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Unmanned Aircraft Systems Integration Pilot Program

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Memorandum of October 25, 2017

Unmanned Aircraft Systems Integration Pilot Program

Memorandum for the Secretary of Transportation

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1 . Policy. It shall be the policy of the United States to promote the safe operation of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) and enable the development of UAS technologies for use in agriculture, commerce, emergency management, human transportation, and other sectors. Compared to manned aircraft, UAS provide novel, low-cost capabilities for both public and private applications. UAS present opportunities to enhance the safety of the American public, increase the efficiency and productivity of American industry, and create tens of thousands of new American jobs.

The private sector has rapidly advanced UAS capabilities to address the needs of recreational, commercial, and public users. To promote continued technological innovation and to ensure the global leadership of the United States in this emerging industry, the regulatory framework for UAS operations must be sufficiently flexible to keep pace with the advancement of UAS technology, while balancing the vital Federal roles in protecting privacy and civil liberties; mitigating risks to national security and homeland security; and protecting the safety of the American public, critical infrastructure, and the Nation's airspace. Well-coordinated integration of UAS into the national airspace system (NAS) alongside manned aircraft will increase the safety of the NAS and enable the authorization of more complex UAS operations.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has taken steps to integrate UAS into the NAS at specific test sites and has issued operational requirements for small UAS operations in the NAS. Further integration will require continued private-sector cooperation and the involvement of State, local, and tribal governments in Federal efforts to develop and enforce regulations on UAS operations in their jurisdictions. Input from State, local, tribal, and private-sector stakeholders will be necessary to craft an optimal strategy for the national management of UAS operations. A coordinated effort between the private sector and among these governments will provide certainty and stability to UAS owners and operators, maximize the benefits of UAS technologies for the public, and mitigate risks to public safety and security.

Sec. 2 . UAS Integration Pilot Program. (a) Within 90 days of the date of this memorandum, the Secretary of Transportation (Secretary), in consultation with the Administrator of the FAA (Administrator), shall establish a UAS Integration Pilot Program (Program) to test the further integration of UAS into the NAS in a select number of State, local, and tribal jurisdictions.

(b) The objectives of the Program shall be to:

- (i) test and evaluate various models of State, local, and tribal government involvement in the development and enforcement of Federal regulations for UAS operations;
- (ii) encourage UAS owners and operators to develop and safely test new and innovative UAS concepts of operations; and (□ printed page 50302)
- (iii) inform the development of future Federal guidelines and regulatory decisions on UAS operations nationwide.

Sec. 3 . Implementation. (a) To implement the Program, the Secretary or the Administrator, as appropriate, shall:

- (i) solicit proposals from State, local, and tribal governments to test within their jurisdictions the integration of civil and public UAS operations into the NAS below 200 feet above ground level, or up to 400 feet above ground level if the Secretary determines that such an adjustment would be appropriate;
- (ii) select proposals by State, local, and tribal governments for participation in the Program according to the criteria listed in subsection (b) of this section;
- (iii) enter into agreements with the selected governments to establish the terms of their involvement in UAS operations within their jurisdictions, including their support for Federal enforcement responsibilities; describe the proposed UAS operations to be conducted; and identify the entities that will conduct such operations, including, if applicable, the governments themselves; and
- (iv) as necessary, use existing authorities to grant exceptions, exemptions, authorizations, and waivers from FAA regulations to the entities identified in the agreements described in subsection (iii) of this section, including through the issuance of waivers under 14 CFR Part 107 (<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-14/part-107>) and Certificates of Waiver or Authorization under section 333 of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (FMRA) (Public Law 112-95 (<https://www.govinfo.gov/link/plaw/112/public/95>)).

(b) In selecting proposals for participation in the Program under subsection (a) of this section, the Secretary shall consider:

- (i) overall economic, geographic, and climatic diversity of the selected jurisdictions;

- (ii) overall diversity of the proposed models of government involvement;
- (iii) overall diversity of the UAS operations to be conducted;
- (iv) the location of critical infrastructure;
- (v) the involvement of commercial entities in the proposal, and their ability to advance objectives that may serve the public interest as a result of further integration of UAS into the NAS;
- (vi) the involvement of affected communities in, and their support for, participating in the Program;
- (vii) the commitment of the governments and UAS operators involved in the proposal to comply with requirements related to national defense, homeland security, and public safety, and to address competition, privacy, and civil liberties concerns; and
- (viii) the commitment of the governments and UAS operators involved in the proposal to achieve the following policy objectives:
 - (A) promoting innovation and economic development;
 - (B) enhancing transportation safety;
 - (C) enhancing workplace safety;
 - (D) improving emergency response and search and rescue functions; and
 - (E) using radio spectrum efficiently and competitively.
- (c) Within 180 days of the establishment of the Program, the Secretary shall enter into agreements with State, local, or tribal governments to participate in the Program, with the goal of entering into at least 5 such agreements by that time.
- (d) In carrying out subsection (c) of this section, the Secretary shall select State, local, or tribal governments that plan to begin integration of UAS (□ printed page 50303) into the NAS in their jurisdictions within 90 days after the date on which the agreement is established.

