

SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA



ITEM: 3.5
(ID # 28688)

MEETING DATE:
Tuesday, October 07, 2025

FROM : EXECUTIVE OFFICE

SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE OFFICE: Approve new Board Policy A-76: Use of Unmanned Aircraft and Unmanned Aircraft Systems; All Districts. [\$0]

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt new Board Policy A-76: Use of Unmanned Aircraft and Unmanned Aircraft Systems; and
2. Direct the Clerk of the Board to update the Board Policy website to include the new Board Policy.

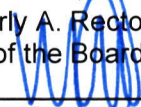
ACTION:Policy


Jeff Van Wageningen, County Executive Officer 10/2/2025

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

On motion of Supervisor Washington, seconded by Supervisor Gutierrez and duly carried by unanimous vote, IT WAS ORDERED that the above matter is approved as recommended.

Ayes: Medina, Spiegel, Washington, Perez, and Gutierrez
Nays: None
Absent: None
Date: October 7, 2025
xc: EO, COB/AB

Kimberly A. Rector
Clerk of the Board
By: 
Deputy

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE,
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

FINANCIAL DATA	Current Fiscal Year:	Next Fiscal Year:	Total Cost:	Ongoing Cost
COST	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
NET COUNTY COST	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
SOURCE OF FUNDS: N/A			Budget Adjustment:	No
			For Fiscal Year:	25/26

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: Approve

BACKGROUND:

Summary

As the use of technology increases to enhance service delivery, the desire and need to use unmanned and manned aircraft systems (UAS) in daily county business is more standard. These systems commonly referred to as drones also include other types of remotely piloted aircraft.

Although many county departments currently use these systems successfully, it is prudent to communicate to the public and department personnel that the county has taken action to ensure safe and responsible operations of these systems. It is important to differentiate that these systems are being used for governmental purposes and not for recreational purposes.

This policy is written to require any county department who currently uses or will be using a type of UAS to develop guidelines specific to the department that meet certain overarching requirements. This allows departments such as public safety departments to have some flexibility in developing guidelines that are safe yet allow for specific departmental operations to occur. For example, there may not ever be a need to have nighttime operations for a specific department, so that department may exclude or disallow it in their guidelines.

This policy was initiated and developed by the Riverside County Enterprise Geographic Information Systems Committee (EGIS), which is a committee comprised of over twenty-nine (29) county departments and ESRI staff and is co-chaired by the Executive Office (EO), RCIT and TLMA. EGIS has been a committee functioning for over twenty (20) years and has collaborated on other county initiatives, such as the Enterprise License Agreement with ESRI and aerial photography for the county. The EGIS Drone Sub-Committee comprised of county airports (TLMA-Aviation), EO, TLMA-Survey, TLMA-Code, Fire, Animal Services, Riverside County Regional Parks and Open Space, Flood Control and Water Conservation District, RCIT and the Riverside County Sheriff's Department collaborated on this policy.

Impact on Residents and Businesses

This policy would ensure departments are using standards that will ensure safe and responsible operations when out in the community.

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ATTACHMENTS:

A. Board Policy A-76 – Use of Unmanned Aircraft and Unmanned Aircraft
Systems


Tina Grande 9/16/2025


Aaron Gettis, Chief of Deputy County Counsel 9/25/2025

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POLICY:

It is the policy of the Board of Supervisors that departments operating unmanned aircraft and unmanned aircraft systems herein defined as part of County daily business develop guidelines that meet certain standards as outlined herein.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of Policy A-76 is to ensure compliance with 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 107 along with local, state, and federal laws when using unmanned aircraft and unmanned aircraft systems as part of daily County business. It is recognized that departments have the need to tailor guidelines to suit individual department activities; however, it is important that general standards and procedures for developing guidelines are followed.

BACKGROUND:

DEFINITIONS (Definitions are included herein are to provide a general understanding of the unmanned aircraft and the positions and practices related to it. Please refer to <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-14/chapter-I/subchapter-F/part-107> for definitions under FAA guidelines and other applicable regulations.)

