

THE SOUTH AFRICAN MODEL AIRCRAFT ASSOCIATION



Operations Manual

SAMAA POLICY ON GENERAL RULES & GUIDELINES FOR OPERATION OF MODEL AIRCRAFT

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PR 03

Management Committee
and SIG Approved.

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PR 03

SAMAA Policy on General Rules and Guidelines for Operation of Model Aircraft

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**GENERAL RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR THE OPERATION
OF MODEL AIRCRAFT**

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to provide all Members and Clubs of the SAMAA a ready reference to their obligations to the SACAA (The South African Civil Aviation Authority) and the SAMAA Rules, Regulations, Guidelines and Procedures for the operation of Model Aircraft on all SACAA/SAMAA Approved and Registered flying sites.

It should be noted that where any discrepancy exists South African law has precedence. It is up to every member to ensure that they are aware of the Rules and Regulation applicable to Model Aircraft Flying, and the SAMAA can accept no responsibility for any lack of knowledge of the Member in respect to the SAMAA Rules and Regulations which are freely available on the SAMAA website www.samaa.co.za.

2. DEFINITIONS

SAMAA

The South African Model Aircraft Association is the organization authorized to administer and control all model aircraft activities in South Africa.

Manual of Operations

This document has been produced by SAMAA and approved by CAA as being the controlling document for Model aircraft flying at Registered fields and approved venues in SA.

CAR

Civil aviation Regulations, These are the regulations set down by the CAA for the control of All aircraft using the airspace over SA, and includes regulations for the control of Model Aircraft.

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ARO

**Aviation Recreational Organisations are established by the CAA to assist them with the control of the Recreational sections of Aviation.
SAMAA is the only approved and appointed body for the control of model aircraft activities in the RSA**

Member

Ordinary Member of the Association.

Registered or Approved site

A flying site or field approved by the CAA and SAMAA for Members to fly model aircraft. See the Application to Register an Approved Flying Area Procedure, PR05 in the SAMAA Manual of Procedures.

Regional Associations

Presently SAMAA are trying to establish Regional Associations. The purpose of these associations is to involve and get Clubs and Club Members in other areas (regions) to get together and interact. This should lead to a more united group of flyers, and it should help to broaden the horizon for many Club flyers who do not participate in competitive flying.

C.A.S.A.

Civil Aviation Safety Authority.

Commercial Activity

Model aircraft flight is considered to be commercial if it is used for any purpose other than the sport of flying the model or learning or teaching the sport of flying. It is commercial if it is used for financial gain, ie aerial photography etc.

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Solo rated Pilot		A pilot who, has flown and passed a Solo test after being judged by authorized inspectors. And his/her name has been placed on the SAMAA central data base.
Definition of Model Aircraft		Fixed wing aircraft as well as Helicopters are included in the definition of model aircraft, as they fulfill the requirement of recreational models for sport or teaching the sport For the definition of a model aircraft, its limitations and characteristics see Policy (PO 18) in the SAMAA Operations Manual.
Radio Controlled Model Aircraft		See SAMAA Manual Section PO18.
Control-Line Model Aircraft		A model aircraft that is constrained to fly in a circle, and is controlled in attitude and altitude, by means of inextensible wires attached to a handle held by the person operating the model.
Indoor Model Aircraft		A model aircraft flown in an area constrained by four walls and a roof.
Turbine Powered Model Aircraft		A model aircraft powered by a gas turbine engine.
Large Model Aircraft		Any model aircraft with an all up weight of more than say 10kg but not exceeding a mass of 25kg.

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Giant Model Aircraft		Any unmanned, model aircraft with an all up Weight in excess of 25kg to a maximum of 45,5kg. (Note In RSA the flying of this Giant size Model Aeroplane is not approved. The CAA and SAMAA are presently agreeing a procedure for a models, of this weight to be built and flown at SAMAA fields
Permit to Fly		A document issued by an SAMAA Inspector following inspection carried out at SAMAA`s request, on special or non standard model aircraft. The certification will be applicable to both the model and the pilot flying this model .
Inspector		A SAMAA member who has been appointed and who has the knowledge and is qualified to carry out inspections on behalf of the CAA and SAMAA for special or non standard Large model Aircraft.
EAA or Homebuilders Association		Branches of the Aero Club of SA, who have the knowledge and experience to advise on, and approve the design and structural integrity of aircraft, and who have the approval of the CAA to perform this duty.
UAV		Unmanned Aerial Vehicle. An aircraft used for commercial or military purposes (Does not fall under SAMAA`s control)
FAI		Federation Aeronautique Internationale The International sporting Body for all Aircraft competitions

