SEPT 2025

UK Civil Aviation Authority

# REMOTE ID IN THE UK

DRONE EDUCATIONAL & SAFETY ARTICLES

05.

## Remote ID in the UK

Remote ID is a system that allows drones to broadcast identification and location information while in flight. It's like a digital licence plate that helps authorities, and the public, identify drones operating in the airspace. It helps keep the skies safe, ensures responsible drone use, supports law enforcement, reassures the public, and lays the groundwork for future drone services.

There are three versions of Remote ID, direct, networked, and hybrid.

- Direct Remote ID transmits data locally via Bluetooth or Wi-Fi to nearby receivers.
- Networked Remote ID sends information through the internet to a central service accessible by authorised users (e.g. police), requiring a constant internet connection.
- Hybrid Remote ID combines both methods, broadcasting locally while also transmitting via the internet, offering greater flexibility and redundancy for tracking and compliance.

Remote ID is separate from electronic conspicuity (EC) systems that allow aircraft (including drones) to make themselves known to other aircraft and to Air Traffic Control, usually via an on-board ADS-B transponder. Both

EC and Remote ID involve an aircraft emitting electronic identifying information, but the use cases and technologies are very different, making EC and Remote ID distinct systems for different purposes.

## UK requirements in 2026

From 1 January 2026 Mandatory Direct Remote ID will become a product and operational requirement for any new drone. That means that any UK class marked aircraft UK1, UK2, UK3, UK5 and UK6 UAS (equivalent to C1, C2, C3, C5 and C in the EU), placed on to the market after this date must have Remote ID capabilities built in by the manufacturer and it must be used by the operator of the drone.

The only exceptions will be if an exemption is granted under a Specific Category Operational Authorisation (OA) or within a pre-defined transitional period.

Having an OA does not automatically exempt you from Remote ID. Specific Category operators will be required to comply unless they request an exemption at the time of application that is granted.

The transitional period gives people with legacy drones, privately built aircraft and model aircraft or drones currently sold in the UK with EU-compliant Remote ID, two years (until 1 January 2028) to add Remote ID functionality to their aircraft.

While the EU (EASA) has Remote ID requirements in place, the UK will adopt its own system from 1 January 2026.

## UK requirements in 2028

From 1st January 2028, Direct Remote ID requirements will come into force for UK0 UAS weighing 100g or more with a camera, model aircraft (e.g. UK4 UAS) unless exempted through agreed conditions, privately built UAS weighing 100g or more with a camera, and legacy UAS (i.e. those not within the scope of UK class marking) weighing 100g or more with a camera.

A table on our website outlines timeframes for compliance with Remote ID.

While its use won't be mandatory for new drones until January 2026, or existing drones until 2028, Direct Remote ID is going live in September 2025. During this period drone operators can enable Direct Remote ID and we welcome feedback on their experience.

## RID use of data

The remote ID system will periodically automatically transmit:

- UAS operator registration number
- unique serial number of the UA
- time stamp, the geographical position of the UA and its height above the surface or take-off point;
- route course
- geographical position of the remote pilot;
- an indication of the emergency status of the UAS.

## Data use and privacy

The UK registration system is only accessible by certain CAA employees on a need-to-know basis. Remote ID data will be added to the existing personal data already in DMARES. No further personal data will be required of individuals in order to secure remote ID.

The introduction of Direct Remote ID makes no difference to how existing personal data is currently stored by us or shared.

As with any personal data held by us, this is only ever shared in circumstances lawfully allowed under section 23 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982, including for the purposes of criminal prosecution, and proportionately under the Data Protection Act 2018.

Sharing the pilot's location through Remote ID improves safety and accountability by allowing local authorities and bystanders to address issues directly with the pilot instead of reacting unpredictably to the drone itself. The broadcast is short-range and not stored in a public database, which limits wider privacy risks.

If a member of the public is close enough to receive a signal via Bluetooth or Wi-Fi Direct Remote ID they could have access to the pilot's location but will not have access to any personal identifying data of the pilot.

We acknowledge that this association of a specific location with a Remote ID has raised concerns within the drone community, as some drone pilots are concerned that their safety may be compromised if they feel they could be targeted for either theft or confrontation despite their drone operation being legal and safe.

However, as all Open category UAS will be flying VLOS, and Direct Remote ID has a limited broadcasting area, we do not consider that the broadcasting of Remote ID creates a new risk above and beyond that of one RPAS pilot visually linking a UAS and its pilot without the use of Remote ID.

The future proposed use of Hybrid Remote ID gives rise to different data protection considerations that are being worked through in parallel ahead of that being implemented.

## Checking data

If you have a person's name and flyer/operator ID, you may check if that ID is valid via this link: Check if a Flyer ID or Operator ID is valid | UK Civil Aviation Authority This is an existing function and not something new associated with remote ID. Remote ID functionality will not reveal an individual's name, or any other personal data.

If at any time you believe someone else has access to your Remote ID or you believe it has been stolen, please contact drone.registration@caa.co.uk to be issued with a new one.

## Enforcement and legislation

Once mandated it will be a legal requirement to use Remote ID and have it switched on under operational requirements UK Regulation (EU) 2019/947

Unless a relevant defence applies, if you do not follow the requirements then such behaviour may constitute a criminal offence. We carry out enforcement activity in respect of drones in alignment with our wider enforcement policy

There is a product requirement for drones to be built with Remote ID within the class marking framework under UK Regulation 2019/945.

## Remote ID future

The long-term objective of the DfT, security stakeholders and the CAA remains to progress towards Hybrid Remote ID (i.e. Network and Direct Remote ID). We will continue to work with government, industry and operators to progress this over the longer-term. This will support the enforcement of UAS regulations, deter unlawful operations, and will have a low impact to lawful UAS operators. We hope this phased approach provides the time needed to progress towards Hybrid Remote ID effectively.