

## **Code of Practice for Filming in the County of AlUla**

### **Final V6 – 15<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

#### **1. Introduction**

The objectives of this Code of Practice are:

1. To inform and educate producers, location scouts and other members of the production team<sup>1</sup> about filming etiquette across the County of AlUla
2. To clearly communicate all of Film AlUla's requirements and expectations, before, during and after filming in AlUla.

This Code of Practice provides important information and advice regarding all types of filming. The production team must familiarize themselves with this document to better inform key decisions, ensure they can minimize disruptions, issues or challenges during pre-production and production, and ensure they adhere to any relevant obligations to operate within the law. All relevant information should be communicated to all relevant production departments and crew members.

The Code of Practice is also intended to support the production team in managing the potential impacts of filming on protected heritage and sensitive natural sites across AlUla (where 80-85% of the County will be protected by law, according to the RCU's Sustainability Charter) as well as on residents and local businesses.

While this document is intended to be as comprehensive as possible, it cannot and does not cover all possible eventualities. The production team should use the Code of Practice alongside other documents Film AlUla provides and consult relevant legal advisors for concerns that are specific to each production.

Beyond the information detailed in the Code of Practice, Film AlUla is the ultimate authority for all questions about filming in the County. Any queries regarding this and other guidance should be emailed to [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa) or discussed with your primary contact.

#### ***Disclaimer***

The *Code of Practice for Filming in AlUla* is subject to change and may not include all guidelines and requirements related to the specific requirements of one production. Use the Code of Practice as an initial guide and consult with Film AlUla for further support and guidance.

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<sup>1</sup> The term "production team" is used throughout the Code of Practice to refer to the producer, director, location manager, production manager and any other members of the production who must work with Film AlUla and its partners to successfully film in AlUla.

## 2. Glossary

Term	Definition
Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU)	<p>The Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU) is the administration responsible for all operations and activities in the County of AlUla. RCU was established to protect and safeguard AlUla, a region of outstanding natural and cultural significance in north-west Saudi Arabia.</p> <p>RCU is currently engaged in a long-term plan to develop and deliver a sensitive, sustainable transformation of the County of AlUla, reaffirming it as one of the country's most important archaeological and cultural destinations and preparing it to welcome visitors from around the world.</p>
Film AlUla	Film AlUla is the office responsible for all filming in the County of AlUla. The office provides a one-stop-shop service for permit applications, provides support for productions at all stages of the process and is the main point of contact for all production-related queries.
RCU department	These are departments in RCU that are responsible for a range of activities related to the four Types of Significance (see below).
RCU department – Heritage, Nature, Arts & Culture Management	The focus of this department is to activate and conserve the natural ecosystems, heritage, arts and culture research and assets of AlUla. They are also charged with developing local arts and culture products and services, and with ensuring the recognition of the areas under RCU's purview as unique destinations for Wildlife and Natural Heritage.
RCU department – County Operations	This department oversees and leads the day-to-day security operations of AlUla, ensuring effective implementation of the security management system and use of resources to protect residents, visitors and assets, and maintaining adherence to security standards and regulations across the geographical boundaries of RCU.
RCU department – Destination Management & Marketing	This department leads RCU's tourism strategy by managing and overseeing different touristic, natural and cultural sectors that are core to RCU's vision. The aim is to preserve the County's heritage and natural ecosystems, attract visitors and

Term	Definition
	investors, and position the County as one of the top desired locations in the world.
RCU department – Public Relations & Communications	This department manages RCU’s public communications and brand presence and will drive any joint locations promotion featuring productions filmed in the County.
RCU department – Culture Site Management	This department is responsible for providing high-quality cultural experiences to visitors and for managing operations and facilities at World Heritage sites, including museums, galleries, pavilions, and interpretation centers.
RCU department – Special Cultural Zones Executive Program (SCZEP)	This special executive program is responsible for driving RCU’s vision and mission, which are focused on culture and heritage preservation and transforming AlUla into a living museum. The SCZEP has oversight for the masterplans covering several districts and villages in AlUla designated as Special Cultural Zones (SCZ) and that house many filming locations covered in this Code of Practice.
Site Managers (RCU-managed locations) – Site and Asset Management	Each of the RCU-managed locations in this Code of Practice has a site manager, who will be the primary point of contact for arranging filming permissions and managing logistics during production. For any private locations listed in this document, Film AlUla can provide the key contacts and make formal introductions.
Production Team	These are the individuals responsible for securing the location(s) for a production; they must work with Film AlUla and its partners to successfully film in AlUla. This includes one or more producer, director, location manager, production manager and any other members of the production.
Heads of Departments (HoDs)	These are the senior crew members of key departments in a production, such as grips, hair and make-up, camera, etc.
<b>Location Specifications</b>	
High Sensitivity locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RCU is responsible for all these locations</li> <li>• They are highly environmentally sensitive and have historical, cultural, ecological and or/ archaeological significance, and require high levels of care during production</li> <li>• Filming potentially poses high environmental risks.</li> </ul>
Medium Sensitivity locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A combination of RCU and private entities own and/ or operate these locations</li> </ul>

Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They are environmentally sensitive and require care during production</li> <li>Filming potentially poses some environmental risks.</li> </ul>
Low Sensitivity locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A combination of RCU and private entities own and/ or operate these locations</li> <li>They have no special RCU or national protections</li> <li>They have their own specific applications and guidelines for producers to follow</li> <li>Filming poses low to no environmental risks.</li> </ul>
Locations with Community, Visitor, and Cultural Significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These locations are open to locals and tourists for cultural or historical tours, informal visits, planned large and small events or commercial trade</li> <li>They may have scheduled public opening hours</li> <li>They may sometimes be unavailable due to private events; the location owners or managers are responsible for the scheduling</li> <li>Some potential filming locations are close to hotels, where guest comfort and safety are prioritized</li> <li>There may be environmentally sensitive sections to these locations.</li> </ul>
Locations with Archaeological Significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These locations currently have live archaeological excavations, or are identified as sites for future excavations</li> <li>Some of these locations are open to locals and tourists for cultural or historical tours</li> <li>These locations are environmentally sensitive</li> <li>These locations are historically sensitive.</li> </ul>
Locations with Ecological Significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These locations contain rare or sensitive flora and fauna, or are the sites for current or future introduction of flora and fauna</li> <li>The locations may have sections that are open to the public but are largely restricted to public access</li> <li>These locations are environmentally sensitive.</li> </ul>
Locations with Geological and Landscape Significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The locations feature naturally occurring phenomena</li> <li>These locations are open to locals and tourists for cultural or historical tours, informal visits and planned large and small events</li> <li>They may have scheduled public opening hours</li> <li>These locations are environmentally sensitive.</li> </ul>

### 3. Associated Documents

Production teams should review this Code of Practice alongside other key filming documents that Film AlUla provides, including:

- Zoning Guidelines for Filming in AlUla's Protected Natural Locations (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa))

### 4. Sensitivity Matrix for Locations in AlUla

The **Sensitivity Matrix** below provides an 'at-a-glance' summary of all the locations where producers may want to film in AlUla, and an indication of how sensitive they are to prolonged human activity.

In addition to **High, Medium or Low Sensitivity**, each of these locations also fall into one or more categories or **Types of Significance**, based on the wider historical, cultural and environmental considerations for AlUla. All the terms in the Sensitivity Matrix are explained in **the Glossary in Section 2**, and profiles with more details for each location can be found in Film AlUla's *Zoning Guidelines for Filming in AlUla's Protected Natural Locations*.

**Sensitivity Matrix for Locations in AlUla**

Levels of Sensitivity	Location	Types of Significance			
		Community, Visitor and Cultural Significance	Archaeological Significance	Ecological Significance	Geological and Landscape Significance
<b>High Sensitivity</b>	Dadan	X	X		
	Gharameel Nature Reserve (including Kherb Mountain)			X	
	Hegra	X	X		
	Hijaz Railway	X	X		
	Jabal Ikma	X	X		
	Khaybar		X		X
	Old Town	X	X		
	Raggasat (Dancing Rocks)	X		X	X
	Rainbow Rock / Arch Rock	X		X	X
	Sharaan Nature Reserve	X		X	
	Tayma	X	X		
	Wadi Nkhlah			X	X
<b>Medium Sensitivity</b>	Elephant Rock	X			X
	Fadhla Dunes				X
	Harrat Uwayridh			X	
	Hegra North / Shalal East	X			
	Madakhil Nature Reserve			X	X
	Maraya, Ashar Estate	X			
	Oasis	X	X	X	X
<b>Low Sensitivity</b>	AlUla Airport				
	AlUla Studios				
	Wadi AlFann	X			X
	Wadi AlNa'am	X			

## 5. Code of Practice for Filming in AlUla

Located in the north-west of Saudi Arabia, the County of AlUla is an area of untouched wilderness, outstanding natural beauty and unique cultural significance, and is home to some of the world's most breathtaking locations, rarely seen on international screens.

The logistics of screen production of any kind can potentially disrupt normal activity in and around locations that have been identified for filming; this document aims to support productions in minimizing the impact of production activity while still achieving their targets, by addressing practical considerations.

The production team should review the Code of Practice during pre-production and before the start of principal photography. Any questions and concerns should be addressed to Film AlUla through your primary contact or by emailing [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa).

This Code of Practice applies to all forms of production that intend to film all or a portion of their project in the County of AlUla. Formats include but are not limited to:

- Feature films
- Television series
- Commercials
- Documentaries
- Music videos
- Still photography
- Short-form content.

This Code of Practice for the production team covers four key areas:

1. **People** – Managing the cast and production crew, as well as members of the public who may be impacted by filming activities
2. **Places** – Managing and maintaining locations used for filming while minimizing the impact on and around these locations across all Levels of Sensitivity and Types of Significance, according to the Sensitivity Matrix for Filming in AlUla (described in **Section 4 of this Code of Practice**).
3. **Public Processes** – Any processes enacted by or requiring input from public agencies in AlUla
4. **On-Set Operations** – Set-ups, specific equipment systems and services necessary for production.

