

Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures

16.15 Unmanned aerial vehicles (drones)

Policy summary

Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) also known as drones, present a threat to the security of correctional centres. UAVs are capable of having a camera fitted that may enable the user to carry out escape route surveillance.

UAVs also have the capability of delivering contraband into a correctional centre by air.

If a UAV is detected in the proximity of a correctional complex or centre, when it is safe to do so, staff must immediately seize the UAV, manage the location as a crime scene and notify police.

Management of Public Correctional Centres Service Specifications

Service specifications	Safety and security
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Scope

This section applies to all correctional centres and other facilities administered by or on behalf of Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW).

It also applies to all CSNSW employees, and where relevant to other personnel such as Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network, contractors, subcontractors, and visitors.

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1 Unmanned aerial vehicles (drones)

1.1 Policy

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) or drones are a threat to correctional centre security as they have the capability to convey contraband such as drugs, mobile phones, tobacco and potentially, weapons to inmates in the centre by air.

UAVs can also be fitted with a camera to photograph security fixtures and carry out escape route surveillance. Objects dropped by UAVs and gathered by inmates pose a serious threat to staff and to other inmates.

If a UAV is detected in the proximity of a correctional centre or complex staff must:

- notify the monitor/control room immediately (if initial detection of the UAV was not made by staff in the monitor/control room) to commence continuous monitoring by Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)
- notify the MOS/Delegated officer, who will contact police if required.

Note: Officers must not discharge a firearm at a UAV (**refer to COPP section 13.7 Use of force**).

At correctional centres that do not have a Control/Monitor Room, Local Operating Procedures (LOPs) must be implemented to guide staff on how best to co-ordinate their response based on the physical layout of the centre and the resources available at different times of the day (**refer to COPP section 21.8 Local operating procedures**).

1.2 Unlawful possession or operation of a UAV

The *Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999* states under section 253FA that a person must not, without lawful excuse, have in their possession a UAV:

- in a correctional centre or correctional complex, or
- in any residential facility or transitional centre located within or near a correctional centre or correctional complex prescribed by the regulations.

Possession of a UAV in these areas is liable to criminal prosecution.

Under section 253FB of the Act, a person must also not be in possession of a remotely piloted aircraft within a prohibited space. Prohibited space means the airspace above detention premises, and above the land in the immediate vicinity of detention premises, at or below 400 feet above ground level.

A person must not, without lawful excuse, operate or attempt to operate a remotely piloted aircraft within prohibited airspace in a way that threatens or is likely to threaten the good order or security of detention premises.

Operating a remotely piloted aircraft means fly or otherwise use a remotely piloted aircraft, including to use a remotely piloted aircraft to photograph, film, or otherwise make or transmit a visual or audio recording of the whole or any of a detention premises, or a person, thing or activity on or at detention premises.

1.3 Procedures for confiscation of UAV and/or items delivered by UAV

	Procedure:	Responsibility
1.	<p>If a UAV lands on the grounds of a correctional centre or complex, immediately seize the UAV including any items/s if inmates are present at the incident location and/or there is a risk that inmates may take possession of the item/s (if safe to do so).</p> <p>Note: Do not attempt to pick up the UAV as the propellers can spin up at any time.</p> <p>Steps taken to seize the UAV should be as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approach the UAV from the rear if possible so that you are not in view of the on board camera. 2. Either flip the UAV onto its side or upside down with your foot or throw a blanket or jumper etc. over the UAV 3. Whilst preserving the UAV for forensic analysis, wrap the UAV in an item e.g.: blanket to prevent the operation of the propellers. Do not attempt to turn the UAV off as you may lose vital fingerprints. (Note: battery life will usually expire in about 30 minutes). 4. Place the UAV into a large bag and seal it as evidence. 	First Responding Officer (FRO)
2.	<p>Notify police and initially manage the area as a crime scene (refer to COPP section 13.8 Crime scene preservation).</p> <p>If the police elect to have the matter dealt with locally all items confiscated are to be managed in accordance with procedures for contraband.</p> <p>Other items attached to the UAV should be removed and the UAV itself should be conveyed to CIG for further analysis.</p>	FRO
3.	<p>Attempt to identify the items, however the Security Operations Group (SOG) must be notified if the item is deemed dangerous, suspicious or unsafe (e.g. suspected Improvised Explosive Device (IED)).</p>	FRO
4.	<p>Report any incidents on OIMS in the <i>Incident Reporting Module</i> (IRM).</p>	FRO

