



Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Policy

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Approved By: Choose an item.

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1.0 Purpose

This document ("Policy") provides requirements and considerations for the safe, lawful, and privacy-respecting operation of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) by Greater Salt Lake Municipal Services District (MSD) staff. This Policy is to adhere with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) UAS regulations governed primarily by 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 107, and Utah statutes concerning unmanned aircraft (drones) (see Title 72, Chapter 10 of the Utah Code) and related restrictions, and is supported further by the [MSD's Standard Operating Procedures for UAS Operations](#). In the event of an inconsistency between this Policy and an applicable federal or state law, rule or regulation, the law, rule or regulation shall control to the extent of the inconsistency.

2.0 Definitions

Certificate or Waiver of Authorization (COA)	A certificate issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) that allows government operation of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) beyond the scope approved in 14 CFR Part 107.
Covered Foreign Entity	A foreign government, entity, or party on the U.S. consolidated screening list or otherwise domiciled in or under the influence/control of certain foreign states (e.g., China or Russia) as set forth in statute.
Critical Infrastructure	As defined in Utah Code § 76-6-106.3.
Drone	See Unmanned Aerial Vehicle.
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)	The Federal Aviation Administration regulates all aspects of civil aviation in the United States of America, as well as over surrounding international waters, to maintain the safe and efficient use of navigable airspace. The FAA issues and enforces regulations and minimum standards covering manufacturing, operating, and maintaining aircraft.
Greater Salt Lake Municipal Services District (MSD)	A political subdivision of the state of Utah that provides specified municipal-type services to its member communities (currently the Town of Brighton, Copperton, Emigration Canyon, City of Kearns, Magna City, White City and portions of unincorporated Salt Lake County).
Low Altitude Authorization and Notification Capability (LAANC)	A collaboration between FAA and industry to allow drone pilots to get near real-time approval to fly in controlled airspace.
Remote Pilot	The person exercising control over the UAS during flight. Remote Pilots need not be 14 CFR 107 certified if they are under the



Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Policy

	supervision of a Remote Pilot in Command (RPIC) who is in direct communication and in a position to take over control of the UAS at any time. Undesignated remote pilots may be student pilots at the controls.
Remote Pilot in Command (RPIC)	The person responsible for all aspects of an uncrewed flight. The RPIC has the final responsibility for the safety of the mission.
Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS)	An aircraft system that can be operated without direct human intervention. It includes the aircraft, as well as all the equipment needed for its safe and efficient operation. UAS are also known as drones, UAV, or Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS).
Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV)	Commonly known as a drone; an aircraft without any human pilot, crew, or passengers on board. It is an aircraft piloted by remote control or onboard computers. UAVs are a component of an uncrewed aircraft system, which includes adding a ground-based controller and a system of communications with the UAV.
Visual Observer (VO)	The individual trained to maintain line of sight and 360-degree hazard awareness around the UAV at all times and to assist the RPIC in carrying out the duties required for the safe operation of the UAV.

3.0 Scope

This Policy applies to;

- All employees, users, contributors, and contractors acting on behalf of the MSD who operate or request UAS operations within the MSD's corporate boundary or on land owned or managed by the MSD.
- All UAS (including those weighing ≤ 55 lbs when operating under 14 CFR Part 107) used for MSD purposes including, but not limited to, inspection, mapping, and planning.

4.0 Policy

4.1 Policy statement

The MSD authorizes UAS operations only when they are conducted for legitimate MSD or member community business or with express city/town/county authorization, as applicable. UAS operations will comply with applicable FAA rules (e.g.: 14 CFR Part 107, UAS registration, remote pilot certification, operations in controlled airspace requiring ATC authorization/LAANC) and Utah statutory and/or regulatory requirements concerning unmanned aircraft. The Policy will ensure that MSD UAS operations will enhance public safety and protect privacy, critical infrastructure, and sensitive information.

4.2 Authorized Use and Approval Process

Upon a preliminary request for a drone flight, the UAS pilot will review the request purpose, mission necessity, FAA airspace status, insurance (if applicable), risk assessment, privacy impacts, and whether the planned flight involves critical infrastructure areas restricted by Utah law. All UAS

Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Policy

operations must be conducted in accordance with federal and state law and FAA regulations and guidelines, or be under a valid waiver or Certificate of Authorization (COA) issued by the FAA.

Only authorized operators who have completed the required training and hold a current FAA Remote Pilot Certificate (or operate under another applicable FAA authorization) shall be permitted to act as the Remote Pilot in Command (RPIC). The UAS must be registered with the FAA, if required, and maintained in air-worthy condition.

Unless otherwise authorized by FAA waiver, UAS operations during civil twilight or nighttime hours must comply with FAA regulations, and an unmanned aircraft shall be equipped with an anti-collision lighting system that is visible for at least three statute miles.

Sustained flight over people or moving vehicles shall be avoided whenever possible. When operationally necessary, such flights may only occur in full compliance with FAA operational categories for flight over people and vehicles. Brief incidental transit over people or vehicles while traveling to or from a target area is permitted as necessary.

Flight operations within a right-of-way may require a traffic control plan as determined by the RPIC. All traffic control plans shall be planned and executed in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

If the operation is inside controlled airspace or otherwise restricted, appropriate Low Altitude Authorization and Notification Capability (LAANC), DroneZone authorization, or a 14 CFR Part 107 waiver must be obtained prior to the flight. The proposed operation must not violate Utah statutes, including those restricting the procurement or use of a UAS manufactured or assembled by certain foreign entities for the inspection of critical infrastructure, or any other statutory or regulatory prohibition.

