General Order 570.1.5
Drones Unmanned Aircraft Systems

This order consists of the following sections:

I. Purpose
II. Policy
III. Definitions
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V. Personnel

June 29, 2019
I. **Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to define and outline the objectives for operation and usage of the Greer Police Department’s Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS). This policy shall provide guidelines for authorization of use, including conditions and limitations. Additionally, this policy will outline the qualifications, training, and equipment for the Greer Police Department’s UAS.

II. **Policy:** It is the policy of the Greer Police Department to provide and maintain an UAS for use in the provision of special services to the community. The use of the UAS will be in coordination with law enforcement officers conducting specific law enforcement missions as guided by the Certificate of Authorization (COA) issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). This policy is designed to minimize risk to persons, property, and aircraft during the operation of the UAS while safeguarding constitutional protections and privacy interests of all persons.

III. **Definitions:**

   A. **UAS:** Unmanned Aircraft System.
   
   B. **Operator (UA Pilot):** The individual responsible for the overall flight operations of a specific mission.
   
   C. **Observer:** Monitor the flight characteristics of the aircraft while in communication with the operator to ensure proper flight and that the aircraft remains clear of obstacles and low flying air traffic. This individual may also be responsible for the operation of all camera and remote sensing functions during the UAS operations as needed.
   
   D. **Flight Team:** Team consisting of operator and observer required for all UAS operations to include training operations.
   
   E. **COA:** For public operation, the FAA issues a Certificate of Authorization or waiver that permits public agencies and organizations to operate a particular UAS for specific purposes and in specific areas. The COA allows an operator to use a defined block of airspace and includes special safety provisions unique to the proposed operation.

IV. **Procedures:**
A. When the UAS is being flown the onboard cameras will be turned so as to be facing away from occupied structures, etc to minimize inadvertent video or still images of uninvolved persons.

B. All video and still images will be maintained in strict compliance with agency policies and procedures.

C. The UAS will not conduct random surveillance activates. The use of the UAS will be tightly controlled and regulated by the Chief of Police or his designee.

D. The authorized missions for the UAS are:
   a. Video/photographs for investigative support, i.e. homicide, collision, ERT.
   b. Hazmat response
   c. Search and rescue
   d. K-9 support for missing/wanted persons
   e. Barricaded persons/Hostage situations/Active shooters
   f. Traffic collision investigations
   g. Disaster response
   h. Bomb threats
   i. All other requested uses will be approved by the Chief of Police or his designee prior to deploying the UAS.
   j. If the UAS is going to be deployed over a residential property for an investigation, a warrant shall be obtained unless the UAS Commander can articulate probable cause that exigent circumstances exist. The warrant should be obtained as soon as practical.

E. The UAS program will operate strictly within the law and regulations. If in doubt, the Chief of Police or his designee will ensure warrants are applied for and obtained prior to use. This agency will balance all operations with the need to accomplish the mission while maintaining public privacy and the freedom from intrusion.

V. Personnel:
   A. The Chief of Police shall be or will designate the appropriate supervisor to serve as UAS Commander. The commander shall report directly to the Captain and shall be responsible for the overall performance and direction of the UAS unit.
B. Responsibilities:
   a. Selection of UAS personnel.
   b. Maintaining all training, flight and maintenance records for each operator, observer, and all individual airframes.
   c. Remain aware of FAA regulations that are subject to change.
   d. Evaluate airframes based in mission needs.
   e. Ensure that all appropriate supplemental reports documenting operational support provided by the UAS are completed and forwarded to the Captain.
   f. Complete monthly reports documenting the number of UAS missions, flight time, mission type, and monthly training.

C. Operators:
   a. The operator’s primary duty is the safe and effective operation of the UAS in accordance with the manufacturers approved flight manual, FAA regulations, and agency policy and procedures. Operators must remain knowledgeable of all FAA regulations, COA, UAS manufactures flight manual and bulletins.
   b. Operators may be temporarily removed from flight status at any time by the UAS Commander, Captain, or Chief of Police for reasons including performance, proficiency, or physical condition. Should this become necessary, the operator will be notified verbally and in writing of the reason, further action to be taken, and expected duration of such removal.

