**1.0 PURPOSE**

This policy establishes the authorized use and operational guidelines for Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS). The UAS program is a function of the Dupage County Sheriff’s Office (DSO) Special Operations Team.

**2.0 POLICY**

It is the policy of the Dupage County Sheriff’s Office to embrace new technologies that advance the capabilities of the office to protect and serve the public. This policy is designed to minimize risk to the public, property, and Dupage County Sheriff’s Office Dupage County Sheriff’s Office personnel during the operation of UAS while continuing to safeguard the right of privacy of the public.

**3.0 APPLICABILITY**

This policy applies to all DSO commissioned personnel assigned to the Law Enforcement Bureau

**4.0 REFERENCES**

**A. FAA Order 8900.1 Volume 16 Unmanned Aircraft Systems**

**B. Federal Aviation Regulations, 14 CFR Part 61**

**C. Federal Aviation Regulations, 14 CFR Part 91**

**D. Federal Aviation Regulations, 14 CFR Part 107**

**5.0 DEFINITIONS**

**A. Certificate of Authorization (COA) –** COA is an authorization issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to a public operator for a specific UAS.

**B. Defined Incident Perimeter –** A defined perimeter to be determined based on the scope of the operation and a defined operational ceiling at or below four hundred (400) feet Above Ground Level (AGL).

**C. Night Flight –** Flight of a UAS that occurs between one half (1/2) hour after sunset and one-half (1/2) hour before sunrise. The time of sunset and sunrise are determined by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

**D. Pilot in Command (PIC) –** The individual responsible for the overall flight operations for a specific mission. The PIC has the final responsibility for all aspects of the mission to include safety**.**

**E. UAS Team Lead (UTL) –** the UTL is a sworn member of the Law Enforcement Bureau designated by the Sheriff or his/her designee. The UTL is responsible for the administrative functions related to the UAS program, including maintaining a current list of all UAS team members. The UTL is also responsible for the condition, maintenance, and flight records of the UAS and associated equipment.

**F. Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) –** An aircraft without a human pilot on board. Its flight is controlled either autonomously by computers on board the vehicle or under the remote control of a pilot.

**G. Visual Observer –** A person who is designated by the PIC to assist the remote PIC and the person manipulating the flight controls of the UAS to supplement situational awareness and Visual Line of Sight (VLOS), assisting with seeing and avoiding other air traffic or objects aloft or on the ground.

**6.0 PROCEDURE**

**A. Organization**

1. The UAS Team Lead will report to The Special Operations Team commander or other personnel designated by the Sheriff and be responsible for all UAS operations, maintenance, coordination, purchasing, standardization, evaluations, training, safety, planning, and personnel matters involving UAS aircraft and assigned or attached UAS Team personnel.

2. All UAS team members will work under the direct supervision of the UAS Team Lead when activated.

3. The UAS Team Lead will be responsible for making sure that the UAS Team is readily available for use as designated by The Special Operations Team commander or other personnel designated by the Sheriff.

**B. Procedures and Restrictions for UAS Deployment and Use**

1. The Dupage County Sheriff’s Office must obtain applicable authorizations, permits, or certificates required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) prior to deploying or operating the UAS, and these authorizations, permits, and certificates shall be maintained and current.

2. The UAS will be operated only by personnel (pilots) who have been trained in the operation of the system.

3. The PIC shall inspect and test UAS equipment prior to each deployment to verify the proper functioning of all equipment and the airworthiness of the device.

4. The UAS equipment is the responsibility of the PIC and will be used with reasonable care to ensure proper functioning. Any equipment issues shall be brought to the attention of the UAS Team Lead as soon as possible so that appropriate repairs can be made or a replacement unit can be procured.

5. All flights will be documented on a form and/or a database designed for that purpose. Each flight shall include information regarding the following; Reason for the flight, date, time and location of the flight, the name of the supervisor approving the deployment, names of PIC/observer(s) and a summary of the activities covered, actions taken, and outcomes from the deployment.

6. Where there are specific and articulable grounds to believe that the UAS will collect evidence of criminal wrongdoing and/or if the UAS will be used in a manner that may intrude upon reasonable expectations of privacy, the office or agency requesting use of the UAS will obtain a search warrant prior to conducting the flight.

7. The UAS shall be deployed and used only in support of official law enforcement and public safety missions or office approved UAS training.

8. The UAS shall not be operated in an unsafe manner or in violation of FAA rules.

9. The UAS shall not be equipped with weapons of any kind.

10. The UAS Team Lead and The Special Operations Team commander or other personnel designated by the Sheriff shall approve any payload used on a UAS.

11. The UAS shall not be used for routine observation of the public at large.

12. The UAS shall not be used for surveilling or “spying” on the public (without a warrant).

13. The UAS shall not be used in flights over populated areas, except in response to emergencies outlined below.

**C. Approved Mission Uses**

All UAS mission requests shall be authorized by the Sheriff or his/her designee and then forwarded to the Special Operations Team Commander or his/her designee for approval. Upon receiving mission approval, the UAS Team Lead will assign him/herself or a PIC to the mission. All missions will be flown in accordance with the FAA regulations 14 CFR Parts 61, 91, COA or FAA Part 107. This agency has adopted the use of UAS to provide an aerial visual perspective in responding to emergency situations and exigent circumstances, and for the following objectives:

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. Search and Rescue: To assist missing person investigations, AMBER Alerts, Silver Alerts, and other search and rescue missions.

