



# MEDIA RELEASE

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SANTA CRUZ COUNTY  
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## Media Release: February 12, 2020 Unmanned Aerial System Annual Report

In January 2019 the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office launched the Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Team. This is the first of its kind in Santa Cruz County and was formed to take advantage of the new advanced technology of unmanned aerial systems available to public safety today. As part of our commitment to the community we are releasing this annual report regarding the usage of the UAS.

It's been proven to be a very valuable tool, not only benefiting law enforcement, but enhancing public safety across the county.

The UAS Team consists of 14 members of the Sheriff's Office who applied for this auxiliary position. 11 of them are certified under Code of Federal Regulations Title 14 part 107 to fly drones in a commercial capacity and three are in the process of getting their licenses. The team trains on a monthly basis on coordinating multiple drone deployments, critical incident response, use of visual observers and updates.

In 2019 the UAS was deployed 21 times. Those deployments included search and rescue operations, suspect searches, crime scene documentation, high risk incidents involving firearms and search warrants.

The Sheriff's Office worked with the community for months to create a policy that addressed any concerns citizens had before the launch of the UAS. There have been other requests for use of the drone that were denied because it would be outside of that policy our agency worked so hard to create.

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