

New drone policy

1101. SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the salient features of the new drone policy released by the Ministry;
- (b) whether the policy allows for the operation of drones beyond the visual line of sight and the details thereof;
- (c) the manner in which Government intends to address safety and privacy concerns; and
- (d) whether Government is investing in geofencing software to ensure that drones do not trespass upon restricted areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI JAYANT SINHA): (a) Aircraft Rule, 1937 was amended *vide* G.S.R No. 1358 dated 01.11.2017 to include Rule, 15A to enable operations of Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (commonly known as drones). Subsequently, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) issued Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) Section 3, Series X, Part 1 on the operation of civil Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) on 27th August, 2018 which has become effective from 1st December, 2018. The salient features of the CAR are given in the Statement (*See* below).

(b) Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) Section 3 Series X Part I restricts operations of RPAS to Visual Line of Sight (VLoS). However, there is a provision in the CAR as per Para 14.1 for authorising operations of RPAS in beyond visual line of sight on case-to-case basis subject to adequate justification provided by the applicant for safe conduct of RPAS operations.

(c) DGCA, being the civil aviation safety regulator, has issued CAR Section 3 Series X Part I with an intent to address the safe and secure operations of RPAS. As per the CAR, RPA operator/remote pilots are to ensure that privacy norms of an entity are not compromised in any manner. In case of any violations of operating requirements and restrictions for RPAS, specified in the CAR, enforcement action is also spelt out in the CAR (including relevant IPCs).

(d) An online platform called Digital Sky is being developed for approval of drone flights to ensure that drones do not trespass upon restricted area.

Statement*Details of salient features of the CAR Section 3, Series X, Part 1*

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1. RPA has been categorised in accordance with maximum all-up-weight (including payload) as follows: –

Nano	:	<250gm
Micro	:	>250gm and <2kg
Small	:	>2kg and <25kg
Medium	:	> 25 kg and < 150 kg
Large	:	> 150 kg
 2. RPAS operations are restricted to:–
 - (a) Day light (between sunrise and sunset);
 - (b) Within visual line of sight;
 - (c) Flying upto 400 feet* AGL in the country
 - (d) In Visual Meteorological Conditions (VMC) with a minimum ground visibility of 5 km.;
 - (e) Surface winds of not more than, 10 knots.
 3. RPA shall not discharge or drop substances unless specially cleared. Further, RPA are prohibited from transporting any hazardous material such as explosives or animal or human payload.
 4. "No drone zone" has been identified for the operations of RPAS in India which majorly secludes area within 5 km. from the perimeter of major airports, area within 3 km from the perimeter of any civil, private or defense airports, military installations, area within 25 km. from international borders.
 5. All permissions for RPAS operations will be granted through 'Digital Sky platform'. The platform works on 'No Permission - No Take-off' concept. It will be one of its kind in the world.
 6. There is no requirement of remote pilot license. However, a minimum criterion for training has been laid out for flying small and above categories of RPAS.
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* Note - Nano RPA upto 50 ft. AGL and Micro RPA upto 200 ft. in the uncontrolled airspace and enclosed premises.