



City of Westminster

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December 12, 2017

The Honorable Charles Margines,
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

**RE: Response of the City of Westminster to Orange County Grand Jury
2015-2016 Report, titled "Drones: Know Before You Fly"**

TRI TA
Mayor

TYLER DIEP
Vice Mayor

SERGIO CONTRERAS
Council Member

KIMBERLY HO
Council Member

MARGIE L. RICE
Council Member

EDDIE MANFRO
City Manager

Dear Judge Margines:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the report issued by the Orange County Grand Jury entitled "Drones: Know Before You Fly." As required by Penal Code & 933 and 933.05, please consider this letter as my response to the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations.

Grand Jury Findings and Recommendations

Findings

F.1. Recreational drones have greatly increased in number since December 2015 and it is probable their unregulated use will pose significant threats to public safety and privacy in Orange County cities and unincorporated areas.

The City agrees with the finding.

F.2. With the exception of the recent Federal Aviation Administration registration rule, recreational drone owners are largely self-policed, which leads to a wide range of behavior.

The City agrees with the finding.

F.3. Most of the cities and unincorporated areas of the County of Orange do not have a drone ordinance, nor do they have any immediate plans to enact an ordinance in the near future.

The City does not disagree with this finding; however, the Department cannot speak towards the ordinances for cities other than for this City. The City of Westminster has entertained the idea of enacting an Ordinance in the near future.

F.4. Most of the cities provide no educational programs for public awareness of the safety issues connected to recreational drones.

The City agrees with this findings, but cannot comment on the Ordinances for cities other than for this City. The City does not currently provide educational programs for public awareness of the safety issues connected to recreational drones, but plans on providing updated educational awareness on the City website in the near future.

F.5. Some Orange County cities, despite recognizing potential issues with drones, are awaiting drone-related legislation action or other guidance by the State of California or FAA before enacting local ordinances.

The City agrees with the finding.

F.6. The FAA-required registration of recreational drones provides a useful tool for local enforcement of drone ordinances.

The City agrees with the finding.

F.7. Orange County cities have not established a procedure for reporting drone incidents, which results in under-reporting of drone safety and privacy events.

The City cannot speak towards other Orange County cities reporting procedures, which could result in under-reporting of drone safety and privacy events. The Police Department monitors and responds to complaints by citizens regarding recreational drone usage.

Recommendations:

Recommendation #1: "Each City Council should direct its City Attorney to provide a report to the city's police department and City Council on existing laws that can be applied to the use of recreational drones in the city's jurisdiction by December 30, 2016."

The recommendation has not been implemented, but will be considered in the near future.

Recommendation #2: "Each City should adopt recreational drone ownership and operation ordinance, with regulations similar to those found in Los Angeles City ordinance #183912, by May 31, 2018, to the extent not preempted or superseded by Federal law or Federal regulations."

The recommendation has not been implemented, but will be considered in the near future. The Westminster Police Department City Attorney's Office will work with the police department on drafting an ordinance based on existing laws.

Recommendation #3: "Each City should inform its citizens about laws and ordinances that apply to recreational drone operators through print media, city-related web sites, social media sites and/or public forums by May 31, 2017.

The recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented in the near future utilizing print media, city related web sites, social media, and public forums.

Recommendation #4: "Each City should establish and publish on its website a point of contact for drone related citizen complaints by December 30, 2016.

The recommendation will not be implemented. The City believes the current method to receive drone related complaints is adequate.

Recommendation #5: "Each City should post FAA drone ownership and operation educational links on city-related websites, newsletters, and flyers by December 30, 2016.

The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. Along with the consideration by the City Council of a forthcoming drone ordinance, the City will have information readily accessible on its website regarding drone related guidelines, education, and federal regulations.

Recommendation #9: "The County and each City should formally gather data on recreational drone incidents within their jurisdictions and review these data annually and report the results publicly. The first analysis and publication should occur within 1 year of the publication of this report.

This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. The City maintains open and efficient procedures in response to requests for data by the public. Any inquiry related to recreational drone incidents would be provided under normal course and scope of business.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "TRI TA". The letters are cursive and somewhat stylized.

Tri Ta
Mayor of Westminster