

Remotely Piloted Aircraft (Drone) Policy

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) The purpose of this Policy is to ensure:

- a. the safety of all University staff, students and volunteers, as well as the public;
- b. all relevant University activity complies with Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) requirements and the conditions of the University's RPA Operator's Certificate; and
- c. all Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) activity complies with the University's Work Health and Safety policies.

Scope

(2) This Policy applies to all staff, students and volunteers of the University.

(3) This Policy applies to all RPA operations that are part of University activities or involve University assets, regardless of the size or classification of the RPA.

(4) To the extent that any changes to CASA rules or regulations from time to time conflict with this policy or Operations Manual, the CASA rules or regulations must be adhered to until such time as the policy or Operation Manuals is amended.

Section 2 - Definitions

(5) For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

- a. Chief Controller means the person identified as such in the University's RPA Operations Manual;
- b. RPA means a Remotely Piloted Aircraft, previously referred to as an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV);
- c. RPA Operations Manual means the document approved by CASA which governs the operations of all RPAs within the University; and
- d. RPA Operator's Certificate (ReOC) means the license issued to the University by CASA, including any additional restrictions or requirements particular to the University.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(6) Southern Cross University recognises that RPAs provide an increasingly low-cost capability for SCU's academic and professional staff to undertake research and other university activities. However, the operation of RPAs can present physical risk for University members and the public, as well as regulatory and reputational risk for SCU.

(7) Southern Cross University regulates staff and student use of Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and the safety of the public and University members.

RPA Operator's Certificate

- (8) The University will apply for and maintain a valid RPA Operator's Certificate.
- (9) The University will develop and maintain a CASA-approved RPA Operations Manual.
- (10) The Chief Controller will be responsible for:
- a. being the primary point of contact between the University and CASA;
 - b. ensuring the successful application and ongoing validity of the RPA Operator's Certificate;
 - c. ensuring the RPA Operations Manual remains up to date, including appending any new restrictions imposed by CASA;
 - d. ensuring that the RPA Operations Manual complies with all other relevant University policies, including the Work Health and Safety Policy;
 - e. ensuring that the University complies with the RPA Operations Manual and any conditions or restrictions that form part of the University's RPA Operator's Certificate; and
 - f. advising staff on compliant RPA procedure, as required and specified in the RPA Operations Manual.

Procurement

(11) Any staff member intending to purchase an RPA for University purposes must first consult with the Chief Controller. The Chief Controller will advise the staff member of any restrictions or requirements pertaining to the operation of the RPA should it be purchased.

(12) If a new RPA is procured, the purchaser must register it immediately with the Chief Controller who will add it to the University's list of operating types in the RPA Operations Manual.

Operations

(13) RPAs, regardless of the size or classification of the RPA, may only be operated by staff for University purposes:

- a. where prior approval is obtained from both the SCU Chief Controller and relevant Head of Work Unit; and
- b. in strict accordance with the University's RPA Operations Manual and its embedded Flight Conduct procedures.

(14) RPAs of any weight are strictly prohibited for any type of use at SCU's Gold Coast Campus unless expressly approved by the Chief Controller and Vice Chancellor.

(15) The RPA Operations Manual is considered a University Procedure for the purposes of the [Governance Documents Rule](#). Compliance with the Operations Manual is therefore mandatory for all staff and students of SCU.

(16) Students may only operate RPAs for University purposes under the direct supervision of an SCU staff member duly authorised under this Policy.

Status and Details

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Head of Work Unit	Mark Dixon Director, Governance Services
Enquiries Contact	Office of the Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor