



Model Aeronautics Association of Canada
Unit 9, 5100 South Service Road, Burlington, ON L7L 6A5

February 25, 2023

Dear Member,

In the January 23 eBlast, we outlined a plan to reauthorize outdoor flying that was suspended in December on a site-by-site basis. By January 31, we had reauthorized over fifty sites. A few days later, on February 3, Transport Canada called a special meeting with MAAC's Transport Canada Advisory Group and senior management. At that meeting, we were advised that our Exemption from [Part IX of the Canadian Aviation Regulations](#) (CAR) is **no longer in effect** due to breaches of exemption condition 3, sanctioning fields in controlled airspace without the required written agreements.

Transport Canada indicated that the written notification would be sent to us and initially asked us to wait until it was issued before making any MAAC-internal announcement. They also recognized that our recently reauthorized members might continue flying until MAAC was notified. Because of ongoing delays in processing the Transport Canada notification, we reached an agreement with them this week to notify our members.

Effective immediately, all MAAC members operating Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) must comply with all Canadian Aviation Regulations, including CAR Part IX.

Since the February 3 call, MAAC and Transport Canada have been actively engaged in ongoing discussions to ensure our members can again enjoy the hobby responsibly **under a new exemption**. We are also working on ways to make life under Part IX as easy and flexible as possible for the members.

More information on legally flying RPAS in Canada can be found on the Transport Canada [‘Flying your drone¹ safely and legally’](#) webpage.

What does this mean?

- 1. All MAAC members flying Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) outdoors must now have a minimum of a Basic Pilot certificate and comply with all Canadian Aviation Regulations, including CAR Part IX regulations.**
- 2. MAAC RPAS sites that are either indoor or have been issued a Site Operating Certificate may continue to fly. All outdoor operations must comply with all Transport Canada CAR Part IX regulations. New Site operating certificates will be issued reflecting Part IX restrictions.**
- 3. Altitudes are limited to 400 feet above ground level (AGL), and higher altitude limits on either a Site Operating Certificate issued this year or on Altitude Waivers issued last year are rescinded. *MPPD-15 Altitude Limit Policy* is withdrawn.**
- 4. Where RPAS flying can happen, so can events. We are still assessing what changes might be needed for fun-flys and contests, and we will ensure that club executives are fully informed as soon as possible.**
- 5. International RPAS operators are now required to obtain an RPAS Basic Pilot certificate and obtain a Transport Canada Special Flight Operations Certificate (SFOC) to operate an RPAS in Canada.**

¹ The Canadian Aviation Regulations is a legal document that only uses the term RPAS and does not use ‘drone’. The Transport Canada web site uses the word ‘drone’ in many of its pages and subsites. These terms are equivalent for MAAC purposes.

Operational Impacts

The Safety and Transport Canada Advisory Groups are working with the board of directors to determine how and in what sequence we can release MAAC outdoor flying sites for operations under CAR Part IX. We are working on getting an announcement out on this in the coming weeks.

The fifty or so outdoor RPAS sites that have been granted a Site Operating Certificate for the resumption of operations must comply with all Transport Canada CAR Part IX regulations, which means that pilots must be able to produce an RPAS Pilot Certificate, be limited to operating below 400 feet above the ground, be able to display a TC issued registration number on their RPAS and produce the certificate of registration, use and maintain a 'Flight' and a 'Maintenance' log for all parts of the RPAS – this includes the RPA (model) and the ground station (transmitter).

For sites in NAV CANADA controlled airspace, it is unlikely we will be able to resume traditional RPAS flying in 2023. Military airspace remains an unknown at this time. While MAAC and the regulators and controlling agencies want to work towards allowing safe operations in controlled airspace in the future, those clubs should consider non-RPAS activities for the season and/or start searching for new sites in uncontrolled airspace.

Insurance coverage for members, clubs, and field owners continues to be in force for all operations, provided you comply with all CAR Part IX regulations, where applicable, and the MAAC Safety Code.

While we work on reconciling the MAAC Safety Code to reflect needed changes, any and all references to our Exemption NCR-011-2019 are no longer valid. You will notice that many Safety documents have been temporarily removed from the maac.ca site.

Getting your Drone Pilot Certificate

The Transport Canada website has the current information on [getting a drone pilot certificate](#) as well as a link to their drone pilot [study resources](#). Our experience shows that MAAC members should be able to get their Basic Drone Pilot Certificate with minimal review and studying. For the majority of MAAC activities, the Basic Certificate would be adequate.

An Advanced Drone Pilot Certificate may open up more opportunities and flying locations but requires more general aviation knowledge as well as a practical flying test administered by a Transport Canada Authorized examiner.

We are working with the RPAS Centre - a cross-Canada Part IX Compliant RPAS Training company - to provide discounted Part IX training to MAAC members who feel the need for more test preparation. RPAS Centre can also provide Advanced Certificate test preparation and flight tests at a discount to MAAC members . We hope to have more information on this soon.

Why did this happen?

MAAC's internal approval controls failed to identify that several flying sites were approved inside controlled airspace without an agreement with NAV CANADA. These approvals were in breach of our Exemption from the CAR Part IX regulations and in breach of an operating agreement we had with NAV CANADA. As a result of these breaches, Transport Canada considers our Exemption to be no longer in effect, and NAV CANADA has revoked our operating agreements.

It is important to note that at no time did these administrative breaches result in incidents that put aviation safety or the safety of the public at risk.

What is MAAC Doing About This?

MAAC volunteers and staff are working to adapt our rules, procedures, and policies for member and club operations under CAR Part IX, and to develop Part IX-related support materials. We will also continue to advocate for our members with Transport Canada, NAV CANADA and Innovation, Science & Economic Development Canada. We apologize more information could not be released more quickly, however, this continues to be an extremely challenging, complicated, and dynamic situation to maneuver through.

Transport Canada has asked that we handle all inquiries on this issue internally, so please contact your zone director with any questions so they can forward them appropriately. We will keep you advised of our work on your behalf.

Sincerely,



Mike Anderson

President