



City of Dallas

Overview of Dallas Police Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Program

**Public Safety Committee
February 10, 2025**

Assistant Chief Catrina M Shead
Dallas Police Department
City of Dallas

Presentation Overview



- Define Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS)
- Program Objectives
- Procedural Requirements
- Current Fleet
- UAS Activity
- Privacy Concerns
- Next Steps



UAS Defined



- An Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS), commonly known as a drone, is a classification of aircraft designated by the Federal Aviation Administration
- Generally, the system includes a fixed or rotary-wing aircraft and a Ground Control Station (GCS)
- The system must be operated in compliance with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulation and statutory requirements



Program Objectives



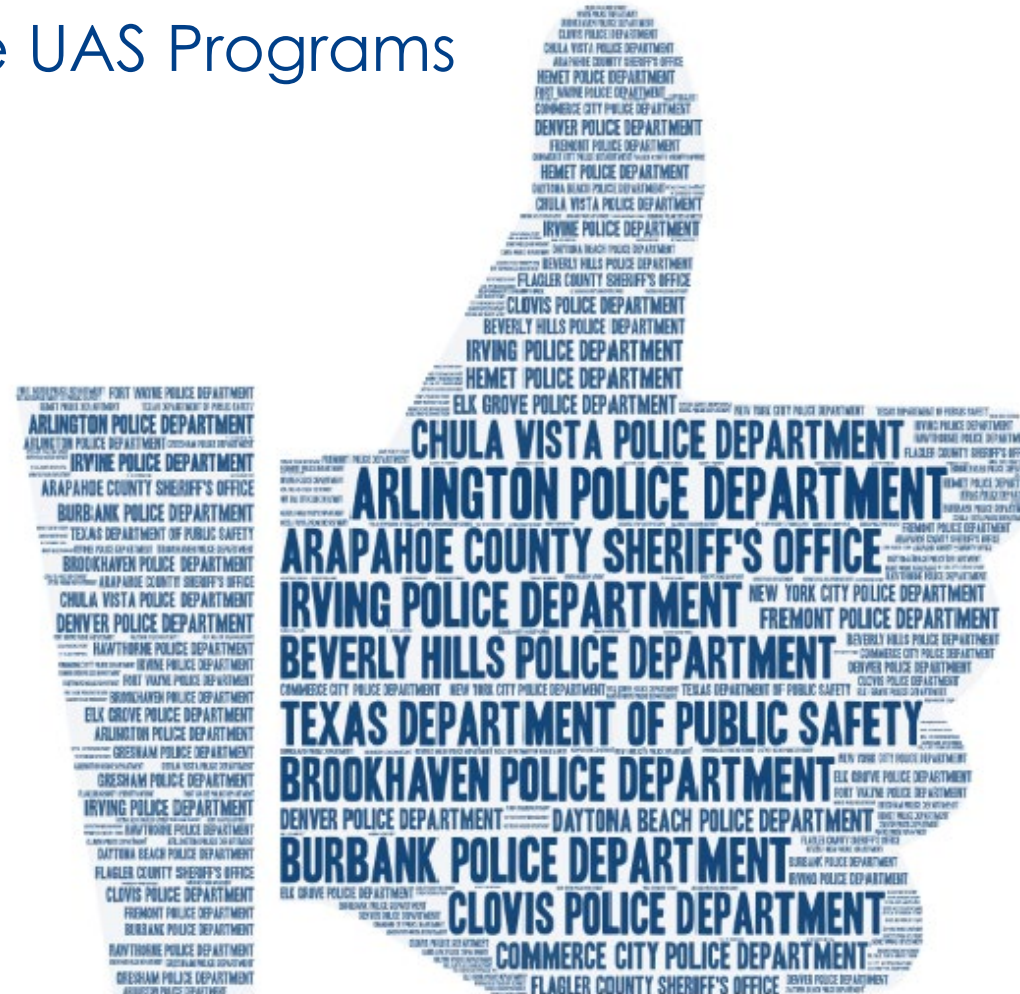
- Increases officer safety by exposing unseen dangers
- Enhances protection of officers & citizens during operations
- Enriches Follow-up Investigative Purpose
- Applications:
 - Planned Events
 - Tactical Operations
 - Civil Unrest
 - Crime Scene Evidence Collection
 - Disaster Response
 - Missing Persons
 - Search & Rescue
 - Traffic Crash Reconstruction





