

EXEMPTION FROM SECTION 603.01 AND PARAGRAPH 603.06(b) OF THE CANADIAN AVIATION REGULATIONS

Pursuant to subsection 5.9(2) of the *Aeronautics Act*, and after taking into account that the exemption is in the public interest and is not likely to adversely affect aviation safety or security, I hereby exempt **persons conducting a special aviation event, pilots of a single aircraft, and pilots conducting formation flyovers**, from the requirements set out in section 603.01 and paragraph 603.06(b) of the *Canadian Aviation Regulations* (CARs).

The above-mentioned provisions are reproduced in **Appendix A**.

INTERPRETATION

This exemption includes commonly used industry verbiage. For clarity, in this exemption:

“additional crew member” means a person who is assigned to duty in an aircraft during the flyover

“dynamic manoeuvre” means an abrupt manoeuvre, crossing manoeuvre or opposing manoeuvre (definition based on Federal Aviation Administration [FAA] Order 8900.1 Volume 3, Chapter 6, Section 1).

“flyover” means intentionally flying an aircraft or a formation of aircraft in a non-aerobatic manner over a planned event before an invited assembly of persons (definition based on FAA Order 8900.1 Volume 3, Chapter 6, Section 1).

“flyover spectator area” means one or more areas in which the invited assembly of persons will be positioned to view the flyover.

“formation” means when two or more aeroplanes under the command of a formation leader are flown with reference to other aeroplanes and are within 500 feet of the referenced aeroplane. An aircraft being towed, and the aircraft towing it, are not considered to be in formation flight

“formation leader” means the pilot-in-command of the lead aircraft of a formation

“NATO formation wings standard” means a pilot who has graduated from a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military aeroplane training stream which includes training and demonstrating proficiency in formation flying to a solo standard (e.g. RCAF high-performance stream on the CT-156 Harvard II)

“industry formation credential” means either:

- (A) A Transport Canada “Statement of Aerobatic Competency” (form 26-0307) or a FAA (United States) “Statement of Aerobatic Competency” (form 8710-7) with an activity endorsement for Formation Aerobatics, Non-aerobatic formation, or Dynamic Manoeuvring – Formation; or

(B) A valid Formation and Safety Team (FAST) or Formation Flying, Inc. (FFI) card. As pilot-in-command, the pilot shall conduct the formation non-aerobatic manoeuvres in accordance with the formation level qualification (e.g. wing pilot, lead pilot).

“**missing man formation**” means an aerial salute performed as part of a flyover of an aeroplane at a funeral or memorial event, where one aeroplane leaves the formation while the rest of the formation continues in level flight until all aeroplanes are out of sight.

“**prior coordination**” means the pilot-in-command of a single aircraft flyover, or the formation leader of a formation flyover, has notified the affected ATS unit(s) prior to the flyover, and both agree to procedures for the deconfliction of the flyover aircraft and non-participating aircraft.

“**type**” means a specific make and model of aircraft, including modifications thereto that do not change its handling or flight characteristics.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this exemption is to allow **persons to conduct a special aviation event, and suitably qualified pilots-in-command to perform flyovers**, at funerals, holiday ceremonies, celebrations, weddings, and sporting events without having a Special Flight Operations Certificate-Special Aviation Event (SFOC).

Unlike aerial demonstrations at air shows, the purpose of a flyover is not to demonstrate a pilot’s flying skills or aircraft capabilities, but rather to pay an aerial tribute to an activity occurring on the ground.

APPLICATION

This exemption applies to **persons conducting a special aviation event and pilots operating an aircraft who hold one of the following:**

- a valid Canadian pilot licence/permit;
- Foreign License Validation Certificate; or
- a valid foreign private pilot, commercial pilot, or airline transport pilot licence accompanied by a valid medical certificate, provided that the licence and certificate meets or exceeds the ICAO licensing standards outlined in Annex 1 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation – Personnel Licensing.

This exemption permits such individuals to perform flyovers in front of or over an invited assembly of persons, provided that:

- The special aviation event is at a funeral, holiday ceremony, celebration, wedding, or sporting event;
- The aircraft does not have operating conditions restricting flight over any built-up area, or over an open-air assembly; and
- No more than five (5) aeroplanes are operated, in the case of a formation flyover.

This exemption ceases to apply to any person who breaches a condition of this exemption.

CONDITIONS

This exemption is subject to the following conditions:

For all flyovers:

1. The pilot-in-command shall hold the appropriate pilot certificate/licence/permit and ratings appropriate for the aircraft to be operated and shall not be acting in this capacity on the basis of a student pilot permit.
2. The pilot-in-command of an aircraft operating pursuant to this exemption must have a minimum of 10 hours of flight time experience in the type of aircraft used.
3. The pilot-in command shall not carry passengers and shall ensure that additional crew members hold a pilot certificate/licence/permit for the category and class of aircraft used.
4. The pilot-in-command of an aircraft operating under a special certificate of airworthiness shall comply with the operating conditions of their aircraft. Pilots of foreign aircraft operating pursuant to a validation of a foreign flight permit shall comply with the operating conditions of their aircraft, provided those operating limitations do not limit or change the conditions of the Canadian validation.
5. Pilots shall not overfly the assembly of persons below 1,000 feet above the highest obstacle located within a horizontal distance of 2,000 feet from the aircraft.
6. Pilots shall ensure that no object is dropped from the aircraft.
7. The pilot-in-command shall not operate an aircraft where the ground visibility is less than three (3) statute miles.
8. The pilot-in-command shall maintain the required flight visibility and distance from cloud as prescribed in section 602.114 and 602.115 of the CARs.
9. Pilots shall not conduct aerobatic manoeuvres nor conduct dynamic manoeuvres.
10. The pilot-in-command shall ensure that prior coordination with the appropriate Air Traffic Services (ATS) unit is conducted, where the flyover is to be conducted within Class C or D airspace, or a Class E control zone.