D. Observers: The observer must have sufficient training to communicate clearly to the operator any turning instructions required to stay clear of conflicting traffic. The observer is responsible for radio communications with patrol or other units and will act to intervene with anything that conflicts with the primary duties of the operator. The observer will provide navigational awareness and may operate any UAS equipment such as camera and FLIR.

E. Assisting other agencies:
   a. Requests for support from other government agencies within, or outside the jurisdiction of the Greer Police Department will be forwarded to the
UAS commander who will determine the feasibility of the request or forward the request to the Captain. Greer Police Department policy and FAA regulations will be followed when providing UAS assistance to other agencies.

F. Safety: The Greer Police Department is committed to a safe and healthy workplace, including:

a. The ongoing pursuit of an accident free workplace, including no harm to people.

b. A culture of open reporting of all safety hazards. The Greer Police Department will not initiate disciplinary action against personnel who, in good faith, disclose a hazard or safety occurrence due to unintentional conduct.

c. Support for training and awareness programs.

d. Conducting regular audits of safety policies, procedures and practices.

e. Monitoring the UAS unit to ensure best safety practices are incorporated into the unit.

f. It is the duty of every member within the UAS unit to contribute to the goal of continued safe operations. This contribution may come in many forms and includes always operating in the safest manner practicable and never taking unnecessary risks. Any safety hazard, whether procedural, operational or maintenance related should be identified as soon as possible after, if not before, an incident occurs. Any suggestions in the interest of safety should be made to the UAS commander.

G. Medical Factors:

a. Operator and observers shall only deploy the UAS when rested and emotionally prepared for the task at hand.

b. Physical illness, exhaustion, emotional problems, etc., can seriously impair judgement, memory, and alertness. The safest rule is not to act as an operator or observer when suffering from any of the aforementioned ailments. Members are expected to stand down when these problems
could reasonably be expected to affect their ability to perform flight duties.

c. A self-assessment of physical condition shall be made by all members during flight activities.

d. Performance can be seriously hampered by prescription and over the counter drugs. Many medications cause drowsiness and hamper sound decision making abilities and reaction. The UAS commander will be advised anytime such drugs are being taken. If it is determined that the medicine being taken could hamper an operator or observer, that member shall be prohibited from the deployment or exercise.

e. No member shall act as an operator or observer within twelve hours after consumption of any alcoholic beverage, or while under the influence of alcohol.

H. Training:

a. The key to safe operations is maintaining a professional level of competency.

b. Operators shall complete the on line FAA Remote Pilot Certification (part 107).

c. In conjunction with fulfilling all FAA requirements for operator/observer duties, the new member will also become familiar with the agency UAS operations and its related equipment.

d. Each UAS unit member must complete at least eight (8) hours of flight training demonstrating to the UAS Commander proficiency of the flight training exercises and the airframe prior to flying as an operator. This must be accomplished to show the operators ability and knowledge of the UAS in compliance with the manufactures manual and instructions.

I. Call out procedures/Use of the UAS:

a. A supervisor will screen all initial requests to use a UAS. All reasonable requests will then be forwarded to the UAS commander for consideration.

b. The UAS commander will screen the request using the following factors:
i. Is the proposed use of the UAS within the capabilities of the UAS equipment and personnel to perform?

ii. Does the proposed use of the UAS fall within the FAA and department policies for usage?

iii. Can the UAS be deployed safely given current weather conditions?

iv. Have the appropriate warrants been obtained or applied for as applicable?

v. Are trained and qualified personnel available to operate the UAS?

c. The UAS commander will accept or decline the request for the UAS support and will provide reason for either decision. The UAS commander will notify the Captain requesting final approval.

d. Upon receiving mission approval, the UAS commander will contact the designated UAS flight team to provide all available mission information.

e. The UAS operator is responsible for transporting the UAS and all required equipment to the scene. The UAS operator will make contact with the incident commander to receive the mission briefing. The UAS operator will determine the ability of the UAS to perform the requested mission safely and within department policy and FAA guidelines and regulations.

f. If the UAS operator determines that the use of the UAS would violate department policy, the operator will inform the incident commander of the conflict while offering recommendations to modify the mission to meet standards. The UAS operator will notify the UAS commander of any changes to the original mission. The UAS operator will make a full report of the circumstances and concerns to the UAS commander.

g. UAS operators will have sole discretion to decline missions based upon safety concerns of any kind or potential FAA violations. If the UAS operator refuses to conduct the mission he will then inform the incident commander the reason for the refusal. The UAS operator has absolute authority to refuse to fly under circumstances deemed to be unsafe or in
violation of the FAA regulations. The UAS commander will be informed of these developments immediately.

h. The UAS shall not be used for the purpose of random surveillance.

i. Simultaneous requests for UAS support will be prioritized based upon available resources and the type of operation to be conducted. Those operations based in support of life and human safety will receive first priority.

