CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY

Air Navigation Order 2016

PERMISSION – UK Model Aircraft Associations – Operations in excess of 400ft above the surface

1. The Civil Aviation Authority, in exercise of its powers under article 94A of the Air Navigation Order 2016 ("the Order"), as amended, hereby permits any member of a United Kingdom Model Aircraft Association, as specifically described at paragraph 2, to operate a small unmanned aircraft at a height in excess of 400 feet above the surface, subject to the conditions specified in paragraph 3.

2. This permission shall only apply to a person acting as the remote pilot of a small unmanned aircraft while also being a member of one of the following UK Model Aircraft Associations:

    a. The Society of Model Aeronautical Engineers trading as the British Model Flying Association (BMFA)
    b. The Scottish Aeromodellers Association (SAA)
    c. The Large Model Aircraft Association Ltd trading as the Large Model Association (LMA)
    d. FPV UK

3. This permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

    a. with the exception of the circumstances described in paragraph 3f below, the mass of the small unmanned aircraft shall not exceed 7kg excluding its fuel but including any articles or equipment installed in or attached to the aircraft at the commencement of its flight;

    b. the small unmanned aircraft shall not have any automatic or autonomous flight capability except for flight stabilisation purposes;

    c. the small unmanned aircraft shall not be a rotorcraft with more than one lift generating rotor or propeller;

    d. this permission does not absolve the remote pilot from the requirement to obtain permission for a flight, or any part of a flight, within the flight restriction zone of a protected aerodrome in accordance with article 94A(4) of the Order. However, if permission to fly within the flight restriction zone has been obtained from the aerodrome operator, under the conditions listed in article 94A(4)(c) of the Order, then the small unmanned aircraft may be flown at a height in excess of 400ft above the surface in accordance with the conditions listed in this document.

    e. the small unmanned aircraft shall not be flown above a height that is beyond the direct, unaided visual line of sight of the remote pilot, as required by article 94(3) of the Order, unless flying in accordance with any separate exemption that has been issued by the CAA.

    f. a glider with a mass that is greater than 7kg, but not exceeding 14kg, may be flown at a height in excess of 400ft above the surface of the earth beneath it, provided that the aircraft is not flown at a height greater than 400ft above the remote pilot at any time.

4. This permission has effect from 6th July 2020, at which point the previous permission, under Reference number 20191125UKModelAssociationsUAS7068PandE400ftOSC, dated 25th November 2019 is revoked.

5. This permission will remain valid until 30th December 2020.

for the Civil Aviation Authority
Date: 06 JUL 2020
Ref: 20200706UKModelAssociationsUAS7068PandE400ftOSC
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Notes:

1) This permission is granted to the model aircraft associations named in paragraph 2 in recognition that 'traditional' model aircraft activities have a good safety record within the UK. This is due to the codes of conduct that have been developed, as well as the active promotion of safety awareness and good practice that is achieved through membership of a model association.

2) Condition 3(b) means that this permission is limited to small unmanned aircraft that are 'traditionally flown' by the remote pilot via 'stick' and (if appropriate) 'throttle' inputs and where continuous control inputs are required in order to manoeuvre the aircraft safely. Aircraft with automatic control modes, such as pre-programmed flight control systems where the remote pilot simply 'monitors' the aircraft while it manoeuvres itself, cannot be flown in accordance with this permission.

3) Condition 3(c) means that small unmanned aircraft commonly known as quadcopters or multi-rotor drones, cannot be flown above 400 feet in accordance with this permission.

4) Condition 3(d) means that the privileges of this permission may be exercised at protected aerodromes where there is neither an air traffic control unit nor a flight information service unit at the protected aerodrome, or where the flight, or the part of the flight, takes place outside the operational hours of any such unit or units at the protected aerodrome.

5) Condition 3(e) means that article 94(3) of the Order still applies when using this permission to fly above 400 feet and hence "*The remote pilot of a small unmanned aircraft must maintain direct, unaided visual contact with the aircraft sufficient to monitor its flight path in relation to other aircraft, persons, vehicles, vessels and structures for the purpose of avoiding collisions.*" Compliance with this requirement will be a limiting factor on the maximum operating height.

6) This permission does not impose any additional airspace limitations, other than those that already apply to small unmanned aircraft. However, when employing this permission, the requirements of article 94(2) of the Order, that "*The remote pilot of a small unmanned aircraft may only fly the aircraft if reasonably satisfied that the flight can safely be made.*" still applies and this must be taken into account when choosing where and when to fly the small unmanned aircraft. In addition, the requirements of any airspace reservations (Danger, Restricted or Prohibited Areas), or other legal restrictions placed on the flight of small unmanned aircraft, must still be observed fully.