

# DRONE USER STUDY 2022

Key findings  
and results



## Foreword

The purpose of the Coverdrone Drone User Study 2022 was to gain a greater and more in-depth understanding of the needs of drone operators worldwide, determine how operators currently use their drones, and give them the opportunity to share their collective views on the future of the drone industry.

All drone users worldwide, regardless of whether they were a current Coverdrone customer or not, were invited to participate in the study in Q4 2022. We received an overwhelming response and support from the drone user community, with over 3,700 responses recorded. We would therefore like to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who took the time to complete the survey and the part they have played in giving us a holistic view of the drone industry today.

The intention is to use these initial results as a benchmark and re-run the Drone User Study on an annual basis to explore how drone usage and the needs of drone operators evolve over time.

This document outlines the key findings that came from the study.

## About Coverdrone

Coverdrone was the first insurer to offer specialist cover to commercial drone operators and is now the UK's largest drone insurance provider, offering market-leading and comprehensive policies for both commercial and recreational operators worldwide.

Our aim is simple. We want to offer a value for money and flexible policy for drone users that is easy to purchase, provides real peace of mind and protection should anything happen, and is underpinned by helpful and friendly expert advice and support at every step.

So whether you are a recreational or commercial drone user or you need cover for just one day or a full year, we've got you covered.

Visit [www.coverdrone.com](http://www.coverdrone.com) to find out more.



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## Gender



<b>84%</b>	Male
<b>14%</b>	Female
<b>1%</b>	Gender neutral
<b>&lt;1%</b>	Prefer not to say

Whilst we have detected a steady increase in female drone users in our own customer data over the last few years, according to the data of the Drone User Study 2022, males continue to significantly dominate the drone user market worldwide.

We will closely monitor this trend as we re-run the study annually, to identify if the gender gap starts to narrow over time.

<b>&lt;1%</b>	18 or younger	<b>15%</b>	50 to 59
<b>24%</b>	19 to 29	<b>13%</b>	60 or over
<b>31%</b>	30 to 39	<b>&lt;1%</b>	Prefer not to say
<b>16%</b>	40 to 49		

## Age

Nearly half of all drone users surveyed were aged between 30 and 49. By comparison, 1 in 4 drone users who completed the survey were 29 or under, whilst less than 30% were aged over 50.

Additionally, a greater proportion of commercial drone users stated they were under 49 years old (70%), compared to recreational drone users (64%) where the results were more evenly spread across the different age ranges.





## Geographical profile of respondents

United Kingdom		37%
Europe		21%
USA		35%
Asia		<2%
Africa		<1%
New Zealand		<1%
Canada		<2%
Australia		<2%
Other		1%

The study was open to drone users worldwide and whilst we did see responses from across the globe, the majority of participants were predominantly based in the United Kingdom, Europe and the United States of America.

Consideration to be given to how we can encourage further responses from other countries in future studies, to provide a more holistic and global view of drone users' thoughts and opinions.

# DRONE USAGE

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How operators are currently using their drones

“

## What type of drone user are you?

”



Nearly half of all drone users who took part in the study selected that they were recreational drone users only. This is compared to just over one in every five participants who are solely commercial drone users.

Furthermore, just over a quarter of respondents selected that they use drones both recreationally and commercially.

The study was open to drone users only. Therefore, any responses from individuals who selected 'I am not a drone user' were removed from the overall collated results to ensure accurate reporting.

Recreational (or 'hobby') drone user

**49** %

Commercial drone user

**21** %

Recreational and commercial drone user

**27** %

Not sure which category they fall into

**2** %

Not a drone user

**1** %

# 3 in 4

**drone users fly their drones at least part of the time for recreational and leisure reasons**

“

# How many drones do you currently have?

”

Nearly

# HALF

of drone users currently own more than one drone

Perhaps to be expected to give the nature of their use, we've identified a very polarised view between both recreational and commercial drone users here.

62% of recreational drone users who completed the study advised they currently own one drone. By contrast, the same percentage of commercial drone users advised that they owned more than one drone, with 20% advising they actually owned five or more.

There was very little disparity in results noted between different geographical regions.

