

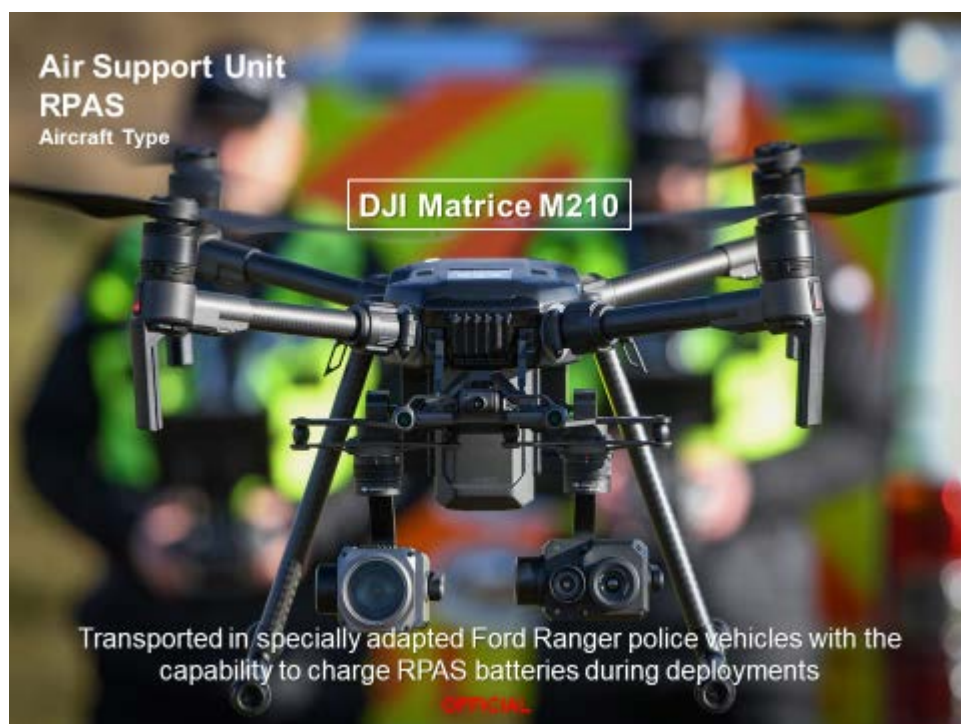
BRIEFING PAPER FOR RENFREWSHIRE SCRUTINY BOARD

FOR INFORMATION			
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POLICE SCOTLAND USE OF REMOTELY PILOTED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS (RPAS)

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Renfrewshire Scrutiny board with an overview of Police Scotland's use of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS).



2. Background

RPAS, colloquially referred to as drones, were introduced operationally by Police Scotland on 1 May 2019 as an enhancement to the current Police Scotland Air Support Unit Helicopter.

The use of RPAS within Police Scotland falls under the remit of the Air Support Unit. Although the Police Scotland Helicopter remains the primary asset, Police Scotland

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has procured 7 RPAS at present with 2 based at Aberdeen, 2 at Inverness and 3 based at Glasgow. Each location has a training platform and an operational platform, with 4 used for training purposes and 3 for operational purposes.



The present RPAS are fitted with 2 camera sensors including thermal image and have a flight endurance of approx 25 minutes (several additional battery units are carried during a deployment). RPAS cameras can record images but only for a legitimate policing purpose e.g. event planning, crime scene investigation, criminal proceedings. The limitations for use means that RPAS cannot fly in heavy rain, snow or fog.

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Police Scotland has a Data Protection and Equalities & Human Rights Impact Assessments in place for all RPAS activity and all RPAS activity is conducted under the Air Navigation Order and Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) regulations. The CAA granted Police Scotland permission to operate RPAS in both urban and rural environments, day and night.

3. Community Impact

It cannot be underestimated that this new technology together with the negative perception of 'drones' may cause public concern. Police Scotland recognises that there may be public concern in terms of impact on an individual's privacy.

Police Scotland only deploys RPAS for a legitimate policing purpose, where it is considered necessary and appropriate to do so. To identify and reduce risks to privacy, Police Scotland developed and completed a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA), also known as Privacy Impact Assessment, which covers all police RPAS activity. The DPIA helps minimise the risks of harm to individuals through the processing of personal information.

