

Unmanned Aerial Device

CHAPTER 10.4

Issued: April 3, 2017

Revised: April 2018

Submitted by: Office of Information & Technology

Approved by: Chief of Fire Rescue

Requesting the UAV Team should be considered early in an incident due to the travel time needed. The UAV resource can be cancelled if not needed. Consider requesting the team for the following types of incidents.

- Wildfires with significant potential for spread or at the onset of any part of a large wildland fire.
- Search and Rescue, (SAR)
- Aerial reconnaissance of a HAZMAT incident
- Post disaster scene evaluation or assessment
- Any incident where aerial observation, video recording and/or streaming, photographs or maps will benefit firefighter or civilian safety
- Any structure fire or incident in which an After Action Review may or will be conducted.
- Water, technical or high angle rescues.

Request should be made through the Combined Communications Center, (CCC). Request can be made through the District Chief, (DC), responding to an incident, the company officer responding or on scene of an incident. All requests for the UAV Team to respond will be followed up with a DC notification if a DC is not responding. Response time for the UAV is approximately 30-45 minutes.

Weather – Due to the rapid launch and recovery time of the UAV it is capable of flying in small weather windows that would normally prevent aerial observation. The remote pilot in command, (RPIC), will decide if the operations can be conducted in current weather conditions found on scene or upon notification of request.

Location – Flights in particular locations are restricted due to FAA regulations and the decision to fly the UAV will be determined by the incident location.

General flight rules – Unless an emergency waiver is granted by the FAA the following rules apply to UAV flights. All decisions to conduct any mission will be decided by the RPIC.

- **Altitudes 400' or less unless next to a structure (i.e. cell tower)**
- **VFR flights only (visual flight rules), no instrument flights**
- **Line of sight flights only, UAV must remain in sight of ground team**
- **Night flights are possible and are authorized but some limitations may exist.**

The UAV team is self-supporting and has the ability to recharge batteries at the incident. The UAVs are capable of flights approximately 20 minutes each (with 30% battery safety margin). Aerial imagery is available during UAV flights and can be recorded for later review.

The UAV is for Fire Rescue operations only and cannot be used in support of LEA unless it's a SAR incident or has been approved by the Fire Chief or his/her designee.