

Rocketmine Receives Beyond-Visual-Line-Of-Sight (Bvlos) Drone Flight Approval From The South African Civil Aviation Authority

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Rocketmine is proud to have received Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) approval for the flight of their commercial drones from the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA). This is a major achievement for the company, as they are now only the second South African operator, in four years of drone legislation, to be approved for BVLOS.

The current SACAA laws for drone operators for Visual Line of Site (VLOS) operations limit flights to a radius of 500m from the drone operator and a maximum upward distance of 120m. With an observer stationed at the maximum radius of VLOS, Extended Visual Line of Site (EVLOS) can be approved which accommodates for a radius of up to 1000m from the pilot. BVLOS, on the other hand, allows for a flight radius beyond 1km without an observer.

“This BVLOS approval enables us to offer our clients more applications for our drone services at their sites more cost-effectively. We are able to cover a larger area which is extremely beneficial on large mining sites,” explains Christopher Clark, Rocketmine’s Managing Director. “BVLOS operations also come with an increased safety risk, as there is no visual site of the actual drone. In response to this, Rocketmine has had to improve its operational processes to accommodate for the approval to mitigate against factors that would be safety concern.”

The SACAA has very stringent and rigorous processes in place for operators to prove they are able to meet the requirements for BVLOS operations. The biggest concern with BVLOS is safety of the public as well of manned airspace traffic. Of the 25 legal operators in South Africa only two have received approval to fly BVLOS.

“The approval for Rocketmine to perform BVLOS operations once again demonstrates that we are industry leaders, always ensuring we are keeping up with the latest technological

developments and applications,” states Christopher Clark. “We are excited to include BVLOS in both our current and new projects.”