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Operation of foreign micro-light aircraft within Swiss airspace

1. General remarks

It has been possible to register aircraft in the "Eco-light" category in Switzerland since 1 July 2005.

Note: Outside Switzerland, aircraft that correspond to the Swiss category, "Ecolight", include those designated as "microlight", "ultralight", "Ultraleichtflugzeuge", "ultra-léger motorisé" (ULM), etc.

In addition, with effect from 15 July 2015, ultralight aircraft with an electric motor may also be registered in Switzerland.

Ecolight aircraft are aircraft meeting the following specifications:

- Three-axis fixed-wing aircraft.
- Valid certification in accordance with German certification standards LTF-UL.
- Compliance with special Swiss certification requirements.
- Type officially recognised/validated by FOCA.

Ecolight aircraft with an electric motor are aircraft meeting the following specifications:

- Three-axis fixed-wing aircraft.
- Valid certification in accordance with German certification standards LTF-UL or British certification standard BCAR Section S. A certification by one of the following organisations is also recognised: Deutscher Aeroclub, Deutscher Ultraleichtflugverband, and British Microlight Aircraft Association.
- Type is not validated by FOCA.

Flight authorization

Ecolight aircraft and ultralight aircraft with an electric motor entered in the Swiss aircraft register do hold an airworthiness certificate in the special category (valid exclusively in Swiss airspace).

Registration code

- Ecolight with combustion engine and aircraft with an electrically powered engine: HB-W...
- Ecolight touring motor gliders: HB-5000 to HB-5499
- Ecolight motorised gliders: HB-5500 to HB-5599

Minimum licence requirements for pilots

A valid pilot's licence (RPPL or EASA LAPL).

Flight operation

- The same regulations apply as for conventional light aircraft (use of airfield, minimum flight altitudes, flight regulations, etc.).
- Electrically operated ultralight aircraft are not permitted to operate to or from Switzerland's national airports.

2. Use of Swiss airspace by foreign microlight aircraft

Special categories aircraft without internationally recognised airworthiness certificates (for microlight, ultralight, ultra-léger motorisé, etc.) may only be operated in the airspace of the country in which they are registered.

For operation in Switzerland, foreign ultralight aircraft require a special permit for the use of Swiss airspace. This does not apply to foreign ultralight aircraft corresponding to a type already approved for operation in Switzerland: such aircraft may be operated in Switzerland without an explicit special permit.

The list of microlight / ecolight aircraft approved for use in, or permitted to enter Switzerland may be viewed by clicking on the following link:

www.bazl.admin.ch > Portal for Specialists > Aircraft > Airworthiness > Foreign aircraft that belong to special categories > Microlights entitled to fly in Switzerland

Restrictions and duration of operation

- The Swiss airspace may only be used on an occasional basis; the aircraft may not be kept permanently in Switzerland.
- Electrically operated ultralight aircraft are not permitted to operate to or from Switzerland's national airports.

Technical specifications

- A Valid certification in accordance with regulations LTF-UL, BCAR-S.
- The models approved for entry into Switzerland are entered in a list compiled and constantly updated by the FOCA.

Regulations concerning pilots

- Hold the necessary pilot's licence for flying the type of microlight aircraft in the country of registration.
- Pilots only holding a national licence (e.g. microlight licence) may only fly in Swiss airspace zones G and E.
- Entry into control zones (CTR) for landing and takeoff purposes requires a prior permit (PPR) from the local air traffic control authority (as a rule, possession of a valid on-board radiophone operator's licence is a prerequisite).
- Pilots holding a recognised EASA or ICAO licence may fly microlight aircraft 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.

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