



Civil Aviation Rules

Part 107, Initial Issue

Research and Development Organisation Certification

These rules are made by the Associate Minister of Transport under section 52 of the Civil Aviation Act 2023, after –

- (a) being satisfied of the matters specified in section 61(2)(a) and (b) of that Act; and
- (b) having regard to the criteria specified in section 72 in accordance with section 61(2)(c) of that Act.

Made at Wellington on

This 13 day of November 2025

by Hon

James Meager

Associate Minister of Transport

25/CAR/01

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Rule objective

The objective of the initial issue of Part 107 is to provide a regulatory environment to enable rapid iterative research and development activity for aviation systems, whilst maintaining appropriate levels of aviation safety.

Extent of consultation

A Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, NPRM 25-01, containing the proposed Part 107 Research and Development Organisation Certification was issued for public consultation under Docket 25/CAR/01 on 23 June 2025 to 27 July 2025.

The NPRM was published on the CAA web site and e-mailed to identified stakeholders including representative organisations who were considered likely to have an interest in the proposal.

A period of 35 days was allowed for comment on the proposed rule.

Summary of submissions

75 written submissions were received on the NPRM. A summary of submissions for this NPRM is available on the CAA website. These submissions have been considered, and as a result the following substantive amendments have been made –

- the definition of **aviation systems** is amended to include “or any other related system, or an aviation-related service” to be more encompassing
- the definition of **research and development** is amended to clarify the parameters that the use of an aircraft is for the sole purpose of achieving the goals specified in the certificate holder’s exposition and listed on the operations specification
- to minimise risks, draft rule 107.13(a)(5) is amended to effectively allow the carriage of a flight crew member only (as opposed to not carrying a passenger) onboard an aircraft
- draft rule 107.13(a) is amended by restricting a certificate holder from carrying dangerous goods (new paragraph 6 is inserted)

- for alignment with the revised definition of **research and development**, draft rule 107.13(b) is amended to require the certificate holder to ensure that an aircraft is operated for the sole purpose of achieving the goals specified in the certificate holder's exposition
- draft rule 107.53(a)(7) is amended so that an applicant for a Part 107 certificate is required to also include in its exposition any agreements or preliminary agreements with 'an aerodrome operator or special use airspace administering authority', in addition to the initial proposal to provide details of any agreements with a relevant air traffic provider
- draft rule 107.53(b)(3) is inserted to require an applicant for a Part 107 certificate to include the details of the energy source for the aircraft
- draft rule 107.53(b)(4) is inserted to require an applicant to provide details regarding the airworthiness and maintenance of any aircraft that is to be used if the applicant is to continue operating the aircraft after research and development activities are completed
- draft rule 107.53(b)(6) is amended to include procedures for dropping of articles if such operations are intended, the phrase 'excluding dangerous goods' (in the context of carriage of cargo) is removed
- draft rule 107.53(b)(7) is inserted to require an applicant to provide procedures for the reporting of manned aircraft accidents or incidents to the Authority
- to allow for flexibility, draft rule 107.55(3)(i) is amended to remove the requirement to have the number, type and description, including if applicable, the serial number and registration of every aircraft that is to be used.

Examination of submissions

Submissions may be examined by application to the Docket Clerk at the Civil Aviation Authority between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm on weekdays, except statutory holidays.

Insertion of Civil Aviation Rule Part 107

- Subpart A – General (rules 107.1 to 107.19)
- Subpart B – Certification Requirements (rules 107.51 to 107.61)
- Subpart C – Operating Requirements (rules 107.101 and 107.103).

Effective date of rule

Part 107 comes into force on 22 December 2025.

Administering Agency

The administering agency responsible for administering these rules is the Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand.

Availability of rules

Civil Aviation Rules are available from–

CAA web site: <http://www.aviation.govt.nz/>

Freephone: 0800 GET RULES (0800 438 785)

Subpart A General

107.1 Purpose

This Part prescribes the requirements for the certification of an organisation conducting research and development of an aviation system.

107.3 Definitions

In this Part, unless the context otherwise requires, –

Aviation system means a new concept of an aeronautical product, component, control system, product, propulsion system or any other related system, or an aviation-related service:

Research and development, in respect of an aviation system, means the testing, inspecting and investigating of an aviation system using an unmanned aircraft or manned aircraft under rule 107.57 for the sole purpose of achieving the goals specified in the certificate holder's exposition and listed on the operations specification:

Exposition means the exposition required by rule 107.53:

107.5 Requirement for certificate

A person must not exercise the privileges under rule 107.11 except under the authority of a research and development organisation certificate issued by the Director under the Act and this Part.

