



HOLLIS POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS



G.O. NO: PR-344	SUBJECT: Unmanned Aerial Systems (sUAS)	PAGE NO.: 1 OF 13
SUPERSEDES: All previous policies, procedures, and general orders	ISSUING AUTHORITY: Brendan T. LaFlamme Chief of Police <i>Brendan T. LaFlamme</i>	
EFFECTIVE DATE: 12/27/2023	REVISED:	

NOTE: This written directive is for the internal governance of the Hollis Police Department, and as provided by RSA 516:46, is not intended and should not be interpreted to establish a higher standard of care in any civil or criminal action than would otherwise be applicable under existing law.

I. PURPOSE:

The use of small unmanned aerial systems (sUAS) to support law enforcement operations has become widely accepted as a potential low-cost alternative to traditional aviation programs. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and minimum standards for the use and oversight of unmanned aircraft systems (sUAS), commonly known as “drones” and the associated storage, retrieval and dissemination of information obtained through the use of small unmanned aircraft systems. The use of a sUAS is not intended for general patrol or observation of areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.

II. POLICY:

It is the policy of this agency that sUAS shall be deployed only for specific public safety missions, in compliance with all applicable laws, and only by trained and authorized personnel. This policy is not intended to be all-inclusive, but instead shall serve as a supplement to other agency policies and procedures, applicable national aviation authority regulations, and sUAS manufacturers' approved flight manuals.

III. DEFINITIONS:

Small Unmanned Aerial System (sUAS): An unmanned aircraft of any type that is capable of sustaining flight, whether remotely controlled or preprogrammed and all the supporting or attached hardware designed for gathering information through photography, video recording or any other means.

Remote Pilot in Command (RPIC): Person directly responsible for and is the final authority as to the operation of the small unmanned aircraft.

Visual Observer: The person designated by the remote pilot in command to assist the remote pilot in command and the person manipulating the flight controls of the aircraft to see and avoid other air traffic or objects aloft or on the ground. Pursuant to this policy, the visual observer does not need to be a RPIC.

Visual line-of-sight (VLOS): The ability of the RPIC and/or VO(s) to be able to see and



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determine the trajectory of the sUAS throughout the entire flight with vision that is unaided other than by corrective lenses or sunglasses or both, and to determine its movement relative to intruding aircraft, obstacles, and terrain and observe the airspace for other air traffic or hazards to determine that the sUAS does not endanger the life or property of another.

Certificate of Waiver or Authorization (COA): Issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), permits public agencies and organizations to operate a particular aircraft for a particular purpose in a particular area or waives specific requirements for operations. A COA may be “Public” (i.e. “Blanket Class G”), “Jurisdictional,” or “Special Government Interest.”

14 CFR Part 107: The sUAS rule to allow for routine civil operation, to include public safety, of sUAS in the National Airspace System (NAS), and provides safety rules for those operations. The rule defines sUAS as unmanned aircraft weighing less than 55 pounds.

Low Altitude Authorization and Notification Capability (LAANC): Automated application and approval process that provides sUAS pilots with access to controlled airspace at or below 400 feet.

Notice to Air Mission (NOTAM): A notice containing information essential to personnel concerned with flight operations but not known far enough in advance to be publicized by other means. It states the abnormal status of a component of the National Airspace System (NAS) – not the normal status.

- NOTAMs indicate the real-time and abnormal status of the NAS impacting every user.
- NOTAMs concern the establishment, condition, or change of any facility, service, procedure, or hazard in the NAS.
- NOTAMs have a unique language using special contractions to make communication more efficient.

IV. PROCEDURES:

A. Unit Organization:

1. The Operations Bureau Commander shall have line and staff authority over the sUAS Unit. The chain of command and organizational structure of the unit under the Operations Bureau Commander, who will act as the Unit Commander, shall consist of a Unit Supervisor and Unit Members.
2. The membership of the Hollis Police Department sUAS Unit may consist of a multi-disciplined and multi-agency unit. The rank-and-file members of the unit may be comprised of individuals from the Hollis Police Department.