3%

I do not currently own a drone



47%

One drone



36%

Two, three or four drones



13%

Five or more



1%

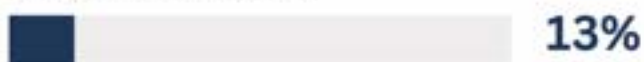
I hire or lease a drone



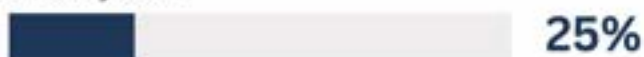
# “ How long have you (or your business) used drones? ”



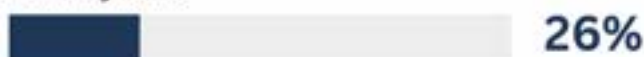
Less than 12 months



1 to 2 years



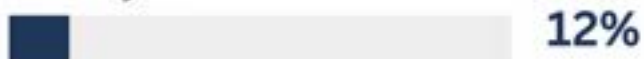
2 to 3 years



3 to 5 years



5 to 10 years



10 years +



Nearly two-thirds of respondents advised they have been using drones for less than three years.

By contrast, early adopters of drone usage (those users with 10 years' experience or more) currently represent just 2% of drone operators according to the results.

Commercial drone users continue to lead the way in terms of experience, with 19.2% advising they have used drones for five years or more, compared to just 8.2% of recreational drone users.

We would however expect this gap to naturally close in future studies, as continued advancements in drone technology make smaller beginner drones, like the DJI Mini 3, more accessible and affordable for recreational users.



“

## How often do you use your drone?

”

- 14%** Daily - weather permitting
- 30%** At least once a week
- 29%** Two or three times a month
- 16%** Monthly
- 7%** Every three months
- 4%** Less frequently
- <1%** Other

Nearly three out of four drone operators use their drones at least a couple of times each month, with once a week being the most common choice selected by respondents (30%).

Unsurprisingly, commercial drone operators tend to use their drones more frequently than recreational operators, with 18.7% recorded for daily use and 49% for weekly use, compared to 9.1% (daily) and 38.8% (weekly) for recreational users.

Interestingly, commercial drone users in Europe tend to use their drones more frequently than other countries, with 51.6% reportedly using their drones at least once a week.

By comparison, recreational users in the USA tend to use their drones more than other countries, with an impressive 58% of recreational drone users taking to the skies each week.



# “ What purpose(s) do you use your drone for? ”



Photography and fun/leisure are the most common purposes for drone use.

A quarter of Canadian respondents reportedly use their drones for agricultural purposes, followed by the UK (11%) and USA (9%).

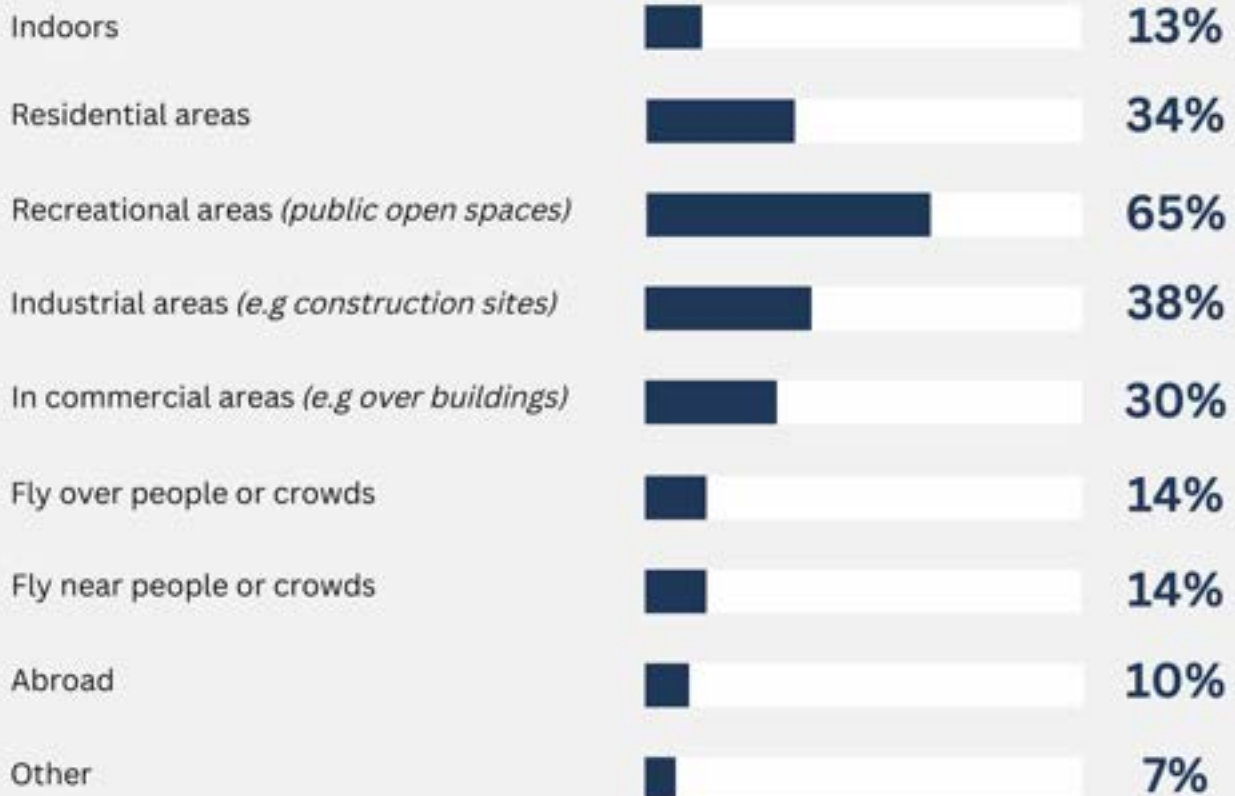
Furthermore, over one in ten respondents currently use drones for public safety and defence in the UK, USA and Canada, followed by Europe (5%).

