
Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Operations

606.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy is intended to establish guidelines for the use of unmanned aerial systems, including retrieval and dissemination of images and data captured by the UAS.

606.1.1 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,, and all of the supporting or attached systems designed for gathering information through imaging, recording or any other means. UASs are also commonly referred to as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) or drones.

606.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Poulsbo Police Department to utilize UAS to enhance the department's ability to save lives, protect property, and document crime scenes and collision scenes. Any application of the UAS will be in accordance with Federal, State, and City laws, to include constitutional privacy rights, search and seizure regulations, and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations.

606.3 PRIVACY CONSIDERATIONS

The Poulsbo Police Department operates under a set of rules, policies, and laws that control the collection, retention, dissemination, and disposition of records that contain personally identifiable information. As with personally identifiable information collected in the course of any investigation, these authorities apply to information collected via UAS. Consistent with applicable existing laws and requirements, the Poulsbo Police Department's use of UAS shall include the practices identified below. The Poulsbo Police Department shall only collect, use, and disseminate information obtained from UAS for an authorized purpose.

The Poulsbo Police Department shall not retain information collected using UAS that may contain personally identifiable information for more than 180 days or in accordance with current Evidence.com and policy restrictions. Exceptions can occur when retention of the information is determined to be necessary for a criminal investigation or is maintained in a system of records covered by the Privacy Act.

Data collected by UAS that is retained must be safeguarded in accordance with applicable Federal laws. These authorities ensure that Department personnel with access to such data follow practices that are consistent with the protection of privacy and civil liberties. Use of all Department information systems may be monitored, recorded, and subject to audit, and unauthorized collection, retention, or dissemination of data is prohibited. Further, the Department has procedures in place to review, investigate, and address privacy and civil liberties complaints.

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606.4 TRANSPARENCY

Rigorous adherence to the requirements set forth in this policy is not enough. To be successful in our law enforcement and national security missions, we must continue to facilitate relationships of trust with the communities we serve. Enhancing our transparency about agency operations, including how we operate UAS, creates an informed citizenry and greater confidence in the Department's decision-making. Education of the public can enhance the Department's ability to fulfill its missions and serve the American people. As appropriate, while not revealing information that might compromise law enforcement or national security needs, the Department will update its website to reflect its current policy on UAS on an ongoing basis, and will provide a general summary of UAS operations conducted by the Department during the previous year, including a brief description of types or categories of missions flown and the number of times the Department provided assistance to other federal, state, local, and tribal agencies or entities.

606.5 AUTHORIZED USE

The authorized missions for the Poulsbo Police Department's UAS are:

- (a) Video/photographs for investigative support
- (b) HAZMAT response
- (c) Search and Rescue
- (d) Barricaded persons
- (e) Traffic collisions
- (f) Disaster response (i.e. flood, earthquakes, etc.)
- (g) Aerial support for Fire incidents
- (h) Marine assistance
- (i) Training events

All other requested uses will be approved by the on-duty supervisor prior to accepting the mission.

606.5.1 COMMUNITY OUTREACH DEMONSTRATIONS

In an effort to encourage public trust and effectively engage our community, the use of an UAS as part of a community meeting or special event is authorized. The UAS demonstration should be limited to showcasing the department's investigative capabilities and educating the public on the UAS program. Use of an UAS in this capacity must be authorized by someone the rank of Lieutenant or higher.

606.6 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.

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- To harass, intimidate, or discriminate against any individual or group.
- To conduct personal business of any type.

The UAS shall not be weaponized.

606.7 AUTHORIZED OPERATORS

Only personnel who have successfully completed the required training shall be permitted to operate the UAS. These officers will be designated as Remote Pilots in Charge (RPIC).

606.8 FLIGHT LOGS

Each authorized UAS RPIC will maintain a flight log. RPICS will log the date, flight time, and locations of all UAS deployments. They will also note case number, incident type, automated flight or manual flight, and whether photo images or video were captured during the flight.

- (a) Flight log data will be entered by the RPIC upon completion of all missions, whether operational or training.
- (b) Flight log data will be stored digitally in a manner determined by command staff that allows supervisors immediate access.
- (c) Flight log data will be maintained and retained in accordance with the Records Release and Security policy.
- (d) Any practical demonstration of proficiency will include a review of the RPIC's flight log.

606.9 PROGRAM COORDINATOR

The Chief of Police will designate someone the rank of Sergeant or higher to oversee the UAS Program. Their duties will include the following:

- Ensuring that policies and procedures conform to current laws, regulations, and best practice.
- Establishing a training standard for RPICs that meets FAA requirements.
- Overseeing the selection and training of RPICs.
- Overseeing procurement and maintenance of UAS equipment.
- Review of UAS deployments to ensure compliance with policies and operating procedures.
- Conducting audits of flight logs at least bi-annually.

606.10 RETENTION OF DATA

Photographs and video collected by the UAS shall be retained in accordance with Washington State Records Retention Schedules and current Poulsbo Police Department Evidence Retention requirements.