
Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Operations

614.1

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and protocol for the deployment and use of the Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) including the retention and/or destruction of media obtained using the UAS in accordance with applicable Federal law, State law, and City of Elk Grove regulations.

614.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Certificate of Authorization (COA): Given by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) granting permission to fly the UAS within specific boundaries and perimeters.

Pilot: A member of the Elk Grove Police Department who is trained, certified and authorized to control a UAS during flight.

Observer: A member of the Elk Grove Police Department who is trained and authorized to maintain visual observation of the UAS while in flight.

Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS): Consists of the small, unmanned aircraft weighing less than 55 lbs., the command system, a secure control link and other safety and support systems for operation of the UAS.

614.2 POLICY

Unmanned Aircraft Systems may be utilized to enhance the department's mission of protecting lives and property. Any use of the UAS will be in strict accordance with constitutional and privacy rights, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations, and department policy. Safety, above all else, is the primary concern in every operation, regardless of the nature of the mission.

614.3 PRIVACY

The use of the UAS potentially involves privacy considerations. Personnel will consider the protection of individual civil rights and the reasonable expectation of privacy as a key component of any decision made to deploy the UAS. Pilots will take reasonable precautions to avoid inadvertently recording or transmitting images that infringe upon an individual's right to privacy.

614.4 PROGRAM COORDINATOR

The Chief of Police will appoint a program coordinator who will be responsible for direct supervision of the UAS program and its personnel. The program coordinator will have the following additional responsibilities:

- Coordinating the FAA Certificate of Waiver or Authorization (COA) application process and ensuring that the COA is current.
- Maintaining contact with the FAA and familiarity with pertinent FAA regulations.

Elk Grove Police Department

Elk Grove PD Policy Manual

Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Operations

- Ensuring Department UAS pilots have completed the required FAA and Department approved training in the operation, applicable laws, and policies and procedures regarding use of the UAS.
- Developing a UAS inspection, maintenance and record-keeping protocol to ensure continuing airworthiness of a UAS, up to and including its overhaul or life limits.
- Facilitating law enforcement access to images and data captured by the UAS.
- Recommending program enhancements, particularly regarding safety and information security.
- Ensuring that all training, flight and maintenance records for each Pilot and UAS are maintained.

614.4 TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The UAS Program Coordinator shall conduct an annual needs assessment to ensure that training is conducted within unit capabilities, department policy, and training guidelines as established by the FAA.

614.5 DEPLOYMENT PROCEDURE

Requests to deploy Unmanned Aircraft Systems shall be forwarded to the Watch Commander for approval.

614.6 USE OF UAS

Unmanned Aircraft Systems may be authorized for deployment under the following circumstances:

- (a) Public safety and life preservation missions including, but not limited to, barricade situations, active shooters, apprehension of armed and dangerous fleeing suspects, and high-risk search warrants
- (b) Investigative scenes
- (c) Missing persons incidents
- (d) Search and rescue operations
- (e) Disaster scene incidents
- (f) Hazmat incidents
- (g) Suspected explosive devices
- (h) Pursuant to a warrant (search or arrest)
- (i) Special events
- (j) Outside public agency assists
- (k) Training missions
- (l) Mutual aid support when the underlying missions meets the uses outlined in this policy

Elk Grove Police Department

Elk Grove PD Policy Manual

Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Operations

614.7 PROHIBITED USE

The UAS shall not be weaponized, nor shall it be used to:

- Conduct random surveillance activities
- Target a person based solely on individual characteristics, such as, but not limited to race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation
- Conduct any business other than official business

All recording media images and audio recordings are the property of the Department. Dissemination outside of the agency is strictly prohibited, except to the extent permitted or required by law (as outlined in EGPD Policy 446.5).

Unauthorized use, duplication, and/or distribution of UAS videos are prohibited. Personnel shall not make copies of any UAS videos for their personal use and are prohibited from using a recording device such as a personal camera or any secondary video camera to capture UAS videos.

614.8 EVIDENCE COLLECTION AND RETENTION

To avoid missing critical evidence during UAS operations, all UAS video will be recorded during flight. The pilot will manually activate the record feature on the UAS before take-off and will stop recording after landing. Data collected by the UAS shall be retained as provided in the established records retention schedule.