

ZA Related Questions from The Press

Attribute answers to: Steve Moore, Deputy Director, General Aviation at CAA

In what ways is the CAA working with Kitty Hawk / Zephyr Air?

CAA Response: CAA has been working with Zephyr Airworks to ensure that when their remotely piloted aircraft system enters (RPAS) operation in the New Zealand aviation system that it is safe for its intended operation. To date, CAA has granted Zephyr Airworks an Unmanned Aircraft Operators Certificate under Civil Aviation Rule (CAR) Part 102 which approves them to conduct research & development testing at a private aerodrome in the South Island.

I understand you are working towards a native certification for the prototype aircraft. What does that mean and why is it a big deal?

CAA Response: CAA is in the process of using CAR Part 102, which is a risk-based rule, to define a bespoke set of certification requirements that will be applied to Zephyr Airwork's first commercial operation. The flexible approach offered by CAR Part 102 is understood by CAA to be unique within the global aviation environment.

What are the challenges being worked through by the CAA and Zephyr/Kitty Hawk in relation to aircraft certification?

CAA Response: A certification programme of this nature brings with it a myriad of challenges. The nature of Zephyr Airworks' RPAS design and their operational goals means that the standard set of requirements applicable to aeroplanes or helicopters cannot be applied in the normal manner. A bespoke approach needs to be taken to ensure that the certification requirements adequately capture the associated aviation risks and are also tailored to reflect the specific nature of their design.

What about in regards to rules and regulations that would be needed to one day operate this type of vehicle commercially?

CAA Response: CAR Part 102 came into effect in 2015 and creates a legal framework to enable the operation of RPAS within New Zealand such as that intended by Zephyr Airworks. While this rule provides a sound basis for the safe operation of RPAS within New Zealand CAA is aware of the need to ensure that its broader suite of regulations remains contemporary as the use of RPAS proliferates throughout the New Zealand aviation system. Examples of significant regulatory challenges needing to be addressed in the future include integration of operations with other airspace users and the conduct of Beyond Visual Line Of Sight operations.

I understand Zephyr Air hopes to be able to have some sort of limited service available to the public in NZ in the next five years or less. From the CAA's point of view, is this realistic? Are things on track?

CAA Response: CAA is working with Zephyr Airworks towards the certification of a commercial operation using a future evolution of the aircraft currently being operated at a

private aerodrome in the South Island. The timeframe to achieve certification of any new system is dependent upon a multitude of factors and it would not be appropriate for CAA to offer an opinion regarding such a schedule.

Is there anything else you would like to add, or think I have missed?

CAA Response: Nothing further to add.