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España

The anti-drone system used by the Interior Ministry to seize drugs and telephones at prisons

Incidents with these drones in prisons have multiplied in the past year. Ángel Luis Ortiz's department is finalizing a plan to neutralize them.



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28/12/2022 03:30

It's called '**EnforceAir**' and it's the counter-drone system that the General Secretariat of Penitentiary Institutions, under the Ministry of [Interior](#), that is being tested in different prisons to neutralize the unmanned aerial vehicles that have been trying, at least for the last two years, to bring prohibited objects inside the facilities. This has become [a booming enterprise](#) whereby prisoners have managed to receive all kinds of illegal goods in prison, including **drugs, cell phones, cash, alcoholic beverages, medicines, and more...**

Penitentiary sources informed this newspaper that the Ángel Luis Ortiz's department has tested this device for a month in the penitentiary center of Málaga I, in Alhaurín de la Torre and, given its success, will expand the use of this system, manufactured by the Israeli company **D-Fend Solutions**, to the prisons of **Ceuta, Melilla and Cádiz**, where drone sightings have also been constant. This measure is part [of a plan finalized by the Prisons](#) to put an end to the small UAVs in Spanish prisons, as indicated by the same sources.

The use of these devices in prisons has doubled compared to last year. According to the latest data from the General Secretariat, as of July this year, 33 drone incidents have been recorded – 30 sighted and 3 impeded – compared to 14 in all of 2021.

Taking cyber control

“We are studying different options for detection, disablement or mitigation of drones. Tests have been carried out in Alhaurín with this system and now they are going to be conducted in other prisons”, explain the Prison officials. Specifically, 'EnforceAir' is designed to [control the threat of drones](#) by means of **a cyber takeover technology**, explain the experts consulted by [THE OBJECTIVE](#).

This autonomous 'anti-drone' system can detect, locate and identify drones with GPS precision, and then take full control of the drone. The EnforceAir system has three deployment options: vehicular —including military and civilian vehicles—, tactical —at high altitude and ground level— and stationary —at high altitude and for long range. In the case of the Malaga prison, the system has been placed on the roof of the main building, as can be seen in the photo that illustrates this article.

The drones, in addition to carrying different types of loads, can also be **“armed or self-destructing”**, experts warn. As such, they can cause serious damage to facilities. Nevertheless, what worries prison officials the most is that they could introduce **weapons**, although no cases have been registered so far. The majority of seizures are of drugs, cell phones and alcohol.



Two bottles of whiskey



The last drone seized by the National Police at the Cádiz prisons | Inside

Without going any further, on November 18, the National Police mitigated the smuggling of [a high-end mobile phone and two mini bottles of whiskey](#), perfectly packaged and attached to a drone, into **the El Puerto de Santa Maria (Cádiz)** prison. A police patrol was watching the perimeter security of these prisons when, in a path near the facilities, it noticed three individuals in a parked vehicle. Upon inspection of the [car](#), they discovered the drone, its controller, three batteries, fishing line with four loops, and the package with the load.

Everything was ready for the drone to take off to deliver these goods into the prison. The three individuals, who had no type of license to fly the drone, are being investigated for infringement of the AESA and Citizen Security Protection regulations. A week earlier, **in the Botafuegos prison**, in Algeciras, another failed attempt was also noted, according to the officials at **ACAIP-UGT** Prison officials intercepted a drone flying over the prison that, upon

losing control, landed on a neighboring terrace. The device carried **hashish, cocaine and two mobile phones**.



Former convicts

The first line of defense against these remote-controlled devices is the **Civil Guard** or the **National Police**, in charge of external surveillance of the prisons. However, if they manage to get past that obstacle, it is the prison officials who monitor the entry of the drones into the prison facilities.

In the Ceuta prison, for example, it is something they have been experiencing practically every day. Penitentiary sources report that, on average, between **30 to 40 drones per day** fly over the prison. In the last year, according to data from Penitentiary Institutions, the Civil Guard has intercepted a total of 22 drones that directly or indirectly targeted this prison alone.

"In many cases, drone entry inside walls is dangerous. For instance, one crashed into the officials' parking lot; another one injured an official and caused bleeding from the propellers which are barely visible and move at high speed... In general, the drones move packages with hashish and medication, but it is also possible that they could also carry weapons and so this *modus operandi* is much more dangerous," warns a prison official from Ceuta, in a conversation with [THE OBJECTIVE](#).

Those sending the goods are usually former convicts, prison sources indicate, who take advantage of the night to fulfill orders and go unnoticed. "Afterwards, they send the drone to a **geopositioned** location with exact coordinates. They always look for the window of a specific prisoner. If we see them, it's from the surveillance window. If not, it's because they've crashed and ended up in the yard", they conclude.

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