The Code of Practice includes references and links where available to separate supporting documents, as well as government laws, policies and guidelines, where relevant.

The Code of Practice is part of a series of production documents that Film AlUla provides to ensure that filming in the County is as transparent and clear for producers as possible.

Other key references produced by Film AlUla (and referenced throughout this document) include:



- *Zoning Guidelines for Filming in AlUla's Protected Natural Locations* (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa))
- *Health and Safety TV and Film Production Guidelines* ([download here](#) or email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa))
- *Film & TV Health and Safety Children & Young People in a Production Environment Protection Policy & Procedure* ([download here](#) or email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa))).

## 5.1. People

This section covers the managing of the cast and production crew, as well as members of the public who may be impacted by filming activities.

### **Child Performers**

The production must adhere to Saudi Labor Law as it relates to working with children (minors), ensuring proper treatment as well as appropriate conditions; legal consequences are possible if this law is not observed.

As part of a production's contracting process, all cast and crew engaged to work with or close to children and young people on location must complete a Child Protection Personal Disclosure Form (included in the *Film & TV Health and Safety Children & Young People in a Production Environment Protection Policy & Procedure*, provided by Film AlUla or linked below).

In a case where the child lives outside the County of AlUla, the child remains subject to the requirements outlined from the point of arrival in the County. The production is responsible for any additional requirements from the child's country of residence.

The hours that a child is permitted to work will depend on their age, the context of the filming location and the required hours of the filming day. The production must adhere to the permitted working hours detailed in Section 11 of the *Film & TV Health and Safety Children & Young People in a Production Environment Protection Policy & Procedure*.

### **Support Documentation:**

- *Film & TV Health and Safety Children & Young People in a Production Environment Protection Policy & Procedure* ([Download here](#), email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa))
- Saudi Labor Law issued by [Royal Decree No. M/51 of 23 Sha'ban 1426 \(September 27, 2005\)](#); significant amendments were made to the existing labour laws under [Resolution No. 51848/1442](#) that took effect in March 2021.

### **Health and Safety**

The production team is responsible for securing and implementing any measures needed to ensure that a healthy and safe working environment is maintained for the duration of filming. All relevant Health and Safety requirements must be observed, as detailed in Film AlUla's *Health and Safety TV and Film Production Guidelines*.

There are additional guidelines pertaining to location-specific filming, including but not limited to filming under direct sunlight.



A Risk Assessment plan for all locations, considering relevant Health and Safety regulations must be submitted to Film AlUla prior to commencement of principal photography (this should include primary production contacts as well as any relevant accommodation details of cast and crew).

Failure to adhere to all relevant health and safety procedures could result in the rejection or removal of filming permits, as well as wider consequences, including the invalidation of any insurance packages and, in the event of an incident, legal action.

***Support Documentation:***

- *Health and Safety TV and Film Production Guidelines* ([Download here](#), email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa))
- [Procedural Guidelines for Occupational Safety and Health for Preventing the Effects of Exposure to the Direct Sun and Heat Stress](#).

**Residents and Businesses**

A production must consider the impact that filming may have on residents, businesses and communities, not only at the specific location that appears on camera, but also in the surrounding areas and the transportation routes to and from the location(s).

- **Residential areas and business districts** – The production team must consult and work with residents and businesses before filming takes place to resolve challenges where possible, leveraging Film AlUla as a mediator where necessary. Maintain regular communication with significantly impacted residents and other stakeholders throughout principal photography to demonstrate understanding of their challenges and concerns and minimize inconvenience as far as possible
- **Historical areas or areas frequented by visitors** – During filming, the production team must ensure that a representative is present to communicate any potential disruptions to visitors and ensure that visible signage regarding disruptions is installed well before filming begins. Production representatives should be clearly identifiable through high-visibility clothing and signage.

***Support Documentation:***

- *Zoning Guidelines for Filming in AlUla's Protected Natural Locations* (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa))
- *Health and Safety TV and Film Production Guidelines* (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa))

**Visa and Entry Requirements**

To obtain working visas for international cast and crew, there are two options:

- Through a **local co-producer** – This option involves partnering with a local co-production company that is authorized to submit working visa requests for both short- and long-term engagements
- Through **Film AlUla** – If there is no registered company in Saudi Arabia, Film AlUla can facilitate applications for event visas.

For equipment and specialized gear, the production team must work with Film AlUla to secure the necessary transit goods requirements to ensure entry and return documentation for all necessary equipment.

***Support Documentation:***

- Email the Film AlUla team for assistance at [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa).

