



Commercial Unmanned Aircraft Association of Southern Africa

## Presidents Report for 2023

2023 was a challenging but productive year for CUAASA with multiple initiatives ongoing. This Presidents report covers the period from March, our last AGM and report to the end of 2023.

### RPAS Liaison Group

- During 2023 the Drone industry experienced some name changes due to amendments within part 101, 71 and ?. The RPL has now become an RPC, DFE is now a DRE, and CUAASA was well represented at these meetings. A key focus for 2023 was the creation of an open category for sub 250g drones. This was well supported by the CAA, but has reached an obstacle in the form of the ASL that eliminates this option at present.
- The ASL (Air Service Licence) has become an even greater challenge in 2023 with most applications failing for a multitude of reasons, but most specifically due to the requirement of a SANAS issued BEE certificate. This effectively prevents any EME and many QSE level companies from participating in the industry and CUAASA has elevated this concern through CAASA as a priority for 2024.
- Part 71 amendments were finalised after extensive workshopping and with agreement reached between CUAASA and AATOSA.

### SAPS engagement

- Engaged with SAPS legal division around their view on the impact of drone technology on crime and policing.
  - “The use of unmanned aircraft (“drones”) by criminals and syndicates has become a serious concern in the fight against crime. While drones provide an effective tool in the operational policing, the same tool also offers benefits for criminal syndicates and groups. The SAPS is at a disadvantage identifying drones involved in such illicit activities, since no adequate records of such drones and their owners exist. The situation should be resolved as a matter of urgency.”

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- “In addition, it is important that SAPS and the SACAA coordinate their approaches to the reporting and investigating of allegations of the contravention of Part 101 of the Regulations. The first point of contact for reporting an alleged contravention of Part 101 of the Regulations should be the South African Civil Aviation Authority.”

### **Guidelines for Operations previously categorised as “umbrella”**

- Started drafting an update to the CUAASA enforcement guide that will include guidance for companies that are having their drones being operated by existing ASL and UASOC holders.
- In order for this concept to be compliant it has to consider various ASL and CAA regulations.
- Such guidelines include the following aspects:
  - Comprehensive Written agreement between the client and the ASL/UASOC Holder
  - Surrender operational control of the drones once registered under the UASOC.
  - Secondment and Induction of staff to act as Qualified Pilots under the UASOC
  - Establishment of a tangible Satellite Base controlled by the UASOC holder.
  - May not represent itself as an ASL/UASOC Holder
  - May not advertise or sell Aerial or Drone Services

### **Engagement with Financial and Insurance Institutions**

- Met with insurers and Chemical companies explaining the dangers and needs to implement a liability policy to protect pilots against chemical drift to other fields and pilot error when spraying the wrong fields.
- Numerous meetings with Financial institutions and explained the requirements for Commercial Drone Operations and the importance of commercial Drones being operated legally within an authorised ROC in order to be securely financed and insured.

### **Communications**

- Successful “fireside chat” event held on 14 September.

### **Work Groups**

- ATM-cns
- Categorization
- UAV/RPAS Subgroup on GA Safety
- Part 71 (Training)

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- Detect and Avoid options.

**EXCO Members include:**

- Sean Reitz – President
- Kim James
- Sonet Kock
- Nico Van Rooyen
- Alan Ball
- JC Van Niekerk
- Daniel Blomerus
- Kevin Storie