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## RECOGNITION OF OUTSTANDING DRONE PROGRAM

**Name of Department/Agency:** Lincolnshire Police

**Your Full Name:** Inspector Edward Delderfield

**Your Email Address:** Edward.delderfield@lincs.pnn.police.uk

**How long program in operation?** August 2017

**How many aircraft in program?** 5

**What types of aircraft in fleet?** DJI Inspire 1v2, Mavic Pro / Mavic 2, Phantom 4 Pro.

**How many remote pilots in program?** 16

**Do you operate with COA, Part 107 or both?** UK Civil Aviation Authority regulations governed under the Air Navigation Order 2016.

**How has your drone program been innovative for your department?**

We are a rural County with 2500 sq miles of mostly farm land. We have approximately 1000 officers and as such are spread thinly. Our nearest Police helicopter is 60 miles away and nearest fixed wing police asset is 40 miles. This has transformed our ability to search for vulnerable people and suspect. We are now able to clear far larger areas. In addition we have been able to follow up on intelligence reports for cannabis production using the thermal imaging. Using that footage to obtain search warrants, criminals have been jailed and communities are safer.

**How has your drone program enhanced safety for your department?**

With thermal search capability checking rural areas at night which are uneven for suspects and missing people has been game changing. Often preventing officers having to walk on foot in these environments has no doubt prevented injury. Furthermore we have been able to check and search rooftops for discarded evidence and for criminals without the need to commit personnel.

**How has your drone program improved operational effectiveness?**

As above with the intelligence reports. Without the drone footage warrants would not have been obtained and the criminals would have got away. In addition the suspects that have been found even when K9 units have lost a scent has revolutionized policing in the County. The ability to search large open rural spaces and clear those areas increased the operational effectiveness when searching at night for suspects and missing people. I use the term force multiplier

**as a drone officer can do the work of several dozen officers searching with torches in a fraction of the time. It is easily possible to clear multi acre fields in minutes.**

**If you have news stories of success of your program or missions, please provide links to stories (More than one link is OK):**

Topic: Life Saving

Circumstances:

In February 2018 officers responded, with colleagues from Fire and Rescue to a report of a single vehicle traffic collision where the car involved had rolled into a field in the middle of the night. The location was isolated and the temperature was -2. When first responders arrived there was no one with the vehicle Information from a witness said they saw someone from the car walking down the road away from the crash site.

Actions

Police officers searched the area immediately around the crash site with torches and were supported by Fire and Rescue officers with handheld thermal cameras. The search included a 6' deep ditch running along the road from the crash site in the direction the witness had seen the person walking. No person was found.

The Sergeant at the scene called for the on duty drone operator who attended. On taking flight the thermally equipped aircraft saw a faint person shaped heat source in the 6' deep ditch that had been already checked. Officers were directed to the source and despite being directly over it couldn't see anyone or anything. Officers climbed down into the ditch and discovered the driver of the vehicle unconscious, hypothermic and soaking wet as the ditch was half filled with water.

Result:

The male was rushed to hospital where he made a full recovery and if he had not been found he would have died.

Topic: Intelligence gathering

Circumstances:

The East Divisional Intelligence unit had information that a person of interest was growing cannabis on a large scale at a remote farm house near the coast at Chapel St Leonards in November 2017. The intelligence was low grade but supported by a previous conviction the owner/occupier had for a like offence at the same location. The property was surrounded by large trees, fencing, gates and hedgerows and so reconnaissance on foot was impossible.

Actions:

One of our thermally equipped drones completed a fly past of the property and discovered a large obvious heat bloom coming from the roof of the and several upstairs rooms. The flight took only minutes but the resulting footage was used in Magistrates Court to obtain a search warrant.

Result:

Officers found up to £50,000 worth of drugs and the occupier was jailed for a total of 3 years.