

Drones Shame Coronavirus ‘Health Offenders’



In healthcare, drones to date have traditionally been used to deliver supplies to remote or inaccessible areas. In the face of the Coronavirus 2019-nCoV spreading across China, the flying machines are now being deployed to press people into donning protective facemasks as part of multiple measures to control the virus.

Chinese police in the Luqiao district of Taizhou, have been using drones kitted out with loudspeakers to disperse public gatherings and to admonish people walking around the streets without face masks.

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Several online [videos depict urban scenes where drones shame offenders](#) for failing to wear masks. In one scene, a lone man is reminded by police to put on a facemask via a speaker on a hovering drone. In another, a group of card players outside an apartment building are told to stop playing. Elsewhere an elderly woman looks confused as she scans the sky to locate to source of a courteous but firm voice telling her to put on her “face mask on and go home right away”.

Authorities in rural China are also using drones to keep an eye on citizens out and about without facemasks. Further footage shows a farmer being asked: “Isn’t it comfortable to stay at home, with food and drinks? You didn’t even wear a mask.” The farmer reacts by smiling, upon which he is told, “it’s not funny” and reminded not to come outside unnecessarily.

Elsewhere in China, an agriculture drone manufacturer is getting ready to deploy a fleet that will combat the virus by spraying disinfectant on high-risk public areas like bus and train stations.

Most of the cases are in mainland China where the number presently stands at 34,546. The death toll there has risen to 722. According to WHO, outside China, 25 countries have confirmed 270 cases with two deaths in Hong Kong and the Philippines.

On January 30, [WHO declared a global emergency \(a Public Health Emergency of International Concern – PHEIC\)](#) over the spread of the virus.

Around the world, countries are implementing different measures to control cases and spread of the virus including grounding flights to and from China and enforcing quarantine.

Source: [RTE, Spatial Source](#)

Image credit: Global Times

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