



TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS

 Proudly Policing Since 1841	SUBJECT <p style="text-align: center;">Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems</p>	 Nationally Accredited 1986	
CHIEF OF POLICE <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Signature on file</i></p>			
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AUTHORITY/RELATED REFERENCES

14 CFR Part 107, Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems
 FS Chapter 119, Public Records
 FS 934.50, Searches and Seizures Using a Drone
 General Records Schedule GS1-SL For State and Local Government Agencies
 General Records Schedule GS2 For Law Enforcement
 General Order 17, Records Management
 General Order 19, Digital Evidence Capturing Devices

ACCREDITATION REFERENCES

CFA Chapter 32

KEY WORD INDEX

Digital Evidence/Records Retention Protocols	Procedure V
Flight Operations	Procedure IV
General Information	Procedure I
Maintenance Protocols	Procedure VII
Mutual Aid Considerations	Procedure IX
Program Coordinator Responsibilities	Procedure II
Restrictions	Procedure VIII
Training and Qualification	Procedure VI
Utilization Criteria	Procedure III

POLICY

The Department is responsible for implementing protocols for the proper and legal utilization of Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (SUAS). Members and other authorized City of Tallahassee employees shall abide by established protocols in the operation and maintenance of Department SUAS.

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

DEFINITIONS

FAA: Federal Aviation Administration.

Program Coordinator: The member or other authorized City of Tallahassee (COT) employee responsible for performing administrative duties for the Department's SUAS program.

Remote Pilot in Command (RPIC): The member or other authorized COT employee exercising control over the SUAS during the flight, to include takeoff and landing.

Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (SUAS): A Department-owned or authorized aircraft without an on-board human pilot, which is flown either autonomously by computers in the aircraft or under the remote control of an RPIC.

Visual Observer (VO): The member or other authorized COT employee who maintains the line of sight and 360° hazard awareness around the SUAS at all times during the flight, to include takeoff and landing, and assists the RPIC in carrying out all duties required for the safe operation of the SUAS.

PROCEDURES

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. The utilization of the Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (SUAS) is intended to enhance the efficiency and safety of law enforcement activities by the Department.
- B. The SUAS shall be deployed and used only to support official law enforcement and public safety missions.
- C. The Program Coordinator is appointed by the Chief of Police or designee.
- D. Any member or other City of Tallahassee employee involved in SUAS utilization shall adhere to applicable Florida Statutes and Federal Aviation Regulations for SUAS utilization.

II. PROGRAM COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The Program Coordinator is responsible for ensuring policy compliance in SUAS utilization.

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

- B. The Program Coordinator is the Department's designated liaison with the FAA regarding applicable Federal Aviation Regulations for SUAS utilization.
- C. Program Coordinator responsibilities include, but are not necessarily limited to, those listed below:
 - 1. Ensuring all requisite training is conducted prior to SUAS utilization.
 - 2. Maintaining all records pertinent to the SUAS program, to include at a minimum:
 - a. Budgetary and financial records,
 - b. Current roster of RPICs and VOs,
 - c. Training records,
 - d. Utilization/flight documentation, and
 - e. Maintenance records.
 - 3. Performing inspections of utilization/flight documentation on a regular basis to ensure compliance with applicable Department written directives, FS 934.50 (Searches and Seizures Using a Drone), and 14 CFR Part 107.
 - 4. Maintaining a current FAA Part 107 certificate.
 - 5. Communicating with the FAA, in compliance with 14 CFR Part 107, in reporting and follow-up action on SUAS accidents.
 - 6. Ensuring all flight operations are conducted safely and in compliance with applicable Federal Aviation Regulations.
 - 7. Terminating an SUAS flight as needed because of safety concerns.
 - 8. Verifying RPICs maintain current qualifications and certifications.
 - 9. Ensuring each RPIC is provided with all necessary flight-related materials, checklists and equipment.

