



Deputy Chief Minister

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Introduction of Command Paper on the Use of Drones in Gibraltar

In the light of recent changes to UK legislation on the use of small unmanned aircraft, including aircraft commonly known as “small drones”, the Government is today publishing a Command Paper amending the Civil Aviation (Air Navigation) Regulations 2009 on the use of these aircraft in Gibraltar.

The amendments included in the Command Paper propose the following:

- All drones regardless of weight, including drones weighing under 250 grams (i.e. toy drones), will be captured by the amended legislation – at present drones under 7kg in weight are exempt from the majority of existing requirements.
- No drone, not even drones weighing under 250 grams (i.e. toy drones), can be flown in Gibraltar airspace, whether being flown for leisure or commercial purposes, without a permission from the Director of Civil Aviation (“DCA”). This new requirement mirrors the UK legislation which requires drone operators to obtain similar permissions when flying near an airport. These measures will help reduce the likelihood of instances such as those seen at Gatwick Airport last December.
- There will be a differentiation between the drone operator and the remote pilot, placing responsibilities and requirements on both – in many cases this will be the same person, but this will future-proof for when a company owns more than one drone and employs different pilots to operate them.
- All drone operators must register with the DCA by 1 January 2020 – this will not be required in respect of drones weighing under 250 grams (i.e. toy drones). There will be a charge for the registration of drone operators
- All remote pilots must prove their piloting competency to the DCA by 1 January 2020. This requirement will not apply in respect of drones weighing under 250 grams (i.e. toy drones).



- Drones weighing more than 250 grams will be required to display a registration code.

Deputy Chief Minister and Minister with responsibility for Civil Aviation, Dr Joseph Garcia said, 'Local interest in the operation of Drones continues to rise and there are now a total of five local operators recognised by the Director of Civil Aviation. The disruption suffered by Gatwick Airport shortly before Christmas, brought into sharp focus the problems that unauthorised drone flying close to airfields can cause and I welcome these new procedures for controlling the use of these devices.'