

# Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) Operator Requirements for Spraying Agricultural Chemicals

1. The RPA operator
  - a. must have completed training satisfactorily in handling, storage and transport of chemicals in accordance with AHCCHM307 – Prepare and Apply Chemicals to Control Pest, Weeds and Diseases and AHCCHM304 – Transport and Store Chemicals.
  - b. or his/her employer must hold a Commercial Operator's Licence (COL).
  - c. must hold the appropriate Remote Aircraft Pilots Licence (RePL) and a Remote Aircraft Operators Certificate (ReOC) from CASA.
  - d. must comply with the *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Control of Use) Act 1995* and the *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Control of Use) Regulations 2022* and associated Orders under the Act.
2. The RPA weight/type/model must be specified. The permit is only applicable for the RPA weight/type/model requested and listed in the pilot's Operation Manual and Operation Library.
3. The RPA operator must provide copies of relevant sections of their Operation Manual and Operation Library relating to the RPAs to be used and copies of their RePL and ReOC with their application for a permit.
4. The RPA operator must notify the Registrar of Chemical Products of any changes to his/her qualifications (RePL and ReOC) licences.
5. The permit may be varied for use of other RPAs on application to the Registrar of Chemical Products.
6. Agricultural Chemicals used for spray application must be registered for aerial use.
7. Spray release is to be at a height above the canopy as low as practicably possible and always less than 3 metres, in order to minimise spray drift.
8. Agricultural Chemicals may be used for spot spraying if the registered label provides a rate for spraying with a knapsack.
9. Spot spray is defined by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicine Authority (APVMA) as a spray applied to small, restricted areas such as individual weeds or small patches of weeds and plants.
10. Spot spraying must be conducted in accordance with label directions for use with a knapsack. Handgun rates are not applicable to RPAs as they are for high-pressure, high-volume application.
11. The minimum spray droplet size used for spraying is 226 – 325 microns (medium range).
12. Chemical products must not be applied or dealt with at variance with the label instructions or an authorised permit, other than where it is applied at a lower rate, concentration or frequency than advised on the label.
13. Chemical products must not be applied using a water rate that is less than the minimum stated on the label directions. i.e. they must not be applied in a more concentrated form than indicated on the label directions.
14. Chemical products must be stored in their original containers. Stores containing 1000kg or litres or more of chemical must comply with the storage requirements of Australian Standard AS 2507. Smaller stores must comply with that recommended by this department at [On-farm Pesticide Storage | Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania \(nre.tas.gov.au\)](#).
15. Empty containers of agricultural chemical products used in making up spray tank mixes must be triple rinsed or power rinsed and the rinsate added to the spray tank for use. Empty containers may be returned to the supplier, delivered to a local Council's drumMUSTER collection site, or otherwise disposed of in a manner that is acceptable to the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment (NRE).
16. Chemicals used on site must be bunded and a spill kit must be available at the site.

17. Any chemical spills that can threaten the environment must be reported to the Tasmanian Fire Service and the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment (NRE).
18. Spray must not be permitted to drift onto waterways or waterbodies or waterlogged areas other than where permitted by an approved label or permit.
19. A chemical product must not be permitted to move off target to the extent that it may adversely affect any people, their land, water, plants or animals.
20. A record of spraying operations must be maintained and must at least include the operator's name, the date and time, wind speed and direction, location, full name and application rates of any chemical products applied and the purpose for which the spraying is undertaken. If the label of the registered agricultural chemical product requires any additional spray records to be kept, these must be recorded.
21. Records of spraying operations must be kept for a period of at least two years.
22. Records must be made available to the Registrar of Chemical Products or an authorised officer under the *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Control of Use) Act 1995* if so requested.
23. If a member of the public, or other third party, should approach the area being sprayed, spraying must cease immediately.
24. If a member of the public has an inquiry or complaint, every assistance must be provided where possible. The public must be treated with courtesy at all times.
25. These requirements do not remove or alter any obligation or requirement under any other Act or Regulation or alter the need to comply with other Codes of Practice or industry guidelines.

#### **Best Practice Guidelines**

26. Where practicable adjoining landowners should be notified of impending spray operations, and signage should be used that is related to the activities being undertaken. i.e. chemical application by RPA.
27. On completion of spraying operations all spray equipment and associated machinery should be rinsed out and washed down with water. Rinsates and washings must be disposed of in an approved manner that is acceptable to the NRE.
28. Spray equipment must be maintained in good operational order.
29. Equipment must first be cleaned prior to any maintenance.
30. The RPA operator is responsible for ensuring that all criteria for a safe and successful spray application are met. This responsibility includes deciding whether or not a spray operation should begin or be discontinued.

Other relevant State legislation includes:

- *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994* and regulations under this Act.
- *Biosecurity Act 2019* and regulations under this Act.
- *Dangerous Goods (Road and Rail Transport) Act 2010* and regulations under this Act.
- *Workplace Health and Safety Act 2012* and regulations under this Act.