



TIBET WATCH · with research support from C4ADS

EYES ABOVE THE PLATEAU

**Drones, DJI, and the Aerial Architecture
of Control in Tibet**

September 2026



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

The places in Tibet where people have protested against a dam, gathered to pray or set out across the Himalaya for exile now have something else in common. Police drones fly over them, and anyone else who wants to fly needs the state's permission.

Tibet Watch has traced this build-out through the Chinese state's own paperwork: tenders, award notices, police bulletins, flight bans and training reports published between June 2017 and July 2026.¹ The documents show security agencies buying drones, automated docking stations and counter-drone (counter-UAS) systems at every level, from the region's anti-terror reconnaissance unit down to county police stations. They show pilots being trained for "stability maintenance" (维稳), a political term for suppressing dissent and enforcing compliance with Chinese Communist Party (CCP) policy, and the term under which DJI trained police in East Turkestan (Xinjiang) in 2017. Documents uncovered by Tibet Watch show the air over Lhasa and parts of four other prefecture-level areas closed to all but approved flights in August 2025, and procurement documents naming equipment made by DJI, the Shenzhen company that makes most of the world's civilian drones, including in Britain.² DJI faces major regulatory restrictions and import bans in both the United States and India.³

This report is about who controls the sky over Tibet. The Chinese Party state has given itself the means to watch Tibetans from above, and over the same years has taken that vantage point away from everyone else. Since May 2026 a new civilian drone in China will not take off until it is registered to its owner's identity,⁴ and authorities in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) urge citizens to report "black flights".⁵ The documents do not show a drone flown against a named person or over a particular protest. They show, in the state's own words, where it chose to put its aircraft and surveillance apparatus.

In 2022 Britain ordered Chinese-made surveillance cameras out of sensitive government sites on national security grounds.⁶ Drones made by companies subject to the same Chinese intelligence law were left untouched. The Tibet record did not exist then. It does now.

Key findings

- **Police have bought drones for the places where Tibetans resisted, gathered for religious ceremonies or tried to leave.** Derge (德格) was the site of peaceful protests against the construction of the Kamtok (Gangtuo) dam, set to submerge entire villages and ancient monasteries, in February 2024. Fifteen months later its county police bought four autonomous DJI Dock stations, with fleet control software, for the checkpoint on the Sichuan–TAR road, as part of a ¥4.43 million (£499,000) checkpoint upgrade in which the DJI items came to ¥602,000 (£68,000).⁷ Driru (Chinese: Biru, 比如) in Nagchu (Chinese: Naqu), TAR, where Tibetans have faced tough reprisals and crackdown since peaceful protests of 2013,⁸ has the largest county police fleet in the dataset: 18 aircraft across five models, flying daily patrols.⁹ Kardze prefecture includes Serthar, where demolitions at the major Larung Gar Buddhist institute resumed in July 2026, and Drago, where a monastic school and a large Buddha statue were destroyed in 2021–22.¹⁰ There the prefectural anti-terror SWAT unit bought a rapid 3D modelling system built around a DJI laser-scanning (LiDAR) camera in November 2025,¹¹ and the prefectural police tendered for drones and a command vehicle.¹² In Lhasa, restrictions on Tibetans at the Jokhang and the Barkhor in spring 2021, days before the anniversary of the 10 March Uprising,¹³ were followed within months by a counter-drone system and a 15-aircraft fleet for the district police.¹⁴ On the routes to Nepal, the dataset records a border police drone station at Everest, a dedicated low-altitude policing unit in Tingkye, and an all-DJI platform with the Shigatse border detachment.¹⁵ None of these documents says a drone was bought because of a protest, and protective security for state occasions could explain the Lhasa purchases on its own. The pattern is one of placement, and the state chose the places (Section 10.1).
- **Police drones and airspace controls are also building up in the counties where China is damming Tibet's rivers.** News of the Derge protests reached the outside world because phone footage emerged from Tibet,¹⁶ and the repression that followed was severe: more than 100 Tibetans were detained, two senior monks of Yena monastery were jailed, and one of them, Gonpo Tsering, was tortured in custody and remains critically ill.¹⁷ On the far bank, in Jomda (江达), county police tendered in September 2025 for all-terrain drone reconnaissance and countermeasure equipment: the means to watch, and the means to stop anyone else watching.¹⁸ On the Yarlung Tsangpo, the lower Yarlung Tsangpo hydropower project in Nyingtri, near Medog, officially broke ground on 19 July 2025.¹⁹ Seven months later Nyingtri reported the most developed drone control system in the dataset.²⁰

Upstream in Gyatsa (加查), site of the huge Zangmu dam,²¹ authorities required drone flights to be registered with and reported to local police in July 2025, weeks before the region-wide anniversary controls; it is the only county notice of its kind in the dataset.²²

- **Beijing is running one security playbook across its two most strategically sensitive 'ethnic' regions, the most advanced version yet of a surveillance feedback loop.** The grid policing system that Chen Quanguo built as Party Secretary of the TAR from 2011 was transferred to Xinjiang in 2016, where it became the scaffolding of mass internment.²³ Aerial surveillance is now moving the other way, carrying the same mission language. The TAR police drone course of 2023 trains pilots for patrol, emergency rescue and "stability maintenance" (维稳)²⁴ after DJI trained police in Xinjiang in 2017, also for "stability maintenance and counter-terrorism" purposes.²⁵ Xinjiang public security bodies went on to place seven orders for DJI drones between 2019 and 2022,²⁶ and US sanctions against DJI in 2020 and 2021 rested on the surveillance of Uyghurs.²⁷ Both regions are borderlands that Beijing treats as core to national security, and in both it has made the drone an instrument of state control. The Tibet record differs in one respect: DJI equipment reaches the police there through resellers, not a direct contract. Whether a single institutional pathway links the two programmes is an inference the record does not yet prove.
- **DJI equipment appears in 12 confirmed awards to security and government buyers in Tibetan areas.** The awards run from December 2020 to January 2026, in packages with a combined published value of about ¥24.79 million (about £2.8 million). That figure includes non-DJI equipment bundled in the same packages, and 41 per cent of it is a single ¥10.18 million Lhasa police emergency-equipment award from 2023 whose lot and supplier attribution is still being checked.²⁸ Six awards are inside the TAR. Six are in Tibetan areas of Sichuan and Yunnan, among them a ¥2.07 million Dechen (Diqing) prefectural police package that pairs DJI aircraft with counter-drone equipment²⁹ and the Derge checkpoint upgrade.³⁰ The buyers include the TAR anti-terror special reconnaissance unit;³¹ Chengguan district police, who cover central Lhasa and the Jokhang and bought 15 DJI Inspire 2 aircraft in a single order;³² the Shigatse border detachment on the Nepal frontier;³³ and the People's Armed Police Tibet Corps headquarters,³⁴ alongside fire, forestry, emergency and agencies representing scenic areas for tourism. In every award the equipment comes through a reseller or integrator, four of them registered in the TAR. The record does not show that DJI contracted directly, knew the end use or

authorised each dealer.³⁵ It does show demand for the brand: the TAR Ecology Department issued a request for quotations for a DJI drone by name.³⁶

- **The state has bought the means to deny the air to everyone else.** The second-largest award in the dataset is not for drones but against them: ¥8,631,435 (£973,000) for detection and countermeasure equipment for Lhasa police in July 2021.³⁷ Since then buyers have paired watching with blocking in the same package, from the Ngari SWAT unit³⁸ to Jomda county.³⁹ Enforcement has moved from a ¥500 fine in 2024⁴⁰ to counter-drone vehicles for technical interception.⁴¹ A national standard now ties flight to a registered identity,⁴² and the Ministry of State Security directs the public to its 12339 hotline over “illegal aerial photography”.⁴³ Police aircraft are outside the registration standard, and approved police flights continued through the flight bans.
- **The authorities ran a ‘counter-terror’ drill - in the absence of any insurgency - then closed airspace, at the time of the Dalai Lama’s 90th birthday and his statement on succession.** In June and July 2025, as Tibet Watch documented checkpoints and heightened militarisation in Lhasa around the 6 July birthday and the Dalai Lama’s statement confirming the Dalai Lama institution would continue,⁴⁴ Chengguan SWAT ran a combined “drone plus ground unit” counter-terror drill⁴⁵ and Lhasa SWAT added drone reconnaissance, including indoors, to its summer training.⁴⁶ In August Lhasa and parts of four other prefecture-level areas closed their airspace to all but approved flights, and on 21 August Xi Jinping attended the ceremony in Lhasa marking the 60th anniversary of the founding of the TAR.⁴⁷ Chamdo’s notice, as reproduced online, warned that unauthorised drones would be shot down.⁴⁸ Protective security for a head of state would explain the August closure on its own. What sets Tibet apart is that the closure sat on top of a permanent apparatus that was there before the visit and is there now (Section 10.3).
- **On the Indian border, the military has a say in who flies.** Nyingtri (Chinese: Nyingchi), bordering Arunachal Pradesh, runs a named “low-altitude defence network” (低空防御网) combining radar, AI recognition, electronic fencing, five drone airports and a drone registration module inside the city’s policing data platform. It is overseen by a leading group that includes the military, and it runs a full chain from detection and identification to driving intruders off, investigation and sanction.⁴⁹ No other city-level drone control body in the dataset has military participation. Police in Bayi District report routine drone patrols, and Lulang police have used drones in rescues.⁵⁰ In 2026 the Lhoka border detachment reportedly published procurement notices for drones and permanent drone airfields on the Indian and Bhutanese

approaches.⁵¹ In Ngari, facing Ladakh, a test base above 4,300 metres has unveiled a fixed-wing drone reported to have four and a half hours' endurance,⁵² and the prefecture's SWAT unit drills "drone mountain pursuit".⁵³

- **Police drone operations are routine and counted in thousands.** In one Shigatse district, Samzhubze (Chinese: Sangzhuzi), police report 5,723 duty activities and more than 22,700 km flown since May 2024, from automated nests⁵⁴ fitted with thermal imaging, laser ranging and loudspeakers.⁵⁵ "Crowd flow monitoring at large events" is a standing mission, and in Samzhubze the large events are the festivals at Tashi Lhunpo, seat of the Panchen Lamas, where the CCP seeks to promote their installed Panchen Lama, Gyaltzen Norbu.⁵⁶ The account does not name the manufacturer. The TAR police drone programme began with a single DJI Phantom donated to a county police bureau near Lhasa in 2017;⁵⁷ by 2025 it had an accredited training institution at the Tibet Police College⁵⁸ and a Police Aviation Management Battalion inside Lhasa SWAT.⁵⁹
- **Aerial surveillance joins an already dense technological layer.** The drones sit on top of grid management and "convenience police stations",⁶⁰ camera networks reaching into monasteries, routine phone checks, and mass DNA collection that included children.⁶¹ What drones add is reach. A docking station with a 10–15 km radius, or a fixed-wing drone that stays aloft for more than four hours, can follow herding families on the Changtang and cover the passes to Nepal, where no fixed camera reaches.⁶² The same aircraft find lost yaks⁶³ and missing teenagers,⁶⁴ and those rescues are the public face of the programme.
- **Drone capacity on the plateau is being developed with military and border-security uses explicitly in view.** People's Liberation Army (PLA) Western Theatre Command drones surveyed the Tingri (Chinese: Dingri) earthquake epicentre before ground troops arrived in January 2025.⁶⁵ A plateau drone research centre at Tibet University opened near the Everest approaches in July 2026 with senior military officials in attendance, and state coverage lists border patrol among its purposes.⁶⁶

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

To the UK Government:

- Extend the November 2022 Cabinet Office instruction, which required government departments to cease deploying visual surveillance equipment produced by companies subject to the PRC National Intelligence Law at sensitive sites, to uncrewed aerial systems, and state whether UAVs are within its scope. The instruction did not name manufacturers and did not address drones; the removal of the equipment it covered was reported complete for all originally identified sensitive sites in November 2025.⁶⁷
- Issue guidance to police forces on UAVs manufactured by companies subject to the PRC National Intelligence Law, drawing on the National Protective Security Authority's vendor-neutral, risk-based UAS protective security guidance; and open an assessment of whether DJI meets an exclusion ground under the Procurement Act 2023 (potentially Schedule 7, paragraph 14, national security), following the Act's investigation and debarment procedure. DJI is not on the current published debarment list.⁶⁸
- Once the vendor-related direction power in the Cyber Security and Resilience (Network and Information Systems) Bill is enacted and commenced, use it on the UAS already in service. The power lets the Secretary of State direct a specified operator to stop using, or to remove, disable or modify, a named vendor's goods where their use gives rise to a risk to national security. The new power is modelled on the Telecommunications (Security) Act 2021 powers used to force Huawei equipment out of Britain's 5G networks. Specify UAS operators in essential sectors, including policing, in the regulations that define who may be directed; assess DJI against the national security condition on its National Intelligence Law obligations and on the airspace controls enforced on its aircraft in Tibet (Section 9); and name the vendor in the published notice of any direction rather than withholding it under the commercial interests exclusion. Unlike the two measures above, this power would reach equipment already in service, and operators outside central government: ministers could direct an organisation running an essential service to stop using, remove or modify a named supplier's technology. It is not yet law. The Government added the clauses to the Bill ahead of its Lords committee stage in

September 2026; the Bill has yet to complete its Lords stages and receive Royal Assent, and the power would then need regulations to bring it into force. Police forces are not currently within its scope, which is why we ask that they be added.⁶⁹

- Publish the Government's response to the Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner's 2023 survey of police drone use, and invite the current Commissioner to revisit its recommendations in light of the Tibet record.⁷⁰

To the US Government:

- Add a Tibet-specific human rights record to the evidentiary basis of the two existing US measures that rest on human rights grounds, Commerce's December 2020 Entity List designation and Treasury's December 2021 NS-CMIC investment restriction, both tied to surveillance of Uyghurs, and reflect it in any future review of DJI's FCC Covered List and Section 1260H status.⁷¹
- Add the TAR public security bodies that this report shows buying drone and counter-drone equipment, including the Lhasa Public Security Bureau and its Chengguan District branch, the TAR Public Security Department's anti-terror special reconnaissance unit and the Ngari Prefecture SWAT detachment, to the Commerce Department's Entity List, as the Xinjiang public security bureaus were added in October 2019 and as the chairs of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China asked for TAR public security bureaus to be added in October 2023.⁷²

To the EU and like-minded governments:

- Apply procurement restrictions to PRC-manufactured drones in police and sensitive site use; treat the TAR security bodies that the procurement record shows buying drone and counter-drone equipment, including the Lhasa Public Security Bureau and the Ngari Prefecture SWAT detachment, as leads for assessment under the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime, which can reach violations of the freedoms of peaceful assembly, expression and religion where they are widespread or systematic; and raise the TAR airspace restrictions through UN Special Procedures on freedom of religion or belief, minority issues, and privacy.

To retailers, investors, and police forces operating DJI equipment:

- Suspend stocking of, and investment in, DJI products and securities pending enhanced human rights due diligence, commensurate with the severity and context of the risk, on the company's channel relationships with public security buyers in Tibetan areas and Xinjiang, mirroring the Uyghur Human Rights Project's March 2024 ask to retailers to suspend stocking;⁷³ and conduct and publish fleet audits (manufacturer and model), review whether aircraft, controllers or software connect to manufacturer servers, require manufacturer accounts, cloud activation or firmware channels, and adopt replacement planning consistent with the approach already taken for visual surveillance equipment at sensitive government sites.

3. THE LOW-ALTITUDE DOMAIN: WHY DRONES CHANGE THE TERMS OF CONTROL

A drone is a cheap way to put a sensor, a loudspeaker or a weapon anywhere within a few kilometres in a few minutes, and to continue to do so. In the space of a decade, small uncrewed aircraft have moved from novelty to the most consequential change in the practice of both warfare and policing since the mobile phone, and the airspace between the ground and a few hundred metres up, the low-altitude domain, has become contested territory in its own right. This report is about who controls that domain over Tibet. The wider record below shows why the question matters.

3.1 Warfare: Ukraine and the Taiwan Strait

The war in Ukraine has been the proving ground. Commercial-grade quadcopters (unmanned aircraft with four motorised propellers), many of them DJI products and flown on both sides, began the war as reconnaissance and artillery-spotting tools. By its third year, Ukraine's defence ministry was reporting that drones accounted for most of the verified targets in its strike-reward programme, and both governments were announcing production capacities and contracts in the millions of units a year, party claims about capacity and delivery, not independent counts of what was fielded, but a change of scale by any measure.⁷⁴ The lessons that matter here are not tactical. First, drones flatten the cost of persistent observation: a formation that once needed a helicopter or a satellite pass to see over the next ridge now sees it continuously for the price of a consumer camera. Second, the counter-drone problem became as important as the drone problem, jamming, spoofing, detection radar and interception have absorbed enormous investment, and no army now treats the low-altitude domain as uncontested by default. Third, the line between commercial and military hardware collapsed: the same aircraft that surveys a construction site drops a grenade, and the same manufacturer's registration, geofencing and identification systems become instruments of war.

The Taiwan Strait is where these lessons meet the People's Liberation Army directly. PLA drones are a routine feature of the pressure campaign around Taiwan, regular incursions into the island's air defence identification zone, and large uncrewed platforms flying alongside crewed patrols. Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence describes Ukraine-informed asymmetric procurement, thousands of small attack and reconnaissance drones from non-PRC suppliers; and, separately, the commander of US Indo-Pacific Command has described a US contingency concept of turning the Strait into an "unmanned hellscape".⁷⁵ PRC military doctrine, for its part, has folded uncrewed systems into an established concept of domain control, 制域权, the securing of

command over a domain (air, sea, information) as the precondition for freedom of action within it, and its Military-Civil Fusion strategy⁷⁶ deliberately blurs the boundary between the commercial drone industry, which is overwhelmingly Chinese, and the state's security and military users. No Tibet-specific low-altitude doctrine has been located. The plateau's place in that strategic frame is taken up, with external analysis attributed as such, at Section 4.1.⁷⁷

3.2 Policing: the drone as first responder

Police forces did not wait for the military lessons. Across democracies and authoritarian states alike, drones have become a rapidly expanding police capability. In Britain, police fly around 60,000 drone flights a year; in the United States, "drone as first responder" programmes dispatch aircraft to 911 calls ahead of officers, and in China, police drone units are now standard at county level, and automated docking stations that launch on a schedule without a pilot present are being sold as routine municipal infrastructure.⁷⁸ The attraction is obvious and, in many contexts, legitimate: faster response, less risk to officers, better search and rescue, cheaper than helicopters.⁷⁹ But the technology changes policing in three ways that do not depend on the intentions of any particular force. It makes aerial observation cheap enough to be continuous rather than exceptional. It moves the sensor from a fixed post the public can see to a mobile platform the public often cannot. And it comes bundled with the manufacturer's software ecosystem, flight logs, video, mapping, cloud services, so that questions of who sees the data, and where it goes, are answered by the vendor's architecture rather than the force's policy.

3.3 Human rights: asymmetric visibility

The human rights literature on aerial surveillance is younger than the technology, but its framework is clear. Persistent overhead observation of public space engages the right to privacy even where no individual is targeted, because it makes everyone observable; it can chill assembly and expression, because people behave differently under a camera they cannot see; and it raises discrimination concerns where it is deployed disproportionately over particular communities. Whether a given deployment is lawful turns on necessity, proportionality and safeguards. The Human Rights Committee's General Comment 37 and OHCHR's reporting on surveillance technology set out that analysis; the US Fourth Circuit has held a persistent aerial surveillance programme to be a Fourth Amendment search, and France's Conseil d'État has halted police drone surveillance on privacy and data protection grounds.⁸⁰

What the Tibetan record adds is the other half of the picture, which the literature has scarcely reached: the state's simultaneous monopolisation of the air. Most analyses of drone surveillance assume a world in which civil society can also fly, in which journalists, human rights monitors and ordinary citizens have, at least in principle, access to the same vantage point. In Tibet that assumption is false. The state's capacity to see from above has expanded at the same time as everyone else's has been legislated, geofenced and criminalised away. A population is watched from the air and cannot look back. That asymmetry runs through everything that follows.

4. THE MILITARY LAYER AND DUAL-USE INFRASTRUCTURE

A parallel and complementary chain runs alongside public security procurement. The People's Armed Police Tibet Corps procured DJI aircraft through its own headquarters award in 2023 (Section 6.1). The PLA's one confirmed operational drone deployment in the dataset followed the 7 January 2025 Tingri earthquake, when Western Theatre Command dispatched drones to survey the epicentre before ground forces arrived, demonstrating independent short-notice military tasking in TAR airspace.⁸¹



On 28 September 2025, China's first unmanned equipment testing base, at an elevation above 4,300 metres, was inaugurated in Ngari Prefecture, Tibet. Image: Chinese state media.

The test infrastructure layer clearly shows the dual-use pattern. The sensitive border region of Ngari (Chinese: Ali) inaugurated China's first unmanned-equipment test base above 4,300 m in September 2025, alongside a fixed-wing platform, the "Ali Yunduan No. 1", reportedly of roughly 100 kg MTOW, 150 km/h, 4.5 hours' endurance, under the associated entity "TianShang Ali" (天上阿里).⁸² Framed as scientific development, a platform with that endurance at that altitude is a persistent surveillance asset over terrain no ground system reaches, in the prefecture bordering Ladakh. The physics explains why the test infrastructure exists: at TAR altitudes, rotor thrust loss and battery degradation sharply constrain multirotor endurance, and terrain breaks the mesh networking that autonomous coordination depends on.

What PRC state media describe in Tibet with the term 蜂群 ("swarm") is, on the operational record, operator-per-platform formation flying, not autonomous swarm intelligence. The Ngari base, and reported cold-and-high propulsion work such as Shenyang-based hydrogen fuel-cell test flights in high-altitude Tibet, exist to overcome that constraint.

4.1 The strategic frame

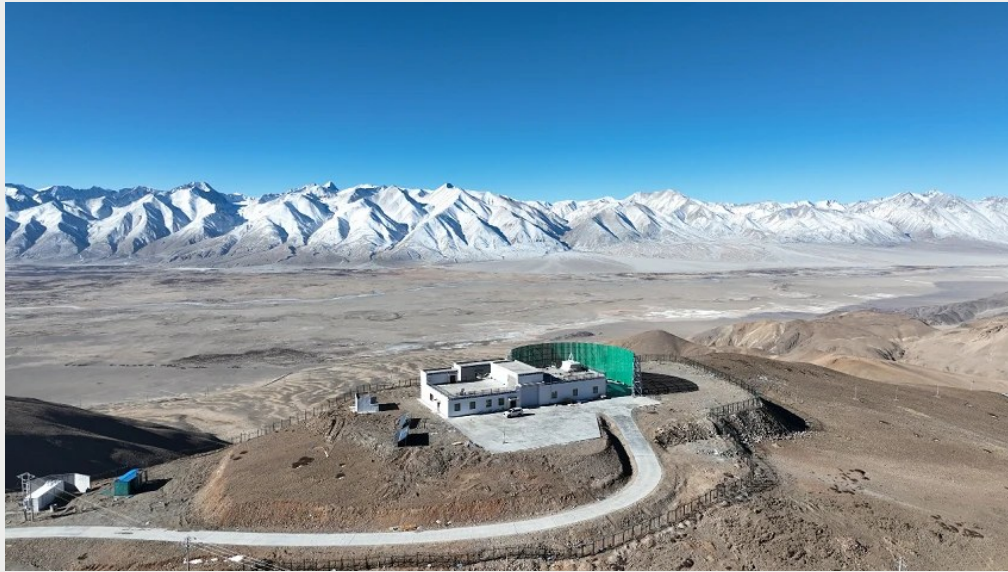
The location is not incidental and has been noted in India. Ngari (Ali) borders Ladakh and the wider Line of Actual Control, the site of the deadliest India–China clashes in decades; Nyingtri (Nyingchi) and Lhoka (Chinese: Shannan) in the TAR face Arunachal Pradesh and Bhutan; Shigatse (Chinese: Rikaze) and its border detachments border Nepal. A platform enabled to fly for four and a half hours at these altitudes is, whatever its stated civil purpose, an asset suited to persistent observation over exactly this terrain. Indian and international coverage has read the plateau build-out in those terms.⁸³



A unit of the Tibet Military Command conducts drills using UAVs and unmanned vehicles. State media reported: "At the start of the drill, a convoy of various types of transport vehicles rapidly advanced towards the target area. During the manoeuvre, the convoy was suddenly attacked by 'enemy' drones, and the soldiers quickly deployed short-term camouflage for their vehicles." Image: CCTV News, January 2026.