B. Mission and Capabilities:



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1. The mission of the Hollis Police Department's sUAS Unit is to utilize the unit's personnel and aerial platforms to support a wide variety of police and public safety mission profiles and tasks. Please note that this policy prohibits the use of sUAS equipment for "drone as a first responder" usage. The scope of the sUAS Unit's mission is to support police and public safety operations and tasks that may include, but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Search and rescue missions of lost or missing adults or children and of individuals who pose a clear and articulable safety risk to themselves or others.
 - b. Traffic collision scene searching, photography, videography, scene mapping, and documentation.
 - c. Crime scene searching, photography, videography, scene mapping, and documentation.
 - d. Searching and/or surveillance of structures, conveyances, or outdoor environments for criminal offenders and fugitives.
 - e. In response to emergency 911 calls and/or serious or violent crimes in progress, when necessary to help coordinate resources, establish parameters, identify crime scene areas, etc.
 - f. Situational awareness support and visual assistance at large-scale events or critical incidents to provide incident commanders and key leaders with an understanding of the scope, nature, and scale of an incident. The information garnered from this type of mission can be used for planning and coordinating a more effective response.
 - g. Tactical deployment by supporting the deployment of officers and equipment in emergencies.
 - h. Visual perspective by providing an aerial visual perspective to assist officers in providing direction for crowd control at events, riots, disturbances, traffic incident management, incident response, scene mapping, and large or multiple forensic scene investigations.
 - i. Fire services support.
 - j. Damage assessments for purposes of natural or manmade disaster recovery.



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2. The unit will facilitate the deployment of the unit's platforms, assets, and personnel to support any police or public safety mission or special circumstance that is determined to be legitimate and in compliance with the law and this policy by the Unit Commander or Unit Supervisor.
3. Nothing in this policy shall prohibit members of the sUAS Unit from providing demonstrations to members of the public on sUAS capabilities for the purposes of community education and outreach.

C. Member Training Requirements:

1. The Unit Commander shall ensure that all training and licensing for the unit is compliant with the current laws and regulations, including FAA requirements and 14 CFR 107.
2. Members of the sUAS Unit must obtain the following qualifications as members of the unit before they can be utilized in an operational capacity:
 - a. Completion of a recognized and department-approved Remote Pilot Course through organizations like the PilotInstitute.org.
 - b. Certification and licensing in accordance with 14 CFR 107 (FAA Part 107 Remote Pilot) with the appropriate rating. Unit members are required to maintain certification once obtained.
 - i. Part 107 Certification is not required in order to operate under a Public Certification of Authorization (COA); however, the training must be equivalent to Part 107 Certification at a minimum.
 - ii. Additionally, a Public COA (otherwise known as a "Blanket Class G COA") only allows sUAS operation in the performance of a "government function" in unrestricted (i.e. Class G) airspace; a Public COA does not allow for sUAS operation for the purposes or training, public demonstrations, etc.
 - iii. Similarly, a Jurisdictional COA only allows sUAS operation in the performance of a "government function" in restricted airspace and does not allow for sUAS operation for the purposes or training, public demonstrations, etc. Although this COA does allow for sUAS operation in restricted airspace, the PIC must abide by LAANC altitudes as indicated in the applicable [UAS Facility Map](#).



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- iv. A Special Government Interest (SGI) COA may be requested for a one-time operation of the sUAS at a location not included under HPD's approved Public or Jurisdictional COA based on an imminent-risk-to-life type event where manned aircraft may need to be available or the risk to manned aircraft is too great. An expedited SGI waiver/authorization may be requested via phone; however, the FAA Request Form must be submitted as soon as possible.
 - v. All members of the sUAS Unit shall become Part 107 certified, as this provides the most versatility, widest scope of operation, and removes liability from the Town of Hollis.
 - c. Satisfy and maintain all the conditions of the COA and/or waivers issued by the FAA.
 - d. sUAS Unit members will be trained on and abide by all legal standards applicable to the deployment and use of the sUAS technology.
 - e. Obtain and exercise working knowledge of the airspace intended for operations and air traffic control communication requirements.
 - f. Obtain and exercise the ability to monitor and interpret weather information.
4. At the discretion of the Unit Commander, and as part of the unit's continuing education efforts, members of the sUAS Unit may be required to complete additional trainings and obtain additional certifications upon assignment to the unit, including but not limited to the following:
- a. Attendance and successful completion of in-house sUAS Unit training, outside vendor training, and other related courses for the purpose of enhancing the individual member's knowledge and proficiency in sUAS operations. These trainings may include classroom training, online training, practical training, and participation in readiness exercises.
- D. sUAS Unit Activation Procedures:
- 1. The sUAS Unit members and assets may only be activated by a member of the sUAS Unit chain of command. sUAS Unit members will report to the incident commander or designee for assignment during an activation.



