

Unmanned Aerial System

607.1 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.

607.1.1 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.

607.2 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.

607.3 PRIVACY

The use of the UAS potentially involves privacy considerations. Absent a warrant or exigent circumstances, operators and observers 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.

607.4 PROGRAM COORDINATOR

The Chief of Police will appoint a program coordinator who will be responsible for the management of the UAS program. The program coordinator will ensure that policies and procedures conform to current laws, regulations, and best practices and will have the following additional responsibilities:

- Coordinating the FAA Certificate of Waiver or Authorization (COA) application process and ensuring that the COA is current, and/or coordinating compliance with FAA Part 107 Remote Pilot Certificate, as appropriate for department operations.
- Ensuring 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.
- Developing uniform protocol for submission and evaluation of requests to deploy a UAS, including urgent requests made during ongoing or emerging incidents. Deployment of a UAS shall require written authorization of the Chief of Police or the authorized designee, depending on the type of mission.

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- Coordinating the completion of the FAA Emergency Operation Request Form in emergency situations, as applicable (e.g., natural disasters, search and rescue, emergency situations to safeguard human life).
- Developing protocol for conducting criminal investigations involving a UAS, including documentation of time spent monitoring a subject.
- Implementing a system for public notification of UAS deployment.
- Developing an operational protocol governing the deployment and operation of a UAS including but not limited to safety oversight, use of visual observers, establishment of lost link procedures, and secure communication with air traffic control facilities.
- Developing a protocol for fully documenting all missions.
- Developing a UAS inspection, maintenance, and record-keeping protocol to ensure continuing airworthiness of a UAS, up to and including its overhaul or life limits.
- Developing protocols to ensure that all data intended to be used as evidence are accessed, maintained, stored, and retrieved in a manner that ensures its integrity as evidence, including strict adherence to chain of custody requirements. Electronic trails, including encryption, authenticity certificates, and date and time stamping, shall be used as appropriate to preserve individual rights and to ensure the authenticity and maintenance of a secure evidentiary chain of custody.
- Developing protocols that ensure retention and purge periods are maintained in accordance with established records retention schedules.
- Facilitating law enforcement access to images and data captured by the UAS.
- Recommending program enhancements, particularly regarding safety and information security.
- Ensuring that established protocols are followed by monitoring and providing periodic reports on the program to the Chief of Police.
- Maintaining familiarity with FAA regulatory standards, state laws and regulations, and local ordinances regarding the operations of a UAS.

607.5 USE OF UAS

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

1. All flights will be approved in advance by a lieutenant and in the absence of management personnel, the sergeant will have the authority to approve missions.
2. All flights will be documented on the mission dispatch form designed for the purpose and all flight time shall be accounted for on the form. The reason for the flight and type of mission as specified and the name of the police manager or supervisor approving the mission will also be documented.
3. The manager or supervisor approving any flight missions, UAS operators and observers will consider the protection of individual civil rights and the reasonable expectation of privacy as a key

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component of any decision made to deploy the UAS. Each UAS operator and observer will ensure that the operation of the UAS is consistent with local, state, and federal laws.

4. The use of the UAS will be limited to the authorized missions described herein. The authorized missions for the RPD UAS are:

- Post-incident crime scene preservation and documentation
- Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD) missions
- Response to hazardous materials spills
- Search and Rescue (SAR) missions defined in California Government Code Section 26614
- Public safety and life preservation missions to include barricaded suspects, hostage situations, civil unrest incidents, active shooters, apprehension of armed and dangerous and/or violent fleeing suspects, and high-risk search warrants
- Disaster response and recovery to include natural or human-caused disasters including a full overview of a disaster area for post-incident analysis and documentation
- Training missions
- In response to specific requests from local, state, or federal fire authorities for fire response and prevention
- When there is probable cause to believe that (1) the UAS will record images of a place, thing, condition, or event; and (2) that those images would be relevant to proving that a certain felony had occurred or is occurring, or that a particular person committed or is committing a certain felony and the use of the UAS does not infringe upon the reasonable expectation of privacy
- Pursuant to a search warrant

607.6 PROHIBITED USE

The UAS video surveillance equipment shall not be used:

- To conduct random surveillance activities.
- To target a person based solely on actual or perceived characteristics, such as race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, economic status, age, cultural group, or disability.
- To harass, intimidate, or discriminate against any individual or group.
- To conduct personal business of any type.

The UAS shall not be weaponized.

607.7 RETENTION OF UAS DATA

Data collected by the UAS shall be retained as provided in the established records retention schedule. Any recorded images shall be retained only when there is reasonable suspicion that the

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images contain evidence of a crime or are relevant to an ongoing investigation or trial and such images should only be kept until the case is adjudicated. Images captured during any training events are an exception and may be retained for the sole purpose of training and electronic administrative documentation of RPD employees.