Interestingly, over half of respondents who selected 'drone racing' are based in the USA.

'Other' reasons for drone usage ranged widely but quite a few respondents selected this option where they use drones for training and general practice. We'll add this as a specific category for future drone studies for adequate reporting.

**2 in 3**  
drone operators  
use their drones  
for photography

# Where do you fly your drone(s)?





# “ What time of the day do you typically fly your drone? ”

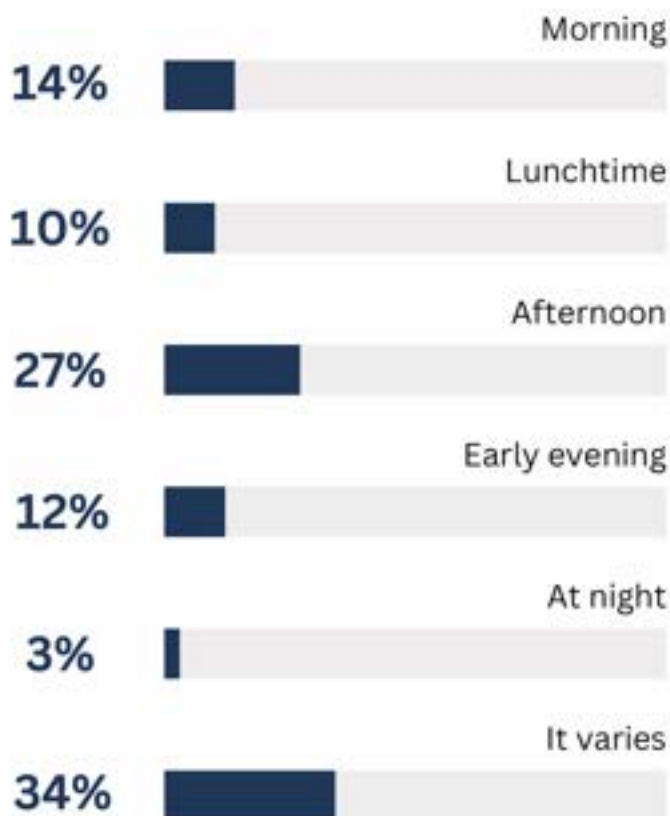
The results of this particular question were quite mixed, with one in every three respondents advising that the time of day they choose to fly varies.

When reviewing the results on a geographical basis, no real distinctions were also noted between countries.

Afternoons do appear to be the preferred time of day to fly, with just over a quarter of respondents selecting this option.

Perhaps unsurprising, with the impact to VLOS, flying at night scored low with only 3%.

Early evenings also scored fairly low, with just 12%. This could however be impacted by shorter daylight hours for many countries over the winter months. It would certainly be interesting to see how this statistic changes if the study was completed over the summer period.



