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Do you agree with the proposed core principles for the National Emerging Aviation Technologies policy?

The proposed core principles are sound in nature and are well thought through. The containing document is professionally written and substantially referenced. The quality of the document befits its national importance and may be considered to be equal and in some senses superior to documents in this area from other countries. With regard to the specific question, response is supplied in the positive.

Will the proposed approach to policy development adequately allow for the future direction, operations and investments of your business/organisation?

The current response is not on behalf of an organisation or a business, rather from the perspective of a member of the public. The comments contained in this response are mostly general in nature however they are informed by professional experience with and personal interest in, eVTOL and drones. They are also informed from nearly 15 years of experience in the field of transport.

Are there any other approaches that could benefit the sector?

The Government may consider allocation of land and associated airspace for the purposes of drone and eVTOL testing. This could encompass an open or closed space (very large empty hangar or other geo-fenced large volume that can be closed e.g. disused open cut mine) whereby control could be exercised in terms of environmental conditions such as wind gusts in a safe and risk minimised manner. Testing of new vehicles could be performed to ensure they comply with Government mandated operational criteria and also that manufacturers claims can be validated.

What level of service and regulation do you expect from the Government?

The evolutionary involvement of government in registration, regulation and control of existing forms of aircraft, vehicles and vessels should also be applied to drones and eVTOL. The Government should be the only entity to drive and lead service and regulation as leaving this to the market is fraught with risk. The public would not find it acceptable that the responsibility of certain elements of this emerging field be transferred or delegated to commercial entities. In a manner not dissimilar to existing regulations of other aircraft, vehicles and vessels, the States and Territories should perform their delegated roles in this emerging field as set by federal and jurisdictional legislation. This requires great care and alignment between States and Territories throughout Australia. The Government should strictly control the importation of drones and eVTOL for reasons of security.

What are your expectations of the Government's role and responsibilities in the management of drones and eVTOL vehicles?

The Government should be the peak (if not the only) body in the UTM space. Within a potentially short amount of time, this emerging field may find significant (and potentially disruptive) increases in the number of drones and eVTOL vehicles with commensurate

pressure being exerted on the requirement for their safe and efficient management. Other jurisdictions are suggesting separation of airspace such that drones and eVTOL do not occupy the same spatiotemporal airspace allocation. The Government should develop and promote their own representation between other countries in preparation for international eVTOL travel should that in future, be warranted. The Government should prepare for the eventuality of eVTOL and drones being able to cross international airspace. The risk of collision between a drone and other existing aircraft can be catastrophic. Contrary to some beliefs that such an impact is no worse than a bird strike, a recent collision between a drone and a helicopter in the USA show that belief to be unwarranted. The safe and efficient control of drones and eVTOL via UTM is vital to its success and the Governments role therein cannot be understated.

What are the key opportunities that these new technologies could deliver for Australia?

For the most part, Australia can develop their own expertise in the research, development and manufacture of eVTOL and drones. This can be done by developing domestic competency and capability in education and manufacturing industry. This would bolster job opportunities and reinvigorate the economy. In light of the current COVID-19 environment, there could be significant opportunities to utilise drones and eVTOL to manage/minimise the impact of such pandemics.

What are the most significant barriers to realising these opportunities?

The unfortunate decades-long degradation in local manufacturing (not isolated to Australia however) has resulted in a reduced ability to develop and manufacture drones and eVTOL. This could be arrested with commitments to develop this emerging field on a local level.

What issues or actions should the government prioritise to facilitate the growth of emerging aviation technologies?

As discussed, education, research, development and manufacture - all within Australia.

To what extent should Australia's approach be harmonised with approaches taken in other countries?

This has already been addressed somewhat above.

Additionally, while Australia is surrounded by water, it may be a matter of time where there could be a realistic (ie more broadly accessible) desire for increased access to airspace for movement of goods (initially) and people via eVTOL. Australia should prepare for this and harmonising approaches would be wise. Countries that share borders should be communicated with in this regard and one example could be those within Europe for obvious reasons.

Are there other issues that the Australian Government should consider?

The Australian Government would do well to educate the public in the correct and legal use of drones. The registration of all drones (non-military, recreational etc.) should be considered before too many drones are released into the market.