**Working Conditions and Employment Equality**

The production team is responsible for ensuring that they adhere to all current legislation that guides the employment of local and international cast and crew. They must also adhere to their legal obligations as an employer concerning minimum wage payments and working hours regulations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

- **Local cast and crew** – The production team must obtain ‘right to work’ documentation for all individuals directly employed by and for the production, including (but not limited to) valid passports and proofs of residence
- **International cast and crew** – The production must ensure all documentation including (but not limited to) valid visas and passports is acquired, up-to-date and on file to ensure safe and secure passage in and out of the County of AlUla and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The production team must adhere to all relevant immigration and border rules.

The production team should seek to promote equality of opportunity and inclusivity in all aspects of its operation, as far as is possible. Production Heads of Departments should ensure that their crews are accessible for under-represented communities and are non-discriminatory (according to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’s national outline of equality and non-discrimination in the workplace).

***Support Documentation:***

- Email the Film AlUla team for assistance at [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa)
- [Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Equality and Non-Discrimination Rights](#).



## 5.2. Places

This section covers the managing and maintaining of locations used for filming while minimizing impact on and around these locations across all Levels of Sensitivity and Types of Significance, according to the **Sensitivity Matrix for Filming in AlUla** (described in **Section 4 of this Code of Practice**).

### **AlUla Filming On-Location**

Productions should hire a location manager with experience relevant to the scale of the production – considering both domestic and international productions. The locations manager should have a minimum of two projects of a similar size. Film AlUla can assist in connecting productions with appropriate location managers.

The production team must review and consult *Film AlUla's Zoning Regulations, Rules and Guidelines*, which defines the main filming locations through short profiles and how they are zoned to ensure that filming takes place in as safe a manner as possible. All productions are required to follow these Guidelines and should further consult with Film AlUla for any questions and any specific requirements.

The Zoning Guidelines lists all of AlUla's main filming locations and organizes them according to:

- **Levels of Sensitivity:**
  - High
  - Medium
  - Low.
- **Types of Significance:**
  - Community, Visitor and Cultural Significance
  - Archaeological Significance
  - Ecological Significance
  - Geological and Landscape Significance.

**See the Glossary in Section 2 for descriptions of all the terms above and the Sensitivity Matrix for Filming in AlUla in Section 4.**

Depending on the location you want to use, the Level of Sensitivity and the Type of Significance, there are specific filming rules to follow and possibly, additional permits for which you must apply. The Zoning Guidelines should be consulted during the permitting process in pre-production to best prepare the crew to safely use these locations.

All locations in AlUla, whether sensitive, protected, public spaces or private sites, must be treated with the utmost care and respect by all members of the production team. Once the production has wrapped, the production team is responsible for ensuring that all locations are left following filming in the same state in which it was found (see **Waste Management and Removal in Section 5.2**).

The production team is responsible for obtaining any necessary insurance or indemnity for specific locations (also see **Indemnity and Insurance in Section 5.4**) to mitigate any potential damage or loss during filming.



In addition, any visible branding on or around locations, such as business names, logos or signage, is covered under intellectual property rights and must be acknowledged if visible in the frame.

**Support Documentation:**

- *Zoning Guidelines for Filming in AlUla's Protected Natural Locations* (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa))
- Email the Film AlUla team for assistance at [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa).

**Filming from Vehicles**

This refers to (but is not limited to) filming from vehicles that use low loaders, tracking vehicles and/or A-frames.

When filming is required to take place on a public road, the production team must work with Film AlUla to engage RCU's County Operation and HSSE Control, as the department in RCU that is responsible for highways and traffic.

All national roads and traffic legislation must be observed, subject to the granting of any concessions by the highways and traffic authority as well as the police.

The production must ensure the safety of the crew when filming on an active road or highway by providing high-visibility clothing and personal protection equipment (PPE).

**Support Documentation:**

- *Zoning Guidelines for Filming in AlUla's Protected Natural Locations* (link from website).

**"Night" Filming**

"Night" filming refers to all filming that is undertaken outside of daylight hours. As part of RCU's commitment to "Safeguard the Natural and Cultural Landscape" as Principle 1 on its Sustainability Charter, the County aims to preserve AlUla's dark night skies and tranquillity by managing the quality of light output across a wide range of circumstances.

While film production is not specifically addressed in RCU's *Outdoor Lighting Guidelines*, lighting considerations for most of the locations defined in the **Sensitivity Matrix for Filming in AlUla in (Section 4)** are covered in different sections. The relevant members of the production team should familiarize themselves with the *Zoning Guidelines for Filming in AlUla's Protected Natural Locations* for the specific guidelines by location as well as any further relevant lighting specifications. If there are any questions or doubts about the lighting guidelines that apply, or if the production requires temporary exceptions, speak to your Film AlUla contact.

In addition, the production team must consult with the relevant site manager to confirm the availability of the filming location for night filming, as well as consider any additional requirements and/or restrictions for those hours.

The production team must also ensure that all residents and businesses that may be impacted are notified before filming begins.

**Support Documentation:**



- *Zoning Guidelines for Filming in AlUla's Protected Natural Locations* (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa))
- Email the Film AlUla team for assistance at [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa).

