

# New proposals put forward to strengthen drone regulation and boost UK aviation sector

A new report published today (Monday 1 November) by the Regulatory Horizons Council has set out how the UK could support the rapid and safe commercialisation of drones as the technology develops.

The Regulatory Horizons Council (RHC) is an independent expert committee which identifies the regulation needed to foster technological innovation and provides government with impartial, expert advice on the regulatory reform required to support its rapid and safe introduction.

Drones have been used to deliver vital supplies throughout the pandemic and this report outlines how innovation-friendly regulation could further unlock the benefits of drones, which have the potential to enable the delivery of medical supplies, aid search and rescue services or inspect infrastructure.

The report expands on the opportunities for remote parts of the UK such as the Hebrides to act as a testbed for the commercial deployment of drones. This would enable a shift away from experimentation to commercial operations, particularly for flights beyond the visual line of sight of the operator.

It also highlights regulatory lessons that the UK can learn from engagement with countries including the United States, Rwanda, Singapore, and Ireland, building on existing strengths in the wider aviation sector such as the skilled workforce and technology base.

Furthermore, the report outlines several other regulatory challenges and how the government and the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) could help to address them, ensuring that the UK's regulatory framework continues to enable new technologies and business models to thrive.

Professor Iain Gray, Chair of the Drones Industry Action Group, said:

This is an exciting time for the UK's drone sector, as new technologies are solving real commercial problems and helping save lives. Government is making game-changing investments through the Future Flight Challenge, but to reap the full benefits, innovators need clear, forward-thinking and responsive regulatory regimes to operate within.

I would like to thank the RHC for their work producing this welcome report, and look forward to government's response in due course.

The Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng has written to the Regulatory Horizons Council welcoming the report, and the Department for Transport will respond

in detail to its recommendations after the live consultation on the future of transport regulatory review.

Read the report and government response: