



Australian Association for Unmanned Systems

AAUS Accredited Drone Operator Program

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Background and Scope

The Australian Association for Unmanned Systems' (AAUS) core objective is to promote a safe and viable unmanned systems industry in Australia.

There is increasing use of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) or drones in a wide range of civil applications. These applications can deliver significant benefit to the Commonwealth. However, the use of drones by unprofessional operators can have a detrimental impact on the high safety standard and reputation of the entire industry sector. It can also expose the end-users of drone services to a number of commercial, legal and regulatory risks.

AAUS recognises the need to promote those RPAS/drone operators who offer a service to a high professional standard.

AAUS also recognises the difficulties end-users have in finding and identifying professional drone service providers.

AAUS endeavours to promote the highest level of safety and professionalism from all drone operators. To this end, AAUS has established the AAUS Accredited Drone Operator Program. The objectives of the Program are to:

- Provide drone operators with an independent means for identifying their business as a professional member of the industry;
- Provide end-users with added assurance in the professionalism of the drone service providers they engage.

This document details the program and associated activities.



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AAUS Accredited Drone Operator

Definitions

AAUS Accredited Drone Operator – A business/company/trading entity that provides commercial drone services and has been granted accreditation status by AAUS.

Applicant – A member of AAUS who is applying to AAUS for accreditation of their business as an AAUS Accredited Drone Operator.

End-user – The commercial client contracting the services of a drone operator.

Disclaimers

The AAUS Accredited Drone Operator Program is intended to provide end-users greater assurance in the professionalism of the service provider they contract. AAUS offers no guarantee or warrantee as to the services offered by AAUS Accredited Drone Operators.

AAUS is not liable for any damages or losses resulting from the activities of an AAUS Accredited Drone Operator or any damages or losses resulting from decisions made by End-users on the basis of a drone operator holding an AAUS Accreditation as an AAUS Accredited Drone Operator.

AAUS verification activities are made at the time of submission of an application. AAUS does not conduct ongoing verification activities and therefore cannot guarantee that an AAUS Accredited Drone Operator meets all of the conditions of the AAUS Accredited Drone Operator Program at the time they are engaged by an End-user. End-users should still undertake their own due diligence activities before selecting a drone service provider, as they would when engaging any other contracted service provider.

Complaints or Concerns in Relation to an Accredited Operator

End-users should address all concerns or complaints in relation to the **professional** conduct of an AAUS Accredited UAS Operator to:

info@aaus.org.au

Please note, that complaints of a criminal nature (including potential breaches of the Civil Aviation Safety Regulation and other State and Federal legislation) should be directed to the relevant authority. Further information on the handling of complaints can be found on the AAUS website.

1.1 Identification of an AAUS Accredited Drone Operator

AAUS Accredited Drone Operators can be identified by:

- The display of the accreditation seal (Fig. 1) on promotional materials, advertising, websites and documentation;
- Searching the AAUS Drone Operator database (public searchable) on the AAUS website;
- Contacting AAUS to verify the accreditation of a drone operator.



FIG. 1 SAMPLE IDENTIFICATION SEAL

1.2 Verification of Accreditation Status

End-users and members of the public can verify the accreditation status of an operator by:

- Searching the AAUS Drone Operator database (public searchable);
- Viewing a list of accredited AAUS Drone Operators on the AAUS website (updated weekly); or
- Contacting AAUS (info@aaus.org.au).

1.3 Period of Accreditation

Accreditation is renewed annually and expires at the end of each calendar year (regardless of the date of Application).

AAUS Accredited Drone Operators must resubmit all of the required documentation for verification each calendar year. Applications can be submitted at any time but will expire 31st December of that year.



1.4 Eligibility

All of the following conditions must be met in order to be eligible to apply as an AAUS Accredited Drone Operator:

- Must be a current member (individual or company/SME) of AAUS and listed as an operator;
- Must commit to follow the AAUS Code of Conduct;
- Must hold and maintain appropriate insurance coverage for their operations;
- Must have passed an online safety, compliance, and airmanship test; or hold a remote pilot licence; or a Remote Pilot Operators Certificate / UoC; or have passed a training course provided by a CASA approved training provider; or have passed any other course with content covering the safety, regulation, and professionalism of Drone/RPAS operations¹;
- Have submitted all documentation necessary to verify the conditions of eligibility.

1.5 Application Process

AAUS Members can apply for status as an AAUS Accredited Drone Operator through the member's only section of the AAUS website. Further instructions on how to submit your application can be found on the website.

aaus.org.au/ADOP

1.6 Application Documentation

Members will be required to compile and submit the following documentation as part of their application:

- Business name and individual name (must match AAUS membership)
- Electronic scan of a signed copy of the AAUS Code of Conduct
- Electronic scan of their certificate of insurance (all insurance providers can provide a copy of the certificate of insurance on request)
- One of the below:
 - An electronic copy of their Remote Pilot Licence as issued by CASA;

OR

¹ Course syllabus will need to be reviewed by the AAUS Accreditation Panel to ensure it covers the appropriate content.



- Copies of certificates of training from CASA approved training providers;
 - OR
 - Copies of certificates of training from other RPAS courses (subject to review of content by AAUS Accreditation Panel);
 - OR
 - A copy of the email detailing successful completion of the online test (refer to Section §1.7);
- Have submitted all documentation necessary to verify eligibility;
 - Documentation is independently verified by AAUS staff.

1.7 Online Test

Applicants who have not completed any formal training will need to pass a simple online test covering aspects of the regulation and principles outlined in the industry code of conduct. AAUS will provide reference to online learning materials. Details of the test will be provided on the AAUS website in October 2016.

1.8 Cost of Application

Accreditation is free for all AAUS Members.

1.9 Processing of Applications

The AAUS Executive Manager and/or supporting administration staff will review submitted documentation. The AAUS Executive Manager will notify an Applicant if they fail to provide the documentation necessary to verify eligibility requirements.

1.10 Decisions to Refuse Application

The professional conduct of the Applicant may need to be taken into consideration when deciding to offer accreditation. Such considerations are warranted when there is evidence to suggest the Applicant has not previously adhered to the code of conduct or met other conditions for eligibility. Evidence can include, but is not limited to:

- The applicant is/has been subject to CASA enforcement action, irrespective of whether or not it resulted in successful prosecution;
- Written complaints have been received in relation to the Applicant;

These concerns will be discussed with the Applicant prior to a decision being made in relation to their application.



Should an Applicant wish to appeal a decision, they should address their appeal in writing to the President of AAUS (president@aaus.org.au). The President will contact the Applicant for further information, and convene an independent Review Panel from members of the AAUS Board. The President will notify the Applicant of the Review Panel's decision. The decision of the Review Panel is considered final. An Applicant is not eligible to apply again for accreditation until the beginning of the next calendar year.

1.11 Rules on Use of Accreditation

Accreditation is made to a single business or trading entity. If a business operates under multiple trading names, then separate accreditation must be obtained for each trading entity (as seen by an end-user). Accreditation cannot be shared/transferred between businesses.

