

Submission 93 – Nicholas

I will be as concise as I can, model aircrafts are my life. The love I have for aviation, building and flying remote control planes, is absolutely the most significant, meaningful thing to me. As such I find myself feeling violently ill when I consider Remote ID, how practically insane it is and how detrimental it will be to the hobby. The most eloquent way I can express this feeling is to say that for anyone with similar passion to me, Remote ID will destroy the RC aircraft hobby and sacrifice our well-being, way of life, and mental health.

Remote ID, as a concept, is fundamentally flawed. The argument that a identification/tracking technology is required to process and manage drones in our airspace so as to "ensure to impact to public safety" is frankly ridiculous and appalling misleading. In Australian (and the US where this regulatory concept was directly copied from), there have been NO incidents where RC aircrafts, planes or multi-rotor, have collided with, posed any threat to, or otherwise gotten in the way of manned, civilian or commercially operated aircrafts. Beyond just hobbyists flying responsibly, this is the result of pre-existing laws that make it illegal for such RC aircrafts to fly above a certain altitude, or within a specified distance of aircrafts or aerodromes. These laws already make it illegal to put a manned or commercial aircraft in a position where recreational, remote aircraft pose a threat. The absence of such incidents demonstrates the clear effectiveness of pre-existing laws at protecting our airspace and assuring the safe operations of hobby drones.

The discussion paper also suggests that Remote ID would allow tracking of illegal, non-compliant, or suspicious drone use. The very suggestion of this is hysterically wrong as those operating drones in an illegal or dangerous manner, and/or those with direct intention to act maliciously, would not be using the Remote ID system. This is incredibly obvious, those acting illegally or with malicious intent would simply not use a system designed to or capable of tracking illegal activity. It is like relying on people turning themselves in to locate criminals, it is just completely unrealistic, someone intent on acting illegally will not put themselves in a position where they are easily caught. As well as this, suppose someone acting illegally did use Remote ID, they can easily use GPS jamming technology to make it less than useless for tracking their activity. There have already been vulnerabilities found in the Remote ID technology, allowing spoofing that all completely kills any possible influence it could have. The thought that Remote ID could somehow be used to track and regulate those who are not using Remote ID is a severe logical failing.

Beyond pre-existing legislation, the effective, meaningful way to ensure safe use of the airspace is to just educate people correctly. Majority of problems and misuse can be solved through education, and the RC hobby is no exception. If those who use RC aircrafts are simply well informed on the laws and safe behaviour, than the potential for unsafe behaviour will be diminished hugely and more effectively than with Remote ID.

Both of these points show that Remote ID would not only be obsolete and wholly unnecessary, but also that the very arguments in support fail easily when examined with even the most basic logic. Beyond logical shortcomings however, there is an even more significant reason why Remote ID should not be implemented. It will essentially kill the RC aircraft hobby. By forcing people to fly at clubs or risk fines will be hugely detrimental to the accessibility of the hobby. From membership

costs to driving distance, RC clubs are often out of reach for many, especially newcomers who don't have enough money for an airframe, materials, electronics and then club fees on top of that. Making people drive frequently substantial distances to fly also prevents many with limited time and transportation from enjoying the hobby. Once again, laws are already in place prohibiting people from flying within a certain distance of other people or property, meaning there is already infrastructure to ensure safe use of drones and RC planes at local parks and sport fields. Proper education for hobbyists would also guarantee that people act responsibly in public spaces with their RC aircrafts. It is absolutely clear to me, especially from my personal experience, that the hobby would suffer greatly if people were forced to fly only at clubs, ultimately decreasing the accessibility and preventing many from getting involved and enjoying their passion.

Furthermore, cost of these often expensive RID modules would continue to decrease the accessibility of the hobby by forcing people to spend even more money in a time where for many money is already tight, killing people's ability to enjoy their recreation time. This cost increase becomes even larger when you consider the mass of the modules themselves. One of the most important things to an aircraft is it's mass and the balance location as such. Therefore, forcing the use of heavy communication modules greatly harms the performance and usability of an RC aircraft. Tying back in with the cost, the greatly increased mass of the module would demand people use more powerful motors and larger batteries. This once again results in a drastic cost increase, prohibiting so many from enjoying a harmless hobby. Heavier aircrafts also pose a greater risk to surroundings, both infrastructure and life, if they were to experience a malfunction and fall from the sky from example. Does this not clearly act in opposition to the "intentions" behind remote ID? Both the mass and cost increases associated with mandated Remote ID modules and forced use of clubs work together to kill the accessibility of the hobby, standing in the way of those who are similarly passionate about aircrafts, scaring away newcomers entirely and encouraging those already involved to participate in a greatly reduced manner.

When newcomers see the drastic cost increase from Remote ID and the associated mandate to fly at clubs, they are simply going to be turned away from even trying out the hobby at all. Inflated costs, difficulty and location inaccessibility are simply going to kill interest and force many current hobbyists to re-evaluate their own level of participation.