### **Parking**

The production team may be required to submit a detailed parking plan as part of the permitting process. This is particularly relevant to on-street parking for technical vehicles and equipment and for any public bays or spaces that the production would like to reserve for film vehicles and set design continuity.

The production team must work with Film AlUla and the relevant RCU departments to ensure the highest consideration is taken to find off-street parking for facilities and vehicles and to prioritize essential vehicles. Mandatory or warning traffic signs must always remain visible and should not be obscured by production vehicles. All necessary highway and traffic requirements should be met and the necessary authorities notified in advance, including police and/or emergency services.

Regarding designated locations (according to the Zoning Guidelines), the production team must consult with the relevant location site manager to plan and map out designated parking areas for all required production and film vehicles.

### **Support Documentation:**

- *Zoning Guidelines for Filming in AlUla's Protected Natural Locations* (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa)).

### **Sustainability**

Productions are encouraged to adopt sustainable filming practices to minimize environmental impact as far as is possible while filming in the County of AlUla. Due to the sensitive natural environment and protected historical sites, it is critical to ensure that there are no physical or environmental impacts, at any time during the production set up, principal photography or shut down.

Film AlUla's internal Sustainability Charter declares RCU's adoption of sustainability, circular economy and resiliency across its development plans under the country's Vision 2030 strategy. This extends to the care and concern for the natural environment that the RCU expects all citizens and visitors to demonstrate; this is reflected in the first of 12 Framework Principles, "Safeguard the Natural and Cultural Landscapes".

Film AlUla recommends that productions observe industry sustainability best practices; one best practice example to consider is the UK's BAFTA Albert approach.

### **Support Documentation:**

- [Albert Production Handbook](#) (UK).

### **Travel and Local Transport**

The County of AlUla is accessible to most international hubs via its international airport. As the County is an increasingly popular tourist destination, there are various forms of local transportation, ranging from car rentals to personal drivers. For production-specific vehicles, also see **Trucks and Trailers in Section 5.4**. For assistance with finding production-specific vehicles and transportation, work with your local production company or contact Film AlUla for assistance.

***Support Documentation:***

- Email the Film AlUla team for assistance at [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa).

**Waste Management and Removal**

The production team, vendors and service providers for the production must ensure that all waste is removed and correctly disposed of immediately following the end of the filming. The location, surrounding area and facilities must be returned to the same condition in which they were found.

The production team may choose to arrange specialized waste removal through the relevant site managers, through Film AlUla or through their local production company. Waste on location should be recycled where possible; if any construction materials, sets, costumes or props can be reused, speak to your primary contact at Film AlUla about storing or upcycling items to other productions.

***Support Documentation:***

- N/A

### 5.3. Public Processes

These are processes related to filming that are enacted by or require input from public agencies in the County of AlUla.

#### **Aerial Filming – General**

If aerial filming is required, either via drone or helicopter, the production team must request and obtain the following, all with the guidance of Film AlUla:

- GACA permit and permission from the General Directorate for Military Survey
- Permission from the relevant landowner (for private land)
- Permission from the relevant location site manager (for locations of significance) and/or the relevant authorities (for public areas).

The requirements for aerial filming should be reviewed during the permitting process and confirmed with all relevant parties before filming begins.

Considering local airspace, there are some important restrictions on the operation of aircraft in AlUla. Film AlUla can provide guidance on safety requirements relating to flying unmanned aircraft. Depending on the flight category, an application may need to be made to the relevant air traffic authorities, which Film AlUla can identify through the permitting process.

#### **Aerial Filming – Drones: Filming with Small Unmanned Aircraft**

The use of small, unmanned aircraft, commonly referred to as drones, has become integral to all types of commercial production. This section provides general guidelines on the use of drones for commercial filming activity; productions that must use this type of equipment should always employ an approved drone operator and seek further advice from the Saudi Aviation Authority – General Authority of Civil Aviation (GACA) website, or from Film AlUla.<sup>2</sup>

#### **General Guidelines:**

Small Unmanned Aerial Systems (SUAS), Small UAS, Remote Piloted Aerial Systems (RPAS), Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), Unmanned Aerial System (UAS), and 'Drone' are interchangeable terms unless specified.

Model aircraft, toy, remote-controlled and radio-controlled aircraft may be covered by the same regulations unless specified.

The GACA grants permission for multi-rotor and fixed-wing type and will only grant permission for drones that do not exceed 20kg (44 lbs.).

In advance of filming with a drone, the production team must ensure that:

- The operator has a Current Pilot Certificate issued according to GACA Regulation part 61 (commercial operators)
- The operator has a Remote Pilot Certificate Issued by the GACA

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<sup>2</sup> For consistency, this section has been taken from *Health and Safety for Film and TV Guidelines*



- For Foreign Operators, any imported drones must be registered to obtain Saudi Customs clearance (there is a fee for this service)
- The drone has an 'airworthiness certificate'; speak to your primary contact at Film AlUla about how to access this
- The production has permission from the GACA Air Traffic Control of the operational area
- Each drone displays a unique identification number issued by the Registry after the Certificate of Aircraft Registration has been approved. This number must be secure, easily accessible and visible for inspection
- The production has permission from the owner or manager of the location used for take-off and landing
- The production has control over the area intended for drone use, including any persons or vehicles in the area
- The operator has a copy of the Drone Operators' Risk Assessment and PLI certificate.