J. Flight Boundaries:

a. The FAA COA restricts deployment of the UAS to within Greenville and Spartanburg counties for law enforcement purposes. At no time shall UAS support be granted outside of this agency’s jurisdiction without first obtaining an emergency FAA COA and approval by the UAS commander.

b. Maximum altitude shall not be set more than 400 feet per the FAA COA unless near a structure and then the maximum altitude shall not be more than 400 feet above that structure.

c. All UAS operations shall be conducted within line of sight of the flight team so that such as aircraft or property may be detected and avoided.

K. Minimum Personnel Requirements:

a. The minimum personnel required on all missions will be the complete flight team consisting of an operator and observer. Under no circumstances will an operator attempt to complete a deployment alone.

b. All training deployments will require the flight team.

L. Personal Equipment:

a. Operators and observers shall deploy in a professional manner and wear clothing that easily identifies them as members of the Greer Police Department and appropriate for adverse weather or terrain.

b. The operator is strictly prohibited from use of the radio, cell phone, or any other device during any flight operations per the COA.

M. Pre-flight/Post-flight Actions:
a. The flight team is responsible for a thorough preflight inspection of the UAS.

b. The operator and observer shall conduct a thorough inspection of the UAS in accordance with the instructions contained in the manufactures user’s manual.

c. Any issues found that could jeopardize the safety of the operation of the UAS shall be documented and resolved immediately prior to flight.

d. It has been recognized that the use of a checklist is a significant method to combat UAS accidents. A pre-flight and post-flight checklist shall be conducted in accordance with the manufactures instruction.

e. Any equipment issues that cannot be resolved pre-flight will cause the operation to be delayed until such repairs can be accomplished.

N. Weather:

a. The flight team will ensure that enough information is gathered to make themselves familiar with the weather situation existing throughout the area of deployment. FAA weather resources shall be utilized to obtain the latest and most current weather conditions.

b. The weather conditions reported for the operation shall be recorded in the flight log.

c. The flight team shall ensure that the flight will occur within FAA VFR (Visual Flight Rules) weather requirements.

O. Planning:

a. The flight team shall familiarize themselves with all available information concerning the deployment including, but not limited to, the weather conditions, hazards, description of the incident, and deployment goals.

b. Operators will ensure that the location for take-off and emergency landing is adequate for a safe deployment.

c. The take/off landing location should be clearly marked and identifiable with electric flares and short cones.
d. Operators will ensure that they are aware of their surroundings in the event that an emergency landing is necessary. This includes the ability to recover the UAS. At least one emergency landing area should be identified per deployment.

e. The flight team will plan for the immediate notification of the FAA in the event of a fly away (loss of sight and/or contact of the UAS).

P. Documentation:

a. The operator will complete a supplemental report documenting the UAS operations following each flight. The supplement shall include:
   i. Reason for the flight
   ii. Time, date, and location of the flight
   iii. Names of the flight team and supervisors requesting and approving the flight
   iv. Summary of the activities covered, actions taken, and outcome of the deployment.

b. All aerial photography (still or video) of an evidentiary nature obtained during the UAS operation will be exported into the case files and components folder of the N-Drive.

c. Non-evidentiary aerial photography (still or video) shall be stored for ninety days in the specifically designated hard-drive maintained by the UAS commander.

d. The flight team of the UAS is responsible for evidence handling as well as writing any supporting documentation for the incident.

Q. Maintenance:

a. All recommended manufacturer maintenance schedules shall be followed.

b. Any issues that arise during maintenance that cannot be resolved by routine methods shall be forwarded to the manufacturer for further technical support.

c. Maintenance and service records associated with the UAS shall be maintained by the UAS commander.
d. The UAS commander shall maintain manufacturer’s software updates and or operating requirements.