

	<h1>MARICOPA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE</h1> <h2>POLICY AND PROCEDURES</h2>	
Subject <h3>UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS PROGRAM</h3>		Policy Number GJ-41 Effective Date 11-20-25
Related Information FAA Small UAS Rule, Part 107 <i>GE-3, Property Management and Evidence Control</i> <i>GF-5, Incident Report Guidelines</i> <i>GH-2, Internal Investigations</i> <i>GJ-3, Search and Seizure</i> Maricopa County Policy A2605	Supersedes EJ-1 (06-24-20)	

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Office Policy is to establish guidelines and procedures for Office personnel to enable the deployment of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), process requests for the use of UAS, and implement effective safety practices for designated missions.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Office to ensure all UAS missions are conducted in accordance with the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Small UAS Rule (14 CFR Part 107), or other appropriate FAA authorized and applicable rules and regulations. All employees operating a UAS pursuant to this Policy shall be aware of and follow all federal rules. UAS missions shall be flown within the guidelines of Office Policy GJ-3, *Search and Seizure* to ensure they meet the legal requirements associated with search and seizure and Constitutional guarantees.

DEFINITIONS

Certificate of Authorization (COA): An authorization issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to a public operator for a specific UAS activity. These authorizations are made through the FAA's website.

Employee: A person currently employed by the Office in a classified, unclassified, contract, or temporary status.

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA): An agency of the United States responsible for the control and use of navigable airspace within the United States. The FAA provides all rules and regulations regarding commercial use of Small Unmanned Aircraft. (SUA)

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Remote Pilot Certificate: A certificate issued by the FAA under the FAA's Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Small UAS Rule (14 CFR Part 107), that demonstrates the pilot understands the regulations, operating requirements, and procedures for operating UAS's safely.

Federal Aviation Regulations (FARs): Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations governing all aspects of aviation operations, standards, and maintenance.

Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV): An unmanned aircraft that is operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft.

Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS): An Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) and associated elements, including communication links and the components that control the UAV, that are required for the pilot in command to operate safely and efficiently in the National Airspace System.

Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Chief Pilot (UASCP): For the purpose of this policy, a sworn supervisor with UAS pilot qualifications. The responsibilities include, but are not limited to, UAS maintenance, pilot training and certification, statistical gathering, and general recordkeeping.

Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Commander: The sworn commander responsible for the overall operation of the UAS program. The responsibilities include ensuring the Office follows the rules and regulations established by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as well as the Federal Aviation Regulations (FARs) and to ensure that the use/deployment of the UAVs are within the guidelines set forth by this policy.

Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Remote Pilot in Command (UASPIC): For the purpose of this Office Policy, an employee who has final authority and responsibility for the operation and safety of the flight of a UAS, regardless of the rank of another person on scene and is designated as UASPIC before or during the flight.

PROCEDURES

1. **Unmanned Aircraft System Regulations:** Office use and deployment of unmanned aircraft for designated missions shall be operated in accordance with federal regulations that apply to the Office under its current Certificate of Authorization (COA) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Rule (Part 107), or other appropriate FAA authorized and applicable rules.
 - A. Federal regulations regarding maintenance and remote pilot qualifications and responsibilities shall apply at all times.
 - B. UAS operations shall be carried out in a manner that respects and protects personal privacy consistent with the United States Constitution and federal, state, and local law. The impact on privacy and civil liberties shall be balanced against the governmental interests leading to a mission deployment.
 1. The Office shall only collect information and use, retain, or disseminate information obtained for a properly authorized purpose.
 2. The UAS shall be equipped with reasonable precautions to secure recorded and transmitted data.
 - C. The UAS is simply an extension of an employee's authorization and is subject to the guidelines and procedures regarding search and seizure, as specified in Office Policy GJ-3, *Search and Seizure*.
 - D. Every effort shall be made to ensure all safety considerations with UAS and operations are maintained. In the least, it shall be equivalent to the Federal Aviation Regulations (FARs) required by the FAA, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).
 - E. The UAS shall be owned or leased by Maricopa County. Office use of personally owned equipment is prohibited.
 - F. UAS pilots shall possess an FAA Remote Pilot Certificate under the FAAs Small UAS Rule (14 CFR Part 107).

- G. To lease or purchase any UAS, including a pre-insurance review, appointing authorities shall coordinate with the Budget and Finance Bureau to obtain written authorization from Maricopa County Risk Management.
- H. Clear exterior markings shall indicate the UAS registration number and comply with current FAA Regulations.
- I. The UAS shall have a Global Positioning Systems (GPS) or a Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS), and Lost Link Procedure in case of loss.

2. **Requests for Unmanned Aircraft Systems:** UAS functions and responses to calls for service shall be based on availability, the UAS capabilities, the nature of the request, and flight conditions.

