

Drone Detection Technology at Miami International Airport

Article By:

Kathryn M. Rattigan

The Miami International Airport (MIA) was selected by the U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) this week as a test site for new drone detection technology. The new technology includes detect, track, and identify (DTI) equipment which will be used to identify unauthorized drones that enter restricted airspace. The airport was chosen as a test site for this technology in part because there is already a “perimeter protection pilot” program being tested there. The TSA said that the perimeter protection system and DTI technology are designed to protect the airport from both ground and aerial intrusion.

The perimeter protection system includes thermal sensors, 360-degree cameras, and infrared illuminators, while the DTI equipment allows the airport to gather information about the height, altitude, direction, speed, type, and operator of any unidentified crafts. Captain Jim Bamberger, TSA’s Counter-UAS Capability Manager, said that the focus of the DTI equipment will be to identify “non-compliant [drone] operator[s], the criminal operator, or the careless operator” so as to prevent these types of operators from unauthorized entry. It is anticipated that the DTI equipment will be updated every two to three months to accommodate changing technology and threats.

All of the information gathered by this DTI equipment will be available to airport authorities via a tablet system. The hope is that technology like this being tested at MIA can be used to benefit and protect airports across the country.

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National Law Review, Volume XI, Number 217

Source URL: <https://natlawreview.com/article/drone-detection-technology-miami-international-airport>