

# ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

## GENERAL ORDER

### UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM



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**ISSUING AUTHORITY – SHERIFF CARL E. DuBOIS**

**DISTRIBUTION – ALL DEPUTY SHERIFFS**

**& OFFICE PERSONNEL**

#### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish guidelines to ensure the safe handling, use and maintenance of the Orange County Sheriff's Office Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), for the purpose of improving public and officer safety, and improving situational awareness in response to an act of terrorism, mass casualty event, or any other emergency as deemed necessary by the Sheriff or his designee. The UAS, related equipment and technology, and data collected from its deployment shall be used in a lawful manner, consistent with all provisions of the United States' and New York States' Constitutions. It will be the policy of the Orange County Sheriff's Office to allow for deployment of the UAS for emergency, and non-emergency use to assist in investigations, special operations group response and training, and other needs which may arise, further outlined below. It shall be the policy that UAS will not be equipped with weapons, microphones, or any other listening devices.

#### II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) – An aircraft that is intended to navigate in the air, without an on-board pilot, commonly referred to as a “Remote Piloted Aircraft” or “Drone”.
- B. Remote Pilot in Command (RPIC) – A person exercising control over an unmanned aircraft during flight.
- C. UAS Flight Crew Member – A pilot, visual observer, payload operator or other person assigned duties for a UAS for the purpose of a flight.

- D. Defined Incident Perimeter – A location with a defined perimeter to be determined based on the scope of the operation, and a defined operational ceiling.
- E. Digital Multimedia Evidence (DME) – Digital recording of images, sounds, and associated data captured by a UAS.
- F. Technical Support Unit (TSU) – A subsidiary unit of the Orange County Special Operations Group that is responsible for equipment maintenance and piloting agency-owned UAS.

### III. SITUATIONS OF USE

A UAS may be used during events where public or personal safety may be at risk, or where special circumstances exist that requires their use, including, but not limited to:

- A. Search and rescue
- B. Monitoring traffic/emergency evacuation routes
- C. Investigate/monitor chemical, biological or radiological incidents
- D. Monitor mass gatherings
- E. Wanted and missing persons
- F. Search warrants and barricades
- G. Active shooter response
- H. Counter-terrorism efforts/response to an act of terrorism or mass casualty event
- I. Assist other government agencies as needed

### IV. TERMS OF USE

- A. An RPIC must possess an FAA Part 107 Certificate prior to operating or directly supervising a UAS operation.
- B. The UAS will be registered and operated in accordance with Federal, State and Local laws, as well as the Orange County Sheriff's Office Policies.
- C. When a UAS is deployed, the RPIC will document the following:
  - a. Mission (search warrant, barricade, etc.)
  - b. Location
  - c. RPIC/any assisting members
  - d. Start and End time of flight
- D. The RPIC shall make the final decision with regards to flight operations, as per FAA Part 107.
- E. Agency issued body cameras shall not be powered on during equipment set up, break down, flight or any operation. Body cameras will be utilized per the Orange County Sheriff's Office Policy.

## V. AUTHORIZATION FOR OPERATION.

- A. Authorization to deploy the UAS shall be made through the Special Operations Group Chain of Command.

## VI. EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORM.

TSU members shall wear issued uniforms and equipment including, but not limited to:

1. Ballistic vest
2. Agency issued handgun
3. Any additional protective equipment as deemed necessary by the Special Operations Group Chain of Command.

## VII. OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE.

- A. The UAS will be operated with due regard for the safety of all persons within the Incident Perimeter, and overall safety of the general public.
- B. All UAS shall be operated in accordance with Federal, State and Local statutes, as well as the Policies and Procedures of the Orange County Sheriff's Office.
- C. After use, UAS will be left in such condition that it is readily available for its next immediate use.
- D. Prior to the operation, the RPIC will be responsible for checking the UAS for any physical damage or mechanical defects to include remote controls, rotors, emergency lights and any other attached equipment. Any defects observed will be reported to a supervisor before operation.
- E. Any physical damage or mechanical defects incurred during use will be reported immediately to a supervisor.
- F. Any requests for maintenance will be reported in writing the TSU Squad Leader.

## VIII. Civilian Privacy and Civil Liberties

UAS-recorded data will not be collected, disseminated, or retained solely for the purpose of monitoring activities protected by the United States Constitution and New York State law.

- A. Any data collected which has evidentiary and training value shall be retained in accordance with Federal, State and Local statutes. Data that holds no evidentiary or training value shall be disposed of within ten days.
- B. DME shall be kept on a secure agency server, in a locked folder.

- C. DME shall only be given to another government agency for an authorized purpose upon request and approval from the SOG Chain of Command. DME dissemination pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act shall be in accordance with the Orange County Sheriff's Office Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) Policy and Procedure.

## IX. REVIEW AND OVERSIGHT

- A. This policy shall be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with Federal, State and Local statutes.
- B. Routine audits of this program will be conducted yearly by the Orange County Sheriff's Office's Professional Standards and Compliance Division.
- C. The Professional Standards and Compliance Division shall take receive, investigate and address all privacy, civil rights, and civil liberty complaints as they pertain to operations utilizing UAS.
- D. The Orange County Sheriff's Office will make known that UAS may be utilized in operations and provide a link on the agency website for citizens to contact a representative with concerns or inquiries and be able to request information pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act.
- E. The Orange County Sheriff's Office will produce a yearly report through the Public Information Officer to include the number of flights and overall flight times.

### *Reference:*

*NYS DCJS LEAP Standard 42.4*