NHP first state agency approved to fly drones

By Raven Jackson, Las Vegas Review-Journal

The Nevada Highway Patrol announced Friday that it is the first law enforcement agency in the state to fly small unmanned aerial vehicles – commonly known as drones – after gaining approval by the Federal Aviation Administration.

The patrol has begun using small UAVs weighing less than 55 pounds after fulfilling federal, state and local requirements, including education and training, to safely, securely and legally fly the aircraft, Trooper Daniel Marek said at a news conference in Las Vegas.

The UAVs can capture images using a 13-megapixel camera while flying at elevations of between 50 and 400 feet, he said. Marek said the agency refers to the aircraft as UAVs because the public tends to think of drones as weapons, such as the missile-equipped Predators the Air Force and CIA use overseas.

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