



News story

New proposed measures for drones in the UK

From: Department for Transport (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport>), Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon (<https://www.gov.uk/government/people/lord-ahmad-of-wimbledon>) and Civil Aviation Authority (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/civil-aviation-authority>)

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Part of: Aviation and airports (<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/aviation-and-airports>)

Government launches new consultation on drone safety.



The government plans to introduce new measures to ensure the successful uptake of drones is matched by strong safeguards to protect the public.

Measures out for consultation

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/benefits-of-drones-to-the-uk-economy>) today (21 December 2016) include:

- mandatory registration of new drones
- tougher penalties for illegal flying near no-fly zones and new signs for no-fly zones at sensitive sites such as airports and prisons
- making drones electronically identifiable so the owner's details can be passed to police if they are spotted breaking the law



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Aviation Minister Lord Ahmad



The consultation will also consider whether there is a need for a new criminal offence for misuse of drones.

The government is determined to make the most of this emerging technology (<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/unlocking-the-uks-high-tech-economy-consultation-on-the-safe-use-of-drones-in-the-uk>), estimated to be worth around £102 billion by 2025. But ministers are clear it will only be a success if it is done safely, and with the consent of the public.

Aviation Minister Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon said:

“ Drones have enormous economic potential and are already being used by emergency services, transport and energy providers and conservation groups to improve services, respond to incidents and save lives.

While the vast majority of drone users are law-abiding and have good intentions, some operators are not aware of the rules, or choose to break them, putting public safety, privacy and security at risk. The government is taking a common sense approach to tackling this behaviour, ensuring the safe roll-out of this technology.”

Current regulations balance clear rules on safety and strong penalties for misuse, and companies using drones for commercial purposes need permission to ensure they are operated responsibly.



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Aviation Minister Lord Ahmad

Tim Johnson, Policy Director at the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) said:

“ Our priority is the safe operation of drones and we cannot underestimate the importance of understanding how to use drones safely and responsibly. The new CAA Dronecode, which forms part of our wider drone awareness campaign, is designed to help protect the safety of the wider aviation industry. Drones have significant potential to drive benefits across a range of sectors, from farming to emergency response, healthcare to logistics. We encourage anyone with an interest in this area to respond to the government’s consultation.”

The CAA’s safety code (<http://dronesafe.uk/drone-code/>) and dronesafe website (<http://dronesafe.uk/>), and the recently released NATS safety app for drone users Drone assist (<http://dronesafe.uk/drone-assist/>) are important tools in encouraging safe and legal drone use.

Andrew Sage, RPAS Director at air traffic control company NATS said:

“ NATS fully supports the development of the drone industry and is committed to creating a safe and efficient airspace environment that meets the needs of both manned and unmanned aircraft operators. We’d encourage all users of the UK’s airspace to respond to the consultation; it’s only by understanding all perspectives and working together that we’ll be able to find the solutions that will see successful manned and unmanned aviation industries both safely operating in the UK.”

Aviation and maritime media enquiries

Press enquiries 020 7944 3021

Out of hours 020 7944 4292

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