Two developments in mid-2026 sharpened the securitisation reading. The Tibet University⁸⁴ Plateau Drone R&D Application Centre, unveiled near the Everest approaches on 3 July 2026 as China's first platform dedicated to high-altitude plateau drone research and deployment, was opened with senior military officials from aviation rescue and emergency response teams in attendance, and was described in state coverage as serving border patrol among its purposes. Separately, Nepal declined to permit a US-made drone to conduct test flights on the Nepali side of Everest (Chomolungma), citing national security and a wish to maintain strategic neutrality, in reporting that set the decision against China's activity on the northern side. Neither item is a procurement record, and neither is treated here as one; together they show that the plateau's

drone build-out is being read internationally as a border and great-power question, not only a domestic policing one.⁸⁵



Tibet University establishes a training facility for UAV operations. A Chinese media report in July 2026 announced that an undergraduate course had been introduced in 'Low Altitude Technology and Engineering'. Image: Chinese state media.

The wider analytical literature goes further than this report will. Commentary in outlets such as The National Interest argues that Beijing is converting Tibet from a political periphery into a central node of an unmanned-warfare programme, and that control of the high ground carries a deliberate signal to India and the United States. That is an interpretation, offered as opinion rather than established from the record. What the documentary record supports is narrower and firmer: a funded, institutionalised, border-weighted expansion of state aerial capability across the Tibetan plateau, of which the surveillance of Tibetans is the part this report documents.⁸⁶

Two further ecosystem records sit alongside these. The first is China Unicom's tethered-drone emergency communications platform, exempt from the flight ban regime by its state-operator status, a permanent aerial presence regardless of airspace closures.⁸⁷ The second is a corporate procurement showing Tibet Yulong Copper company - which runs one of the most strategically important copper deposits in the PRC, in Chamdo in the TAR - seeking a LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging)⁸⁸ scanner specifically compatible with its existing DJI M300 RTK drone, evidence of the enterprise DJI ecosystem beyond government buyers.⁸⁹

5. BACKGROUND: THE SURVEILLANCE STATE IN TIBET

The drone programme documented here is the aerial extension of a surveillance architecture under construction in Tibet for more than a decade, whose techniques travelled from Tibet to Xinjiang; aerial capability is now expanding in Tibet, in an apparent surveillance feedback loop. From 2011, under then-TAR Party Secretary Chen Quanguo, Tibetan cities and villages were divided into administrative grids (网格化管理), each with dedicated personnel monitoring residents; a network of "convenience police stations" (便民警务站) placed armed police within minutes of every urban block in Lhasa; cadre work teams were stationed permanently in villages and monasteries, and management committees embedded officials inside religious institutions. When Chen transferred to Xinjiang in 2016, he took the model with him, where it became the scaffolding of the mass internment system.⁹⁰ Similar techniques were later deployed in Xinjiang; the procurement record now shows subsequent expansion of aerial capability in Tibet. Whether that reflects a single institutional pathway is an inference, not something the record demonstrates. The vocabulary the TAR police use for drone training, "stability maintenance" (维稳) and also counter-terrorism, is the vocabulary documented in Xinjiang for DJI use by police.

Aerial surveillance joins an already dense technological layer: Hikvision and Dahua camera networks in "Safe City" and "Sharp Eyes" (雪亮工程) deployments including at monasteries; mass DNA collection campaigns across the TAR, including from children, documented by Citizen Lab and Human Rights Watch in 2022;⁹¹ and recurrent phone inspection campaigns targeting Tibetans' communications, VPN use and religious content.

What drones add is reach. The TAR is 1.2 million square kilometres, most of it high-altitude grassland, mountains and valleys. Three features of Tibetan geography give aerial surveillance distinct significance: dispersed nomadic populations on the Changtang, a high altitude plateau in western and northern Tibet, which a drone nest with a 10–15 km radius or a fixed-wing platform with 4.5 hours' endurance can cover where no fixed infrastructure can; monastery complexes and mass religious festivals such as Saga Dawa, Losar and monastic cham dances, which can sometimes entail gatherings of thousands in open terrain, precisely the "large events" named as a crowd monitoring mission in the Samzhubze record; and the Himalayan border corridors into Nepal and India used by refugees and pilgrims, which are exactly where the dataset shows border county training cohorts, an Everest border police drone station, a border detachment DJI platform, and reported drone airfield construction.

The build-out also rides a national industrial policy wave. Since 2023–24 the PRC has promoted the "low-altitude economy" (低空经济) as a strategic emerging industry, and TAR agencies publish boosterish accounts of drones "flying into a thousand industries."⁹² The commercial framing matters: procurement that would read as security build-up is increasingly presented as economic development, and the same platforms, standards and airfields serve both.

6. THE PROCUREMENT RECORD, 2020–2026

The procurement record monitored in this report by Tibet Watch runs from December 2020 to mid-2026, with no confirmed 2022 award, and divides into two mutually reinforcing tracks: the acquisition of aerial surveillance capability, and the acquisition of the means to deny the air to everyone else. The tables below present the confirmed awards; leads and pending attributions are held out of all totals.

A note on trend claims. A majority of dataset source records carry 2025 dates. This reflects the onset of systematic collection in April 2025 and the clustering of near-duplicate flight ban notices, not a demonstrated acceleration in state activity: retrospective sweeps recover substantial 2020–2023 procurement, including the two largest awards in the dataset, and there is no confirmed 2022 award. This report accordingly describes repeated procurement and institutional build-out across 2020–2026 and makes no claim about rate of change. Record density is a function of search coverage, and no density figure is published until near-duplicate notices are collapsed and the 2022–2024 backfill is complete.

6.1 The surveillance track: 12 confirmed DJI awards

Alert	Buyer	Award date	Package	DJI equipment (itemised)
59	TAR PSD Anti-Terror Special Recon Mobile Unit	2020-12-02	¥1,720,000	M300 RTK; H20T; TB60 ×2; M600 Pro; Mavic 2 Ent. ×2 (≥¥437,803)
60	Chengguan District PSB, Lhasa	2021-08-09	¥2,458,605	Inspire 2 ×15; Zenmuse X7 ×15; lenses, batteries (≈¥754,110)
61	Shigatse Border Management Detachment	2021-09-09	¥852,240	All-DJI platform: M300 RTK + 16 enterprise aircraft
63	Armed Police Tibet Corps HQ	2023-05-29	¥678,900	DJI explicit; models in bid file; tender records 31 UAVs
64	Lhasa PSB (emergency equipment)	2023-06-16	¥10,180,000	M300 RTK ×2; M30T; further small DJI UAV (lot attribution unconfirmed)
65	Ali Prefecture Fire & Rescue	2024-01-19	¥353,010	Mavic 3T; Mavic 3 Pro; M30 (itemised unit prices)
OT-1	Diqing Prefecture PSB (Yunnan)	2023-11-22	¥2,070,435	M350 RTK; P1; H20N; M30T ×2; Mavic 3T ×2; FlyCart 30 (¥479,080)

Alert	Buyer	Award date	Package	DJI equipment (itemised)
OT-2	Hailuoguo Scenic Area Mgmt (Ganzi)	2023-06-16	¥448,520	M30 + LP12; Mavic 3 (¥97,485)
OT-3	Aba County Forestry & Grassland (Aba)	2026-01-08	¥395,000	Matrice 4T x4 (¥320,000)
OT-4	Kangding Emergency Mgmt (Ganzi)	2024-12-25	¥484,785	Mavic 3T + RM510B (¥49,980)
OT-5	Dege County PSB checkpoint (Ganzi)	2025-05-17	¥4,429,553	Dock 2 x4; M3TD/M3D x4; FlightHub 2 (¥602,000 core)
OT-6	Ganzi PSB Anti-Terror SWAT (Ganzi)	2025-11-24	¥723,800	DJI Zenmuse L2 LiDAR + TB65 batteries in Gaussian-splatting rapid-modelling system

Twelve awards; published package values total ¥24,794,848. Sources: award notices and itemised supply schedules cited at Sections 1 and 11; brand attribution throughout is documentary, DJI named in award documents or itemised schedules, never inferred from imagery. Alert 62 (TAR Ecology Department, 26 April 2023) is a request for quotations naming DJI Mavic 3E by brand and is not counted as an award. Alerts 59, 60, 61 and 64 and OT-1, and the Alert 57 counter-drone award, currently rest on procurement-mirror copies; Alert 64 retains lot/supplier uncertainty. Not tabulated: the Ngari Prefecture Public Security Bureau (PSB) SWAT award of 17 April 2026 (GZFCG2026-32171, ¥3,979,030, DJI FlyCart 100 / Matrice 400 / Neo 2 reported), a mirror-only lead pending recovery of the primary record.⁹³

Three further awards fill out the surveillance track without brand attribution: the Lhasa Economic and Technological Development Zone (ETDZ) Public Security Bureau's ¥457,200 (£51,500) drone award of December 2024 (models in the unrecovered winning response file),⁹⁴ the Ngari Prefecture PSB SWAT tender of July 2025 for drones, hangars, spare parts and counter-drone equipment at a published budget of ¥2,343,728 (£264,000), for which a second-round award dated 19 August 2025 is verified to exist, with supplier and amount withheld on the indexed page;⁹⁵ and the Jomda County PSB tender for all-terrain, all-weather drone reconnaissance and countermeasure equipment, where a corporate procurement index associates Chongqing Yifei Zhilian Technology with a September–October 2025 award, a low-confidence lead excluded from all totals pending the original notice.⁹⁶

6.2 The denial track: counter-drone as a funded programme

Lhasa has been paying to stop drones for years. In July 2021 the city's police were awarded ¥8.63 million (about £973,000) of equipment to detect drones and stop them,⁹⁷ so Tibet's capital had a counter-drone capability funded in the millions by mid-2021. The regional government's radio regulator, the TAR Radio Management Bureau, has been building on it since. In April 2025 it opened a consultation on where and how drone-jamming equipment could be installed and used across the region; two weeks later it answered questions from bidders; and in September it

tendered for testing and verification of the region's radio monitoring facilities.⁹⁸ The 2025 work upgrades and extends a capability Lhasa already had.⁹⁹ The contractor matters more than the sum. The work went to the testing arm of the State Radio Monitoring Center, the technical body of China's national radio regulator under the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT). Counter-drone systems work mainly by jamming the radio links drones depend on, so deploying them requires spectrum clearance; in the TAR, that clearance is being engineered with national-level technical support.

6.3 What the procurement record shows

- **Counter-drone capability travels with surveillance capability.** The Ngari (Ali) SWAT tender bundles drones, hangars and counter-drone equipment in one package; Jomda County in Chamdo in the TAR, the lowest administrative tier, specifies reconnaissance and countermeasures together; the Dechen (Diqing) in Yunnan package pairs DJI aircraft with counter-drone shields and an integrated detection-and-countermeasure unit. The buyers are simultaneously acquiring the ability to watch from the air and to stop anyone else doing so.
- **Procurement spans every tier and multiple verticals.** Region (TAR Public Security Department (PSD) anti-terror unit, Radio Management Bureau, Ecology Department), city (Lhasa, Nyingtri), prefecture (Ngari SWAT, fire and rescue), county (Jomda, Derge), development zone (Lhasa ETDZ), and at least three services: public security, the People's Armed Police, and the border management system, whose Shigatse detachment built an all-DJI platform on the Nepal frontier in 2021 and whose Lhoka detachment reportedly published 2026 procurement notices for drones and permanent drone airfield construction on the Indian and Bhutanese approaches, inside a specialised equipment programme that also covers detection and crowd control equipment.¹⁰⁰
- **Since 2025, the authorities have become more guarded about what they publish.** Recent drone tenders leave out the supplier's name and put the budget in attachments that are often unavailable. The records do not disappear entirely, though. Commercial sites that copy government procurement notices still hold itemised awards the official portals no longer show. The original pages for the 2021 Lhasa counter-drone award, for example, can no longer be found through the official portal and survive only on one of these copies.¹⁰¹ Secrecy on the portals makes these purchases harder to trace, but it has not hidden them.

7. TRAINING AND INSTITUTIONALISATION

The official account record allows the police drone pilot corps to be reconstructed as a timeline which can be summarised in the following terms: gift-and-experiment (2017), procurement at scale and border-first training (2020–21), doctrine and scale (2023–24), and institutional permanence (2025).



Nagchu (Naqu) City in the TAR conducts drone application skills training for farmers and pastoralists. Image: Chinese state media.

- **June 2017.** A DJI Phantom 3 SE is donated to Maldro Gongkar (Chinese: Mozhugongka) County PSB, Lhasa, for a "new public security patrol model", rapid aerial overview of incident scenes and police deployment. The earliest record in the dataset, and vendor-confirmed.¹⁰²
- **April 2021.** Shigatse City PSB holds its first police drone training course; the trainees are backbone officers from nine border counties and two port sub-bureaux. The

border is the priority from the start, and the same city's border management detachment awards its all-DJI platform five months later.¹⁰³

- **November 2021.** The TAR Public Security Department's first region-wide pilot course opens, delivered with the People's Public Security University of China; senior officers from counter-terrorism, police support and public order units attend the ceremony.¹⁰⁴
- **2023.** The TAR PSD's 2023 course runs 25 days in Lhoka (Chinese: Shannan) with 52 trainees from Lhoka, Shigatse and Nagchu; its stated focus is patrol, "stability maintenance" (维稳), emergency rescue and public communications.¹⁰⁵ The politically coded term "stability maintenance" is the direct CCP terminology bridge to the Xinjiang precedent: the Uyghur Human Rights Project's March 2024 briefing documented a 2017 agreement in which DJI trained Xinjiang police for "stability maintenance, counter-terrorism and conservation purposes." The same mission, in the same words, now structures police drone training in Tibet. By December, Driru (Biru) County PSB in Nagchu reports 18 police drones across five models with more than ten trained pilots for daily aerial patrol, a county level fleet.¹⁰⁶
- **2024.** The pipeline widens: Shigatse's second course of 2024 emphasises "low-altitude policing team building" and a dedicated training base;¹⁰⁷ Nagchu enrolls 46 officers in a one-month course delivered by instructors from the People's Public Security University of China, national level institutional investment in TAR police drone capacity;¹⁰⁸ and Tingkye (Chinese: Dingjie) County stands up a dedicated "low-altitude policing unit" (低空警务专班).¹⁰⁹
- **September 2025.** A Level-IV police drone training institution (四级培训机构) is established at the Tibet Police College, with a Nagchu training class opening in the same month, a permanent, accredited training body inside the region;¹¹⁰ and Lhasa's SWAT detachment is confirmed to contain a dedicated Police Aviation Management Battalion (警用航空器管理大队) responsible for drone safety management.¹¹¹ By mid-2025, district forces were publishing fleet statistics as routine performance indicators: Bayi District (Nyingtri) reported nine drones, 17 pilots, 156 aerial patrols and 43 traffic incident responses since 2024.¹¹²

In 2017 a county police station outside Lhasa was given a single consumer drone, a DJI Phantom. Eight years later, drones are built into policing across the region. Since December 2020, police have spent millions of yuan on them. Tibet now has an accredited drone training school at the Tibet Police College, and aviation units inside SWAT teams. At least one county has its own low-altitude policing unit, and police publish drone flight statistics as routine performance figures, much as forces elsewhere publish numbers of arrests.

8. OPERATIONS

8.1 The Samzhubze case

A Tibet Daily / Lhasa government account of 22 December 2025 describes the drone programme of the Samzhubze (Chinese: Sangzhuizi) District PSB, the bureau covering central Shigatse and roughly 80% of the city's daily police incidents. Shigatse matters to Beijing, because it is home to Tashi Lhunpo, seat of the Panchen Lamas, whose traditional role in recognising the next Dalai Lama puts the monastery at the centre of the Party's plans to control the succession. And the prefecture it anchors borders Nepal, India (Sikkim) and Bhutan, taking in Everest, the Kyirong (Gyirong) crossing and the Nangpa La, for decades one of the main routes Tibetans took into exile.

Since May 2024 the district has operated automated drone nests (无人机自动机巢) across the urban area: permanently installed stations from which aircraft launch, fly, land and recharge with one-button dispatch. The aircraft carry thermal imaging, multi-zoom optics, laser ranging, floodlights and PA loudspeakers, and feed live video into an "air-ground unified" (空地一体) command system. The bureau's own figures detail participation in 5,723 duty activities (勤务) and more than 22,700 km flown by December 2025. The source's unit is duty activities, not sorties. Its stated missions include mountain and water search and rescue, crowd flow monitoring at large events, and pre-programmed patrol routes covering ground patrol blind spots; state media presents the system as an example of modern policing. The account does not name the aircraft's manufacturer, and it is not linked here to the DJI procurement record. It documents sustained tempo, automation, sensor payloads capable of identifying individuals, and crowd monitoring as a named mission.

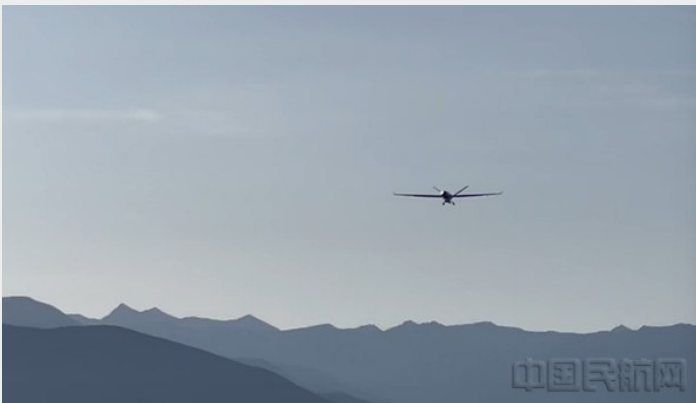
8.2 Tactical integration and the border thread

Lhasa SWAT has integrated drone reconnaissance, including indoor reconnaissance, a counter-terrorism capability, into routine summer drills;¹¹³ Chengguan District PSB ran a "drone + ground unit" combined exercise resolving a simulated terrorist incident in five minutes;¹¹⁴ and Ngari Prefecture SWAT, which tendered for a drones-and-countermeasures package with a ¥2.34m budget, conducted a cross-regional exercise including a "drone mountain pursuit" drill.¹¹⁵ Tracking and pursuit of people through high terrain is, on the Nepal–India frontier, a capability that could be applied to Tibetans attempting to escape Tibet across a heavily securitised border, or pilgrims seeking to travel to sacred sites in Nepal or India,¹¹⁶ though no such use appears in the record. The border thread runs the length of the dataset: the 2021 Shigatse training cohort drawn from nine border counties; the border management detachment's all-DJI platform the same year; the Everest Border Police Station using drones to locate persons on the mountain

approaches;¹¹⁷ routine drone patrols in Bayi District near the Arunachal Pradesh frontier;¹¹⁸ Nyingtri's integrated low-altitude defence network on the same frontier (Section 9); and the Lhoka border detachment's reported 2026 procurement notices for drone airfields.

8.3 Public safety uses

The dataset contains genuine public safety operations, and they are not discounted here: a seven-hour search for a missing teenager given real-time aerial coverage in Tingkye;¹¹⁹ 67 lost yaks found for a herder in Gegye after terrain defeated a ground search;¹²⁰ a stranded tourist rescued near Lulang; routine traffic work in Chamdo;¹²¹ forestry pest control monitoring in Lhasa; PLA drones surveying the Tingri earthquake epicentre before ground forces arrived; and the Ngari fire and rescue detachment's itemised DJI purchase. The search and rescue record is the public face of the build-out. But the capability is shared. The Samzhubze account describes one 'nest' system performing rescue and crowd monitoring missions; the training courses list rescue in the same syllabus; a thermal camera does not change its nature with the tasking. Whether a particular aircraft flew both kinds of mission is not established at asset level. But the dual use is not incidental: the same equipment and personnel serve both ends.



A Wing Loong UAV makes three flights through the disaster zone to provide emergency assistance to Kyirong Port, Tibet.



Images: China Civil Aviation News and China Civil Aviation Network.

9. THE AIRSPACE DENIAL LAYER

While police capability expanded, the same authorities progressively restricted the air for everyone else. The dataset documents four mechanisms operating together, with a funded technical base beneath them since July 2021.

- **Temporary flight controls keyed to political sensitivity.** In the run-up to and during the TAR's 60th-anniversary period (10–31 August 2025), which culminated in the ceremony in Lhasa on 21 August attended by Xi Jinping, authorities documented concurrent "low, slow, small" (低慢小) aircraft controls in Lhasa and in selected localities across four other prefecture-level areas, scope varying from citywide to county, radius, road or airport-specific; no Shigatse notice has been located: Lhasa citywide,¹²² Chamdo, with explicit warnings that unauthorised aircraft "will be shot down in accordance with law" (违规飞行器将被依法击落),¹²³ Nyingtri,¹²⁴ Ngari (specified areas) and Gêrzê County (15 km radius), in Ngari prefecture¹²⁵ and Bange (Bangoin) County in Nagchu City of the TAR, which authorised "police countermeasures" against violators,¹²⁶ with Gyatsa (Chinese: Jiacha) County in Lhoka mandating registration and police reporting from July.¹²⁷

The flight bans issued across the region use the same wording, which suggests they were coordinated from above rather than drafted locally. They also carry the same exemptions: police, rescue, medical, weather and sporting flights could still go ahead with approval, so state and approved flights kept flying while everyone else was grounded. Chamdo's notice went further, warning that unauthorised drones would be shot down. That wording comes from a copy of the notice reproduced on a third-party website, since the official version has not yet been recovered.

- **Identity-linked registration. China has required owners of civilian drones weighing 250 grams or more to register them under their real names since June 2017. One county in the dataset has added local rules: in July 2025 Gyatsa required drone flights to be registered with and reported to local police.**¹²⁸ A national standard, GB 46761-2025, issued on 31 October 2025 and in force since 1 May 2026, now builds registration into the drone itself. A new civilian drone that meets the standard will not fly until it has been registered and activated, and it stops flying if its registration is cancelled. A second standard, GB 46750-2025, requires drones to broadcast an identification signal in flight. For new drones, flying without

registration is now technically impossible as well as illegal. There are limits. Drones sold before 1 May 2026 have 12 months to comply, and older or modified drones may still fly. Police, customs and emergency management aircraft are outside its scope. Civilians can still fly legally once their drone is registered and activated and they have any airspace approval required. What the record does not show is whether registration is realistically open to nomadic herders who use drones to manage livestock, or whether registration data is passed to police systems.

- **Enforcement and informant mobilisation.** Enforcement has hardened fast. In March 2024, in the TAR's first reported case of an unauthorised or "black" flight (黑飞) under new regional rules, Gongbogyamda County (in Nyingtri prefecture) police issued a warning and a ¥500 fine.¹²⁹ By September 2024 a Shigatse police unit dedicated to low-altitude policing was issuing penalties in Samzhubze and using a counter-drone vehicle to intercept drones in the air.¹³⁰ In February 2026 the TAR's internet regulator, the Cyberspace Office, republished a national article on cases elsewhere in China in which police had arrested drone users in December 2025 for bypassing built-in flight limits. They were held on suspicion of "endangering public safety by dangerous means", a serious criminal charge. The article urged online platforms to suppress "black flight" content and asked the public to report suspicious drones. The source does not locate that case in Tibet or record a final judgment; it is national context, not a TAR prosecution,¹³¹ echoing the Ministry of State Security's February 2025 warning directing the public to the 12339 hotline over "illegal aerial photography."¹³² Within the TAR, documented enforcement has moved from administrative penalty to technical interception, and has been extended into the information domain through informant mobilisation; criminal enforcement is documented nationally but not yet in a Tibet-located case.
- **Integrated counter-drone architecture.** Nyingtri City operates the most advanced system in the dataset: a formally named low-altitude defence network (低空防御网) integrating radar, AI recognition and electronic fencing for real-time tracking and "precision interception"; five drone airports and a ¥857,800 "Police Eagle" (警鹰) patrol platform; a drone registration module inside the "Ping'an Nyingchi" big-data platform combining pre-flight notification, real-time monitoring, analytics and command dispatch; a four-tier alert system; an online flight approval system with streamlined approval for routine work; and a drone-control leading group coordinated by the municipal government's principal leader with police, military, civil aviation and emergency management participation, operating a full-chain doctrine: detect → identify → drive away → investigate and sanction.¹³³ Military participation in a city level drone control body has no equivalent elsewhere in the dataset. Nyingtri

is a highly militarized area bordering Arunachal Pradesh, the Indian state Beijing claims as "South Tibet" (藏南). It is also one of the most popular destinations in the TAR for Chinese domestic tourists, most of whom arrive via Lhasa or by road and rail from elsewhere in China, with the Sichuan–Tibet highway (G318) and new rail link from Lhasa.

