



Department
for Transport



Department for
Science, Innovation
& Technology

From the Parliamentary
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1 April 2025

Dear Rob,

Regulatory Innovation Office and Future Safety and Innovation (FS&I) engagement

Following on from the discussions that the Regulatory Innovation Office, DfT and the CAA FS&I team have had over the last few months we are writing to you to formally summarise the actions we have agreed. This letter focuses specifically on priorities for the CAA within the UAS sector only and is aligned with the ministerial annual priorities letter to the CAA, that will be sent separately shortly. The work outlined below is all within the work programme for which DfT have agreed grant to the CAA for 2025/26.

To support the growth of the Uncrewed Aerial System (UAS) sector, we have agreed that the CAA will take action in the following areas by March 2026:

- 1. Develop a simplified process to enable 2-year airspace change for Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) operations.** We have discussed how industry has previously spent considerable effort to establish a trial that may only be in place for 90 days. To grow and realise the full benefit to the UK, industry needs to move from trials to integrated sustainable commercial operations as soon as practicable. The CAA should consider this with both current and future operations and in regulatory development. Where pathfinder operations are aligned with the UK's Airspace Modernisation Strategy and require an airspace change, we have agreed that the CAA will have the option to enable 2-year airspace changes rather than the current 90-day limit.
- 2. Consider noise exemptions for RPAS trials within the ACP process.** We have agreed that the CAA will work with the DfT to consider the relevant noise requirements, to support the gathering of noise and public perception data within real world settings, enabling the development of clear routes for permanent operations for industry. The relevant guidance to CAA already provides flexibility such that noise complaints can be considered proportionately within the context of the benefits of UAS operations, particularly where operations can support public services, such as the NHS.
- 3. Develop options for mandating Electronic Conspicuity.** Electronic Conspicuity, is an important enabler to scaling Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) UAS operations. We have agreed, and funded, the CAA will work with the DfT to develop

proposals and consult industry on a national mandate before the end of the year. Alongside enabling BVLOS operations EC can improve safety through the reducing the risk of mid-air collisions as well as other wider benefits for existing airspace users.

4. **Updated approach for authorising Emergency Services RPAS operations.** One of the government's six missions is Safer Streets and UAS have a part to play in achieving this. We have agreed that the CAA will work with the Emergency Services to ensure that they can adopt UAS where it supports their mission and increases overall safety to the public. The ongoing CAA work with the NPCC is a strong first step in this area.
5. **Work with specific operators as pathfinders.** The CAA has agreed to continue with and, where beneficial, expand the approach of selecting and working with a small number of innovative operators to enable new types of operation and move the industry forward. Operations such as London Health Bridge not only benefit those NHS hospitals where the UAS are flying, but also the wider UAS sector. Use cases like these create a pathway for other operators to follow, as well as generating data that can be used to inform future policy and shared with industry. The CAA should continue this approach and enable increasingly complex operations in a rapid and safe manner.
6. **Simplify RPAS application process.** Efficient application systems and clear and proportionate regulation are a key enabler for industry. We welcome the digital application system that the CAA are introducing this year along with the SORA methodology. The CAA has agreed to continually review the effectiveness of the application system, the proportionality and clarity of the rule set, and to continually improve the system, while measuring and publicly reporting on the progress it is making to achieve a more efficient approvals system.

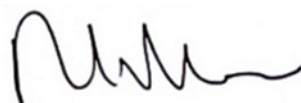
We wish to thank you and your colleagues at the CAA for their openness and expertise on these issues. The work our departments have already done in collaboration with your teams demonstrates the effectiveness of this partnership. DSIT and DfT officials will continue to work with you as you develop and deliver these actions, particularly on the details of reporting and publishing metrics in the months ahead on the delivery of these actions.

UAS will bring benefits as diverse and important as speeding up NHS logistics, connecting people on the more remote islands of the UK, creating jobs and growing the UK economy. The CAA are a key enabler to this sector and we look forward to working with you to realise the benefit to the UK.

Yours sincerely,



MIKE KANE MP
MINISTER FOR AVIATION,
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MINISTER OF STATE FOR SCIENCE,
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