

Civil Aviation Rules



Part 102

Unmanned Aircraft Operator Certification

5 April 2025

CAA Consolidation

Rule Objective

The objective of Part 102 is to ensure that an effective safety culture is maintained by unmanned aircraft operators, by providing the requisite safety requirements for the certification and operation of unmanned aircraft outside of Part 101.

This document is the current consolidated version of Part 102 produced by the Civil Aviation Authority, and serves as a reference only. It is compiled from the rules that have been signed into law by the Minister of Transport. Copies of the rules as signed by the Minister of Transport may be obtained from the Civil Aviation Authority or may be downloaded from the official web site at: www.caa.govt.nz

Bulletin

This Part first came into force on 5 April 2025.

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Part 102 Unmanned Aircraft Operator - Certification

102.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Part is to enable the Director to determine whether to grant an unmanned aircraft operator certificate to a person after giving consideration to whether that person—

- (1) has conducted an adequate assessment of the risk to safety of conducting the proposed unmanned aircraft operation; and
- (2) has developed procedures to adequately manage the risks and to ensure that the operation is conducted safely.

102.3 Application

This Part applies to the following:

- (1) a person who operates an unmanned aircraft other than in accordance with Part 101;
- (2) a person who operates an unmanned aircraft in accordance with Part 101 and who wishes to apply for an unmanned aircraft operator certificate.

102.5 Definitions

Exposition, unless the context otherwise requires, means the exposition required by rule 102.11.

102.7 Requirement for certificate

A person must not operate an unmanned aircraft other than in accordance with Part 101 except under the authority of, and in accordance with the terms of, a valid unmanned aircraft operator certificate granted by the Director under the Act and in accordance with this Part.

102.9 Application for certificate to operate an unmanned aircraft

- (a) Before operating an unmanned aircraft other than in accordance with Part 101 a person must apply for an unmanned aircraft operator certificate.

- (b) A person who operates an unmanned aircraft in accordance with Part 101 may apply for an unmanned aircraft operator certificate.
- (c) A person in (a) or (b) must apply by—
 - (1) submitting an application to the Director in accordance with section 73 of the Act; and
 - (2) paying the appropriate fee specified in regulations made under the Act.
- (d) An application must include—
 - (1) the name and address for service in New Zealand of the applicant; and
 - (2) the details required by rule 102.15 for the operations specification; and
 - (3) the applicant's exposition required by rule 102.11; and
 - (4) any other information relating to the application as may be required by the Director.

102.11 Unmanned aircraft operator exposition

- (a) An applicant for an unmanned aircraft operator certificate must provide the Director with an exposition that is acceptable to the Director.
- (b) The exposition must address the following matters, having regard to the nature, degree and risk of the intended operation—
 - (1) the identification of a person who will have primary responsibility for the operation; and
 - (2) the identification of any person who is to have or is likely to have control over the exercise of the privileges under the certificate; and
 - (3) details of the physical locations to be used in the operation; and
 - (4) a hazard register that—

- (i) identifies the known and likely hazards to people, property and other aircraft of the proposed operation; and
 - (ii) for each of the hazards identified, includes an assessment of the associated risks; and
 - (iii) includes a description of the measures that can be implemented to mitigate or manage the risk; and
- (5) procedures for reporting information to the Civil Aviation Authority; and
 - (6) operating requirements for personnel licensing, qualifications, training and competency including pilot and support crew qualifications, training or medical requirements; and
 - (7) details of the number and specifications of the aircraft to be used, including any identification system used on the aircraft (for example colour schemes, unique identification numbers, markings); and
 - (8) details of the control system to be used to pilot the aircraft; and
 - (9) procedures for the maintenance of aircraft and measures to ensure continued airworthiness; and
 - (10) inflight procedures, including minimum distances from persons or property; and
 - (11) procedures for handling cargo or dropping items, if such operations are intended; and
 - (12) procedures to establish initial airworthiness, and any standards applied; and
 - (13) procedures for controlling, amending and distributing the exposition; and
 - (14) any other approvals that are required to conduct the proposed operation.