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2. All requests for mutual aid assistance for sUAS usage shall be directed to the sUAS Unit Chain of Command, and the Unit Commander *or Unit Supervisor* shall make the determination on whether such requests will be authorized.

E. Unit Operation Procedures:

1. All sUAS missions shall be flown in strict compliance with all FAA regulations including, but not limited to, 14 CFR 107, the HPD COA, and any applicable waivers. The Pilot-in-Command (PIC) has final authority and responsibility for the operation and safety of all sUAS missions conducted in accordance with 14 CFR 107.
2. The sUAS will only be operated by Unit members who have been trained and certified in the operation of the system. All Unit members with sUAS responsibilities shall be provided training in the policies and procedures governing their use.
3. All sUAS missions shall be documented on a form or database that will include the date, time, purpose of the flight, RPIC and visual observer (VO) assigned.
4. The Chief of Police or his designee shall ensure that flight documentation is audited at regular intervals. The results of the audit will be documented. Any changes to the flight time counter will be documented. Unauthorized use of the sUAS shall result in disciplinary action.
5. Where there are specific and articulable grounds to believe that the sUAS will collect evidence of criminal wrongdoing and if the sUAS will intrude upon a person's reasonable expectation of privacy, the Unit will secure a search warrant prior to conducting the flight, unless there exists a judicially recognized exception to the search warrant requirement (i.e., plain view, exigent circumstances, or consent).
6. sUAS mission requests shall be authorized by the Chief of Police or his designee, Operations Commander, Sergeant, or any other supervisor.

F. The RPIC shall be responsible for conducting:

1. Preflight briefing, operational plan and inspection of the sUAS for each mission.
2. Notifying the Air Traffic Controller (ATC) prior to any flights unless an emergency exists, then immediately once the situation permits. If flying under 14 CFR 107, the ATC does not need to be notified if a LAANC request has been approved.



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3. Submission of the NOTAM or LAANC request, if applicable.
4. Post-flight inspection of the sUAS and any associated reporting requirements.
5. The Chief of Police, Unit Commander, Unit Supervisor, or the RPIC may decline, cancel, or terminate any sUAS request or mission due to:
 - a. Hazards, poor weather conditions, or lack of visibility;
 - b. Type of request is beyond the sUAS or pilot's capability;
 - c. Determination that the use of the sUAS is in violation of this policy or law;
 - d. Flight emergency; and,
 - e. Mechanical maintenance of the sUAS.
6. At no time will the Hollis Police Department authorize the weaponizing of the sUAS or allow for the use of dispersal payloads.

G. Emergency Procedures:

1. The sUAS manufacturer's specified emergency procedures shall be complied with at all times. Additionally, should the RPIC encounter an emergency or abnormal circumstance, they shall operate in accordance with the COA and applicable waivers.
2. Personnel flying the sUAS will first and foremost be trained that in any emergency situation, the safety of persons on the ground and in the air is the number one priority. The following are emergency procedures and each will be documented with an emergency checklist for unit to review.
 - a. Inflight Fire: sUAS will be flown away from people and property until a safe landing location can be found. A fire extinguisher and first aid kit will be located at the mission site.
 - b. Loss of Link: Onboard system will execute lost link protocol by either landing immediately or returning to launch point and land.
 - c. Line of Sight Lost: If both unit members lose sight of the aircraft the pilot will initiate a Return-To-Home on the remote control. The Return-To-Home protocol is identical to the Loss of Link protocol. Once visual



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contact with the aircraft is reestablished the pilot will take-back the aircraft using the remote control. This procedure is not necessary if the RPIC is operating in accordance with a “tactical beyond visual line of sight” waiver.