# TRAINING, INSURANCE AND REGULATION

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# “ Have you ever undertaken any formal training or courses in drone flying? ”



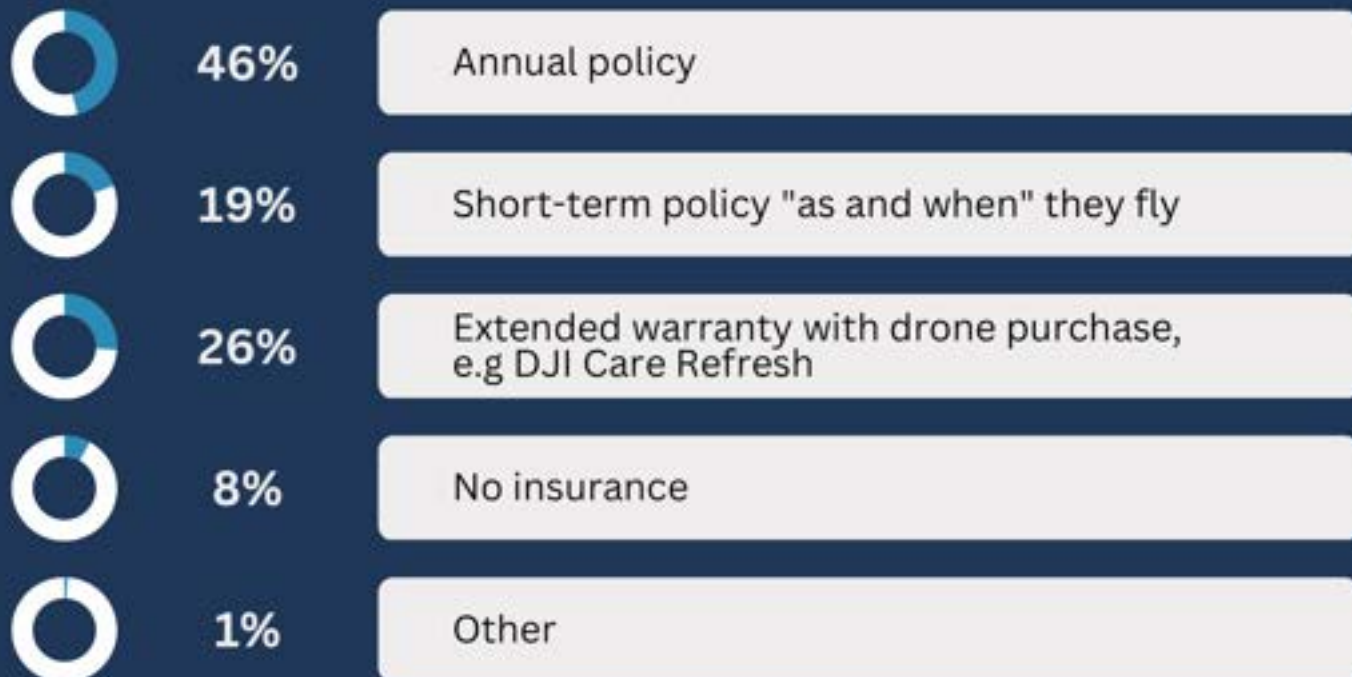
Over half of all respondents selected that they have participated in and attended some form of training in-person. This could be either through formal recognised qualifications or courses, or through practical learning.

By comparison, only 16% of respondents selected that they have never taken any form of formal or practical training.

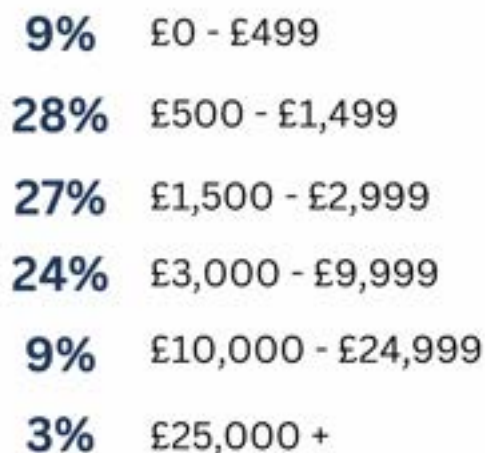
Interestingly, one in five respondents also advised that they regularly watch videos on YouTube to upskill their knowledge of drone flying.



