

## USE OF DRONES POLICY

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| <p><b>New document for approval</b></p> <p>Please note that this document is a draft document and not yet approved.</p> <p>When published in its final form, it will be issued as a Policy document, with a briefing issued to all relevant managers.</p> | <p><b>Synopsis</b></p> <p>This policy specifies the roles, responsibilities, actions and processes necessary to ensure the use of drones is controlled and managed.</p>                            |
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| <p><b>Approval</b></p> <p><b>Approved by: University Court</b><br/>Date: March 28<sup>th</sup> 2017</p>   |  |

**Revision Record**

| ISSUE   | DATE         | REASON FOR REVIEW                                |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Draft 1 |              | New document for consultation                    |
| Draft 2 | January 2017 | Updated document following H&S Committee meeting |
| Draft 3 | March 2017   | Updated after PNCC and Operating Board review    |

**DISTRIBUTION:**

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Implementation

From receipt after approval by the Operating Board,

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## 1. Standard Terms / Abbreviations

Throughout this document standard terms and abbreviations have been used. The terms and abbreviations with their definitions are set out below:

| Term                          | Definition   |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>UAV</b>                    | Unmanned Aerial Vehicle  |
| <b>UAS</b>                    | Unmanned Airborne System   |
| <b>SUA</b>                    | Small Unmanned Aircraft  |
| <b>SUSA</b>                   | Small Unmanned Surveillance Aircraft   |
| <b>CAA</b>                    | Civil Aviation Authority   |
| <b>ANO</b>                    | Air Navigation Order   |
| <b>UCEMM</b>                  | UAV/UAS Centre for Environmental Monitoring and Mapping  |
| <b>Valuable Consideration</b> | Conferring a benefit <i>e.g.</i> money, work, <i>etc</i>   |
| <b>Aerial Work</b>            | Any purpose for which an aircraft is flown if valuable consideration is given or promised in respect of the purpose of the flight                                    |
| <b>Congested Area</b>         | Any area which is substantially used for residential, commercial, industrial or recreational purposes  |
| <b>Risk</b>                   | The likelihood of hazard causing harm to person or damage to property  |
| <b>Risk Assessment</b>        | An assessment of the likelihood of hazards present in a work place or activity causing harm or damage and likely consequence of such harm or damage occurring        |
| <b>Because We Care</b>        | This is the University of Aberdeen's approach to Health, Safety and Wellbeing of staff and students. It underpins the hearts and minds way of continuously improving |

## 2. Introduction

Drones, mainly aerial drones, are used by a number of Schools at the University and it is expected that their use will continue to grow. Drones include a number of different vehicles, mainly the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), but also includes ground and water based vehicles. There are two areas where drones can be used and these include:

- Academic: this will be the area where the majority, if not all, of the use of drones by University staff or students occurs and it is expected that research or development flights would be covered by this section
- Commercial: otherwise known as Aerial Work and includes flights conducted for the purpose of filming, building maintenance surveillance, *etc.* where *valuable* consideration is given in respect of the flight

## 3. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that the use of drones by staff or students at the University of Aberdeen is conducted in a safe manner and in accordance with regulatory requirements.

## 4. Scope

This Policy applies to all University of Aberdeen staff (including visiting academics), students, visitors and contractors employed by the University who use drones.

The Policy applies to the use of drones both on and off University of Aberdeen sites.

## 5. Objectives

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that the use of drones for teaching and research purposes is conducted in a manner which is safe and minimises risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

All departments/schools that propose to use drones for teaching or research purposes shall have local arrangements in place that comply with this Policy.

## 6. Legislative Context

The use of aerial drones is governed by the Air Navigation Order 2009 and specifically there are various regulations dependent on the weight of the drone and the activity that the drone is being used for. However, the overriding aspect for the use of drones is 'The operation must not endanger anyone or anything'.

Unmanned aircraft with an operating mass of 20kg or less are defined as 'Small Unmanned Aircraft' (SUA) and according to Article 253 of the ANO 2009 are exempt from the majority of regulations applicable to manned aircraft. It is expected that drones used for, or on behalf of, the University will be less than 20kg.