Commercial drone operators must have all GACA documentation and other permissions at the time of operation. Any drone flight in an urban area or near large crowds of people, whether for private or commercial purposes, will require the same documentation.

#### ***Drone Operations & Control:***

Productions using drones for filming purposes must ensure they are familiar with aircraft legislation and procedures that relate to aerial filming:

- Not within a specified distance, normally 150m (492 ft.), of any congested area of a city, town or settlement
- Not within a specified distance, normally 50m (164 ft.), of any person, vessel, vehicle or structure not under the control of the aircraft operator
- Not at speeds greater than 160 kph (100 mph or 87 knots)
- Not at heights greater than 122 meters (400 ft.)
- Flights only during daylight or civil twilight
- The operator must maintain a Visual Line of Sight (VLoS) between the drone and ground
- The operator may only fly one drone at a time
- The operator must give all manned aircraft the right of way
- Unless authorized in advance by Air Traffic Control (ATC), no person may operate a small, unmanned aircraft in Class B, C, or D airspace or within the lateral boundaries of the surface area of Class E airspace designated for an airport
- In any circumstances or weight category, it should be noted that flights directly overhead persons and vehicles would not be allowed at any height in a congested area unless they are under the control of the person in charge of the aircraft. A full closure of the road or area to be used would usually need to be in place before the drone can be used.

#### ***Support Documentation:***

- [Saudi Arabia Drone Laws](#)
- [Permit Information and Application for Aerial Filming](#)
- [General Authority of Civil Aviation \(GACA\) Part 107 – Operation of Unmanned Aircraft Systems.](#)

#### **Highways and Traffic Management**



The production team must work with Film AlUla and the relevant highways and traffic authority to adhere to the rules of the use of public highways, roadways and walkways for filming or for locating production vehicles, crew and cast bases and equipment.

The production team must request road closures for filming during the permitting process; if approved, the highways and traffic authority will provide an approval notice or order. There are requirements and specifications to be considered for closures that will need to be confirmed before filming begins. The production team would likely need to be in contact with Film AlUla in advance of principal photography.

The temporary changing of road markings, lines or other road signs is subject to agreement through the permitting process before filming begins with Film AlUla and, if necessary, the highways and traffic authority. The production team must also notify local law enforcement in advance of filming, working through Film AlUla as needed. The production is responsible for reinstating any alterations to road markings to the satisfaction of the relevant highways and traffic authority.

***Support Documentation:***

- N/A.

**Permitting**

The production team must acquire a permit to film in the County of AlUla. The permitting process is also an invaluable time of preparation for both the production and Film AlUla. All the production's requirements and specifications can be discussed and coordinated to ensure all necessary elements and stakeholders are engaged before filming begins.

Film AlUla is responsible for guiding producers through the permitting process and acts as a one-stop shop for general permitting, for arranging access to RCU-owned locations and, where required, connection to privately-owned locations.

When applying for a permit to film in AlUla, productions should note the following:

- The permitting process starts after the General Commission for Audiovisual Media (GCAM) or the Saudi Film Commission approves the relevant type of project, and ends after filming is concluded and the Film Production Services Manager at Film AlUla concludes the review of the Production Wrap Form
- Production companies must ensure that they understand the permit conditions and that all filming activities are conducted in accordance with these conditions; address any questions or concerns to Film AlUla at [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa)
- Film AlUla will monitor filming activity at its discretion, particularly for filming in locations of significance and/or filming that would be considered to have a medium or high sensitivity (according to the **Sensitivity Matrix**, described in **Section 4 of this Code of Practice**)
- The production team must follow all the guidelines and directions of Film AlUla, the representatives of RCU as well as any instructions from location site managers.

***Support Documentation:***

- *Zoning Guidelines for Filming in AlUla's Protected Natural Locations (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa)).*

**Police and Emergency Services**

The production team must inform the police services and relevant emergency services of all proposed filming in a public space, as advised by Film AlUla or through Film AlUla as needed.

The staging of illegal activities and/or accidents, the use of firearms (including prop and replica), stunts and special effects or pyrotechnics must be raised during the permitting process and communicated to relevant services prior to filming (see also **Health and Safety in Section 5.1**).

The production team must inform police services of any filming involving individuals in the cast or crew who could potentially cause security or crowd control issues.

If filming involving any of the following takes place without prior permitting approval or notice to relevant services, legal action could be taken:

- Stunt or acting police officers or vehicles
- Re-creation of crimes
- Presence of firearms (prop, imitation and deactivated or replica firearms)
- Explosions or perceived explosions
- Special effects
- Scenes involving nudity
- Motion filming (including but not limited to low loaders, A-frames and tracking).

Also see **Highways and Traffic Management in Section 5.3**.

***Support Documentation:***

- N/A.

