

Quick Start Guide

to model flying/operation of unmanned aircraft



bmfa.org



YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE

- ⦿ If you are operating an unmanned aircraft, you are legally responsible for ensuring that the flight is conducted safely. It is therefore essential that you are aware of the laws which apply.
- ⦿ You must not operate an unmanned aircraft for any commercial purpose, without permission from the CAA. Failure to operate lawfully could result in criminal prosecution.



LINE OF SIGHT

- ⦿ If you are operating an unmanned aircraft, you must keep it within visual line of sight to allow you to see and avoid any other hazards within the area of operation.
- ⦿ If you are operating an unmanned aircraft using first person view, then you must have a competent observer next to you who maintains visual line of sight with your aircraft.



HEIGHT LIMITS

- ⦿ The legal height limit for all unmanned aircraft is 400ft (120m) above the terrain, but BMFA members have permission to operate their aircraft (other than multi-rotors) which weigh less than 7Kg higher than 400ft.
- ⦿ BMFA members are also permitted to operate sailplanes over 7kg, (but not exceeding 14kg), higher than 400ft above the terrain, provided that the aircraft is not flown at a height greater than 400ft above the pilot.
- ⦿ Model aircraft weighing more than 7Kg, or any multi-rotor aircraft, must not be flown higher than 400ft without permission from the CAA.



AIRCRAFT SAFETY

- ⦿ The general aviation principle of 'see and avoid' applies and you must do everything possible to avoid conflict with any other aircraft.
- ⦿ It is illegal to fly any unmanned aircraft within in a Flight Restriction Zone (FRZ) around an airport/airfield without permission from air traffic control at the airport or, if air traffic control is not operational, from the airport itself.
- ⦿ To ensure that you are not operating within an FRZ, please see <https://dronesafe.uk/restrictions/> or use a phone app like NATS Drone Assist (<https://dronesafe.uk/safety-apps/>).
- ⦿ Endangering the safety of an aircraft could result in a five-year prison sentence.



BE AWARE

- ⦿ 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 and you must always maintain a safe distance.
- ⦿ For aircraft fitted with cameras, you must not fly within 150ft (50m) of any uninvolved person (reduced to 30m for take-off/landing) or any vessel, vehicle or structure not under your control and you must not fly over or within 500ft (150m) of any congested area or an organised open-air assembly of more than 1,000 persons.



REGISTERED & COMPETENT

- ⦿ From 30th November 2019, the law requires that anyone operating an unmanned aircraft outdoors which weighs more than 250g is registered as an Operator with the CAA and able to provide evidence of their competency. BMFA members are exempted from the requirement to register as an Operator until the start of 2020 when they renew their membership.
- ⦿ From the 30th November, those without a recognised BMFA Achievement should take the BMFA's Registration Competency Certificate or the CAA's online test before they fly.

For details of the full requirements, please visit www.be-lawful.bmfa.org



The CAA Drone & Model Aircraft Registration and Education Scheme (DMARES)

The law has changed. From 30th November 2019, if you operate a model aircraft or drone (weighing more than 250g) outdoors, then you must be registered as an operator with the CAA and be able to provide documented

evidence of competency. The BMFA has agreed a very simple process to help members comply.

You must be registered as an Operator with the CAA (if you are over 18) and pay the £9 fee

BMFA members are exempted from the requirement to register by the 30th November and can register when they renew their BMFA Membership for 2020.

You can easily comply with the law if:

- ⦿ As part of the BMFA Membership renewal/joining process, you opt in to the CAA Operator registration and pay the £9 fee.
- ⦿ You register directly with the CAA and pay the £9 fee.
- ⦿ You register with another CAA recognised Association and pay the £9 Fee.

The CAA will email your Operator number to you and you must display this somewhere easily accessible on or within your aircraft.

You only need to register once. Please do not register and pay multiple times as you may not receive a refund.

YOU MUST BE COMPETENT

After the 30th November, you must have evidence of a recognised competency when you fly. You can easily meet this requirement if:

- ⦿ You have an existing BMFA Achievement.
- ⦿ You take the BMFA Registration Competency Certificate which can be completed through the membership portal, via the website (<https://rcc.bmfa.uk/>) or on paper (please contact the BMFA Office).
- ⦿ You take the CAA's Online test (<https://register-drones.caa.co.uk/individual>) or hold another CAA recognised competency.

SOME ACTIVITIES ARE EXEMPTED

If you **ONLY** fly certain types of aircraft, the law does not require you to register with the CAA or take a test. The activities/aircraft exempted from the requirements are:

- ⦿ Control line models
- ⦿ Model balloons
- ⦿ Model rockets
- ⦿ Aircraft operated indoors
- ⦿ Aircraft weighing less than 250g

WHAT ABOUT FREE FLIGHT AIRCRAFT?

Operators of FF aircraft weighing more than 250g will need to comply with the new registration and competency requirements and should only fly:

- ⦿ On sites that are clear and open with adequate open space downwind of the launch point. (With a strong wind this distance could be considerable).
- ⦿ In good visibility.
- ⦿ After you have ensured that any spectators are clear of the intended initial flight path of the model.

- ⦿ With due consideration for other people and property.
- ⦿ Outside of FRZ's other than with permission.

WHAT HAPPENS TO MY DATA IF I REGISTER WITH THE CAA?

If you register with the CAA through the BMFA (or via the CAA/other Associations), the CAA will store your information securely. It is not shared with any other parties.

Information may be made available to the Police in relation to specific individuals who are subjects of an investigation or prosecution. The Police do not have access to the full register and cannot search all registered individuals in a certain area.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON'T REGISTER OR HAVE EVIDENCE OF COMPETENCY?

If you are engaged in activities for which registration and competency are legal requirements, then failure to comply could result in a fixed penalty notice of up to £1000 or prosecution if challenged by the Police should they suspect you of flying unlawfully.

WHAT ABOUT INSURANCE COVER?

Members should be aware that most insurance policies are limited to cover 'lawful activities' and therefore the best way to ensure certainty of cover is to comply with the CAA's registration & competency requirements if you operate any unmanned aircraft for which they are a legal requirement. It is also important to note that any legal costs and/or punitive financial sanctions incurred by an individual member under criminal law as a result of non-compliance will be outside the scope of cover.

The BMFA's affiliated clubs will remain fully protected by the BMFA's insurance in the event of a claim made against them, should individual members be found to be non-compliant.

WHAT ABOUT JUNIOR AND FAMILY MEMBERS?

For BMFA Family memberships, only the Family Senior needs to register and pay the £9 fee. Family Juniors and Family Partners will just need evidence of competency such as an existing BMFA Achievement or take the new BMFA Registration Competency Certificate.

Individual Junior members (under 18) will need to have evidence of competency and someone over 18 as their CAA Registered 'Operator'.

THE BMFA MAKES IT EASY

You can register with the BMFA as a CAA Operator (and pay the £9 fee) when you join or renew your BMFA membership.

If you have an existing BMFA Achievement or take the new BMFA RCC, then you have a CAA recognised competency. Job done.

It's as simple as that!