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Light aircraft in Switzerland - Clarification

The category light aircraft includes all aircraft that are not subject to EASA regulations by reason of their weight. These are also known as ultralight aircraft (and also include Ecolight aircraft and ultralight gyrocopters).

Unpowered or electrically powered gliders, kites, parachutes, tethered balloons, parachutes and unmanned aircraft are classed as special category aircraft in Switzerland and are not subject to the same rules as light aircraft, nor are they entered in the Swiss register. Combustion engine gliders are prohibited in Switzerland.

1. Light Aircraft registered in Switzerland

1.1 Licensing:

- Aircraft powered by electric motors and piloted by aerodynamic controls and gyrocopters powered by thermal or electric motors are subject to the licensing requirements of Annex 2 (subcategory ultralight) of the DETEC Ordinance on the Airworthiness of Aircraft (AAwO, SR 748.215.1).
- Aeroplanes with thermal engines and aerodynamic controls are subject to the licensing requirements of Annex 1 (subcategory ecolight) of the AAwO.

1.1.1 Authorisation to pilot an aircraft:

- A national licence in accordance with the DETEC Ordinance on Flight Crew Licences and Authorisations not regulated on a Europe-Wide Basis (FCLAO, SR 748.222.1).
- A valid EASA medical certificate (minimum LAPL class)

1.1.2 Operational requirements:

- The above-mentioned light aircraft may operate in all classes of airspace in accordance with the pilot rating and in compliance with the provisions of SERA and national provisions.
- Gyrocopters are not permitted to take off or land on mountain landing sites.

2. Light aircraft registered abroad

2.1 Licensing and flight clearances:

Special category aircraft without an internationally recognised airworthiness certificate (microlight, ultralight, motorised ultralight, ULM etc.) may in principle only be operated within the airspace of the country in which they are licensed. Special permission allowing such aircraft to enter Swiss airspace may be granted on a case-by-case basis.

Restrictions and periods of use

- In principle, a special permit is required to operate light aircraft registered abroad in Switzerland and to use Swiss airspace. The list of aircraft requiring a permit is published on the FOCA website.
- Such aircraft may be operated in Swiss airspace for up to two months per calendar year. Only the following combinations are permitted:
 - 1 month and 4 weeks en bloc/separately;
 - 1 month and 30 days en bloc/separately;
 - 4 weeks en bloc/separately and 30 days individually/separately;

2.2 Authorisation to pilot and aircraft:

For persons resident in Switzerland:

- A national licence in accordance with the DETEC Ordinance on Flight Crew Licences and Authorisations not regulated on a Europe-Wide Basis (FCLAO, SR 748.222.1) **and**
- a valid EASA medical certificate (at least LAPL class)

For persons resident abroad:

- A valid foreign light aircraft licence issued by the state of registration of the aircraft used, **or**
- a national licence in accordance with the DETEC Ordinance on Flight Crew Licences and Authorisations not regulated on a Europe-Wide Basis (FCLAO, SR 748.222.1) **and** a valid EASA medical certificate (minimum LAPL class).

2.3 Operational requirements:

- The above-mentioned light aircraft may operate in all classes of airspace according to the pilot rating and in compliance with SERA provisions and national provisions.
- Foreign qualifications are valid for the use of aeronautical radio communication systems on board aircraft which the pilot is entitled to operate with the licence issued by the country which also issued the qualification in question.
- Gyrocopters are not permitted to take off or land on mountain landing sites.

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