

Remote Pilot Aircraft Policy

Section 1 - Key Information

Policy Type and Approval Body	Administrative - Vice-Chancellor
Accountable Executive - Policy	Chief Operating Officer
Responsible Manager - Policy	Executive Director, Asset Transformation
Review Date	15 November 2027

Section 2 - Purpose

(1) Operators and pilots of all Remotely Piloted Aircrafts ('RPAs'), otherwise popularly referred to as 'drones' naturally operate within the national aviation system and must ensure flights are safe and compliant with the [Civil Aviation Safety Regulations 1988](#).

Section 3 - Scope

(2) This Policy applies to all operators of RPA's on University property and all RPA's owned by or on loan to the University, including:

- a. staff
- b. students
- c. contractors
- d. visitors to the University (including volunteers)
- e. third party RPA operators

Section 4 - Key Decisions

Key Decisions	Role
Purchase of asset (RPA/Drone)	Head of School/Financial Delegate

Section 5 - Policy Statement

(3) The University has a number of RPA's weighing between 500g-16kgs which are primarily used for education, research and marketing purposes.

(4) The University is committed to the safety and wellbeing of its staff, students and the broader community, in the context of RPA operations and to ensuring compliance with the [Civil Aviation Safety Regulations 1988](#).

(5) Failure to comply with this Policy, or applicable laws and regulations, could result not only in disciplinary action but

also enforcement action taken against the University and the pilot, and may be subject to civil and criminal penalties.

(6) Any detected or suspected breaches of the [Civil Aviation Safety Regulations 1988](#) or other applicable laws or regulations must be reported in accordance with the [Compliance Management Policy](#).

Section 6 - Procedures

Part A - LTU RPAs and Operators

(7) All LTU RPA's operators must hold a valid Remote Pilot Licence (RePL) or have an RPA operator accreditation unless the RPA is being flown for fun.

(8) All LTU RPA operators must submit evidence of a Remote Pilot License (RePL) or RPA operator accreditation to Infrastructure and Operations via ioservicedesk@latrobe.edu.au before flying a RPA for business purposes.

(9) Where a RPA is being flown for fun, the operator must review and understand the [CASA drone safety rules](#) before operating the RPA.

(10) The University does not hold a Remotely Piloted Aircraft Operator's Certificate (ReOC), therefore LTU staff are not permitted to:

- a. operate as a drone service provider; and
- b. earn money for hire or reward; and
- c. operate outside the drone safety rules unless the operation is a permitted activity within the RPA operator accreditation.

(11) Permitted RPA operator accreditation activities, where a RPA is less than 25kg include:

- a. selling photos or videos taken from a drone
- b. inspecting industrial equipment, construction site or infrastructure
- c. monitoring, surveillance or security services
- d. research and development
- e. any drone activities on behalf La Trobe University

(12) The RPA operator remains responsible for:

- a. ensuring compliance with all applicable laws and regulations; and
- b. satisfying the University that any proposed flight operations will be managed in strict adherence to the Standard Operating Conditions (CASA Part 107).

(13) All LTU RPA operators must have a risk assessment in place for the use of RPA's. The risk assessment must consider emergency response procedures such as loss of GPS signal, communication failure, or in-flight malfunction.

Part B - LTU RPAs Registration and Maintenance

(14) All RPA's owned by the University must be registered with CASA using La Trobe's Aviation Reference Number (ARN).

(15) Infrastructure and Operations is responsible for registering and deregistering University owned RPAs with CASA.

(16) When a new RPA asset is purchased by the University, information including the make, model, serial number,

weight, type of drone and value must be reported to Infrastructure and Operations via ioservicedesk@latrobe.edu.au.

(17) If the drone does not have a serial number, Infrastructure and Operations will supply a CASA-assigned registration mark, which must always be legibly displayed on the RPA when operating.

