
POLICE OFFICER
SAN DIEGO
POLICE
1889
San Diego
POLICE
DEPARTMENT
Drone as First Responder









Purpose

The Drone as First Responder (DFR) Program utilizes an Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) to quickly respond to police and public safety incidents, such as:

- Crimes in progress
- Missing Persons
- All-hazard Events (e.g., fires, floods)



Objectives

Efficiency

Montgomery County Police, MD cleared over 250 calls for service in 1 year without dispatching patrol units.

Reduce Response Times

The Oceanside Police Department has seen a 50% reduction in response times for top-priority calls.

Evidence Collection

Metropolitan Nashville Police utilized DFR for an active robbery. Capturing the incident and assisting officers in recovering evidence.

Enhance Safety

The Chula Vista Police Department has said the program has assisted in de-escalation.



DFR systems shall be for legitimate law enforcement and public safety purposes only.

Legitimate law enforcement purposes include, but are not limited to:

- Providing remote aerial camera observation and imagery during dispatched incidents for safety and situational awareness.
- Search and Rescue support for lost, missing, stranded persons, or suspects.
- Providing aerial observation and imagery in support of fire response, all-hazard, disaster response and critical incidents.
- Providing video digital media recordings in support of crime scene evidence collection and mapping.
- DFR pilot training.



The following uses of DFR shall be expressly prohibited:

- To violate any Constitutional rights or federal, state, or local laws.
- To conduct random surveillance activities.
- To harass, intimidate, or discriminate against any individual or group.
- To conduct personal business of any type.
- Any use in a discriminatory manner that targets protected individual characteristics, including race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, age, disability, gender (to include gender identity and gender expression), lifestyle, sexual orientation, or similar personal characteristics, in accordance with Department Policy 9.31.
- Any use that does not conform with police Department Policy and Procedure of FAA Regulations.



Data Collection

DFR systems equipment does not automatically record video. The DFR pilot manually controls when the DFR system will record.

DFR systems can collect video in multiple visual spectrums, such as:

- Red, Green, and Blue (RGB) light spectrum
- Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) spectrum, commonly known as “thermal imagery”
- Infrared spectrum, commonly known as “IR”
- “Night Vision” or “Low-Light” and
- Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR).

Data Protection

All DME will be retained within the DFR system until the data is removed from the aircraft and uploaded to the Department's DME storage database.

Once DME has been impounded, data protection becomes the responsibility of the Property Unit or the Department's DME storage database and all such evidence is controlled and regulated by SDPD Procedure 3.02 – Impound, Release, and Disposal of Property, Evidence and Articles Missing Identification marks.



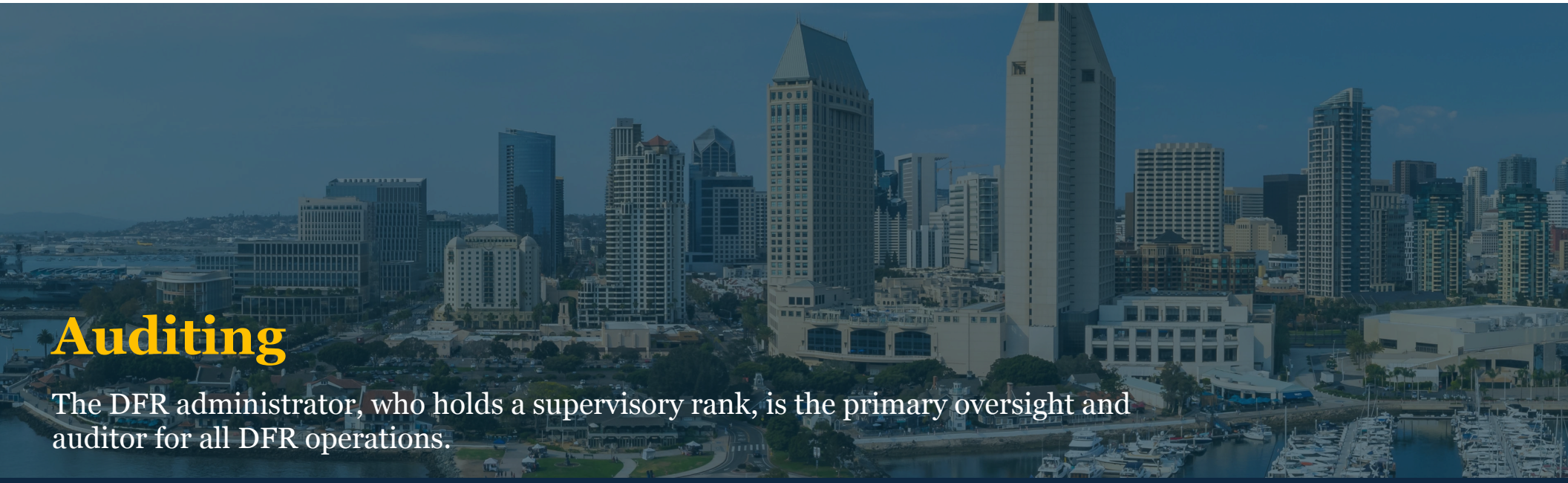


Third Party Data Sharing

The Department only shares DFR data with other law enforcement agencies for legitimate law enforcement purposes, with the San Diego City Attorney or the San Diego District Attorney in connection with legal proceedings, or in response to a valid court or judicial order, all in accordance with this Use Policy.

SDPD shall not:

- Share DFR images, video or data with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Border Patrol, or any other law enforcement agency for the purpose of enforcing immigration laws, as required by California Government Code 7284.6 – The California Values Act.
- Release DFR images, video or data to aid in the prosecution of any individual for providing, obtaining, or assisting in the provision or obtention of an abortion or any reproductive care, in accordance with California Penal Code 423.2, the California FACE Act and Penal Code 13778.2.
- Sell DFR data obtained or received by SDPD.



Auditing

The DFR administrator, who holds a supervisory rank, is the primary oversight and auditor for all DFR operations.

Audits include:

- Confirming compliance with state and local laws, including compliance with the Department's Use Policy.
- Confirming that equipment is functioning properly.
- Confirming data is being impounded and retained per Department Policy 3.02
- Confirming users have current training and authorization to use the system.
- Confirming that each use is properly logged and documented.
- Confirming that the complete case and incident numbers are being used.

Training

Designated DFR pilots are the only personnel who are authorized to be in possession of or use any of the Department's DFR systems.

Pilot candidates must complete the following training prior to being designated as a DFR pilot.

- FAA CFR Part 107 Small Unmanned Aircraft System Certification
- DFR system manufacturer's training
- SDPD UAS Pilot Academy – Approximately 80 hours of specialized UAS Flight and classroom training to include procedures on evidence collection, retention, impounding, and the protection of citizens' privacy, civil rights, and Fourth Amendment during operations.





Fiscal Cost

The Department has not completed the Request for Proposal (RFP) process and has not identified a vendor.

Potential Sources of Funding

- Grant Funds
- Private donations (Managed through the San Diego Police Foundation)
- Special Funds (Asset Forfeiture Program)
- General Funds