

NPA/24/56

Title of Proposal: RA 2115 – Aircraft Commanders

RA(s) or Manual Chapter(s): RA 2115 Issue 6

Organizations and / or business sectors affected: All of the Regulated Community.

RFC Serial No: MAA/RFC/2022/248

MAA Author

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N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Cross-references to Other Documents or Relevant Sources

Other MRP Amendments: N/A

Service Inquiry Recommendations: N/A

AAIB Recommendations: N/A

Other Investigation Recommendations: N/A

Any Other Document: N/A

Feedback Notes for the Regulated Community

The Regulated Community are invited to offer feedback about the proposed amendment in the following areas:

- Air or Flight Safety impact
- Operational impact
- Errors or omissions
- Timescale for implementation
- Cost of implementation
- Amendment to internal processes/orders
- Resourcing the outcome of change

- (Contract amendments because of the change)

The format for feedback is available within a single Excel Template file on both internal and external MAA websites; it is important to use this format to ensure that your responses are considered and answered correctly.

Summary of Proposed Amendment

Objective: Routine review

Changes made:

- Minor amendments to be RPAS inclusive.
- Changes to maintain coherence with the recently amended RA 2301 ('custody' vs 'responsibility').
- Embodiment of the RPAS Ground Operator role.
- Removal of minor ambiguity.

Impact Assessment: Negligible

Consultation Period Ends: 17 January 2025

The consultation period for this proposed amendment ends on the stated date. Please send your feedback, using the Response Form, via email to DSA-MAA-MRPEnquiries@mod.gov.uk

MAA Approval

Post	Name	Rank	Signature
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RA 2115 - Aircraft Commanders

Rationale

An Aircraft Commander is designated by the ► **Aviation Duty Holders (ADH) and Accountable Managers (Military Flying) (AM(MF))** ◀ as being in command of an Air System and is responsible for its safe operation and the accomplishment of its assigned mission. A failure to execute this Responsibility, or a misunderstanding of it, could increase Risk to Life. This Regulation requires ADH / AM(MF) to establish the Responsibilities and authority of an Aircraft Commander and ensure that they are understood and acted upon.

Contents

2115(1): Responsibilities of an Aircraft Commander

2115(2): Authority of an Aircraft Commander

Regulation

2115(1)

Responsibilities of an Aircraft Commander

2115(1) The Aircraft Commander **shall** be entirely responsible for the Safety of the Air System, its occupants and equipment, ► **while they hold custody of it**¹. ◀

Acceptable Means of Compliance

2115(1)

Responsibilities of an Aircraft Commander

1. ADH and AM(MF) **should** issue guidance on the standards required of Aircraft Commanders within their Area of Responsibility.
2. The Aircraft Commander **should** ensure that:
 - a. The crew is properly Constituted and all members are qualified, current and capable of performing their duties in accordance with (iaw) the Air System Document Set (ADS) and ADH / AM(MF) orders ► ◀.
 - b. All crew members are:
 - (1) Properly clothed and equipped for their tasks.
 - (2) In date for all Safety and survival drills appropriate to the Air System.
 - (3) Proficient in the use of the escape and Survival Equipment carried.
 - (4) Familiar with all emergency procedures ► **pertinent to their role**. ◀
 - c. All necessary flight ► ◀ planning has been carried out iaw the ADS and ADH / AM(MF) orders ► ◀.
 - d. The ► **pertinent** ◀ aeronautical information publications or other national flight planning documents relevant to the area in which they intend to operate are used ► **and, where appropriate, carried on board the Air System**. ◀
 - e. An appropriate meteorological briefing has been obtained.
 - f. All requisite steps have been taken to prepare the Air System for the flight and ► **custody**¹ is accepted. ◀
 - g. The Air System is supervised and managed once the Aircraft Commander has taken ► **custody**¹ of it. ◀ When the Aircraft Commander is not able to effectively supervise and manage the Air System while it is in their custody, they **should** delegate this Responsibility to a suitably qualified Aircrew representative ► **or Remotely Piloted Air System Ground Operator**. ◀
 - h. ► **Their** ◀ Passengers ► ◀ have been briefed on:
 - (1) The authority of the Aircraft Commander.
 - (2) Precautions to be taken when boarding and leaving the Air System.

¹ Refer to RA 2301 – Responsibility for an Air System.

**Acceptable
Means of
Compliance
2115(1)**

- (3) Crash positions and emergency procedures.
- (4) Use of the Air System oxygen, escape and Survival Equipment carried.
- (5) Loose equipment stowage.
- (6) Use of Portable Electronic Devices while on board, if permitted.
- i. Correct Air Traffic Control communications and navigation procedures are carried out during flight.
- j. Appropriate post-flight procedures are completed.

**Guidance
Material
2115(1)**

Responsibilities of an Aircraft Commander

- 3. When Qualified Aircrew Instructors (Qualified AI) are qualified to act as Aircraft Commanders and are acting in the capacity of Qualified AI, they will normally be the Aircraft Commander, unless otherwise permitted by ADH / AM(MF).
- 4. Subordinate orders and instructions may use the term 'Aircraft Captain'. Where this occurs, the meaning will be interpreted as being synonymous with the meaning of 'Aircraft Commander'.

**Regulation
2115(2)**

Authority of an Aircraft Commander

- 2115(2) In matters of Air Safety, all persons on board ► **Air Systems**, ◀ whatever their rank or status, **shall** be under the command of the Aircraft Commander.

**Acceptable
Means of
Compliance
2115(2)**

Authority of an Aircraft Commander

- 5. Nil.

**Guidance
Material
2115(2)**

Authority of an Aircraft Commander

- 6. This Regulation protects the Safety of persons on board ► **Air Systems** ◀ from attempts to undermine the Aircraft Commander's authority for the preservation of Air Safety. For example, a superior may be instructed by the Aircraft Commander to 'sit down and fasten a seat belt', ► or 'leave the Remote Pilot Station'. **Personnel with authority**, ◀ acting on behalf of the ► **ADH / AM(MF)**, ◀ may issue a legitimate order affecting the sortie as planned, whether on board or not, such as a Grade 1 diversion, so long as the order is consistent with RA 1020² and / or ► **RA 1028(2)** ◀³, and RA 1210⁴.

² Refer to RA 1020 – Aviation Duty Holder ► ◀ - Roles and Responsibilities.

³ Refer to ► **RA 1028(2)**: ◀ Accountable Manager (Military Flying).

⁴ Refer to RA 1210 – Ownership and Management of Operating Risk (Risk to Life).