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AIC 002/2021 A

Effective Date: 12-AUG-2021

Publication Date: 12-AUG-2021

CNL: AIC 002/2019 A

Operation of ultralight gyrocopters within Swiss airspace

1. General remarks

The possibility of registering ultralight gyrocopters in Switzerland was introduced on 15 JUL 2015.

Note: Outside Switzerland, aircraft corresponding to the Swiss category, "ultralight gyrocopters", include those types designated as "microlight", "ultralight", "Ultraleichtflugzeuge", "ultra-léger motorisé", etc.

Ultralight gyrocopters are aircraft that meet the following specifications:

- A **gyrocopter** (also referred to as autogyro or gyroplane), is a rotorcraft that functions in a similar manner to a helicopter. However, the rotor is set passively in motion by airflow instead of an engine (autorotation). The uplift is effected by the resistance of the rotor blade, the surface of which is angled towards the rear. Forward thrust is provided by a propeller engine similar to that of a fixed-wing aircraft.
- Valid certification in accordance with the German registration standards for gyrocopters (BUT) or British registration standard BCAR Section T, Light Gyroplanes. Certification by one of the following organisations is also recognised: Deutscher Aeroclub, Deutscher Ultraleichtflugverband, Austrocontrol and British Microlight Aircraft Association or equivalent regulation(s).
- The type is not validated by the FOCA.
- Noise is limited to 65.0 dB in accordance with ICAO Annex 16, Volume 1, Chapter 10, at maximum take-off weight (MTOW) of 600 kilograms.

Permit to fly, registration code:

- Ultralight gyrocopters entered in the Swiss aircraft register hold a permit to fly in a special category (valid exclusively in Swiss airspace).
- Ultralight gyrocopters are entered in the Swiss aircraft register with registration code HB-W..

2. Operation of HB-registered ultralight gyrocopters within Swiss airspace

Ultralight gyrocopters in all categories may be operated in accordance with the corresponding authorisations of the pilot, taking account of the provisions of the Standardised European Rules of the Air (SERA).

Minimum requirements for pilots:

- Valid EASA licence (at least LAPL [A or H])
- Valid EASA Medical (at least LAPL)
- Possession of the necessary valid foreign pilot's licence or authorisation for flying the ultralight gyrocopter in the country of registration
- Possession of national licence according Ordonnance 748.222.1 (Verordnung VABFP)

Operation conditions:

- The same regulations apply as for conventional light aircraft (use of airfield, minimum flight altitudes, flight regulations, etc.).
- Ultralight gyrocopters are not permitted to take-off from and land at Switzerland's national airports.
- Ultralight gyrocopters are not permitted to take-off from and land at mountain airfields.

3. Use of Swiss airspace by foreign ultralight gyrocopters

Special categories of aircraft without internationally recognised airworthiness certificates (in particular for microlight, ultralight, ultra-léger motorisé, etc.) may only be operated in the airspace of the country in which they are registered. Special permits for entry into Switzerland may be issued on a case by case basis.

In principle, for their operation in Switzerland, foreign ultralight gyrocopters require a special permit for the use of Swiss airspace.

Restrictions and duration of use:

- Intended use of Swiss airspace request a declaration to the authority (FOCA). The maximum duration of operation in Swiss airspace is maximum 2 Months per calendar year.
- Ultralight gyrocopters are not permitted to take-off from and land at Switzerland's national airports.
- If an annual authorization for use of Swiss airspace was issued before 30 JUN 2021, a new annual authorization can be issued on request. Nevertheless these annual authorization will be renewed only during the transition period which will end 30 JUN 2024.

Regulations concerning pilots / operating conditions:

- Possession of the necessary valid pilot's licence for flying the type of gyrocopter in the country of registration.
- Flights by pilots who only hold a national licence (e.g. microlight licence) may only be carried out in Swiss airspace zones G and E.
- Entry into control zones (CTR) for landing or take-off purposes requires a prior permit from the corresponding air traffic control authority (as a rule, possession of a valid on-board radiophone operator's licence is a prerequisite here).
- Pilots who hold a recognised EASA or ICAO licence may fly ultralight gyrocopters in Swiss airspace in accordance with the relevant Swiss provisions in the same way as normal registered aircraft.

Flight plans and customs formalities:

For cross-border flights, pilots are required to issue a flight plan and use an airport that handles customs formalities.

Required documentation for issuing a special permit:

- An airworthiness certificate or permit to fly from the country in which the aircraft is registered
- A certificate of registration
- A noise certificate with indication of measurement procedure in accordance with ICAO Annex 16, Volume1, Chapter 10
- A certificate of insurance
- An airworthiness documentation (from the country in which the aircraft is registered)
- A maintenance record

Applications for special permits for the use of Swiss airspace shall be submitted to:

Federal Office of Civil Aviation
Swiss Aircraft Registry
3003 Bern

E-mail: aircraftregistry@bazl.admin.ch

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