UAS Programs

1,686 U.S. Police Agencies
Currently Operate UAS Programs



Pilot Requirements



- UAS Pilot Requirement
 - FAA Part 107 Commercial Drone License
 - Dallas Police UAS (40-hour)
- UAS Visual Observer Requirement
 - FAA Visual Observer Course (8-hour)
- Dallas Police Department has 156 UAS Pilots & 186 Visual Observers.



Operational Requirements



- FAA Operational Requirement
 - Below 400 feet outside flight requirement
 - Line of sight maintained by a Visual Observer
 - Indoor flights are not subject to these restrictions.
- Monthly reporting of “Certificate of Authorization” flights within restricted airspace
- State of Texas UAS flight & expense report every 2 years
 - Date, Time, Operational Purpose, Timeframe, Location



UAS Squad



- Program Implementation & Oversight
- Training of UAS Pilots & Visual Observers
- Test & Evaluate Emerging UAS Technology
- FAA & State of Texas Compliance Reporting
- Available on 24/7 call back to assist specialized units, critical incident response
- UAS Liaison to Outside Organizations (Local, State, Federal & Corporate Partners)



Current Fleet



(10) **Matrice M30T** - Outdoor High-Zoom Operations

- UAS Squad & Patrol



(33) **Mavic 3T** - Outdoors Quick Response

- Vehicle Crimes, Animal Cruelty, UAS Squad & Patrol



(82) **Mini 2** - Indoors Patrol Response

- SWAT, UAS Squad & Patrol



(12) **Avata** - Indoors Tactical Response

- SWAT & UAS Squad



(2) **Lemur 2** - Indoors Tactical Response

- SWAT

UAS Activity Tracker



AXON AIR

POWERED BY DRONESENSE

My Teams All + Profile

Welcome back, Ross

Sunday, February 2, 2025

Profile

Dallas Police Department - TX

109

Drones

157

Members

11578

Flights

2

Incidents

☒ Flights ☒ Missions ☒ Incidents

<

>

January 2025

today

month

week

day

list

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29 +25 more	30 +22 more	31 +38 more	1 +43 more	2 +28 more	3 +38 more	4 +27 more
5 +19 more	6 +70 more	7 +45 more	8 +42 more	9 +63 more	10 +88 more	11 +15 more
12 +14 more	13 +21 more	14 +20 more	15 +16 more	16 +36 more	17 +23 more	18 +59 more
19 +23 more	20 +14 more	21 +23 more	22 +18 more	23 +13 more	24 +12 more	25 +19 more
26 +46 more	27 +11 more	28 +20 more	29 +16 more	30 +29 more	31 +12 more	1 +22 more
2 +50 more	3	4	5	6	7	8

Powered by DroneSense | [HELP](#) | [ANDROID](#) | [IOS](#) | [VIDEO](#)



Unit UAS Activity



Current Areas of Operation	Operating Since	Aircraft Assigned	FY2024 Flights
Patrol UAS Operations	December 2022	67	7336
Vehicle Crimes Investigations	January 2023	10	111
UAS Squad	July 2021	45	377
Special Weapons & Tactics (SWAT)	September 2021	12	36
Animal Cruelty	October 2024	5	3
Totals		139	7863



Privacy Concerns



- Texas Privacy Act, Government Code 423 is the baseline for departmental policy
 - Requires that video or images will only be recorded if one of the following criteria are met:
 - Felony
 - Life or Death Circumstances
 - Warrant Executions
 - Consent
- Citizen privacy is protected through data retention and warrant requirements prior to private property operations.



Next Steps



- Initial deployment of the Tethered UAS for the rapid visual access needs of special events and critical incidents.
- Drones as a First Responder (DFR) plans are being developed to supplement Air Support, etc.
- Integrate UAS into additional units to enhance public safety and transparency
- Develop annual department refresher training



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