

78.1 POLICY

It is the policy of the Hagerstown Department of Police to utilize a small Unmanned Aircraft System (sUAS) for the focused and limited purpose of public safety and law enforcement activities, and to make reasonable efforts to ensure individual privacy rights while utilizing sUAS equipment.

78.2 DEFINITIONS

- .1 **Digital Multimedia Evidence (DME)** -- Digital recording of images, sounds, and associated data.
- .2 **Remote Pilot** – A person who holds a valid remote pilot certificate with a small unmanned aircraft system rating issued by the Federal Aviation Administration.
- .3 **Remote Pilot in Command (PIC)** -- A person who holds a remote pilot certificate with an sUAS rating and has the final authority and responsibility for the operation and safety of an sUAS operation conducted under FAA regulations.
- .4 **Visual Observer**-- individual designated to assist the RPIC and/or remote pilot to see and avoid other air traffic or objects aloft or on the ground.
- .5 **Small Unmanned Aircraft System (sUAS)** -- A small unmanned aircraft and its associated elements including equipment, hardware, software, and personnel.
- .6 **Project Manager**- Employee designated by the Operations Captain to oversee the Unmanned Aircraft System program. The Project Manager is responsible for inventory, coordination of equipment maintenance and replacement, coordination of training, program oversight, purchasing and program budget and policy recommendations. The sUAS Project Manager will report to the Operations Captain in matters pertaining to the program.
- .7 **Program Administrator**- Employee designated by the Operations Captain to assist in the administration of the program and in overseeing personnel assigned as pilots in this program. The program administrator is responsible for pilot certifications and pilot proficiency evaluations, compliance reports for FAA, registration of aircraft and assisting the Project Manager.
- .8 **Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS):** sUAS operation where the pilot does not maintain direct visual contact with the drone but monitors its flight using remote sensing technology.
- .9 **Drone as First Responder (DFR):** DFR system included pre-positioned drones at launch stations to provide immediate aerial situational awareness for public safety emergencies. Allows for rapid, remote sUAS deployment that provides real-time aerial response to emergency incidents.
- .10 **Teleoperator (TO):** An officer who has received additional training to operate a UAS remotely through a desktop at another location.

78.3 PERMISSABLE USES

The sUAS may be used to provide an aerial visual perspective during situations where the sUAS could contribute to incident resolution, criminal/traffic investigation, and/or suspect apprehension. Examples include:

- .1 **Situational Awareness:** To assist decision makers (e.g., incident command staff; first responders; city, county, and state officials) in understanding the nature, scale, and scope of an incident—and for planning and coordinating an effective response.
- .2 **Person Searches:** To assist missing person investigations (e.g., AMBER Alerts, Silver Alerts, missing children).
- .3 **Tactical deployment:** To support the tactical deployment of officers and equipment in emergency situations (e.g., response to terrorist activities, active shooters, SRT raids, hostages, and barricades), support for large-scale tactical operations, and other temporary perimeter security situations.

- 4 Search Warrants: To provide an aerial visual perspective before and during high risk search warrants where the use of an sUAS has been authorized in a warrant or where exigent circumstances permits the use of the sUAS; or in any other incident where a search warrant authorizes the use of a sUAS.
- 5 Incident Management: To provide an aerial visual perspective to assist officers in providing direction for crowd control, traffic incident management, special events, and temporary perimeter security.
- 6 Scene Documentation: To document a crime scene, collision scene, or other major incident scene (e.g., disaster management, incident response, large-scale forensic scene investigation).
- 7 Active Pursuit: To assist in the apprehension of wanted suspects during a pursuit; providing aerial coverage during a vehicle/foot pursuit or search incident to a foot pursuit.
- 8 Canine Track: provide aerial coverage for a Canine track.
- 9 Evidence location: to provide an aerial visual perspective to assist officers in locating evidence in areas where it is legal to do so.
- 10 Drone as a First Responder (DFR): Used to respond to call for service to provide initial assessment and overview for active calls and incidents.

