

Definition of model clubs and associations

European Model Flying Union (EMFU), 14 July 2025

Objective: clarify “legally established” – when is a group of people eligible to apply for an Article 16 Authorisation (conditions/criteria)?

Article 2(10) of Regulation 2019/947:

Current text: ‘*model aircraft club or association*’ means an organisation legally established in a Member State for the purpose of conducting leisure flights, air displays, sporting activities, competition activities using UAS;

EMFU Proposal: ‘*model aircraft association or club*’ means a not-for-profit organisation that is legally established in a Member State. The purpose of such organisations is to provide a framework for conducting leisure flights, air displays, sporting activities, educational activities or competition activities using UAS and to represent the interests of model aircraft clubs and members engaged in such activities;

Background/explanation

There are no EU rules on establishing clubs or associations – this is regulated by the Member States. Member State rules for this vary. In some Member States official registration of clubs or associations is required (either generally, or above a certain budget or members threshold or to gain specific legal rights). Others do not require official registration but define a set of requirements (such as a regular assembly of members and formally agreed statutes) to enable a club or association to have legal personality. It’s important that any specification of model aircraft club or association respects these different approaches.

The main criteria that can be found across Member State legislation to define associations or clubs are that:

- 1) These are **legally established** under the rules of that Member State;
- 2) These organisations operate on a **not-for-profit basis**. Generally, not-for-profit means that any revenue and profits generated are used to pursue the organization's objectives and is not distributed to members or stakeholders. This is to be determined under the rules of each Member State. Note that there is currently no definition in EU law of “not-for-profit” and some Member States define this broadly as “in the public interest”.

A further important characteristics of model aircraft associations and clubs is that:

- 3) The **purpose** of these organisations is to provide a framework to enable members conducting leisure flights, air displays, sporting activities, educational activities or competition activities using UAS and representing the interests of members and model aircraft clubs engaged in such activities;

The EMFU is of the view that, to reduce workload and expenses, the preferred addressee of an Article 16 should be national/regional associations rather than individual local clubs. We therefore propose to reverse the terms “clubs and associations” throughout the Regulation (i.e. refer to “associations and clubs”). The organisational structure of the model flying community in a small number of Member States may lead to a preference to issue Article 16 Authorisations at the level of individual clubs. Whether this is the case should be determined together with the model flying community in these Member States.