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Renton Police Use Cutting Edge Technology

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For more information contact:

Commander Chad Karlewicz, 525-430-7640

Commander David Leibman, Public Information Officer, 425-430-7573

First in Region to Make the Switch

Renton, Washington – The Renton Police department has adopted the use of new high-tech “photogrammetry” software to survey crash and crime scenes.

The change will enable investigators to process crime scenes much more quickly and accurately than ever before.

For many years, most police agencies have used hand held surveyor equipment to map out crime and accident scenes. This process took several officers several hours to complete. Once the data was collected, it took several more hours of work to turn the data into a diagram that could be used by investigators.

Photogrammetry uses aerial based digital photographs instead. These photographs are analyzed using sophisticated software which quickly creates a 3D cloud map that is millions of times more detailed than the diagrams produced with the old technology. The end result is a more accurate and much more detailed virtual recreation of the scene that investigators can utilize anytime they want.

To accommodate the aerial based digital photography required for this technology, the Renton Police Department received authorization from the FAA to use two unmanned aerial vehicles, (UAV's) each equipped with different photography equipment.

The new technology is not just about assisting the investigators.

According to Commander Chad Karlewicz, “The real benefit is to the public we serve. One of the biggest advantages of the new system is our ability to arrive on a scene, deploy our UAV, and in minutes, have the results we need. Before, roads would’ve been closed for hours while we did our work.”

Karlewicz added, “We are sensitive about the public’s perception that part of the new system uses UAV’s. But our policy only lets us use it for taking video/photographs for investigative support (traffic collisions, homicide, etc,) hazmat response, search and rescue, barricaded persons, disaster response (flood, earthquakes, etc.) and tactical support. The policy specifically does not allow the vehicles to be used for “random surveillance activities”.

Please see the [attached white paper](#) for more information on this new technology.