107.7 Application for certificate

(a) An applicant for the grant of a research and development organisation certificate must complete the applicable CAA form which requires –

- (1) the name and address for service in New Zealand of the applicant;
- (2) the applicant's exposition required by rule 107.53;
- (3) the details for the operations specifications required by rule 107.55; and

- (4) any other information relating to the application as specified on the form.

(b) The applicant must submit the completed form to the Director with a payment of the appropriate fee prescribed by regulations made under the Act.

107.9 Issue of certificate

A research and development organisation certificate may be issued by the Director under the Act and this Part if the Director is satisfied that –

- (1) the applicant meets the requirements of Subpart B;
- (2) the applicant and the senior person required under rule 107.51(1) are fit and proper persons; and
- (3) the issue of the certificate is not contrary to the interests of aviation safety or security.

107.11 Privileges of certificate holder

(a) The holder of a research and development organisation certificate is authorised to conduct the research and development of aviation systems as specified in the certificate holder's operations specifications.

(b) Unless the exposition required by rule 107.53 specifies otherwise, the holder of a research and development organisation certificate is not required to comply with –

Rule Parts 19, 21, 26, 39, 43, 47, 63, 66, 67, 93, 95, 99, 101, 102, 115, 119, 129, 133 and 137.

107.13 Restrictions on certificate holder

(a) The holder of a research and development organisation certificate must ensure that an aircraft is operated –

- (1) in accordance with the conditions specified in the operations specifications;
- (2) in accordance with the conditions and procedures specified in the exposition;

- (3) for research and development purposes only;
- (4) within the airspace and geographic location specified in the operations specifications;
- (5) without carrying a person other than a flight crew member;
- (6) without carrying dangerous goods.

(b) The holder of a research and development organisation certificate must ensure that an aircraft is operated for the sole purpose of achieving the goals specified in the certificate holder's exposition.

(c) Despite rule 107.11(b), the Director may require the certificate holder to comply with a Rule Part not specified in the exposition after the certificate had been issued –

- (1) if there is a material change to the nature or scope of the research and development activities; or
- (2) in the interests of aviation safety.

107.15 Duration of certificate

(a) A research and development organisation certificate may be granted or renewed for a maximum period of 5 years.

(b) The holder of a research and development organisation certificate that is suspended or revoked must surrender the certificate to the Director within 30 days of the suspension or revocation.

(c) The holder of a research and development organisation certificate that is suspended must surrender the certificate to the Director for appropriate endorsement.

107.17 Renewal of certificate

(a) If the holder of a research and development organisation certificate wishes to apply for renewal of their certificate, they must use the approved CAA form.

(b) The application for the renewal must be made before the application renewal date specified on the certificate or, if no such

renewal date is specified, not less than 60 days before the certificate expires.

107.19 Notification of ceasing research and development activities

(a) A holder of a research and development organisation certificate who ceases to offer research and development activities must notify the Director in writing within 30 days of the date of cessation.

(b) The notification must include a request for revocation of the research and development organisation certificate.

Subpart B Certification Requirements

107.51 Personnel requirements

An applicant for the grant of a research and development organisation certificate must employ, contract, or otherwise engage –

- (1) A senior person who has the authority within the applicant's organisation to ensure that all activities undertaken by the organisation can be financed and carried out in accordance with the requirements and standards prescribed by this Part; and
- (2) any other senior person or persons if applicable depending on the scope and nature of the research and development activities.

107.53 Research and development organisation exposition

(a) An applicant for a research and development organisation certificate must provide the Director with an exposition containing –

- (1) a statement signed by the senior person referred to in rule 107.51(1) on behalf of the applicant's organisation confirming that the exposition and any included manuals –
 - (i) define the organisation and demonstrate its means and methods for ensuring ongoing compliance with this Part; and

- (ii) are to be complied with at all times; and
 - (2) details of all locations where the applicant conducts research and development of aviation systems;
 - (3) the scope, details and goals of the intended research and development of aviation systems;
 - (4) the details of the airspace to be used in any aircraft operation;
 - (5) a hazard register that –
 - (i) identifies the known and likely hazards to people, property and other aircraft of a proposed operation;
 - (ii) for each of the hazards identified, includes an assessment of the associated risks;
 - (iii) includes a description of the measures that will be implemented to mitigate or manage the risks;
 - (6) procedures for reporting information to the Civil Aviation Authority;
 - (7) any agreements or preliminary agreements with relevant air traffic service provider, aerodrome operator or special use airspace administering authority;
 - (8) procedures for controlling, amending and distributing the exposition;
 - (9) any other approvals that are required to conduct the research and development of aviation systems.
- (b) In addition to paragraph (a), if the applicant is to operate an aircraft for research and development purposes, the applicant must include the following in its exposition –
- (1) operating requirements and procedures for personnel licensing if applicable, qualifications, training and competency including pilot and other crew member qualifications, training or medical requirements;