(c) An exposition may adopt, by reference, a requirement in a Civil Aviation Rule for the purpose of mitigating or managing a risk identified in the hazard register required by rule 102.11(b)(4).

(d) The Director may require only those matters in paragraph (b) that the Director considers are appropriate in the particular circumstances to be contained in the exposition.

(e) The exposition must remain acceptable to the Director.

102.13 Grant of certificate

(a) The Director may, in accordance with section 75 of the Act, grant a certificate to a person who has applied under rule 102.9.

(b) When granting a certificate under paragraph (a), the Director may—

- (1) impose requirements for unmanned aircraft systems and may specify procedures to be followed by the operator of any unmanned aircraft that are operated under the authority of the certificate; and
- (2) in accordance with section 78 of the Act, specify any additional conditions that the Director considers necessary in the interests of aviation safety; and
- (3) after considering the type of aircraft to be used, determine that any aircraft to be operated under the certificate must be registered and display identification markings in accordance with Part 47 if the Director considers that it is necessary in the interests of aviation safety.

102.15 Operations specification

(a) If the Director grants an unmanned aircraft operator certificate under rule 102.13, the certificate must be issued with an operations specification containing the details described in paragraph (b).

(b) The operations specification must include:

- (1) details of the physical location of the certificate holder's principal base of operations; and

- (2) the certificate holder's address for service in New Zealand; and
- (3) a list of any business names under which the certificate holder is approved to operate; and
- (4) the privileges and operations that the operator is permitted to perform, including:
 - (i) the number, type and description, including, if applicable, the serial number and registration, of every aircraft that is authorised for use; and
 - (ii) identification of the geographical areas of operations approved by the Director; and
 - (iii) any exemption granted from any requirement of this or any other Part; and
- (5) any additional condition that the Director determines is necessary in the interests of aviation safety.

102.17 Privileges of certificate holder

- (a) The holder of an unmanned aircraft operator certificate is authorised to perform the operations specified in the accompanying operations specification.
- (b) Unless the exposition required by rule 102.11 specifies otherwise the holder of an unmanned aircraft operator certificate is not required to comply with Civil Aviation Rules Parts 12, 19, 21, 26, 39, 43, 47, 61, 63, 66, 67, 91, 92, 93, 95, 115, 119, 129, 133, and 137.

102.19 Duration of certificate

- (a) When granting or renewing a certificate under this Part the Director must specify a date on which the certificate will expire.
- (b) The Director may not specify a date under paragraph (a) that is later than 5 years after the date on which the certificate was granted.

102.21 Conditions of operation of unmanned aircraft

- (a) A holder of an unmanned aircraft operator certificate must comply with—

- (1) Part 101, to the extent the requirements of Part 101 are consistent with the operations specified in the operations specification;
 - (2) the conditions imposed by the Director on the unmanned aircraft operations specification; and
 - (3) the exposition required by rule 102.11.
- (b) The certificate holder is responsible for ensuring that any other operator or other personnel involved in an operation conducted under the authority of that certificate are notified of and comply with the requirements of paragraph (a).

102.23 Changes to exposition

- (a) Each holder of an unmanned aircraft operator certificate must—
- (1) ensure that the exposition is amended—
 - (i) so that it remains a current description of the certificate holder's operation; and
 - (ii) to ensure continued compliance with any Civil Aviation Rules that have been adopted under rule 102.11(c); and
 - (2) provide the Director with a copy of each amendment to the exposition as soon as practicable after the amendment is incorporated into the exposition; and
 - (3) make such amendments to the exposition as the Director considers necessary in the interests of aviation safety.
- (b) A holder of an unmanned aircraft operator certificate must obtain the approval of the Director before changing any of the following:
- (1) the identification of any person who is to have or is likely to have control over the exercise of the privileges under the certificate:
 - (2) the identification of locations from which the certificate holder conducts unmanned aircraft operations.

102.25 Renewal of certificate

A holder of a current unmanned aircraft operator certificate who wishes to continue to exercise the privileges of the certificate beyond its expiry date must apply for the renewal of the certificate in accordance with section 73 of the Act.