



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR BUREAU OF LAND
MANAGEMENT

TRANSMITTAL SHEET

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- 4. Delegations of Authority Updated:

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UNCREWED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS

Order Number

46

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4

Issued by

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Director, Bureau of Land Management Office of Law Enforcement and Security

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6. POLICY

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy to establish procedures for the deployment of small, Uncrewed Aircraft Systems (sUAS) used by Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Law Enforcement Officers (LEOs) for law enforcement missions, ensuring the appropriate balance between resource protection and public safety while respecting the civil liberties and constitutional rights of all citizens of the United States.

2. SCOPE

The scope of this policy applies to all BLM LEOs and their supervisors who request sUAS support for patrol and/or investigative functions, with an emphasis on piloted BLM LEOs authorized to operate sUAS for law enforcement missions. This policy does not apply to the use of aircraft under the command and control of pilots assigned to state, local, or other federal law enforcement agencies on operations or investigations involving BLM law enforcement. Nothing in this policy is intended to supersede applicable law, regulation, and/or Department of the Interior (DOI) policy. In the event of any discrepancies, the applicable laws, regulations, and policies of the DOI shall govern.

3. AUTHORITY

- a. 43 U.S.C. § 1733
- b. 43 U.S.C. § 1742

MS 9260 – LAW ENFORCEMENT GENERAL ORDERS
General Order 46

- c. 14 C.F.R. § 107
- d. 14 C.F.R. § 91

4. DEFINITIONS

Aircraft Carded: The sUAS being utilized has a current DOI Office of Aviation Services (OAS) 36U inspection certificate, is in proper working condition, and is appropriate for effective and safe completion of the mission.

Law Enforcement Mission: Any authorized activity undertaken by a BLM Remote Pilot (RP) for the purpose of investigating criminal activity or supporting a law enforcement incident.

National Airspace System (NAS): The NAS is a network of both controlled and uncontrolled airspace, both domestic and oceanic. It also includes air navigation facilities, equipment and services; airports and landing areas; aeronautical charts, information and services; rules and regulations; procedures and technical information; and manpower and material. The RP must ensure that the sUAS mission is cleared within the NAS and that all notifications to aviation management agencies have been made. If a Notice to Airmen or other risk mitigation action is required, it has been filed and verified.

National Aviation Plan (NAP): The NAP provides Bureau-wide guidance for sUAS flights and missions.

Pilot in Command (PIC): The PIC is directly responsible for directing operation of the sUAS and must ensure the aircraft will pose no undue hazard to other people, other aircraft, or other property in the event of a loss of control of the sUAS, in compliance with applicable regulations and policies.

Project Aviation Safety Plan (PASP): A PASP outlines procedures and protocols for sUAS missions, ensuring all safety requirements are met. A PASP must be completed and approved for all non-incident sUAS operations to ensure adherence with policy and procedures. For law enforcement sUAS missions, a blanket PASP (expires annually) can be established to cover recurring missions and location.

Remote Pilot (RP): An individual who holds both a current Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Part 107 Remote Pilot Certificate and is a carded pilot holding a current OAS-30U DOI Remote Pilot Qualification Card authorizing them to fly sUAS for official purposes. The RP executing the sUAS mission must ensure they are certified, current, proficient and are operating within all applicable policies and procedures.

Remote System (RS): Refers to the process and protocols for the acquisition, maintenance, inspection, and lifecycle of remote systems, including aircraft, payloads, and peripheral devices.

Small, Uncrewed Aircraft System (sUAS): Refers to the small, uncrewed aircraft and its associated elements (including communications links and the components that control the small, uncrewed aircraft) that are authorized for use by BLM carded pilots in the NAS.

5. FILE AND RECORDS MAINTENANCE

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Law enforcement records will be maintained in accordance with the Law Enforcement General Orders (GOs) and Handbooks, and the Bureau Records Retention Catalog.

6. POLICY

6.1 AUTHORIZED REMOTE SYSTEMS

Only government issued, aircraft carded systems authorized by the DOI OAS and the BLM National Aviation Office may be used by BLM RPs. BLM law enforcement is not authorized to independently purchase or obtain remote systems from any source, and all RSs must be purchased through and registered as property of the DOI OAS.

6.2 NOTIFICATION AND OUTREACH

The Director, BLM Office of Law Enforcement and Security (OLES), or their designee will develop an outreach plan to inform the local public that sUAS are being used as a tool in accomplishing BLM law enforcement missions, to include the mission types and the benefits to public safety and resource protection.

6.3 REMOTE PILOT QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

BLM Law Enforcement Remote Pilot (LE RP) selectees will be enrolled into the sUAS training program by the BLM sUAS Program Training Coordinator. LE RPs will adhere to all requirements for training, qualification, proficiency, and currency, as outlined in the DOI Operational Procedures Memorandum (OPM) 11 and the BLM NAP.

6.4 MISSION TYPES

BLM LE RPs will only utilize BLM sUAS in connection with approved mission types, in accordance with provisions in 446 Law Enforcement Policy 19 – Use of sUAS in Law Enforcement, further defined as:

- a. Deliberate Missions: Missions which can be planned in advance to ensure adequate time for planning and approval.
- b. Hasty Missions: Associated with unplanned, exigent circumstances requiring deployment under a compressed planning and approval process.
- c. Administrative Missions: Pre-planned, non-law enforcement missions.

6.5 MISSION PLANNING

Prior to flying any sUAS missions, a PASP is required. The PASP provides detailed information regarding the project, aircraft being utilized, communication plan, hazard identification, airspace coordination, and risk assessment.

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6.6 MISSION APPROVAL AND NOTIFICATION

BLM law enforcement missions will follow the sUAS flight approval and notification processes outlined in DOI OPM 11 and the BLM NAP.

6.7 OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

LE RPs must follow all operational guidelines as authorized under 14 CFR Part 107, the DOI – FAA Certificate of Authorization, Special Governmental Interest waivers, and the BLM NAP.

6.8 DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING

LE RPs must also complete all post mission reporting and documentation for flight tracking and use as prescribed in the DOI OPM 11 and the NAP. A summary of the activities covered, actions taken, and outcomes of the deployment will be documented in the approved LE Records Management System.

6.9 PROHIBITED USE

The Director, BLM OLES reserves the right to remove authorization from a BLM LE RP to conduct LE missions and recall aircraft for prohibited use, through coordination with the DOI OAS.

6.10 ELECTRONIC EVIDENCE STORAGE PROCEDURES

All sUAS used by BLM LE RPs for law enforcement missions must follow procedures in General Order and Standard Operating Procedure 41, Mobile Video and Audio Recorders. For administrative missions, MVAR will be managed in accordance with BLM standards for data storage and retention.