

WHITE SETTLEMENT POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDERS		CHAPTER 8: Special Operations		NUMBER 807.00	
		TITLE: AVIATION UNIT (DRONES)			
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807.01 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Aviation Unit of the White Settlement Police Department is to provide an added resource to the agency that enhances the safety of the public as well as its employees. The Aviation Unit consists of employees who operate Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (sUAS), commonly known as drones. This technology allows for a safer, more effective and thorough search and rescue mechanism. The Aviation Unit can also provide officers with the ability to analyze potential threats on active scenes and prevent unnecessary injuries. It can deliver lifesaving payload to individuals otherwise inaccessible to emergency service providers. Supervisors can also enhance situational awareness of community events, unfolding incidents, or surveillance of authorized operations that are approved under this policy. Drones can also provide images and video of community events and showcase city facilities, equipment, and amenities that bolster community trust.

807.02 POLICY

This policy sets forth how the Aviation Unit will operate the aircraft in coordination with police, fire, and city department functions as guided by the 14 CF Part 107 licensing and other waivers issued to the department by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as well as in coordination with the proper communication protocol with the Air Traffic Control (ATC) tower at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (NASJRB). This policy is designed to minimize risk to people, property, and aircraft during the operation of the sUAS while continuing to safeguard the right to privacy of all persons.

807.03 LIMITATIONS

The Aviation Unit will respect the Constitutional privacy considerations of citizens, and the use of sUAS will be very limited in scope and only used as authorized by the outline described in this General Order. The sUAS program at the White Settlement Police Department may be utilized for event management to broaden awareness of conditions on the ground to safeguard public safety. In addition, the unit may be utilized in a reactive policing manner to incidents. The random use of

departmental unmanned aircraft systems in residential areas, solely for the purpose of gathering evidence related to criminal wrongdoing or for any other unauthorized purpose, is prohibited.

807.04 DEFINITIONS

Air Vehicle (AV) – the aircraft(s) purchased and utilized by the police department.

Airworthiness – by following current rules and regulations, the airworthiness of the UAS will be certified by the Office of Emergency Management.

ATC – Air Traffic Control

Camera and Remote Sensing Operator – The individual responsible for the operation of all cameras (video and still) and remote sensing functions during UAS operations.

Certificate of Authority (COA) – a document issued by the FAA that allows a “public entity” to conduct flight operations of a UAS within a specific area and altitude clearance. The pilot must have the COA with them when they fly.

Defined Incident Perimeter – a location identified by command. The location has a defined perimeter to be determined based on the scope of the operation and a defined operational ceiling at or below 400 feet Above Ground Level (AGL).

Exigent Circumstance Flights – These are sUAS flights that are performed in emergency circumstances where the loss of life and property is imminent or has already occurred. The use of the sUAS can be requested by any governmental or statutory agency that is designated to deal with emergencies (search/rescue, tornado, flooding, fire, SWAT stand-off, etc.). These flights must be approved by the sUAS Operations Coordinator or the on-duty supervisors’ discretion if the sUAS Operations Coordinator cannot be reached. If approval for the sUAS to assist another governmental or statutory agency is given, a notification to command staff must be made advising of the situation and assistance.

Liaison – a person who interacts with incident personnel to avoid distracting the PIC and observer from their duties.

National Airspace System (NAS) – The airspace owned and regulated by the Federal Government, specifically the FAA. From the ground upward (no defined height limit) is within the jurisdiction of the FAA.

Personally-Owned Air Vehicle (POAV) – the aircraft(s) purchased, owned and utilized by a police department employee.

Pilot in Charge (PIC) – This individual has total control and authority over the flight operations of the UAS and is civilly and criminally responsible to State and Federal Agencies tasked with safe and legal operation of a UAS in the NAS. The PIC must continuously scan the NAS for possible aircraft incursions or other dangers that require immediate action.

Registration – UAS Registration Marking with N Number in accordance with 14 CFR Part 45.

Search Warrant Required Flights – Any flight not designated a call for service, training flight, exigent circumstance flight, or a plain-view surveillance activity shall require issuance of a search warrant prior to any aircraft activities.

Surveillance Activities – any intentional surveillance flights that fall outside of the search warrant requirement such as “plain-view” (or observation from a location that where suspected activity can be legally viewed) are permitted only with authorization by the Patrol Commander or above. Only after authorization is received may surveillance activities begin.

Team Leader – the individual responsible for assisting the sUAS Operations Coordinator with administrative functions related to the sUAS program, including maintaining a current list of all equipment that could be placed on the sUAS during operations. The Team Leader is also responsible for the condition and maintenance of the sUAS and may distribute these tasks to other members of the sUAS/Drone program.

