the drone.
- An identified Leader in charge of the activity. The Leader must be familiar with the rules and regulations prescribed by CASA for flying drones and by any other authorities such as the controller of the land over which the drones are to be flown. The References section below has links to relevant CASA documentation.
- The Leader must select a site for drone flying that meets both the CASA requirements and landowner requirements. CASA's requirements, in summary, for drones in the micro to small categories for recreational flying are (the References section contains a link to an app to assist determine where a drone can be flown in accordance with CASA but does not cover landowner requirements):
  - The drone will be operated in visual line of sight at all times
  - A pilot can only fly one drone at a time
  - No higher than 120m (400')
  - Daytime operations only
  - No closer than 30m to any people not associated with the flight
  - Not in a designated Restricted Area (airspace designated RA3)

- Not over populous areas – the population density must be sufficiently low that a failure or mistake will not pose an unreasonable risk to a person in the area but not associated with the flight
- Not within 5.5km of a controlled airport: many parts of the ACT and nearby NSW are within 5.5km of Canberra airport (micro drones less than 100g are excluded from this provision)
- If within 5.5km of a non-controlled airport or helipad (eg. Canberra Hospital), the drone must be landed as soon as the pilot becomes aware that a flight is operating to or from the airport or helipad
- Not within the area of a ‘public safety operation’ – typically but not exclusively bushfires
- In suitable weather conditions: although there are no set criteria, strong winds, heavy rain and poor visibility would all be inappropriate for drone flight.
- The Leader must brief all participants on safety around drones and pilots on safe flying and handling events including the need to immediately land the drone when so directed.
- The Leader must supervise youth members piloting the drone, ensuring appropriate safety measures consistent with the skill of the youth member:
  - While novices are conducting their first flights, other youth members must be kept well clear
  - The Leader must be able to intervene immediately to take control of the drone if required
  - As the youth member’s competence improves they can be permitted to fly more complex exercises but only in a way that does not pose a risk to the public or Scouts ACT members
  - The Leader should ensure youth members are willing and able to pilot a drone. The requirement to keep the drone in a visual line of sight at all times is vital and not all individuals may be able to do this
  - Regular checking of the drone and its flight controls for serviceability must be done and after any ‘hard’ or unusual landing
- The Leader must determine appropriate supervision ratios. Novice pilots will require a 1:1 ratio between the competent pilot and the novice pilot. Other responsible people may also be required to ensure other youth members do not put themselves in a place of potential danger. The Leader’s own level of experience and the experience of people being used to support the activity will also affect the number of participants than can be accommodated.
- The Leader is responsible for ensuring activity approval and parental consent is obtained.

Drone flights inside halls are prohibited except for micro-drones (<100g) which may be operated provided the Leader ensures their operation is kept well away from other participants and that a collision by the drone with any part of the hall will not result in damage.

## 5 Use of External Providers

Scouts ACT Groups may use external (eg. non-Scouting) providers for drone activities provided the provider meets the CASA requirements for the category of the operation. The most likely case for this is where a parent or supporter offers to provide their own drone to a Scouts ACT activity to assist young people learn about drones.

If the use of a third party is being considered, the Leader must ensure that all of the provisions of section 4, above, are complied with. This responsibility cannot be transferred to the third party. The Leader must also assess the liability the third party is able to accept in the event of an incident or accident that results in damage to the drone or loss or injury to others. It is quite likely that a parent or non-commercial provider will be unable to provide liability protection: in this instance, while it may be acceptable for the third party to demonstrate operating a drone, youth members should not be permitted to pilot it.

## 6 Further advice

The Adventurous Activities Power Flying team is available to assist with queries: [wings@scoutsact.com.au](mailto:wings@scoutsact.com.au). As at the date of publishing the team does not have a drone flying capability. This is being considered.

## 7 References

CASA Publications:

- Advisory Circular AC 101-01 v2.1 Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems.... (<https://www.casa.gov.au/AC>) and find AC 101-01 v2.1
- Advisory Circular AC 101-03 v1.1 Unmanned aircraft and rockets - Model Aircraft (for RPA less than 25kg engaged in sport and recreation)
- CASA Flying Drones or model aircraft recreationally (<https://www.casa.gov.au/modelaircraft>)
- APPs on Drone Flight Restrictions (<https://www.casa.gov.au/aircraft/flying-dronesremotely-piloted-aircraft-australia/drone-safety-apps>)
- CASA Droneflyer – a good site for youth members (<https://www.droneflyer.com.au/>)

## 8 Authority

This Chief Commissioner's Directive/Standard Operating Procedure was approved by the Chief Commissioner on 11 May 2018 and 3 July 2019