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3. GENERAL

- 3.1) Any Model Aircraft in flight, using the airspace (excepting as noted in Paragraph 3.3) is subject to the regulations imposed by the Civil Aviation Authority. The CIVIL AVIATION REGULATIONS – CAR, and the Civil Aviation Technical Specifications CATS, covers all manned aircraft and unmanned aircraft operations, including model aircraft.
- 3.2) This document is intended to give an overview of CAR part 94 and other applicable parts of the existing CAA Regulations, as stated elsewhere in this document, the Regulations are presently being rewritten, but until this rewrite is completed and accepted, the current Regulations remain in force.
- 3.3) Models Exempt from CAR requirements, but not from SAMAA Rules or the requirements of the SAMAA Manual of Procedures are;
- a) Models weighing less than 100 grams (3.5oz).
 - b) Control Line models
 - c) Any model flown indoors (contained by four walls and roof)
- 3.4) The CAA recognizes the South African Model Aircraft Association (SAMAA) as the sole approved and appointed **Aviation Recreational Organization in South Africa**, authorised to administer, coordinate and regulate the operation of Model aircraft flying. The CAA expects SAMAA to coordinate and control the flying of all Model aircraft to ensure that model aircraft, when in the air, are not a threat or risk to other users of the land or air space and that a high standard of safety is followed..
- 3.5) A model aircraft operated(**whether it be a fixed wing , helicopter or glider**) by an member of the SAMAA, is subject to the requirements of the SAMAA Manual of Procedures as well as to CAA Regulations.
- 3.6) The operation of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV's) is excluded from the SAMAA brief, as they are not considered recreational model aircraft. UAV's are subject to specific sections of the CAA Regulations.
- 3.7) Operation of a model aircraft **for financial reward** or gain is excluded from the SAMAA control and these Model Aircraft are only permitted to operate under separate CAA Rules.

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4. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1) The individual operator of a model aircraft is responsible for his/her compliance, and his/her model's compliance, with the CAA Regulations, and with all SAMAA Regulations as set out in the SAMAA Manual of Operations.

5. **RULES FOR THE OPERATION OF ALL MODEL AIRCRAFT**

The CAA is presently updating sections of their Regulations and Technical specifications and in the interim, until the revised regulations are available, the Regulations as they are, must stand.

Below are the current CAA regulations covered in CAR Part 94 .05/06. and CATS;

- 5.1) **General prohibition on unsafe operation**
A person may not operate an unmanned aircraft (Model Aircraft) in a way that endangers the safety of any manned aircraft, person, or property. THIS REGULATION CLEARLY STATES THAT A MODEL AIRCRAFT WILL ALWAYS GET OUT OF THE WAY OF A FULL SIZE OR MANNED AIRCRAFT UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, AND FURTHER THAT MODEL AIRCRAFT MAY ONLY BE OPERATED IN A MANNER OR AREA, WHICH WILL AVOID INJURY TO PERSONS OR DAMAGE TO PROPERTY.
- 5.2) **Visibility for operation of model aircraft**
 A person may operate a model aircraft only if the visibility at the time is good enough for the person operating the model to be able to see the model continuously.
- 5.3) **Operating a Model Aircraft at Night**
 A person may not operate a model aircraft at night, unless CAA permission has been obtained, and then only if complying with the SAMAA Night Flying Procedure (PR18).
- 5.4) **Operating a Model Aircraft from or above a Public Road**
 A person may not operate a model aircraft over or from a public road without permission.
 No person may operate, take off or land a model aircraft from a public road.

