# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## Proposed FIMS pricing model consultation 2026

### Will Airservices charge drone operators directly?

No.

Airservices is proposing to charge approved UAS Service Suppliers (USS) for access to FIMS. Drone operators will access Airservices FIMS services through their chosen USS rather than directly through Airservices.

### Will I have to pay to fly my drone?

Airservices is not proposing to charge drone operators directly under this pricing model.

USS providers may choose to recover some of their costs through their own pricing arrangements to drone operators. Individual USSs will determine their own costs to access their products and services, which may differ between each USS. Airservices does not administer or determine how USSs set prices for their own products and services.

### Will recreational drone and model aircraft operators be charged?

Airservices is not proposing direct charges for recreational drone or model aircraft operators as part of this pricing proposal. Recreational drone users are not the focus of the proposed pricing model.

We are still seeking feedback from these operators because the FIMS is expected to play an important role in the future management of drone operations in Australia.

### Why is Airservices introducing charges?

The Australian Government asked Airservices to develop and implement FIMS. Airservices has invested in the development of FIMS to support the safe integration of drones into Australian airspace.

The proposed pricing model is designed to recover costs gradually over time while supporting industry growth and encouraging early adoption of the system.

### Why are some operations subject to higher charges?

Operations near civil controlled aerodromes generally involve greater operational complexity and require additional coordination and authorisation processes.

Under the proposed model, charges to USSs would initially apply only to authorisations within 3 nautical miles of a civil controlled aerodrome.

## When will an Automated Airspace Authorisation (AAA) be charged?

An AAA is chargeable once a flight plan has been authorised within 3 nautical miles (NM) of one of the 28 participating aerodromes. If the authorised flight plan is withdrawn before the authorised flight end time, no charge will apply. If the authorisation remains active until the authorised flight period expires, the AAA will be charged, regardless of whether the flight occurred.

## Are there alternative ways to obtain an airspace authorisation?

Yes. Eligible operators may continue to submit applications for airspace authorisations through CASA's manual application process. During the Automated Airspace Authorisation (AAA) trial, eligible operators can also obtain authorisations through a participating Drone Safety App at the existing 10 participating airports.

## Why are there no proposed charges outside 3 NM?

The proposed introductory pricing is intended to support the growth of Australia's drone industry and minimise barriers to participation during the early stages of FIMS implementation.

Airservices is not proposing a per-flight authorisation fee for operations outside 3 NM of a civil controlled aerodrome during the initial phases of FIMS implementation.

## Will these prices remain the same forever?

No.

The proposed prices are introductory and will be reviewed periodically as the market, technology and regulatory environment evolves. Any future pricing changes would be considered through appropriate governance and stakeholder engagement processes.

## Is the FIMS pricing proposal part of Airservices' Long Term Pricing Agreement (LTPA) consultation?

No.

The proposed pricing approach for the Flight Information Management System (FIMS) is a separate consultation and sits outside Airservices' Long Term Pricing Agreement (LTPA) pricing proposal. The FIMS pricing consultation relates specifically to the provision of digital services to approved UAS Service Suppliers (USSs) that connect to the FIMS.

## Will the proposed FIMS charges affect fees paid by airlines to Airservices?

No.

The proposed FIMS pricing model does not apply to airlines, conventional aircraft operators, or aviation charges recovered through Airservices' LTPA arrangements. The proposal only relates to approved UAS Service Suppliers (USSs) accessing FIMS services and is intended to support the integration of uncrewed aircraft (drones) into Australian airspace.

## Is Airservices proposing to make FIMS mandatory?

No.

This consultation relates only to the proposed pricing approach for FIMS. Any future requirement for mandatory use of FIMS would be subject to separate government and regulatory consideration and would involve its own consultation processes.

## How will my feedback be used?

All feedback received during the consultation period will be reviewed and considered before the pricing model is finalised.

Airservices is seeking views on the proposed pricing structure, pricing levels and any potential impacts on industry participants.

## What is a UAS Service Supplier (USS)?

A USS is an organisation that provides digital services to drone operators, such as airspace information, flight planning tools and operational authorisations. Under the proposed model, USS providers connect to FIMS to facilitate the delivery of these FIMS services to drone operators.

Airservices will separately publish information outlining the technical requirements and assessment criteria for becoming a USS. New onboarding opportunities will commence with a priority onboarding round for existing Drone Safety Applications (DSAs) that wish to become USSs, with further progressive onboarding as part of our commitment to expanding access to FIMS. Any person or entity, including a drone operator, may choose to become a USS and connect to FIMS, provided they can meet the applicable technical, operational and assurance requirements.

## Will Airservices have access to my flight information?

FIMS is designed to support the safe and efficient management of drone operations by enabling the exchange of operational and airspace information between Airservices and approved UAS Service Suppliers (USSs).

The specific information exchanged through FIMS will depend on the services being provided and applicable regulatory requirements. Airservices will only collect, use and disclose information in accordance with applicable Australian laws and government requirements.

## How will my information be protected?

Protecting information and maintaining cyber security are critical design requirements for FIMS.

Airservices is committed to implementing appropriate security controls to protect information within FIMS and to support the confidentiality, integrity and availability of system data.

As part of accessing FIMS, USS providers will be required to meet security, technical and operational requirements established by Airservices and relevant regulators.

## Will Airservices share my information with other organisations?

Airservices will manage information in accordance with applicable privacy obligations and legal requirements.

Information will only be shared where authorised, required for service delivery, aviation safety purposes, regulatory obligations, or otherwise permitted by law.

## Will FIMS track recreational drone users?

This consultation is about the proposed pricing model for FIMS and does not propose new monitoring or tracking requirements for recreational drone users.

Any future regulatory or policy changes relating to participation in FIMS would be subject to separate government and regulatory consideration, including consultation with stakeholders.

## Is Sydney Harbour and surrounding areas (R407A/B) managed through FIMS?

No.

R407A/B (Sydney Harbour restricted areas) are administered by CASA and are not managed through FIMS. Operators must continue to use CASA's existing approval processes and CASA verified applications when seeking approval to operate in these areas.

## Is FIMS secure from cyber threats?

Cyber security has been a key consideration in the design and delivery of FIMS. Airservices will continue to monitor, maintain and enhance security controls as the system evolves to help protect the integrity of services and information exchanged through the platform.

Privacy and security are important considerations for Airservices. We welcome feedback on any privacy, security or data management matters that stakeholders believe should be considered as part of the implementation of FIMS.