



Unmanned Aircraft Systems (Drones)

Working Together to Keep Our City Safe



The Metropolitan Police Department launched its Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) — more commonly referred to as drones — program in June 2024 for situations where “eyes in the sky” will be critical to ensure a safe resolution for all.

MPD joins over 1,500 police departments across the country that use drones to aid officers in real time.

The program’s procedures are outlined in MPD’s General Order 803.09.

Uses and Parameters

MPD uses drones to support only those operations cited in the General Order, including help with:

- Searching for missing persons
- Major traffic crash reconstruction
- Crowd management for large-scale gatherings
- Situational and tactical purposes (such as a barricade)

Drones operated by MPD are subject to specific operational limitations.

Drones will not be deployed to record a particular person or group based solely on:

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- National origin
- Sex
- Age
- Marital status
- Personal appearance
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity or expression

Drone flights must always adhere to airspace regulations and safety protocols.

Flights are restricted in inclement weather such as high winds, heavy rain, or low visibility to ensure safety and effectiveness.

The use of facial recognition and weapon capabilities are prohibited.

Learn more at

mpdc.dc.gov/drones



GOVERNMENT OF THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

Management, Staffing and Oversight

Drone operations are managed by MPD's Special Operations Division, whose trained pilots and flight observers plan and execute flights and manage flight data.

MPD maintains a robust accountability system for drone operations, including comprehensive pre-flight checks, post-flight debriefings, and documentation of all operational activities.

Public Notice and Privacy Concerns

MPD is committed to transparency regarding its use of drones. MPD will provide public notice of drone deployment when feasible and collaborate with community stakeholders to address any concerns.

Drone operations will be conducted in a manner consistent with constitutional rights and legal standards.

Evidence, Records and Access

Evidence collected by drones will be handled according to established evidentiary procedures.

Records and video shall be publicly released consistent with the District of Columbia Freedom of Information Act, DC Official Code §2-531 *et seq.*

Community members are encouraged to voice concerns through channels such as community meetings, online forums, or direct communication with MPD representatives.

For additional information about MPD's Drone program, please visit our website at mpdc.dc.gov/drones.



Drones and Unmanned Aircraft Systems

A Quick Look at MPD's Newest Tool to Fight Crime

Meet Our Fleet



MPD will deploy USA-made Parrot Anafi drones, operated by trained pilots.



Each drone is capable of flying for about 30 minutes without recharging.



Drones can fly into tight spaces to help support critical missions.

Deployment

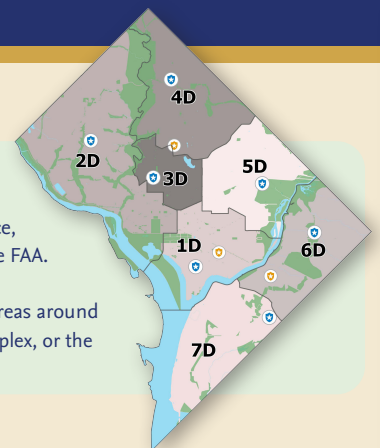
Our investment in drones will provide a versatile solution for deployment to augment the capabilities of our existing Air Support Unit and vehicles on the ground.



Taking to the Air

Only authorized Remote Pilots in Charge (or RPICs) may fly in the District's heavily-regulated airspace, under special permission from the FAA.

The program will not operate in areas around the White House, US Capitol complex, or the US Naval Observatory.



Come Fly with Me



MPD's RPICs receive vigorous training and must have a current license under FAA Part 107. RPICs are accompanied by Visual Observers, who assist by constantly monitoring the drone and its surroundings to ensure safety and alert the pilot to potential hazards.