Approved operations will be documented as such on the Mission Pre-Flight Checklist. Unauthorized flights are prohibited and may result in disciplinary or legal action.

MSD-owned or contractor-operated UAS and payloads must be well-maintained, with a current maintenance log and functional safety features, as well as being covered by liability insurance adequate to cover potential damages.

All data obtained through UAS operations shall be used solely for the approved mission purpose(s), and staff shall not obtain, receive, or use data acquired through a UAS unless it was obtained for the scheduled mission type.

4.3 Unauthorized Use

Unauthorized use of UAS is strictly prohibited. No employee, contractor, or representative of the MSD shall operate a UAS for MSD business without prior authorization as provided in this Policy. UAS operations conducted under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any impairing substance are expressly forbidden. The use of UAS for surveillance, photography, or data collection in violation of privacy laws, public records statutes, or without mission-specific approval is prohibited.

UAS that are restricted under Utah law, namely a UAS that is manufactured or assembled by a covered foreign entity, may not be used for inspections of critical infrastructure, consistent with Utah Code § 72-10-1202, unless all of the following conditions are strictly met:



Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Policy

- The UAS is not connected to the internet during the inspection operation.
- After the inspection, all data collected (images, video, flight logs, geospatial data, etc.) are removed from the UAS before it is connected to the internet.
- If the operation involves live/internet-broadcast video from the UAS, the relevant software for the UAS must be developed in the United States or be approved under the most recent federal National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

Except as provided above, a UAS may be of any origin so long as applicable federal, state and agency requirements are met and the UAS is used in a manner consistent with this Policy and all applicable laws, rules and regulations.

A UAS shall not be used for any purpose unrelated to official MSD work, nor for random or unauthorized surveillance activities.

The MSD shall not use UAS data associated with any crime or unlawful activity. Should such data come into the MSD's possession, it must be promptly reported to local law enforcement, and arrangements must be made for lawful transfer and custody of the data.

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in revocation of flight privileges, disciplinary action (including termination), contract penalties, and referral for civil or criminal enforcement as permitted or required by law.

4.4 Operator Requirements

All MSD-authorized RPICs must hold and maintain a valid FAA Remote Pilot Certificate (14 CFR Part 107) or operate under the appropriate FAA authorization and follow all procedural guidelines for operating a UAS as outlined in the MSD Standard Operating Procedure for UAS. Those without a 14 CFR Part 107 license may only operate a UAS after being certified by MSD according to the MSD Standard Operating Procedure for UAS documentation, and only under the supervision of the RPIC or as a VO.

The operator must ensure that all UAS operated for MSD work meet FAA registration thresholds, display FAA registration and carry registration documentation. This information will be included in the Preflight checklist which must be completed, along with a risk assessment, prior to each flight.

4.5 Privacy, Data Collection and Retention

UAS operations shall adhere to the principle of data minimization by collecting only the information necessary to fulfill the approved mission. Whenever reasonably practicable, advance public notice should be provided for UAS operations that may cause noticeable activity or disruption in public spaces. Such notice may be given through signage, website postings, or other appropriate means to promote transparency and public awareness.

The use of UAS for routine surveillance of individuals without probable cause or legal authorization is strictly prohibited, and any violation of these privacy standards may result in disciplinary or legal action.

Each flight must be logged in an approved system or format, including details such as flight duration, location, applicable waivers or authorizations, the mission purpose(s), and any significant events. Significant events include, but are not limited to, injury to persons, property damage,



Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Policy

equipment failures, or crashes, which must be reported promptly. Additionally, operators must file all FAA-mandated reports, including those related to reportable accidents, injuries, or as stipulated by any certificate or waiver of authorization (COA).

The following records shall be maintained and retained in accordance with the records retention schedule applicable to the MSD and applicable Utah records laws:

- Flight authorizations and/or Air Tasking Orders (ATOs)
- Pilot certifications and training records
- Flight logs and incident reports
- Data inventories and retention actions

All data collected by UAS may be processed, extracted and managed using third-party software or programs as necessary for each project. Such data shall be stored on approved MSD systems, with retention and access governed by the MSD's Records Policy and applicable retention schedules under the Government Records Access and Management Act, Utah Code Ann. § 63G-2-103, et. seq. (GRAMA), or other applicable federal, state, or local laws, rules and/or regulations. Any data subject to public disclosure requirements must be redacted as provided in Utah law prior to release.

4.6 Incident Reporting

All accidents, injuries, equipment damage, or near-misses involving UAS operations must immediately be reported to upper management, and be formally logged within 24 hours after the incident. The RPIC is responsible for coordinating any required FAA and state reports and leading internal investigations. In the event that a UAS operation results in a potential violation of Utah criminal statutes, such as trespassing over private property, the MSD will fulfill all applicable reporting obligations and cooperate fully with law enforcement agencies.

5.0 Policy Review and Updates

This Policy will be reviewed at least annually and be updated whenever applicable federal or state law or MSD operational needs change.

Approved by the Board of Trustees of the Greater Salt Lake Municipal Services District the 8th day of July, 2026.

Keith Zuspan, Chair

Attest:

Marla Howard, General Manager