Regulation: Use of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS, a.k.a drones, unmanned aerial vehicles/UAVs) at McGill University

I. Introduction

All recreational and non-recreational piloting of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), drones, or any other powered flying object, is governed by Transport Canada legislation and University policies, rules and regulations.

II. Principles

Recreational use of unmanned aerial systems is not permitted on university property. McGill research or work-related UAS use on university property is permitted provided it meets legislative and university requirements. Commercial use on university property will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Off-campus use of McGill-owned UAS must comply with all applicable local legislation.

Personal use of McGill-owned UAS on or off McGill property is prohibited.

III. McGill University Requirements for all UAS pilots

1. Pilots must comply with all current Transport Canada legislation, rules, and regulations.

Before commencing UAS flight, all pilots must (items 2-6):

2. Complete the Registration and Insurance Application Form. This form is designed to facilitate the UAS approval process. Complete the form and submit it along with all supporting documentation to Environmental Health and Safety.

3. Provide proof of appropriate insurance coverage.

For McGill-owned or formally loaned / leased UAS:

a. McGill-owned UAS must be registered with Risk Management and Insurance,

b. Proof of insurance must be requested through Risk Management & Insurance.

Pilots must also contact Risk Management and Insurance to ensure that their planned flight path is covered by the University’s insurance policy. Pilots must comply with all applicable local legislation.

Proof of insurance may only be requested by faculty or staff. If it is the intent of faculty that a student pilot the aircraft, they must have supervisor approval on the Registration and Insurance Application form.

c. Any potential McGill operations with (non-certified) prototype UAS requires additional approvals from Risk Management and Insurance.
Third-party UAS:

a. Privately owned UAS cannot be covered under the University’s insurance.

b. Use of non-McGill-owned UAS requires proof of liability insurance from the UAS owner adding the University as additional insured.

4. Obtain written permission from all owners of the property on which the UAS will take off or launch from, and/or land or recover on.

If flying over private property, pilots will also be required to have written permission from the landowner and to note any restrictions placed by the landowner (distance from domestic animals, etc.).

Pilots must comply with all privacy or trespassing laws and bylaws that their research or work may be subject to.

5. For flights on McGill property or taking-off/launching or landing/recovering on McGill property,

   a. Verify with the relevant university unit that the proposed flight area is available,

   b. Advise Security Services at least 24 hours before commencing any flight.

6. As per Transport Canada guidelines, pilots must be appropriately trained to pilot such aircraft, and the UAS must be maintained according to manufacturer’s specifications.

7. During flights on McGill property, pilots are required to have the following documents with them at all times:

   a. Proof of approval from McGill.

   b. Proof of liability insurance coverage.

   c. Personal identification card (i.e. McGill ID card, Driver’s license, other).

   d. Any documents required by Transport Canada regulations.

8. At least one visual observer is required to accompany the pilot during flights.