- d. Loss of Motor: During a motor failure sUAS flight cannot be maintained and the sUAS will make an uncontrolled landing. An announcement will be made to all unit members of the loss of the flight of the aircraft and to watch for the landing site.
 - i. One unit member will bring a fire extinguisher to the landing site in case of fire.
- e. Unusual Attitude: Onboard stabilization gyros will be allowed to level aircraft before control is resumed by ground control.
- f. In the unlikely event of an emergency involving the aircraft and person on the ground, the flight unit (RPIC and Observer) shall maintain a list of applicable numbers (EMS, Dispatch, ATC) for emergency contact. The flight unit will also be trained in CPR and first responder medical techniques.

H. Lost Communications Procedures:

- 1. Loss of Communications between the Remote Pilot in Command (RPIC) and Air Traffic Control (ATC):
 - a. If required, the RPIC will communicate with ATC through use of two-way radio communications or a cellular phone based on the agreement between ATC and the RPIC. In the event the RPIC is unable to establish communications, the RPIC will immediately land the sUAS until communications can be regained. In all cases, when during Loss of Communications there is concern for people or property in the air or on the ground the RPIC will immediately land the aircraft.
- 2. Loss of Communications between the Visual Observer (VO) and the Remote Pilot in Command (RPIC):
 - a. The RPIC and Observer will be collocated during operations for this COA and communications will be through direct communication. However, if the observer and the RPIC are not collocated where verbal communication is not possible, the following communication tools will be utilized:



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- i. Handheld radio;
 - ii. Cellular phone;
 - iii. Hand Signals (may be used solely or in conjunction with the communication equipment);
 - b. If communication is lost and cannot be re-established, the sUAS will immediately land.
- I. Lost Link/Visual Line of Site:
- 1. Lost Link Procedures:
 - a. In the event of lost link, the sUAS must initiate a flight maneuver that ensures landing of the aircraft. Lost Link airborne operations shall be predictable and shall remain within the defined operating area filed in the NOTAM for that flight operation. If the sUAS could potentially enter controlled airspace, the RPIC will immediately contact the appropriate ATC facility having jurisdiction over the controlled airspace to advise them of the sUAS's last known altitude, speed, direction of flight and estimated flight time remaining and the Proponent's action to recover the sUAS.
 - b. The sUAS is preconfigured / programed in the event of a Lost Link condition to stop forward flight and attempt to regain link to the remote operated by the RPIC. If the link is not re-established the sUAS is programed to initiate a Return to Home maneuver. If link is not re-established the RPIC will also initiate a manual Return to Home procedure by activation the Return to Home function on the sUAS' remote.
 - c. If the link is reestablished the RPIC will take control of the sUAS and continue the operation or maneuver the sUAS back to the launch location if safe to do so. If link is intermittent the RPIC will immediately land the sUAS in a safe location.
 - d. Once the sUAS has returned to home or recovered, the system will be inspected for causes of the lost link condition and necessary repairs will be made prior to any future flights.
 - e. All lost link events will be documented along with any findings of causes of these lost link events.



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2. Lost Visual Line of Sight:

- a. If the Visual Observer loses sight of the sUAS, the Visual Observer must notify the RPIC immediately. If the sUAS is visually reacquired promptly, the mission may continue. If not, the RPIC will immediately execute lost link procedures.
- b. The mission may continue beyond visual line of sight if the RPIC is operating in accordance with the COA and applicable “tactical beyond visual line of sight” waiver.

3. Loss Communications:

- a. If communication is lost between the RPIC and the Visual Observer(s), the RPIC must execute the lost link procedures.

J. sUAS Unit Records and Reporting Requirements:

1. sUAS Unit members will utilize the unit’s Daily Flight Log (DFL) to document all instances in which a sUAS has been utilized for any purpose. This includes training, maintenance, and deployments that are conducted in support of an incident, event, or other public safety mission. The DFL will serve as a permanent record of all Hollis Police Department sUAS Unit activities. The DFL shall be reviewed by the sUAS Unit Commander and shall consist of, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a. Date, location, time of flight;
 - b. Purpose and scope of flight;
 - c. RPIC and VO names; and,
 - d. Details of key events and findings during the flight.
2. Operational flights shall be documented in IMC utilizing the appropriate or associated report classification type.
 - a. Hollis-based missions with pre-existing or accompanying report will not require a duplicate report solely for sUAS deployment; however, appropriate accompanying documentation must be included in the corresponding IMC report.



