

**Laurel Police Department – General Order**  
**Chapter III, Section 600, Order 612 – Unmanned Aircrafts**  
**March 13, 2016**

**3 / 612.05 POLICY**

It is the policy of the Department that duly trained and authorized agency personnel may deploy unmanned Aircraft Systems when such use is appropriate in the performance of their official duties, and where deployment and use, abide by applicable laws, policies, and provisions.

**3 / 612.10 PURPOSE**

This policy is intended to provide personnel who are assigned responsibilities associated with the deployment and use of small unmanned aircraft systems (sUAS) with instructions on when and how this technology and the information it provides may be used for law enforcement and public safety purposes in accordance with law.

**3 / 612.15 DEFINITIONS**

Digital Multimedia Evidence (DME)	Digital recordings of images, sounds, and associated data.
Model Aircraft	A remote controlled aircraft used by hobbyists that is built, produced, manufactured, and operated for the purposes of sport, recreation, and / or competition.
Unmanned Aircraft (UA) Unmanned Aerial Vehicle	An aircraft that is intended to navigate in the air without an on-board pilot. Also alternatively called Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA), Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV), or Drone.
Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS)	A system that includes the necessary equipment, network, and personnel to control an unmanned aircraft.
Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (sUAS)	UAS systems that utilize UAVs weighing less than 55 pounds and consistent with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations governing model aircraft.
UAS Flight Crew member	A pilot, visual observer, payload operator or other person assigned duties for a UAS for the purpose of flight or training exercise.
Unmanned Aircraft Pilot	A person exercising control over a UA/UAV/UAS during flight.

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**3 / 612.20 PROCEDURES**

A. GENERAL

1. All deployments of sUAS must be specifically authorized by the Chief of Police or authorized supervisory personnel.
  - a. The use of sUAS has been adopted to provide an aerial perspective in responding to emergency situations and exigent circumstances, and for the following objectives:
    - 1) Situational Awareness: to assist decision makers; first responders 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 officers and equipment in emergency situations, (incidents involving hostages, 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 providing direction for crowd control, traffic incident management, special circumstances, and temporary perimeter security.
    - 5) Scene Documentation: To document a crime scene, accident scene, or other major incident scene (e.g., disaster management, incident response, large-scale forensic scene investigation).
    - 6) Large Scale Gatherings: such as Laurel July 4<sup>th</sup> Festival, Main Street Festival, and any events that cover a large area of the City authorized by the Chief of Police or an appropriate designee.

B. PROCEDURES FOR sUAS USE

1. The agency must obtain applicable authorizations, permits, or certificates required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) prior to deploying or operating the sUAS, all certifications shall be maintained and current.
2. The sUAS will be operated only by personnel who have been training and certified in the operation of the system.
3. The sUAS-certified personnel shall inspect and test sUAS equipment prior to each deployment to verify proper functioning of all equipment and the airworthiness of the device.
4. The sUAS equipment is the responsibility of individual officers and will be used with reasonable care to ensure proper functioning.
  - a. Equipment malfunctions shall be brought to the attention of the officer's supervisor as soon as possible so that an appropriate repair can be made or a replacement unit can be procured.

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5. The sUAS equipment is the sole property of this agency.
6. All flights are to be documented on a form or database designed for that purpose, and all flight time shall be accurately recorded.
  - a. Each deployment shall include information regarding:
    - i. Reason for the flight
    - ii. Time ( Start/Ending time)
    - iii. Date
    - iv. Location of flight
    - v. Name of supervisor approving deployment
    - vi. Assigned staff
    - vii. Summary of activities covered; actions taken, and outcome of deployment
7. Where there are specific and articulable grounds to believe that 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, the agency will obtain a search warrant prior to conducting the flight.

**C. RESTRICTIONS ON USING THE sUAS**

1. The sUAS shall be deployed and used only to support official law enforcement and public safety missions.
2. The sUAS shall not be operated in an unsafe manner or in violation of FAA rules.
3. The sUAS shall not be equipped with weapons of any kind.

**D. DME RETENTION AND MANAGEMENT**

1. All DME shall be handled in accordance with existing policy on data and record retention, where applicable.
2. All DME shall be securely downloaded (via file transfer) at the completion of each mission.
  - a. The sUAS-certified operators will record information for each file that shall include the date, time, location, and case reference numbers or other mission identifiers—and identify the sUAS personnel involved in mission.
3. Officers shall not edit, alter, erase, duplicate, copy, share, or otherwise distribute in any manner sUAS DME without prior written authorization and approval of the Chief of Police or his designee.

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4. All access to sUAS DME must be specifically authorized by the Chief of Police or his designee, and all access is to be audited to ensure that only authorized users are accessing the data for legitimate and authorized purposes.
5. Files should be securely stored in accordance with agency policy and state records retention laws and retained no longer than necessary for purposes of training or for use in an investigation or prosecution.

**E. sUAS SUPERVISION AND REPORTING**

1. sUAS supervisory personnel shall manage all deployments and uses of sUAS to ensure that officers equipped with sUAS devices utilize them in accordance with policy and procedures defined herein.
2. An authorized sUAS supervisor or administrator will audit flight documentation at regular intervals. The results of the audit will be documented.
  - a. Any changes to the flight time counter will be documented.
3. The Chief of Police or an appropriate designee shall publish an annual report documenting the agency's deployment and use of sUAS devices.
  - a. The published report is to be given to:
    - 1) Mayor and City Council
    - 2) City Administrator
    - 3) City Attorney
    - 4) Office of Compliance

**F. TRAINING**

1. Police personnel who are assigned sUAS must complete an agency-approved training program to ensure proper use and operations.
  - a. Additional training may be required at periodic intervals to ensure the continued effective use and operation and proper calibration and performance of the equipment and to incorporate changes, updates, or other revisions in policy and equipment.
2. All agency personnel with sUAS responsibilities, including command officers, shall also be trained in the local and federal laws and regulations, as well as policies and procedures governing the deployment and use of sUAS.

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**3 / 612.25 GOVERNING LEGISLATION AND REFERENCES**

IACP.Net

**3 / 612.30 ANNEX**

None