

CAD reminds the public not to operate UAS or exhibit laser light in vicinity of airport

The Civil Aviation Department (CAD) noticed that there are online posts about expressing views at the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) on Sunday (September 1), in which operating unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) and exhibiting laser light in the vicinity of the HKIA are mentioned. The CAD today (August 30) reminds the public not to operate UAS or exhibit laser light in the area of the HKIA and in its vicinity (including 5km of the aerodrome) to avoid contravening the law and jeopardising aviation safety.

UAS are classified as aircraft and are governed, as far as aviation safety is concerned, by the civil aviation legislation. Article 48 of the Air Navigation (Hong Kong) Order 1995 (Cap. 448C) stipulates that a person who recklessly or negligently causes or permits an aircraft (including an UAS and a model plane) to endanger any person or property is liable to prosecution, and upon conviction, to a fine and to imprisonment for two years.

Moreover, under section 35 of the Airport Authority Bylaw (Cap. 483A), no person shall, within the Bylaw Area, fly a model plane (including UAS). Offenders shall be liable on conviction to a maximum penalty of a fine of HK\$50,000 and imprisonment for six months. Under section 3 of the Airport Authority Bylaw, the Bylaw Area shall comprise – (i) all the Restricted Area; (ii) all that portion of the Airport Area no part of which is either in the Restricted Area or on any road or length of road; and (iii) all the designated roads, but shall not include any area within an area referred to in paragraph (i), (ii) or (iii) which is also within the MTR Area.

Shining laser light at aircraft in flight also poses serious hazard to aviation safety. According to the Air Navigation (Hong Kong) Order 1995 (Cap. 448C), exhibiting light (including laser light) that endangers aircraft is an offence. Upon conviction, the offender is liable to a fine.

Aviation safety is crucial to the public and the passengers. The CAD and the Airport Authority Hong Kong will closely monitor the situation and take appropriate measures and actions to ensure aviation safety.