



Operational guidance for drone users: flying a drone near a railway track

Non-qualified remote pilots (hobbyists)

Flying near, on or over the railway infrastructure is extremely dangerous and could result in significant loss or damage to the railways and/or affect passenger journeys.

Your aircraft could cause significant issues, including:

- Endangering people working on the railway;
- Disrupting urgent track inspections that are being carried out by authorised employees or contractors;
- Disrupt a search for a missing or vulnerable person by the British Transport Police; or
- Cause damage to railway property and equipment.

You should:

- Always comply with the Civil Aviation Authority's [Drone and Model Aircraft Code](#);
- Note that you could be personally liable for any damage caused to the railway infrastructure by you or your drone if you do not have Public Liability Insurance of at least £5,000,000; and
- Be aware that you could be prosecuted under Article 240 or 241 of The Air Navigation Order 2016:
 - Article 240 - '**A person must not recklessly or negligently act in a manner likely to endanger an aircraft, or any person in an aircraft**' [Note: Network Rail also utilises a fleet of Helicopters that routinely fly around the infrastructure.]
 - Article 241 - '**A person must not recklessly or negligently cause or permit an aircraft to endanger any person or property**'

Qualified remote pilots (professionals)

You are wholly responsible operating a UAS/drone near, on or over Network Rail infrastructure and must follow relevant UK legislation.

You should:

- Familiarise yourself with Network Rail's standard *NR/L3/OPS/251 Unmanned Aircraft System (Drone/UAS) Operations* by registering a standards account [here](#)
- Conduct a risk assessment / method statement / safe system of work. This includes but is not limited to:
 - a) boundary ownership

- b) track worker distraction
- c) moving trains / line speeds
- d) electrification and lineside hazards (overhead line equipment, conductor rails)
- e) localised Radio Frequency from GSM-R and Signal systems
- Document a robust and agreed system of alerting the relevant Network Rail Route Control Manager (RCM) of an incident involving the UAS/drone if it causes a safety concern to the running of the railway;
- Have Public Liability Insurance in force with a minimum value of £5,000,000 for drone operations on or near the railway;
- Operate under a current [CAA] Permission supported by an approved Operations Manual;
- Notify Air Operations of the planned flight via the Flight Management System at [Dronecloud™](#); and
- Comply with the [Network Rail's Life Saving Rules](#).

If in doubt, do the right thing and contact Network Rail by emailing:

DroneEnquiries@networkrail.co.uk

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