European Union Aviation Safety Agency

Operational authorisation requirements for the ‘specific’ category

Do I need to obtain an authorisation before flying my drone in the 'specific' category?

Answer

When operating under the ‘specific’ category, if the operations can be conducted within the limitation of a standard scenario and using an appropriate drone, the drone operator only needs to submit a declaration to the National Aviation Authority and wait for the confirmation of receipt and completeness. For all other operations in the ’specific’ category, an operational authorisation issued by the National Aviation Authority is needed.

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I fall under the ‘specific’ category, so how do I obtain an authorisation?

Answer

Firstly check whether your operation can be accommodated within a **standard scenario**. If it can, you do not need an authorisation, but you do need to submit a declaration to the National Aviation Authority. A standard scenario is an operation defined in the Appendix to the drone regulation (EU Regulation 2019/947). You need to use a drone marked with the appropriate class identification label (5 or 6). After submitting the declaration to the National Aviation Authority, you will receive the confirmation of receipt and completeness from the National Aviation Authority and operate following the limitations of the standard scenario.
Otherwise, there are other means to obtain an operational authorisation under the ‘specific’ category, depending on the level of risk the operation poses. The drone operator can apply for:

1. **An operational authorisation by conducting a risk assessment of the intended operation** using a methodology for the risk assessment; one possible method is the SORA (specific operation risk assessment) that you can find as AMC1 to Article 11 to

Regulation (EU) 2019/947. This methodology helps to identify the risk level of the operation and to identify the mitigations and operational safety objectives needed to make the operation safe. When the drone operator believes they have put in place satisfactory measures to ensure the safety of the operation, they send all the information to the National Aviation Authority and apply for an operational authorisation. When the National Aviation Authority is satisfied, it provides the drone operator with the authorisation, and the operation can be started.

2. **An operation authorisation through a predefined risk assessment' (PDRA)** as a simplification of the drone operator conducting a risk assessment. For those operations that will be the most common in Europe, EASA will carry out the risk assessment and will publish, as an acceptable means of compliance with the drone regulation, the list of the actions that the drone operator needs to put in place in order to conduct the operation safely. An application for an authorisation to the National Aviation Authority is still needed, however, both the drone operator and the National Aviation Authority will benefit from the standardised measures defined in the PDRA. The PDRAs are published by EASA as AMC to Art 11 to Regulation (EU) 2019/947; more are already under development.

3. **Light UAS operator certificate (LUC)**: this is a voluntary certification, after which the National Aviation Authority may allocate some privileges to the drone operator.

   Drone operators may ask the National Aviation Authority to assess their organisation to evaluate whether they are capable of assessing the risk of an operation themselves. The requirements to be demonstrated by drone operators are defined in Part C of Regulation (EU) 2019/947. When the National Aviation Authority is satisfied, they will issue a light UAS operator certificate (LUC) and they will allocate privileges to the drone operators based on their level of maturity. The privileges may be one or more of the following:

- To conduct operations covered by standard scenarios without submitting a declaration;
- To self-authorise operations conducted by the drone operator and covered by a PDRA without applying for an authorisation.
- To self-authorise all operations conducted by the drone operator without applying for an authorisation.

Regulatory reference: article 12 of EU regulation 2012/947.

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