III. UTILIZATION CRITERIA

- A. The utilization of an SUAS is authorized only as follows:

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. Training missions, and
 2. Emergency situations and exigent circumstances in compliance with the specific criteria outlined in FS 934.50.
- B. In consideration of the authority and restrictions of FS 934.50, the Department permits the utilization of an SUAS as follows:
1. During the execution of a search warrant signed by a judge specifically authorizing the use of an SUAS.
 2. To counter a high risk of a terrorist attack by a specific individual or organization if the United States Secretary of Homeland Security determines that credible intelligence indicates there is such a risk.
 3. With reasonable suspicion that, under particular circumstances, swift action is needed to:
 - a. Prevent imminent danger to life,
 - b. Prevent serious damage to property,
 - c. Forestall the imminent escape of a suspect,
 - d. Forestall the imminent destruction of evidence, or
 - e. Facilitate the search for a missing person.
- C. Except as provided in subsection D below, all requests for SUAS utilization shall be made to the Program Coordinator, or designee, who will determine whether or not the request meets the utilization criteria.
- D. Exceptions to the mandate of subsection C above include:
1. The Tactical Apprehension and Control (TAC) Team Commander may authorize SUAS utilization in any incident involving the TAC Team as long as the utilization meets the criteria set forth in subsection B above.
 2. The Special Response Team (SRT) Commander may authorize SUAS utilization in any incident involving the SRT as long as the utilization meets the criteria set forth in subsection B above.

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

IV. FLIGHT OPERATIONS

- A. All missions shall be flown in accordance with 14 CFR Part 107 and current FAA regulations for SUAS utilization.
- B. The FAA Certificate of Authorization (or any waiver) granted to the Department will dictate any exceptions from 14 CFR Part 107 or current FAA regulations.
- C. The SUAS shall be operated only by RPICs who have trained in the operation of the system.
- D. Per FAA policy, no SUAS will be flown unless there are two people dedicated to the entirety of the flight.
 - a. One person shall be designated as the RPIC and the other as the VO.
 - b. The SUAS may be flown under both autonomous and semi-autonomous modes.
- E. The SUAS will weigh less than 55 pounds.
- F. The SUAS shall be operated only under a visual line of sight (i.e., the SUAS must remain within the visual line of sight of the RPIC or VO).
- G. The SUAS shall not purposely be operated over anyone not directly involved in the operation unless:
 - 1. An exception is granted by the FAA, or
 - 2. It is during an operation to safeguard human life where a human being is located under a covered structure or inside a stationary vehicle which can provide reasonable protection from a falling SUAS.
- H. Except as noted below, the SUAS will be flown only during daylight operations (daylight is defined as the local sunrise and sunset times as reported by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration).
 - 1. Nighttime flights will be authorized if the FAA Certificate of Authorization provides an exception for nighttime flight operations.
 - 2. In the absence of an exception provided by the FAA, a nighttime flight is only authorized to safeguard human life.

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

- I. The RPIC shall ensure the SUAS yields the right of way to other aircraft, whether manned or unmanned.
- J. Each RPIC shall ensure their flights are documented on the SUAS flight log or database designed for that purpose.
 - 1. All flight times will be accurately recorded.
 - 2. Each SUAS utilization documentation shall include:
 - a. The reason for the flight,
 - b. The date, time and location(s) of the flight,
 - c. The name of the Program Coordinator or designee approving the deployment,
 - d. RPIC and VO assigned (and any other member or other personnel assigned), and
 - e. A summary of the activities covered, actions taken, and outcomes from the deployment.
- K. Except for training operations, the RPIC or designee shall advise the appropriate CDA dispatcher prior to, and at the end of, each SUAS operation.
- L. Except as authorized by FS 934.50 in certain exigent circumstances (see subsection III B above), whenever there are specific and articulable grounds to believe the SUAS will collect evidence of criminal wrongdoing and/or if the SUAS will be used in a manner that may intrude upon reasonable expectations of privacy, members shall first obtain a search warrant prior to conducting the flight.
- M. The RPIC shall ensure the SUAS does not exceed a maximum altitude of 400 feet above ground level unless to clear any obstacles or to avoid a collision.
- N. The SUAS will be allowed to fly in Class B, C, D, and E airspace with the appropriate Air Traffic Control clearances.
- O. To the extent possible, prior to a change in control, the SUAS will be landed prior to handing over the control unit to another RPIC.

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

- P. In the event of an emergency involving the safety of persons or property, the RPIC may deviate from the procedures of this written directive relating to aircraft, equipment, and personnel utilized to the extent required to properly address the emergency.
- Q. The Program Coordinator or assigned RPIC will maintain the right of final flight approval and can at any time before or during a deployment end a flight if:
 - 1. The Program Coordinator or assigned RPIC have any concerns relating to safe operation of the SUAS, or
 - 2. The deployment does not meet, or no longer meets, the requirements of FS 934.50, the Federal Aviation Regulations, and/or the rules set forth in the FAA Certificate of Authorization.

