

18 November 2019

Our Reference: IR-01-19-28946

Amy Ferguson
fyi-request-11508-21b68cd9@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Amy

I am writing in response to your Official Information Act 1982 request of 22 October 2019 where you requested information regarding the number of drones New Zealand Police possess and what they are used for.

What is the number of drones being used for any purpose by the NZ Police and what is their purpose?

As at 5 November 2019, New Zealand Police is in possession of 21 Remotely Piloted Aircraft systems (RPAS – commonly referred to as drones).

New Zealand Police is currently undergoing certification training and once this is completed, a proof of concept is planned for utilisation of the RPAS for purposes such as:

Crime scene photography: use of RPAS including the ability to map and photograph a crime scene without disturbing evidence. This would also be of value at serious crime scenes, such as a homicide, where an aerial reconnaissance could be used to inform an appreciation.

Crash scene reconstruction and mapping: use of an RPAS in a serious crash scene would allow the scene to be photo-surveyed accurately and considerably quicker than current methods. This would reduce the length of road closures and scene examinations.

Search and rescue: use of RPAS for locating missing persons or searching for deceased people.

Tactical situations: use of RPAS for incidents such as armed offender incidents; both for pre-planned operations where images could be obtained for planning purposes, or in support of operations where real-time, urgent deployment is required to assist with surveillance of a location to improve tactical decision making and minimise risk to staff and members of the public.

Reconnaissance: Use of RPAS to identify criminal activity, such as for the cultivation of cannabis in rural areas, either with the consent of landowners or with a search warrant.

Police National Headquarters

180 Molesworth Street. PO Box 3017, Wellington 6140, New Zealand.
Telephone: 04 474 9499. Fax: 04 498 7400. www.police.govt.nz

Other uses of RPAS by Police include surveillance, disaster response and management, and provision of an aerial observation platform during criminal offending.

Yours sincerely



Superintendent Andrew Sissons
National Manager: Response and Operations