Small Unmanned Aircraft System (sUAS) – sometimes referred to as a “drone”. This system includes the aircraft, ground station controller and all peripherals.

sUAS Operations Coordinator – The individual responsible for reviewing and approving the use of the sUAS in a public safety mission. The sUAS Operations Coordinator has full oversight responsibility of all logistical and administrative elements of sUAS operations.

Visual Observer (VO) – when required and feasible, an individual responsible to assist in monitoring the NAS prior to and during Flight Operations. The VO will, prior to Flight Operations, survey the area of operations for any hazards to Flight Operations (power lines, power poles, towers, radar dome reflectors, buildings, etc.). During Flight Operations, the VO could be responsible for the operation of the Camera System affixed to the UAS. However, they should also continuously scan the NAS for possible aircraft incursions and alert the PIC to any situations that require immediate action.

807.05

MARKINGS

The UAS shall be marked with the FAA Registration Number as required by Federal Law and further shall be identified as belonging to the White Settlement Police Department by prominently displaying “White Settlement Police” on the aircraft. The police department aircraft may be affixed with “RED and BLUE” lights to further identify the aircraft as belonging to the police department.

807.06

CRITICAL INCIDENT CHAIN OF COMMAND

- A. The Chain of Command will be followed at all times during the operation of the UAS by White Settlement PD certified remote PICs. Supervisors will become familiar with the operational limitations of sUAS devices to ensure that they are not requested for deployment in prohibited situations.

- B. RPIC/VO – Flight Operations Team may start/suspend/terminate flight operations at any time based upon current FAA rules and regulations, safety of personnel, and operations over areas where there are civilians present at the remote PIC discretion. NOTAMS (Notice to Airman), SIGMETS (Significant Meteorological Information), AIRMETS (Airman’s Meteorological Information) and TFR (Temporary Flight Restrictions) may all be factors in determining flight decisions.

807.07 UAS MISSIONS

The sUAS will be utilized for operations pertaining to a law enforcement capacity or of those to assist other agencies at the Operation Coordinators discretion or the on-duty supervisors’ discretion if the Operation Coordinator cannot be reached. The sUAS will be operated in accordance with chapter 423 of the Texas Government Code. The sUAS may be utilized in a variety of Pre, Active, and Post incident operations including but not limited to:

- A. Warrant Service – Where a valid search or arrest warrant exist, the sUAS may be deployed in assisting with aerial imagery of a target location for pre-planning purposes, to include the use of 360° panoramic video and or images in all high-risk felony warrant services, or any other warrant service where the Incident Commander or on-duty supervisor requests the use of the sUAS for Officer and public safety reasons.
- B. City Event Planning – The sUAS may be deployed for assisting with the pre-planning of large events where crowd control and officer safety could be an issue.
 - 1. Special Events - for imagery of crowds during an event to assess areas of safety concern as well as guiding personnel to requests for assistance through the crowds to the complainant’s location.
- C. Accident Investigation – The sUAS may be deployed for accidents resulting in death or Serious Bodily Injury (SBI). Serious accidents resulting in one or more vehicles needing to be towed will be up to the Operation Coordinator or the on-duty supervisor’s discretion for the deployment of the sUAS. The sUAS will be utilized for imagery, to include the use of 360° Aerial Panoramic imagery, to assist with origin/cause determination and evidence documentation.
- D. Active Assaults – The sUAS may be deployed to the location of a call for an assault where the suspect(s) is still on scene, or in the case of a felony assault, a description of the suspect(s) including clothing, transportation, and direction of travel should be obtained if the actor has just left the scene and may still be in the area.
- E. Active Theft/Robbery – The sUAS will be deployed for calls for service of a felony theft or robbery in progress where the suspect(s) is still on scene or has just left the confines of the building or habitation and is in the immediate area of where the reported theft or robbery took place. A description of the suspect(s) including clothing, transportation, and direction of travel should be obtained by dispatch if available.
- F. Barricaded Suspect/Hostage Situation – The sUAS may be deployed for calls regarding a barricaded suspect(s) who have recently committed an offense and is evading arrest/detention, in the event of a hostage situation, or anytime the incident commander believes the utilization of a sUAS will enhance officer safety. The sUAS will gather live streamed aerial imagery that will be accessed by ground units for pre-planning purposes of the target area. Where applicable and appropriate, the sUAS may be utilized in searching the building or habitation

for the suspects or any potential threats to officers and may provide a means of communication between the suspect(s) and negotiators.

