



OFFICE OF THE BIOMETRICS
AND SURVEILLANCE
CAMERA COMMISSIONER

All chief officers of Police England & Wales

By email

CC: Senior responsible officers

Information Commissioner's Office

3 March 2023

Dear Chief Officer,

Police survey 2022: unmanned aerial vehicles

You will be aware that, earlier this month, I published the responses to my 2022 survey of police use of overt surveillance camera systems in public places¹, for which I am grateful to your force for submitting a return.

I am now seeking to clarify and develop the picture of the use of uncrewed aerial vehicles (UAVs) or 'drones' used by policing and law enforcement in England and Wales, and would be grateful if you could provide the following information in relation to UAVs deployed in or over your force area:

- When were UAVs introduced into your force?
- Details of the UAV and uncrewed aerial systems (UAS) manufacturer(s): makes and models used or available to you or collaborative partner agencies, including fire and rescue, local authorities, and coast guard.
- Which ground control stations are used when your force or others deploy UAVs in or over your force area and how do these work in practice (e.g., standalone base unit, force issued mobile phone running internal apps, or on a force laptop)?
- What mitigations/protocols are in place against possible data/security breaches when this technology is used in or over your force area.
- When deploying UAVs, what considerations are documented as to their suitability when assessed against the security rating of the incident?
- Details of manufacturers of any counter-UAV technology and operations together with details of the ground operating systems used.

¹ [Police survey 2022: responses and key findings.](#)



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- When was counter-UAV technology introduced to your force?
- What security training is in place around the deployment of this technology? Specifically, what security training is given to pilots of UAVs and those deploying counter-UAV technology, and the technical teams supporting their deployment.
- What policies and procedures do you have in place when updating software, firmware or flight apps provided by the manufacturer?
- When considering tactics, techniques, and procedures, what penetrating testing has been completed against counter-UAV equipment being used?
- How, where, and how often is your use of UAV/counter-UAV capability held to account for your force area.

It would be very helpful if responses were received no later than **31 March 2023**.

Should you or any member of your force require any further information regarding this, please do contact my office by email at enquiries@obscc.org.uk.

Thank you for your assistance

Yours sincerely

Professor Fraser Sampson
Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner