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Hon. P. Lesufi
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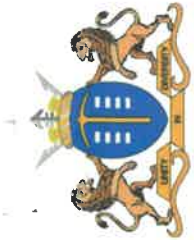
Dear Hon. Premier,

RE: DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SAFETY RESPONSE ON DRONE OPERATIONS QUESTIONS.

Please find herewith attached Department of Community Safety response to Community Safety Portfolio Committee questions on drone operations.

Sincerely

Ms. Nontsikelelo Sisulu
Head of Department
Department of Community Safety
Date: 03/10/2024



**GAUTENG PROVINCE
COMMUNITY SAFETY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR RESPONSES TO THE BELOW COMMUNITY SAFETY PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE QUESTIONS

QUESTION	RESPONSE
1. How many drones have been procured by the department thus far, and when were they procured?	The Department of Community Safety (DCS) procured thirty-three (33) drones in the 2023/24 financial year.
2. How many of these drones are registered with the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA), and how many are currently operational?	One (01) drone was registered with the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA). As an interim measure, during the 2023/24 financial year, DCS appointed a service provider with Recognition of Compliance licence (ROC) to fly the drones as part of crime prevention operations. A total of ten (10) of the thirty-three (33) drones were used through this contract. The contract expired at the end of May 2024. The process to obtain accreditation to fly drones is underway.
3. What is the department's drone fleet strategy? Considering the phasing out of certain drone models like those from DJI.	The model (DJI Matrice 350 model) that DCS procured is still supported by the manufacture and in additional it will be supported by the service provider. The Department's planned drone fleet strategy includes the following: a) Develop a phased replacement plan. b) Negotiate a buy-back plan with the manufacturer/service provider.

	<p>c) Access their compatibility with existing infrastructure.</p> <p>d) Upgrade and prioritise essential features.</p>
<p>4. The status of UAS operator certificate, include which department it falls under.</p>	<p>The Recognition of Compliance (ROC) application process is currently underway and as per the attached project status report (<i>annexure A</i>), DCS is working on finalizing phase 3 of the plan.</p>
<p>5. How the department plans to utilize the registered drones, given the department's lack of industry experience and current operational scope?</p>	<p>Thus far, DCS trained twenty-two (22) officials as Drone operators. In addition, the Department is in a process of appointing a service provider to offer experiential training on flying drones. The experiential ongoing training covers full scale operations which include pre-flight planning, post-flight, risk assessment, controlled airspace operations site allocation, flight documentation.</p>
<p>6. A summary of any accidents or incidents to date, including the number, details and the third-party liability coverage in place of these events.</p>	<p>To date only one (01) incident occurred, a drone crashed whilst operating with the service provider's license. The department is set to acquire third party insurance as the final requirement for obtaining ROC if exemption is not granted.</p>

