



Roxana Kennedy
Chief of Police

CHULA VISTA POLICE DEPARTMENT

315 Fourth Avenue, MS P-200
Chula Vista, California 91910-3801

POLICE MEDIA ADVISORY

Date: 04/16/2020
To: San Diego Media
From: Chula Vista Police Department
Contact: Captain Vern Sallee
Phone: 619-691-5218
Subject: **CVPD Homeless Outreach Efforts Using Speaker Equipped Drones**

Message: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

On April 15, 2020, CVPD's Homeless Outreach Team (H.O.T.) partnered with CVPD's Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS or Drone) team in a first of its kind outreach effort to the City's homeless community.

Since Governor Newsom's emergency declaration, CVPD's H.O.T. team has coordinated with local social service agencies and the County of San Diego to increase outreach and expand services to members of Chula Vista's homeless community. CVPD's H.O.T. team provides face to face service and support to homeless clients whenever possible and has enjoyed tremendous success in serving a vulnerable community.

While the H.O.T. team is generally able to reach most of the City's homeless population, there are some pockets of the homeless community that present a unique challenge to serve. Chula Vista has dozens of square miles of urban canyons that have difficult terrain and dense foliage. While CVPD officers often go into these environments on foot to reach people, it is a time consuming, arduous and oftentimes dangerous endeavor. Moreover, it is even more of a challenge for social service providers to accompany CVPD staff on these outreach efforts.

In order to reach more people, CVPD's H.O.T. team partnered with its drone team to use a speaker equipped drone to enhance the H.O.T. team's ability to reach more people in a shorter amount of time. CVPD personnel staged services near common exits to canyons with known homeless encampments and used a speaker equipped drone to communicate public health messages in English and Spanish. The messages broadcast health information and offered services to the homeless community along with directions to the staging area.

Homeless persons were given direction that they could voluntarily come to the staging area for services. Services offered at the staging area included food, a personal hygiene kit, face masks, medical screening by a County nurse and information about how to protect themselves against the virus. They were also given information about shelter options and other services should they wish to

Prepared By: Lieutenant Peak
Copies Sent To: Media Contact List

Approved By: Captain Collum
Date/Time: 04/10/20 12:00 PM

accept them. This was a public health outreach mission and not an enforcement operation and no homeless persons were displaced or forced to move.

Statistics:

- **Square miles covered by speaker equipped drone: 8**
- **Encampments reached and offered services via speaker: 26**
- **Persons seen and offered services via speaker: 16**
- **Persons who voluntarily accepted services: 3**
- **Time to provide outreach and service with drone assistance: 3 hours**
- **Time to provide same outreach service without drone support: 2 days**

Chief Roxana Kennedy noted, ***“I am proud to see two of our most innovative programs, the H.O.T. team and our drone team, combine to serve one of our most vulnerable populations.”*** She also noted, ***“It is difficult enough to be homeless in the best of times, but during this crisis I can imagine it must be terrifying to those without resources. I’m pleased that our officers and our County and social service partners were able to use this technology in a sensitive and humane way to reach and serve people in need.”***

CVPD staff are assessing other appropriate sites for future combined missions to better serve our community.

More information about CVPD’s drone program can be found at:

<https://www.chulavistaca.gov/departments/police-department/programs/uas-drone-program>

A link to video documenting the combined operation can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=3y5vavvkSpM&feature=youtu.be>

Media may direct all inquiries to Captain Vern Sallee at (619) 691-5218 or vsallee@chulavistapd.org.