



Technocrats At Work: Weaponized Police Drones Will Soon Patrol U.S. Streets

Technocrats and your tax money at work: What more efficient way to control society than with weaponized drones and robot policemen? □ TN Editor

The idea of cops sending in drones to Taser suspects may sound far-fetched, but police in the U.S. are reportedly already discussing the possibility.

Talks have recently taken place between police officials and Taser International, a company that makes stun guns and body cameras for use by law enforcement, the Wall Street Journal reported on Thursday.

While no decision has yet been made on whether to strap stun guns to remotely controlled quadcopters, Taser spokesman Steve Tuttle said his team were discussing the idea with officials as part of broader talks about “various future concepts.”

Tuttle told the Journal that such technology could be deployed in “high-risk scenarios such as terrorist barricades” to incapacitate the suspect rather than kill them outright.

An indication of police willingness to explore high-tech solutions for challenging situations came in July when Dallas cops killed a violent suspect with a bomb delivered by a robot. In a similar situation, a Taser-equipped drone could enable law enforcement to incapacitate a suspect at a safe distance before moving in to make an arrest.

However, critics are likely to fear that such a plan would ultimately lead to the police loading up drones with guns and other weapons.

Portland police department's Pete Simpson told the Journal that while a Taser drone could be useful in some circumstances, getting the public "to accept an unmanned vehicle that's got some sort of weapon on it might be a hurdle to overcome."

Simpson added that it's nevertheless useful to discuss how technology can play a role in "improving officer safety, community safety, and suspect safety."

The idea of a Taser-equipped quadcopter is actually nothing new, with at least one company already having built such a contraption. But police have so far only ever deployed stun guns on the ground, manually, and within close proximity of the target.

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