“ Do you insure your drone(s) and any associated equipment? ”

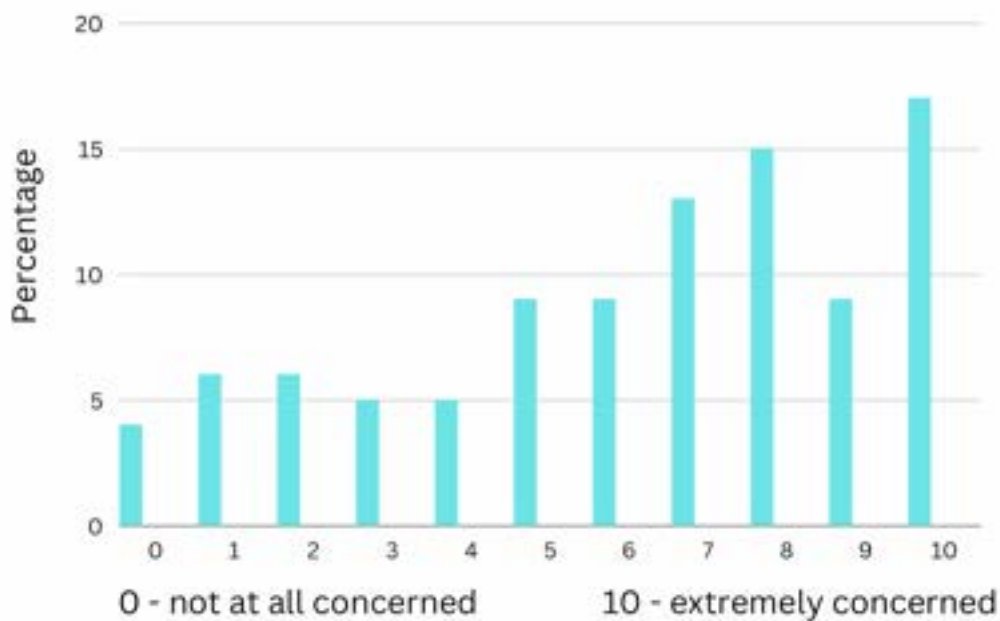


“ What is the approximate value of your drone(s) and all associated equipment, including camera, gimbals and extra batteries etc? ”





“ How concerned are you about the risk of injuring another person or causing damage to someone’s property when you fly? ”



The average rating of all respondents when asked how concerned they were about the risk of injuring another person or causing damage to someone’s property when they fly was **6.3**, with nearly two-thirds of respondents awarding this question a score of 'five' or higher.



## When thinking about the drone laws and regulations in the country where you live, which of the words or phrases below do you agree with?

It's apparent that drone users understand the need for laws and regulations around drone usage, with 41% of respondents selecting that they thought the laws and regulations in their own country were *'reasonable'*.

However, more negatively-perceived terms such as *'strict'*, *'confusing'* and *'excessive'* were also commonly selected from the list provided.

As each country has their own applicable laws and regulations, we were really keen to delve deeper and understand how views differed between geographical areas. Perhaps the most contrasting view can be shown between Europe and the UK and USA. Over 40% of respondents from Europe believe the laws and regulations to be *'confusing'*, compared to 27% in the UK and 16% in USA.

It's also encouraging to see the *'I'm not concerned, I just ignore the rules'* option was the least popular answer amongst the respondents.

41%	Reasonable
27%	Strict
26%	Confusing
25%	Excessive
25%	Easy to understand
20%	Complicated
18%	Useful
17%	Fair
13%	Nonsensical
13%	Moderate
10%	Thorough
1%	Other
<1%	I'm not concerned, I just ignore the rules



# “ What’s the one bit of advice you would give to a beginner drone flyer? ”

Who knows what better advice to give a beginner drone user than an experienced operator who has been in their shoes before? That's why we asked respondents to share their words of wisdom and give some useful pointers to those just starting out. Here are just a few of the great comments and advice that were shared with us...



The use of drones can easily cause injury to people. Use them with care and always abide by the relevant laws and regulations.



Before taking off, set your return home point. Ensure that the GPS signal reaches more than 4 bars and the number of satellites reaches 10.



Start in a nice empty field to just get a feel for it and always fly in visual line of sight.