- G. Lost Person(s) Searches – The sUAS may be deployed at the request of the on-duty supervisor for imagery, to include the use of thermography, to assist in the search for persons by utilizing live imagery as well as recorded imagery that can be reviewed during the search operations.
- H. Rescue Operations – The sUAS may be deployed to assist ground units to locate and provide responders directions for recovery and rescue operations.
- I. Storm Damage Assessment – The sUAS may be deployed to assist other agencies for imagery to determine affected areas as well as the severity of damage in order to define and prioritize operational areas and provide imagery for access routes into damaged areas.
- J. Fires – The sUAS may be deployed for imagery, to include the use of thermography, for determining the location of the fire “head”, fuel types and amounts, direction of travel, rate of spread, exposure hazards, personnel safe zones and escape routes, operations as a “safety spotter” as well as assistance with division assignments, personnel accountability and safety, etc.
- K. Hazardous Materials Incidents – The sUAS may be deployed for imagery, to include the use of thermography, to determine the incident type (i.e., spill/leak/vapor release), product/agent being released, assist with determining operational zones such as “Hot/Warm/Cold” zones, assist with assessment of spread area including into waterways, as well as determine areas of evacuation/shelter in place.
- L. SWAT Operations – The sUAS may be deployed for any SWAT operation where the Incident Commander has requested the assistance for aerial imagery of a target location. This deployment will be at the discretion of the Operation Coordinator or the on-duty supervisor if the Operation Coordinator is not available.
- M. Brand Management and Reputation – The sUAS may be deployed to capture images or video that can be used by members of the Strategic Communications team to assist with branding, reputation management, and bolster community awareness on policing operations and bolster trust.
- N. The sUAS may be deployed during any other operation where officer or citizen safety could be increased by the use of the sUAS at the discretion of the on-duty supervisor.
- O. After Action Reviews – The video and still imagery may be utilized to assist with operations critiques, to include training assessment.

807.08

PROHIBITIONS

The UAS shall not be operated under any of the following conditions:

- A. In any manner that violates Chapter 423 of the Texas Government Code.
- B. Before following guidelines regarding communication procedures with NAS JRB ATC as listed on the “Drone Operations Communication Procedures” card:
 - 1. Contact appropriate personnel.
 - 2. Advise of LOCATION, ALTITUDE, and DURATION OF FLIGHT.
- C. In any manner that would violate FAA regulations, including operations within restricted airspace without authorization such as areas of Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFR), restricted airspaces such as near airports (specifically within 2 miles of approaches or within

- a 5-mile radius of any airport) until 722-5 communications have been established with the airport manager, Air Traffic Control (ATC) tower, or general air traffic via radio.
- D. During manned aircraft operations within the same local airspace. For the safety of the aircrew and national airspace in general, all sUAS shall yield the right of way to manned aircraft. The exception to this rule is if a TFR has been established and the manager of the TFR airspace has established altitudes and rules in which sUAS and manned aircraft can operate within the same airspace. Even with a managed TFR, the sUAS shall yield to the manned aircraft to avoid a collision. This includes the destruction of the sUAS if necessary.
 - E. Weather conditions that would likely cause the loss of pilot control of the sUAS. These thresholds will depend upon the physical capabilities and design of the sUAS.
 - F. If the sUAS has been tagged for maintenance, repairs, or otherwise grounded.
 - G. The sUAS shall not be operated above an altitude of 400 feet Above Ground Level (AGL) (where applicable) except in those situations where allowed by FAA regulations. The sUAS shall not be operated where the remote PIC cannot visually observe the aircraft or its operations unless a tactical BVLOS waiver exists.
 - H. The sUAS shall not be operated in any situation that would violate any policy or procedure of the department including but not limited to sections referring to the violation of local/state/federal laws, activities considered harassment, use of alcohol or illegal drugs, and actions deemed to be unsafe.
 - I. The sUAS shall not be operated if the pilot determines conditions to be unsafe. The UAS pilot has the final decision as to whether the aircraft can be flown safely.
 - J. Use of force by an sUAS will not be authorized unless justified under the White Settlement Police Department Use of Force General Order. Deadly force is prohibited by means of any sUAS.
 - K. Personally Owned Air Vehicles shall not be used without permission of the Chief of Police.

807.09

TRAINING

- A. Pilot Requirements – All pilots who will be flying police department missions shall be properly trained by either manufacturer representatives or instructors/licensees (FAA 107 license) as designated by the police department. Failure to maintain/prove proficiency can result in removal from sUAS operations. The sUAS pilots will meet all conditions of the 14 CF part 107 issued by the FAA. The pilots will have current working knowledge of the airspace intended for operations, Air Traffic Control communication requirements, specific sUAS aerodynamic factors, and the ability to obtain and interpret weather. All pilots must meet the following flight experience requirements and be current with their flight log entries:
 - 1. To be considered for selection to the White Settlement Police Department sUAS/Drone Unit, the person under consideration must either possess or be able to obtain a Commercial Remote Pilot Certification issued under FAA 14 CFR part 107 within 30 days of appointment to the division and pass all future mandatory recurrence testing to maintain a Commercial Remote Pilot Certification under FAA 14 CFR part 107. Failure to complete this within the 30 days or two failures of the test within the 30 days will result in removal from the unit.

