

Submission to: Regulatory requirements that impact on the safe use of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems, Unmanned Aerial Systems and associated systems.

Michael Fawcett – Operator of Map My Farm, affordable high resolution plant health imagery and aerial mapping.

I am 39 and have worked all of my life in technology as a mechanic, electronics technician and finally water treatment plant operator.

I have had a keen interest in drones and aerial photography long before the Sub 2kg commercial law came into effect. Once the law change occurred, I proceeded to get my ARN number and commence my Start-Up business in the innovative field of aerial mapping and photography. I have also pioneered the drone system in my fulltime workplace, monitoring dams and improving workplace safety by eliminating risk in operations.

I am a responsible and fully insured business owner. I have set up my own Job Safety Analysis system and operate according to CASA 101. I have invested significant time and thousands of dollars (thanks to the law change it was not in the 10's of thousands). It has allowed me to start earning a small income to support my family and broaden my technological skill by experimenting with plant health imagery (NDVI) and high resolution aerial mapping.

I am frustrated that the \$8000+ I have just invested and the numerous hours I have spent away from my twin 1 year old and 4 year old daughters may have been a complete waste. I am also disappointed that I may not be able to provide a cost saving plant health imagery service (even for free) to my friend who is a struggling dairy farmer affected by the Murray Goulburn milk price cut.

Certainly some kind of regulation is warranted and the current and simple system of 120m height, 30m from people and property etc is simple and most people will follow these rules. As stated in other submissions, changing the laws back will not stop the rogue recreational operators performing risky acts of stupidity. No commercial drone operator in their right mind would be silly enough to risk fines or lose their ARN. It is also quite detrimental to the government's push for innovation and start up entrepreneurship, putting a huge red tape barrier between law abiding operators that simply cannot afford the week off work and 10k bill associated with becoming a fully RPAS licenced operator. The law change has also made the innovative technology more affordable to hard working people like myself and struggling farmers in the agriculture industry, with myself and other operators now able to provide the service at a price that is reasonable and is actually value for money.

No matter what the law is with regard to commercial drones less than 2kg, changing the laws back will not stop unsafe non-commercial operators and recreational users operating unsafely, all it will achieve is putting safe law abiding operators like myself out of business.