If you fly over water, change the memory card often as if you crash and sink your drone, you could end up losing all your footage!



Practice, practice and practice.



Find someone that already flies and knows what there doing to support and offer advice. Most are only too happy to help.



Be aware of large birds during the breeding season!



Take your time to build up your flying skills. Don't panic, just let go of the sticks, take stock and then carry on.



The best time to fly drones is in the early morning or just before sunset, when the sun is softer and the pictures are more beautiful.

And of course, our personal favourite...



Insure your drone for the peace of mind which will enable you to fly freely and without worrying



# ABOUT THE FUTURE

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“ Do you intend to purchase a new or second-hand drone in the next 12 months? ”

Yes



51%

No



24%

Maybe



25%



Looking **back** over the last 12 months, how has your drone usage changed compared to previous years?

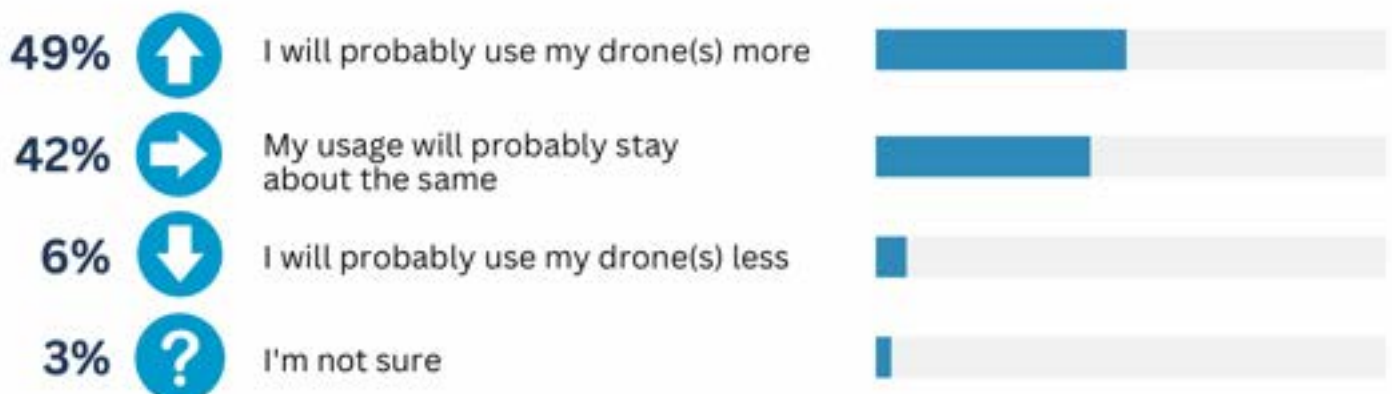


According to the study results, drone usage does not appear to have reduced over the last 12 months, with 43% of respondents advising their drone usage has stayed about the same, whilst an impressive 40% of respondents report to use their drones more.

Looking **ahead** to the next 12 months, how do you feel your drone usage will change?



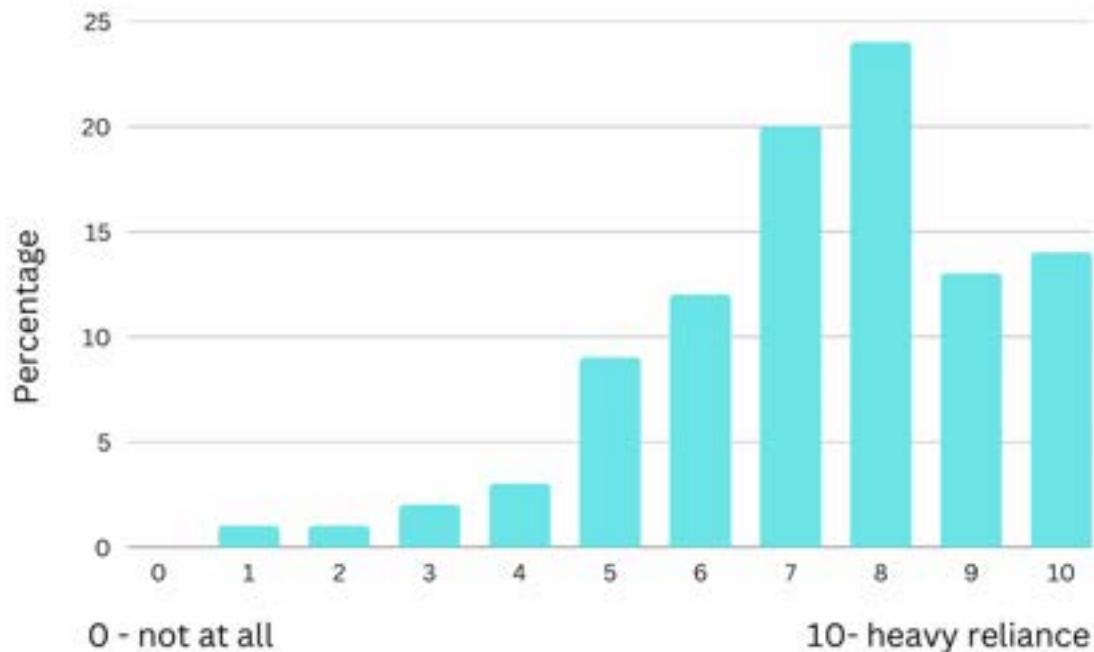
When thinking about their likely drone usage in 2023, nearly half of the respondents thought they will use their drones more this year!