If the complete lack of safety improvements and hobby-murdering nature of Remote ID are somehow not on their own deal breakers, there is also an appalling privacy perspective to the problem. By giving every member of the public the ability to check an app on their phone and see who is flying and where that person is immensely dangerous and a huge transgression against our privacy as individuals. This allows people to be located by any member of the public, making it easy to approach them and potentially cause trouble. Further, this will empower criminals as they can easily find where people are with expensive equipment, giving them the ability to target people for robberies and cause harm. Even worse, there are many kids that love to fly drones and RC planes, be it those like me who build their own vehicles or kids who maybe got a drone from a shop like Kmart for a birthday or Christmas. With Remote ID, every single child who flies a drone of any kind is at risk. With their locations publicly broadcasted, any member of the public could find where a minor is flying, be it at a park or their backyard, and track them down to cause harm. This in itself would work

to kill the hobby as people are scared away by the prospect of being targeted by criminals, harmed or abused by members of the public unhappy with drones. This is a major transgression against the privacy of Australians and poses a direct threat to anyone in the hobby and specifically puts children directly in harms way. This is frankly unacceptable and is even on it's own a profoundly significant reason to prevent Remote ID from being implemented.

More than just practicalities and law, Remote ID would have a profound human impact. There are countless people across the country, just like me, who love aircrafts, who love building and flying RC planes and Drones. For many like me, this is our passion and what gives our lives joy and how we use our recreation time. Now consider what Remote ID will do to people like me, who adore this hobby and everything about it. When you take away something beloved to people, place worthless measures that have no real impact on safety and are instead prohibitive to participation, all while exposing us through your mandates to gross privacy transgressions and threats to our safety from those in our community with malicious intent, it genuinely hurts people. You take away something adored, something that gives enjoyment, relaxation and recreation to peoples lives you directly hurt their mental health. Beyond privacy, beyond lack of safety improvements, it destroys people's way of life and leaves them angered, deflated and furious with a government that would do this to their people. Imagine, if you will, what would be the result if one day, due to "public safety concerns", the Australian people were banned from kicking a football at the local park, instead having to pay a large fee for access to a special facility and forced to wear trackers to ensure their park football isn't a "threat to public safety"? Not only would football as a sport be irreparably harmed from immense entry barriers, but those who love football would be appalled, saddened, deeply angry at the government and have their mental health severely effected. If you see the absurdity in such an action, how can you in good faith do such a thing to our hobby, to RC aircrafts? Just because we are fewer in numbers, does not mean we are a vulnerable group that can be tossed aside and treated in such a way.

Now that we have gotten the emotional side out of the way and established the complete uselessness of Remote ID in improving public safety as claimed, I wish to ask, why push for it at all? It is clear to me, based on the situation in America where this law was taken from, that the real motivating force is big corporations. It seems that foreign tech monopolies such as Amazon and Google who wish to run drone delivery programs have pushed for this as means to clear the sky for their projects. This seems to be the case here as well, as there is no way one can believably claim that Remote ID is in the interest of public safety. The thought that our government would erode the public's right to expression and privacy, as well as sacrificing the happiness and mental health of citizens, in the interest of powerful monopolies who would profit from our suffering and the transgression of our rights is despicable. If you allow this to occur, we begin travelling a dangerous path towards a future of Orwellian-like Totalitarianism where the rights and recreation of the people are trampled for the sake of government and corporate benefit. I expect the government to sell out the people for corporate advantage in America, that's characteristic of the malevolent nature of their capitalism, but to have that occur in this country, Australia, where unlike in Trumpian America, democracy, sanity and care for our fellow person prevails, makes me sick.

Remote ID would also cause unforeseen suffering to our Aerospace industry. The RC aircraft hobby is for the vast majority of people the number one gateway into the Aviation and Aerospace industries. Kids build RC planes and Drones, fall in love with it and decide they want to do that for a living. It is the primary cause for people choosing to pursue the work in the industry. In a time where as a country, we are undergoing the much needed push to breathe life into our Aerospace industries, why in God's name would you then kill the motivating force behind interest in such jobs? Without the RC hobby to spike peoples interest and promote education and engagement with Aviation, our Aerospace Industries (and America's as well due to their implementation of RID) will face absence of work in the future, with younger generations lacking the exposure or interest to pursue such careers. In a time where we are starting to advance our Aerospace efforts as a nation and the economic benefits of doing so are clear, it seems very foolish to kill the excitement and motivating factors at the root, doesn't it?

If Remote ID is implemented, so many people across this great country will suffer, that will be the only result. Safety won't be improved and "bad actors" won't be caught. People who act responsibly and safely in their participation in a peaceful recreation that brings joy to their lives will suffer, have their privacy stripped from them and their mental health diminished due to public safety threats that quite literally do not occur do to already satisfactory infrastructure. Public trust in the government will suffer immeasurably, too, with Remote ID standing as an unbelievable transgression on the rights and privacy that we are entitled to. The only meaningful way Remote ID could be applied is for people wanting to fly 1. Above legal altitude for RC aircrafts, 2. Within close proximity to aerodromes or 3. When operating heavy, multi-kilogram drones. Excluding these extreme circumstances where RID could potentially be applicable, if you genuinely wish to guarantee public safety from RC Aircraft without the harm to the hobby, please implement education on the matter, which frankly would be far cheaper and much more effective at preventing people from pursuing illegal activity in the first place.