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5.5) Height Limits for Model Aircraft

The CAA Regulations limit the maximum height a model aircraft may fly in the RSA to 150 feet agl. *But*

After representation to the CAA and the presentation of a working paper, requesting legalization of a 400 foot flying height for model aircraft, to CARCOM at a meeting the 10th February 2011, **SAMAA as the ARO for Model Aircraft in the RSA was given approved, subject to the conditions set down in the paper, to allow model aircraft to fly up to 400 feet agl. at SAMAA Registered Clubs or fields.**

If greater heights are required, by clubs or members ie. for specific events, competitions and glider flying, the Procedure PR16 must be followed and the form F12 completed and submitted for an exemption to be issued.

NOTE: any person operating at a model field should realize that a model flying at 400 feet, is flying only 100 feet below the minimum approved height allowed for full size or manned aircraft, and therefore the Pilot flying a model has an obligation to get out of the way of any full size or manned aircraft which happens to fly in the area.. The following will apply;

Operation of Model aircraft at all SAMAA Registered sites or fields, is limited to a maximum height of 400 feet AGL.

Should models require to fly at heights greater than 400 feet, an application must be submitted to SAMAA for transmission to RAASA for temporary approval.

Specific exemption, on a individual basis, may be applied for, from the CAA, for gliding, Competitions, displays or events held at Registered SAMAA sites, by submitting a written application to SAMAA.

Park flyers are limited to 150 feet.

5.6) Operation of model aircraft outside approved areas

The operation of model aircraft outside Approved areas will not be approved or sanctioned by SAMAA.

5.7) Operation in controlled airspace

A person may only operate a Model Aircraft above 150 feet in controlled airspace if :

- i) In controlled airspace, at a maximum height as specified in the terms of written approval; and
- ii) In accordance with written clearance from the appropriate air traffic control authority.

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5.8) Operation near full size Aerodromes

CAA only permits operation of a model aircraft at an altitude above 150 feet AGL within 5 nautical miles of an aerodrome under the following conditions;

- (i) In the case of controlled Aerodrome, Authority for the operation has been obtained from the Air Traffic control.
- (ii.) In the case of other than a controlled aerodrome, authority has been obtained from CAA Commissioner.

5.9) Dropping or discharging of things

It is prohibited to cause any ballast or any other heavy part to be dropped or discharged from an unmanned aircraft (model aircraft) in flight. Any ballast or material discharged may only be water or sand. This clause also prohibits the carrying of, or discharge of, pyrotechnics from a model aircraft in flight.

5.10) General Characteristics of Model Aircraft

This CAA specification sets out the limitations of what is classified as a Model aircraft. Both fixed wing and helicopter. It also refers to the FAI document ABR, part 4c as the originator of this information.

5.11) Free flying Aircraft

Free flying aircraft are limited to a maximum weight of 6Kgs

5.12) Noise limitations

The noise limit of Model aircraft is limited to 96db(A) at 3 meters. The test procedure is specified elsewhere.

6. SAMAA RULES, GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Below are the balance of the Rules and guidelines applicable to model aircraft Flying;

6.1) Public Events, Displays, Airshows, Fly- in`s .

The CAA requires that all clubs and groups who intend to hold an Airshow, Displays, fly-ins or events is to apply to, and obtain permission from SAMAA, before such an event is held.

The guidelines as how such a Event/Display shall be organized falls under the SAMAA`S responsibilities.

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For details ,see the Events/Public Display Procedure (PR02).
in the SAMAA Manual of Procedures.

6.2) Registered flying fields

For a flying site or Club to become a SAMAA Registered Club, the Club must complete and submit the application forms, and following approval from the CAA, SAMAA will register the Club. The Registered club will then abide by and enforce the SAMAA Flying guidelines and Rules as set out in the Operations Manual. (see SAMAA Procedure PR 05 for Registration details) The following guidelines and Rules shall apply at a Registered flying field

6.3) No Fly Areas or Zones

Flying sites should be arranged, so that all flight operations are conducted in front of the flightline., The flightline shall be a line defined by the side of the runway nearest to the pilots, which shall be extended to both to the left and right extremes of the flying area the area in front of this line shall be totally unobstructed. Pilot boxes or stations should be set out so that pilots shall have a clear and unobstructed view of the flying area, at all times.

The area behind the flightline and the pilots, are **no fly zones**, these will cover the pit, club house, buildings, spectator any other public areas such as car parks.