These mechanisms tilt aerial observation over Tibet towards the security state. Lawful civilian flight remains possible in principle, subject to registration, activation and approval. But a Tibetan resident, or anyone else, who flies without approval in a controlled period or area faces detection by radar and RF networks funded since 2021, interception by counter-drone vehicles and electronic fencing, administrative penalty, and denunciation by mobilised informants, while the security organs' own aircraft sit outside the registration standard and, with approval, kept flying through the bans. The record reveals the asymmetry, not a complete closure.

10. TIBETANS UNDER THE AERIAL GAZE

Every record in this report was published by the Chinese state about itself. None of them describes what it is like to live beneath the aircraft they document. This chapter reads the same records from the ground. It asks where the drones went, who lives beneath them, and what it means that those people cannot fly a camera of their own without the state's permission. The rights this engages are set out in Annex D.

10.1 Drone concentration in areas of crackdown

Derge (in Kardze, Sichuan, the Tibetan area of Kham) and Jomda (in Chamdo in the TAR). In February 2024 Derge (德格) in Kardze (Chinese: Ganzi) was the site of the largest Tibetan protests in years, against the Kamtok (Gangtuo) hydropower dam on the Dri Chu (upper reaches of the Yangtze river), whose reservoir would submerge villages and monasteries on both banks. More than 100 people were detained, and the world knew because phone footage recorded rare and bold peaceful protests, with senior monks and laypeople appealing to officials not to go ahead with construction of the dam in the upper reaches of one of Asia's great wild rivers. In doing so, the Tibetan monks and villagers were aligned with Chinese scientists who warn of the dangers of such major infrastructure projects in a climate emergency, when permafrost and glaciers are melting and rivers on the plateau are becoming more unpredictable.¹³⁴ Two senior monks of Yena monastery, Gonpo Tsering and Jamyang Lekshay, were jailed after the footage reached the outside world; it showed Jamyang Lekshay on his knees, thumbs raised in a humble appeal, imploring local officials to stop construction of the dam. Gonpo Tsering was tortured in custody so severely that he is now unable to speak or swallow food, has breathing difficulties, has lost his sight and has suffered brain injuries. Two years after his arrest he remains critically ill in hospital.¹³⁵



Gonpo Tsering, the 45-year-old head of his monastery, is in critical condition in hospital following torture after his involvement in peaceful protests against the construction of a major hydropower dam in Derge (Dege), Kham, in February 2024.



Troops patrolling in Lhasa in July 2025, at a time of heightened security during the Dalai Lama's 90th birthday celebrations in exile. The image, shared from inside Tibet, shows a device with a round hoop that Tibetans say the authorities intend to use in case of self-immolations.

In spring 2025 Derge County police (德格县公安局) bought four autonomous DJI Dock 2 stations, four DJI drones and DJI's FlightHub 2 fleet-control software for the county's police checkpoint on the Sichuan-TAR border, as part of a ¥4,429,553 contract to upgrade the checkpoint's surveillance systems. The Kamtok dam straddles the Drichu, the river that forms the border here, between Derge and Jomda (Jiangda, 江达) county in the TAR, and takes its name from Kamtok (岗托), the TAR township on the Jomda bank.

In September 2025 Jomda County Public Security Bureau published a procurement for all-terrain, all-weather drone reconnaissance and countermeasure equipment.¹³⁶ Within 20 months of the protests, the police on both sides of the river had moved to acquire persistent aerial surveillance, and the Jomda package includes the means to stop anyone else flying.

Driru. Driru (比如) in Nagchu has been under continuous security pressure since the protests of local Tibetans in September 2013. One of the key triggers was Chinese mining at a sacred mountain, while another was the local government's attempt to impose political re-education on the area and, in particular, the attempt to force Tibetans to fly Chinese flags on the roofs of their houses in advance of Chinese National Day.¹³⁷ On 6 October 2013, Chinese security forces opened fire on unarmed Tibetan protesters, injuring at least 60 people, including four critically

wounded individuals. This was followed by mass arrests and torture, severe restrictions on movement and communication, and long-term punitive measures against Tibetans accused of dissent.

In December 2023 Driru County Public Security Bureau reported 18 police drones across five models and more than ten trained pilots for daily aerial patrol.¹³⁸ That is the largest county fleet in the dataset, in the county Tibet Watch has described as the hub of Tibetan resistance in the TAR.

Kardze (Chinese: Ganzi) in Sichuan, the Tibetan region of Kham. Kham has a long history of resistance to Chinese rule, from the uprisings of the 1950s to the protests of 2008 and beyond. Campaigns against the Dalai Lama, the loss of land and livelihoods, and mining by Chinese prospectors have caused deep resentment in Kardze. Restrictions on religious practice, including the requirement to denounce the Dalai Lama, intensified after 2008, and from 2011 Kardze was one of the areas where Tibetans set themselves on fire in protest.

At Serthar in Kardze there were mass expulsions, demolitions, and a deployment of more than 400 military personnel at one of the world's largest Buddhist institutes, Larung Gar in 2024, followed by a further wave of demolitions from July 2026, after a harsh political education campaign at the monastery linked to the imposition of China's 'ethnic unity' law.¹³⁹



The major Buddhist institute at Larung Gar in Serthar, Kardze, eastern Tibet, has undergone waves of demolitions and expulsions of monks and nuns under three Chinese leaders, most recently in August 2026. In this image from 2017, monks walk past a team of Chinese demolition workers. Image obtained from Tibet by Tibet Watch.

In Drago (炉霍) in Kardze, a monastic school, a large Buddha statue, and prayer wheels were demolished under heavy security in late 2021 and early 2022, while the authorities have transformed a sacred Buddhist landmark into a racecourse there and named it after the Chinese Red Army.¹⁴⁰



Horseback parade with mandatory Chinese red flag display, enforced in crackdown-hit Drago county in the Kham region of Tibet. The authorities have transformed a sacred Buddhist landmark into a racecourse and named it after the Chinese Red Army.

In September 2025 Kardze prefecture's police tendered for drones and a mobile command vehicle. Two months later the prefecture's anti-terror SWAT unit bought a rapid 3D mapping system built around DJI's Zenmuse L2 laser-scanning camera.¹⁴¹ The system uses laser scanning (LiDAR) and drone photographs to build a detailed three-dimensional model of buildings and terrain that can be explored on screen, and it can produce one quickly. The record does not say what the unit plans to map. But news of the demolitions at Larung Gar and Drago reached the outside world largely through phone and drone footage. Within a year of the late-2024 evictions at Larung Gar, the police unit responsible for the prefecture could map such a site in detail from the air. Meanwhile, anyone else who wants to fly a camera over the same ground must now register the drone to their identity first, and police elsewhere in China have brought criminal cases against people who get round built-in flight limits.

Lhasa, 2021. In March 2021, at the time of the anniversary of the 10 March 1959 uprising and 2008 protests, and again in May, Tibet Watch documented intensive police checks and restrictions on Tibetan access to the Jokhang and the Barkhor in Chengguan (城关) District, central Lhasa.¹⁴² On 9 July 2021 Lhasa Public Security Bureau awarded ¥8,631,435 for drone detection and countermeasure equipment.¹⁴³ On 9 August 2021 Chengguan District Public Security Bureau bought 15 DJI Inspire 2 aircraft with Zenmuse X7 cameras, at a package value of ¥2,458,605.¹⁴⁴ Xi Jinping visited Nyingtri and Lhasa unannounced in late July 2021, and Lhasa held celebrations in August for the 70th anniversary of the Seventeen-Point Agreement, signed in May 1951. The counter-drone award in particular reads naturally as preparation for a state occasion, and this report says so. What followed in Lhasa was permanent: a Police Aviation Management Battalion inside the SWAT detachment,¹⁴⁵ the Chengguan drone airport and three-dimensional control circle procurement, still being verified (Section 12.2), and the 2023 ¥10.18m emergency equipment package with further DJI enterprise aircraft.¹⁴⁶ While the Party leader left, the aircraft

stayed, and the district they fly over is the one where Tibetans' access to their own temple is checked at the door.

Lhasa, summer 2025. In June and July 2025, around the Dalai Lama's 90th birthday and his statement on the continuation of the Dalai Lama institution, Tibet Watch documented heightened militarisation, checkpoints, and information controls in Lhasa.¹⁴⁷ The heightened security in the city - escalated still further in August with the arrival of Xi Jinping for an official visit - involved the deployment of armed forces with live ammunition, round-the-clock checkpoints and bans on traditional religious observances including prayer ceremonies and burning incense.

On 18 June 2025 Chengguan District SWAT reported a "drone plus ground unit" exercise resolving a simulated terrorist incident in five minutes,¹⁴⁸ while on 9 July Lhasa SWAT reported drone reconnaissance, including indoor reconnaissance, integrated into summer drills.¹⁴⁹ In August, as Xi Jinping attended the ceremony in Lhasa on 21 August 2025 marking the 60th anniversary of the founding of the TAR, Tibet Watch documented detentions and movement restrictions while the city and parts of four other prefecture-level areas closed their airspace to all but approved flights (Section 9). The two summers, 2021 and 2025, show the same sequence: restriction of Tibetans on the ground, then aircraft and airspace for the police.

Tingri, Tingkye, and the passes that lead into exile. On 30 September 2006 Chinese border guards shot and killed Kelsang Namtso, a 17-year-old nun, as she crossed the Nangpa La in Tingri (定日) County towards Nepal with a group of Tibetans. The killing was filmed by a climber at Cho Oyu base camp, and the footage remains the clearest outside record of what happens on those passes.¹⁵⁰

The dataset places a border police drone station at Everest,¹⁵¹ a dedicated low-altitude policing unit in neighbouring Tingkye (定结),¹⁵² and an all-DJI aerial platform with the Shigatse Border Management Detachment, which covers nine border counties.¹⁵³ The first police drone training course in Shigatse, in April 2021, drew its trainees from those nine counties and two ports of entry.¹⁵⁴ A climber with a camera at Cho Oyu today would be filming into a police-controlled air corridor, and a drone in the same hands would be a black flight.

Samzhubze and Tashi Lhunpo. The drone nests described in Section 8.1 cover Samzhubze (桑珠孜), the central district of Shigatse. This is home to Tashi Lhunpo, one of Tibet's most important monasteries and the seat of the Panchen Lamas. Pilgrims walk the route around its walls every day.

Tashi Lhunpo is also where China's control of Tibetan Buddhism is particularly evident. In May 1995 the Dalai Lama recognised a six-year-old boy, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, as the 11th Panchen Lama. Three days later Chinese authorities took the boy and his family away, and he has not been seen in public since. China then installed its own choice, Gyaltzen Norbu, at Tashi Lhunpo. He returns for major religious events, such as a large ceremony in Shigatse in October 2025 attended by monks and senior lamas from across Tibet.¹⁵⁵ This matters because Panchen Lamas in the past have played a role in identifying the next Dalai Lama, and Beijing's Panchen Lama is central to its plan to choose the Dalai Lama's successor.

The monastery's festivals draw the biggest regular crowds in the city. The largest is the annual thangka festival, when a giant painting of the Buddha is hung on a wall above the monastery for pilgrims to see. The police say one of the drone nests' regular jobs is "crowd flow monitoring at large events".¹⁵⁶ In Samzhubze, the large events are Tashi Lhunpo's festivals and the visits of Beijing's Panchen Lama.

Nyingtri, Gyatsa and the next dams. At the Great Bend in Medog (墨脱), the Yarlung Tsangpo makes a sharp horseshoe turn around a wall of mountains and drops about 2,000 metres in roughly 50 kilometres, right beside the *de facto* border with Arunachal Pradesh, an Indian state China claims.¹⁵⁷ On 19 July 2025 China's Premier, Li Qiang, launched construction of what is set to be the most powerful hydropower system in the world, widely expected to be sited there: five power stations along the river, costing an estimated 1.2 trillion yuan (about £135 billion), designed to generate three times as much electricity as the Three Gorges Dam. Beijing has released few details, including how many people will be displaced. Downstream, the river flows on into India as the Brahmaputra, and then into Bangladesh.

Seven months after the launch, Nyingtri, the prefecture that includes Medog, reported the most developed drone control system in the dataset. It combines radar, AI recognition and electronic fences that stop drones entering set areas. It also has five drone airports and a drone registration system linked to the police's data platform. It is run by a body that includes the military, and it covers every step from spotting an unauthorised drone to investigating and sanctioning its owner.¹⁵⁸

Upstream, the river near Gyatsa (加查) in Lhoka is already dammed. The Zangmu dam, the first major dam on the Yarlung Tsangpo's main course, began generating power in 2014,¹⁵⁹ and a second station, Jiacha, followed in 2020. In July 2025 Gyatsa issued the only county notice in the dataset requiring drone flights to be registered with and reported to local police, weeks before the region-wide restrictions for the TAR's anniversary.¹⁶⁰

In Derge, phone footage carried the dam protests to the outside world. In the valleys of the Yarlung Tsangpo dams, the controls on who can fly a camera are already in place.

What the evidence does and does not show

None of these examples shows that a drone was bought because of a protest, flown over a festival or used on a mountain pass. The records do not say so, and Tibet Watch makes no such claim. Some records in the dataset point the other way, and we set them out here.

The Lhasa counter-drone award of July 2021 and the airspace closures of August 2025 both came around visits to Tibet by Xi Jinping, and security for the Chinese leader could explain either on its own. In Ngaba (阿坝), the buyer of four DJI Matrice 4T drones in January 2026 was the county's forestry and grassland bureau, purchasing under a grassland monitoring programme.¹⁶¹ Nothing in the record links the purchase to Kirti monastery or to Ngaba's long history of protest, notably the beginning of a wave of self-immolations by a Kirti monk in February 2009. Police drone records from Everest and Tingkye describe searches for lost tourists and a missing teenager,¹⁶² and police in Gegye (革吉) used a drone to find a herder's 67 yaks.¹⁶³

But beyond these examples, a clear pattern remains. The Chinese authorities have put aircraft where Tibetans have resisted, where they gather and where they try to escape across borders, and they have recorded it themselves, in their own procurement notices and police reports.

10.2 Who is watched

The drones do not just add to the surveillance that already exists. They reach people and places that cameras never could.

Herders. Across the Changtang, Tibet's high northern plateau, and the grasslands of Nagchu and Ngari, many Tibetan families still live from their yaks, sheep and goats, moving between summer and winter pastures at 4,500 metres and above. No street camera reaches them. For two decades the authorities have pressed nomads to settle in fixed housing;¹⁶⁴ the drone reaches those who still move. A single drone nest covers a radius of 10–15 kilometres. The fixed-wing drone unveiled at Ngari's high-altitude test base can stay in the air for four and a half hours, long enough to cross a county.¹⁶⁵ The police records show this reach used to help. A drone found 67 missing yaks for a herder in Gegye in Ngari, and drones joined the search for a missing teenager in Tingkye. But the herder whose yaks are found is also the herder whose movements can now be followed from the air.

Monks, nuns and pilgrims. Religious occasions are almost the only times large numbers of Tibetans can lawfully gather. At Losar, the Tibetan new year, crowds fill the Barkhor around the Jokhang. During Saga Dawa, the holiest month of the Buddhist year, pilgrims walk the Lingkor around Lhasa, and thousands gather beneath Mount Kailash in Ngari to watch the great prayer-flag pole at Tarboche raised. India's Kailash Mansarovar pilgrimage resumed in 2025, so Ngari's drone reach extends over a site Indian pilgrims visit. Monasteries across the plateau stage masked cham dances, and at Tashi Lhunpo a giant thangka of the Buddha is unrolled on the hillside before the crowds. Each is a mass gathering in open ground, and the Samzhubze police list "crowd flow monitoring at large events" among the standing missions of their drone nests.¹⁶⁶ Monasteries are already controlled from within: officials sit on management committees installed inside them, religious activity must be registered, and camera networks cover them.¹⁶⁷ The drones add a view from above the walls.



China's installed Panchen Lama, Gyaltsen Norbu, led a four-day Kalachakra empowerment – one of the most sacred initiations in Tibetan Buddhist practice – at Tashi Lhunpo monastery in Shigatse in October 2025. The carefully choreographed event at the seat of the Panchen Lama's incarnation line constitutes a deliberate step in China's decades-long campaign to seize control of Tibetan Buddhism's tradition of reincarnation, including the Dalai Lama's, and to erode Tibetan Buddhism through its policy of 'Sinicisation'.

People crossing the border. Before 2008, between 2,500 and 3,500 Tibetans a year made the crossing into Nepal, most of them on foot over high Himalayan passes, and reached the Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu. After a crackdown of unprecedented scope and scale in 2008 following hundreds of protests across Tibet, the number fell to a few hundred a year, and between 2020 and 2024 just 55 Tibetan refugees reached India. ¹⁶⁸

A more heavily securitised border is one of the main reasons for the decline. The 2006 killing of Kelsang Namtso on the Nangpa La, the 5,700-metre pass near Cho Oyu (Section 10.1), came as that tightening began.

Today the state is building its own view over the same frontier. Police drone training has drawn recruits from border counties since 2021. The Shigatse border detachment runs a DJI platform, and there is a police drone station at Everest. Ngari's SWAT unit drills "drone mountain pursuit", and in 2026 the Lhoka border detachment reportedly sought drones and permanent drone airfields on the approaches to Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh (Section 6.3).

One of those approaches runs through Lhuntse (隆子). It was at Lhuntse Dzong in March 1959, on his flight to India, that the Dalai Lama repudiated the Seventeen-Point Agreement and proclaimed his own government. Tibet Watch published testimony from a Lhuntse resident, now in exile, describing religious restrictions and compulsory political displays in the county between 2018 and 2022. ¹⁶⁹ The record shows the drone capability on this frontier, not its use against any individual. For Tibetans trying to cross, that distinction offers no protection.

Residents of Lhasa and Shigatse. In central Shigatse, drones take off from permanent nests on pre-programmed routes over the city, carrying thermal cameras, zoom lenses and loudspeakers. Police logged 5,723 drone duty activities there in 19 months.¹⁷⁰ In Lhasa, Chengguan district police have sought bids to build a "three-dimensional" security cordon that extends the same watch into the air (Section 12.2). For people living in these districts, being watched from above is now a daily condition, not an occasional one. It is carried out by the same police who run the convenience police stations and the grid management system on the ground, and the ID checks at the entrance to the Jokhang.

10.3 The asymmetry as a harm in itself

In many parts of the world, drones are not only a tool of the state. Journalists, activists and ordinary people use them to film protests, demolitions and disasters, and to hold authorities to account. In Tibet, that door has been closed.

Since July 2021, police in Lhasa have had funded equipment to detect drones and bring them down. In 2024, enforcement moved from fines to intercepting drones in the air. In August 2025, the authorities closed the skies over Lhasa and parts of four other prefecture-level areas for a political anniversary, while approved police flights continued.¹⁷¹ Since May 2026, a new drone sold in China cannot fly until it is registered to its owner. Police aircraft are outside the registration standard, and approved police flights continued through the bans. In Nyingtri, the body that decides who may fly includes the military.¹⁷²

This is a harm in its own right, separate from the surveillance. Almost everything the outside world knows about abuses in Tibet depends on Tibetans being able to record what happens to them and get it out: the aerial footage of Larung Gar's demolitions, phone videos from Drago and Derge, and the testimony that reaches Tibet Watch from people who have fled, including from Lhuntse. The authorities say their airspace rules exist for safety and security, and they ask the public to report anyone flying without permission. Whatever the stated purpose, the effect is the same. The state can watch Tibetans from the air, but Tibetans cannot look back without the state's permission, and abuses that cannot be recorded are far easier to deny.

The August 2025 controls. Just a few weeks after the world's media descended on Dharamsala to hear an announcement by the Dalai Lama that his institution would continue, Xi Jinping travelled to Lhasa, as if to demonstrate Communist Party control over the plateau and its future. Most governments restrict airspace when their head of state travels. From 10 August, Lhasa and parts of four other prefecture-level areas banned civilian flights, while police and other approved flights carried on. Chamdo's notice, as reproduced on a third-party website, warned that drones flying without permission would be shot down. The controls were lifted at the end of the month.¹⁷³

If that were the whole story, it would not belong in this report. But the August ban sat on top of a system that was already in place and has kept growing since. Lhasa police had counter-drone equipment from 2021. Shigatse police could intercept drones in the air by 2024, and drone nests had been flying over the city since May of that year. In the months after the anniversary, Nyingtri reported the most developed drone control network in the dataset, and a national rule came into

force requiring every new drone to be registered before it can fly. In the same weeks as the ceremony, Tibet Watch documented detentions and restrictions on Tibetans in Lhasa. The August ban was not a one-off. It showed a capability the state keeps, used on a population it was also restricting on the ground.

10.4 Obligations and responsibilities

The state. China has ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and other core treaties, and it is reviewed by the relevant treaty bodies and through the Universal Periodic Review. It has signed but not ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. UN independent experts have repeatedly raised China's use of surveillance technology, including in a 2020 joint communication on the tracking of 'minorities'¹⁷⁴ and a 2022 joint statement that also addressed Tibet.¹⁷⁵ None has yet been presented with evidence of aerial surveillance in Tibet. Section 2 recommends that they should be.

The state bodies. Every body named in this record is an identifiable part of the Chinese state, and its conduct is documented in its own publications. Confirmed buyers of drone or counter-drone equipment include Lhasa and Chengguan District police, the TAR police anti-terror reconnaissance unit, the Ngari SWAT detachment, the Shigatse border detachment, Derge County police and the Kardze SWAT detachment. Driru County police operate the largest county fleet in the dataset. Jomda County police and the Kardze prefectural police have tendered for equipment, and the Lhoka border detachment has reportedly published procurement plans. In Nyingtri, a leading group that includes the military controls who may fly. Buying and flying drones does not in itself make out a case against any of these bodies. But their records belong in any assessment of Chinese security entities for export controls, such as the US Entity List (to which the chairs of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China asked in October 2023 for TAR public security bureaus to be added),¹⁷⁶ and for targeted sanctions where the evidence meets those regimes' thresholds.

The supplier. Under the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, a company is responsible not only for harms it causes but for harms directly linked to its products through its business relationships, including sales through dealers. DJI equipment reached Derge County police, Chengguan District police, the Shigatse border detachment, the TAR anti-terror unit and the Kardze SWAT detachment through resellers. The same term of "stability maintenance" now frames police drone training in both Tibet and Xinjiang (Section 7). Selling through resellers does not remove DJI's responsibility. It defines where the company must use its influence: in its dealer agreements, its end-use checks, and the activation and software systems its drones depend on. Section 12 sets out what is and is not known about DJI's knowledge of these sales, and Section 2 sets out what we ask of its customers and investors.

11. BEYOND THE TAR: THE CROSS-PROVINCIAL PATTERN

Beyond the TAR. In July 2026 Tibet Watch extended its search to Tibetan areas outside the TAR, checking provincial procurement platforms and the commercial sites that copy them. We found six confirmed awards placing DJI equipment with government and security buyers in Dechen (Chinese: Diqing) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Yunnan, and in Kardze (Ganzi) and Ngaba (Aba) prefectures in Sichuan. Two more leads still await the award pages: a Kardze prefectural police tender for drones and a command vehicle, and a Lixian County award linking a drone base to an expansion of the "Skynet" (天网) street-camera network.¹⁷⁷



'Field Testing of High-Altitude Aviation Emergency Drone Capabilities by the Emergency Management Departments of TAR and Qinghai'. Image: Chinese state media.

Three things stand out. First, in Derge, police bought four self-operating DJI drone docks and DJI's fleet-control software for their checkpoint on the Sichuan-TAR border, as part of a wider upgrade to the checkpoint. Drones can now launch automatically and watch the road around the clock. Second, in Dechen, the prefectural police bought DJI drones together with equipment to detect and disable other people's drones, in a single order. Watching the ground and closing the sky go together outside the TAR too. Third, the buyers look just like those inside the TAR: police, anti-

terror SWAT units, emergency management, forestry and grassland bureaus, and scenic-area authorities.¹⁷⁸

Our searches in Qinghai and Gansu found no confirmed records. This is most likely because those provinces' procurement platforms are hard to search from outside, not because no drones were bought. The Qinghai platform in particular barely appears in external search results. A December 2024 lead for Yushu's emergency reserve remains unverified.¹⁷⁹

12. VENDORS: DJI AND THE RESELLER LAYER

12.1 Presence evidence and procurement evidence

Two kinds of evidence. The dataset contains two different kinds of evidence about DJI.