An unmanned aircraft with an operating mass of 20kg or less which is equipped to undertake any form of surveillance or data acquisition is defined as a 'Small Unmanned Surveillance Aircraft' (SUSA).

Article 166 of the ANO 2009 includes specific regulations for SUA and Article 167 of the ANO 2009 includes additional regulations for SUSA. The specific regulations can be found at: <http://www.caa.co.uk/Commercial-industry/Aircraft/Unmanned-aircraft/Small-unmanned-aircraft/>

In addition, it should be noted that any images of identifiable individuals taken when using SUSA will be subject to the Data Protection Act. As this Act contains requirements concerning the collection, storage and use of such images, SUSA operators should ensure that they are complying with any such applicable requirements.

For aircraft greater than 20kg, the regulations are similar to those required for manned aircraft. Information on the current regulations can be found at: <http://www.caa.co.uk/Commercial-industry/Aircraft/Unmanned-aircraft/Large-unmanned-aircraft/>

## 7. Responsibilities

### 7.1 Heads of Schools / Professional Services

Heads of Schools / Professional Services are responsible for:

- Providing permission and approving the use of drones in respect of teaching, learning, research and undertaking surveys
- Ensuring that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are completed by competent persons in respect of each flight
- Ensuring that if the activity is off campus, then the landowner/Leaseholder or other occupier has granted permission that the drone can be used

## 7.2 Staff & Students

Those academic line managers and supervisors who use or are approached by individuals who wish to fly aerial drones in their teaching, research and consultancy activities will direct staff and students to relevant drone information sources. Within the University, the main point of contact is the Aberdeen Institute for Coastal Science and Management's UAV/UAS Centre for Environmental Monitoring and Mapping (UCEMM).

Staff and students who fly an aerial drone are responsible for each and every flight. In summary, these responsibilities are:

- Understand the flight specific risk assessment conducted for each flight
- Conduct an on-site survey prior to any flight
- Keep the drone in visible sight at all times. This is classed as 500m (1,640.42 ft) horizontally
- Keep the drone below 400 ft (121.92m)
- If fitted with cameras, keep the drone 50m away from people, vehicles, buildings, 150m away from any congested area and 150m away from an organised open-air assembly of more than 1000 persons
- Avoid collisions and do not fly near aircraft, helicopters and airports

## 8. Permissions

Permission for flying an aerial drone must be sought from the landowner/Leaseholder or other occupier for where the flight is planned to take off and land. On University property, permission must be sought from the Estates Department.

It is expected that the aerial flights conducted by University staff and students will be for research purposes only and will not be classed as 'Aerial Work' *i.e.* there will be no valuable consideration given or promised in respect of the flight or the purpose of the flight. Research or developmental flights are not normally considered as Aerial Work provided there is no valuable consideration given or promised.

Permission must be requested from the CAA if you plan to;

- Fly an aerial drone on a commercial basis, or
- Fly a SUSA within congested areas or closer (than the distances listed within Article 167) to people or properties (vehicles, vessels or structures) that are not under your control

## 9. Competence

All individuals seeking to fly an aerial drone, or other drones, on behalf of the University of Aberdeen, must be competent to do so.

Any individual flying a drone for Aerial Work for the University of Aberdeen must hold a CAA Permission for Aerial Work.

## **10. Insurance**

Prior to flying an aerial drone, the individual responsible for the activity must ensure that there is adequate insurance provision. They should contact the University's Treasury Manager to ensure that the University's insurers are aware and have provided cover for their activities. Alternatively, a specialist drone insurance company can provide cover if required. Please contact the UCEMM.

## **11. Management Review**

This Policy shall be reviewed at least annually by the Director of Health, Safety and Wellbeing or when any of the following occur:

- a) Internal reorganisation or restructuring.
- b) After any injury or incident or significant performance disruption that highlights the need for review.
- c) Any change in relevant legislation that has an impact on the Use of Drones policy.

The purpose of the periodic review is also to:

- a) Assess whether the objectives set out in section 5 are achieved consistently.
- b) Ensure that recommendations emanating from previous reviews have been implemented and the required outcomes are being achieved.