(see example in Operations manual under Safety)

5.4) Minimum Distances to spectators, persons vehicles or buildings.

Anyone operating a model aircraft, must ensure that, while the model aircraft is LANDING or TAKING OFF, it stays at least 30 meters horizontally away from spectators or any person or persons, occupied building or vehicle, not directly associated with the operation of model aircraft.

This requirement is not contravened if;

- i.) The pilot stands behind the model aircraft while taking off.
- ii.) If the model aircraft is flown in a competition within 30 meters of the official judges.
- iii.) If the model aircraft is flown within 30 meters of Pilots and their assistants operating other aircraft from the same flightline,

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- iv.) If persons such as the Flight Line Director, Safety Officers, Instructors, and similar people who are directly involved with the operation of model aircraft at the time, remain within this distance.
- v.) Pilots and their assistants with aircraft in the “pits”, provided that this area is **not** accessible to the public. Wherever possible the pits shall be located at least 20 meters behind the flightline, or if this is not possible as near to 20 meters as can be reasonably achieved.

All flying will conform to the above requirements.

Model aircraft (weighing up to 10 Kgs) flying must remain at least 30 Meters from spectators at all times..

Model aircraft weighing more than 10Kgs must remain at least 50 meters from spectators, except when landing or taking off.

Pylon racers will only operate at a distance of more than 100 meters from spectators.

6.5) Radio Equipment use at a field

Frequency Control

All flying fields, where Radio controlled model aircraft are flown, will have an frequency control system installed, and a **peg or marker on the board system of frequency control will be used.** (see Operations Manual PO13)

Only ICASA “type approved “ imported radio equipment will be used.

Only legal ICASA approved frequencies on the 27 , 35, 53, and 54Mhz bands equipment, as well as the now popular 2,4 Ghz equipment may be used.

6.6) Safety rules

The National SAMAA Safety code and Safety rules as set out in the Manual Of Operations shall be used, by all Members and persons flying model aircraft.

Clubs will add their own supplementary or special field rules to the above.

6.7) Incident reporting

It is the responsibility of each Member and Club to ensure that Accidents and incidents are recorded and sent to SAMAA. The purpose being that a record of the type of incident and the frequency of incidents can be established, and a warning, alerting system can be passed on to the Members with the intention of reducing model accidents.

The forms and details of this reporting system is set out in Procedure (PR 02)

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- 6.8) Insurance claims**
The use of the SAMAA Insurance policy is limited to paid up members of the Association.
Any incident, if it happens in the wrong place can become an accident. Fortunately for us, due to experience and guidelines and rules made over the years registered fields and registered flying sites have been set out to minimize the usual crashes to incidents.
Accidents which involve persons, or property, which occur at registered flying sites, and have a possible financial implication or potential claim potential, must be reported, firstly to the police and secondly to the SAMAA, who in turn will pass the report forms on to the Insurance company. Do note an excess is involved in any claim.
All details and information on the Insurance Claim is contained in Procedure (PR14)
- 6.9) Drinking, Drugs or Performance affecting medication**
The use of the above by many Members, before or during model flying is becoming a major concern.
It is a well documented fact that alcohol affects ones judgement in many ways, all negatively, And most of us are well aware of the effect of certain medication.
MODEL AIRCRAFT Clubs must restrict flying Members from drinking until after the pilot has finished flying, and packed away his equipment. This Policy is set out in policy (PO16)
- 6.10) Flying Field Spacing**
The SAMAA requires a minimum spacing of radio-controlled model aircraft flying sites of 5kms. Operations at less than this distance shall be carried out in accordance with the Operation Procedure for fields in close proximity Policy (PR04) in the SAMAA Manual of Procedures. The SAMAA requirement for spacing of fields, may be relaxed if the Radio equipment specified, limits the equipment to 2,4 Ghz only.
- 6.11) Persons on the flightline**
This is not a requirement which is often observed, but one which if ignored could have serious consequences.
The recommendation, which is to be enforced at all Clubs, and must be written into their Club Safety Rules, is that only one helper, instructor, caller or spotter to be on the flightline with the pilot, the same guideline must be enforced at all Fly ins, Airshows or displays.