3. Tactical Deployment: To support the tactical deployment of sworn personnel and equipment in emergency situations (e.g., incidents involving hostages and barricades, support for large-scale tactical operations, and other temporary perimeter security situations).

4. Visual Perspective: To provide an aerial visual perspective to assist officers in traffic incident management, and temporary perimeter security.

5. Scene Documentation: To document a crime scene, crash scene, or other major incident scene (e.g., disaster management, incident response, large-scale forensic scene investigation).

**D. Pre-Flight Briefing**

A briefing led by the PIC, and to include the observer, will be conducted prior to aircraft launch. This briefing includes, but is not limited to:

1. Review of the missions goals and expected outcomes

2. Review of current and forecasted weather conditions.

3. Review of current Notices to Airmen (NOTAMs) and Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs) that have been issued for the proposed flight area.

4. Identification of mission limitations and safety issues such as battery charge, GPS signal strength, and potential for radio interference.

5. Review of proposed flight area to include surrounding airspace and any obstructions that are present.

6. Review of communication procedures between PIC, observer, and other personnel used to support the mission. This includes verifying phone numbers and radio frequencies used to communicate with Air Traffic Control (Dupage Airport, O’Hare Airport) in the event of a flyaway or other flight emergency when operating in controlled airspace.

7. Review of emergency/contingency procedures including aircraft system failure, flight termination, diversion, lost link procedures, and lost communications with ATC if applicable.

8. Execution of a pre-flight check utilizing the operational checklist.

**E. Maintenance**

UAS maintenance is the responsibility of the UAS Team Lead in accordance to manufacturer’s recommendations. Any maintenance discrepancies with a UAS will be reported by the PIC to the UAS Team Lead immediately. After any maintenance is performed, a test flight shall be conducted and documented.

**F. Pilot Training Requirements**

1. Initial Training – All personnel selected to be a member of the UAS team that will be flying missions shall receive office-approved training. The pilots will have a current working knowledge of the airspace intended for operations, Air Traffic Control communication requirements, specific UAS aerodynamic factors, UAS limitations, emergency procedures, and the ability to obtain and interpret weather information. All pilots shall be familiar and proficient with the role and functions of an observer. All training will be documented on the proper forms.

2. Proficiency Training – In order to maintain proficiency, all pilots shall conduct at least (1) one flight each month to include safe take-off and landings. All flights, include training and after maintenance flights, shall be documented on a UAS flight report and digitally stored in the appropriate database. Pilot proficiency training is not limited to actual pilot skills, but also knowledge of all pertinent UAS related matters and understanding of current COA guidelines. Members who do not have documented training or flight time for the preceding sixty (60) days shall demonstrate proficiency before performing pilot duties during a mission. This training shall include a minimum of one (1) hour of ground instruction and flight time, including making three (3) ten (10) minute flights to demonstrate proficiency. Failure to maintain and prove proficiency shall result in removal from UAS team.

3. Annual Training – Each pilot must attend training once a year to include updated industry standards and field exercises, as well as a review of current case law governing the use of UAS, and FAA regulations pertaining to the operation of UAS as designated by the sheriff or his/her designee.

4. Pilot Mission Eligibility – All members assigned to UAS Team shall have, at a minimum, completed FAA Part 107 remote pilot certificate, conducted one hundred (100) flights, and twenty (20) flight hours. All pilots must be able to show proficiency in specific core competencies in all UAS controls and operating systems in accordance with FAA and COA regulations before being approved to fly missions.

**G. UAS Observer**

In the event an observer is required, the PIC on-scene will assign an observer from available on-scene personnel. All training and mission details will be provided to the selected observer at the time of the mission.

**H. UAS Pilot Termination**

1. Removal or suspension from UAS operations will be the decision of the Sheriff or his/her designee with recommendations from the UAS Team Lead and the Special Operations Team Commander. Reasons for removal or suspension from the team include, but are not limited to, the following:

a. Failure to attend special assignments,

b. Failure to attend training unless excused,

c. Failure to pass a certification or re-certification course,

d. Failure to maintain an FAA Part 107 certification,

e. Failure to maintain teams standards, and;

f. Failure to meet office/team duties and responsibilities.

**I. Accident Notification and Investigation.**

In flight accidents involving fatalities, injuries, fly-away, or in which the aircraft receives substantial damage will be immediately reported to the UAS Team Lead and The Special Operations Team commander or other personnel designated by the Sheriff on scene. the UAS Team Lead, Special Operations Team commander or other personnel designated by the Sheriff will immediately notify the FAA in cases of serious injury, or loss of consciousness, or damage to property (other than the UAS) in excess of $500. Any property damage caused by an accident involving the UAS will immediately be reported to the UAS Team lead.

**J. Documentation of Flight Time and Mission Reporting**

All UAS flight missions including training and maintenance flights shall be documented on a UAS operational checklist within (24) twenty-four hours of flight and submitted into the appropriate database. At a minimum, the original UAS operational checklist shall include the date, time, location, PIC/Observers names, flight time, and a brief summary of the mission. This document shall be scanned, attached to the corresponding incident report, and placed into property control as evidence.

**K. Information Retention**

Per (725 ILCS 167/1) the Freedom from Drone Surveillance Act, All information recorded while conducting a UAS mission shall be destroyed within thirty days of collection unless there is reasonable suspicion that the information contains evidence of criminal activity or the information is relevant to an ongoing investigation or pending trial.

**7.0 ATTACHMENTS**

**A. Dupage County Sheriff’s Office UAS Operational Checklist**

**B. Dupage County Sheriff’s Office UAS Standard Operating Procedure**