- (2) details of the unique identifiable marking for every aircraft that is to be used;
 - (3) for a manned aircraft, details regarding the aircraft's airworthiness and maintenance as required under Parts 21 and 43;
 - (4) for an unmanned aircraft, details of the control system to be used to pilot the aircraft;
 - (5) inflight procedures, including emergency procedures and minimum distances from persons or property;
 - (6) procedures for testing restraint systems for the carriage of cargo or dropping of articles if such operations are intended; and
 - (7) procedures for reporting and recording of aircraft accidents and incidents; and
 - (8) procedures and frequency of reporting operational data.
- (c) An exposition may adopt, by reference, a requirement in a civil aviation rule for the purpose of mitigating or managing a risk identified in the hazard register required by paragraph (a)(5).
- (d) The exposition must remain acceptable to the Director.

107.55 Operations specification

A research and development organisation certificate issued by the Director under the Act and this Part is to be accompanied by operations specification containing –

- (1) the certificate holder's address for service in New Zealand;
- (2) a list of any business names under which the certificate holder is approved to operate;
- (3) the privileges and operations that the operator is permitted to perform, including:

- (i) any unique identifiable marking of every aircraft that is to be used;
- (ii) identification of the geographical areas and locations of operations approved by the Director;
- (iii) any exemption granted from any requirement of this or any other Part; and
- (iv) any other condition that the Director determines is necessary in the interests of aviation safety.

107.57 Testing new concept of aviation system, operating techniques and aircraft use

(a) An applicant for a research and development organisation certificate may conduct iterative exploratory testing to investigate and inspect a new concept of an aviation system, new operating techniques or new uses for aircraft.

(b) The applicant must ensure that flight tests are not carried out at any other place except at the designated location and airspace specified in the certificate holder's exposition.

107.59 Records of personnel

An applicant for the grant of a research and development organisation certificate must ensure that –

- (1) an accurate record is maintained of –
 - (i) each employee who is required to hold a licence or rating for operating a manned aircraft; and
 - (ii) each employee who is exercising any authorisations granted by the applicant; and
- (2) the record includes details of –
 - (i) the relevant experiences, qualifications, and training of each employee under paragraph (1)(i); and

- (ii) the validity, currency and associated privileges of any licence or rating under paragraph (1)(i); and
 - (iii) the authorisations under paragraph (1)(ii) and
- (3) the record is retained for 1 year from the date that the employee ceases to perform duties requiring a licence or rating or exercises any authorisation.

107.61 Records of resources

An applicant for the grant of a research and development organisation certificate must ensure that –

- (1) procedures are established for identifying, collecting, indexing, storing, maintaining, and disposing of the records for research and development; and
- (2) maintain the records for 2 years from the date the details are recorded.

Subpart C — Operating Requirements

107.101 Continued compliance

A holder of a research and development organisation certificate must –

- (1) have at least one complete and current copy of its exposition accessible to personnel at each work location specified in its exposition; and
- (2) comply with all procedures and systems detailed in its exposition; and
- (3) make each applicable part of the exposition available to personnel who require those parts to carry out their duties; and
- (4) continue to meet the standards and comply with the requirements that Subpart B prescribes for certification under this Part.

107.103 Changes to certificate holder's organisation

(a) A holder of a research and development organisation certificate must ensure that its exposition is amended –

- (1) each time an amendment is made to any of the matters specified in paragraph (d); and
- (2) to ensure continued compliance with the civil aviation rules that have been adopted under rule 107.11(b) or are to be adopted under rule 107.13(b).

(b) The certificate holder must –

- (1) ensure that any amendment made to its exposition meets the applicable requirements of this Part; and
- (2) complies with the amendment procedures contained in its exposition.

(c) Subject to paragraph (d), the certificate holder must forward to the Director for retention a copy of each amendment to its exposition as soon as practicable after the amendment is incorporated into its exposition.

(d) The certificate holder must obtain the approval of the Director before changing any of the following –

- (1) the senior person referred to in rule 107.51(1);
- (2) the scope of the testing activities the certificate holder undertakes;
- (3) the testing location and address for service;
- (4) the system for risk management, if the change is a material change.