

REMOTELY PILOTED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM

1. GENERAL

- A. This policy outlines the regulations, guidelines and standard operating procedures for the employment and operations of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) by Halifax Regional Police.
- B. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the use of the RPAS is managed in an efficient and accountable manner consistent with law, regulation, policy and best practices.
- C. Deployments of this technology will be in direct support of emergency events, crime scene and vehicular collisions, forensics collection, surveillance, tactical operations, officer training, disaster response and any other mission requiring aerial support.
- D.

2. POLICY

- A. HRP shall ensure that HRP RPAS are, at all times, operated in compliance with Transport Canada Canadian Aviation Regulations, Part 9 and any Special Flight Operations Certificates issued by Transport Canada.
- B. HRP shall ensure that HRP RPAS operations are conducted with due regard for public safety.
- C. RPAS shall be operated in a manner consistent with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; specifically with due regard for Section 8 provisions for protection from unreasonable search and seizure.
- D. RPAS operations will be conducted by authorized HRP RPAS operators who have completed the required training and who hold current Transport Canada Advanced Operator certification.
- E. All HRP RPAS, regardless of size and classification, shall be registered with Transport Canada.
- F. HRP shall designate an RPAS Administrator, who is an Advanced Operations RPAS Pilot, and who will be responsible for:
 - i. HRP RPAS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
 - ii. HRP RPAS Operator flight logs.
 - iii. HRP RPAS registration.
 - iv. HRP Operator Proficiency training.
 - v. HRP RPAS maintenance.
 - vi. HRP RPAS budgets; and,
 - vii. HRP representative for any Municipal/Provincial/Federal RPAS working groups.
- G. HRP RPAS Operators shall:
 - i. Hold and maintain an Advanced Operations RPAS Pilot Certificate.
 - ii. Maintain flight proficiency standards as outlined in HRP RPAS SOPs;
 - iii. Maintain their personal flight log.

- iv. Be familiar with the RPAS system they are operating.
- v. Ensure that they are fit to fly IAW Transport Canada CAR 901.19; and,
- vi. Operate HRP RPAS within the environmental and technical guidelines as outlined in HRP RPAS SOPs

PROCEDURES

- H. Detailed instructions and guidance on HRP RPAS operations shall be included in HRP RPAS Standard Operating Procedures found on the HRP Intranet and HRP Common Drive (P).
- I. HRP RPAS operations shall be classified as routine, or non-routine flight operations depending upon the urgency and nature of the flight operation. Authorization for routine and non-routine flight operations are detailed in HRP RPAS SOPs.
- J. RPAS support for pre-planned operations such as parades, concerts, marathons and festivals shall include inclusion of an annex to the Operations Order for RPAS Ops that outlines the limitations and restrictions in place for that particular operation.
- K. Armed Overwatch and appropriate protective equipment shall be provided to the RPAS Operator, for their physical safety, when RPAS operations require the Operator to operate from a position where they are isolated from armed support.
- L. RPAS operators not in uniform will wear an identifying marking that identifies them as an RPAS Operator associated with HRP.
- M. In order to provide fair warning to the public that HRP is collecting imagery, HRP shall, where practicable, post public notifications/signs that imagery collection from an HRP RPAS is in progress. Examples of public notification can include:
 - i. Signs or posters.
 - ii. Social media posts.
 - iii. Announcements made via loudspeaker/LRAD;
 - iv. A warning provided orally by an HRP member to an individual.
- N. In order to ensure that HRP respects, upholds and defends the privacy rights of the public, HRP has established the following guidelines with respect to RPAS imagery collection:
 - i. HRP will ensure that all routine RPAS flight operations (as defined in HRP RPAS policy) that include the collection of imagery/video shall be conducted in a manner that complies with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, with consideration for reasonable expectation of privacy.
 - ii. A reasonable expectation of privacy shall include:
 - 1. Fenced areas of a private property where the fence is constructed in a way to limit or restrict observation by the public
 - 2. Secluded areas of private property that are not observable by the public.
 - 3. The interior of any private property observed through a window or doorway.
 - 4. Public Beaches.
 - 5. Outdoor public pools and splash pads.
 - 6. Playgrounds.

7. School Yards (when school is in session);
 8. Cemeteries (during a funeral service);
 9. Outdoor Weddings; and,
 10. Outdoor religious services
- iii. A reasonable expectation of privacy **does not include:**
1. Etc. Being a participant or present at a public order disturbance where warnings have been delivered that imagery is being recorded by HRP
 2. being present at any public event such as a concert, parade, rally, festival, etc where warnings are posted that imagery is being recorded by HRP.
 3. When engaged in activity that represents an immediate threat to public safety
 4. When engaged in any activity that is specifically prohibited by a Court Order or undertaking
- iv. In circumstances where imagery/video is collected for evidentiary purposes and there is a reasonable expectation of privacy, HRP shall ensure that the appropriate judicial authorization is obtained, prior to collecting any imagery/video.
- v. In cases where the capture of uninvolved bystander imagery occurs as a result of RPAS imagery collection, HRP will edit such imagery to blur or obscure the identity of uninvolved bystanders prior to any disclosure or use of the imagery for investigative or prosecution purposes.
- vi. Recordings will only be disclosed as authorized by law. External requests for digital footage or images shall be processed through the HRP Freedom of Information and Protection of the Privacy office.
- vii. Any disclosure of recordings other than for Court purposes, shall be of a working copy, edited for privacy as necessary.

3. DEFINITIONS

- A. **RPAS** – the acronym for Remotely Piloted Aircraft System. RPAS is an aerial vehicle that is power driven, other than a model aircraft, that is designed to fly without an onboard operator(s).
- B. **CARs** – the acronym used for Transport Canada issued Canadian Aviation Regulations, which constitute the legal and regulatory framework for RPAS operations in Canada.
- C. **RPAS Administrator** – refers to a designated sworn or civilian member of HRP, who holds an Advanced RPAS Pilot Certification, and who is responsible for ensuring that HRP RPAS policy, standard operating procedures, maintenance, and operator training are compliant with all Federal laws and regulations.
- D. **RPAS Operator** - refers to a sworn or civilian HRP member who holds an Advanced RPAS Pilot Certificate and who operates any HRP RPAS.
- E. **Observer** – a trained person who is in direct communication with the operator and continually maintaining visual line of sight with the RPAS, (for example, other traffic, clouds, obstructions and terrain).

- F. **Armed Overwatch** – refers to a Sworn member, in uniform, who provides site security for the RPAS Operator when the RPAS operator is not located within the perimeter of a Police operation.
- G. **SFOC** – refers to a Special Flight Operations Certificate, issued by Transport Canada, that provides specific exemptions to the holder. In the context of HRP RPAS Operations this includes:
- i. The authority to conduct Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) flight operations.
 - ii. The Authority to operate within 3 nautical miles of an Airport;
 - iii. The authority to conduct flight ops in excess of 400 feet above ground level (AGL).
 - iv. The authority to carry and deploy payloads, including crowd control agents.
 - v. The authority to operate near and over crowd; and,
 - vi. The authority to operate near and over public events.
- H. **FPV** – refers to First Person view in which the RPAS Operator wears a set of goggles which provide a first person view from the RPAS. In the context of HRP RPAS operations, FPV RPAS ops refer to tactical deployment of AVATA RPAS by ERT.

Effective Date of Last Revision	September 15, 2025
Policy Owner	Superintendent Greg Robertson

By Order Of:



Chief Don MacLean
Chief of Police