

THE FILES FROM THE ORIGIN POINT

The information below is related to The Origin Point: A Future Tech Cyber Novella, the prequel to [the Life Online Files book series](#) by Case Lane. This document covers one issue discussed in the novella.

Below is the redacted summary for the Law Enforcement File.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

No License to Kill: Civilian law enforcement protocols for armed drones

THE ISSUE: *Law enforcement drones equipped with cameras and sensors are used to patrol urban areas. All are weaponized, programmed with automatic disarmament protocols, and the ability to shoot-to-kill. Civil liberties groups argue that a human must always authorize the machines' capabilities. But police forces want to activate automatic features in certain situations.*

Civilian drones, unmanned aerial vehicles used in non-combat situations, are everywhere. The machines are used to deliver packages, assist emergency rescue, handle manual labor, and gather close up and detailed information for weather, news and the paparazzi. The acceptance of drones as operational tools in many professions is extended to the use of the machines in civilian law enforcement.

For law enforcement, the capabilities are a mirror of the military's use in war. Police officers can use the drones to chase criminals, disarm them, and even shoot them if the situation arises. Prior to several court cases, every police force developed their own rules on the drones' deployment. And despite an acceptable safety record, stricter protocols were implemented.

For example, drones can be flown in any public space provided the machines are trackable, noiseless, broadcast a unique light signature, and are equipped with sensors to detect humans, birds, buildings, trees and other objects. Drones can be any shape or size. For civilian uses, most resemble the purpose such as boxes for deliveries, but law enforcement uses mini-helicopter style vehicles that can curve around corners like an accordion bus.

Police can use drones as extensions of the human force, "flying officers," anywhere a human officer would normally, and legally, go, a drone can go too. However, once the drone expects to engage with a suspect, it must come under manual human control. For example, if the suspect is

wearing a mask, the human operator must have authorization to remotely remove it. If the suspect is brandishing a weapon, the human operator must survey the entire area to ensure the safety of civilians prior to attempting disarmament. And the human officer can activate the drone's weapons only after assessing the situation as if the officer were there live. The operator who fires a weaponized drone is considered to have discharged a service weapon and would be subject to the standard review process.

THE PROBABILITY: Likely that law enforcement drones are already in widespread use but few know where, how or how many.