



PRESS RELEASE

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Consumer awareness: Segways and Drones

Segways and Drones have grown in popularity recently and their dropping prices means that they are becoming more accessible for purchase by the general public. As these items may be attractive Christmas gifts for consumers in Gibraltar, the Office of Fair Trading, in conjunction with HM Customs, the Civil Aviation Authority and the Gibraltar Regulatory Authority, would like to raise public awareness regarding these products to avoid any disappointments over the festive season.

Segways

Self-balancing two-wheeled electrically-powered personal transport vehicles known as 'segways' and equivalents are prohibited from being imported into Gibraltar as per Schedule 1 of the Imports and Exports (Control) regulations 1987. This means that they are not permitted to be imported into Gibraltar. Anyone attempting to import such a vehicle or vehicles is contravening the law and will, therefore, have these detained and subsequently confiscated by HM Customs.

As prohibited imports, this also means that the use of segways or equivalents within Gibraltar is illegal, regardless of whether these have already been imported into Gibraltar and regardless of whether they are to be used in public areas or on private property. The authorities may, therefore, seize any segways or equivalents found to be in possession within Gibraltar.

Segways are not the only prohibited imports in Gibraltar. You can familiarise yourself with other prohibited imports on the Government's Gibraltar laws website:

www.gibraltarlaws.gov.gi/articles/1987s006.pdf

Drones

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), otherwise known as "Drones", "Quadcopters" or "Octocopters", are now widely available for sale to the general public. Although not classed as prohibited or restricted imports, their use locally is subject to the Civil Aviation (Air Navigation) Regulations 2009 and they cannot be used without specific authorisation from the Director of Civil Aviation in Gibraltar to fly them.

Although largely advertised as "toys", UAVs are considered to be aircraft by the laws of Gibraltar. As such, any person operating a UAV must ensure that it shall not recklessly or negligently cause



or permit the UAV to endanger any person or property.

To gain the DCA's permission, applicants will be required to prove that they have successfully attended a recognized piloting course, have adequate insurance to cover the flying of the UAV and have considered, and mitigated, all risks associated with the flight.

The Director of Civil Aviation commented: "While buying such equipment is easy, it must be remembered that a poorly operated small unmanned aircraft, weighing several kilograms and being flown at a couple of hundred feet above the ground, is a potential killer if it falls to earth! Equally, given the proximity of aircraft operating from the Airfield, any activity by Unmanned Aerial Vehicles must be carefully coordinated with Air Traffic Control. Therefore, it is extremely important that anyone considering buying such equipment for use in Gibraltar contacts the Civil Aviation Office at dca@gibraltar.gov.gi to receive advice on the limitations in place."

You can find a useful FAQ about buying a drone from the Civil Aviation Authority on the news section of our website: <http://oft.gov.gi/index.php/news>

Additionally, the radio frequency and transmitter power used to control drones needs to be compliant with the Communications Act so that it does not cause harmful interference to other radio systems. For advice on radio frequencies please contact the radio communications team at the Gibraltar Regulatory Authority by emailing typeapproval@gra.gi

Similarly, the use of UAVs with cameras also raises certain data protection issues which need to be considered. For advice on the potential data protection implications please contact the information rights team at the Gibraltar Regulatory Authority by emailing privacy@gra.gi

The public is urged to take stock of the guidance set out above in order to avoid any disappointments this Christmas.