(18) When a RPA is lost, damaged beyond repair or decommissioned, Infrastructure and Operations must be notified via ioservicedesk@latrobe.edu.au so the RPA can be deregistered with CASA.

(19) Infrastructure and Operations is responsible for ensuring the RPA database is kept up to date with the names of licensed/accredited LTU RPA operators.

(20) LTU RPA operators must retain records to demonstrate:

- a. A record of flight time
- b. Time in service
- c. Maintenance performed
- d. Any defects and abnormalities that affected operations
- e. Any incidents or accidents
- f. Any other useful information

(21) LTU RPA Operator's records may be audited by Infrastructure and Operations to ensure compliance with record keeping requirements.

Part C - Third Party RPAs and Operators

(22) Where the University engages a third party to operate a RPA, the third party must adhere to this Policy.

(23) Third party RPA operators remain responsible for compliance with all applicable laws, regulations and insurance arrangements. Engagement and operational terms should be formalised under a contract between the University and the third party.

(24) Prior to operating a RPA on University property and to ensure proper visibility and risk management, all third party RPA operators must notify Infrastructure and Operations via ioservicedesk@latrobe.edu.au of their intent to fly and provide the following documentation:

- a. the RPA to be flown has been registered with CASA;
- b. the operator has a remote pilot licence (RePL) or RPA operator accreditation with CASA;
- c. evidence of current public liability insurance valued at \$20 million; and
- d. a completed pre-flight risk assessment.

Part D - Privacy and Complaints

(25) While the [Civil Aviation Safety Regulations 1988](#) do not specifically cover privacy obligations, the right to privacy, and protections afforded against surveillance under State or Territory laws (i.e. observation and visual records) must remain a paramount consideration when designing a RPA flight operation.

(26) An individual may complain to the University's Privacy Officer at privacy@latrobe.edu.au about the use of an RPA on University property if they believe it has interfered with their privacy.

(27) The Privacy Officer will investigate the complaint as promptly as possible and will advise the Chief Operating Officer or nominee of their findings and recommendations.

(28) The Chief Operating Officer or nominee will make a decision on the complaint and advise the complainant in writing of the outcome of the investigation.

Section 7 - Definitions

(29) For the purpose of this Policy and Procedure:

- a. 'Danger': The term 'danger' is used to designate airspace where certain activities in the area may be hazardous to the safety of an aircraft. For example this may be blasting areas, mining or quarrying sites or other special use areas such as those used for flight training or high traffic routes.
- b. 'Prohibited': RPAs cannot be operated in prohibited areas at any time, under any circumstance. Prohibited areas are usually of a temporary nature.
- c. 'Restricted': Restricted airspace has horizontal and vertical limitations and depending on the type of restriction or hazard involved may be active during certain times on a temporary or permanent basis. The term 'restricted' is used whenever RPA or other aircraft flight operations within the designated area are not absolutely prohibited but may be permitted only where permission has been obtained from the controlling authority and any specified conditions are complied with. Most restrictive areas are used by the Defense Force for exercises such as military flying training or live weapons firing. The restricted area may extend from the ground up to a nominated height.
- d. Restricted airspace (General Overview): Access to some areas of airspace may be restricted because they present a potential hazard to aircraft operations. For safety or security reasons, particular airspace may be designed as being prohibited, restricted or danger areas.

Section 8 - Authority and Associated Information

(30) This Policy is made under the [La Trobe University Act 2009](#).

Enquiries: ioservicedesk@latrobe.edu.au

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	15th November 2024
Review Date	15th November 2027
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	15th November 2024
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Manager - Policy	Gerard Blood Executive Director, Asset Transformation
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"student" - Student is defined in the La Trobe University Act 2009 as: (a) a person enrolled at the University in a course leading to a degree or other award; or (b) a person who is designated as a student or is of a class of persons designated as students by the Council.

"staff" - Staff means any person employed by the University as per the definition in the La Trobe University Act 2009 (Vic).