

Quick Start Guide

to the new regulations for model flying



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THE LAW HAS CHANGED

- ⦿ The regulations for operating unmanned aircraft (including models) have changed. The full requirements of the new regulations (as they apply to everyone in the UK) can be found in CAP 722.
- ⦿ The BMFA has obtained an 'Authorisation' from the CAA which defines different and more flexible operating requirements for members operating aircraft up to 25Kg. To benefit from the Authorisation, you must familiarise yourself with the requirements.
- ⦿ For full details, please see <https://rcc.bmfa.uk/article-16>.



LINE OF SIGHT

- ⦿ You must operate your aircraft within visual line of sight (VLOS).
- ⦿ If flying using first person view, you must have a competent observer next to you who maintains VLOS with your aircraft. Special rules apply to FPV drone racing within a 'sterile area'.
- ⦿ Free flight aircraft must not be deliberately flown beyond VLOS.



HOW HIGH CAN I FLY?

- ⦿ The height limit for all unmanned aircraft in CAP 722 is 400ft (120m) above the terrain.
- ⦿ BMFA members are authorised to operate above 400ft with aircraft (excluding multi-rotors) which weigh less than 7.5 Kg.
- ⦿ BMFA members are permitted to operate sailplanes over 7.5 Kg, (but not exceeding 14kg), up to 400ft above the pilot.
- ⦿ Model aircraft weighing more than 7.5 Kg must not be flown higher than 400ft without permission from the CAA.



FLY SAFELY

- You must not endanger the safety of any uninvolved person or any vessel, vehicle or structure not under your control when you fly your unmanned aircraft.
- For aircraft under 7.5kg, do not fly within
- ⦿ 30m of uninvolved people
 - ⦿ 30m horizontal distance from an assembly of people
- The distance can be reduced to 15m for take-off and landing in some circumstances.
- For aircraft over 7.5kg, do not fly within
- ⦿ 30m of uninvolved people
 - ⦿ 50m horizontal distance from an assembly of people
- Flying within 'built up areas' is only permitted subject to the conditions outlined in our guidance.



MANNED AIRCRAFT

- ⦿ You must do everything possible to avoid conflict with any manned aircraft.
- ⦿ It is illegal to fly any unmanned aircraft (other than a control line aircraft) within in a Flight Restriction Zone (FRZ) around an airport/airfield without permission (see our guidance for details).
- ⦿ To ensure that you are not operating in an FRZ, please see <https://dronesafe.uk/restrictions/>.
- ⦿ Endangering the safety of a manned aircraft could result in a five-year prison sentence.



REGISTERED & COMPETENT

- ⦿ It is a legal requirement for most model flyers to register as an Operator with the CAA (if 18 or over) and have evidence of their competency (regardless of age).
- ⦿ **You can register as an Operator through the BMFA and existing BMFA Achievements are accepted as evidence of competency.**
- ⦿ Those without a recognised BMFA Achievement must pass the BMFA or CAA online test before they fly.
- ⦿ A CAA Operator I.D. number must be displayed on (or be easily accessible within) the aircraft.

For details of the full requirements, please visit <https://rcc.bmfa.uk/article-16>

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE



- ⦿ You are legally responsible for ensuring that your flights are conducted safely. It is essential that you are aware of the laws which apply.
- ⦿ Our Authorisation covers flying for sport, recreation, education and demonstration. It excludes any flying for commercial purposes.
- ⦿ For further details of Operator and Remote Pilot responsibilities, please refer to our full guidance.
- ⦿ Failure to operate lawfully could result in criminal prosecution.

MINIMUM AGE



- ⦿ The minimum age for a remote pilot operating unsupervised within our Authorisation is 10.
- ⦿ There is no minimum age for a remote pilot under the direct supervision of another remote pilot (who is age 14 or over) but both must have evidence of competency.
- ⦿ Under 18's will need someone to act as their Operator and be registered with the CAA.

AIRCRAFT LESS THAN 250G



**250g
or less**

- ⦿ Model aircraft below 250g which are operated within our Authorisation are subject to its terms and conditions.
- ⦿ Alternatively, they may be operated within the requirements of the Open Category - defined in CAP 722 - for aircraft less than 250g.
- ⦿ For further details, see <https://publicapps.caa.co.uk/cap722>.

IF THINGS GO WRONG



- Our Authorisation includes the requirement to report:
- ⦿ Serious accidents and incidents to the AAIB
 - ⦿ Serious incidents and a range of other occurrences (including breaches of the terms of our Authorisation) to the CAA.
 - ⦿ For further details, see <https://rcc.bmfa.uk/reporting>.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS



- Our Authorisation also includes special arrangements for:
- ⦿ Trial flights for non-members
 - ⦿ Visiting flyers/competitors from overseas
 - ⦿ Display flying
- For further details, please see the full guidance.



THE BMFA

- The BMFA has been working hard for UK model aircraft and drone flyers since 1922. Our unbeatable membership benefits include:
- ⦿ Insurance – a class leading package including £25 million liability cover and £35K personal accident cover.
 - ⦿ CAA Operator Registration - made easy as part of our membership process.
 - ⦿ The BMFA NEWS – 60+ glossy pages of everything happening in our sport, delivered to your door 6 times per year.
 - ⦿ Achievement Scheme – dedicated to raising flying standards and safety whilst making learning fun.
 - ⦿ Access to competition – membership provides access to local, national, and international model flying contests.
 - ⦿ Guidance – we publish an extensive range of guidance material to help members have fun, fly safely, and remain within the law.
 - ⦿ Assistance – our experienced staff are there to help, advise and support whenever required.
 - ⦿ Representation - we represent the model/drone flying community at the highest levels nationally and internationally.

All this and much more for less than 11p a day!

www.bmfa.org

For details of the full requirements, please visit <https://rcc.bmfa.uk/article-16>