A DJI drone (EV50) flies over the mountains in Tibet as part of a high-altitude trial from Base Camp of Mt Chomolungma (Everest). Images of the trial appeared on DJI's website and across Chinese state and social media channels.

The first shows that DJI drones are in police hands. In 2017 police in Maldro Gongkar county, east of Lhasa, were given a DJI Phantom 3 SE. In July 2025 police in Tingkye trained with a DJI Mavic 3 Pro.¹⁸⁰ The second shows how they got there. In 12 government purchase records, DJI equipment is named in the award or in the itemised list of goods, along with the buyer, the date, the supplier and, in most cases, the price paid for each item.

Together, these records show that security and government bodies in Tibetan areas bought DJI equipment again and again between 2020 and 2026, through dealers and system integrators, in orders with a combined published value of about ¥24.8 million, a figure that includes non-DJI equipment in the same packages. They do not show that DJI sold to these buyers directly, that every dealer was authorised by DJI, or that DJI knew how its products would be used. DJI is not the seller in any of the 12 awards.

Two points, however, weaken any argument that DJI was simply at arm's length. First, buyers asked for DJI by name: the TAR Ecology Department issued a request for quotations for a DJI drone. Second, four of the suppliers are registered in the TAR, and company records can show whether they are part of DJI's authorised dealer network. That work is under way.

12.2 The supplier layer

Supplier	Registered	Role in record
重庆鹰力德警用器械有限公司	Chongqing	DJI package to TAR anti-terror unit (2020)
西藏皓森实业有限公司	TAR	Inspire 2 fleet to Chengguan PSB (2021)
西藏攀索实业有限公司	TAR	All-DJI border platform, Shigatse (2021)
西藏大智无疆科技有限责任公司	TAR	¥8.63m Lhasa C-UAS system (2021)
西藏科力达数码测绘仪器有限责任公司	TAR	DJI award to PAP Tibet Corps HQ (2023)
广州捷厉特车装备有限公司	Guangzhou	Lhasa PSB emergency package incl. DJI (2023)
西藏智疆科技有限公司	TAR	DJI to Ali Fire & Rescue (2024); named in Chengguan drone-airport bid attachment
四川川鑫创新科技有限责任公司	Sichuan	Lhasa ETDZ PSB drones (2024); brand unconfirmed
国家无线电监测中心检测中心	National (MIIT)	TAR RF counter-UAS evaluation (2025)
云南近达信息技术有限公司 / 四川中月畅饮商贸有限公司 / 中立道科技有限公司 et al.	Yunnan / Sichuan	Outside-TAR DJI packages (2023–25)

Whether the Tibetan-registered suppliers are within DJI's authorised-dealer network is to be pursued through SAMR/Qichacha registry work on legal representatives, shareholders and dealer listings; nothing is inferred from company names. The counter-drone track has named suppliers at both ends: a Tibetan commercial integrator for Lhasa's 2021 system, and a national technical institution for the 2025 RF programme. The one named platform still without a discoverable vendor is Nyingtri's 警鹰 ("Police Eagle").

The most significant record still being verified comes from Chengguan District police in central Lhasa: the second phase of a project for a "smart drone airport and three-dimensional control circle". A bid document names the supplier as Tibet Zhijiang Technology (西藏智疆科技), one of the Tibet-registered companies that already appears as a DJI reseller in the confirmed awards, and lists equipment designated "M4T-BD". This is very likely a version of DJI's Matrice 4T, its current-generation security drone. If confirmed, it would place DJI's latest dock-and-drone system at the centre of a police surveillance network covering central Lhasa, including the Jokhang and the Barkhor.¹⁸¹

12.3 DJI corporate profile

DJI. SZ DJI Technology Co., Ltd., based in Shenzhen, is the world's leading maker of civilian drones. Estimates vary by market and year, but DJI is commonly reported to make around 70 per

cent of the world's consumer drones and a large share of professional ones. In the US, it supplied most public safety drone fleets on 2020 figures.¹⁸²

Governments have already acted on DJI's links to rights abuses and the Chinese state. In December 2020 the US Commerce Department added DJI to its Entity List, citing its role in enabling human rights abuses. A year later, in December 2021, the US Treasury barred US investment in the company, specifically for supplying drones used to watch Uyghurs in Xinjiang. The US Defense Department lists DJI as a "Chinese military company". In September 2025 a federal court upheld that listing on the grounds that DJI contributes to China's military-civil fusion strategy, while rejecting the claim that DJI is owned or controlled by the Chinese Communist Party. In December 2025 the US Federal Communications Commission blocked new models of foreign-made drones, and all DJI communications and video equipment, from authorisation for sale in the US. A 2022 investigation by the Washington Post found state-linked investors among DJI's shareholders; DJI says they hold minority stakes with no control.¹⁸³

Like every company headquartered in China, DJI is bound by Article 7 of the National Intelligence Law, which requires organisations to support and cooperate with state intelligence work. That law was the basis for the UK's decision in November 2022 to remove Chinese-made surveillance cameras from sensitive government sites.

None of this proves that DJI knew its products were going to the police in Tibet. Buying through dealers, and hiding supplier names at the tender stage, keeps that question open. But under the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, DJI's responsibility does not depend on knowing. A company must act on harms linked to its products through its business relationships, including sales through dealers, and that responsibility applies here.

13. THE GLOBAL FOOTPRINT: SAME DRONES, SENSITIVE SKIES

The manufacturer whose equipment is documented across 12 security- and government sector awards in Tibetan areas is also a dominant supplier to Western police forces and consumers. In the UK, the Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner's 2023 survey and the National Police Chiefs' Council's (NPCC) account of police drone use (around 60,000 flights a year) establish the scale of police reliance.¹⁸⁴ In February 2023 the Telegraph reported, from Freedom of Information requests, that at least 230 of the 337 drones operated by 37 UK police forces were DJI models.¹⁸⁵ The data security argument (National Intelligence Law exposure; manufacturer-connected servers, accounts, cloud activation and firmware channels) and the ethical procurement argument (documented supply presence amid abusive deployment in Tibet and Xinjiang) run in parallel, as they did for visual surveillance equipment at sensitive sites, where the UK Government acted on the security argument in 2022.



Global Chinese-language media focus on drones: China hosted correspondents based in countries including the US, Canada, Australia and South Korea to explore how the Chinese company Yizhou Intelligent is “reshaping Tibet’s low-altitude economic landscape through technological innovation”. Covered by Korean media, July 2025.

There is a precedent. In October 2019 the US Commerce Department added Hikvision and Dahua to the Entity List over Xinjiang. In November 2022 the UK Cabinet Office instructed departments to stop deploying visual surveillance equipment made by companies subject to the PRC National Intelligence Law at sensitive sites, without naming manufacturers.¹⁸⁶ The government committed to a removal timetable during the passage of the Procurement Bill.¹⁸⁷ By April 2024 about half of the small number of sensitive sites that had such equipment had replaced it.¹⁸⁸ On 18 November 2025 Dan Jarvis confirmed in a written statement that all the sensitive government sites originally identified had completed replacement.¹⁸⁹

On the drone side, DJI's US treatment rests on two measures grounded in human rights, Commerce's December 2020 Entity List addition and Treasury's December 2021 NS-CMIC identification, both citing Xinjiang, and a series of supply-chain and airspace instruments in 2025–26 (the FCC Covered List addition,¹⁹⁰ Executive Orders 14305 and 14307)¹⁹¹ that do not turn on human rights and, in the case of the executive orders, do not name DJI at all.

The asymmetry is the central UK point: cameras removed from sensitive sites, drones untouched, the same National Intelligence Law logic, and now a procurement record from Tibet that did not exist when the 2022 instruction was issued. Other jurisdictions have moved in the same direction: Norwegian parliamentary pressure on police use of Chinese drones alongside sovereign-alternative development; US federal¹⁹² and state procurement bans; Indian import restrictions.¹⁹³

14. CONCLUSION

Tibet's sky is being closed to everyone but the state. No law aimed at Tibetans was needed, and no leaked directive or whistleblower revealed it. It is set out in tender notices, contract awards, police reports and flight bans that the Chinese state has published about itself, in the ordinary course of government, since 2017. Read one at a time, they describe equipment purchases and public safety drills. Read together, and set against what Tibet Watch knows of the people living beneath them, they describe a region where the police fly freely and no one else may fly without the state's permission.

There have been two developments at the same time. Police and security forces across the Tibet Autonomous Region and the Tibetan areas of Sichuan and Yunnan have acquired drones, trained the pilots to fly them, and built what they need to keep them in the air: automated drone nests, drone airports and a police aviation battalion, while the region has opened a high-altitude drone test base. Over the same years they have acquired the means to keep everyone else out of the sky: systems to detect and jam drones, flight bans timed to a political anniversary, a network in Nyingtri that runs from radar to sanction, and a national rule under which a new drone will not take off until it is registered to its owner. None of this is secret. The mission the TAR's police drone training names is 维稳, "stability maintenance", the term the state uses for suppressing dissent and enforcing compliance with Party policy. And the places where the aircraft have gone are the places where Tibetans have protested, where they gather to pray, and where they have tried to escape to freedom.

The record does not show a drone flown over a particular festival or a particular mountain pass, and this report has not claimed it does. It shows, in the state's own words, where the state chose to put its aircraft, and what it chose to make difficult or impossible for the people who live there. The herder whose lost yaks are found from the air is the same herder whose movements can now be followed from the air, and he has no say in either. In Derge, monks who appeared in footage of the dam protests were jailed, and one of them was tortured so severely he has only just survived. The Tibetan who might film from the air can do so only once registered with the state, and in Lhasa in August 2025 could not do so at all. The state can watch Tibetans from above, and Tibetans cannot look back without its permission. That imbalance is the harm, whatever the stated purpose.

The manufacturer named most often in these records, DJI, is the same company whose drones fly for police forces across Britain. That puts this record in front of governments that have already decided, in the case of surveillance cameras, that equipment from companies bound by China's National Intelligence Law should not be used at sensitive sites. It puts it in front of the UN human

rights experts who have raised China's use of surveillance and the rights of Tibetans, but have not yet seen the evidence from Tibet's skies. And it puts it in front of DJI itself, whose responsibility under the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights does not end when a dealer makes the sale. Section 2 sets out what we ask of governments, and of DJI's customers and investors.

Tibet Watch will keep this record open. Every new tender, drill and flight ban that appears will be logged, checked and archived, because these sources disappear and the state's own account is the evidence. The people this report is about cannot publish it. Within their own country, they cannot freely fly, and they cannot film what flies over them. The least the rest of us can do is read what the state has written, and say what it means.

ANNEX A. MASTER CHRONOLOGY (65 RECORDS, JUNE 2017 – FEBRUARY 2026)

ID	Date	Type	Summary	Amount	Vendor / Supplier	Conf.
31	2017-06-11	WeChat	DJI Phantom 3 SE drone donated to Mozhugongka County PSB (Lhasa), used for new public security patrol model — rapid aerial overview of scenes and pol...	n/a	DJI	High
59	2020-12-02	Tender/ Award	Anti-terror mobile unit procurement included a substantial DJI surveillance and multi-function UAV package.	¥1,720,000	重庆鹰力德警用器械有限公司	High
32	2021-04-25	WeChat	Shigatse City PSB held its first police UAV training course; participants included backbone officers from 9 border counties and 2 port PSB sub-bureau...	n/a	—	High
57	2021-07-09	Tender/ Award	Lhasa PSB awarded a city-level UAV detection and countermeasure equipment procurement.	¥8,631,435	西藏大智无疆科技有限责任公司	High
60	2021-08-09	Tender/ Award	Chengguan PSB procurement bought a fleet of DJI Inspire 2 aircraft and Zenmuse X7 camera systems.	¥2,458,605	西藏皓森实业有限公司	High
61	2021-09-09	Tender/ Award	Shigatse Border Management Detachment established a police UAV platform using DJI aircraft.	¥852,240	西藏攀索实业有限公司	High
33	2021-11-08	WeChat	TAR Public Security Department's first police unmanned aircraft pilot training course opened; participants drawn from counter-terrorism, police suppo...	n/a	—	High
62	2023-04-26	Tender/ Award	TAR Department of Ecology and Environment sought a DJI mapping/inspection drone.	n/a	—	High
63	2023-05-29	Tender/ Award	Armed Police Tibet Corps headquarters awarded a DJI UAV procurement.	¥678,900	西藏科力达数码测绘仪器有限责任公司	High
64	2023-06-16	Tender/ Award	Lhasa PSB emergency-equipment award included multiple DJI enterprise UAVs.	¥10,180,000	广州捷厉特车装备有限公司	Medium-High
34	2023-08-13	WeChat	TAR PSB 2023 first police UAV pilot training opened in Shannan; 52 trainees from Shannan, Shigatse, and Nagqu; focus on patrol, stability operations,...	n/a	—	Medium
35	2023-09-04	WeChat	TAR PSB 2023 first police UAV pilot training (Shannan) concluded after 25 days at the Shannan PSB training base.	n/a	—	Medium

ID	Date	Type	Summary	Amount	Vendor / Supplier	Conf.
36	2023-12-20	WeChat	Biru County PSB (Nagqu) issued 18 police UAVs across 5 models and trained 10+ pilots for daily aerial patrol, public service, and security operations.	n/a	—	High
65	2024-01-19	Tender/Award	Ali Fire and Rescue purchased three DJI drones for operational response.	¥353,010	西藏智疆科技有限公司	High
37	2024-03-26	WeChat	Lulang Township police station (Bayi District, Nyingchi) deployed officers with UAVs to search for and rescue a stranded tourist.	n/a	—	High
38	2024-04-19	WeChat	First illegal UAV 'black flight' case penalised under the new regulations in TAR, handled by Gongbogyamda County PSB (Nyingchi).	n/a	—	High
39	2024-04-28	WeChat	Ali Prefecture PSB SWAT completed cross-regional rapid deployment exercise including 'UAV mountain pursuit' drill.	n/a	—	High
40	2024-10-18	WeChat	Shigatse City PSB held 2024 second police UAV training course; emphasis on low-altitude policing team-building and broad application of police UAVs.	n/a	—	High
41	2024-10-18	WeChat	Lhasa Special Police held open police camp day; UAV demonstration and interactive display included.	n/a	—	High
42	2024-11-11	WeChat	Nagqu City PSB 2024 first police UAV operator training course opened; 46 backbone officers enrolled for one-month curriculum delivered by China Peopl...	n/a	—	High
43	2024-11-13	WeChat	Shigatse City PSB 2024 second police UAV training concluded; focused on advancing UAV training base construction and specialist personnel development.	n/a	—	High
44	2024-11-13	WeChat	Tingkye County PSB low-altitude policing unit conducted police UAV skills training to strengthen grassroots policing technology application.	n/a	—	High
58	2024-12-18	Tender/Award	Lhasa Economic and Technological Development Zone PSB awarded a drone procurement.	¥457,200	四川川鑫创新科技有限责任公司	High
30	2025-01-07	Notice	Following the Dingri earthquake (7 January 2025, Shigatse Prefecture), PLA Western Theatre Command dispatched UAVs to survey the epicentre area befor...	n/a	—	High
11	2025-04-08	Tender/Award	Consultation notice for evaluation of UAV RF countermeasure equipment deployment and usage.	¥423,000	国家无线电监测中心检测中心	High
12	2025-04-23	Tender/Award	Supplementary announcement clarifying service fee terms for UAV RF countermeasure evaluation project.	n/a	—	High
45	2025-04-29	WeChat	Gêrzê County, Revolution Township police station (Ali) conducted joint search with township government using vehicles, foot patrol, and UAVs.	n/a	—	High

ID	Date	Type	Summary	Amount	Vendor / Supplier	Conf.
46	2025-06-12	WeChat	Everest Border Police Station (Shigatse) used UAVs to rapidly locate tourist movements during a search-and-rescue operation.	n/a	—	High
47	2025-06-12	WeChat	Bayi District PSB (Nyingchi) equipped with 9 police UAVs and 17 pilots; 156 aerial patrols and 43 traffic accident responses conducted since 2024.	n/a	—	High
48	2025-06-18	WeChat	Chengguan District PSB (Lhasa) SWAT team used 'UAV + ground unit' combined operations, resolving a simulated terrorist incident within 5 minutes.	n/a	—	High
15	2025-07-02	Tender/ Award	Tender for drones, drone hangars, spare parts, and counter-UAV equipment for Ali Prefecture PSB SWAT unit.	¥2,343,728	—	High
3	2025-07-09	WeChat	Lhasa SWAT integrated UAV reconnaissance into summer training drills, including indoor reconnaissance operations.	n/a	—	High
56	2025-07-17	WeChat	Tingkye County PSB organised police UAV practical skills training; DJI Mavic 3 Pro platform referenced for police training and air-ground integrated...	n/a	DJI	Medium
5 □	2025-07-22	Notice	Gacha County notice requires registration and approval for UAV/LSA flights; reporting to local public security mandated.	n/a	—	Medium
19 □	2025-07-22	Notice	Gacha County mandated UAV/LSA registration and reporting to local public security; defined parameters for 'low, slow, small' aircraft.	n/a	—	Medium
49	2025-08-03	WeChat	Tingkye County PSB UAV provided real-time aerial feed during a 7-hour search for a missing youth, building a three-dimensional search network.	n/a	—	High
17	2025-08-08	Notice	Nyingchi Public Security announced UAV bans in specified areas from 10–31 August 2025; enforcement by local police.	n/a	—	Medium
4 □	2025-08-09	Notice	Lhasa municipal notice imposes flight control on UAVs and 'low, slow, small' aircraft; exceptions for police/rescue/ meteorological with approval.	n/a	—	High
20 □	2025-08-09	Notice	Lhasa municipal government imposed UAV flight controls across the city; unauthorized 'low, slow, small' flights prohibited, exceptions for police/res...	n/a	—	High
22 □	2025-08-10	Notice	Lhasa municipal government issued flight-control notice restricting UAV and 'low, slow, small' aerial activities across the city, effective 10–31 Aug...	n/a	—	High
21 □	2025-08-11	Notice	Ali Prefecture government issued airspace control notice for 'low, slow, small' aircraft (including UAVs) during TAR 60th anniversary, 10–31 Aug 2025.	n/a	—	High

ID	Date	Type	Summary	Amount	Vendor / Supplier	Conf.
25	2025-08-11	Notice	Bange County government announced UAV flight control and no-fly zones from 11 Aug – 1 Sep 2025; violators subject to police countermeasures.	n/a	—	High
7	2025-08-14	Notice	Chamdo City announced a ban on UAV/LSA flights during anniversary celebrations; unauthorized flights may be shot down.	n/a	—	Medium
18	2025-08-14	Notice	Chamdo City announced UAV/LSA bans from 14–31 Aug 2025; warned unauthorized flights may be shot down.	n/a	—	Medium
23	2025-08-14	Notice	Chamdo City announced UAV/LSA flight ban from 14–31 Aug 2025, warning unauthorized drones may be 'shot down'.	n/a	—	High
6	2025-08-21	Notice	Gêrzê County PSB announced temporary no-fly zone for UAVs and LSA aircraft within ~15 km of county town.	n/a	—	Medium
24	2025-08-21	Notice	Gêrzê County PSB (Ali Prefecture) declared temporary no-fly zone for UAVs and other 'low, slow, small' aerial craft within 15 km radius of county sea...	n/a	—	High
50	2025-08-21	WeChat	Gegye County PSB (Ali) deployed UAV after terrain made ground search impossible, to locate 67 missing yaks for a herder.	n/a	—	High
16	2025-08	Notice	Ali Prefecture government announced flight restrictions on 'low, slow, small' aircraft across several counties during TAR 60th anniversary (10–31 Aug...	n/a	—	High
13	2025-09-01	Tender/Award	Tender for test and verification services of TAR radio monitoring facilities, relevant to UAV spectrum and countermeasure support.	In attachments (not visib...	—	High
9	2025-09-02	Notice	Public Security reports enforcement against illicit hacking/bypass of UAV no-fly and altitude restrictions.	n/a	—	High
1	2025-09-16	WeChat	Nagqu Public Security Bureau launched a police UAV training class at Tibet Police College; curriculum covers theory, field operation, and drills.	n/a	—	High
51	2025-09-16	WeChat	TAR four-tier police unmanned aircraft training institution officially inaugurated; Nagqu training course opened simultaneously.	n/a	—	High
14	2025-09-20 (approx.)	Tender/Award	Procurement for all-terrain, all-weather UAV reconnaissance and countermeasure equipment for Jiangda County PSB.	n/a	—	High
52	2024-09-21	WeChat	Shigatse Sangzhuzi District issued first 'black flight' administrative penalty; low-altitude policing unit deployed counter-drone vehicle for technic...	n/a	—	Medium
2	2025-09-26	WeChat	Lhasa Special Police Aviation Management Battalion held study and training sessions; responsibilities include UAV safety management.	n/a	—	High

ID	Date	Type	Summary	Amount	Vendor / Supplier	Conf.
53 □	2025-09-26	WeChat	Confirmed: Lhasa Special Police has a dedicated Police Aviation Management Battalion within the SWAT brigade.	n/a	—	High
10	2025-09-28	Notice	Ali Prefecture inaugurates high-altitude unmanned equipment test base (>4300m). Unveils fixed-wing 'Ali Yunduan No. 1' (~100kg MTOW, 150 km/h, 4.5h).	n/a	—	High
28	2025-12-10 (TAR repub...	Policy_Contr...	State Administration for Market Regulation published two mandatory national UAV standards effective 1 May 2026: GB 46761-2025 (registration and activ...	n/a	—	High
26	2025-12-22 (publicati...	Notice	Sangzhuzi District PSB (Shigatse) details operational deployment of police UAV programme since May 2024: automated drone nests with thermal imaging,...	n/a	—	High
8	2025 (undated on mirr...	Notice	Lhasa forestry pest-control drill used UAVs for monitoring and aerial observation.	n/a	—	Medium
29	2026-02-11	Notice	TAR Cyberspace Office republishes national article on criminal cases for UAV geofence/ altitude hacking: one individual arrested December 2025 for flying t...	n/a	—	High
54	2026-02-12	WeChat	Chamdo City PSB Traffic Management Unit uses UAVs for routine inspection of key road sections, hazard areas, and construction sites.	n/a	—	High
27	2026-02-19	Notice	Nyingchi City details a fully integrated low-altitude defense network: radar, AI recognition, and electronic fencing for real-time tracking and preci...	n/a	警鹰 platform (vendor not named)	High
55	2026-02-19	WeChat	Nyingchi established a UAV control leadership working group with specialised sub-groups including emergency countermeasures; full-chain enforcement i...	n/a	—	High

ANNEX B. DJI AWARDS IN TIBETAN AREAS OUTSIDE THE TAR

ID	Status	Area	Buyer	Date	Award	DJI models / content	Conf.
OT-1	Confirmed	Yunnan — 迪庆藏族自治州	云南省迪庆藏族自治州公安局	2023-11-22	¥2,070,435	Matrice 350 RTK ×1; Zenmuse P1 ×1; Zenmuse H20N ×1; M30T ×2; Mavic 3T ×2; FlyCart 30 ×1	High
OT-2	Confirmed	Sichuan — 甘孜藏族自治州（海螺沟）	甘孜藏族自治州海螺沟景区管理局	2023-06-16	¥448,520	DJI M30 + LP12 ×1; DJI Mavic 3 ×1	High
OT-3	Confirmed	Sichuan — 阿坝藏族羌族自治州（阿坝县）	阿坝县林业和草原局	2026-01-08	¥395,000	DJI Matrice 4T ×4	Medium-High
OT-4	Confirmed	Sichuan — 甘孜藏族自治州（康定市）	康定市应急管理局	2024-12-25	¥484,785	DJI Mavic 3T / M3T with RM510B controller ×1	High
OT-5	Confirmed	Sichuan — 甘孜藏族自治州（德格县）	德格县公安局	2025-05-17	¥4,429,553	DJI Dock 2 ×4; DJI M3TD/M3D aircraft ×4; DJI FlightHub 2 / 司空2 control platform ×1	High
OT-6	Confirmed	Sichuan — 甘孜藏族自治州	甘孜藏族自治州公安局反恐特警支队	2025-11-24	¥723,800	DJI Zenmuse L2 LiDAR gimbal camera; DJI TB65 batteries; non-DJI 3D Gaussian splatting modelling system (Qiyu P1)	High
OT-7	Lead	Sichuan — 甘孜藏族自治州	甘孜藏族自治州公安局	2025-09-19...	Unknown	Police UAVs plus command-and-control vehicle; models not exposed in indexed notice	Medium
OT-8	Lead	Sichuan — 阿坝藏族羌族自治州（理县）	理县公安局	2026-05-14	Award located; amount and...	Drone airport integrated with Skynet phase-II expansion	Medium

ANNEX C. METHODOLOGY, CONFIDENCE AND LIMITATIONS

Tibet Watch Note: Every finding in this report rests on documents Chinese authorities published about themselves. They establish purchases, capability and named missions. They do not establish that a drone was used against a named individual, and the record does not yet contain testimony about drones. Each document is logged as a numbered record, and the footnotes cite it by that number: Alert numbers for the TAR chronology (Annex A), OT numbers for DJI awards in Tibetan areas outside the TAR (Annex B).

