



# Privacy Advisory Board

Date: April 9, 2026

From: City of San Diego Privacy Advisory Board

To: The Honorable Council President La Cava and Members of the San Diego City Council

Re: San Diego Fire & Rescue Department's Operating Year 2025 Annual Surveillance Report

## I. Background

This recommendation is submitted pursuant to Section 210.0105 of the City of San Diego Municipal Code (SDMC). It concerns two existing technologies, as reported by the San Diego Fire & Rescue Department (SDFD) in its January 30, 2026 Annual Surveillance Reports, submitted pursuant to SDMC Section 210.0108. The Annual Surveillance Reports addressed the SDFD's Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) and the Mission Bay and OB Pier Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Camera System Surveillance Use Policy.

## II. Recommendations

### Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS)

NOTE: SDFD has six active UAS. The aircraft are deployed via two response vehicles located at Fire Station 1. The UAS were flown on only 11 incidents. No imagery was retained or shared outside of SDFD.

Based on the Annual Surveillance Report for UAS, the PAB affirms its recommendation for this technology without modification to the current Surveillance Use Policy.

### Mission Bay and OB Pier Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Camera Systems.

NOTE: The SDFD reports that as of April 9, 2026, the Mission Bay and OB Pier Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Camera System has not yet been placed in service. The UASI Cameras have not yet been deployed because they are still not fully operational. The City's communications department, City lighting and electrical teams, and the third-party camera vendor still need to coordinate to activate the systems.

This is a federally used technology. The United States Coast Guard has direct access to view the San Diego data. The United States Customs and Border Patrol and Naval Warfare personnel do not have access to the San Diego cameras and data. Prior to making the UASI operational, it will reconfirm that use of the system and management of the data are in compliance with applicable state and local regulations.

Based on the Annual Surveillance Report for UASI, the PAB affirms its recommendation for this technology without modification to the current Surveillance Use Policy.

General Recommendations:

The SDFD currently has an internal compliance and audit process. However, this process can be improved by:

- The final compliance or audit review should be conducted by someone who is independent of the Surveillance Technology and chain of command for the Surveillance Technology.
- Clear documentation should be used of the “risk” for which the department is testing in its compliance and audit processes. Normally this includes identification of the risk, procedures specifically established to address the risk, and controls over those procedures.
- All audit or compliance findings and exceptions should be researched and a root cause analysis performed to determine systemic or other causes of the compliance issue. This must then be followed up to ensure the matter was adequately addressed.

The SDFD should develop a process to track the PAB comments and City Council requirements to ensure that each are addressed and the resolutions are properly disclosed to the PAB, the City Council, and the public.