Aircraft Systems:

Large Unmanned Aircraft System (IUAS) – means a large, unmanned aircraft and its associated elements (including communication links and the components that control the large unmanned aircraft) that are required for the safe and efficient operation of this type of aircraft in the national airspace system, greater than or equal to 55 lbs. on takeoff including everything that is on board or otherwise attached to the aircraft.

Small Unmanned Aircraft System (sUAS) – means a small, unmanned aircraft and its associated elements (including communication links and the components that control the small unmanned aircraft) that are required for the safe and efficient operation of this type of aircraft in the national airspace system, weighing less than 55 lbs. on takeoff including everything that is on board or otherwise attached to the aircraft.

Unmanned Aircraft (UA) – means an aircraft operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft, sometimes referred to as a drone.

Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) – means an unmanned aircraft and its associated elements (including communication links and the components that control

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the unmanned aircraft) that are required for the safe and efficient operation of this type of aircraft in the national airspace system.

All the systems defined above shall be referred to as UAS in this policy.

Other Definitions:

Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs) - SOPs are written and tested by department or district-specific procedures that are applied uniformly and consistently and involve all aspects of flight operations and UA/UAS practices and activities.

14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 107 (Part 107) – Found in Title 14, of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 107 is a set of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) rules and regulations for small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (sUAS) operations that cover a broad spectrum of commercial, and government uses for drones weighing less than 55 lbs.

Remote Pilot in Command (RPIC) - The person who is ultimately responsible for the overall operation. The RPIC shall ensure the flight is conducted safely, lawfully, and all necessary notifications have been made. The RPIC may or may not be the person actually flying the UAS.

Person Manipulating the Controls (PMC) - The person who is piloting / physically manipulating the controls of the UAS through the remote controller. If this person is not the RPIC, then the PMC shall be under the direct supervision of the RPIC.

Visual Observer (VO) - Personnel involved in the UAS operation who are assigned to keep a constant visual on the UAS during flight. Visual observers scan the area using the FAA's "see and avoid" technique to ensure the UAV remains clear of any possible hazards such as approaching aircraft, obstacles, etc. The Visual Observer shall have uninterrupted communication with the RPIC / PMC either in person, cell phone, radio, etc.

Development of Guidelines:

Departments currently using any UAS as defined herein are required to develop individual guidelines within 60 days of approval of Policy A-76 by the Board of Supervisors. After this time, departments are required to have a UAS guideline in place prior to deploying any UAS. Departments must meet general standards and guidelines in the development of a UAS guideline, and it must include the following:

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General Standards

Authority:

Guidelines shall be reviewed and approved by County Counsel for adherence to federal law and included in the department's Standard Operating Procedure Manual. The department's guideline shall include approval by the department head and/or designee.

Guideline Requirements:

The following areas outline the provisions to be included in each department's guidelines.

Unit Composition:

Guidelines shall include unit composition. County UAS operations shall be comprised of those personnel recognized as qualified and assigned by County departments/districts and may include a UAS coordinator, RPIC, VO, and others as deemed necessary. An individual may fulfill multiple roles. The RPIC must be a current Part 107 license holder or authorized by a waiver through the FAA.

Requirements for RPIC:

Guidelines shall include training requirements at a minimum to include Part 107 regulations and any additional requirements by departments/agencies, including, but not limited to: requiring preflight inspections, physical possession of and readily accessible certificate with UAS rating, and personal identification.

It is recommended that the RPIC demonstrates proficiency in manual piloting and controlling the UAS with appropriate competence to ensure safe and effective operations. This can be done through peer evaluation, that is then documented with signature and filed with the department.

Ensure that the UAS complies with the existing registration requirements specified in Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 91, 14 CFR § 91.203(a)(2).

Ensure the flight conforms to the rules of Part 107, an issued Certificate of Authorization (COA), or issued FAA waiver.

Safety:

Safety of UAs operations is of the utmost concern. The safety of all operations should be considered during every flight. All FAA and COA requirements must be followed at all times, as well as safety and operations requirements.

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Therefore, the guidelines shall include a section and include the sections listed below.

General Safety:

Emergency Response Plan shall be included in the guidelines.

Steps to ensure that the UAS will pose no undue hazard to other people, other aircraft, or other property in the event of a loss of control of the UA for any reason.

Reporting requirements that meet or exceed current County standards if a flight operation results in injury or property damage.

