

The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) has issued a memorandum circular which regulates the operation of unmanned aircraft vehicles (UAVs).

Under the CAAP's Memorandum Circular No. 21 series of 2014 (dated June, 2014) and its amendments in Memorandum Circular No. 35 (dated November 2014), UAV owners or operators are now required to register their equipment with the CAAP, and secure a certification to operate from the agency.

The provisions apply to:

- The operation of large UAVs and (devises above 150 kg)
- The operation of a small UAV for purposes other than sport or recreation (devises above the 100 grams)

Under the memorandum provision to be certified as a UAV controller (pilot), an applicant must:

- Be in possession of a restricted radiotelephone operator certificate
- Have passed Theories of Flight knowledge test
- Have completed a training course conducted by the UAV Manufacturer in the operations of the type of drone to be used
- Have at least 5 hours experience outside controlled airspace
- Have passed knowledge test of Philippine Civil Aviation Regulations

No person may operate a UAV for hire or rewards unless in possession of a UAV Certificate of Authorization that authorizes the person to operate the UAV. The applicant for UAV Certificate of Authorization must hold the following documents:

- Operations Manual and Flight Manual
- Command Clearance (J2)
- UAV insurance/Third party liability (TPL)
- Special Certificate of Airworthiness and
- Certificate of Registration

In addition, the memorandum requires applicants to provide a detailed description of their UAV and their purpose for operating it. The memorandum prohibits the flying of UAVs over populated areas, restricted areas such as airports and no-fly zones such as military training camps.

Under the provisions of the Philippine Civil Aviation Regulations, any operators found violating rules of the memorandum will be fined between 300,000 to P500,000 Pesos depending on the grave of violations.

For further information on the legislation and points of contact at the Civil Aviation Authorities of the Philippines, please get in touch with Caterina Pino, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, UNOCHA. Email: pinoc@un.org