



**NASSAU COUNTY FIRE COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE FIRE MARSHAL**

Nassau County Public Safety Center
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FIRE MARSHAL BULLETIN

TO ALL NASSAU COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENTS

The Nassau County Fire Marshal's Office is pleased to announce that our Unmanned Aerial System program has reached operational status. The UAS program provides the Nassau County Fire Service with new valuable tools to assist in their response and mitigation of incidents.

The Nassau County Fire Marshal's Office now have numerous Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) and pilots that can be utilized on various missions they would be requested to such as,

- Aerial photography over scene/incident
- Thermal imagery utilizing FLIR
- Aerial duration of 35min+ (expanded with multiple battery sets) and on scene charging capabilities
- Hazmat instrument monitoring and reconnaissance
- Scene documentation (photo/video)
- Damage assessment and surveying
- Exposure control
- Various weather conditions heat/cold, windy conditions, rain

All our pilots have completed FAA required training and certification and have completed additional operational training by various organizations to fly in various conditions the mission would require.

If you require a UAV at your incident, your request platform would be through Firecom. Due to flight restrictions and airspace approvals, it is recommended that you request a UAV as early as possible. When requested, a Firecom representative shall request a signal 11 (call by telephone) so that they may acquire additional information listed below.

- Exact location of your incident and where you would like the UAS to be deployed
- Reason for the request (example: exposure control, aerial video monitoring, scene documentation, etc.)

Once all required information is obtained and your mission is approved, a UAS pilot shall be assigned and will respond. Due to the high-risk nature of utilizing a UAS at a scene/incident, your mission may be denied for reasons such as severe weather, airspace conflicts, unusual conditions, or other similar reason. The Nassau County Fire Marshal's Office will make every attempt to accommodate your request, but safety is priority.

All UAS footage is available to view remotely from the incident command post. In the event the department would request/require the footage, it may be obtained through written request to the Nassau County Fire Marshal's Office.

If you have any questions regarding the program, please contact Fire Marshal Joseph Battaglia at (516) 573-9976.

Nassau County Fire Marshal's Drone Program (UAS)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What can the NC Fire Marshal UAS units provide at an incident scene?

A: The NCFM UAS units can provide you and your organization with an aerial platform to visually monitor a fire/incident, record/document an incident for future training and review, utilize hazmat metering, visually observe exposures from an aerial perspective, and any other similar scenario that is within the capabilities of the aircraft. The units are all outfitted with FLIR, can be airborne for periods exceeding 30 minutes on a single battery (multiple batteries per unit), spotlights, 2-way speakers, and can fly at heights up to 400ft. The Matrice 210 is capable of operating multiple cameras simultaneously, 30x zoom, High Definition FLIR, severe cold weather conditions, high output spotlight, and other advanced features.

Q: Is there any cost to me or my department?

A: No, this is a service provided by the Nassau County Fire Marshal's Office to support local emergency services.

Q: What are some limitations of the UAS units?

A: The units are sometimes restricted from being flown in certain FAA airspaces without prior authorization from FAA. The units are currently restricted from being flown directly over people. The units are not able to fly during certain weather conditions outside of the manufacture's specifications.

Q: Am I able to see the footage while the aircraft is airborne?

A: Yes, to ensure a safe operation the pilot and all take off/landing operations must be secluded from the incident. With that in mind, our UAS teams can broadcast the footage to a remote monitor for the IC to observe at the command post. With the command post able to view the footage, the IC can direct the pilot to where he/she needs to observe.

Q: What can I do to ensure a safe smooth UAS operation for my incident?

A: When requesting the UAS, give Firecom a signal 11 (phone call) and explain the location you wish to utilize the UAS, and the intent of your operation. All our flights require FAA approval, the earlier the pilot obtains the necessary information, the more efficient the process can be approved. When the UAS unit is on scene he/she will check in with the incident commander and go over what the operation will entail. The UAS unit will require a 10' x10' takeoff/landing area that is secluded from the incident for safety purposes. Once the drone is in the air, the incident commander should notify all personnel operating at the scene that the drone is airborne and being utilized.

Q: I requested the UAS for my scene, but they took a very long time to get in the air and conduct operations, is that normal?

A: Conducting UAS operations is a very high-risk operation. Pilots are trained to utilize the aircraft according to local laws and with every safety aspect in mind. All our flights require airspace authorization from FAA, a 10' x 10' takeoff/landing area, a preflight checklist/inspection, a briefing with the incident commander as to what is being conducted and what's expected, and other factors to ensure a safe operation. Although the incident commander is responsible for the scene, the UAS pilot is the sole responsible party for the safety of the UAS operation.

Q: Are there any special concerns that may arise?

A: The Fire Chief/IC oversees and is responsible for the incident. Some of the incidents we may be called to can be subject to criminal or civil cases. Photo/Video footage taken from the aircraft may be used in courtroom testimony therefore chain of custody is essential. The Fire Marshals Investigations Unit handles incidents for which death or serious injury have occurred, suspicious in nature, or if the cause of the fire is deemed undetermined by the incident commander. The Investigations unit will work with the incident commander to ensure the scene is processed appropriately.

Q: Can I obtain footage from the UAS after the incident is over to use for training?

A: Yes, all footage can be obtained by submitting a formal request to the Fire Marshals Investigations unit. The footage may be subject to editing for privacy concerns if any apply. Also, if the incident is part of a criminal investigation, the footage may not be released until the case is closed.

Any additional questions or concerns feel free to contact the Investigations Division at 516-573-9970