Information Notice

Civil Aviation Authority

INFORMATION NOTICE

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Civil Aviation Authority

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Small Unmanned Aircraft Operations Within London and Other Towns and Cities

This Information Notice contains information that is for guidance and/or awareness.

Recipients are asked to ensure that this Information Notice is copied to all members of their staff who may have an interest in the information (including any 'in-house' or contracted maintenance organisations and relevant outside contractors).

Applicability:	
Aerodromes:	All Aerodromes
Air Traffic:	All ATC Units
Airspace:	Not primarily affected
Airworthiness:	Not primarily affected
Flight Operations:	All Unmanned Aircraft Systems Operators
Licensed/Unlicensed Personnel:	All Unmanned Aircraft Systems Operators

1 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this Information Notice is to provide guidance to operators of Small Unmanned Aircraft (SUA) and Small Unmanned Surveillance Aircraft (SUSA) who wish to operate within congested areas in relation to towns and cities. The latest generation of commercially-available SUA have very advanced capabilities in relation to their size and cost; this has led to a surge in their utilisation for a wide range cinematographic and survey tasks and an increasing demand for their employment in urban areas. Operations in urban areas require an additional understanding of the complexities of the environment and of the safety and operational limitations that are suitable for London and other towns and cities.

1.2 In addition to the general guidance on areas of operation in this Information Notice, additional specific airspace guidance for operators wishing to undertake aerial work and surveillance (filming and photographic) operations within London is given in **paragraph 5**. Most of the principles and procedures described will also apply to other large towns and cities within the UK. London has been featured due to its combined characteristics of population density, commercial air traffic volumes, large blocks of controlled airspace down to the surface, two major airports, a low-level helicopter route system, a central licensed heliport and several specialised restricted areas.

1.3 All reference to SUA and SUSA in this Information Notice should be interpreted to apply to other aircraft of the same category but that may be known by an alternative name such as 'Drone', Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS), Remotely Piloted Vehicle (RPV), Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) etc.

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1.4 This Information Notice covers the use of SUA by civil operators and does not include military systems. Comprehensive guidance on Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) operations in UK airspace can be found in **CAP 722**.

2 Definitions

2.1 'SUA' means any unmanned aircraft, other than a balloon or a kite, having a mass of not more than 20 kg without its fuel but including any articles or equipment installed in or attached to the aircraft at the commencement of its flight. The majority of such SUA are of the electrically-powered 'multi-rotor' type whose typical flight endurance with a payload is in the order of 6-15 minutes.

2.2 'SUSA' means a SUA which is equipped to undertake any form of surveillance or data acquisition.

2.3 A 'Congested Area' is defined in Article 255 of the Air Navigation Order (ANO) 2009. The definition states that a 'Congested Area' means any area in relation to a city, town or settlement which is substantially used for residential, industrial, commercial or recreational purposes. Operations of SUA within congested areas may be permitted in specific circumstances as described in the remainder of this Information Notice.

3 The Requirements

3.1 The table below shows that the applicable legal requirements in articles 166 and 167 of the ANO 2009 for the operation of any SUA depend upon the weight of the aircraft and whether or not it is surveillance equipped. The CAA-issued aerial work permission may allow some exemptions against Article 167(1) and (2) dependent on the weight of the aircraft.

The requirements in the ANO 2009 for SUA (Small Unmanned Aircraft of weights between 0 and 20 kg)	**SUA 0-7 kg**	**SUA >7 kg**	**SUSA 0-7 kg**	**SUSA >7 kg**
166(1) A person must not cause or permit any article or animal (whether or not attached to a parachute) to be dropped from a SUA so as to endanger persons or property.	✓	✓	✓	✓
166(2) The person in charge of a SUA may only fly the aircraft if reasonably satisfied that the flight can safely be made.	✓	✓	✓	✓
166(3) The person in charge of a SUA 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.	✓	✓	✓	✓

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The requirements in the ANO 2009 for SUA (Small Unmanned Aircraft of weights between 0 and 20 kg)	SUA 0-7 kg	SUA >7 kg	SUSA 0-7 kg	SUSA >7 kg
166(4) The person in charge of a SUA which has a mass of more than 7 kg excluding its fuel but including any articles or equipment installed in or attached to the aircraft at the commencement of its flight, must not fly the aircraft — (a) in Class A, C, D or E airspace unless the permission of the appropriate air traffic control unit has been obtained; (b) within an aerodrome traffic zone during the notified hours of watch of the air traffic control unit (if any) at that aerodrome unless the permission of any such air traffic control unit has been obtained; or (c) at a height of more than 400 feet above the surface unless it is flying in airspace described in sub-paragraph (a) or (b) and in accordance with the requirements for that airspace.		✓		✓
166(5) The person in charge of a SUA must not fly the aircraft for the purposes of aerial work except in accordance with a permission granted by the CAA.	✓	✓	✓	✓
167(1)&(2) The person in charge of a SUSA must have permission from the CAA to fly — (a) over or within 150 metres of any congested area; (b) over or within 150 metres of an organised open-air assembly of more than 1,000 persons; (c) within 50 metres of any vessel, vehicle or structure which is not under the control of the person in charge of the aircraft; or (d) except when taking off and landing (see below), within 50 metres of any person.			✓	✓
167(3)&(4) During take-off or landing, a SUSA must not be flown within 30 metres of any person except that it can be flown within 30 metres of the person in charge of the SUSA or another person under the control of the person in charge of the SUSA.			✓	✓

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