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- There are obviously exceptions to this guideline, for instants when there is a competition or proficiency test, and Judges are present, or when Officials are supervising an event.
The intention is to ensure that uninvolved persons must not be on the flightline while flying is in progress.
- 6.12) Etiquette**
This guideline for considerate behavior of pilots at clubs and competitions has been set down in two policies which are included in the Manual Of Operations. These guidelines together with any Club specific requirements should be included in or referred to in the individual Clubs Safety rules.
These etiquette guidelines can be found in the Manual Of Operations Under (PO 10) and (PO 11)
- 6.13) Instruction of pupil pilots**
All Pupil pilots, learner or inexperienced pilots shall, while being taught to fly, be instructed on all relevant Safety, frequency and Operating requirements of the sport/hobby.
All persons flying at a Registered field, be he a pupil pilot, visitor or Club member will be a paid up SAMAA member.
The qualification of the Member or person suitable to teach a beginner has been set at the equivalent of a SAMAA silver proficiency.
The preferred and recommended method to teach beginners is set out in the "Fixed wing proficiency booklet" in the SAMAA Operations Manual.
- 6.14) Inspection of Aircraft**
It is recommended that prior to the first flight of any aircraft, or after any major repair an independent person or an appointed instructor does a safety inspection. For larger or specialist aircraft this is essential, in fact for any aircraft to fly in an Event/ Display or Airshow, it is a requirement that the model has been previously checked out and flown.
- 6.15) Operating a Model Aircraft at night**
The CAA Regulations Prohibit the flying of model aircraft at night. But subject to discussions and approval of this Procedure, it was agreed that model aircraft could be flown at registered fields, provided the following rules were followed.
i.) That SAMAA has been approached and has given written

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permission for the pending event.

ii.) That the conditions set down in the Operations Manual under Procedure (PR 17) are followed

6.16) Flight Proficiency

SAMAA has produced a set of Proficiency tests for all types of Aircraft. These tests can be found in the Operations Manual. A “Solo” proficiency is the minimum requirement, for a pilot to fly safely and unattended, on the flightline at a Registered Club. All clubs are requested and encouraged to promote the use of the SAMAA Proficiency Scheme, to improve model flyers and pilots. The Proficiency Codes are included in the SAMAA Manual of Operations.

6.17) Mobile phones

Mobile phones have been known to affect R/C Transmitter signals, And it is recommended that until all doubt is removed, that cell phones are not taken onto the flight line. (see Policy PO12)

6.18) Synthesized transmitters

The use of synthesized transmitters and receivers now days is common, and provided the pilot takes due care to ensure he reserves the correct frequency when flying, there should be no objections from fellow flyers. Nevertheless it is advised that the relevant Policy (PO 15) be read.

6.19) Hearing Protection

It is recommended that hearing protection be worn by any person conducting noise testing, or where lengthy engine running or testing is required. In many instances pit men at Pylon races and Control line races are required to use noise reducing ear protection.

6.20) Engine Starting

It is recommended that hand starting of model aircraft (ie, without chicken stick, glove or electric starter) be prohibited if the engines capacity is greater than 2,5cc.

6.21) Engine Adjustments

Run a slightly rich mixture, especially with new engines.

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It is recommended that all adjustments to running engines be done from behind the engine, and propeller.

It is also recommended that no person stands near the propeller when the motor is being run up to full throttle.

6.22) Propellers

Metal bladed propellers may not be used on any model aircraft. It is recommended that propellers fitted to engines of capacity greater than 2.5 cc . are designed for the purpose and have the tips delineated with a contrasting colour. Beware, propellers designed for Electric motors are not suitable for Internal combustion engines.

6.23) Holding or restraining Model Aircraft on start up.

Although not a Rule for smaller Models, it is recommended that all model aircraft be restrained mechanically or physically by a helper other than the person starting the aircraft, during engine start-up. In the case of model aircraft weighing more than 10Kg , the holding or restraining of a model aircraft during start up, is a mandatory requirement.

6.24) Internal Navigation Systems

The CAA does not allow the use of internal navigation systems in model aircraft.

