

RADIO SPECTRUM MANAGEMENT



Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems/Drones

Remotely piloted aircraft systems (RPAS) must use the right radio frequencies, so they don't cause harmful interference to vital radio systems such as air traffic control, cellular phones, or emergency services.

People who use the wrong frequencies for their RPAS can be prosecuted under the Radiocommunications Act 1989 and the Radiocommunications Regulations 2001.

The most commonly used frequencies that are legal for RPAS in New Zealand are 433 MHz or 2.4 GHz for remote control, along with 5.8 GHz for video and audio links. RPAS can use any of the frequencies in the [General User Radio Licence for Short Range Devices](#) and the [General User Radio Licence for Aeronautical Control](#). These are the only frequencies that RPAS are permitted to use in New Zealand.

RPAS must also comply with the licence conditions set out in the General User Licences and the [Radiocommunications \(Radio Standards\) Notice 2015](#).

Because most RPAS equipment is developed offshore, it often exceeds the frequency and power limits required in New Zealand, and so it is illegal to possess or use here.

If you intend to buy an RPAS, ask the supplier for evidence of compliance with New Zealand requirements. This will be shown on the product by a supplier code number (SCN) or R-NZ label.

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is the government agency that oversees aviation safety and the relevant rules, including rules regarding the use of RPAS. Airways (New Zealand's air navigation service provider) in conjunction with Callaghan Innovation, UAVNZ (the RPAS industry group) and CAA, have set up the [airshare website](#) to provide information for RPAS users.