**Publicity**

Where agreed and possible, the production (or in some cases, the distributor, commissioner or broadcasters) must provide Film AlUla and any location site managers with publicity material on the release of the project.

***Support Documentation:***

- N/A.

#### 5.4. On-Set Operations

This refers to set-ups, specific equipment systems and services that could be required for principal photography.

##### **Animals**

The production team must source animals that are trained to meet the production requirements and must align with standard industry best practice of the use and welfare of animals in filming.

In some cases, particularly with wild and/or dangerous animals, animal wranglers may be required, which should be discussed during the permitting process and agreed upon with location site managers, where relevant. Film AlUla may be able to advise on local service providers for animal training and wrangling.

##### **Support Documentation:**

- *Health and Safety for Film and TV Guidelines (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa)).*

##### **Catering**

Catering provisions and the positioning of catering vehicles and services must be agreed in advance with the production team and the location site manager, or both a Film AlUla representative and the local authority representative, in the case of a public area.

The production team must ensure that no organic material is deposited in location-specific waste points (unless specified by the site manager). Where possible, the production must use sustainable materials and sustainable waste removal practices (also see **Sustainability in Section 5.2**). Catering equipment should not use energy from the local electrical grid and/or through a location's power sources (unless agreed with the site manager).

Where possible, consider sourcing catering from local businesses.

##### **Support Documentation:**

- N/A.

##### **Cabling, Cranes, Jibs and Cherry Pickers, and Dollies**

##### **Cabling:**

- The production team must confirm through the permitting process the appropriate use and set-up of cables, particularly in public spaces or locations of notable sensitivity (also see *Zoning Guidelines for Filming in AlUla's Protected Natural Locations*)
- Consider matting, ramping and flying of cables to avoid hazards in high traffic areas
- The production team is responsible for ensuring that visible signage is present and adequately warns passers-by of any potential hazard that may be caused by cabling.

##### **Cranes, Jibs and Cherry Pickers:**

- The production team and the relevant Heads of Departments must include all large equipment set-ups in their permitting application. Through the permitting process, the production team must discuss and confirm this well in advance of filming with Film AlUla, the location site manager and any other relevant authorities



- Camera cranes, jib arms and cherry pickers must have documentation confirming that the equipment has been tested and would only be operated by certified technicians; it may be necessary for the relevant authority and site manager to carry out inspections, both before and after a cherry picker is used
- Productions should adhere to all codes and operation requirements from recognized international industry bodies, as well as observe the requirements of Film AlUla's *Health and Safety for Film and TV Guidelines*
- Any actions involving large-scale equipment should be risk-assessed
- Undertake rigging and de-rigging with consideration for residents and other stakeholders and follow guidance for noise and lighting levels (also see **Lighting and Noise in Section 5.4**).

***Dollies:***

- All camera tracking must be disclosed and discussed during the permitting process and agreed on with Film AlUla before filming begins
- Any obstructions caused by tracks or the need for alternative footpaths to be created must be cleared with Film AlUla as well as the location site manager; tracking boards may be required in certain circumstances, which should be sourced by the relevant production department
- Any actions involving tracking should be risk-assessed
- Undertake rigging and de-rigging with consideration for residents and other stakeholders and follow guidance for noise and lighting levels (also see **Lighting and Noise in Section 5.4**).

***Support Documentation:***

- *Health and Safety for Film and TV Guidelines* (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa)).

**Communication and Consultation**

If the production team requires, Film AlUla can facilitate discussions and meetings, where relevant, with key stakeholders, including residents, businesses, locations and sites of significance, and emergency services. This should be discussed during the permit application process to ensure all consultation is done before the start of filming in a specific location.

***Support Documentation:***

- N/A.

**Firearms and Weapons (Armory)**

The use of firearms or any kind of offensive weapon is prohibited without prior agreement between the production team, licensing authority and police services.

Therefore, this must be discussed as early in the permitting process as possible, and the terms of use agreed between the above parties and Film AlUla well in advance of principal photography. This includes when filming exteriors and interiors on public and private property. If a location of significance is being used, the location site manager and other relevant authorities must also enter into the agreement.

Once confirmed, Film AlUla and/or the production team will officially notify local police officers and armed response teams that firearms or weapons are being used for filming on specified days. On occasion, the production may require the presence of a police officer to be in attendance on location for public reassurance. The production team should work closely with Film AlUla to ensure they are adhering to all regulations and protocols regarding firearms and weapons.



In the case of a live-firing weapon, the licence holder for that weapon must be present on set for the duration of its use. In the case of a blank-firing weapon, it is recommended to have such a person present.

In all cases, an armourer must always be present on set for the handling and management of the firearms or weapons. (See also **Special Effects, Pyrotechnics and Stunts in Section 5.4**).

The production team is responsible for always ensuring the safe custody of firearms and weapons.

**Support Documentation:**

- *Health and Safety for Film and TV Guidelines (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa)).*

**Indemnity and Insurance**

The production team must obtain and provide proof that the relevant insurance coverage is in place before filming begins. An appropriate production insurance package is required for certain locations of significance and for specific permitting requests.

