



Icom Australia: Ensuring Legal Compliance for Drone Operators

RPAS Training and Solutions contacted Sphere Communications who are specialists in drones, weather monitoring equipment, robotics and communications equipment to provide an airband radio which is a mandatory requirement for trainees to have and use as part of their training course structure and to monitor air traffic in the area. Most importantly, the radio supplied needed to be ACMA Type approved to meet the strict guidelines in the Australian airband industry. The IC-A15 ensured all business and legal requirements were addressed as well as being simple to operate and water resistant.



Company: RPAS Training and Solutions

Country: Australia

Industry: Drones & Training

Business Situation: RPAS Training and Solutions required an ACMA Type Approved airband radio to be used in weekly training courses where it was important to monitor all aspects of the sky around the drone.

Solution: Sphere Communications, specialists in the drone industry supplied the IC-A15 airband radio to ensure business and legal requirements were adhered to successfully.

Features:

- Simple operation
- Rugged construction
- Output power 5.0 W
- Loud audio output
- Full air band coverage
- 200 memory channels
- Water resistant

BUSINESS REQUIREMENTS

RPAS Training and Solutions has been providing CASA certified RPA training to drone pilots as well as teaching the appropriate use of airband radios for AROC (Aeronautical Radio Operator Certificate).

The emerging worldwide drone industry for both recreational and commercial users has led to the Australian Federal government placing strict controls around the usage and licencing of these units. With the applications being many and varied ranging from emergency service use (ie. monitoring bush fires) to building site inspection or filming weddings.

Operating a drone requires a high level of situational awareness of other airspace users both in controlled and uncontrolled environments. The IC-A15 allows them to increase situational awareness by communicating with manned aircraft in the area. Operators are essentially sending another aircraft into the sky that need to be identified by all pilots to ensure the safety of everyone involved.

RPAS Training and Solutions required a handheld airband radio that is legally approved by the ACMA (Australian Communications & Media Authority) to be used in weekly training courses and to monitor air traffic in the area.

Sphere Communications worked with RPAS Training and Solutions to ensure that the radios supplied would not only meet their training and air traffic monitoring requirements but also be ACMA Type Approved.



APPLYING THE RIGHT SOLUTION

Standard RPA (Remote Pilot Licence) operating conditions means the RPA must be operated:

- Within visual line of sight
- Below 400 ft AGL (121.92meters)
- During the day
- More than 30 m away from anyone who is not directly associated with the operation (people being filmed are not considered to be directly associated with the RPA's operation)

It may NOT be operated:

- Over a populous area
- Within 3 nautical miles (5.5km) of the movement area of a controlled aerodrome
- In a prohibited area
- In a restricted area that is classified as RA3
In a restricted area that is classified as RA2 or RA1 otherwise than in accordance with regulation 101.065
- Over an area where a fire, police or other public safety or emergency operation is being conducted without the approval of a person in charge of the operation

For those operators requiring the use of a drone for commercial use a certification process is required to achieve a licence to operate. As part of the licencing requirements there is an investment required in a training course with a registered provider such as RPAS Training and Solutions to achieve the qualification.

RPAS Training and Solutions contacted Sphere Communications to fulfill this requirement and working with Icom were able to supply an ACMA Type approved Air band radios to meet the strict guidelines in the Australian market.

WHAT THE CLIENT GAINED

By selecting the IC-A15 airband radio, RPAS Training and Solutions were able to conduct their training and monitor air traffic with confidence that their students could continue operating outside the course with a reliable airband radio that met all legal requirements.

Features of the IC-A15 include:

- Simple operation
- Rugged construction
- Side tone function, with standard G.A. headsets Icom Auto noise limiter (ANL) reduces pulse noise
- Water resistant construction (IPX4)
- Full air band coverage (118-136.975 Mhz)
- Output power 5.0 W (PEP) 1.5 W (CW)
- Loud audio output (BTL Amplifier - 700mW)
- 200 memory channels (8 character alpha tagging)
- BP232N Li-Ion battery supplied (18 Hrs typical)

The IC-A15 enabled RPAS Training and Solutions to conduct their training and monitor air traffic with the confidence that their students were using a reliable airband radio that met all legal requirements.

