



# Infrastructure planning guidelines for drone delivery services

## Public consultation outcomes

Below are some of the issues we have consulted on and their outcomes.

### We Asked

On 4 November 2022, the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (the department) opened public consultation on infrastructure planning guidelines for drone delivery services.

The aim of the consultation was to ensure the guidelines are fit for purpose to manage the expected growth of drone operations in Australia in a manner that is safe, nationally consistent and considerate of the community and environment.

Public consultation ran from 4 November to 2 December 2022. The department sought feedback on:

- the infrastructure and land use planning considerations for drone delivery services;
- the potential application of the guidelines by local government planning authorities; and
- the regulatory approvals process for drone delivery services.

For more information, visit the [Infrastructure Planning Framework](#) webpage.

### You Said

A total of 97 submissions were received from a range of individuals and organisations during public consultation. The department valued the responses provided and has incorporated this feedback in updating the drone delivery guidelines.

You said the key issues related to infrastructure and planning decisions for drone delivery services include:

- Noise and visual amenity impacts
- Safety of drone delivery operations
- Privacy concerns and implications
- Impacts on environmentally sensitive areas and wildlife
- Transparency of drone noise approval and complaints and management processes
- Implications of using existing planning controls for drone delivery services
- Importance of effective local government community consultation mechanisms.



- Requirements for public consultation and reporting on community feedback received
- Measures to mitigate excessive drone noise, such as additional operating conditions.
- Further clarity provided on the role of local governments and planning authorities who are responsible for granting development approvals for new drone delivery services.
- Land use planning recommendations revised to create a more flexible approach, with a focus on local government community engagement to inform assessment of new drone delivery services on a case-by-case basis.
- Principles to support effective community consultation, which are expected to be adopted if not already embedded in local governments' public engagement strategies.

## Public Submissions

All public submissions on the drone delivery guidelines not marked as private by respondents can be viewed on [drones.gov.au](https://drones.gov.au) [here](#).

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Answers to frequently asked questions in public consultation submissions are provided in the table below and may help to clarify any misunderstandings about the purpose of the guidelines.

Question	Department response
<b>What is the purpose of the drone delivery guidelines?</b>	<p>The drone delivery guidelines step through the regulatory requirements for drone operators and are intended as guidance only to assist planning authorities make informed decisions about drone delivery services in their local community.</p> <p>The guidelines will complement a range of other <a href="#">policies</a> being developed to address community concerns, such as security, privacy, and environmental impacts.</p>
<b>Who is responsible for managing the noise impacts of drone delivery services?</b>	<p>The department is responsible for regulating drone noise, including from delivery drones. Noise approvals come with strict conditions, including operating restrictions and reporting requirements.</p> <p>Noise approvals may be amended or revoked if an operator does not abide by these or fails to adequately address community noise complaints through appropriate noise mitigation strategies.</p> <p>The drone delivery guidelines provide recommendations to local governments on where to locate new services to reduce potential noise impacts.</p>
<b>Where can I report excessive drone noise?</b>	<p>Concerns regarding drone noise can be reported to the drone delivery operator, local government, or the department via the <a href="#">Have Your Say</a> page.</p> <p>Where drone noise is found to be excessive, the department will work with drone delivery operators and local governments to identify appropriate mitigation strategies. This may include applying additional operating conditions to a drone operator's approval.</p>

Question	Department response
<p><b>Who manages drone safety and how can I be assured that delivery drones are safe?</b></p>	<p>The <a href="#">Civil Aviation Safety Authority</a> (CASA) is responsible for regulating all safety aspects of civil aviation, including drone flights. Before flying, drone delivery operators are required to apply for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a <a href="#">remotely piloted aircraft operator’s certificate (ReOC)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">beyond visual line-of-sight (BVLOS) approval</a></li> <li>• a <a href="#">remote pilot licence (RePL)</a>.</li> </ul> <p>CASA undertakes rigorous safety assessment of all drone delivery operations. Current drone delivery services have submitted a safety case to satisfy CASA requirements that their drones are reliable, they can operate safely and meet all safety requirements.</p> <p>Unsafe drone operations can be reported to CASA via their <a href="#">website</a>.</p>
<p><b>What safeguards are in place to ensure that the privacy of community members is upheld?</b></p>	<p>The department is developing drone <a href="#">privacy guidelines</a> to assist drone operators operate in accordance with privacy laws and community guidelines. The privacy guidelines will provide general guidance on considerations for drone pilots before engaging in activity but will not constitute legal advice.</p> <p>General information for individuals and organisations can be found at the <a href="#">Office of the Australian Information Commissioner</a>. Drone operators should follow the <a href="#">Australian Privacy Principles</a>.</p>
<p><b>Who is responsible for granting development approval for new drone delivery services?</b></p>	<p>Local governments are ultimately responsible for granting final development approval which permits drone delivery services to establish the necessary infrastructure to fly in the community.</p> <p>Operators will still need to obtain safety and noise approval, from CASA and the department respectively, prior to commencing operations.</p>
<p><b>What expectations are there for community engagement and consultation prior to new drone delivery services being approved?</b></p>	<p>The department expects local governments to engage early with the public and key stakeholders, and conduct broad community consultation to inform their assessment of new drone delivery services on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>The department may require drone delivery operations which are likely to have a significant impact on residential areas to undertake a public consultation process. This may require applicants to arrange activities, such as public meetings, media releases and letterbox campaigns.</p> <p>Principles for effective local government community consultation are outlined in the revised guidelines.</p>
<p><b>Will the drone delivery guidelines be released for further public consultation before being finalised?</b></p>	<p>The guidelines have been revised to incorporate feedback received through public consultation. Another round of public consultation is not anticipated at this stage.</p> <p>Further consultation is planned with industry, local, state and territory governments, after which the guidelines will be finalised and published on <a href="#">drones.gov.au</a>.</p>