- A. Circumstances for a UAS response include, but are not limited to:
 1. Crime and traffic collision scene imagery and/or video recording;
 2. Public disorders requiring reconnaissance;
 3. Searches for suspects and/or missing persons;
 4. Participation in search and/or rescue operations, and
 5. Service of high-risk search warrants and tactical operation missions.
- B. UAS shall not be used for immigration enforcement.
- C. The UAS Pilot in Command (UASPIC) has the ultimate responsibility for the prioritization of requests for assistance. Requests for a UAS mission shall be made through the Communications Division.
- D. Whenever possible, a UASPIC shall respond to calls for assistance when requested by a UAS Supervisor.
- E. Requests for a UAS response inside of Maricopa County which involves a coordinated search and/or rescue mission shall be organized through the Search and Rescue Coordinator or the agency responsible for the mission. Notification and approval shall be obtained through the UAS Supervisor or the UAS Commander, through the Communications Division.
- F. Requests for a UAS outside of Maricopa County, which involves a coordinated search and/or rescue mission, shall be received by the UAS Supervisor through the Communications Division and approved by the UAS Commander.
- G. Notification and approval for requests for imagery and/or videography of crime scenes and/or traffic collision scenes shall be obtained from the Crime Lab, through the Communications Division. If the Crime Lab does not have a UAS pilot available, the UAS Supervisor or the UAS Commander shall be contacted through the Communications Division.
- H. Requests for a UAS response, which can be made in advance, shall be directed to the UAS Supervisor or the UAS Commander, for approval. Advance requests from all divisions may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 1. Surveillance or interdiction operations;

2. Imagery and/or video recording missions;
3. Search and/or rescue operations or training;
4. Assistance to tactical operations;
5. Service of high-risk warrants; and
6. Public disorders requiring reconnaissance.

3. **Requests for Equipment Purchases:** The UAS Chief Pilot or UAS Commander must pre-approve equipment purchases to ensure the Office's UAS fleet is kept up to date with the appropriate equipment to maintain a safe and effective operation of the overall UAS program.

- A. Employees requesting to purchase any UAS or UAS related equipment for the Office shall email the UAS Chief Pilot and/or the UAS Commander to seek pre-approval **before** submitting a purchase request or grant paperwork through their chain of command. A copy of the approval email shall be attached to the official purchase request.
- B. UAS and UAS related equipment, includes but is not limited to, the following:
 1. Drones;
 2. Software;
 3. Cameras;
 4. Batteries;
 5. Lights; and
 6. Payloads.

4. **Complaints From Members of the Public:** Complaints from members of the public related to noise or operating procedures shall be addressed as specified in Office Policy GH-2, *Internal Investigations*.

5. **Operational Decisions:** Except where specifically stated in this Policy, the UASPIC of any UAS shall be the sole person in charge of its operational use, and their decision shall be final. Only pilots meeting the requirements stated in the FAA 14 CFR Part 107 rules and regulations, or other appropriate FAA authorizations issued to the Office shall be allowed to operate the flight controls and other equipment of the UAS. At any time the UAS Supervisor, the UAS Commander, or an Office Commander may cancel or discontinue use of a UAS mission.

6. **Ground Safety Rules and Precautions:** Ground safety rules and personal precautions shall be observed while a UAS is on the ground. Non-emergency personnel and spectators shall be directed away from the UAS. Personnel shall not approach the UAS unless authorized to do so by the UASPIC.

7. **Training and UAS Chief Pilot (UASCP) Responsibilities:**

- A. Employees requesting to attend training to become a UAS pilot for the Office shall email the UAS Chief Pilot and/or the UAS Commander for pre-approval prior to submitting an official training

request through the requestors chain of command. A copy of the approval email shall be attached to the official training request.

B. The Office's UAS Remote Pilot Certification program specifies the necessary training for UAS operators which includes, but is not limited to:

1. An approved 14 CFR Part 107 Remote Pilot Certification Course; and
2. The Flight Proficiency Rating Program, which includes hands-on flight training with unmanned aircraft systems to ensure pilots are capable of safely and effectively operating the UAS.

C. The UASCP shall review FAA and FARs to ensure the UAS program is kept up to date with current information to maintain consistent, safe, and compliant standards.

D. The UASCP shall oversee and ensure pilots are in compliance with FARs related to UASs. The UASCP shall document compliance within the Traffic Criminal Software (TraCS) application to ensure certifications are recorded. These documents may be provided annually to the FAA and as required by Maricopa County, state, and federal law or regulation.

8. **Safety Event Reporting:** As required by the FAA, 14 CFR part 107.9, no later than 10 calendar days after an operation that meets the criteria listed below, a remote pilot in command must report to the FAA any operation of the small, unmanned aircraft involving:

- A. Serious injury to any person or any loss of consciousness; or
- B. Damage to any property, other than the small, unmanned aircraft, unless one of the following conditions is satisfied:
 1. The cost of repair, including materials and labor, does not exceed \$500; or
 2. The fair market value of the property does not exceed \$500 in the event of total loss.

9. **Unmanned Aircraft Systems Related Evidence:** Only Office approved media storage devices shall be used in UAS equipment. All digital media evidence related to an UAS deployment where an *Incident Report* (IR) is generated, shall be impounded, as specified in Office Policy GE-3, *Property Management and Evidence Control*.