



Acquisition Directorate

UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The Coast Guard is exploring the use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) to augment the service's land- and cutter-based aviation capabilities. UAS that can remain on scene for extended periods, expand maritime domain awareness, and disseminate actionable intelligence about maritime hazards and threats can provide a significant, cost-effective capability for the Coast Guard. A UAS consists of an unmanned aircraft, its mission payloads, ground support equipment, and data and control links.

The Coast Guard is moving forward with plans to augment its aviation fleet with land-based, mid-altitude UAS to provide strategic, wide-area surveillance and cutter-based, low-altitude UAS to provide tactical, on-demand capability. The UAS project is focused on technologically mature systems, commonality with Department of Homeland Security and Department of Defense programs, and leveraging other agencies' UAS experience.

The Coast Guard is pursuing a non-major acquisition project for a small UAS for the NSC, as an interim, cost-effective UAS capability. To support this strategy, the Coast Guard R&D Center conducted a technical demonstration of the ScanEagle UAS aboard an NSC in August 2012 and plans to conduct a follow up demonstration on an NSC in 2013.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Coast Guard established a Joint Program Office to coordinate maritime land-based UAS policy and operations. In 2009, CBP acquired its first maritime-variant Predator UAS, the MQ-9 Guardian. CBP and Coast Guard flight crews have jointly operated Guardian from Cape Canaveral, Fla., and Corpus Christi, Texas, since 2010.

For updates on UAS, visit the project's website at <http://www.uscg.mil/acquisition/uas/>.



Top: U.S. Navy Fire Scout

Middle: U.S. Customs and Border Protection Guardian

Bottom: U.S. Navy Small Tactical UAS

Mission execution begins here.