
APPENDIX D – UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEM (UAS) RESPONSE PLAN

Salina Regional Airport (SLN) UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEM (UAS) RESPONSE PLAN

BACKGROUND: The potential safety hazards and security threats presented by errant or malicious UAS activity in the National Airspace System (NAS) and the evolving tactics used by hostile actors are provoking a growing number of efforts by public and private sector entities to address these risks. The potential for UAS activity to interfere with or halt operations at an airport is a known threat, demonstrated by disruptions to operations at Gatwick Airport in the United Kingdom (December 2018) and Newark Liberty International Airport (January 2019).

PURPOSE: This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) provides guidelines in the event an Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) enters the air space around Salina Regional Airport (SLN) without authorization.

RESPONSIBILITY: By federal regulation, all unmanned aerial systems (UAS)/Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV), also referred to in this SOP as drones, flight activity is prohibited within five (5) miles of SLN unless the operator has received express authorization of flight from the FAA ATCT or possesses a Certificate of Authorization exemption. Airport personnel will respond and follow the FAA suggested response “D-R-O-N-E” protocols, notify supporting agencies, initiate lawful procedures to neutralize the threat, take appropriate enforcement action, and file a report of findings. The Example Aviation Department and other local law enforcement agencies shall initiate all mitigating procedures allowed under law to neutralize threats to public health, welfare, and safety caused by drones over or near SLN, and shall immediately contact the appropriate federal regulatory agencies when appropriate.

- D – Detect the drone
- R – Report and submit the report to the FAA
- O – Observe the drone, its position of roadways and people, maintain visibility
- N – Notice features fixed wing or multi rotor, size, shape, color, special equipment it is carrying, flight activity, FAA Registration # (ALL drones are required to have a FAA registration #)
- E – Execute appropriate action

PROCEDURES:

SLN Airport Operations (OPS) will determine if the reported/spotted UAS has authorization to operate by first calling SLN Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT). The controller in charge (CIC) will look in the tower’s UAS authorization binder and review approved UAS operations. If the spotted UAS has authorization, no further action is required. Standard operating procedures for responding to unauthorized UAS activity at or near SLN considers protocols according to threat level presented. These threat levels are defined as Low – Medium – High as follows

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LOW

Report or observation of UAS operating near the airport with no disruption to operations. Low impact UAS events are categorized as those where UAS have been observed or reported, but are no longer active, pose a nominal hazard to the airport and airspace, present no indication of intentional harm, or are unlikely to cause disruption to airport or air traffic operations.

Required actions:

- If initial ATC call determines the UAS is unauthorized, SLN will notify Airport Communications Center (ACC) of the threat level with any known details and request appropriate Law Enforcement Officials (LEO) response.
- Search for UAS and maintain visual contact, and/or last known position. If reported by a citizen, then attempt to contact the citizen observer. If UAS operator is observed, maintain visual contact until law enforcement arrival. Non-law enforcement personnel must not attempt to forcefully detain suspected UAS operator.
- Monitor for change in threat level (upgrade to Medium or High or dismiss police response).
- This level shall be documented by Airport Operations.
- Operations will determine when it is all clear and report this to ATC and ACC.

Examples:

- UAS confirmed, but no longer active. A drone was identified near airport property, usually through a citizen report or visual observation, but the drone is no longer active.
- UAS confirmed and active. A drone has been identified near airport property, is still active, but poses no threats or potential safety issues to airport or airspace operations.
- UAS reported operating without authorization on airport or adjacent to airport property (up to five miles), but not exhibiting threatening behavior.

Response Type:

- Monitor, report, and document in Operation's Log.

MEDIUM

Report of unauthorized UAS operating on or near the airport, with the potential to cause disruption to operations. Medium impact UAS events are categorized as those that occur in visible proximity of SLN that pose a moderate safety risk to airport, air carrier flight paths, or airspace operations, present no indication of intentional harm or malicious intent, but has potential to disrupt airport, air carrier flight path, or airspace operations due to proximity, type of UAS operation, or direction of the UAS flight path.

Required actions:

- If initial ATC call determines the UAS is unauthorized, SLN will inform ATC of location, direction of flight, threat-level, size, and airport point-of-contact. ATC notification at this point is for awareness, not necessarily requiring ATC action.
- Immediately notify ACC of the threat level and details collected and request appropriate LEO response.
- Search for UAS and maintain visual contact, and/or last known position until. If reported by a citizen, then attempt to contact the citizen observer. If UAS operator is observed, maintain visual contact until law enforcement arrival. Non-law enforcement personnel must not attempt to forcefully detain suspected UAS operator.
- Maintain communications with ATC until situation resolved by Airport Operations.
- Monitor for change in threat level (upgrade to High or dismiss police response). This level shall be documented by a Salina Police CRN number.
- Operations will determine when it is all clear and report this to ATC and ACC.

