

# UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM



Acquisition  
Directorate



Small unmanned aircraft systems will provide persistent airborne surveillance capabilities for the national security cutter.



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Pursuing small UAS as a capability for the national security cutter class as a nonmajor acquisition to provide persistent, tactical airborne intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capability to increase the NSC's effectiveness
- Focusing on capabilities that are available in the current market
- Presently in the analyze/select phase

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Coast Guard is exploring the use of the unmanned aircraft system to supply the service with 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 plans to augment its aviation fleet with cutter-based, low-altitude small UAS to provide tactical, on-demand capability and with land-based, mid-altitude UAS to provide strategic, wide-area surveillance. 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 the acquisition of sUAS as a cost-effective approach to meeting the national se-

curity cutter's operational need for a persistent airborne surveillance capability. As part of the analysis, the Coast Guard Research and Development Center conducted technical demonstrations of sUAS aboard two NSCs and a demonstration at the NASA Wallops Flight Facility to investigate sUAS payloads for maritime missions.

The Coast Guard has validated a mission need for land-based UAS to significantly enhance ocean surveillance in support of the service's operations. The Coast Guard is developing a land-based UAS concept of operations and is investigating opportunities to leverage UAS technology to further enhance maritime patrol capabilities. Coast Guard flight crews are jointly operating maritime-variant Predator UAS (Guardian) on maritime missions in conjunction with U.S. Customs and Border Protection to enhance the Coast Guard's understanding of potential land-based UAS solutions and support the development of a land-based UAS requirements package.

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

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Mission execution begins *here*.