78.4 PROCEDURES FOR sUAS USE

- 1 In addition to the policies and procedures outlined in this chapter, all sUAS operations shall adhere to the HPD Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems Standard Operating Procedures, which shall be published in the Rules and Regulations folder of the shared drive and in PowerDMS.
- 2 The Hagerstown Police Department will possess current applicable authorizations, permits, and certificates required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) prior to deploying or operating the sUAS. These certificates include COAs and BVLOS waivers. DFR operations will be conducted under these BVLOS and COA waivers.
- 3 The sUAS will be operated only by Remote Pilots in Command and Remote Pilots.
- 4 The sUAS-certified personnel shall inspect and test sUAS equipment prior to each deployment to verify the proper functioning of all equipment and the airworthiness of the device.
- 5 The sUAS equipment is the responsibility of individual employees and will be used with reasonable care to ensure proper functioning. Equipment malfunctions shall be brought to the attention of the Program Manager as soon as possible so that an appropriate repair can be made or a replacement unit can be procured
- 6 The sUAS equipment and all data, images, video, and metadata captured, recorded, or otherwise produced by the equipment is the sole property of the Hagerstown Police Department.
- 7 All flights will be captured and recorded by software designed for that purpose. The Program Administrator will maintain a log of all deployments, which will include:
 - the reason for the flight;
 - the time, date, and location of the flight; and
 - a summary of the actions taken and outcomes resulting from the deployment.
- 8 The Program Manager shall review all deployments and uses of sUAS to ensure adherence to HPD policy and procedures, and to identify policy and training needs.
- 9 The Program Administrator will conduct a debrief on major incidents to evaluate the performance of the sUAS and the pilot. The debrief will include the Remote Pilot, Visual Observers, and anyone else with critical information for the debrief.
- 10 The sUAS program equipment will be secured in an area designated by the Operations Captain.

78.5 TRAINING

- .1 Police personnel who are assigned as sUAS pilots must complete the training program required for FAA certification. Additional training identified by HPD may also be assigned.
- .2 Remote Pilots shall maintain proficiency in the operation of the sUAS. At a minimum, each pilot will participate in at least one actual or one training deployment per calendar quarter. The UAS Program Administrator can remove any UAS operator from flight operations and active status in the UAS program for failing to attend required FAA/UAS training. UAS operators may also be removed from flight operations and active status if the operator engages in unsafe flight activities and/or fails to maintain their proficiency as required by the FAA.

78.6 RESTRICTIONS ON USING THE sUAS

- .1 The sUAS shall be deployed and used only to support official law enforcement and public safety activities. This may include actual deployments, training exercises, and maintenance.
- .2 The sUAS shall be operated in accordance with training, HPD policy and procedures, and FAA rules.
- .3 The sUAS may be used outside of HPD's jurisdiction if a request has been made by an allied law enforcement agency and the operator(s) follow all local, state and federal laws.

78.7 RETENTION AND MANAGEMENT

- .1 All DME recordings are the property of the Hagerstown Police Department and shall be securely stored in a manner consistent with federal and state law, existing HPD evidence protocols for digital media, and the Department's retention schedule. Recordings with training value may be retained until no longer needed.
- .2 It is the pilot's responsibility to upload all DME by the end of their tour of duty.

78.8 RECORDS REQUESTS AND RELEASE OF RECORDINGS

- .1 The public release of DME recordings will be conducted in accordance with applicable federal and state law.
- .2 Recordings will not be disseminated by any employee unless approved by the Chief of Police.

78.9 DRONE AS A FIRST RESPONDER (DFR)

The DFR program utilizes pre-positioned UAS to fly to a call for service and arrive prior to, or in conjunction with, first responders on the ground. These DFR drones will be piloted by Teleoperators. DFR assists in helping evaluate the scene and circumstances before officers arrive and while an event is ongoing. This will provide necessary tactical information and situational awareness to help officers safely respond to incidents, de-escalate situations, and increase efficiency.

78.10 SUPERVISION AND REPORTING

The sUAS program equipment will be secured in an area designated by the Project Manager. The sUAS Project Manager shall review all deployments and uses of sUAS to ensure adherence to HPD policy and procedures, and to identify policy and training needs.