
Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Operations

614.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the use of an unmanned aerial system (UAS) and for the storage, retrieval and dissemination of images and data captured by the UAS.

614.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) - An unmanned aircraft of any type that is capable of sustaining directed flight, whether preprogrammed or remotely controlled (commonly referred to as an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV)), and all of the supporting or attached systems designed for gathering information through imaging, recording or any other means.

614.2 POLICY

Unmanned aerial systems may be utilized to enhance the department's mission of protecting lives and property when other means and resources are not available or are less effective. Any use of a UAS will be in strict accordance with constitutional and privacy rights and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations.

614.3 PRIVACY

The use of the UAS potentially involves privacy considerations. Absent a warrant or exigent circumstances, operators and observers shall adhere to FAA altitude regulations and shall not intentionally record or transmit images of any location where a person would have a reasonable expectation of privacy (e.g., residence, yard, enclosure). Operators and observers shall take reasonable precautions to avoid inadvertently recording or transmitting images of areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy. Reasonable precautions can include, for example, deactivating or turning imaging devices away from such areas or persons during UAS operations.

614.4 USE OF UAS

Only authorized operators who have completed the required training shall be permitted to operate the UAS.

UAS operations should not be flown over populated areas without FAA approval.

The UAS should only be used under the following conditions:

- An incident involving the deployment of the EGPD Crisis Response Unit
- The verified use of violence by a suspect in the emerging incident, or in the incident leading to the deployment of the CRU
- The existence of probable cause to arrest the suspect, or a valid arrest warrant for a suspect involved in the incident
- The use is for the purpose of surveillance, or the acquisition of information in a circumstance that would otherwise expose an officer to a deadly threat

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- The deployment can only be authorized by the Incident and/or Tactical Commander
- The deployment will be documented, to include clear articulation as to why the deployment met these parameters
- Understanding that tactical situations are highly dynamic, use will be reported to the Chief of Police as soon as practical. It is understood that such report might be delayed while the tactical situation is evolving
- The team will take great care to ensure the device is used strictly for its intended purpose only; while training only on and over properties we control or have approval for use; and avoid public contact (whether public or private property) to the greatest degree possible

614.5 PROHIBITED USE

The UAS video surveillance equipment shall not be used:

- To conduct random surveillance activities.
- To target a person based solely on individual characteristics, such as, but not limited to race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation.
- To harass, intimidate or discriminate against any individual or group.
- To conduct personal business of any type.

The UAS shall not be weaponized.

614.6 RETENTION OF UAS DATA

Data collected by the UAS shall be retained as provided in the established records retention schedule.