



CITY OF GAINESVILLE

Gainesville Police Department

Memo

To: Chief Lonnie Scott Sr.

From: Drone Team Coordinator

Via: Lt. Marc Plourde, Capt. Anthony Ferrara

Date: October 14, 2022

Re: Drone Team update and new drone replacements

I am writing this IOC to provide an update on the current status of the GPD Drone Team and upcoming changes. The unit has a total of nine pilots with only six of those being fully operational. Those pilot not operational have taken a medical leave of absence, on maternity leave, or re-assigned away from patrol and not up to date with training.

The GPD Drone Team is still flying the DJI Mavic Enterprise Zoom and DJI Mavic Enterprise Dual (thermal) with a single DJI Mavic Mini for indoor mission. A total of eight units are functional and in operation. Of those units operational, two are the Dual and four are the Zoom. The remaining four units out of the original twelve, have been taken out of service due to crash damage and/or hardware/software failures. The DJI Mavic Mini is still operational and being used exclusively for interior building searches during SWAT search warrants.

Due to the age and use of the drones currently in use, most of the batteries have reached the end of their life cycle. Each operational pilot only has an average two batteries available, with each battery only giving about 20-25 minutes of flight as compared to the original 30-35 minutes of flight time. A request to purchase new batteries was submitted recently and denied.

As you aware, Florida State Statute 934.50, calls for the use of our DJI drones to be discontinued as of January 1st 2023. A comprehensive plan for discontinuing the use of the unapproved drones has been appropriately filed with the State of Florida as per the requirement listed in FSS 934.50. This plan gives the Gainesville Police Department the following options for our soon to be grounded fleet of drones;

- Use them for trade-in credit towards the purchase of new drones. They are becoming less and less valuable, and even more so without fully chargeable batteries.
- Send them to surplus, and let the city handle any future transactions.
- Individually sell them to other agencies out of state (without the legal restrictions against DJI) that have interest in buying lower cost drones.

And finally, this brings us to the issue of replacement drones. FSS 934.50 assigned the Department of Management Services (DMS) as the responsible entity for creating a list of approved drones that public safety agencies can use after January 1st 2023. That list has a total of five manufactures on

it and only two have working units for sale to LEAs. Those manufacturers are Parrot and Skydio; with Parrot being the only unit that will work seamlessly through our Axon BWC Respond system allowing live video feed as we have shown during many recent special events.

The Parrot Anafi "USA Gov." edition has an individual estimated cost of \$15,388.91 (see attached quote for two units). The expected delivery time from when an order is placed was estimated at 2-4 months at the time of this letter. I hope that we can begin to purchase these drones soon to build the GPD Drone Team back up to a more functional status that would allow GPD to serve its community better.

Please reach out to Lt. Plourde, myself, or any member of the Drone Team with concerns or questions. Thank you for your support of the team.