(e) The Secretary shall consider new proposals for participation in the Program up to 1 year before the Program is scheduled to terminate.

(f) The Secretary shall apply best practices from existing FAA test sites, waivers granted under 14 CFR part 107 (<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-14/part-107>), exemptions granted under section 333 of the FMRA, the FAA Focus Area Pathfinder Program, and any other relevant programs in order to expedite the consideration of exceptions, exemptions, authorizations, and waivers from FAA regulations to be granted under the Program, as described in subsection (a)(iv) of this section.

(g) The Secretary shall address any non-compliance with the terms of exceptions, exemptions, authorizations, waivers granted, or agreements made with UAS users or participating jurisdictions in a timely and appropriate manner, including by revoking or modifying the relevant terms.

Sec. 4 . Coordination. (a) The Administrator, in coordination with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, shall apply relevant information collected during the Program and preliminary findings to inform the development of the UAS Traffic Management System under section 2208 of the FAA Extension, Safety, and Security Act of 2016 (Public Law 114-190 (<https://www.govinfo.gov/link/plaw/114/public/190>)).

(b) The Secretary, in coordination with the Secretaries of Defense and Homeland Security and the Attorney General, shall take necessary and appropriate steps to:

(i) mitigate risks to public safety and homeland and national security when selecting proposals and implementing the Program; and

(ii) monitor compliance with relevant laws and regulations to ensure that Program activities do not interfere with national defense, homeland security, or law enforcement operations and missions.

(c) The heads of executive departments and agencies with relevant law enforcement responsibilities (Federal law enforcement agencies), including the Attorney General and the Secretary of Homeland Security, shall develop and implement best practices to enforce the laws and regulations governing UAS operations conducted under the Program.

(d) In carrying out the responsibilities set forth in subsection (c) of this section, the heads of Federal law enforcement agencies shall coordinate with the Secretaries of Defense and Transportation, as well as with the relevant State, local, or tribal law enforcement agencies.

(e) In implementing the Program, the Secretary shall coordinate with the Secretaries of Defense and Homeland Security and the Attorney General to test counter-UAS capabilities, as well as platform and system-wide cybersecurity, to the extent appropriate and consistent with law.

Sec. 5 . *Evaluation and Termination of UAS Integration Pilot Program.* (a) The Program shall terminate 3 years from the date of this memorandum, unless extended by the Secretary.

(b) Before and after the termination of the Program, the Secretary shall use the information and experience yielded by the Program to inform the development of regulations, initiatives, and plans to enable safer and more complex UAS operations, and shall, as appropriate, share information with the Secretaries of Defense and Homeland Security, the Attorney General, and the heads of other executive departments and agencies.

(c) After the date of this memorandum and until the Program is terminated, the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretaries of Defense and Homeland Security and the Attorney General, shall submit an annual report to the President setting forth the Secretary's interim findings and conclusions concerning the Program. Not later than 90 days after the Program is terminated, the Secretary shall submit a final report to the President setting forth the Secretary's findings and conclusions concerning the Program. (□ printed page 50304)

Sec. 6 . *Definitions.* As used in this memorandum, the next stated terms, in singular and plural, are defined as follows:

(a) The term “unmanned aircraft system” has the meaning given that term in section 331 of the FMRA.

(b) The term “public unmanned aircraft system” has the meaning given that term in section 331 of the FMRA.

(c) The term “civil unmanned aircraft system” means an unmanned aircraft system that meets the qualifications and conditions required for operation of a civil aircraft, as defined in 49 U.S.C. 40102 (<https://www.govinfo.gov/link/uscode/49/40102>).

Sec. 7 . General Provisions. (a) Nothing in this memorandum shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

(i) the authority granted by law to an executive department or agency, or the head thereof;

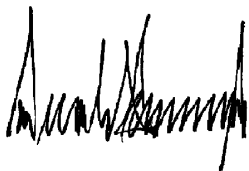
(ii) the functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budgetary, administrative, or legislative proposals; or

(iii) the conduct of public aircraft operations, as defined in 49 U.S.C. 40102(a)(41) (<https://www.govinfo.gov/link/uscode/49/40102>) and 40125 (<https://www.govinfo.gov/link/uscode/49/40125>), by executive departments and agencies, consistent with applicable Federal law.

(b) This memorandum shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

(c) This memorandum is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

(d) The Secretary is authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.



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