“

In 10 years' time, how much do you believe society will rely on drone technology in their daily lives?

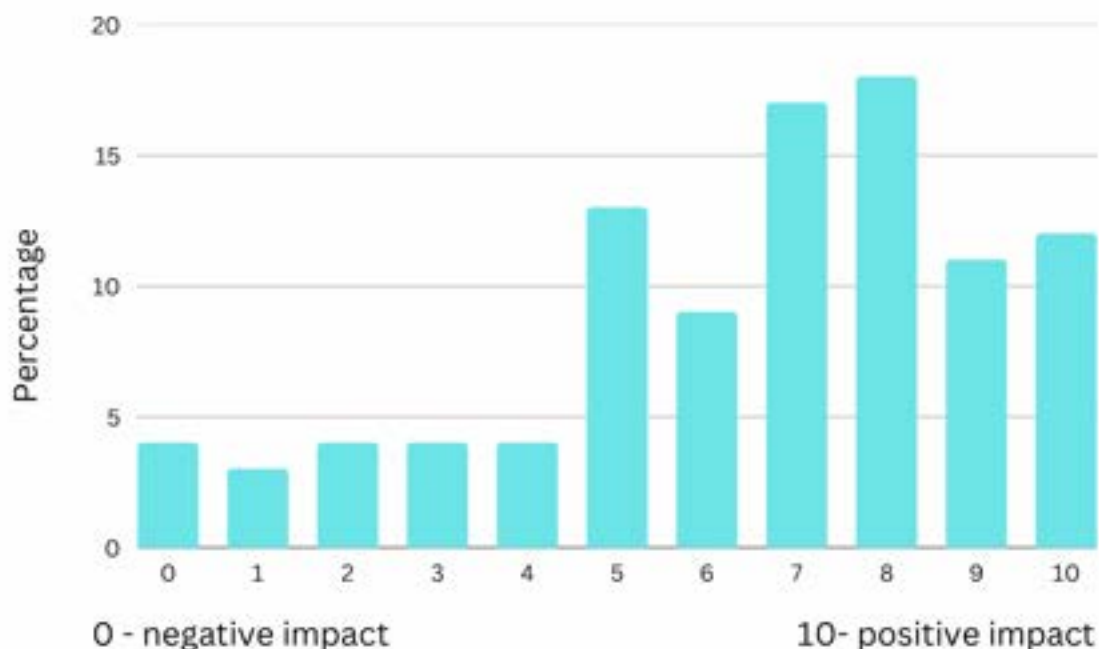
”



**7.3%**  
AVERAGE  
RATING

It's clear the majority of drone users believe society will rely on drone technology in our everyday lives in 10 years' time, with nearly three-quarters of all respondents scoring this question a seven or higher!

“ In your opinion, what impact do you feel the drone industry has on the environment? ”



The impact of the drone industry on the environment has always been a hotly-debated topic, so we were really keen to understand the views and opinions of drone users themselves. Interestingly, 80% of respondents scored this question a five or higher, indicating drone users, on the whole, believe any impact from drone usage to the environment is likely to be positive, rather than negative.

**6.5%**  
AVERAGE  
RATING



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