

(U//~~FOUO~~/LES) For your situational awareness: In order to operate a UAV in US airspace, the FBI must first obtain a Certificate of Authorization (COA) from the FAA. In matters of life and death, the FBI may apply for an Emergency COA for the utilization of UAVs, which may be approved in 24 hours or less. In non-emergency matters, obtaining a COA can take several weeks or even months. All communication with the FAA regarding UAVs, including COAs and Emergency COAs, is conducted solely by the Field Flight Operations Unit (FFOU), Surveillance and Aviation Section, CIRG.

(U//~~FOUO~~) Any public inquiries on the FBI's use of UAVs should be directed to the National Press Office of OPA at 202-324-3691. The National Press Office has previously provided the following public response which may be used by authorized personnel for general response to an inquiry only:

*"We have used surveillance aircraft in very limited circumstances to support operations where there was a specific operational need. Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) allow us to learn critical information that otherwise would be difficult to obtain without introducing serious risk to law enforcement personnel. As an example, the FBI utilized a UAV at the crisis site during the Jimmy Lee Dykes hostage barricade situation in Alabama earlier this year.*

*"FBI's UAVs are only utilized to conduct surveillance operations on stationary subjects. In each instance, the FBI must first obtain the approval of the FAA to use the aircraft in a very confined geographic area."*

(U//~~FOUO~~/LES) In the coming months, program management of the operational UAV fleet will transition from OTD to CIRG. Once the transition has been completed, divisions should consider UAVs as a resource to support their surveillance needs, integrated as part of CIRG's Surveillance and Aviation Section assets. All requests for UAV operations will come through the Aviation Coordinator to their Program Manager at FFOU. A separate notification will be sent when the program management transition to CIRG has been finalized. When the transition is finalized, the Aviation Policy Guide will reflect any new policies governing the use of UAVs.

(U//~~FOUO~~/LES) If you have specific questions or if you would like to receive additional information about the FBI UAV program, please contact Section Chief Scott Bean, Technical Surveillance Section, OTD, at [redacted] (desk) or [redacted] (cell).

V/R  
Amy Hess (OTD)  
[redacted] (CIRG)

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# FBI UAV Present



- The FBI's current inventory is comprised of [redacted] and [redacted] UAVs. Each set consist of [redacted] UAVs and [redacted] controllers.
- [redacted] UAVs are on order:
- [redacted] UAV pilots. (FAA Class II Medical, FAA Ground School, UAV Certified School)
- Flown over 20 missions since 2005 in support of FBI cases which range from kidnappings [redacted]

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