
Notice of Motion (Use of drones for filming near seabirds)

In accordance with Standing Orders, please place the following Notice of Motion on the agenda for the Waitākere Ranges Local Board meeting being held on 23 August 2018.

Recommendation/s

That the Waitākere Ranges Local Board:

- a) adopt the DOC “Best practice guidance to help minimise disturbance when flying your drone around birds” (Attachment A) with appropriate modifications to apply to beaches and parks under the governance of the Local Board.
- b) invite Regional Parks to similarly adopt the DOC “Best practice guidance to help minimise disturbance when flying your drone around birds”.

Background

The Waitākere Ranges Local Board encourages the use of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area for filming and sees this as an appropriate economic activity for the area. The Board receives and approves many filming applications each year.

The Board has had several applications recently involving the use of drones for filming on beaches where there are known to be endangered seabirds including dotterels.

While we have a dotterel guideline for Te Henga, we do not have one for other beaches where dotterels nest and frequent and the Te Henga guideline does not cover drones. A general environmental guideline to protect environments and wildlife is under development but does not currently exist.

While we can direct filming away from nesting areas, drones pose a particular problem for shorebirds who can be highly disturbed by drones in the air.

As an immediate guide, the Local Board proposes the adoption of the DOC Guideline with appropriate modifications for Auckland Council.

Signatories:

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Mover	Sandra Coney
Secunder	Saffron Toms

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/apply-for-permits/drone-use-on-conservation-land/flying-drones-near-birds/>

Flying drones near birds

Best practice guidance to help minimise disturbance when flying your drone around birds.

Flying drones in the vicinity of birds can be highly disturbing for them. Even though a bird might not appear to be disturbed, it could be quite stressed.

It is an offence under the Wildlife Act 1953 to disturb or harm protected birds. See below for guidelines on how you can minimise disturbance to birds when flying your drone.

If you wish to fly a drone on public conservation land for any reason you must have authorisation from DOC. See [Commercial drone use](#) or [Recreational drone use](#) for more information.

Guidelines

To help minimise disturbance around birds follow this best practice guidance:

Drone users should:

- take off at least 100 m from any shorebird or seabird
- land their drone immediately if a bird circles or otherwise interacts with a drone in flight
- land their drone at the first sight of any shorebird or seabird being disturbed.

Drones users should **not**:

- fly closer than 50 m in any direction to protected shorebirds/seabirds on the shore, land or at sea
- fly more than three drones within 300m of any shorebird or seabird.

Questions

If you have any questions or concerns about flying your drone near birds contact [your local DOC office](#).

If you see or experience inappropriate drone use report it to your local DOC office or you can call our emergency hotline 0800 DOC HOT (0800 362 468).