C.1 Collection

All records derive from open sources published by PRC state organs, state media, or procurement platforms: the China Government Procurement network and TAR portal (ccgp-xizang.gov.cn, ggzy.xizang.gov.cn, zjt/jxt/ee.xizang.gov.cn); the Sichuan public resources platform (ggzyjy.sc.gov.cn); official police and government accounts on xzdw.gov.cn and prefecture subdomains; regional notice boards; national standards publications; and official media. No classified, restricted or leaked material was consulted. Collection is conducted in Chinese with a defined term set, 无人机, 警用无人机, 无人机反制, 低慢小, 无人机机巢, 低空防御, 低空经济, and procurement-specific terms (采购意向, 中标公告, 成交公告), with buyer-type rotation (公安局, 边境管理支队, 出入境边防检查总站) anchored by year, which consistently outperforms generic queries. National CCGP project numbers are the most reliable cross-reference identifiers where URLs fail. The methodology was developed with, and the dataset structure is maintained for, C4ADS, whose support of the Tibet Watch research team is acknowledged.

Currency. Sterling equivalents are given at £1 = ¥8.87, the exchange rate on 25 September 2026, and are rounded.

C.2 Confidence schema and source hierarchy

Each record carries 13 fields including original Chinese title, buyer, date, budget, vendor where identifiable, source URL and mirror URL, with two separate ratings: record confidence (High for official government or police-operated channels; Medium for aggregator mirrors and secondary republication) and platform-identification confidence (High only where a make or model is named or unambiguously visible). Of the July 2026 collection's 16 confirmed records, 13 are High and three Medium-High; all leads are excluded from all totals. "Confirmed" denotes human review of

the record against the best available source, the original notice where reachable, otherwise an archived copy or a procurement mirror reproducing the notice's identifying fields, with field level checking of load-bearing values; it does not denote primary source verification of every field in every record, and mirror-only records are marked as such; corrections are made through a dedicated verification register, not on record sheets. Secondary procurement mirrors (fdzb119.com, ode119.com) reproduce project numbers, suppliers, amounts and itemisations and are in several cases the only surviving copy of de-indexed awards; they are corroborated across two mirrors where possible and require immediate Wayback and local-PDF archival. State media operational claims (tasking counts, fleet numbers) are treated as stated by the source: they are the state's own claims about itself, and the analytical burden they carry here is one they were published to bear.

C.3 Limitations

The dataset observes what the security state publishes about itself and is bounded by its disclosure choices: vendors concealed at notice stage, budgets moved to attachments, operational accounts framed for domestic legitimization. PLA capability is almost entirely outside the open source record. Coverage is a function of search effort: a majority of source records carry 2025 dates because systematic collection began in April 2025 and because near-duplicate flight ban notices cluster there, and retrospective sweeps demonstrate that earlier records exist and are recoverable, so no trend or density claim is made, and none should be, until the 2022–2024 CCGP backfill completes. Qinghai and Gansu are collection gaps, not confirmed absences. TAR government portals time out from external environments; aggregator mirrors are the operational fallback, with the confidence discount that entails. Nothing in this report relies on sources inside Tibet, and no Tibetan inside Tibet was contacted in its preparation.

ANNEX D. RIGHTS ENGAGED

China has ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1981), the Convention against Torture (1988), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1992) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (2001). It signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1998 but has never ratified it. Under the Universal Periodic Review, China's record is assessed against the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the treaties it has ratified and its own voluntary commitments. China's Constitution protects freedom of religious belief (Article 36) and the privacy of correspondence (Article 40), although Article 40 allows the police and prosecutors to inspect correspondence for state security or criminal investigations. The analysis below treats the ratified treaties as binding obligations, and the ICCPR as the standard that UN independent experts apply to China in practice.

Privacy. Drones fitted with thermal and zoom cameras, flying regularly over homes, monasteries and public gatherings, intrude on the private lives of everyone beneath them, whether or not anyone is singled out. In Samzhubze, drones fly pre-set routes over the city regularly, watching an entire population without suspicion of any individual, and the police present this as the system's strength. Under international standards, including Article 12 of the Universal Declaration and Article 17 of the ICCPR, such intrusion is permissible only if it is lawful, necessary and proportionate to a legitimate aim, and subject to safeguards. For children, this is not just a standard but a binding obligation: under Article 16 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which China has ratified, no child may be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with their privacy. Nothing in the record attempts to justify the surveillance on these terms, and Tibetans living beneath it have no independent body to which they can complain.

Religion and cultural life. China is bound by Article 15 of the ICESCR to respect the right to take part in cultural life, and by Article 5 of CERD to guarantee freedom of religion and equal participation in cultural activities without discrimination. The Convention on the Rights of the Child protects children's freedom of religion (Article 14) and the right of children from minority communities to practise their own religion and culture (Article 30). Article 18 of the ICCPR sets the standard UN experts apply to the practice of religion in community with others. In Tibet, religious and cultural life cannot be separated: they meet in the festival, the kora, the pilgrims' circuit around a sacred site, and the cham, the masked dance performed in monastery courtyards. A police drone over a Saga Dawa procession or a monastery festival adds an eye in the sky to the controls already inside Tibet's monasteries: the management committees of officials, the rules requiring religious activities to be registered, and the camera networks. The operational records could show whether a particular flight was timed to a particular festival, and this report has not yet established that. What is established is that the drones are stationed where the festivals take place, and that monitoring crowds at large events is one of their stated missions.

Peaceful assembly. In Tibet, gatherings the state has not sanctioned are treated as a threat to "stability", and "stability maintenance" (维稳) is the language of the TAR's police drone training. The UN Human Rights Committee, in its authoritative interpretation of the right to peaceful assembly (General Comment 37, 2020), warns that collecting personal information about people at assemblies, including through facial recognition, can deter them from taking part, and must itself be necessary and proportionate. For Tibetans, a police drone over a gathering sends a clear message: whoever attends may be recorded. The record contains no testimony from Tibetans about drones specifically. The chilling effect is inferred from where the drones are deployed, and from what Tibetans already know about the consequences of being identified at a gathering.

Expression and the right to document. China is bound by Article 5 of CERD to guarantee freedom of opinion and expression without discrimination, and by Article 13 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to protect children's freedom of expression. Article 19 of the ICCPR sets the wider standard: the freedom to seek, receive and share information. Tibetans have been imprisoned for sharing it. Tashi Wangchuk was sentenced to five years in prison after he appeared in a New York Times video about Tibetan-language education.¹⁹⁴ After the Derge dam protests of 2024, people accused of sending images abroad were detained. The airspace rules described in Section 9 apply the same logic to the sky. Under a national standard in force since May 2026, a new drone will not take off until it has been registered to its owner's real name and activated. The TAR's internet regulator has republished calls for online platforms to suppress "black flight" content and for citizens to report suspicious drones, and the Ministry of State Security asks the public to report "illegal aerial photography" to its 12339 hotline.¹⁹⁵ For a Tibetan, this means that filming from the air is tied to their identity before it happens, punishable if it is not, and open to being reported by anyone either way. The footage from Derge was filmed on phones. Wherever the next protest happens, the means of filming it from the air will already be under state control.

Freedom of movement. China is bound by Article 5 of CERD to guarantee, without discrimination, "the right to leave any country, including one's own". Article 13 of the Universal Declaration and Article 12 of the ICCPR set out the same right. For most Tibetans, who have long been refused passports,¹⁹⁶ the only way to exercise this right has been to cross the Himalaya on foot. The drone capability documented on the frontiers with Nepal, Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh bears directly on that route. The record shows the aircraft and the training, not their use to stop anyone crossing. The number of Tibetans reaching Nepal, which has fallen from thousands a year to a handful, shows how completely the border has been closed.

Non-discrimination. China is bound by the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Article 2 requires it to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms, and Article 5 guarantees equality in enjoying each of the rights set out above. In its 2018 review of China, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination warned that China's broad definitions of terrorism, extremism and separatism could criminalise peaceful civic and religious expression and lead to the profiling of 'minorities', including Tibetans.¹⁹⁷ It also raised serious restrictions on Tibetans' movement and the near-total denial of passports in the TAR. Tibet Watch has documented restrictions imposed on Tibetans, but not on Han Chinese visitors, at the same sites in Lhasa.¹⁹⁸ This report does not ask whether China polices with drones,

as police forces in many countries now do. It asks whether China uses aerial surveillance and airspace closures disproportionately against Tibetans. The pattern documented in Section 10.1, with drones concentrated where Tibetans have protested, worship and try to leave, is the evidence on which the Committee can put that question to China.

Children. The Convention on the Rights of the Child, which China has ratified, protects children's privacy (Article 16), requires education to respect a child's own cultural identity and language (Article 29), and protects the right of children from minority communities to their own culture, religion and language (Article 30). For Tibetan children, all three are already under pressure. Most Tibetan children of school age are now in state boarding schools, away from their families.¹⁹⁹ Tibetan-language monastic schools have been closed, including the Taktsang Lhamo Kirti Monastery school in Dzoge in October 2024.²⁰⁰ Children were included in the mass DNA collection campaigns described in Section 5. Aerial surveillance of Tibetan communities reaches them too. The record contains no drone deployed at a school. It does contain Drago, where a monastic school was demolished in 2021 and the footage reached the outside world, and where, four years later, the prefecture's SWAT unit bought a system for rapidly mapping sites in 3D from the air.



Tibet Watch has documented a new programme involving military veterans in schools that underscores the Chinese government's drive to integrate national defence education and patriotic education into the daily curriculum of state-run boarding schools in Tibet, amid growing concerns over the erosion of Tibetan-medium education under China's so-called bilingual education. The programme places heightened emphasis on China's control over its borders with neighbouring countries including India, Nepal and Bhutan, with children taken to strategic border locations on school trips. Image: Chinese state media.

NOTES

- 1 TAR_UAV_Master_Research_v8_outside_TAR_deep_scan_20260718.xlsx (Tibet Watch / C4ADS, 18 July 2026). Sheets: Master_Chronology (65 records), Procurement, DJI_Procurement_Sweep (9 records), DJI_Tibetan_Areas_Outside_TAR (8 records), Outside_TAR_Deep_Leads, Update_Log, Ecosystem_Context, Policy_Control. All records open source; collection and confidence methodology at Annex C. Alert numbers are the immutable record identifiers of the Master_Chronology sheet (Annex A); OT numbers identify the eight outside-TAR records, six awards and two leads (Annex B); Alert IDs do not change between dataset versions.
- 2 Segment-specific figures per the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission staff report on China's remote sensing and drone industry (December 2024) and UHRP (2024, citing 2020 US public safety data).
- 3 United States: Commerce Department Entity List (December 2020), Treasury NS-CMIC investment restriction (December 2021) and FCC Covered List (December 2025); see Section 12.3. India: Directorate General of Foreign Trade Notification No. 54/2015-2020, 9 February 2022, prohibiting drone imports with exceptions for research, defence and security.
- 4 Alert 28: GB 46761-2025 民用无人驾驶航空器实名登记和激活要求 (real-name registration and activation requirements for civil unmanned aircraft), issued 31 October 2025 by SAMR/CAAC, republished by the TAR Cyberspace Office on 10 December 2025, effective 1 May 2026; covered compliant civil drones must be activated through the civil aviation identity system to be flight-capable and are disabled on deregistration; drones already sold and in use before 1 May 2026 receive a 12-month transition; police, customs and emergency management aircraft and qualifying toys/models are outside scope. https://wxb.xzdw.gov.cn/xxh/ghzc/202512/t20251210_631310.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/NGqax>). Companion standard GB 46750-2025 covers operational identification broadcast. High confidence.
- 5 Alert 29: 无人机，不应成为“脱缰的野马”，TAR Cyberspace Office republication of a Guangming Daily article on MPS-publicised cases, 11 February 2026, https://wxb.xzdw.gov.cn/wlaq/aqdt/202602/t20260211_648069.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/G7I11>). High confidence on the republication; no Tibet nexus established for the criminal case; the source does not record the outcome.
- 6 Cabinet Office, written ministerial statement HCWS386, 24 November 2022 (national security measure for visual surveillance equipment at sensitive sites; manufacturers not named); removal timetable given as a political commitment during passage of the Procurement Bill, not a statutory duty; HCWS431, 29 April 2024 (approximately 50% of sites replaced); written statement, 18 November 2025 (all originally identified sensitive sites completed replacement).
- 7 OT-5: 德格县公安环川综合检查站智慧信息化建设采购项目 (德格县公安局, 甘孜藏族自治州 (德格县)), 17 May 2025, ¥4,429,553; supplier 中立道科技有限公司; DJI items: DJI Dock 2 ×4; DJI M3TD/M3D aircraft ×4; DJI FlightHub 2 / 司空2 control platform ×1. <https://ggzyjy.sc.gov.cn/jyxx/002002/002002004/20250517/8a69d33c96c9ce5d0196dc4db2e91b22.html> (page captured 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch). High source quality.
- 8 Tibet Watch, "Driru County: the new hub of Tibetan resistance," tibetwatch.org/driru-county-the-new-hub-of-tibetan-resistance/ (cited at Section 10.1).
- 9 Alert 36: 那曲市比如县公安局运用警用无人机护航“平安比如” (Biru County PSB (Nagqu) issued 18 police UAVs across 5 models and trained 10+ pilots for daily aerial patrol, public service, and security operations), 比如县公安局, 20 December 2023, https://toutiao.xzdw.gov.cn/ms/202312/t20231220_427321.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/lwyRO>). High confidence.
- 10 Tibet Watch, "Further details emerge of evictions at Larung Gar," tibetwatch.org/further-details-emerge-of-evictions-at-larung-gar/; Tibet Watch, "Destruction of Buddha statue, prayer wheels and prayer flags in Drago County," tibetwatch.org/destruction-of-buddha-statue-prayer-wheels-and-prayer-flags-in-drago-county/ (both cited at Section 10.1); Tibet Watch, 'Tibetan Buddhist landmark transformed into racecourse named after Chinese red army', 2 August 2026: <https://tibetwatch.org/tibetan-buddhist-landmark-transformed-into-racecourse/>
- 11 OT-6: 甘孜州公安局反恐特警支队无人机应急快速建模系统项目 (甘孜藏族自治州公安局反恐特警支队, 甘孜藏族自治州), 24 November 2025, ¥723,800 (中标 (成交) 金额 (award amount), from the official award result notice); supplier 低空数创 (成都) 科技有限公司 (Low-Altitude Digital Innovation (Chengdu) Technology Co., Ltd.); DJI items: DJI Zenmuse L2

LiDAR gimbal camera; DJI TB65 intelligent batteries; the 3D Gaussian splatting cluster modelling system itself is a non-DJI product (其域 (Qiyu), model P1). <https://ggzyjy.sc.gov.cn/jyxx/002002/002002003/20251124/8a69caa99aa6b2e0019ab458418215e9.html> (page captured 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch). High source quality. OT-7 [lead]: 甘孜州公安局采购警用无人机及运控车辆项目 (甘孜藏族自治州公安局, 甘孜藏族自治州), 19 September 2025 notice, Unknown; supplier —; DJI items: Police UAVs plus command-and-control vehicle; models not exposed in indexed notice. <https://ggzyjy.sc.gov.cn/jyxx/002002/002002001/20250919/8a69c94e995da2f901996130667e2533.html> (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/Sig5i>). Medium source quality.

- 12 OT-7 [lead]: 甘孜州公安局采购警用无人机及运控车辆项目 (甘孜藏族自治州公安局, 甘孜藏族自治州), 19 September 2025 notice, Unknown; supplier —; DJI items: Police UAVs plus command-and-control vehicle; models not exposed in indexed notice. <https://ggzyjy.sc.gov.cn/jyxx/002002/002002001/20250919/8a69c94e995da2f901996130667e2533.html> (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/Sig5i>). Medium source quality.
- 13 Tibet Watch, "Restrictions continue in and around Lhasa even after the 10th March anniversary," tibetwatch.org/restrictions-continue-in-and-around-lhasa-even-after-the-10th-march-anniversary/; Tibet Watch, "Discriminatory restrictions on Tibetans in Lhasa to take effect on China's National Tourism Day," tibetwatch.org/discriminatory-restrictions-on-tibetans-in-lhasa-to-take-effect-on-chinas-national-tourism-day/ (both cited at Section 10.1).
- 14 Alert 57: 拉萨市公安局无人机侦测反制设备采购项目中标结果公告 (Lhasa PSB awarded a city-level UAV detection and countermeasure equipment procurement), 拉萨市公安局, 9 July 2021, <https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/39646.html> (archived 23 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260723204323/https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/39646.html>). High confidence. Alert 60: 城关区公安局装备采购项目 (Chengguan PSB procurement bought a fleet of DJI Inspire 2 aircraft and Zenmuse X7 camera systems), 拉萨市公安局城关公安分局, 9 August 2021, <https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/43608.html> (archived 24 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260724021937/https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/43608.html>). High confidence.
- 15 Alert 44: 以“智”促“治” 基层警务插上智慧“翅膀” (Tingkye County PSB low-altitude policing unit conducted police UAV skills training to strengthen grassroots policing technology application), 定结县公安局低空警务专班, 13 November 2024, https://toutiao.xzdw.gov.cn/yw/202411/t20241113_525223.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/19cwC>). High confidence. Alert 46: 珠峰边境派出所: “枫桥经验”在雪域高原的生动实践 (Everest Border Police Station (Shigatse) used UAVs to rapidly locate tourist movements during a search-and-rescue operation), 西藏出入境边防检查总站日喀则边境管理支队珠峰边境派出所, 12 June 2025, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfdt/zhzl/202506/t20250628_582588.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/h7Cet>). High confidence. Alert 49: 少年归来! 定结公安7小时“双向奔赴”守护 (Tingkye County PSB UAV provided real-time aerial feed during a 7-hour search for a missing youth, building a three-dimensional search network), 定结县公安局, 3 August 2025, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfsm/pajs/jwz/202508/t20250803_592704.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/jUdbv>). High confidence. Alert 56: 智慧警务“翼”起飞——定结公安警用无人机培训点燃实战大练兵新引擎 (Tingkye County PSB organised police UAV practical skills training; DJI Mavic 3 Pro platform referenced for police training and air-ground integrated...), 定结县公安局, 17 July 2025, <https://news.qq.com/rain/a/20250717A08KG000> (archived 15 August 2025, <https://web.archive.org/web/20250815231104/https://news.qq.com/rain/a/20250717A08KG000>). Medium confidence. Alert 61: 日喀则边境管理支队警用无人机平台建设项目 (Shigatse Border Management Detachment established a police UAV platform using DJI aircraft), 日喀则边境管理支队, 9 September 2021, <https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/46449.html> (archived 24 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260724022019/https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/46449.html>). High confidence.
- 16 Tibet Watch, "Occupying Tibet's Rivers: China's hydropower battlefield in Tibet," tibetwatch.org/occupying-tibets-rivers-chinas-hydropower-battlefield-in-tibet/ (cited at Section 10.1).
- 17 Tibet Watch, 'Fears for respected Tibetan monk hospitalised after torture', 10 October 2025: <https://tibetwatch.org/fears-for-respected-tibetan-monk-hospitalised-after-torture/>
- 18 Alert 14: 江达县公安局空地全地形全天候无人机侦察与反制设备采购 (Procurement for all-terrain, all-weather UAV reconnaissance and countermeasure equipment for Jiangda County PSB), 江达县公安局, 20 September 2025 (approx.), <https://www.ccgp-xizang.gov.cn/freecms/site/xizang/cggg/20250920/101490.html> (page captured 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch). High confidence.
- 19 Construction of the Lower Yarlung Tsangpo (雅鲁藏布江下游) hydropower project began with a groundbreaking ceremony in Nyingchi on 19 July 2025, at which Premier Li Qiang announced the start of the project: Cao Desheng, "Mega-hydro project launched in Xizang," China Daily, 21 July 2025, https://regional.chinadaily.com.cn/tibet/2025-07/21/c_1111100.htm; Xinhua, 19 July 2025. Official sources place the project in the lower reaches in Nyingchi and do not name Medog; it is widely expected to sit near the Great Bend: Hong Zhang, "Infrastructure and State-

Building: China's Ambitions for the Lower Yarlung Tsangpo Project," Columbia University SIPA, 9 August 2025, <https://cwp.sipa.columbia.edu/news/infrastructure-and-state-building-chinas-ambitions-lower-yarlung-tsangpo-project-cwp-alum-hong>.

