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Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Requirements

Public safety agencies across the country and worldwide are beginning to use Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) as a low-cost alternative to manned aviation assets, such as helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft. UASs offer a promising technology tool to support the public safety mission. However, UAS technology is not a “buy and fly” technology. There are laws, regulations and extensive training that is required prior to the use this technology.

Recent national events have highlighted the importance of strong, collaborative relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve. The introduction of new law enforcement technologies in communities is often of interest to community members and public advocate groups. In many jurisdictions, where law enforcement agencies have implemented sound and promising technologies, it is because they collaborated with the communities they serve. It is imperative that law enforcement officials work with their respective communities to determine if UAS is a viable tool to support their law enforcement mission in their specific jurisdictions. Community engagement is essential throughout the purchase and implementation of UAS technology to ensure community acceptance.

Because of the unique challenges posed by UAS operations BJA requires adherence to the following requirements in order to ensure the grantee/awardee is cognizant of the operational issues that must be addressed prior to expending federal funds for the purchase of UAS technologies. Any request for an unmanned aerial system utilizing BJA grant funds must be approved by the BJA Director. Please provide/attach additional documents that support each point on the list and reference the documents by point number. For example, any documents supporting “Knowledge of Airspace” would be referenced with the number “4”.

- ____ 1. Must follow presidential memorandum on UAS: "It is required that State, local, tribal, and territorial government recipients of Federal grant funding for the purchase or use of UAS for their own operations ***have in place policies and procedures to safeguard individuals' privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties prior to expending such funds.***" Please provide your policies and procedures that you have in place to safeguard individuals' privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties.
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/02/15/fact-sheet-promoting-economic-competitiveness-while-safeguarding-privacy>
- ____ 2. Knowledge of the process to obtain a Certificate of Authorization (COA) for UAS flights (Both training and operational) from the FAA. Please attach a statement that describes how you will obtain your COA and the estimated time for receipt. The COA must be kept on file for review upon request by the granting agency.
https://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/ato/service_units/systemops/aa/im/organizations/uas/coa/
- ____ 3. FAA Certified pilots and observers with required FAA medical certificates. Please provide copies of required certificates.

_____ 4. Knowledge of the airspace that they will be operating in (Class A, B, C, D, E, G) to include special flight restricted areas to determine the legality of UAS operations in your specific jurisdiction. Please provide a copy of the aviation sectional (map) that you plan on operating a UAS. Please confirm that you have checked Notices to Airmen (NOTAMs) at <http://notams.aim.faa.gov/notamSearch/nsapp.html> and Temporary Flight Restrictions at <http://tfr.faa.gov/tfr2/list.html> for your planned UAS area of operation. This is to ensure that there are restrictions to your planned UAS operations.

_____ 5. Provide a written operational justification for use of the UAS that should include:

- a. the type of missions the UAS will be used for;
- b. why this technology is essential to the maintenance of public safety and good order in your jurisdiction; and
- c. demonstrated community/constituents support for the use of this technology (statements of support from community groups/transcripts from public meetings etc.)

Please note that this justification is in addition to the required controlled equipment justification required under the Justice Assistance Grant. BJA recognizes the operational need for this type of equipment, but requires detailed justification in order to consider the request for approval.

_____ 6. Upon request, the jurisdiction must provide a copy of your Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the use of the UAS both in training and operational environments.