



OPERATIONAL CIRCULAR 43/2025

File: D40227

August 2025

Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) Urban Environment Trial

Key Message

DFES is trialling the use of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) in the urban environment to enhance operational capability, improve situational awareness, and reduce risk to personnel. The RPAS Trial will commence on **1 August 2025**.

What's been happening?

The RPAS trial aims to evaluate the operational effectiveness of Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) in urban emergency response scenarios. The capability will be deployed in a managed operational environment using DO Perth, assisted by CFRS staff where available.

The trial will operate under the following parameters:

- Trial period until the end of 2025 year
- Use Micro Category (250g or less) RPA
- Operate at DFES managed incidents only
- Within Perth Metropolitan area
- Daylight operations only
- Will not be used at bushfire incidents

What does it mean for me?

During the trial period the RPAS capability can be requested by operational personnel in support of tactical decision making, including hazard identification, access route planning, fire behaviour analysis, and investigation.

The Incident Controller (IC) may request the RPAS capability to support incident response using the following process:

1. RPAS resource request to Comcen via radio
2. Mobilisation of RPAS will be assessed in conjunction with other incidents
3. Comcen will mobilise DO Perth following authorisation
4. RPAS team of two will be deployed (pilot and spotter)
5. RPAS pilot will report to IC (or Operations Officer)

ICs should be aware that the operating environment for RPAS must not be in proximity to crewed aircraft, over populous areas, or within 30 metres of other people. A task and risk assessment as per [SOP 3.11.07 - Use Of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems \(RPAS\)](#) will be completed pre-flight, by the RPA pilot, to ensure the safety of all personnel and compliance with these standard operating conditions.

| Target Audience: DFES operational personnel in Perth Metro regions | | | | |
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Further information

The Micro RPA used in this trial will not be operating under the DFES Remote Operators Certificate, so the guidelines in Operational Circular 21/2025 do not apply. The approved procedures for this trial are documented in [Interim Operating Procedure 3.11\(1-25\) – Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems \(RPAS\) Urban Environment Trial](#). This IOP ensures consistent, safe, and compliant deployment of RPAS during the trial period.

Feedback and data will be gathered during the trial period to inform future capability development and integration of RPAS into DFES operations. Feedback of RPAS operations can forwarded to DOPerth@dfes.wa.gov.au.

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