



Determination of Category of RPAS Operations

SECTION 1 GENERAL

1.1 PURPOSE

This advisory circular aims to guide RPAS operators in identifying the Category of RPAS operations under which an individual/company's operations falls.

1.2 STATUS OF THIS ADVISORY CIRCULAR

This AC is an original issuance.

1.3 BACKGROUND

- A. Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS), commonly referred to as drones, have been widely used for leisure and business. The use case of drones has been grouped into three categories - recreational, private, and commercial.
- B. Different cases of RPAS usage require different sets of documents to be presented to the Authority to facilitate the highest standard of safety.
- C. The ability of RPAS operators to identify the Category of RPAS purpose their operations fall under aids in the operator's compliance with the Authority's request for crucial documents for RPAS registration and speeds up the process for the individual/company.

1.4 APPLICABILITY

This advisory circular applies to all RPAS operators.

1.5 RELATED DIRECTIVES

The following Directives are directly applicable to the guidance contained in this advisory circular—

- Ghana Civil Aviation Directives Part 28
- Ghana Civil Aviation (Flight Standards) Directives Part 1

1.6 RELATED READING MATERIAL

- A. ICAO Manual on Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) (Doc 10019)
- B. AC 00-001
- C. AC 28-004
- D. AC 28-005
- E. AC 28-007
- F. AC 28-008.

1.7 ACRONYMS

The following acronyms and abbreviations are used in this advisory circular—

- 1) CONOPS – Concept of Operations
- 2) GCAA – Ghana Civil Aviation Authority
- 3) ICAO – International Civil Aviation Organisation
- 4) RPAS – Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems

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SECTION 2 RPAS Category of Operations

2.1 RPAS Category Description

The different types of RPAS Categories are as follows—

- 1) Recreational: All RPAS operation for entertainment or leisure
- 2) Private: All RPAS operation other than commercial or recreational
- 3) Commercial: All RPAS operation for remuneration or hire

2.2 Recreational

2.2.1 Applicability

The requirements of this section are applicable to both short-term temporary authorization and long-term registration of RPAS for Recreational use.

2.2.2 Characteristics of RPAS Recreational Category

- A. In recreational RPAS usage, the operator/owner (usually an individual, not an organization) uses the RPAS for purely entertainment or leisure. The drone shots (whether photos or videos) are not monetized and are for personal use.
- B. Specific restrictions are placed on the RPAS recreational operator, to ensure he/she operates in a safe manner. Please refer to AC 28-001 for these restrictions.
- C. The owner may not lend the RPAS for a fee to another individual or institution to operate.
- D. In addition, the owner of the RPAS may be advised to insure their drone and/or seek National Security Approval depending on the area of operation.

2.2.3 Examples of RPAS Use Classified as Recreational

The following examples are indicated here to shed more light on the kinds of operations that are considered recreational.

- 1) Using RPAS to practice flying
- 2) Using RPAS to take photos or videos for a personal school project.
- 3) Using RPAS to take photos or videos during a personal vacation.
- 4) Using RPAS to take photos or videos at an event (wedding, party, etc.) to keep memories, not for hire or reward.
- 5) Using RPAS for surveilling your compound or property.
- 6) Using RPAS to check the progress of your personal building/construction project.

2.3 Private

2.3.1 Applicability

The requirements of this section are applicable to both local and foreign-based companies and institutions that are engaged in RPAS Operations within the territory of Ghana.

2.3.2 Characteristics of RPAS Private Category

- A. In this category, the RPAS aids the company's work but does not directly make revenue from the drone's output (photos, videos, transportation, spraying, etc) for the company.
- B. RPAS registered in the Private Category, cannot be used to provide services to third parties in exchange for money. All operations of RPAS must be directly for the company's or institution's use.
- C. The private category is the recreational use case for institutions/companies RPAS.
- D. Just like recreational, all operations of the RPAS are restricted solely to aid the company; hence the output of the drone is not used for hire or reward.

2.3.3 Examples of RPAS Use Classified as Private

The following examples are indicated here to shed more light on the kinds of operations that are considered private:

- 1) An agricultural company uses the RPAS to spray chemicals on their crops.
- 2) A road construction company using the RPAS to survey their roadworks.
- 3) A real estate company uses RPAS to take pictures of its properties.
- 4) A land surveying company using the RPAS to survey portions of land
- 5) An oil distribution company using the RPAS to monitor their pipelines.
- 6) A disaster management company uses the RPAS for search and rescue.
- 7) A stone quarry company ensures the area is clear before explosives are set off.
- 8) A networking company uses the RPAS to monitor the outside perimeter of data centres.

2.4 Commercial

2.4.1 Applicability

The requirements of this section are applicable to both local and foreign-based companies and institutions that are engaged in RPAS operations.

2.4.2 Characteristics of RPAS Commercial Category

An individual /company uses drones to offer services in exchange for money. For instance, using your drone for videography/photography in return for money. Another example would be using your drone solely to offer surveying services. If the drone generates money for services offered, it falls under this category.

For a prospective operator to commence commercial operations, they must first apply to the Authority for an ROC upon which a certification team will be assigned to begin the certification process. Kindly refer to Advisory Circular AC 28-007 for more details on the certification process.

2.4.3 Examples of RPAS Use Classified as Commercial category

The following examples are indicated here to shed more light on the kinds of operations that are considered commercial:

- 1) An individual/company giving out drones for hire.
 - 2) Usage of drones to offer land surveying services to third parties.
 - 3) Usage of drones to offer videography services to third parties.
 - 4) Using drones to offer agriculture services to third parties.
 - 5) Usage of drones for delivery services.
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2.4.4 Transition from Private to Commercial

When a company/individual with approval to operate as a Private Operator begins to use their drones to offer monetary services other than for their company's internal operations, it falls under commercial use. As such, the company/individual must request for the necessary approval to begin such operations.

The following examples are indicated here to shed more light on the kinds of operations that will render a drone operator commercial rather than private:

- 1) An agricultural company using its RPAS to spray chemicals on its crops ceases to be a private operation when they begin offering the same services to other agriculture companies.
- 2) A road construction company using the RPAS to survey their roadworks becomes a commercial operation if they offer the results of the survey to another entity for monetary reward.
- 3) A real estate company using their RPAS to take pictures of their properties becomes a commercial operation when they take aerial photographs for other real estate companies.
- 4) An oil distribution company using its RPAS to monitor their pipelines becomes a commercial operation if other companies contract them for the same service.
- 5) A networking company using RPAS to monitor the outside perimeter of data centres ceases to be a private operation if they offer its RPAS for services in other institutions' data centres.

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