V. DIGITAL EVIDENCE/RECORDS RETENTION PROTOCOLS

- A. The SUAS equipment and all data, images, video, and metadata captured, recorded, or otherwise produced by the equipment is the sole property of the Department.
- B. General Order 19 (Digital Evidence Capturing Devices) is applicable to any SUAS utilization and the producing, capturing, transferring, storing, and disposing of evidentiary digital files.
- C. The mandates of FS 119 (Public Records) and the protocols of General Order 17 (Records Management) are applicable to records generated by SUAS utilization.
- D. Digital evidence shall be securely downloaded at the completion of each mission.
- E. The RPIC shall record the following information for each file:
 - 1. Date and time of the flight,
 - 2. Location of the flight,
 - 3. Case numbers or other relevant reference numbers,
 - 4. Other mission identifiers deemed relevant by the RPIC or Program Coordinator, and

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

- 5. Identification of involved members or other personnel in the SUAS utilization.
- F. No member shall edit, alter, erase, duplicate, copy, share, or otherwise distribute in any manner an SUAS digital recording – whether evidentiary or non-evidentiary – without prior written authorization and approval of the Program Coordinator or their designee.
- G. SUAS training/certification, flight operation and maintenance records shall be securely maintained and retained in compliance with any applicable records retention schedule (i.e., GS1-SL, GS2), or as may be required or warranted for training, investigation, or judicial prosecution.

VI. TRAINING AND QUALIFICATION

- A. Prior to using an SUAS, a prospective RPIC must complete the following:
 - 1. Successfully complete the FAA Small Unmanned Aircraft System test (members holding an FAA Airman Certificate are exempt from the SUAS test requirement, but must obtain the FAA SUAS rating).
 - 2. Complete five (5) hours of practical flight time at the controls of an SUAS while supervised by a Department RPIC.
- B. To be eligible to fly an SUAS mission, a RPIC must have a minimum of three (3) qualifying SUAS flights – to include takeoffs and landings – in the preceding 90 days.
- C. Except as noted in subsection D below, all training, testing and maintenance programs fall under the oversight of the Program Coordinator.
- D. The TAC and SRT Commander are authorized to establish training, testing and maintenance programs for their respective specialty team beyond the minimum standards listed above.

VII. MAINTENANCE PROTOCOLS

- A. All maintenance will be done in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and schedules.
- B. Maintenance will only be performed by an RPIC or another Department-authorized person trained in the maintenance/repair of an SUAS.

TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

- C. Repairs or modifications beyond the ability of the RPIC will be completed by the SUAS manufacturer or their designee.
- D. All maintenance shall be documented on the SUAS maintenance log or database designed for that purpose.

VIII. RESTRICTIONS

- A. An SUAS shall not be operated in an unsafe manner or in violation of Florida Statutes, Federal Aviation Regulations, or the FAA Certificate of Authorization.
- B. An SUAS shall not be equipped with weapons of any kind.
- C. An SUAS shall not be used for general surveillance (refer to search warrant requirement protocols in sections III and IV above).
- D. An SUAS shall not be used for personal business or in such a manner which could reasonably be expected to bring discredit to the City of Tallahassee, the Department, or the policing profession.
- E. An SUAS which is not Department or COT-owned shall not be utilized for Department operations without the written approval of the Program Coordinator.

IX. MUTUAL AID CONSIDERATIONS

- A. The Department may, in accordance with the terms of an existing Mutual Aid Agreement (MAA), allow an RPIC to provide SUAS related assistance to other public service agencies.
- B. If pursuant to a MAA, an agency requests deployment of an SUAS, the Chief of Police or designee is responsible for making the determination whether the SUAS deployment is warranted.
- C. If the deployment is approved, the RPIC shall make arrangements for the transport of the SUAS equipment to the requested location consistent with the requirements of the MAA and this written directive.
- D. The requesting agency is responsible for briefing the RPIC on the mission, and the RPIC shall communicate to the on-site agency supervisor the capabilities, limitations, and restrictions associated with operation of the SUAS.