Examples:

- Operating on land or in airspace that does, or may, present a significant safety conflict, such as in the path of aircraft taking off or on approach for landing.
- Observations of a UAS in an area of potential safety concern such as terminals, ARFF building, fueling areas, at airport perimeter areas, or is persistent beyond the 20-30-minute battery life of the average UAS.
- Observation of one or multiple UAS on the air operations area (AOA), or airspace overlying the AOA, or in the immediate vicinity.
- Off airport property, especially when UAS is conflicting with the airspace for arriving or departing aircraft.
- One or multiple UAS operating near the airport and exhibiting persistent hovering within the airspace for arriving and departing aircraft.

Response Type:

- Report, document, and immediately dispatch resources to track the UAS and locate the operator. Determine need to escalate threat level to High.

HIGH

Persistent unauthorized UAS operating on or near the airport, with the apparent intention to cause disruption to operations or intentional harm. High threat level UAS events are categorized as those that occur within the airport's AOA (runways, taxiways, and safety areas) environment, pose a substantial safety risk to airport, flight paths for air carriers, airspace operations, or present indication of intentional harm or intentional disruptions to airport, flight paths for air carriers, or airspace operations.

Required actions:

- Immediately notify ATC of location, direction of flight, threat-level, size, and airport point-of-contact.
- Coordinate with ATC the immediate closure of any affected movement areas. This action may require the temporary closure of one or all runways by OPS and diversion of air traffic by ATC.
- Immediately notify ACC of the threat level and details collected and request appropriate LEO response.
- ACC should immediately notify Salina Police Department and/or Saline County Sheriff's Department.
- Notify Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Regional Operations Center (ROC).
- ACC to notify local office Transportation Security Administration.
- ACC to notify local office Federal Bureau of Investigation.
- Search for UAS and maintain visual contact, and/or last known position until the arrival of a law enforcement officer. If reported by a citizen, then attempt to contact the citizen observer. If UAS operator is observed, maintain visual contact until law enforcement arrival. Non-law enforcement personnel must not attempt to forcefully detain suspected UAS operator.
- Remain on scene as ATC point of contact until situation downgrades or resolves.
- Monitor for change in threat level.
- Perform safety inspections before opening any previously closed movement areas.
- This level will be documented with the appropriate law enforcement agency report.
- Operations will determine when it is all clear and report this to ATC and ACC.

Examples:

- Overtly threatening behavior, such as hovering above a runway or drone(s) attempting to come into physical contact with aircraft on the ground or in flight.
- Threatening behavior towards ATCT tower, ARFF building, terminals, fuel farms, hangars, or any other critical building.
- Knowledge of a weaponized drone on or in the immediate vicinity of airport property.
- A swarm of drones observed operating on or near the airport.
- Attack by a drone on the airport or adjacent community.

Response Type:

- Report, document, and immediately dispatch resources to track the UAS, and locate the operator. If possible, initiate lawful procedures to neutralize the threat. Request federal response.

INVESTIGATION, REPORTING, AND ENFORCEMENT GUIDANCE for OPS and LEO:

Photograph the drone, equipment, operator, drone registration number. Obtain operator information, including Part 107 drone pilot's license information if possessed, pilot's contact information and physical address, name/information of any witnesses or persons providing accessory support to the drone operation.

1. Detect, locate, and if necessary, lawfully detain the operator, persons providing accessory support to the drone operation, the drone, and wireless control operating device controlling the drone.
2. Determine if operator possesses a Part 107 drone pilot's license.
3. Determine if operator possesses and can produce any Certificate of Flight Exemption or authorization to fly in the airspace, over people, or after dusk. Obtain photos of the exemption authorizations, drone registration number, and operator information. Officer may clear with no further action
4. Law enforcement agency to take evidentiary custody of drone and wireless control operating device controlling the drone.
5. Issue citation, notice-to-appear, or arrest if applicable and appropriate. See **Law Enforcement Jurisdictional Authority** below.

LAW ENFORCEMENT JURISDICTIONAL AUTHORITY:

1. *The Preventing Emerging Threats Act of 2018* provides authority for the DHS and DOJ to protect certain critical facilities and assets when there is a national security risk to public safety posed by a UAS. Neutralizing these threats does not require a warrant or judicial review, and could include physically disabling a drone, intercepting communications, or seizure. The Department of Defense, and agencies within the DHS and DOJ are the only agencies vested with the authority to deploy destructive or disabling countermeasures against airborne threats.
2. The FAA does not authorize the use of UAS countermeasure systems by non-federal authorities. Local governments, including airports and law enforcement agencies, are not permitted to deploy electronic countermeasures or other destructive or disabling means to foil nefarious drone operations. UAS are considered "aircraft," and the FAA holds preemptive authority over the national airspace system, and regulation and enforcement authority over airmen and aircraft. The FAA, however, is a federal regulatory agency without "police power," and authorized only to issue civil penalties and/or suspend or revoke license privileges.
3. Local Law Enforcement Agencies have the authority to enforce laws and ordinances that may have the effect of neutralizing malicious and nefarious drone threats. These may include, but are not limited to:
 - Criminal trespass
 - Reckless endangerment
 - Criminal mischief
 - Interference with law enforcement
 - Voyeurism and peeping
 - Failure to comply with a police officer