Operations Near Airports:

Operations near airports shall be limited to necessary business by the department. Each guideline shall address when and how notification should be made to both controlled and uncontrolled airports. It is the responsibility of each department to understand requirements as well as best practices. Careful planning for these operations is necessary. Guidelines may prohibit operations within a set perimeter of an airport.

Night operations limitations:

Night operations shall be limited to necessary business by the department. Guidelines shall include whether night operations are allowed and under what circumstances. Guidelines may prohibit any type of night operation.

Licensure and Liability:

The pilot warranty section of the County insurance policy states the named insured (County) designee should maintain license compliance. If an incident occurs and the claim investigation determines the pilot is unlicensed, the carrier may reduce the insurance limits that afford payment of the claim or deny the claim in its entirety. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the pilot to maintain standing with the FAA and ensure their license is kept current which is required to operate aircraft.

Update Frequency:

The department must keep up with the current standard FAA protocol and make certain equipment requirements are in place and updated. Each guideline shall include the interval for updates, which shall not be more than two years. Guidelines must include evidence that it was reviewed and/or updated by appropriate department personnel.

Reference:

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BOARD RULES

Requests to Address Board on "Agenda" Items:

You may request to be heard on a published agenda item. Requests to be heard must be submitted to the Clerk of the Board before the scheduled meeting time.

Requests to Address Board on items that are "NOT" on the Agenda:

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these rules, member of the public shall have the right to address the Board during the mid-morning "Oral Communications" segment of the published agenda. Said purpose for address must pertain to issues which are under the direct jurisdiction of the Board of Supervisors. YOUR TIME WILL BE LIMITED TO THREE (3) MINUTES. The Board may limit the public input on any item, based on the number of people requesting to speak and the business of the Board.

Power Point Presentations/Printed Material:

Speakers who intend to conduct a formalized Power Point presentation or provide printed material must notify the Clerk of the Board's Office by 12 noon on the Monday preceding the Tuesday Board meeting, ensuring that the Clerk's Office has sufficient copies of all printed materials and at least one (1) copy of the Power Point CD. Copies of printed material given to the Clerk (by Monday noon deadline) will be provided to each Supervisor. If you have the need to use the overhead "Elmo" projector at the Board meeting, please ensure your material is clear and with proper contrast, notifying the Clerk well ahead of the meeting, of your intent to use the Elmo. **Speakers are prohibited from bringing signs, placards, or posters into the hearing room.**

Individual Speaker Limits:

Individual speakers are limited to a maximum of three (3) minutes. The Board may limit the public input on any item, based on the number of people requesting to speak and the business of the Board. Please step up to the podium when the Chair calls your name and begin speaking immediately. Pull the microphone to your mouth so that the Board, audience, and audio recording system hear you clearly. Once you start speaking, the "green" podium light will light. The "yellow" light will come on when you have one (1) minute remaining. When you have 30 seconds remaining, the "yellow" light will begin flash, indicating you must quickly wrap up your comments. Your time is up when the "red" light flashes. The Chair adheres to a strict three (3) minutes per speaker. **Note: If you intend to give your time to a "Group/Organized Presentation", please state so clearly at the very bottom of the reverse side of this form.**

Group/Organized Presentations:

Group/organized presentations with more than one (1) speaker will be limited to nine (9) minutes at the Chair's discretion. The organizer of the presentation will automatically receive the first three (3) minutes, with the remaining six (6) minutes relinquished by other speakers, as requested by them on a completed "Request to Speak" form, and clearly indicated at the front bottom of the form.

Addressing the Board & Acknowledgement by Chair:

The Chair will determine what order the speakers will address the Board and will call on all speakers in pairs. The first speaker should immediately step to the podium and begin addressing the Board. The second speaker should take up a position in one of the chamber aisles to quickly step up to the podium after the preceding speaker. This is to afford an efficient and timely Board meeting, giving all attendees the opportunity to make their case. Speakers are prohibited from making personal attacks, and/or using coarse, crude, profane or vulgar language while speaking to the Board members, staff, the public and/or meeting participants. Such behavior, at the discretion of the Board Chair may result in removal from the Board Chambers by Sheriff Deputies.