1.4 Procedure for responding to a UAV

	Procedure:	Responsibility
1.	Determine and assess the situation (but do not remove the UAV and/or any items delivered by the UAV unless it is safe to do so).	FRO
2.	Establish and notify communications.	FRO
3.	Contain and isolate the situation.	FRO

4.	Evacuate all uninvolved persons.	FRO
5.	Establish and maintain perimeter control.	FRO
6.	Take control until relieved.	FRO
7.	Report to the MOS/Delegated officer or OIC of the shift to be debriefed.	FRO
8.	Deploy officers to search the external perimeter to locate (if possible) the UAV operator and determine if any further items were delivered to the centre or complex.	MOS/Delegated officer/OIC
9.	Submit an Incident/Witness report to the Governor.	Correctional officer
10.	Complete an IRM on OIMS and Submit for Review.	Correctional officer/OIC

1.5 Procedures for the control/monitor room officer

	Procedure	Responsibility
1.	Coordinate responding officers where necessary.	Correctional officer
2.	Direct all unnecessary movements within the centre to cease until it is considered appropriate to recommence them.	Correctional officer
3.	Ensure continuous CCTV monitoring of the UAV.	Correctional officer
4.	Advise staff of location, position or any movement of the UAV.	Correctional officer
5.	Record any CCTV footage of the incident area.	Correctional officer
6.	Submit an Incident/Witness report to the Governor.	Correctional officer

1.6 Procedures for disposal of UAV and/or items delivered by the UAV

	Procedure:	Responsibility
1.	Enter all details of the UAV and/or items in OIMS <i>Search Module</i> . The procedures for managing a crime scene will also apply when the UAV and/or items are taken by police (refer to COPP section 13.8 Crime scene preservation).	FRO
2.	Manage any items that are suspected to be a prohibited substance per the procedures outlined in COPP section 13.11 Discovery and disposal of drugs .	FRO

	Procedure:	Responsibility
3.	<p>Keep any confiscated property in the inmate property store/reception room or other secure location as determined by the Governor.</p> <p>Confiscated items must be kept in secure storage under the supervision of the OIC of the inmate property store/reception room (or person authorised by the Governor).</p> <p>The Governor must stipulate the method of disposal (refer to COPP section 4.7 Confiscated, unclaimed and disposal of property).</p>	FRO

2 Quick links

- [Related COPP](#)
- [Forms and annexures](#)
- [Related documents](#)

3 Definitions

COPP	Custodial Operations Policy and Procedures
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
CSNSW	Corrective Services NSW
Delegated officer	<p>Any officer who occupies or acts in the following positions which the Governor has delegated certain Governor's functions to deal with correctional centre offences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager of Security • Functional Manager.
Detention premises	<p>This means:</p> <p>(a) a correctional centre, other than a police station or court cell complex in which an inmate is held in custody, or</p> <p>(b) a correctional complex, or</p> <p>(c) a residential facility or transitional centre located within or near a correctional centre or correctional complex prescribed by the regulations.</p>
FRO	First Responding Officer
FM	Functional Manager
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IRM	Incident Report Module
LOP	Local Operating Procedure
MOS	Manager of Security
OIC	Officer in Charge

OIMS	Offender Integrated Management System
Other terms	A UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) may also be referred to as a 'Unmanned Aircraft System' (UAS); 'Remotely Piloted Aircraft System' (RPAS); and 'Drone'. All references refer to an 'Aircraft [or aircraft-system] that is flown from a remote location without a pilot located in the aircraft itself.
Prohibited space	The airspace above detention premises, and above the land in the immediate vicinity of detention premises, at or below 400 feet above ground level.
SOG	Security Operations Group
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle

4 Document information

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1.0		Initial publication (<i>Replaces section 12.4.14 of the superseded Operations procedures Manual</i>)
1.1		Amendment to include policy relating to sections (253FA, 253FB) in the <i>Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999</i> .
1.2	12/03/20	General formatting update and improvements