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Home Office Drone Found Smoking on M20

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– *Categories: General News*

Firefighters were dispatched at approximately 2 p.m. to reports of a vehicle fire on the westbound carriageway of the M20 between Junction 13 (Folkestone) and Junction 12 (Cheriton). Upon arrival, they discovered an overturned drone, bearing Home Office branding, emitting smoke on the hard shoulder.

Witnesses reported the drone's registration as "G-TEKE." The craft has been confirmed as a Tekever AR5 Evolution MK2, a long-endurance surveillance drone equipped with maritime radar and day/night cameras. This model is used by the Home Office as part of its Small Boats Operational Command, which monitors illegal maritime activity in the English Channel.

Under a contract signed in 2023, the Home Office deployed Tekever AR5 drones to support surveillance operations along the south coast. These systems provide extended observation capabilities with endurance over 20 hours and payloads for advanced sensors, enhancing operational efficiency without requiring additional personnel or broader government expansion.

It remains under investigation whether the drone crashed during flight or fell from a transporting vehicle. Kent Fire and Rescue Service is coordinating with Home Office officials to determine the cause and assess safety measures.

By 3 p.m., traffic had resumed in the affected area, and both lanes were reopened with minimal disruption. The Tekever AR5 Evolution MK2 is valued at up to £450,000, reflecting the role of private-sector innovation in providing sophisticated monitoring tools for national security and border protection.

This incident highlights the importance of oversight and accountability in the deployment of high-value government assets. Ongoing evaluation and proper handling of surveillance technology ensure that public funds achieve intended objectives while minimising risk. Authorities are expected to release further details following the conclusion of the investigation.