11. The pilot-in-command of a single aircraft, or the formation leader or other designated formation member of a formation of aircraft shall provide, in writing, the following information to Transport Canada General Flight Standards at airshows-spectaclesaeriens@tc.gc.ca no later than 48 hours after the event:
 - a. The purpose, location and date of the flyover(s);
 - b. The approximate number of spectators at each location;
 - c. The name, address, telephone number and e-mail address of each pilot-in-command and crew member;
 - d. The type and registration marks of each aircraft;
 - e. A site diagram of the flyover site on a 1:24,000 topographic chart or satellite image, clearly indicating at least the following:
 - i) The location of the invited open-air assembly of persons gathered at the event(s); and
 - ii) The ingress route, flyover route, and egress route;
 - f. If conducting a formation flyover, information that outlines their experience flying in formation in the aircraft intended for the flight, which may include a legible copy of each pilot-in-command's industry formation credential or evidence of a NATO formation wings standard qualification; and
 - g. For foreign aircraft with non-standard flight authorizations, the Canadian validation of the aircraft's foreign flight authority pursuant to section 507.05 of the CARs.

Additionally, for all formation flyovers:

12. The pilot-in-command of each aeroplane shall be experienced, as pilot-in-command, in flying in formation in the aircraft intended for the flight.
13. The pilot-in-command of an aeroplane to be used in a formation flyover of four (4) aircraft or less shall have practiced the formation manoeuvres that will be performed during the flyover with the other members of the formation within the previous 30 days prior to the flyover.
14. The pilot-in-command of an aeroplane to be used in a formation flyover of five (5) aircraft shall have practiced the formation manoeuvres that will be performed during the flyover with the other members of the formation within the previous 15 days prior to the flyover.
15. All pilots-in-command shall agree on a predetermined ingress route, flyover route and egress route.
16. All formation leaders shall ensure that, when more than 3 (three) sequential formation flyovers are planned:
 - a. a ground observer is present in or immediately adjacent to the flyover spectator area and has the ability to communicate with the aircraft; and

- b. that the ground observer attends the preflight briefing and is knowledgeable on the planned flight and routes
- 17. All pilots-in-command shall ensure that, except for the aeroplane leaving the formation as part of a missing man formation, all aeroplanes are in straight and level flight or with the wings level in normal climb when overflying the flyover spectator area. Any other formation configuration changes within 3 nautical miles of the flyover spectator area, over a built-up area or open-air assembly of persons are prohibited.
- 18. When performing a missing man formation, the pilot-in-command of the aeroplane leaving the formation shall turn away from the formation prior to, or after, having overflowed the assembly of persons. The pilot-in-command of the aeroplane leaving the formation shall not rejoin the formation until all aeroplanes in the formation are greater than 3 nautical miles from the flyover spectator area and not over a built-up area or open-air assembly of persons.
- 19. Formation leaders shall ensure that a minimum spacing of ½ statute miles between flights is maintained for a series of sequential formation flights. Formation leaders shall ensure that preflight coordination and deconfliction procedures are briefed and agreed upon when sequential flights are scheduled.
- 20. The pilot-in-command of an aeroplane to be used in a formation flyover shall attend a briefing or review conducted by the formation leader covering at least the following subjects:
 - a. Designation of formation leader and alternate leaders, and selection of manoeuvres to be performed and their sequence
 - b. Formation positions
 - c. Alternate positions in case of aborts
 - d. Radio procedures and call signs
 - e. Visual signals
 - f. Expected speeds and power settings
 - g. Take-off and turn out
 - h. Join up and break
 - i. If there is an intent for an aeroplane to rejoin the formation during a missing man formation after breakout, the procedures for this manoeuvre
 - j. Any considerations with respect to the flight characteristics of different types of aeroplanes in the formation must be assessed and briefed. It is especially important to plan for and brief the limitations that will result when conducting a high-wing or biplane formation, or the mixing of high-wing/biplanes with low-wing in a formation
 - k. Emergency procedures, and
 - l. Ingress route, flyover route, and egress route

VALIDITY

This exemption is in effect from until the earliest of the following:

- a) April 30, 2026, at 23:59 (EDT);
- b) The date on which an amendment to the pertinent provisions related to this exemption come into force; or
- c) The date on which the exemption is cancelled in writing by the Minister where he is of the opinion that it is no longer in the public interest or is likely to adversely affect aviation safety or security.

DATED at Ottawa, Ontario, this 7th day of November 2025, on behalf of the Minister of Transport.

“Original signed by”

Félix Meunier
Director General, Civil Aviation
Transport Canada

APPENDIX A

Pertinent provisions of the *Canadian Aviation Regulations*

Certification Requirements for Special Aviation Events

603.01 No person shall conduct a special aviation event, other than a fly-in, unless the person complies with the provisions of a special flight operations certificate — special aviation event issued by the Minister under section 603.02.

Participant and Aircraft Eligibility

603.06 No person shall operate an aircraft or permit an aircraft to be operated in a special aviation event unless the person operating the aircraft and the aircraft

- (a) meet the eligibility requirements specified in section 623.06 of the *Special Flight Operations Standards*; and
- (b) are authorized to do so in a special flight operations certificate-special aviation event.