2. Basic Flight Operations Training – All pilots must successfully complete and pass the Basic Flight Operations Training/Curriculum (NIST Basic 1 and 2) for sUAS as approved by the department.
3. Mission Training – All pilots must undergo Mission Training to increase specific core competencies in all sUAS operations, systems, and roles with conducting a mission in accordance with the approved Mission Training Curriculum. This training is in addition to Basic Flight Operations Training.

B. Training

1. To stay current with the most updated training, pilots will normally participate in at least eight hours of monthly training.
2. This training is not limited to actual pilot/observer skills but includes knowledge of all pertinent sUAS and aviation matters.
3. All members within the sUAS unit shall read chapter 423 of the Texas Government Code and maintain proficiency in their operator abilities.
4. Members who do not have documented training or flight time for the preceding 90 days shall demonstrate proficiency before performing pilot/observer duties during a mission.
5. All sUAS pilots will have a working knowledge of sUAS Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).
6. All training will be documented on the sUAS monthly training paperwork or appropriate flight software.

807.10

UAS MEDIA

A. Privacy:

1. Collection and Use: The White Settlement Police Department shall only collect information using UAV/UAS to the extent that such collection or use is consistent with and relevant to an authorized purpose of the White Settlement Police Department and is compliant with the Texas Privacy Act.
2. Retention of video captured using the UAS will adhere to the same retention schedule assigned to Body Camera Devices (Video/Audio Recording Systems) which is a minimum of ninety (90) days if the video footage has no evidentiary value, unless otherwise ordered by a court order. Exception to this requirement is made for video captured during training events. Video captured during training events will be maintained for a period of at least 30 days.

B. Dissemination:

AV/UAS collected information that is not maintained in a system of records covered by the Privacy Act shall not be disseminated outside of the City of White Settlement unless dissemination is required by law or fulfills an authorized purpose and complies with City of White Settlement requirements.

807.11**REQUESTING SUAS AND AVAILABILITY**

- A. Assigning
 1. When the remote PIC on duty arrives for their normally scheduled patrol shift, they will be responsible for checking out a department issued vehicle/sUAS and properly load it into their patrol vehicle after inspection.
 2. At the end of their shift, the remote PIC will return the vehicle/sUAS to its assigned location and complete any necessary documents.
- B. Availability
 1. sUAS Unit is staffed with at least two (2) licensed officers which are available on an as-needed basis.
 2. Approval for the sUAS Unit to assist will be implied if requested by an on duty White Settlement Police Department supervisor from the Patrol division.
 3. Approval for sUAS to assist outside agencies must be given by sUAS Supervisor over the unit or their designee.
- C. Requesting
 1. sUAS operations may be requested by the shift supervisors through dispatch or direct contact with pilots by phone.
 2. Other agencies can request sUAS assistance by contacting dispatch or direct contact with pilots by phone, however, approval from the sUAS Supervisor must be received prior to leaving the city.
- D. Notification
 1. Notification will be made to the sUAS Supervisor over the sUAS Unit via email, Evertel messaging, or direct contact upon activation of the sUAS for departmental use.
 2. Notifications will be made to the sUAS Supervisor over the sUAS division directly for approval when requested by an outside agency.

807.12**INSPECTION**

- A. Before each duty assignment, officers will check their assigned sUAS for cleanliness, operability, safety features and all required equipment.
- B. Prior to start of shift, officers will conduct a check of their vehicle and equipment for operability.
- C. Officers will report any damage to their vehicle/sUAS immediately to the sUAS Supervisor over the sUAS Unit.
- D. Officers who discover a department vehicle/sUAS in need of repairs will immediately inform the sUAS Supervisor.
- E. Officers are responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of the interior and exterior of their assigned vehicle.
- F. Any damage to the officer's vehicle/sUAS will be documented properly on the Damage to City Equipment form, photos taken, and a memo describing the incident. These will then be forwarded to the sUAS Supervisor.

- A. All flight logs will be completed by the end of the shift/call-out.
- B. All incident reports will be completed by the end of the shift/call out.
- C. All monthly logs will be completed by the 28th of the month.
- D. All training reports will be completed within 24 hours.
- E. All requests for training must be in writing and submitted for approval.
- F. All requests for equipment must be in writing and submitted via chain of command.

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