- 20 Alert 27: 林芝市创新无人机管控模式 筑牢低空安全防线 (Nyingchi City details a fully integrated low-altitude defense network: radar, AI recognition, and electronic fencing for real-time tracking and...), 林芝市政府 / 林芝市公安局 / 军地协同管控领导小组, 19 February 2026, https://wx.xzdw.gov.cn/xxh/ghzc/202602/t20260219_649528.html (archived 15 March 2026, https://web.archive.org/web/20260315114046/https://wx.xzdw.gov.cn/xxh/ghzc/202602/t20260219_649528.html). High confidence. Alert 55: 林芝市创新无人机管控模式 筑牢低空安全防线 (Nyingchi established a UAV control leadership working group with specialised sub-groups including emergency countermeasures; full-chain enforcement...), 林芝市政府/公安协同, 19 February 2026, https://toutiao.xzdw.gov.cn/yw/202602/t20260219_649509.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/LTPdv>). High confidence.
- 21 The Zangmu hydropower station, on the main course of the Yarlung Tsangpo in Gyatsa (Chinese: Jiacha) County, Lhoka, began construction in 2010, generated its first power in 2014 and was at full generation from October 2015: "China reports completion of first large-scale hydropower station on main stream of Yarlung Tsangpo," Tibetan Review, 15 June 2026, <https://www.tibetanreview.net/china-reports-completion-of-first-large-scale-hydropower-station-on-main-stream-of-yarlung-tsangpo/>
- 22 Alert 5: 加查: 加强无人机等“低慢小”航空器安全管理的通告 (Gacha County notice requires registration and approval for UAV/LSA flights; reporting to local public security mandated), 加查县公安, 22 July 2025, <https://uav9.com/post/5093.html> (archived 22 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260722191258/https://uav9.com/post/5093.html>). Medium confidence. Alert 19: 西藏加查: 加强无人机等“低慢小”航空器安全管理的通告 (Gacha County mandated UAV/LSA registration and reporting to local public security; defined parameters for 'low, slow, small' aircraft), 加查县政府 / 公安, 22 July 2025, <https://uav9.com/post/5093.html> (archived 22 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260722191258/https://uav9.com/post/5093.html>). Medium confidence.
- 23 International Campaign for Tibet, 'The origin of the Xinjiang model in Tibet under Chen Quanguo', 19 December 2018: <https://savetibet.org/the-origin-of-the-xinjiang-model-in-tibet-under-chen-quanguo-securitizing-ethnicity-and-accelerating-assimilation>. Adrian Zenz and James Leibold, "Chen Quanguo: The Strongman Behind Beijing's Securitization Strategy in Tibet and Xinjiang," China Brief 17:12 (Jamestown Foundation, 2017); Human Rights Watch reporting on grid management and the convenience police station network in the TAR from 2013 onward.
- 24 Alert 34: 西藏自治区公安厅2023年第一期警用无人驾驶航空器驾驶员培训开班 (TAR PSB 2023 first police UAV pilot training opened in Shannan; 52 trainees from Shannan, Shigatse, and Nagqu; focus on patrol, stability operations,...), 西藏自治区公安厅/山南公安, 13 August 2023, <https://news.qq.com/rain/a/20230813A033FX00> (archived 23 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260723203843/https://news.qq.com/rain/a/20230813A033FX00>). Medium confidence.
- 25 Uyghur Human Rights Project, "Above Us, Their Eyes: DJI Drones in East Turkistan" (briefing, March 2024), documenting seven named Xinjiang procurement orders 2019–2022 and DJI's 2017 police cooperation agreement in Xinjiang, and calling on retailers to suspend stocking. Also: UHRP press statement of 5 March 2024: uhrp.org/statement/new-uhrp-report-on-dji-drones-documents-complicity-in-uyghur-genocide/ The briefing, "Surveillance Tech Series: DJI's Links to Human Rights Abuses in East Turkistan" (Nuzigum Setiwaldi, 5 March 2024), describes the 2017–18 partnership with the Xinjiang PSD (citing ASPI and Bloomberg), notes DJI deleted its announcement of it, and gives the seven orders as worth nearly US\$300,000 in 2019–22 (citing the Washington Post).
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Commerce, Entity List addition of DJI, 22 December 2020 (citing enablement of human rights abuses); Treasury, NS-CMIC identification of SZ DJI Technology Co., 16 December 2021 (drones used in surveillance of Uyghurs; an investment/securities restriction, not an asset freeze). FCC, Covered List addition of categories of foreign-produced UAS and components reaching DJI, 22 December 2025 (bars equipment authorisation for new covered models; does not prohibit operation of already-authorised models); update 7 July 2026. DoD Section 1260H list, notice of 10 June 2026, includes DJI; on 26 September 2025 a federal district court rejected DoD's ownership/control finding but upheld the designation on the military-civil-fusion-contributor ground. Executive Orders 14305 (airspace sovereignty / counter-UAS) and 14307 (domestic drone production) do not name DJI; the SAFER SKIES Act and its DOJ/DHS interim final rule (effective 1 July 2026) authorise state and local counter-UAS activity and do not regulate foreign drone procurement. These 2025–26 instruments are cited for context only.
- 28 Aggregate of published package values across Alerts 59, 60, 61, 63, 64, 65 (TAR) and OT-1 to OT-6 (outside TAR): ¥1,720,000 + ¥2,458,605 + ¥852,240 + ¥678,900 + ¥10,180,000 + ¥353,010 + ¥2,070,435 + ¥448,520 + ¥395,000 + ¥484,785 + ¥4,429,553 + ¥723,800 = ¥24,794,848. Alert 62 (request for quotations) is excluded from the total. Package totals overstate DJI-specific spend: several awards bundle non-DJI equipment. A DJI-only line-item floor of roughly ¥4.7 million is derivable from the itemised entries and is not relied on in this report. A further Ali

Prefecture PSB SWAT award of 17 April 2026 (project GZFCG2026-32171, ¥3,979,030, reportedly itemising DJI FlyCart 100, Matrice 400 and Neo 2) appears on two commercial mirrors and is held as an unconfirmed lead pending recovery of the primary government record; if confirmed the count becomes thirteen and the total ¥28.77 million.

- 29 Record OT-1: 迪庆州公安局无人机及相关软件装备采购项目 (Diqing Prefecture PSB UAV and related software equipment procurement), Yunnan, award 22 November 2023, ¥2,070,435; itemised DJI Matrice 350 RTK, Zenmuse P1, Zenmuse H20N, M30T ×2, Mavic 3T ×2, FlyCart 30 (DJI line items ¥479,080), alongside 3D software, AI equipment, a 察打一体 unit (Beijing Lizheng Qian Dun W-D, classified in supporting procurement documents as an unmanned-aircraft detection and RF countermeasure system, not an armed platform) and counter-UAV shields; supplier 云南近达信息技术有限公司. Mirror: <https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/105669.html> (archived 24 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260724024322/https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/105669.html>). High confidence.
- 30 Record OT-5: 德格县公安环川综合检查站智慧信息化建设采购项目 (Dege County police Huanchuan comprehensive checkpoint smart-informatisation construction procurement), Ganzi, Sichuan, award 17 May 2025, ¥4,429,553; DJI Dock 2 ×4, M3TD/M3D aircraft ×4, FlightHub 2 (司空2) control platform (core DJI items ¥602,000). Official Sichuan public resources award page with full contract line items: <https://ggzyjy.sc.gov.cn/jyxx/002002/002002004/20250517/8a69d33c96c9ce5d0196dc4db2e91b22.html> (page captured 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch). High confidence.
- 31 Alert 59: 西藏自治区公安厅反恐怖特别侦察队机动支队反恐训练器材采购项目 (TAR PSD Anti-Terror Special Reconnaissance Mobile Unit counter-terror training equipment procurement), award 2 December 2020, package ¥1,720,000; itemised DJI equipment (M300 RTK, H20T, TB60 ×2, M600 Pro, Mavic 2 Enterprise ×2) ≥¥437,803; supplier 重庆鹰力德警用器械有限公司 (Chongqing Yinglide Police Equipment Co.). Mirror: <https://www.ode119.com/guanyu/21285.html> (archived 24 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260724022433/https://www.ode119.com/guanyu/21285.html>). High confidence.
- 32 Alert 60: 城关区公安局装备采购项目 (Chengguan District PSB equipment procurement), award 9 August 2021, package ¥2,458,605; DJI Inspire 2 ×15 with Zenmuse X7 ×15 and accessories ≈¥754,110; supplier 西藏皓森实业有限公司. Mirror: <https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/43608.html> (archived 24 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260724021937/https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/43608.html>). Alert 64, 拉萨市公安局2023年应急装备采购项目 (Lhasa PSB 2023 emergency equipment procurement), award 16 June 2023, ¥10,180,000 against a ¥10,800,000 budget; itemised DJI M300 RTK ×2 and M30T; supplier 广州捷厉特车装备有限公司; possible lots/subawards, supplier attribution not yet checked against the original supply schedule. Mirror: <https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/66191.html> (archived 24 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260724022212/https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/66191.html>). Medium-High confidence.
- 33 Alert 61: 日喀则边境管理支队警用无人机平台建设项目 (Shigatse Border Management Detachment police UAV platform construction project), award 9 September 2021, ¥852,240; award explicitly identifies DJI as the brand, M300 RTK plus sixteen further enterprise aircraft; supplier 西藏攀索实业有限公司. Mirror: <https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/46449.html> (archived 24 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260724022019/https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/46449.html>). High confidence.
- 34 Alert 63: 无人机采购项目中标 (成交) 结果公告 (UAV procurement award result), Armed Police Tibet Corps headquarters (武警西藏总队参谋部), award 29 May 2023, ¥678,900; brand explicit, models withheld in the winning bid file; supplier 西藏科力达数码测绘仪器有限责任公司. Official repost: https://zjt.xizang.gov.cn/xwzx/zbgg_zjt/202305/t20230529_357885.html (archived 24 July 2026, https://web.archive.org/web/20260724022519/https://zjt.xizang.gov.cn/xwzx/zbgg_zjt/202305/t20230529_357885.html). The upstream tender notice (ZKKL-ZXCG-2023016) records a quantity of 31 UAVs, a budget ceiling and four invited suppliers; a possible attribution to the Corps Staff Department has not been verified. High confidence on the award itself.
- 35 Supplier identities per award notices cited above and at Section 12. Registry verification (SAMR/Qichacha: legal representatives, shareholders, authorised-dealer listings) not yet completed for 西藏智疆科技有限公司 and 西藏皓森实业有限公司.
- 36 Alert 62: 西藏自治区生态环境厅关于采购大疆DJI无人机的询价公告 (TAR Department of Ecology and Environment request for quotations for procurement of DJI UAV), 26 April 2023; DJI Mavic 3E Care Enterprise Plus package specified by brand in the notice title. This is a competitive quotation solicitation with bidder qualifications, not an award, and is counted separately. Official portal: https://ee.xizang.gov.cn/xwzx/gsgg/202304/t20230426_352665.html (archived 24 July 2026, https://web.archive.org/web/20260724022105/https://ee.xizang.gov.cn/xwzx/gsgg/202304/t20230426_352665.html). High confidence. The brand is specified by the buyer at the demand side, not chosen by an intermediary.

- 37 Alert 57: 拉萨市公安局无人机侦测反制设备采购项目中标结果公告 (Lhasa PSB UAV detection and countermeasure equipment procurement, award result), 9 July 2021, ¥8,631,435; supplier 西藏大智无疆科技有限责任公司 (Tibet Dazhi Wujiang Technology Co.). The original portal pages are no longer readily indexed; the record survives on a secondary procurement mirror reproducing project number, buyer, supplier, amount and date: <https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/39646.html> (archived 23 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260723204323/https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/39646.html>). Mirror-only until the original notice or preserved attachment is recovered.
- 38 Alert 15: 阿里地区公安处特警支队无人机、无人机机库、配件及无人机反制装备采购项目, tender 2 July 2025, budget ¥2,343,728, <https://www.ccg-p-xizang.gov.cn/freecms/site/xizang/cggg/20250702/101322.html> (page captured 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch) (High). Second-round award of 19 August 2025 verified via international tender mirror; supplier and amount withheld (Medium).
- 39 Alert 14: 江达县公安局空地全地形全天候无人机侦察与反制设备采购 (Procurement for all-terrain, all-weather UAV reconnaissance and countermeasure equipment for Jiangda County PSB), 江达县公安局, 20 September 2025 (approx.), <https://www.ccg-p-xizang.gov.cn/freecms/site/xizang/cggg/20250920/101490.html> (page captured 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch). High confidence.
- 40 Alert 38: 西藏首例! 罚! , Gongbogyamda County PSB (Nyingchi), incident 19 March 2024, reported 19 April 2024, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfdt/jwcz/202404/t20240419_460693.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/9Mj8V>). Administrative penalty, not a prosecution. High confidence.
- 41 Alert 52: 多地警方近期开出“黑飞”罚单, published 21 September 2024 describing enforcement of 19 September 2024, secondary republication <https://news.qq.com/rain/a/20240921A06WYH00> (archived 24 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260724021441/https://news.qq.com/rain/a/20240921A06WYH00>). Medium confidence.
- 42 Alert 28: 民用无人驾驶航空器实名登记和激活要求 (GB 46761-2025) 等两项强制性国家标准发布 (State Administration for Market Regulation published two mandatory national UAV standards effective 1 May 2026: GB 46761-2025 (registration and...), 国家市场监督管理总局 / 民航局 / 中共西藏自治区委员会网络安全和信息化委员会办公室, 10 December 2025 (TAR republication); effective 2026-05-01, https://wxh.xzdw.gov.cn/xxh/ghzc/202512/t20251210_631310.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/NGqax>). High confidence.
- 43 Policy record: 国家安全机关提示: 警惕非法无人机测绘拍摄, MSS warning republished in the TAR cyberspace system, February 2025, xzdw.gov.cn. See also the national MPS enforcement report against UAV flight control hacking, 2 September 2025, https://wxh.xzdw.gov.cn/wlzl/202509/t20250902_601247.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/Fk74Z>) (Alert 9).
- 44 Tibet Watch, "The Dalai Lama's 90th birthday in Tibet," tibetwatch.org/the-dalai-lamas-90th-birthday-in-tibet/ (cited at Section 10.1).
- 45 Alert 48: 城关公安: 聚焦五大亮点提升社会治安综合治理水平 (Chenggguan District PSB (Lhasa) SWAT team used 'UAV + ground unit' combined operations, resolving a simulated terrorist incident within 5 minutes), 城关公安, 18 June 2025, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfdt/zhzl/202506/t20250628_582665.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/x4gte>). High confidence.
- 46 Alert 3: 特警支队: “特”训专精英“警”久续航中 (Lhasa SWAT integrated UAV reconnaissance into summer training drills, including indoor reconnaissance operations), 拉萨特警支队, 9 July 2025, <https://ga.lasa.gov.cn/lsga/jwxw/202507/0fb6073fc0fc48148f3e53dad34eeae1.shtml> (archived 24 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260724014335/https://ga.lasa.gov.cn/lsga/jwxw/202507/0fb6073fc0fc48148f3e53dad34eeae1.shtml>). High confidence.
- 47 Alert 4: 关于加强拉萨市范围内无人驾驶航空器飞行活动管制工作的通告 (Lhasa municipal notice imposes flight control on UAVs and 'low, slow, small' aircraft; exceptions for police/rescue/meteorological with approval), 拉萨市人民政府, 9 August 2025, <https://www.lasa.gov.cn/lasa/tggs/202508/879738c1fc864da4be50092fdeda4a2c.shtml> (archived 11 August 2025, <https://web.archive.org/web/20250811104829/https://www.lasa.gov.cn/lasa/tggs/202508/879738c1fc864da4be50092fdeda4a2c.shtml>). High confidence. Alert 7: 关于对无人机等“低慢小”航空器禁飞的通告 (Chamdo City announced a ban on UAV/LSA flights during anniversary celebrations; unauthorized flights may be shot down), 昌都市人民政府, 14 August 2025, <https://uavnew.com/post/5210.html> (archived 14 May 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260514192659/https://uavnew.com/post/5210.html>). Medium confidence. Alert 16: 关于加强西藏自治区成立60周年期间“低慢小”航空器飞行管制的通告 (Ali Prefecture government announced flight restrictions on 'low, slow, small' aircraft across several counties during TAR 60th anniversary (10–31 Aug...), 阿里地区政府, 2025-08, <https://www.al.gov.cn/info/1181/157924.htm> (archived 18 November 2025, <https://web.archive.org/web/20251118214455/http://al.gov.cn/info/1181/157924.htm>). High confidence. Alert 17: 西藏林芝: 8月10日-31日期间部分区域禁飞无人机 (Nyingchi Public Security announced UAV bans in specified areas from 10–31 August 2025; enforcement by local police), 林芝市公安局, 8 August 2025, <https://uavnew.com/post/5173.html> (archived 21 April 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260421102544/https://uavnew.com/post/5173.html>). Medium confidence. Alert 25: 关于对无人机等“低慢小”航空器实施禁飞区域管制的通告 (Bange County government announced UAV flight

control and no-fly zones from 11 Aug – 1 Sep 2025; violators subject to police countermeasures), 班戈县人民政府, 11 August 2025, <https://uavnew.com/post/5232.html> (archived 23 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260723203608/https://uavnew.com/post/5232.html>). High confidence.

- 48 Alerts 7/18/23: 关于对无人机等"低慢小"航空器禁飞的通告, Chamdo City government, 14–31 August 2025, mirror <https://uavnew.com/post/5210.html> (archived 14 May 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260514192659/https://uavnew.com/post/5210.html>). Medium–High confidence (aggregator mirror; uniform text across reposts).
- 49 Alerts 27 and 55: 林芝市创新无人机管控模式 筑牢低空安全防线, 19 February 2026, https://wxw.xzdw.gov.cn/xxh/ghzc/202602/t20260219_649528.html (archived 15 March 2026, https://web.archive.org/web/20260315114046/https://wxw.xzdw.gov.cn/xxh/ghzc/202602/t20260219_649528.html) and https://toutiao.xzdw.gov.cn/yw/202602/t20260219_649509.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/LTPdv>). High confidence. The 警鹰 platform vendor remains unidentified; no corporate registration located.
- 50 Alert 37: Lulang Township police station UAV search and rescue, 26 March 2024, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfdt/jwc/202403/t20240326_453269.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/EVGF6>); Alert 47 (Bayi fleet statistics), cited above. High confidence.
- 51 Shannan Border Management Detachment (Tibet Entry-exit Border Inspection General Station) procurement intent notices, April–May 2026: UAVs and UAV airfield construction ¥3,200,000; police detection equipment ¥2,567,500; law enforcement equipment including tear gas launchers ¥1,231,000. Not yet independently verified.
- 52 Alert 10: 我国首个海拔4300米以上高原无人装备测试基地在西藏阿里地区启用 (Ali Prefecture inaugurates high-altitude unmanned equipment test base (>4300m)), 阿里地区政府 / 天上阿里, 28 September 2025, <https://www.al.gov.cn/info/1035/167224.htm> (archived 12 October 2025, <https://web.archive.org/web/20251012083040/https://www.al.gov.cn/info/1035/167224.htm>). High confidence.
- 53 Alert 39: 阿里地区公安处特警支队完成跨区域拉动演练工作 (Ali Prefecture PSB SWAT completed cross-regional rapid deployment exercise including 'UAV mountain pursuit' drill), 阿里地区公安处特警支队, 28 April 2024, https://ali.xzdw.gov.cn/xwzx_1128/alyw/202404/t20240428_463301.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/s7U01>). High confidence.
- 54 A drone nest is an automated drone docking station.
- 55 Alert 26: 日喀则市公安局桑珠孜分局运用无人机提升现代警务效能——银翼织天网 蓝盾守民心 (Sangzhuzi District PSB, Shigatse, uses UAVs to raise modern policing effectiveness), published 22 December 2025, describing deployment since May 2024. https://lasa.xzdw.gov.cn/zd gz_533/202512/t20251222_634947.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/Yz0Cy>); Tibet Daily e-edition of the same date. High confidence. Figures are the bureau's own; "duty activities" (勤务) is the source's unit, not sorties.
- 56 Alert 26: 日喀则市公安局桑珠孜分局运用无人机提升现代警务效能——银翼织天网 蓝盾守民心 (Sangzhuzi District PSB (Shigatse) details operational deployment of police UAV programme since May 2024: automated drone nests with thermal imaging,...), 日喀则市公安局桑珠孜分局, 22 December 2025 (publication; deployment from May 2024), https://lasa.xzdw.gov.cn/zd gz_533/202512/t20251222_634947.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/Yz0Cy>). High confidence. For instance in October 2025, the Chinese government-installed Panchen Lama conferred a major religious empowerment in Shigatse, involving monks and prominent Buddhist lamas from across Tibet. Tibet Watch report, 5 November 2025: <https://tibetwatch.org/setting-a-religious-trap/>
- 57 Alert 31: 墨竹工卡县公安局构建新型治安防控体系, 11 June 2017, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfsm/sdrw/bzrmajly/201706/t20170611_170403.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/EpboP>). High confidence; platform identification High (model named).
- 58 Alerts 1 and 51: 那曲市公安局机关警用无人机培训班开班啦, 16 September 2025, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfjj/dsdt/202509/t20250923_607765.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/xMOKD>) and https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfsm/dwjs/202509/t20250923_607764.html (archived 5 November 2025, https://web.archive.org/web/20251105074938/https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfsm/dwjs/202509/t20250923_607764.html). 四级培训机构 is a Level-IV institution grade, not a four-layer administrative hierarchy. High confidence.
- 59 Alerts 2 and 53: 市公安局特警支队警用航空器管理大队..., 26 September 2025, https://lasa.xzdw.gov.cn/xwzx_359/ttxw/202509/t20250926_609230.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/8zpRv>) and https://lasa.xzdw.gov.cn/ddjs_493/202509/t20250926_609230.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/0X3Ii>). High confidence.
- 60 Adrian Zenz and James Leibold, "Chen Quanguo: The Strongman Behind Beijing's Securitization Strategy in Tibet and Xinjiang," China Brief 17:12 (Jamestown Foundation, 2017); Human Rights Watch reporting on grid management and the convenience police station network in the TAR from 2013 onward.
- 61 Human Rights Watch, "China: New Evidence of Mass DNA Collection in Tibet" (September 2022); Citizen Lab, report on mass DNA collection in the TAR (September 2022).

- 62** Alert 10: 我国首个海拔4300米以上高原无人装备测试基地在西藏阿里地区启用 (Ali Prefecture inaugurates high-altitude unmanned equipment test base (>4300m)), 阿里地区政府 / 天上阿里, 28 September 2025, <https://www.al.gov.cn/info/1035/167224.htm> (archived 12 October 2025, <https://web.archive.org/web/20251012083040/https://al.gov.cn/info/1035/167224.htm>). High confidence.
- 63** Alert 50: 革吉公安驱车千里为牧民找回"67头牦牛", 21 August 2025, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfsm/sdrw/bzrmajly/202508/t20250825_599149.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/NIbDD>). High confidence.
- 64** Alert 49: 少年归来! 定结公安7小时"双向奔赴"守护, 3 August 2025, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfsm/pajs/jwz/202508/t20250803_592704.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/jUdbv>). High confidence.
- 65** Alert 30: PLA Western Theatre Command UAV deployment to the Dingri epicentre, 7 January 2025; state media reporting (Xinhua / PLA Daily, 7–8 January 2025). High confidence on the deployment.
- 66** South China Morning Post, July 2026 (Plateau Drone R&D Application Centre, Xizang University, unveiled 3 July 2026; "several senior military officials from aviation rescue and emergency response teams attended"); Business Standard / PTI, 30 July 2026. Nepal's refusal of a US Freefly drone Everest test: reporting attributed to The Wall Street Journal (27 July 2026), summarised in South China Morning Post and Tibetan Review. Cited as external framing; not integrated into the procurement dataset.
- 67** Cabinet Office, written ministerial statement HCWS386, 24 November 2022 (national security measure for visual surveillance equipment at sensitive sites; manufacturers not named); removal timetable given as a political commitment during passage of the Procurement Bill, not a statutory duty; HCWS431, 29 April 2024 (approximately 50% of sites replaced); written statement, 18 November 2025 (all originally identified sensitive sites completed replacement).
- 68** NPSA, UAS protective security guidance suite (material dated September 2023; vendor-neutral). Procurement Act 2023, exclusion and debarment regime commenced 24 February 2025; Cabinet Office debarment list, version dated 17 November 2025. PRC National Intelligence Law (2017), Art. 7. The National Security and Investment Act 2021 screens acquisitions of control over UK-connected entities and assets and is not a product procurement screening tool. Uyghur Human Rights Project, "Above Us, Their Eyes: DJI Drones in East Turkistan" (briefing, March 2024), documenting seven named Xinjiang procurement orders 2019–2022 and DJI's 2017 police cooperation agreement in Xinjiang, and calling on retailers to suspend stocking.
- 69** Cyber Security and Resilience (Network and Information Systems) Bill, HL Bill 32 (2026–27), Running list of all amendments in Grand Committee tabled up to and including 24 August 2026, Government amendments in the name of Baroness Lloyd of Effra (Minister for Digital Economy, DSIT): new clauses before Clause 43, "Vendor-related directions" (subs. (1)(a) recipients specified by regulations; subs. (2) eligibility limited to persons specified under s.30(2), persons carrying on a Part 4 essential activity in the UK, or providers of essential goods or services; subs. (3) Condition 1, risk to national security arising or potentially arising from the use of goods, services or facilities provided by another person in connection with a Part 4 NIS; subs. (4) Condition 2, necessity and proportionality; subs. (6)(d)–(f), prohibition or restriction on use, prohibition on installation, and removal, disabling or modification; subs. (11), affirmative procedure), "Further provision about giving of vendor-related directions" (subs. (1)(b)–(c), vendor's place of establishment and place of supply immaterial; subs. (2)(b), direction must specify the vendor; subs. (6)(b), vendor consulted; subs. (8), non-disclosure requirements) and "Power to establish mandatory referral scheme" (subs. (5)(d), qualifying transactions may be defined by vendor identity); new clause after Clause 54, "Publication of notice of direction under section (Vendor-related directions) etc" (subs. (2) (b), notice must state the recipient; subs. (3)(a)–(b), exclusions for unreasonable commercial harm and national security); amendments to Clause 58 inserting the definitions of "Part 4 essential activity" (an activity the Secretary of State considers essential to the economy or the day-to-day functioning of society) and "essential goods or services". <https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/67470/documents/8691>. Superseded by the running list of 25 August 2026, <https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/67479/documents/8695>, and accompanied by a Supplementary Delegated Powers Memorandum of 25 August 2026, <https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/67475/documents/8693>. Bill page: <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/4035>. Grand Committee first sitting 1 September 2026 (House of Lords Business). Policing is not a sector under the Network and Information Systems Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/506) as amended by the Bill. On DJI's United States geofencing change: DJI announced on 13 January 2025 that GEO zones in the United States would be converted from enforced no-fly boundaries to advisory warnings. National cases of circumvention of geofence and altitude limits, republished in the TAR: Alerts 9 and 29 (Section 9).
- 70** Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner, survey of police UAV deployment (36 of 47 forces responding), published September 2023; NPCC account of police drone use, around 60,000 flights a year. William Webster took office as Commissioner on 1 November 2025. FOI returns would supply the manufacturer breakdown and data handling answers.

