

## Filming with Small Unmanned Aircrafts (SUA)

Filming with small unmanned aircrafts, commonly referred to as drones are increasingly becoming a popular piece of filming equipment within the film & TV industry. This document is intended to set out the general guidelines relating to the use of drones for commercial filming activity and productions wishing to film with these types of equipment should always employ an approved drone operator and seek further advice from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) website.

To find out more from the CAA please visit -

[www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?catid=1995&pagetype=90](http://www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?catid=1995&pagetype=90)

Alternatively, please liaise with Screen Manchester for a list of approved drone operators.

### GENERAL GUIDELINES (as per Film London website):

Drones may also be referred to as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV), Small Unmanned Aircraft (SUA) or Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS).

In advance of filming you need to ensure that you have:

- Permission from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).
- Permission from the owner or manager the land used for take-off and landing.
- Control over the area you intend to use the drone within. This includes any persons or vehicles in the area.

### CAA permission

All commercial drone operators must be in possession of a CAA permission document. Any drone flight in an urban area or near large crowds of people, whether for private or commercial purposes, will require the same document.

The CAA grants permission for multi-rotor and fixed-wing type, and will only grant permission for drones that do not exceed 20kg.

- Apply for CAA drone operation permission
- Read the CAA's safety guidance

For more information contact the CAA Flight Operations Department on **01293 573 517** or [UAVenquiries@caa.co.uk](mailto:UAVenquiries@caa.co.uk)

### Land permission and area control

Productions using drones for filming purposes must ensure they are familiar with aircraft legislation and procedures that relate to aerial filming.

The Air Navigation Order, Articles 166 and 167, state the distances at which drones may be operated:

- Not within a specified distance, normally 150m, of any congested area of a city, town or settlement.
- Not within a specified distance, normally 50m, of any person, vessel, vehicle or structure not under the control of the aircraft operator.

CAA Information Notice 2014/190, point 6.1.4, states: “In any circumstances or weight category, it should be noted that flights directly overhead persons and vehicles will not be allowed at any height in a congested area unless they are under the control of the person in charge of the aircraft” A full closure of the road or area to be used will usually need to be in place before the drone can be used.

Drone operators should liaise with the organisation or individual responsible for the land required for take-off and landing to obtain permission.

They will also need to ensure that the land below the flight-path is either clear of people and vehicles by the requisite distances, or that access to the surface is restricted and any people and vehicles are under control of the operator. Drones should not be flown over people, vessels or vehicles that are not in control of the production.

### **Application Process**

Productions must contact Screen Manchester for all drone requests on or near the public highway. Take-off and landing permissions on private property must be sought before making an application.

The following documents will need to be supplied to Screen Manchester with all permit applications:

- A copy of a drone operators CAA Navigation Order
- Drone flight map
- A copy Drone operators RAMS and PLI certificate
- A copy of the drone operators pilots licence
- A copy of the letter drop to residents / businesses

In some cases a road closure will be required in order to operate the safe and controlled flight of the drone. See ‘Highways and Traffic Management’ in Code of Practice document. Typical notice periods are between 4-6 weeks.