



BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Approved Units for Small Unmanned Aircraft System (sUAS)

Office of the Police Commissioner

VERSION - May 12, 2025

Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT)

sUAS may only be utilized during the below circumstances or types of incidents to protect the sanctity of human life, provide enhanced situational awareness, and with consideration for the protection of individual civil rights and reasonable expectation of privacy:

- Barricaded Persons
- Hostage Rescue
- Active Shooter
- High Risk Raid
- Search and Rescue
- Locating a suspect who is believed to be hiding in a specific and defined area, who is believed to be armed with a weapon, where attempting to physically locate would put a SWAT team member, other law enforcement officer or civilian at risk of death and/or serious bodily injury; and surveillance and containment are generally the safest tactics for apprehending the suspect. (Refer to BPD Policy 1505, Foot Pursuits)
- Exigent circumstances to protect life. If the exigent circumstance is not a part of a SWAT mission, SWAT's sUAS may be called to assist, but only if it is for the protection of life and by approval of the Police Commissioner. Use of the sUAS must still be piloted by a SWAT RPIC and meet FAA regulations as determined by the RPIC.
- Training for approved missions through practical sUAS exercises and scenarios. Training may be conducted jointly with other authorized BPD units.
- Technology testing, proficiency testing, performance checks, maintenance flights, and other types of missions to ensure the validity of technology for BPD use.

- Community outreach events hosted by or in collaboration with the Baltimore Police Department.

Crime Scene Unit (CSU)

sUAS may only be utilized during the during the below circumstances:

- Crime scene documentation once a crime scene has been established and secured.
- Training for approved missions through practical sUAS exercises and scenarios. Training may be conducted jointly with other authorized BPD units.
- Technology testing, proficiency testing, performance checks, maintenance flights, and other types of missions to ensure the validity of technology for BPD use.
- Crime scene documentation once a crime scene has been established and secured.
- Additional utilization of the sUAS by the CSU to collect evidence at a scene being investigated after a recent incident shall be approved by the CSU's chain of command.
- Exigent circumstances to protect life. CSU's sUAS may be called to assist BPD operations, but only if it is for the protection of life and by approval of the Police Commissioner.
- Community outreach events hosted by or in collaboration with the Baltimore Police Department.