- 71 Commerce, Entity List addition of DJI, 22 December 2020 (citing enablement of human rights abuses); Treasury, NS-CMIC identification of SZ DJI Technology Co., 16 December 2021 (drones used in surveillance of Uyghurs; an investment/securities restriction, not an asset freeze). FCC, Covered List addition of categories of foreign-produced UAS and components reaching DJI, 22 December 2025 (bars equipment authorisation for new covered models; does not prohibit operation of already-authorised models); update 7 July 2026. DoD Section 1260H list, notice of 10 June 2026, includes DJI; on 26 September 2025 a federal district court rejected DoD's ownership/control finding but upheld the designation on the military-civil-fusion-contributor ground. Executive Orders 14305 (airspace sovereignty / counter-UAS) and 14307 (domestic drone production) do not name DJI; the SAFER SKIES Act and its DOJ/DHS interim final rule (effective 1 July 2026) authorise state and local counter-UAS activity and do not regulate foreign drone procurement. These 2025–26 instruments are cited for context only.
- 72 Bureau of Industry and Security, final rule adding the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region People's Government Public Security Bureau and 19 subordinate government agencies to the Entity List, 84 Fed. Reg. 54002 (9 October 2019). Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Chairs Seek Export Controls on Technology Used for Mass Biometric Data Collection in Tibet," 23 October 2023 (letter of 20 October 2023 from Rep. Chris Smith and Sen. Jeff Merkley): <https://www.cecc.gov/media-center/press-releases/chairs-seek-export-controls-on-technology-used-for-mass-biometric-data>
- 73 Uyghur Human Rights Project, "Above Us, Their Eyes: DJI Drones in East Turkistan" (briefing, March 2024), documenting seven named Xinjiang procurement orders 2019–2022 and DJI's 2017 police cooperation agreement in Xinjiang, and calling on retailers to suspend stocking.
- 74 Ukrainian Ministry of Defence, Army of Drones bonus programme results (nearly 820,000 Russian targets in 2025; winter personnel loss figures), programme-verified targets, not an estimate of all battlefield casualties; Ukrainian presidential statement on four-million annual production capacity and 1.5 million units contracted in 2024; Kremlin transcript on several thousand drones a day reaching Russian forces. DJI announced the suspension of its business in both Russia and Ukraine in April 2022; its aircraft nonetheless remained ubiquitous on the front through grey-market supply.
- 75 Taiwan MND publications documenting WZ-7, BZK-005, TB-001 and CH-4 UAV operations around Taiwan; MND press release on Ukraine-informed asymmetric procurement; Admiral Samuel Paparo, keynote address, Honolulu Defense Forum, 13 February 2025 (official transcript), and earlier reported remarks, June 2024.
- 76 This strategy goes beyond standard Western concepts of dual-use technology or civil-military integration by intentionally merging industrial, scientific, and military domains into a single, unified ecosystem intended to advance and expand People's Liberation Army (PLA) capabilities.
- 77 On 制域权 and PLA thinking on the low-altitude domain, see PLA Daily and Academy of Military Sciences commentary on 低空 and 制低空权; on Military-Civil Fusion (军民融合) and the drone sector, see State Council and CAAC low-altitude economy policy documents 2023–25.
- 78 Chula Vista Police Department (California) DFR programme, from 2018, since replicated widely; UK NPCC review and Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner survey, 2023; PRC Ministry of Public Security guidance on police UAV development and the DJI Dock / 机巢 product category, 2023–25.
- 79 Drones were a key element in Nepal's response to the devastating floods on 26 August, for instance see: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/nepal-drones-photos-9.7337102>
- 80 Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 37 (2020) on the right of peaceful assembly; OHCHR, The right to privacy in the digital age, A/HRC/51/17 (2022); Leaders of a Beautiful Struggle v. Baltimore Police Department, 4th Cir. (en banc) 2021; Conseil d'État, ordonnance of 18 May 2020 (police drone surveillance, Paris). The two court decisions rest on different legal doctrines and are cited as parallel developments, not a single rule.
- 81 Alert 30: PLA Western Theatre Command UAV deployment to the Dingri epicentre, 7 January 2025; state media reporting (Xinhua / PLA Daily, 7–8 January 2025). High confidence on the deployment.
- 82 Alert 10: 我国首个海拔4300米以上高原无人装备测试基地在西藏阿里地区启用, 28 September 2025, <https://www.al.gov.cn/info/1035/167224.htm> (archived 12 October 2025, <https://web.archive.org/web/20251012083040/https://al.gov.cn/info/1035/167224.htm>) (primary). Independently reported by Army Recognition (1 October 2025), which records that the "Ali Yundun-1" aircraft circulated on social media alongside the opening but carries no official Chinese confirmation of the platform or its specifications; the figures cited here are as reported and unverified.

- 83 On the Ngari/Alu base as a border-adjacent facility: South China Morning Post, "A new peak in US-China tech rivalry? Tibet drone hub launches on Mount Everest," July 2026, noting Alu as "a strategically important region in western Tibet bordering India." Business Standard / Press Trust of India, 30 July 2026, framing the Xizang University Plateau Drone R&D Application Centre as intended to bolster "border patrols, security, logistics and transport" and as an advantage in technological competition with the US.
- 84 Tibet University (西藏大学) is the institution's official English name; recent Chinese state media coverage renders it "Xizang University", using the Chinese name for the TAR that Beijing has asked foreign governments and media to adopt.
- 85 South China Morning Post, July 2026 (Plateau Drone R&D Application Centre, Xizang University, unveiled 3 July 2026; "several senior military officials from aviation rescue and emergency response teams attended"); Business Standard / PTI, 30 July 2026. Nepal's refusal of a US Freefly drone Everest test: reporting attributed to The Wall Street Journal (27 July 2026), summarised in South China Morning Post and Tibetan Review. Cited as external framing; not integrated into the procurement dataset.
- 86 The National Interest, "China Is Building a Drone Laboratory at the Top of the World," 9 October 2025 (opinion); see also "China goes low," rukor.org, December 2025, on Military-Civil Fusion and the Alu low-altitude economy conference. Cited for framing; factual claims in this report rest on the primary sources at Sections 4, 6 to 9 and 11.
- 87 Ecosystem record: 中国联通系留无人机应急通信平台, China Unicom Tibet, 2025, industry reporting.
- 88 A high-tech remote sensing device that uses laser light to measure distances and create precise, three-dimensional maps of objects and environments.
- 89 Ecosystem record: 西藏玉龙铜业股份有限公司2026年第三季度备品备件采购, 28 June 2026, https://xizang.jianyu360.cn/jybx/20260628_26062765520576.html (archived 24 July 2026, https://web.archive.org/web/20260724024046/https://xizang.jianyu360.cn/jybx/20260628_26062765520576.html) (Medium; corporate ecosystem context).
- 90 Adrian Zenz and James Leibold, "Chen Quanguo: The Strongman Behind Beijing's Securitization Strategy in Tibet and Xinjiang," China Brief 17:12 (Jamestown Foundation, 2017); Human Rights Watch reporting on grid management and the convenience police station network in the TAR from 2013 onward.
- 91 Human Rights Watch, "China: New Evidence of Mass DNA Collection in Tibet" (September 2022); Citizen Lab, report on mass DNA collection in the TAR (September 2022). Following sustained international pressure from Tibet groups including Free Tibet and congressional inquiries, Thermo Fisher Scientific committed to halting direct and third-party sales of human identification products within the TAR. Free Tibet press release: <https://freetibet.org/latest/thermo-fisher-halts-dna-equipment-sales-to-tibet/>
- 92 TAR Science and Technology Department, 无人机"飞向"千行百业, November 2025, sti.xizang.gov.cn (Ecosystem record). On the political economy of the low-altitude economy in Tibet, see Gabriel Lafitte, "China goes low," rukor.org.
- 93 OT-3, 阿坝县林业和草原局 award, 8 January 2026, ¥395,000, DJI Matrice 4T x4 (¥320,000); official Sichuan result <https://ggzyjy.sc.gov.cn/jyxx/002002/002002003/20260108/8a69c9289b8e7796019b96764fe161c4.html> (page captured 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch) (the "2022 central funds" in the project title is the funding programme name, not the award year). OT-6, 甘孜州公安局反恐特警支队无人机应急快速建模系统项目, award 24 November 2025, ¥723,800; drone-based 3D Gaussian-splatting rapid modelling system (Qiyu P1) with DJI Zenmuse L2 LiDAR gimbal and TB65 batteries; supplier 低空数创(成都)科技有限公司 (Low-Altitude Digital Innovation (Chengdu) Technology Co., Ltd.); official Sichuan award page <https://ggzyjy.sc.gov.cn/jyxx/002002/002002003/20251124/8a69caa99aa6b2e0019ab458418215e9.html> (page captured 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch). April 2026 Alu lead: https://www.biaoyunji.cn/icon/pbxuyulm3pwoz10pe3xuys5m3zq_i1dfe3b49298511f18cecd8b32fc3c624_hf330919bc036bdaf501117d2397897ae (page captured 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch) and <https://xz.chinamae.com/news/9d02bce60a6d1ff752674007fd92b975.html> (page captured 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch), possibly a single syndicated feed; original TAR result not recovered.
- 94 Alert 58: 西藏拉萨经济技术开发区公安分局无人机采购项目中标公告, award 18 December 2024, ¥457,200; supplier 四川鑫创新科技有限责任公司 (Sichuan Chuanxin Innovation Technology). Two independent mirrors corroborate; <https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/115969.html> (archived 24 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260724021812/https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/115969.html>). High confidence.
- 95 Alert 15: 阿里地区公安处特警支队无人机、无人机机库、配件及无人机反制装备采购项目, tender 2 July 2025, budget ¥2,343,728, <https://www.ccg-p-xizang.gov.cn/freecms/site/xizang/cggg/20250702/101322.html> (page captured 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch) (High). Second-round award of 19 August 2025 verified via international tender mirror; supplier and amount withheld (Medium).

- 96** Alert 14: 江达县公安局空地全地形全天候无人机侦察与反制设备采购, notice c. 20 September 2025, <https://www.ccgp-xizang.gov.cn/freecms/site/xizang/cggg/20250920/101490.html> (page captured 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch) (High). Vendor lead 重庆市亿飞智联科技有限公司 via qixin.com index: Low confidence, lead only.
- 97** See Alert 57.
- 98** Alerts 11–13
- 99** Alerts 11–13: 2025年西藏自治区无线电管理无人机无线电反制设备设置使用评估项目: consultation 8 April 2025 (<https://jxt.xizang.gov.cn/xzweb/detail?categoryId=172&channelId=9&id=3443> (page captured 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch)); supplementary notice 23 April 2025 (<https://www.ccgp-xizang.gov.cn/freecms/site/xizang/cggg/20250423/101366.html> (page captured 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch)); radio monitoring test/verification tender 1 September 2025 (<https://www.ccgp-xizang.gov.cn/freecms/site/xizang/cggg/20250901/101457.html> (page captured 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch)). Budget ¥423,000 exposed in the indexed award trail; award amount not exposed. High confidence.
- 100** Shannan Border Management Detachment (Tibet Entry-exit Border Inspection General Station) procurement intent notices, April–May 2026: UAVs and UAV airfield construction ¥3,200,000; police detection equipment ¥2,567,500; law enforcement equipment including tear gas launchers ¥1,231,000. Not yet independently verified.
- 101** Alert 57
- 102** Alert 31: 墨竹工卡县公安局构建新型治安防控体系, 11 June 2017, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfsm/sdrw/bzrmajly/201706/t20170611_170403.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/EpboP>). High confidence; platform identification High (model named).
- 103** Alert 32: 日喀则市公安局首届警用无人机培训班开班培训, 25 April 2021, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfjj/dsdt/202104/t20210425_182881.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/32vOb>). High confidence.
- 104** Alert 33: 西藏自治区首期警用无人驾驶航空器驾驶员培训班顺利开班, 8 November 2021, <https://www.ppsuc.edu.cn/info/1057/10873.htm> (archived 21 March 2022, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220321094950/https://www.ppsuc.edu.cn/info/1057/10873.htm>). High confidence.
- 105** Alerts 34–35: 西藏自治区公安厅2023年第一期警用无人驾驶航空器驾驶员培训, opening 13 August 2023 (<https://news.qq.com/rain/a/20230813A033FX00> (archived 23 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260723203843/https://news.qq.com/rain/a/20230813A033FX00>)), conclusion 4 September 2023 (<https://view.inews.qq.com/a/20230904A08RHK00> (archived 24 July 2026, https://web.archive.org/web/20260724015930/https://news.qq.com/rain/a/20230904A08RHK00?id=20230904A08RHK00&path=a&app=news&suid=&redirect_pc=1)). Medium confidence (secondary republication).
- 106** Alert 36: 那曲市比如县公安局运用警用无人机护航"平安比如", 20 December 2023, https://toutiao.xzdw.gov.cn/ms/202312/t20231220_427321.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/lwyRO>). High confidence.
- 107** Alerts 40 and 43: Shigatse City PSB 2024 second police UAV training course, 18 October and 13 November 2024, https://rikaze.xzdw.gov.cn/zdgz_566/202410/t20241018_517897.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/6ViH6>) and https://rikaze.xzdw.gov.cn/xwzx_455/ttxw/202411/t20241111_524783.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/LsClw>). High confidence.
- 108** Alert 42: 那曲市公安局2024年第一期警用无人机操控员培训班开班, 11 November 2024, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfjj/dsdt/202411/t20241111_524766.html (archived 19 July 2025, https://web.archive.org/web/20250719205443/https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfjj/dsdt/202411/t20241111_524766.html). High confidence.
- 109** Alert 44: 以"智"促"治" 基层警务插上智慧"翅膀", Tingkye County PSB low-altitude policing unit, 13 November 2024, https://toutiao.xzdw.gov.cn/yw/202411/t20241113_525223.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/19cwC>). High confidence.
- 110** Alerts 1 and 51: 那曲市公安局警用无人机培训班开班啦, 16 September 2025, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfjj/dsdt/202509/t20250923_607765.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/xMOKD>) and https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfsm/dwjs/202509/t20250923_607764.html (archived 5 November 2025, https://web.archive.org/web/20251105074938/https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfsm/dwjs/202509/t20250923_607764.html). 四级培训机构 is a Level-IV institution grade, not a four-layer administrative hierarchy. High confidence.
- 111** Alerts 2 and 53: 市公安局特警支队警用航空器管理大队..., 26 September 2025, https://lasa.xzdw.gov.cn/xwzx_359/ttxw/202509/t20250926_609230.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/8zpRv>) and https://lasa.xzdw.gov.cn/ddjs_493/202509/t20250926_609230.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/0X3Ii>). High confidence.
- 112** Alert 47: 林芝巴宜: 优化服务让群众办事更便利, 12 June 2025, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfsm/sdrw/bzrmajly/202506/t20250629_583471.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/eGT72>). High confidence.

- 113** Alert 3: 特警支队: "特"训专精尖"警"久续航中, 9 July 2025, <https://ga.lasa.gov.cn/lsga/jwxw/202507/0fb6073fc0fc48148f3e53dad34eeae1.shtml> (archived 24 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260724014335/https://ga.lasa.gov.cn/lsga/jwxw/202507/0fb6073fc0fc48148f3e53dad34eeae1.shtml>). High confidence.
- 114** Alert 48: 城关公安: 聚焦五大亮点提升社会治安综合治理水平, 18 June 2025, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfdt/zhzl/202506/t20250628_582665.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/x4gte>). High confidence.
- 115** Alert 39: 阿里地区公安处特警支队完成跨区域拉动演训工作, 28 April 2024, https://ali.xzdw.gov.cn/xwzx_1128/alyw/202404/t20240428_463301.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/s7U01>). High confidence.
- 116** Tibetan pilgrims have long faced heavy restrictions and dangers in attempting to travel to attend teachings by the Dalai Lama. Tibet Watch has documented how Chinese authorities ordered hundreds of Tibetans, who had set out on their journey to pilgrimage sites in Nepal and India, to immediately return home. Tibet Watch report, 4 January 2019: <https://tibetwatch.org/hundreds-of-tibetans-ordered-to-immediately-return-from-pilgrimage-sites/>
- 117** Alert 46: 珠峰边境派出所: "枫桥经验"在雪域高原的生动实践, Everest Border Police Station, Shigatse Border Management Detachment, 12 June 2025, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfdt/zhzl/202506/t20250628_582588.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/h7Cet>). High confidence.
- 118** Alert 37: Lulang Township police station UAV search and rescue, 26 March 2024, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfdt/jwcz/202403/t20240326_453269.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/EVGF6>); Alert 47 (Bayi fleet statistics), cited above. High confidence.
- 119** Alert 49: 少年归来! 定结公安7小时"双向奔赴"守护, 3 August 2025, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfsm/pajs/jwz/202508/t20250803_592704.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/jUdbv>). High confidence.
- 120** Alert 50: 革吉公安驱车千里为牧民找回"67头牦牛", 21 August 2025, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfsm/sdrw/bzrmajly/202508/t20250825_599149.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/NIbDD>). High confidence.
- 121** Alert 54: Chamdo PSB Traffic Management Unit routine UAV inspection of road sections and construction sites, 12 February 2026, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfdt/jwcz/202602/t20260212_648655.html (archived 16 March 2026, https://web.archive.org/web/20260316204109/https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfdt/jwcz/202602/t20260212_648655.html). High confidence.
- 122** Alerts 4/20/22: 关于加强拉萨市范围内无人驾驶航空器飞行活动管制工作的通告, Lhasa municipal government, 9–10 August 2025, effective 10–31 August, exemptions for police/rescue/meteorological flights with approval. <https://www.lasa.gov.cn/lasa/tggs/202508/879738c1fc864da4be50092fdeda4a2c.shtml> (archived 11 August 2025, <https://web.archive.org/web/20250811104829/https://www.lasa.gov.cn/lasa/tggs/202508/879738c1fc864da4be50092fdeda4a2c.shtml>). High confidence.
- 123** Alerts 7/18/23: 关于对无人机等"低慢小"航空器禁飞的通告, Chamdo City government, 14–31 August 2025, mirror <https://uavnew.com/post/5210.html> (archived 14 May 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260514192659/https://uavnew.com/post/5210.html>). Medium–High confidence (aggregator mirror; uniform text across reposts).
- 124** Alert 17: Nyingchi PSB UAV ban in specified areas, 10–31 August 2025, notice of 8 August 2025, mirror <https://uavnew.com/post/5173.html> (archived 21 April 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260421102544/https://uavnew.com/post/5173.html>). Medium confidence.
- 125** Alerts 16/21: 关于加强西藏自治区成立60周年期间"低慢小"航空器飞行管制的通告, Ali Prefecture administration, 10–31 August 2025, <https://www.al.gov.cn/info/1181/157924.htm> (archived 18 November 2025, <https://web.archive.org/web/20251118214455/http://al.gov.cn/info/1181/157924.htm>) (High). Alerts 6/24, Gêrzê County PSB temporary no-fly zone, 15 km radius of the county seat, 20–30 August 2025, mirror <https://uav9.com/post/5268.html> (archived 24 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260724014449/https://uav9.com/post/5268.html>) (Medium–High).
- 126** Alert 25: 关于对无人机等"低慢小"航空器实施禁飞区域管制的通告, Bange County government (Nagqu), 11 August – 1 September 2025, mirror <https://uavnew.com/post/5232.html> (archived 23 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260723203608/https://uavnew.com/post/5232.html>). High confidence.
- 127** Alerts 5/19: 加查: 加强无人机等"低慢小"航空器安全管理的通告, Gacha County government/PSB, 22 July 2025, mirror <https://uav9.com/post/5093.html> (archived 22 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260722191258/https://uav9.com/post/5093.html>). Medium confidence.
- 128** Civil Aviation Administration of China, 民用无人驾驶航空器实名制登记管理规定 (Regulations on the real-name registration of civil unmanned aircraft), May 2017, in force 1 June 2017, covering civil drones with a maximum take-off weight of 250 grams or more. Gyatsa notice: Alerts 5 and 19.
- 129** Alert 38: 西藏首例! 罚!, Gongbogyamda County PSB (Nyingchi), incident 19 March 2024, reported 19 April 2024, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfdt/jwcz/202404/t20240419_460693.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/9Mj8V>). Administrative penalty, not a prosecution. High confidence.

- 130** Alert 52: 多地警方近期开出“黑飞”罚单, published 21 September 2024 describing enforcement of 19 September 2024, secondary republication <https://news.qq.com/rain/a/20240921A06WYH00> (archived 24 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260724021441/https://news.qq.com/rain/a/20240921A06WYH00>). Medium confidence.
- 131** Alert 29: 无人机, 不应成为“脱缰的野马”, TAR Cyberspace Office republication of a Guangming Daily article on MPS-publicised cases, 11 February 2026, https://wxh.xzdw.gov.cn/wlaq/aqdt/202602/t20260211_648069.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/G7I11>). High confidence on the republication; no Tibet nexus established for the criminal case; the source does not record the outcome.
- 132** Policy record: 国家安全机关提示: 警惕非法无人机测绘拍摄, MSS warning republished in the TAR cyberspace system, February 2025, xzdw.gov.cn. See also the national MPS enforcement report against UAV flight control hacking, 2 September 2025, https://wxh.xzdw.gov.cn/wlzl/202509/t20250902_601247.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/Fk74Z>) (Alert 9).
- 133** Alerts 27 and 55: 林芝市创新无人机管控模式 筑牢低空安全防线, 19 February 2026, https://wxh.xzdw.gov.cn/xxh/ghzc/202602/t20260219_649528.html (archived 15 March 2026, https://web.archive.org/web/20260315114046/https://wxh.xzdw.gov.cn/xxh/ghzc/202602/t20260219_649528.html) and https://toutiao.xzdw.gov.cn/yw/202602/t20260219_649509.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/LTPdv>). High confidence. The 警鹰 platform vendor remains unidentified; no corporate registration located.
- 134** Tibet Watch report, ‘Occupying Tibet’s Rivers’ tibetwatch.org/occupying-tibets-rivers-chinas-hydropower-battlefield-in-tibet/.
- 135** Tibet Watch report, 10 October 2025: <https://tibetwatch.org/fears-for-respected-tibetan-monk-hospitalised-after-torture/>; Free Tibet, “Head of Tibetan monastery in critical condition after torture following dam protest,” 23 June 2025, updated 26 August 2025, <https://freetibet.org/latest/head-of-tibetan-monastery-in-critical-condition-after-torture-following-dam-protest/>; International Campaign for Tibet, “Tibetan monk remains in critical condition two years after suffering abuse by Chinese authorities over Derge dam protest,” 4 August 2026, <https://savetibet.org/tibetan-monk-remains-in-critical-condition-two-years-after-suffering-abuse-by-chinese-authorities/> (which gives his role as the monastery’s administrator and Jamyang Lekshay as its head; sources differ on the monks’ titles)
- 136** Alert 14: 江达县公安局空地全地形全天候无人机侦察与反制设备采购 (Procurement for all-terrain, all-weather UAV reconnaissance and countermeasure equipment for Jiangda County PSB), 江达县公安局, 20 September 2025 (approx.), <https://www.ccgp-xizang.gov.cn/freecms/site/xizang/cggg/20250920/101490.html> (page captured 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch). High confidence.
- 137** Tibet Watch report, 30 April 2014, <https://tibetwatch.org/driru-county-the-new-hub-of-tibetan-resistance/>
- 138** Alert 36: 那曲市比如县公安局运用警用无人机护航“平安比如” (Biru County PSB (Nagqu) issued 18 police UAVs across 5 models and trained 10+ pilots for daily aerial patrol, public service, and security operations), 比如县公安局, 20 December 2023, https://toutiao.xzdw.gov.cn/ms/202312/t20231220_427321.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/lwyRO>). High confidence.
- 139** A senior religious teacher at the institute had warned monks and nuns beforehand that the authorities were like “a hunter preparing to kill an animal – remaining silent and unnoticed before suddenly releasing a single arrow.” Tibet Watch report, 11 August 2026: <https://tibetwatch.org/like-a-hunter-preparing-to-kill-an-animal-new-wave-of-demolitions-at-larung-gar/> Also see Tibet Watch 2024 reporting: <https://tibetwatch.org/further-details-emerge-of-evictions-at-larung-gar/> Radio Free Asia, “Beijing resumes demolition of major Tibetan Buddhist academy, satellite imagery shows,” 18 August 2026, <https://www.rfa.org/english/tibet/2026/08/19/larung-gar-china-demolition-buddhist-monks/> (demolitions from about 13 July 2026, weeks after the Law on Promoting Ethnic Unity and Progress took effect on 1 July). See also Tibet Watch, 2008 protest logs, tibetwatch.org/2008-protest-logs/
- 140** Tibet Watch, 2 August 2026: <https://tibetwatch.org/tibetan-buddhist-landmark-transformed-into-racecourse/> and tibetwatch.org/destruction-of-buddha-statue-prayer-wheels-and-prayer-flags-in-drigo-county/
- 141** Gaussian splatting is a 3D reconstruction technique, introduced in 2023, that builds a photorealistic, navigable model of a site from overlapping images; combined with LiDAR it yields a model that is both measurable and visually detailed.
- 142** Tibet Watch report, 18 March 2021: <https://tibetwatch.org/restrictions-continue-in-and-around-lhasa-even-after-the-10th-march-anniversary/> and Tibet Watch report, 19 May 2021: <https://tibetwatch.org/discriminatory-restrictions-on-tibetans-in-lhasa-to-take-effect-on-chinas-national-tourism-day/>
- 143** Alert 57: 拉萨市公安局无人机侦测反制设备采购项目中标结果公告 (Lhasa PSB awarded a city-level UAV detection and countermeasure equipment procurement), 拉萨市公安局, 9 July 2021, <https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/39646.html> (archived 23 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260723204323/https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/39646.html>). High confidence.

