



Australian Government

Civil Aviation Safety Authority

Instrument number CASA 55/20

I, CHRISTOPHER PAUL MONAHAN, Executive Manager, National Operations & Standards, a delegate of CASA, make this instrument under the regulation 11.245 of the *Civil Aviation Safety Regulations 1998*.

[Signed Christopher P. Monahan]

Christopher P. Monahan
Executive Manager, National Operations & Standards

29 September 2020

CASA 55/20 — Operation of Certain Unmanned Aircraft Directions 2020

1 Name

This instrument is *CASA 55/20 — Operation of Certain Unmanned Aircraft Directions 2020*.

2 Duration

The instrument:

- (a) commences on 1 October 2020; and
- (b) is repealed at the end of 31 March 2022.

3 Definitions

Note In this instrument, certain terms and expressions have the same meaning as in the *Civil Aviation Act 1988* and the regulations. These include: *aerodrome*, *AGL*, *authorisation*, *controlled aerodrome*, *micro RPA*, *model aircraft*, *movement area*, *remote pilot licence*, *RPA* and *RPA operator*.

- (1) In this instrument:

helicopter landing site means an area of land or water, or a defined area on a structure, intended to be used wholly or in part for the arrival, departure and surface movement of helicopters.

non-controlled aerodrome means a place that is:

- (a) a helicopter landing site not located at a controlled aerodrome; or
- (b) an aerodrome that is not a controlled aerodrome.

- (2) In this instrument, awareness that a manned aircraft is operating to or from an aerodrome is taken to exist where a reasonable person ought to have been aware that a manned aircraft is operating to or from the aerodrome.

4 Application

This instrument applies to the operation of unmanned aircraft of all kinds, except operation mentioned in subregulation 101.005 (3) of CASR.

5 Directions relating to the operation of unmanned aircraft near controlled aerodromes

- (1) A person must not operate an unmanned aircraft within 3 nautical miles of the movement area of a controlled aerodrome.

Note The designation of controlled aerodromes is made in the *Determination of Airspace and Controlled Aerodromes Etc. (Designated Airspace Handbook) Instrument*, as in force from time to time, which is a legislative instrument revised and reissued by CASA approximately every 6 months. Controlled aerodrome information in the Determination in force at any particular time is also published by Airservices Australia, ARN 202210, in the *Designated Airspace Handbook*.

- (2) The direction in subsection (1) does not apply to the operation of an unmanned aircraft in accordance with any of the following:
 - (a) an authorisation (however called) or exemption granted under CASR that permits operation of the aircraft within 3 nautical miles of the movement area of the aerodrome;
 - (b) the approval of an approved area under regulation 101.030 of CASR;
 - (c) if the aircraft is an RPA operated by the holder of a remote pilot licence — the privileges and limitations associated with:
 - (i) the licence; and
 - (ii) the certification of the RPA operator that is conducting the operation.
- (3) The direction in subsection (1) does not apply to the operation of a micro RPA, a model aircraft with a gross weight of not more than 250 g, a tethered balloon or kite, an unmanned free balloon, a rocket or fireworks.

6 Directions relating to the operation of unmanned aircraft near non-controlled aerodromes

- (1) A person must not launch an unmanned aircraft within 3 nautical miles of the movement area of a non-controlled aerodrome if the person is aware that a manned aircraft is operating to or from the aerodrome.
- (2) If a person controlling an unmanned aircraft within 3 nautical miles of the movement area of a non-controlled aerodrome becomes aware that an aircraft is operating to or from the aerodrome, the person controlling the unmanned aircraft must:
 - (a) immediately ensure that the unmanned aircraft is safely manoeuvred away from the path of the manned aircraft; and
 - (b) land the aircraft as soon as safely possible.
- (3) The directions in subsections (1) and (2) do not apply to the operation of an unmanned aircraft conducted in accordance with any of the following:
 - (a) an authorisation (however called) or exemption granted under CASR that permits operation of the aircraft within 3 nautical miles of the movement area of the aerodrome;
 - (b) the approval of an approved area under regulation 101.030 of CASR;
 - (c) if the aircraft is an RPA operated by the holder of a remote pilot licence — the privileges and limitations associated with:
 - (i) the licence; and
 - (ii) the certification of the RPA operator that is conducting the operation.

- (4) The directions in subsections (1) and (2) do not apply to the operation of a micro RPA, a model aircraft with a gross weight of not more than 250 g, a tethered balloon or kite, an unmanned free balloon, a rocket or fireworks.

7 Directions relating to the operation of unmanned aircraft higher than 400 ft AGL

- (1) A person controlling an unmanned aircraft must not operate the aircraft higher than 400 ft AGL.
- (2) The direction in subsection (1) does not apply to the following:
 - (a) the operation of a tethered balloon or kite in accordance with Subpart 101.D of CASR;
 - (b) the release of an unmanned free balloon in accordance with Subpart 101.E of CASR;
 - (c) the operation of a rocket in accordance with Subpart 101.H of CASR;
 - (d) the operation of an unmanned aircraft in accordance with:
 - (i) an authorisation (however described) or exemption granted under CASR that permits operation of the aircraft higher than 400 ft AGL; or
 - (ii) the approval of an approved area under regulation 101.030 of CASR;
 - (e) the operation of an RPA by the holder of a remote pilot licence in accordance with the privileges and limitations associated with:
 - (i) the licence; and
 - (ii) the certification of the RPA operator that is conducting the operation;
 - (f) the operation of a model aircraft in accordance with a written approval given by CASA for the purposes of this paragraph.

8 Directions relating to the operation of unmanned aircraft over areas of public safety or emergency operations

- (1) A person controlling an unmanned aircraft must not operate the aircraft over an area where a fire, police, or other public safety or emergency operation is being conducted.
- (2) The direction in subsection (1) does not apply to the extent that a person in charge of the emergency operation approves the operation of the unmanned aircraft.

9 Directions relating to the operation of RPA or model aircraft near people

- (1) A person controlling an RPA or a model aircraft must ensure that the aircraft is not operated less than 30 m from a person unless the person has duties essential to the control or navigation of the aircraft.
- (2) For subregulation (1), the distance of 30 m is measured in every direction from the point on the ground or surface of the water directly below the aircraft.
- (3) The direction in subregulation (1) does not apply:
 - (a) to the operation of an RPA or a model aircraft in accordance with an authorisation (however called) or exemption granted under CASR that permits operation of the RPA or model aircraft less than 30 m from another person; or

- (b) if:
 - (i) the person is controlling an RPA that is an airship; and
 - (ii) the airship approaches no closer to the second person than 10 m horizontally and 30 ft vertically.

10 Directions relating to the operation of a single RPA or model aircraft

- (1) A person controlling an RPA or model aircraft must only operate 1 aircraft at a time.
 - (2) The direction in subregulation (1) does not apply to the operation of an RPA or model aircraft in accordance with an authorisation (however described) or exemption granted under CASR.
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