

THE SOUTH AFRICAN MODEL AIRCRAFT ASSOCIATION



Operations Manual

POLICY ON MOBILE PHONES AT FLYING FIELD

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PO 12

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This document forms part of the SAMAA Manual of Procedures. It is to be used by SAMAA Members and Registered Clubs in all activities associated with the flying of model aircraft in the RSA.

1. Purpose

This Policy implements the recommendations of the SAMAA Frequency Sub-committee and is accepted by the SAMAA to minimise the possible risk of radio interference from the use of mobile phones at model flying fields.

2. Introduction

The SAMAA Frequency Sub-Committee has confirmed that there is sufficiently well recorded instances of mobile phones affecting model radio control transmitters by corrupting the radiated signals and also modifying the stored memory in computer radios, to make their unrestricted use at model flying sites an unacceptable risk.

It is also understood that the close proximity signal strength from a mobile phone exceeds the designed Electro Magnetic Interference (EMI) specifications of a number of radio manufacturers have identified cell phones as being a significant risk.

3. Definitions

SAMAA South African Model Aircraft Association
Mobile Phone Portable, or cell phone

4. Policy

The SAMAA strongly recommends that: -

- All mobile phones be banned at the following locations at radio controlled model flying fields: -
 - i. The transmitter pound
 - ii. The pit area
 - iii. The flight line
- High power phones with an add-on amplifier are not to be used within 30 metres of operating aircraft or transmitter

5. Guidance

- (a) With the widespread use of mobile phones and the benefits that they bring for general use and also for emergencies, it is not the intention to unreasonably restrict their use at model flying sites, but suggest that the following precautions be implemented.

- (b) It is anticipated that the layout of most flying fields will allow convenient areas to be available, such as public viewing areas or the car park, where mobile phones can be operated safely and in accordance with this Policy.
- (c) Consistent with the intent of this recommendation, a buffer zone should exist between where mobile phones are allowed and the location of any radio control transmitters in the transmitter pound, in the pit area, or on the flightline. It is recommended that all cell phones remain a minimum of two (5) metres, from any operating transmitter.
- (d) As each field layout is different, it is up to the local club management to decide how this policy should be actually and clearly implemented to ensure that it complies with these recommendation in a practical manner.
- (e) Mobile phones that are switched on radiate at regular intervals to maintain identification with the base station, not just when a call is in progress.
- (f) Due to the difficulty in identifying whether a mobile phone is switched on or not, it is recommended that the ban apply to all mobile phones being carried in or near the locations specified in Item 4 of this policy, and not just those that are switched on.

KFN