



SACRAMENTO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS



525.09

UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS

10-8-19

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish policy and procedures for the use and oversight of the Sacramento Police Department's small Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS).

POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Sacramento Police Department to utilize small Unmanned Aerial Systems for official law enforcement purposes to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of public safety efforts in a manner that safeguards the privacy of citizens.

PROCEDURE

A. DEFINITIONS

1. Small Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) – All-encompassing description of aircraft, ground-based controller and communications.
2. Command System – Remote controller and screen/application used to control and operate UAS.
3. Unmanned Aircraft Vehicle (UAV) – Under 55 pounds, pilot solely controls, line of sight.
4. Pilot - Authorized Operator of the UAV
5. Observer – Secondary Operator who assists the Pilot with approved missions.
6. Certificate of Authorization or Waiver (COA)– Permission granted by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to fly within specific boundaries and parameters; valid training and pilot certification required.
7. Program Manager – Person responsible for the management of the UAS program.

B. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Program Manager will ensure that policies and procedures conform to current laws, regulations and best practices, and will:
 - a. Coordinate the COA application process and ensure the COA is current.
 - b. Ensure that all authorized operators and required observers have completed all required FAA and Department approved training in the operation, applicable laws, policies and procedures regarding use of the UAS.
 - c. Develop uniform protocol for submission and evaluation of requests to deploy a UAS, including urgent requests made during ongoing or emerging incidents.
 - d. Ensure on-going training of pilots, operators and specialized units occurs monthly within the department and quarterly with neighboring agencies. Document training events and associated flight logs.
 - e. Ensure annual audits are conducted on use and deployment.

C. DEPLOYMENT

1. Only authorized operators who have completed the required training shall be permitted to operate the UAS during approved missions.
2. UAS shall only be deployed on an approved mission with the approval of the on-duty watch commander or his/her designee. UAS may be deployed for required Department training with the approval of the Program Manager.
3. UAS deployment will be considered when an aerial view would assist officers or incident commanders during:



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- a. Major collision investigation and recreation
 - b. Missing persons or search and rescue operations
 - c. Natural disaster management
 - d. Post-event crime scene documentation
 - e. SWAT, tactical or other public safety and life preservation missions
 - f. In response to specific requests from local, state or federal fire authorities for fire response and/or prevention.
 - g. Other events as authorized by the Chief of Police or his/her designee
4. UAS shall not be used:
- a. To conduct random surveillance on citizens
 - b. To harass, intimidate or discriminate against any individual or group
 - c. To conduct personal business of any type

D. DATA MANAGEMENT AND RECORDS RETENTION

1. All flight hours will be logged and retained for a minimum of two years
2. Flight logs will be made available for public review and dissemination
3. Video recordings will be retained for a minimum of 18 months from the date created in accordance with the City of Sacramento Retention Schedule. Video recordings that become evidence will be kept in accordance with the crime classification listing in the City of Sacramento Retention Schedule SPD-007.
4. Digital evidence captured by UAS cameras shall be treated as official records and handled pursuant to existing Department policies and procedures.
5. Any attempt to erase, alter, or tamper with UAS camera recordings, except as authorized by law or Department policy, will be considered employee misconduct.
6. All recordings made using UAS cameras are the property of the Sacramento Police Department and will not be released or disseminated to the public without the express written consent of the Chief of Police or authorized designee or unless otherwise expressly required by federal or state law.

E. USE OF VIDEO FOR TRAINING

1. Recordings may be used for training purposes.
2. When a recording contains footage that may embarrass an employee, consideration should be given before the video is used for training.
3. If an involved employee objects to the use of a recording, the employee may object in writing through his/her chain of command to the COP or authorized designee to determine if the training value outweighs the employee's objection. In no event shall any recording be used for the purpose of ridiculing or embarrassing any employee.