



Police and Crime Panel 2024 - Drones

OFFICIAL



What is a Drone or a UAS?

- Any pilotless vehicle which can be controlled either remotely by a pilot or autonomously through pre-programmed instructions.
- Drones can also be referred to as;
UAV – Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
RPAS – Remotely Piloted Aircraft System
Quadcopters
- The terminology used in law to refer to drones is a ‘Unmanned Aircraft System’ (UAS)



The role of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) associated CAA permissions

- Primary aim is to enable the full and safe integration of all UAS operations into the UK's total aviation system.
- The CAA provide permission for operators looking to use drones for commercial purposes, as well as providing advice to the general public and industry on how to fly drones safely and reduce any risk to aviation.
- The CAA support the potential for innovative use of drone technology, but their focus is on ensuring that any risks these future uses pose to aviation are managed effectively and proportionately.



Durham Constabulary Drone Capabilities - Equipment

- Aircrafts – 5 in total
- 4 M30T Aircrafts
- 1 M2EA Aircraft

- All weather capabilities (*maximum wind resistance 26mph)

- Speaker & Spotlights



Durham Constabulary Drone Capabilities - Pilots

12 pilots at present, 10 of which are operational

At present pilots are based out of the following areas – Spennymoor, Stanley, Durham, Darlington, Barnard Castle, Stanhope and Crook.

Course in August however due to the weather practical elements unable to be completed therefore 7 additional pilots before end of 2024



Registration and Pilot Competency

- Dependent on the category determines whether the **Drone Operator** needs to be registered with the CAA, whether the **Remote Pilot** needs to hold any competency qualifications, and whether insurance is required to operate the drone.

***Minimum of 2 hours every rolling 90 day period* –
minimum 2 flights per month**



Drone Funding

Home Office initially provided £78000 to buy drones and start off our drone unit.

Area Action Partnership previous approx. £18000, current approx. £96000. This is sourced through NPT's.

Police and Crime Commissioner through Safer Streets 5 previous approx. £24000, current approx. £58000 with the possibility of more funding in the pipeline.



Deployment constraints

- Not within 50m of any uninvolved persons (which can restrict drone deployments in urban settings)
- Limited battery life per flight
- 2 remote pilots to operate – NPCC direction
- Wind/rain restrictions and VLOS and max altitude
- Day/night capabilities of pilot and no dedicated team at present
- Operational envelopes



Drone Deployments so far in 2024

- Total = 153 deployments
- Firearms- 13
- MFH- 26
- Operation- 13
- Suspect search- 58



Next 12 months...

- Looking to purchase more aircrafts (3 already purchased) possibly 3-5 more to be purchased through SS5 and AAP funding.
- We will potentially look at purchasing different types to expand our capabilities such as indoor.
- Expand number of pilots, October course another 6-8 pilots
- NPCC Drone Portfolio – Our vision is to enable local forces and their partners to deliver a safe, efficient and effective drone capability that meets the air support needs of policing to keep the public safe.
- Introduction of APP due 2025



Any Questions?