4. Operational Tasking

When deployed a team of 2 specially trained officers attend and remotely pilot the RPAS. The officers will always be deployed in uniform wearing high-viz clothing and driving a marked police vehicle. RPAS **is not** used covertly. However if there is a

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threat to life or national security then it may be considered as a covert option but strictly under RIPSA.

Operational Tasking includes:-

Searches

- Missing persons
- Suspect persons
- Evidence
- Property

Critical Incident Response

- Firearms
- Public Order
- Major Incident

Post Incident Investigation

- Scene overview and situational awareness for emergency services
- Aerial images for safety, analysis, strategy

Crime Scene Analysis Imagery

- Evidential imagery for criminal proceedings
- Road Traffic Collisions

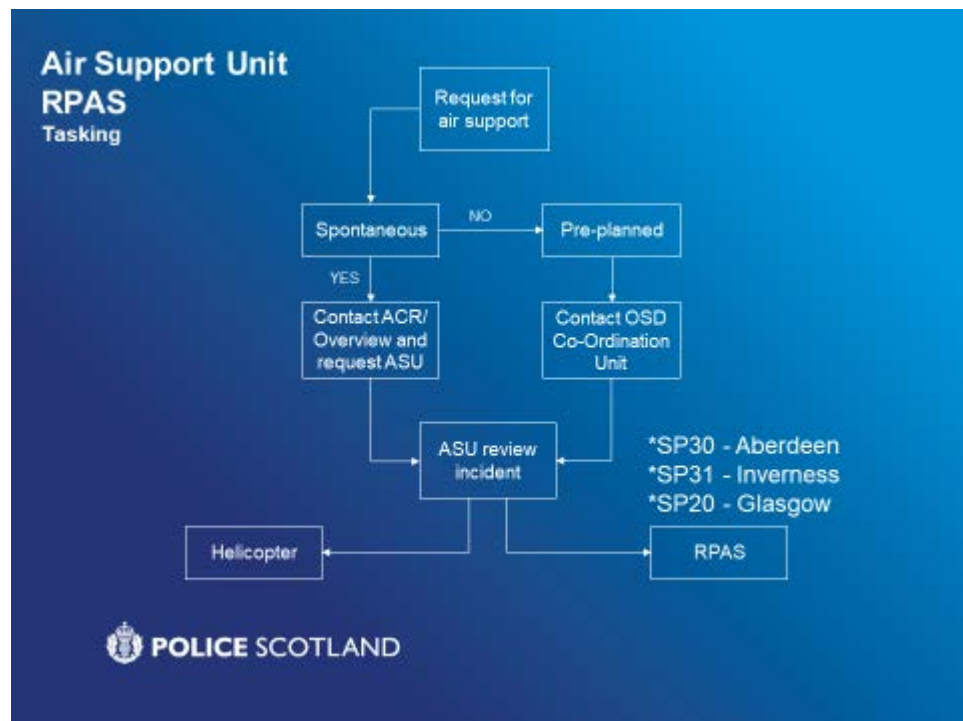
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- Serious Crime

Divisional initiatives supporting the local policing plan

- Aerial imagery for event planning
- Public safety
- Officer safety
- Public confidence

Operationally deployment can be requested to an ongoing or pre-planned incident in the same format as the Helicopter is requested. Attendance will be based on a number of factors including availability, weather, threat, risk and harm. Please see below route that a tasking request would take.



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DIVISION DEPLOYMENTS - RENFREWSHIRE

RPAS has not yet been deployed within Renfrewshire however it is anticipated that in the near future they will be deployed to support local policing through the areas discussed in this paper.

5. Conclusion

Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems are a relatively new concept within Police Scotland and are being continually evaluated.

Renfrewshire Sub-Division will aim to utilise RPAS and Helicopter in the future. Consideration is being given to requesting the assistance for a joint Road Policing Initiative to tackle the illegal use of off-road motorbikes and quad-bikes. Prior to any deployment under the aforementioned initiatives a focussed media and social media campaign would be undertaken.

PS Kevin McGee
Local Authority Liaison Officer
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