# BUSINESSAFE

*BusinesSafe is designed to aid businesses in protecting the safety and well-being of Florida's residents and visitors from threats. BusinesSafe provides private sector partners with open source information, analysis and resources to help protect their businesses and communities.*

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## BusinesSafe Threat Topic: Drones

Commercial unmanned aircraft systems, commonly referred to as drones, are used in many industries and perform a variety of tasks including deliveries, photography, rescue operations, etc. In recent years, commercial drones have increased in popularity amongst both hobbyists and businesses. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has projected that 450,000 drones will be operating in domestic airspace by 2022.

Drones are relatively easy to acquire and operate, can carry small loads, and can be difficult to detect and intercept. Some individuals may take advantage of the stealth-like characteristics of drones for nefarious purposes. In these instances, drones can interfere in business operations and threaten public safety. The following instances highlight the disruption that can be caused by drones when used for nefarious purposes.

- In January 2019, flights operations were stopped for roughly 90 minutes at Newark Liberty International Airport in New Jersey after reports of drone activity at nearby Teterboro Airport. This incident caused more than 40 flights to be held while flights attempting to land resorted to circling the airport until the area was determined safe to operate in. This event followed similar incidents beginning in December 2018 in which all flights in and out of Gatwick Airport in London, England were stopped after drones were seen illegally flying near the airfield. Several flights were grounded impacting thousands of travelers just days into the holiday season.
  Newark Airport Drone Disruption Could Be the Way of the Future
  Police Hunt Drone Pilots in Unprecedented Gatwick Airport Disruption

- In December 2018, a mother and daughter in Indiantown, Florida attempted to transport tobacco and cell phones into a state prison by flying a drone, purchased on Ebay, over the prison's roof. Both women were arrested after prison staff saw the drone hovering above the prison facility.
  Florida Mom, Daughter Used Drone to Deliver Contraband on Prison Roof, Deputies Say

- In May 2018, an FBI hostage rescue operation was interrupted when a swarm of drones controlled by a group of individuals began conducting surveillance of the operation. The drones made "high-speed low passes at the agents" risking the security of the operation.
  'Drone Swarm' Used by Criminals to Disrupt an FBI Hostage Rescue Operation

The Federal Aviation Administration has exclusive authority in regulating aviation safety including the regulation and operation of commercial and recreational drones weighing over 0.5 pounds. The following link provides information on the B4UFLY Mobile App with tips for safe drone operation.
FAA B4UFLY Smartphone App

According to Florida Statutes, drones are not to be operated over or make contact with critical infrastructure facilities as defined by statute. Drones are also not permitted within a specified distance of critical infrastructure to prevent interference with infrastructure facility operations. Some facilities are protected from drone activity through geofencing which is a type of technology that prevents most commercial drones from operating in the airspace around protected areas by stopping drones midflight once they pass an established boundary.
The following link provides information from the Florida Department of Transportation on regulations for drone operation.
FDOT UAS Regulations Brochure (PDF)

Learn more about suspicious activity related to drones by using the link below.
FDLE Suspicious Activity Indicators Related to Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) / Drones

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