The production team must provide a copy of Public Liability Insurance and/or Third-Party Insurance for all locations of medium to high sensitivity (as outlined by the relevant site manager before filming). Cast and crew indemnities may be required for locations of medium to high sensitivity as well as for all special effects and pyrotechnics, large lighting or equipment set-ups and/or stunts (also see **Special Effects, Pyrotechnics and Stunts in Section 5.4**). These packages may be underwritten by an international supplier to cover the entire production, or there may be specific packages acquired by local brokers or insurance providers for the specific filming days in AlUla.

Insurance brokers and providers often require risk assessments as part of issuing production insurance packages. Depending on the type of production and nature of filming, Film AlUla or location site managers may advise the production team to acquire specific insurance; this coverage may be important for high-profile cast and crew, stunts, special effects and more (also see **AlUla Filming on Location in Section 5.2**).

**Support Documentation:**

- *Health and Safety for Film and TV Guidelines (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa)).*

**Lighting and Noise**

The production team must ensure the positioning and safety of lighting set-ups through the permitting process and with the relevant location site managers (also see *Health and Safety for Film and TV Guidelines*).

All requests to set up scaffolding and lighting towers in a public area, highway or walkway and in locations of significance must be agreed in advance through the permitting process and with the relevant location site managers. A temporary structure licence may be required (see forms below under *Support Documentation*).

The use of audio amplifiers or megaphones would only be permitted following an agreement between the production team and the relevant site manager, location authority and Film AlUla representative. The parking position of generators must be agreed upon between the production team and the relevant



site manager, location authority and/or Film AlUla representative. (Also see “Night” Filming in Section 5.2).

**Support Documentation:**

- *Health and Safety for Film and TV Guidelines (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa))*
- *Zoning Guidelines for Filming in AlUla’s Protected Natural Locations (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa))*
- *RCU forms for temporary builds:*
  - *Temporary Construction Permit Application Form (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa))*
  - *Temporary Operation Permit Application Form (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa)).*
- Email the Film AlUla team for assistance at [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa).

**Security**

If required, the production team must secure the services of a licensed security service provider that can conduct licensable activity in keeping with the guidelines set by the County of AlUla and its relevant authoritative bodies. The production team must respect security levels and location-specific requirements; they may be asked to work alongside on-site security officers.

Security services can be considered for:

- Locations
- Studios and sets
- Highway or roadblocks
- Crowd control
- Event security
- Dog patrols and close protection (as required).

Security requirements can be identified and reviewed through Risk Assessments (also see **Indemnity and Insurance in Section 5.4**).

**Support Documentation:**

- *Health and Safety for Film and TV Guidelines (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa))*
- Email the Film AlUla team for assistance at [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa).

**Special Effects, Pyrotechnics and Stunts**

In accordance with Health and Safety Guidelines as well as the permitting process, the production team must provide a risk assessment and proposal for all physical or pyrotechnic effects.

Once approved, the production team must inform residents, businesses and any other stakeholders in the vicinity of filming, with Film AlUla’s support where necessary. All special effects must be conducted under the direct supervision of an SFX Supervisor or crew member of similar certified experience. The production team is responsible for ensuring that there is adequate and necessary insurance to cover all activities of the SFX department.

Atmospheric effects such as wet downs, snow, mist and rain must be carried out with the approval of Film AlUla, location site managers where relevant and necessary local authorities, following an outline and proposal review during the permitting process. The production team must inform residents,

businesses and other stakeholders of filming and install clearly visible signage. All clean-ups should be detailed in a plan before filming begins.

In accordance with Health and Safety guidelines as well as the permitting process, the production team must provide a risk assessment and outlined proposal for all stunts (both involving and not involving cast and crew).

Once approved, the production team must inform residents, businesses and other stakeholders of filming, with Film AlUla's support where necessary. All stunts must be executed under the direct supervision of a Stunt Supervisor, or crew member of similar certified experience alongside the consultation and presence of police and emergency services. It is the key production crew's responsibility to ensure that there is adequate and necessary insurance to cover all activities of the stunt department.

***Support Documentation:***

- *Health and Safety for Film and TV Guidelines (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa)).*

**Trucks and Trailers**

The production team is responsible for sourcing the necessary trucks and trailers, including cast trailers, production offices, hair and make-up and costume trailers.

The key production crew is responsible for ensuring that all vehicle drivers hold the appropriate licenses. All driving of the vehicles and placement of trailers must be coordinated by the production team following working hours to ensure safe and secure conditions (see **also Health and Safety in Section 5.1** and **Working Conditions and Employment Equality in Section 5.1**).

***Support Documentation:***

- *Health and Safety for Film and TV Guidelines (under review, email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa)).*

**5. Contact Film AlUla**

For any questions, guidance and support, Film AlUla is your primary contact for filming in the County of AlUla. Please email [filming@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:filming@rcu.gov.sa), for pertinent queries.