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- b. All missions occurring outside of Hollis will require the generation of a “No Crime Involved” incident report in order to document sUAS deployment in support of outside jurisdictions.
3. All original digitally recorded media of a mission flight or training flight shall be copied and retained based on the type of incident, in accordance with Hollis Police Department records retention and destruction policy (PR-334). After the original digitally recorded media is copied, the original media used (e.g., SD card) may be reformatted for future use with the sUAS.
4. sUAS recorded data will not be collected, disseminated, or retained solely for the purpose of monitoring activities protected by the US Constitution.
5. The collection, use, dissemination, or retention of sUAS data shall not be based solely on individual characteristics such as race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, or gender, which is a violation of the law.
6. The Hollis Police Department will be transparent in its sUAS program while minimizing risk to people, property, and aircraft; and continuing to safeguard the right to privacy of all persons.
7. The sUAS Unit will maintain and make all necessary flight log data and documentation available for inspection or audit by the FAA or upon their request. Information regarding sUAS Unit flight log data, documentation, and unit activations will be made available to requesting parties in accordance with the mandates set forth in NH RSA 91-A or US FOIA requests.
8. Flight log data and documentation will be maintained on the department webpage for the purposes of transparency relative to sUAS usage.

K. Accident Notification and Investigation:

1. In the event of a crash or incident involving fatalities, injuries, or property damage to the sUAS or loss of the sUAS, the RPIC shall:
 - a. Report the crash or incident immediately to the Chief of Police or his designee.
 - b. Make all applicable notifications in compliance with federal and state law, including 14 CFR 107.
 - c. In the event of a crash or incident where serious injury or loss of consciousness occurs to any person, or damage to any property other



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than the sUAS exceeds \$500, the RPIC must report to the FAA in a manner acceptable to the administrator all details of the incident no later than 10 calendar days after the operation.

- d. The RPIC is required to initiate a police report for any crash involving the sUAS. The police report shall include the following information:
 - i. Name and contact information for operators and witnesses.
 - ii. Type of operation.
 - iii. Type of device and registration number/certificate.
 - iv. Event location and incident details.
 - v. Evidence collection such as photos, video, and device confiscation, if necessary.
- e. When the crash meets the criteria listed under section c., the remote pilot in command shall provide notification to the FAA by using the FAA's DroneZone Portal at: <https://faadronezone.faa.gov/#/>.

L. sUAS Unit Equipment:

- 1. The sUAS Unit equipment will be inspected and inventoried on a quarterly and yearly basis. Requests for new equipment or replacement of current equipment should be submitted through the sUAS Unit chain of command.
- 2. The Unit Commander will ensure that any sUAS in the unit's inventory is registered with the FAA in accordance with 14 CFR 107.
- 3. Storage and transportation of all sUAS equipment shall be done in accordance with manufacturer's guidelines.

M. Selection of sUAS Unit Personnel:

- 1. A minimum of two years of full-time law enforcement experience with the Hollis Police Department is required to be assigned as a sUAS Unit member.
- 2. At the discretion of the Unit Commander, interested personnel will be required to submit either a written or electronic communication to express interest in becoming a sUAS Unit member.



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3. Interested personnel may be required to participate in a unit selection process or any battery of test(s) that the Unit Commander deems appropriate. All testing will be on a voluntary basis.

N. Complaint Investigations:

1. Should there be a complaint alleging inappropriate use of the sUAS, the complaint shall be handled in accordance with agency protocols for internal investigations.
2. Any complaint alleging a violation of a person's civil rights by use of the sUAS shall be documented and be investigated through this agency's policy regarding investigation of complaints.
3. Unauthorized or inappropriate use of an sUAS shall result in strict accountability, in accordance with established disciplinary procedures.