

01-07 Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)

UDOT Policy	UDOT 01-07
Group or Divisions Affected	All UDOT
Reference Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UDOT UAS Operations Manual• Utah Code Title 72, Chapter 10, Aeronautics and Space Act• Utah Code Title 72, Chapter 10, Part 7, Unmanned Aircraft—Drones• Utah Code 72-10-1202• 14 CFR Part 107, Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems• Drone Purchase Authorization Form
Owned by	Aeronautics Division
Authority	Utah Code 72-1-202
Revised Date	December 5, 2025
Next scheduled review	December 5, 2028

I. Purpose

This policy outlines the requirements for the authorized use and safe operation of unmanned aircraft systems throughout UDOT.

II. Definitions

As used in this policy, the boldfaced terms below have the following meanings:

- A. **FAA** - Federal Aviation Administration.
- B. **Flight** - when used in relation to a UAS, an individual operation of a UA from takeoff to landing. Each flight is required to have defined parameters for area of operation, altitudes, flight plan, and length of flight.
- C. **Operator** - the group or entity responsible for the safe and secure operation of a UA.
- D. **Project** - a planned effort or activity intended to improve, preserve, or manage the state's transportation infrastructure. When a project involves the use of UAS, the project may require multiple flights.

- E. **UA** - unmanned aircraft, which is an aerial vehicle operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft.
- F. **UAS** - unmanned aircraft system, which includes the unmanned aircraft itself and the associated support items needed to operate the unmanned aircraft safely, such as communication equipment, navigation equipment, controllers, support equipment, and autopilot functionality.
- G. **UAS Flight Coordinator** - a person assigned by UDOT's director of operations to oversee the use of UASs for UDOT projects.

III. Background

As the uses and abilities of UASs expands, UDOT is committed to ensuring the use of UASs by and on behalf of UDOT are appropriately approved and are aligned with federal and state legal frameworks. Important provisions in Utah Code that address the use of unmanned vehicles are found in Utah Code Title 72, Chapter 10, Part 7, Unmanned Aircraft—Drones, and Utah Code 72-10-1202. Additionally, the use of UASs is subject to FAA oversight as described in 14 CFR Part 107, Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems.

IV. Policy

A. General Provisions.

1. UDOT authorizes the use of UASs for UDOT business operations.
2. UDOT employees and UDOT contractors and consultants will coordinate all use of UASs for or on behalf of UDOT with UDOT's UAS Flight Coordinator.
3. UDOT will ensure that all UAS operators participating in a flight for or on behalf of UDOT hold the appropriate certifications in accordance with federal regulations and state law.
4. UDOT personnel may not use personally owned UASs for official UDOT flights.

B. UAS Operator Duties. Each UDOT employee who is a UAS operator will:

1. follow the UDOT UAS Operations Manual and any applicable supplemental documents, including the Emergency Operations section in the event of an emergency;
2. comply with federal, state, and local UAS laws and regulations; and
3. coordinate each UAS flight with the UAS Flight Coordinator.

C. **Third-Party Operators.** UDOT may only authorize a contractor or consultant operating as a UAS operator on behalf of a UDOT project if the contractor or consultant agrees to:

1. comply with the UDOT UAS Operations Manual and all applicable supplemental documents, including the Emergency Operations section in the event of an emergency;
2. register UAs that will be used on behalf of UDOT with the UDOT Aeronautics Division; and
3. share any data collected by UASs on behalf of UDOT or a UDOT project.

D. **UAS Lifecycle and Replacement.**

1. The UDOT Aeronautics Division in coordination with the UAS Flight Coordinator, will conduct an annual review of each UA's and UAS's condition, firmware and software support status, and mission alignment.
2. The UAS coordinator may take a UA or UAS out of service if the UA or UAS fails to meet FAA or UDOT standards for safe operation.

E. **Data Retention and Security.**

1. UDOT will ensure that each UAS flight is cataloged with a unique identifier, including the date, location, mission objective and PIC.
2. UDOT will ensure that data collected through the use of UASs, including aerial imagery, photogrammetry datasets, video footage, LiDAR files, and associated data are stored on UDOT approved servers or cloud platforms, and that the data is stored and used in accordance with UDOT Policy 05-34, Privacy Policy.
3. When coordinating with law enforcement, UDOT will ensure that UAS data is used in accordance with Utah Code 72-10-802 and 803.
4. UDOT may designate any UAS data involving critical infrastructure, law enforcement operations, or emergency response as "Restricted Access" and will manage the data under heightened security protocols.
5. UDOT employees will immediately report any breach, loss, or unauthorized access to UAS data to UDOT's chief privacy officer.

F. **UAS Procurement.** Before a UDOT employee or group purchases a UAS, the employee or group will:

1. coordinate with the UAS Flight Coordinator and seek authorization for the purchase using the drone purchase authorization form; and
2. obtain final authorization for the purchase from the deputy director of engineering and operations.

V. Search Terms

UA; UAS; Unmanned Aircraft System; Drone

Original effective date: March 22, 2017

Last review completed: December 5, 2025