- 144** Alert 60: 城关区公安局装备采购项目 (Chengguan PSB procurement bought a fleet of DJI Inspire 2 aircraft and Zenmuse X7 camera systems), 拉萨市公安局城关公安分局, 9 August 2021, <https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/43608.html> (archived 24 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260724021937/https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/43608.html>). High confidence.
- 145** Alert 53: 市公安局特警支队警用航空器管理大队深入贯彻习近平总书记在西藏视察时的重要讲话精神 (Confirmed: Lhasa Special Police has a dedicated Police Aviation Management Battalion within the SWAT brigade), 拉萨市公安局特警支队警用航空器管理大队, 26 September 2025, https://lasa.xzdw.gov.cn/ddjs_493/202509/t20250926_609230.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/0X3Ii>). High confidence.
- 146** Alert 64: 拉萨市公安局2023年应急装备采购项目 (Lhasa PSB emergency-equipment award included multiple DJI enterprise UAVs), 拉萨市公安局, 16 June 2023, <https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/66191.html> (archived 24 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260724022212/https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/66191.html>). Medium-High confidence.
- 147** Tibet Watch report, 1 August 2025: <https://tibetwatch.org/the-dalai-lamas-90th-birthday-in-tibet/>
- 148** Alert 48: 城关公安: 聚焦五大亮点提升社会治安综合治理水平 (Chengguan District PSB (Lhasa) SWAT team used 'UAV + ground unit' combined operations, resolving a simulated terrorist incident within 5 minutes), 城关公安, 18 June 2025, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfdt/zhzl/202506/t20250628_582665.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/x4gte>). High confidence.
- 149** Alert 3: 特警支队: “特”训专精尖“警”久续航中 (Lhasa SWAT integrated UAV reconnaissance into summer training drills, including indoor reconnaissance operations), 拉萨特警支队, 9 July 2025, <https://ga.lasa.gov.cn/lsga/jwxw/202507/0fb6073fc0fc48148f3e53dad34eeae1.shtml> (archived 24 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260724014335/https://ga.lasa.gov.cn/lsga/jwxw/202507/0fb6073fc0fc48148f3e53dad34eeae1.shtml>). High confidence.
- 150** International Campaign for Tibet, ‘Dangerous Crossing: 2006 Update’ gives a full account of the incident and its documentation: <https://savetibet.org/2006-refugee-report-dangerous-crossing-2006-update/>
- 151** Alert 46: 珠峰边境派出所: “枫桥经验”在雪域高原的生动实践 (Everest Border Police Station (Shigatse) used UAVs to rapidly locate tourist movements during a search-and-rescue operation), 西藏出入境边防检查总站日喀则边境管理支队珠峰边境派出所, 12 June 2025, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfdt/zhzl/202506/t20250628_582588.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/h7Cet>). High confidence.
- 152** Alert 44: 以“智”促“治” 基层警务插上智慧“翅膀” (Tingkye County PSB low-altitude policing unit conducted police UAV skills training to strengthen grassroots policing technology application), 定结县公安局低空警务专班, 13 November 2024, https://toutiao.xzdw.gov.cn/yw/202411/t20241113_525223.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/19cwC>). High confidence. Alert 49: 少年归来! 定结公安7小时“双向奔赴”守护 (Tingkye County PSB UAV provided real-time aerial feed during a 7-hour search for a missing youth, building a three-dimensional search network), 定结县公安局, 3 August 2025, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfsm/pajs/jwz/202508/t20250803_592704.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/jUdbv>). High confidence. Alert 56: 智慧警务“翼”起飞——定结公安警用无人机培训点燃实战大练兵新引擎 (Tingkye County PSB organised police UAV practical skills training; DJI Mavic 3 Pro platform referenced for police training and air-ground integrated...), 定结县公安局, 17 July 2025, <https://news.qq.com/rain/a/20250717A08KG000> (archived 15 August 2025, <https://web.archive.org/web/20250815231104/https://news.qq.com/rain/a/20250717A08KG000>). Medium confidence.
- 153** Alert 61: 日喀则边境管理支队警用无人机平台建设项目 (Shigatse Border Management Detachment established a police UAV platform using DJI aircraft), 日喀则边境管理支队, 9 September 2021, <https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/46449.html> (archived 24 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260724022019/https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/46449.html>). High confidence.
- 154** Alert 32: 日喀则市公安局首届警用无人机培训班开班培训 (Shigatse City PSB held its first police UAV training course; participants included backbone officers from 9 border counties and 2 port PSB sub-bureaux), 日喀则市公安局, 25 April 2021, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfjj/dsdt/202104/t20210425_182881.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/32vOb>). High confidence.
- 155** Tibet Watch report, 5 November 2025: <https://tibetwatch.org/setting-a-religious-trap/>
- 156** Alert 26.
- 157** CNN report, 17 December 2025: ‘China is building the world’s most powerful hydropower system deep in the Himalayas. It remains shrouded in secrecy’, <https://edition.cnn.com/2025/12/17/china/china-largest-hydropower-dam-intl-hnk-dst>
- 158** Alert 27: 林芝市创新无人机管控模式 筑牢低空安全防线 (Nyingchi City details a fully integrated low-altitude defense network: radar, AI recognition, and electronic fencing for real-time tracking and...), 林芝市政府 / 林芝市公安局 / 军地协同管控领导小组, 19 February 2026, https://wx.xzdw.gov.cn/xxh/ghzc/202602/t20260219_649528.html (archived 15

- March 2026, https://web.archive.org/web/20260315114046/https://wxh.xzdw.gov.cn/xxh/ghzc/202602/t20260219_649528.html). High confidence. Alert 55: 林芝市创新无人机管控模式 筑牢低空安全防线 (Nyingchi established a UAV control leadership working group with specialised sub-groups including emergency countermeasures; full-chain enforcement...), 林芝市政府/公安协同, 19 February 2026, https://toutiao.xzdw.gov.cn/yw/202602/t20260219_649509.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/LTPdv>). High confidence.
- 159** "China reports completion of first large-scale hydropower station on main stream of Yarlung Tsangpo," Tibetan Review, 15 June 2026, <https://www.tibetanreview.net/china-reports-completion-of-first-large-scale-hydropower-station-on-main-stream-of-yarlung-tsangpo/> (Zangmu, in Gyatsa County, Lhoka: construction from 2010, full generation from October 2015).
- 160** Alert 5: 加查: 加强无人机等“低慢小”航空器安全管理的通告 (Gacha County notice requires registration and approval for UAV/LSA flights; reporting to local public security mandated), 加查县公安, 22 July 2025, <https://uav9.com/post/5093.html> (archived 22 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260722191258/https://uav9.com/post/5093.html>). Medium confidence. Alert 19: 西藏加查: 加强无人机等“低慢小”航空器安全管理的通告 (Gacha County mandated UAV/LSA registration and reporting to local public security; defined parameters for 'low, slow, small' aircraft), 加查县政府 / 公安, 22 July 2025, <https://uav9.com/post/5093.html> (archived 22 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260722191258/https://uav9.com/post/5093.html>). Medium confidence.
- 161** OT-3: 2022年中央财政资金采购草原办公及监测设备项目 (分散采购) (阿坝县林业和草原局, 阿坝藏族羌族自治州 (阿坝县)), 8 January 2026, ¥395,000; supplier 成都奎远志天信息技术有限公司; DJI items: DJI Matrice 4T x4. https://m.sohu.com/a/973989092_122434053 (archived 24 July 2026, https://web.archive.org/web/20260724024501/https://m.sohu.com/a/973989092_122434053). Medium-High source quality.
- 162** Alert 46: 珠峰边境派出所: “枫桥经验”在雪域高原的生动实践 (Everest Border Police Station (Shigatse) used UAVs to rapidly locate tourist movements during a search-and-rescue operation), 西藏出入境边防检查总站日喀则边境管理支队 珠峰边境派出所, 12 June 2025, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfdt/zhl/202506/t20250628_582588.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/h7Cet>). High confidence. Alert 49: 少年归来! 定结公安7小时“双向奔赴”守护 (Tingkye County PSB UAV provided real-time aerial feed during a 7-hour search for a missing youth, building a three-dimensional search network), 定结县公安局, 3 August 2025, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfsm/pajs/jwz/202508/t20250803_592704.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/jUdbv>). High confidence.
- 163** Alert 50: 革吉公安驱车千里为牧民找回“67头牦牛” (Gegye County PSB (Ali) deployed UAV after terrain made ground search impossible, to locate 67 missing yaks for a herder), 革吉县公安局/相关派出所, 21 August 2025, https://zfw.xzdw.gov.cn/zfsm/sdrw/bzrmajly/202508/t20250825_599149.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/NiBDD>). High confidence.
- 164** Human Rights Watch report, 'They Say We Should Be Grateful', 2013, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2013/06/27/they-say-we-should-be-grateful/mass-rehousing-and-relocation-programs-tibetan>
- 165** Alert 10.
- 166** Alert 26.
- 167** Tibet Watch, 'China installs new restrictions on religious activity in Tibet'; see Section 5.
- 168** International Campaign for Tibet, "A fragile welcome: China's influence on Nepal and its impact on Tibetans," 19 June 2010, <https://savetibet.org/a-fragile-welcome-chinas-influence-on-nepal-and-its-impact-on-tibetans/> (2,500–3,500 registered each year before 2008; 652 in 2008); Migration Policy Institute, "South Asia's Tibetan Refugee Community Is Shrinking, Imperiling Its Long-Term Future," 8 February 2024, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/tibetan-refugees-india> (about 419 a year in 2010–14; 55 arrivals in India in 2020–24).
- 169** Tibet Watch testimony, <https://tibetwatch.org/testimony-of-a-tibetan-in-exile/>
- 170** Alert 26.
- 171** Alert 57: 拉萨市公安局无人机侦测反制设备采购项目中标结果公告 (Lhasa PSB awarded a city-level UAV detection and countermeasure equipment procurement), 拉萨市公安局, 9 July 2021, <https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/39646.html> (archived 23 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260723204323/https://www.fdz119.com/zhaobiao/39646.html>). High confidence. Alert 4: 关于加强拉萨市范围内无人驾驶航空器飞行活动管制工作的通告 (Lhasa municipal notice imposes flight control on UAVs and 'low, slow, small' aircraft; exceptions for police/rescue/meteorological with approval), 拉萨市人民政府, 9 August 2025, <https://www.lasa.gov.cn/lasa/tggs/202508/879738c1fc864da4be50092fdeda4a2c.shtml> (archived 11 August 2025, <https://web.archive.org/web/20250811104829/https://www.lasa.gov.cn/lasa/tggs/202508/879738c1fc864da4be50092fdeda4a2c.shtml>). High confidence. Alert 7: 关于对无人机等“低慢小”航空器禁飞的通告 (Chamdo City announced a ban on UAV/LSA flights during anniversary celebrations; unauthorized flights may be shot down), 昌都市人民政府, 14 August 2025, <https://uavnew.com/post/5210.html> (archived 14 May 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260514192659/https://uavnew.com/post/5210.html>). Medium confidence. Alert 16: 关于加强西藏自治区成立60周年期间“低慢小”航空器飞行管控

的通告 (Ali Prefecture government announced flight restrictions on 'low, slow, small' aircraft across several counties during TAR 60th anniversary (10–31 Aug...), 阿里地区政府, 2025-08, <https://www.al.gov.cn/info/1181/157924.htm> (archived 18 November 2025, <https://web.archive.org/web/20251118214455/http://al.gov.cn/info/1181/157924.htm>). High confidence. Alert 17: 西藏林芝: 8月10日□31日期间部分区域禁飞无人机 (Nyingchi Public Security announced UAV bans in specified areas from 10–31 August 2025; enforcement by local police), 林芝市公安局, 8 August 2025, <https://uavnew.com/post/5173.html> (archived 21 April 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260421102544/https://uavnew.com/post/5173.html>). Medium confidence. Alert 25: 关于对无人机等“低慢小”航空器实施禁飞区域管控的通告 (Bange County government announced UAV flight control and no-fly zones from 11 Aug–1 Sep 2025; violators subject to police countermeasures), 班戈县人民政府, 11 August 2025, <https://uavnew.com/post/5232.html> (archived 23 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260723203608/https://uavnew.com/post/5232.html>). High confidence.

- 172** Alert 27: 林芝市创新无人机管控模式 筑牢低空安全防线 (Nyingchi City details a fully integrated low-altitude defense network: radar, AI recognition, and electronic fencing for real-time tracking and...), 林芝市政府 / 林芝市公安局 / 军地协同管控领导小组, 19 February 2026, https://wx.xzdw.gov.cn/xxh/ghzc/202602/t20260219_649528.html (archived 15 March 2026, https://web.archive.org/web/20260315114046/https://wx.xzdw.gov.cn/xxh/ghzc/202602/t20260219_649528.html). High confidence.
- 173** Alert 4: 关于加强拉萨市范围内无人驾驶航空器飞行活动管制工作的通告 (Lhasa municipal notice imposes flight control on UAVs and 'low, slow, small' aircraft; exceptions for police/rescue/meteorological with approval), 拉萨市人民政府, 9 August 2025, <https://www.lasa.gov.cn/lasa/tggs/202508/879738c1fc864da4be50092fdeda4a2c.shtml> (archived 11 August 2025, <https://web.archive.org/web/20250811104829/https://www.lasa.gov.cn/lasa/tggs/202508/879738c1fc864da4be50092fdeda4a2c.shtml>). High confidence. Alert 7: 关于对无人机等“低慢小”航空器禁飞的通告 (Chamdo City announced a ban on UAV/LSA flights during anniversary celebrations; unauthorized flights may be shot down), 昌都市人民政府, 14 August 2025, <https://uavnew.com/post/5210.html> (archived 14 May 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260514192659/https://uavnew.com/post/5210.html>). Medium confidence. Alert 16: 关于加强西藏自治区成立60周年期间“低慢小”航空器飞行管控的通告 (Ali Prefecture government announced flight restrictions on 'low, slow, small' aircraft across several counties during TAR 60th anniversary (10–31 Aug...), 阿里地区政府, 2025-08, <https://www.al.gov.cn/info/1181/157924.htm> (archived 18 November 2025, <https://web.archive.org/web/20251118214455/http://al.gov.cn/info/1181/157924.htm>). High confidence. Alert 17: 西藏林芝: 8月10日□31日期间部分区域禁飞无人机 (Nyingchi Public Security announced UAV bans in specified areas from 10–31 August 2025; enforcement by local police), 林芝市公安局, 8 August 2025, <https://uavnew.com/post/5173.html> (archived 21 April 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260421102544/https://uavnew.com/post/5173.html>). Medium confidence. Alert 25: 关于对无人机等“低慢小”航空器实施禁飞区域管控的通告 (Bange County government announced UAV flight control and no-fly zones from 11 Aug–1 Sep 2025; violators subject to police countermeasures), 班戈县人民政府, 11 August 2025, <https://uavnew.com/post/5232.html> (archived 23 July 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20260723203608/https://uavnew.com/post/5232.html>). High confidence.
- 174** Adopting CCP terminology. Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention; the Special Rapporteur on minority issues; the Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy; the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief; and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, 7 July 2020: <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=25374>
- 175** OHCHR press release, 10 June 2022, "China must address grave human rights concerns and enable credible international investigation: UN experts": <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/06/china-must-address-grave-human-rights-concerns-and-enable-credible>
- 176** See Congressional-Executive Commission on China, "Chairs Seek Export Controls on Technology Used for Mass Biometric Data Collection in Tibet", October 2023: <https://www.cecc.gov/media-center/press-releases/chairs-seek-export-controls-on-technology-used-for-mass-biometric-data>
- 177** OT-7, 甘孜州公安局采购警用无人机及运控车辆项目, tender notice 19 September 2025, <https://ggzyjy.sc.gov.cn/jyxx/002002/002002001/20250919/8a69c94e995da2f901996130667e2533.html> (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/Sig5i>) (Medium; lead). OT-8, 理县公安局 2026年天网二期升级改造、无人机机场及违停补点项目, award 14 May 2026, mirror https://www.yfbzb.com/winbid/detail/20260514_596996767.html (archived 24 July 2026, https://web.archive.org/web/20260724025152/https://www.yfbzb.com/winbid/detail/20260514_596996767.html) (Medium; lead, amount and supplier hidden by mirror).
- 178** OT-2, 海螺沟应急救援能力建设装备购置项目, Hailuoguo Scenic Area Management (Ganzi), award 16 June 2023, ¥448,520, DJI M30+LP12 and Mavic 3 itemised (¥97,485), <https://ggzyjy.sc.gov.cn/jyxx/002002/002002003/20230616/8a69d03888b7eae0188c228712216a6.html> (page captured 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch)

(High). OT-4, 2024年康定应急管理局防灭火装备采购项目, award 25 December 2024, ¥484,785, DJI Mavic 3T with RM510B (¥49,980), <https://ggzyjy.sc.gov.cn/jyxx/002002/002002003/20241225/8a69c54193ec28400193fd20c18202db.html> (page captured 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch) (High).

- 179** Searching these platforms directly would be a priority for further research. Outside_TAR_Search_Coverage sheet, v8 dataset; Yushu (Qinghai) police emergency reserve package lead, 20 December 2024, UAV content unverified (Low-Medium; excluded from all totals).
- 180** Alert 56: 智慧警务"翼"起飞——定结公安警用无人机培训点燃实战大练兵新引擎, 17 July 2025, secondary republication <https://news.qq.com/rain/a/20250717A08KG000> (archived 15 August 2025, <https://web.archive.org/web/20250815231104/https://news.qq.com/rain/a/20250717A08KG000>). Medium confidence; platform identification High (model named in text).
- 181** Chengguan drone airport lead, 拉萨市公安局城关分局建设智慧无人机机场及立体防控圈（二期）项目（二次）, indexed attachment at <https://ggzy.xizang.gov.cn/govp/attach/download?attachId=2c93c0a09d37d979019d99b22e90352b> (file downloaded 26 August 2026; copy held by Tibet Watch). Medium confidence; award date, amount and quantity not recovered; the M4T-BD designation is unresolved.
- 182** Segment-specific figures per the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission staff report on China's remote sensing and drone industry (December 2024) and UHRP (2024, citing 2020 US public safety data).
- 183** The Washington Post, 1 February 2022 (registry-based investigation of state-linked investment vehicles); DJI Viewpoints response. Investment alone does not establish state control; both positions are recorded.
- 184** NPCC website: <https://www.npcc.police.uk/our-work/work-of-npcc-committees/operations-coordination-committee/police-use-of-drones/>
- 185** The Telegraph, 13 February 2023 (11 forces declined to disclose figures). Cited in Uyghur Human Rights Project, "Above Us, Their Eyes: DJI Drones in East Turkistan" (briefing, March 2024).
- 186** Written Ministerial Statement HCWS386, Oliver Dowden, 24 November 2022. It instructed departments to stop deploying such equipment on sensitive sites where it is made by companies subject to China's National Intelligence Law: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2022-11-24/hcws386>
- 187** In June 2023 the Cabinet Office tabled amendments to the Procurement Bill committing to publish a removal timeline. After Royal Assent on 26 October 2023, the government committed to publish that timeline within six months. See the parliamentary answer: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-03-22/hl3549>
- 188** Alex Burghart's written statement said that of the small number of sensitive sites with such equipment, about 50% had replaced it, 70% were expected to by October, and all would by April 2025. He also said the vast majority of sensitive sites had never had the equipment. Reuters, 29 April 2024: <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/chinese-made-surveillance-kit-be-removed-sensitive-sites-by-2025-says-uk-2024-04-29/>
- 189** <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2025-11-18/debates/25111864000008/China-ManufacturedSurveillanceEquipmentSensitiveSites>
- 190** FCC: Public Notice DA 25-1086, 22 December 2025, from the FCC docket. The National Security Determination is at <https://www.fcc.gov/sites/default/files/National-Security-Determination-for-UAS.pdf>
- 191** EO 14307, "Unleashing American Drone Dominance", and EO 14305, "Restoring American Airspace Sovereignty", were both issued on 6 June 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/06/unleashing-american-drone-dominance/> and <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/06/restoring-american-airspace-sovereignty/>
The 2025–26 US instruments are cited for context; no jurisdiction has yet acted on a Tibet-specific record.
- 192** The American Security Drone Act 2023 was enacted in the FY2024 NDAA. Legal commentary refers to restrictions under sections 1823–1827 of that Act.
- 193** India: Directorate General of Foreign Trade Notification No. 54/2015-2020, 9 February 2022. It prohibits drone imports, with exceptions for research, defence and security. Note that the civil aviation ministry presented it as a measure to promote Made in India drones, not as a security measure against China.
- 194** Tibet Watch report, 23 October 2023: <https://tibetwatch.org/tashi-wangchuk-beaten-by-police-head-refused-business-registration-for-new-shop/> Tashi Wangchuk was sentenced to five years in May 2018 for "inciting separatism" after appearing in a 2015 New York Times video on Tibetan-language education (The New York Times, 22 May 2018).

- 195** Alert 29: 无人机，不应成为「脱缰的野马」——公安机关打击非法无人机飞行违法犯罪典型案例 (TAR Cyberspace Office republication of a national article on criminal cases for UAV geofence/altitude hacking: one individual arrested December 2025 for flying...), 中共西藏自治区委员会网络安全和信息化委员会办公室 / 公安机关, 11 February 2026, https://wxh.xzdw.gov.cn/wlaq/aqdt/202602/t20260211_648069.html (archived 26 August 2026, <https://archive.ph/G7111>). High confidence.
- 196** Human Rights Watch, "One Passport, Two Systems", 2015: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/07/13/one-passport-two-systems/chinas-restrictions-foreign-travel-tibetans-and-others>
- 197** CERD/C/CHN/CO/14-17, 19 September 2018.
- 198** Tibet Watch report, 19 May 2021: <https://tibetwatch.org/discriminatory-restrictions-on-tibetans-in-lhasa-to-take-effect-on-chinas-national-tourism-day/>
- 199** Tibet Action Institute, May 2025, 'When they came to take away our children', <https://tibetaction.net/when-they-came-to-take-our-children/> ; Human Rights Watch, 'Start with the Youngest Children', 4 May 2026: '<https://www.hrw.org/report/2026/05/04/start-with-the-youngest-children/chinas-use-of-preschools-to-integrate-tibetans>'; Tenzin Choekyi of Tibet Watch testimony, <https://www.facebook.com/tibetaction/videos/in-her-testimony-tenzin-choekyi-of-tibet-watch-shares-the-experiences-the-conseq/545044690964842/> .
- 200** Tibet Watch report, 8 October 2024: <https://tibetwatch.org/primary-school-at-buddhist-monastery-forced-to-close/>

Cover image: A DJI drone (EV50) flies over the mountains in Tibet as part of a high-altitude trial in which the drone was flown from Base Camp of Mt Chomolungma (Everest) to an altitude of 8,861 m. The mission, led by Peking University, marked the first time that drones had been used to conduct atmospheric observations at such extreme elevations. Images of the trial appeared on DJI's website and across Chinese state and social media channels.

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