

Kouga Local Municipality launches SA's first drone emergency response programme

Kouga Local Municipality has officially launched the continent's first Drone as a First Responder (DFR) programme

KOUGA, SOUTH AFRICA, March 25, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In a trailblazing leap toward enhancing public safety and disaster management, Kouga Local Municipality has officially launched the continent's first Drone as a First Responder (DFR) programme.

This cutting-edge initiative leverages advanced drone technology to improve situational awareness, secure critical infrastructure, and safeguard the well-being of residents.

This innovation cements Kouga's reputation as a trailblazer in public safety, complementing previous achievements like the panic application with video functionality for residents, body cameras for officers, and the establishment of the Incident Command Centre (ICC).

The drone-led safety initiative sets a new national benchmark for integrating technology into emergency services.

Launched as a pilot project on Monday, 17 March, the programme will operate until mid-May, after which the municipality will have a network of drones across the Kouga region using patented software that can handle emergencies across the municipality 24/7.

This will mark Kouga Local Municipality as the first in Africa to test such an innovative platform



Cape St Francis
Hankey
Humansdorp
Jeffreys Bay
Leribe
Oyster Bay
Patensie
St Francis Bay
Thornhill

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY MUNICIPAL MANAGER
MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION UNIT
MONIQUE BASSON

Postal: PO Box 21, Jeffreys Bay, 6330
Tel: 082 219 9169
Email: mbasson@kouga.gov.za
Website: www.kouga.gov.za

with features such as thermal imaging cameras, live video streaming, and GPS tracking.

State-of-the-art

Equipped with state-of-the-art drones developed by UrSafe Technologies, emergency responders can now gain a real-time view of crises even before personnel arrive on the scene. These drones are designed to bolster emergency operations, from accelerating search-and-rescue missions to combating wildfires and mitigating flood damage.

Kouga Executive Mayor, Hattingh Bornman, emphasised the municipality's leadership in community safety and disaster preparedness.

"This programme builds on Kouga Local Municipality's long-standing dedication to public safety and proactive disaster management," said Bornman. "Previous initiatives, such as our highly regarded Fire and Rescue Services, Disaster Risk Reduction Programme, and Community Safety Partnership, have laid the foundation for this technological advancement.

"With the integration of drones into our emergency response capabilities, we are enhancing existing programmes and setting a new benchmark for how technology can save lives. This step forms part of our continuous effort to provide exceptional services to our community."

UrSafe Technologies Director, Stuart Riddle, emphasised the game-changing role of drones in emergency operations and the DFR's unique capabilities.

"While drones and body cams are not new, the UrSafe initiative stands out by integrating personal safety, law enforcement enhancement, and the ability to deploy drones as first responders under one patented technology umbrella. The DFR-programme envisions a mesh network of drones that can be operated remotely or autonomously, transmitting live imagery to the ICC to enable swift coordination of law enforcement and disaster management efforts.

"In addition, the software will enable drones to assist in search and rescue operations, firefighting coordination, as well as surveillance of municipal infrastructure via autonomously flown surveillance missions as determined by the authorities."

Beyond emergency scenarios, the DFR-programme will also protect vital infrastructure throughout Kouga.

Memorandum of Understanding

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with UrSafe Technologies underscores the municipality's commitment to transparency, privacy, and accountability. Stringent ethical and safety guidelines ensure drone operations respect residents' privacy while maintaining high standards of transparency. A comprehensive privacy policy protects the public before, during, and after drone missions.

The programme represents a pivotal addition to the municipality's broader strategy of modernising emergency services through innovative technology.

"Our vision is to integrate emerging technologies into local government services to enhance the quality of life for our residents," said Bornman. "By adopting drone technology, we are laying the groundwork for the future of emergency response and disaster management."

Todd Smith

The URSAFE APP

info@ursafe.com

Visit us on social media:

[Instagram](#)

[YouTube](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/796643584>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2025 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.