6.25) Radio Equipment and frequencies

6.25.1) Radio Certification

The ICASA has a requirement that R/C Transmitters be “Type Approved” and certified by an approved testing authority ,prior to use on a SAMAA Registered Flying site. See the SAMAA Radio Certification Policy in the SAMAA Manual of Operations, Policy (PO 13).

6.25.2) Transmitter Frequencies

Only frequency approved by the ICASA shall be used for the control of model aircraft. See the SAMAA Frequency Control Procedure (PR 13) in the SAMAA Manual of Operations.

6.25.3) Radio Equipment

See the following sections in the SAMAA Manual of Operations

- i.) Radio Certification Policy, (PO13)
- ii.) Frequency Synthesized Equipment Policy, (PO15)
- iii.) Mobile Phones Policy. (PO12),
- iv.) SAMAA Frequency Control. (PR08),

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6.26) Large Model Aircraft

All model aircraft with a mass, without fuel, of greater than 10Kgs and less than 25kgs are subject to certain additional regulations, over and above those in use for lighter aircraft. The major additional requirements are as follows;

- Models are to be flown at least 50 meters from spectators, people, structures or car parks.
- Models will be fitted with heavy duty servos, batteries, switches, pushrods etc,
- Models are to be inspected , for both structural integrity as well as equipment suitability by an the appointed SIG or SAMAA Approved inspector prior to its first flight.
- Models are to be physically or mechanically restrained during start up.
- Models to be fitted with a remote radio controlled engine cutoff.
- Models to be fitted with approved 2.4 Ghz radio receivers or with 35 or 53 Mhz PCM receivers.
- A spotter or assistant be present on the flightline with the pilot when other aircraft are in the air at the same time is recommended.
- Models to conform to the noise restrictions set down for model aircraft.
- All pilots of Large Model aircraft will require to be tested and approved by the relevant SIG prior to flying that model at a registered field, or public event.

The use of multi receivers, dual power supplies and other safety features is recommended for all large model aircraft.

6.27) Gas Turbine Powered Model Aircraft

The SAMAA requires that all gas turbine powered model aircraft must be inspected by an SAMAA appointed Gas Turbine or the approved SIG Inspector prior to its first flight. Gas Turbine powered Model Aircraft must be operated at flying sites in accordance to the "Turbine Powered Model Aircraft" Sporting Code included in the SAMAA Manual of Operations.

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6.28) Giant Model Aircraft

Models which exceed 25 Kgs are not presently classified by the CAA as being Model aircraft, but as small aircraft and are therefore not permitted to fly on SAMAA Registered fields or sites. The SAMAA is presently investigating and trying to formulate a policy, obtain Insurance and get CAA approval, to permit Giant Model Aircraft of up to 46.6 Kgs (100lbs) to be flown at Registered Sites. In the meanwhile the SAMAA cannot authorize the operation of any Model Weighing over 25kgs or exceeding the Dimensions and Specifications set out in the Policy (PO 18.) (see new exclusion for Gliders whose wingspan exceeds 6 meters, Form 19) The flying of a Giant Model Aircraft at any site will not be approved by SAMAA or covered by the SAMAA Insurance policy.

6.29) SIG's

The Special Interest Groups, or competitive flyers, fall under the International bodies of the FAI and CIAM, have their own Sporting Codes which are based on International class standards, these set out the specification for size weight, construction requirements, etc for each type of model aircraft, these codes go further and set down the competition rules applicable to the particular aircraft. The SIG categories presently in use in SA are; Gliders, Aerobatic, Scale, Large scale, Control line, Pylon ,Fun fly, Helicopters and Jets. Information on these groups can be found in the Manual Of Operations under the individual SIG's.

6.30) Park Flyers

Park flyers are a fairly new group of model aircraft flyers, who fly small electric powered models at parks, school fields or any open piece of land.

It is the intent of SAMAA to Register Clubs for these flyers, so that they can fly safely and enjoy the sport and hobby. A set of guidelines is available in the Operations Manual (PR17)for these models

6.31) Records

Presently there is no procedure for record attempts, nor files or documents for any records established in the RSA.

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Until such time as this matter has been fully researched, it is proposed that any record attempt follow the International procedure as set down in the FAI/ CIAM documentation SC4-Vol ABR. 09.

K.FN