

**Subject: Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Status**

**Key Issue: Law Enforcement and Investigations (LEI) purchased two Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) in March 2007 and received them in December 2007. At the time of purchase there were no known regulatory barriers for operation of UAVs. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) issued new regulations on the use of UAVs on February 6, 2007.**

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**Issue Description:**

An Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) is a remote controlled aircraft used for surveillance, reconnaissance and monitoring missions. The use of these aircraft will increase officer safety for use in illegal Drug Trafficking Operations (DTOs) that are occurring on National Forest System (NFS) lands. LEI National Technical Investigations Unit (NTIU) in Missoula, Montana has been the lead with this project.

**Issue Key Points:**

- Our NTIU has been working closely with our Fire & Aviation (FAM) staff to meet the FAA and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) airworthiness requirements to operate UAVs.
- The current physical status of the UAVs: They are in southern California at the UAV manufacturer receiving the latest software updates to improve operational capability.
- Generally two persons are used to operate the UAV; however, one can operate the aircraft.
- The operation of a UAV requires a FAA certified pilot with current class II medical certification and an observer, who while not required to be a pilot, must have a class II medical certificate. Other elements of the piloting requirements and Certificate of Authorization (COA) are ongoing.
- The UAV can rapidly, safely and completely monitor an area for current or past activity of interest.
- UAV monitoring of DTO illegal marijuana sites has a tremendous safety and law enforcement operations planning application.
- We plan to deploy these aircraft in the California Region once all requirements are met.
- The use of these aircraft increases officer safety as it will provide information regarding the presence of individuals, possible firearms present, overview of the topography, vegetation, and other site specific information prior to start of law enforcement operations.

**Subject: Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Acquisition Status**

**Key Issue: Law Enforcement and Investigations (LEI) initiated purchase of two Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) in September 2006 and received them in December 2007. At the time of purchase there were no known regulatory barriers for operation of UAVs.**

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**Issue Description:**

An Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) is a remote controlled aircraft used for surveillance, reconnaissance and monitoring missions. The planned use of the aircraft was to increase officer safety for use in illegal Drug Trafficking Operations (DTOs) that are occurring on National Forest System (NFS) lands.

**Set Backs to Implementation:**

- LEI initiated the purchase of two UAV's in September of 2006 with FY06 funds.
- LEI received the two UAV's in December of 2007.
- At the time the purchase was initiated, there were no known FAA and NASA regulatory barriers for operation of UAV's of the size and type being considered by LEI.
- FAA issued new regulations on the use of UAVs on February 6, 2007.
- Law Enforcement and Investigations National Technical Investigations Unit coordinated with the Agency's Fire & Aviation Management (FAM) staff to meet the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) air-worthiness requirements to operate UAVs.
- The operation of a UAV requires a FAA certified pilot with current class II medical certification and an observer, who while not required to be a pilot, must have a class II medical certificate. Other elements of the piloting requirements and Certificate of Authorization (COA) are ongoing.
- LEI did not have two certified pilots who were located in the same geographic area.
- June 9, 2009 - FAA maintains its prohibition of Unmanned Surveillance Aircraft for general use except for testing and temporary emergencies such as brush fires – until all safety concerns are mitigated. *(source of information USFS-FAM)*
- LEI is in the process of coordinating with other program areas within the Forest Service that possess the capabilities required by FAA and NASA to affect a transfer of the two UAV's to facilitate use in an efficient manner.
- The current status of the UAVs: They are located in southern California at the UAV manufacturer receiving the latest software updates to improve operational capability.

**Law Enforcement and Investigations (LEI) initiated purchase of two Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) in September 2006 and received them in December 2007. At the time of purchase there were no known regulatory barriers for operation of UAVs.**

- At the time the purchase was initiated, there were no known FAA and NASA regulatory barriers for operation of UAV's of the size and type being considered by LEI.
- FAA issued new regulations on the use of UAVs on February 6, 2007.
- Law Enforcement and Investigations National Technical Investigations Unit coordinated with the Agency's Fire & Aviation Management (FAM) staff to meet the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) air-worthiness requirements to operate UAVs.
- The operation of a UAV requires a FAA certified pilot with current class II medical certification and an observer, who while not required to be a pilot, must have a class II medical certificate. Other elements of the piloting requirements and Certificate of Authorization (COA) are ongoing.
- June 9, 2009 - FAA maintains its prohibition of Unmanned Surveillance Aircraft for general use except for testing and temporary emergencies such as brush fires – until all safety concerns are mitigated. (*source of information USFS-FAM*)

LEI is in the process of coordinating with the Forest Service Fire and Aviation program area to transfer these UAV's to him.