

OPERATING UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS (DRONES) ON COUNCIL OWNED AND ADMINISTRATED LAND POLICY

Date of adoption: 27 June 2024

Resolution number: 24/RDC/178

Operating Unmanned Aerial Systems (Drones) on Council Owned and Administrated Land Policy

BACKGROUND

Anyone operating an Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), also known as, Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS), Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), model aircraft, or drone, must abide by the New Zealand Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) rules to keep people and property safe.

Drones are an aircraft so can be hazardous to people, property, and other aircraft.

Before flying a drone, permission must be provided by the following:

- By the administering authority of a restricted airspace, such as Military Operating Areas and Aerodromes;
- By the owner of the land, this includes Council owned and administrated land;
- By any people that you intend to fly over.

FLYING DRONES OVER COUNCIL LAND

Provided that drone operators comply with the CAA (Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand) Part 101 and 102 rules, Rangitikei District Council gives permission for drone operators to fly drones over Council owned or administrated land, except the following locations:

- Over Council cemeteries, playgrounds, and the Tutaenui Reservoir;
- Over Council land that contains buildings and facilities, including office buildings, libraries, pools, transfer stations, water and wastewater treatment plants, and community housing;
- Over roads, including roads in parks and reserves.

Council may consider specific requests to fly over Council land precluded from the permission granted above. Council will consider the request and respond within 10 working days unless the request is considered to be urgent. When considering requests Council will take into consideration a number of factors including, but not limited to; privacy of others, safety of people and property, and nuisances. Conditions may be imposed on the approval if they are deemed to be appropriate to manage risks.

Note: The sports field at Rātana Pa is not owned or administrated by Council, permission needs to be sought from Rātana Pa Communal Trustees.

MAKING YOUR FLIGHTS KNOWN TO OTHERS

Rangitikei District Council encourages all flights to be logged with AirShare, which also holds information on who to gain permission from for flying in controlled air spaces such as the Military Operating Areas around Ohakea and Waiouru, or other Aerodromes across the district. To be able to fly in controlled airspace air traffic control authorisation must be obtained from Airways. This authorisation can be requested through AirShare using the My Flights tool.

Outside of controlled airspace, flight(s) can be made known to other manned and unmanned aircraft by registering to use Flight Advisor and submitting an Advisory. Doing so provides other aviators notification of flight(s). It also sends notification (SMS or email) of any other traffic that may be in the area. Registration is free but a form of identification will be required depending on the level of access applied for.

COMPLYING WITH CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY RULES

The CAA regulates civil aviation in New Zealand and sets the rules around the use of drones. To operate a drone, the CAA rules must be fully complied with. Council is not responsible for setting or monitoring these rules.

For the latest CAA rules please view their website.

Summary of CAA rules for Drones:

- Fly no higher than 120m (400 ft) above ground,
- Stay a safe and considerate distance away from people and buildings, do not fly directly over people without their permission,
- Do not fly over private land unless the owner provides permission,
- Keep the drone within sight at all times (i.e. not through binoculars, a monitor or smartphone),
- Only fly during daylight hours (unless using a shielded operation),
- Stay clear of fog and clouds,
- Stay well clear of and land immediately if any other aircraft are in the area,
- Stay 4km away from anywhere aircraft could land or take off, this includes helipads at hospitals and sightseeing aircraft. Be aware that controlled airspace extends well beyond the 4km limit, clearance from air traffic control is needed to operate in that area,
- Fly the drone using a shielded operation (i.e. within 100m, and below the top of a natural manmade object such as a building, group of trees or a hedge, not a narrow object such as a pole) if flying a drone in a controlled airspace without clearance from air traffic control. The barrier must be between the drone and the landing area and must be capable for stopping the drone if it loses control.

CODE OF CONDUCT

In addition to the CAA rules, drone operators must also comply with the following code of conduct:

- Do not operate a drone over a sports field if it is in use by others, or within 50 meters of any organised activity taking place on Council owned or controlled land,
- Do not operate a drone within 50 metres of other users of the area,
- Do not operate a drone within 50 metres of livestock, wildlife or domestic animals,
- Do not operate over dry flammable vegetation,
- Be courteous of other users of the area,
- Cease operation of the drone if requested by a Council Officer.

Any breach of the CAA rules or the Code of Conduct may result in Council terminating permission for the operator to fly a drone on Council owned and administrated land.

BREACHES OF THE RULES

Concerns about a drone being operated above Council owned or administrated land should be reported to Council.

Safety concerns about the use of a drone above any land, in breach of the CAA rules, should be reported to the CAA.

Privacy concerns resulting from the operation of a drone, including the use of a drone over private property without permission, should be reported to the Privacy Commissioner.

If a drone presents an immediate danger to public safety, contact the police.