

Unleashing American Drone Dominance Request for Information

The Department of War is seeking information on small unmanned aerial systems (sUAS) capable of conducting **One-Way Attack (OWA) missions** to augment current warfighting capabilities. The intent per the Secretary of War's (SOW) July 2025 Drone Dominance memo is to **“accelerate growth of the U.S. industrial base to outfit our combat units with cheap and effective U.S.-made UAS.”** Every warfighter must have access to low cost/attribution sUAS to conduct OWA. The Drone Dominance Program (DDP) is designed to help industry organize around the need for low-cost, supply-chain secure sUAS manufacturing at scale, urgently.

The DDP intends to **place \$1 billion in fixed-price orders utilizing 10 U.S.C. 4022** over four phases in the next two years. Each phase begins with a Gauntlet challenge event and ends with completed delivery of production-quality sUAS. Vendor systems **will be flown by Military operators** and evaluated on the systems' ability to complete various mission scenarios. At each phase, the number of drones purchased will increase, the price per unit will decrease (after Phase II), and the number of vendors will decrease. At the completion of the Drone Dominance Program, multiple U.S. vendors will have demonstrated the ability to produce low-cost, secure sUAS at scale, enabling Services to integrate these capabilities into acquisition pathways using a commercial procurement model thereafter.

The Department intends to buy commercial technologies for novel applications supporting defense purposes. Vendors will bear development and manufacturing risk. The government will pay a fixed price only for units that are delivered, inspected and accepted. There will be no progress payments or cost-reimbursement terms under this effort.

The DDP **anticipates inviting 25 vendors to the Phase I Gauntlet with a planned start date of 16 February 2026.** Participants will be selected based on responses to a Request for Solutions (RFS) anticipated to post 17 December, with final selections and notifications during the week of 26 January.

Scoring will be public via a leader board and feedback will be provided. Scoring will be primarily related to achievement of two missions, likely to include 10.0 km strike across open territory and a 1.0 km strike in simulated urban territory, both with minimum 2kg dummy payload. **Up to 12 vendors will be provided with fixed-price orders at the end of the Phase I Gauntlet.** Vendors may indicate how many units they are able to deliver during each phase (with deliveries occurring in two tranches no later than 2.5 and 4.5 months after the Gauntlet). No vendor will receive an order of less than 1,000 units. Payment for sUAS will be made at each delivery. Systems must be National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) compliant.

Phases II-IV will substantially increase in difficulty and operational realism, including significant Counter UAS challenges. Vendors are expected to incorporate feedback and improve their designs across the phases while maintaining production capacity to be competitive.

This is not a down-select process between phases. Vendors not selected in any phase are strongly encouraged to participate in later phases. Drone Dominance will focus on overall system performance at cost, production scalability, and ease of use. Supply Chain from non-covered countries beyond NDAA requirements will also be a focal point.

	Dates	Units purchased	Price per unit	Total orders (\$)	Max vendors receiving orders
Phase I	February 26 -July 26	30,000	\$5,000	\$150m	12
Phase II	August 26 -January 27	60,000	\$5,000	\$300m	10
Phase III	February 27-July 27	100,000	\$3,000	\$300m	7
Phase IV	August 27-January 28	150,000	\$2,300	\$345m	5

Table 1: Planned Awards

Questions to Industry

At this time, the government would like to gain an understanding of the concerns and challenges industry will face in producing large scale numbers of low cost OWA drones. This RFI is collected exclusively through the standardized fillable form via www.nstxl.org/opportunity/drone-dominance. Any submissions provided outside of this form will not be accepted. Official RFS is anticipated to be released on or about 17 December 2025. That RFS will provide further details regarding mission requirements, kit, road map for Phases II through IV, and use of Gauntlets to process Blue List accession. It will not be a requirement of the RFS to have provided submissions to this RFI.

Please provide feedback and highlight concerns and risks the government should be aware of before proceeding with the Drone Dominance Program.

- Simplicity of operation is a key attribute. Experienced sUAS operators from the US Army and US Marine Corps are anticipated to fly all Gauntlets. **Vendors will be allotted approximately two hours of vendor training time.** Is this sufficient or would you recommend a different method?
- Is the **price for Phase I** appropriate for supplying a sUAS (and its appropriate kit) that will achieve the mission requirements?
- At the prices and quantities shown in Table 1, what design and manufacturing approaches would you use? Given the aggressive delivery timelines, at what volumes and posted prices would you leverage third-party suppliers or assemblers? When would you invest in additional U.S.-based capacity (e.g. new lines/tooling), and over what timeframe? What components will be the most difficult to procure at scale?
- What changes would you suggest for **Phase I requirements**, if any? What C-UAS conditions would you suggest are appropriate for Phase II?
- What realistic changes in capabilities and reductions in price and increases in volumes can we achieve over future Phases? What concerns would industry have in scaling to tens of thousands of OWA drones produced per month? What concerns would industry have with meeting the schedule and units detailed in Table 1: Planned Awards?
- Are the **Supply Chain requirements described above reasonable**? What other components not currently covered by the NDAA/Blue List requirements should the program insist are manufactured from a secure supply chain (ie one that is available at a time of war)? Is your sUAS NDAA compliant and if we offered a Blue List accession process at the Phase I Gauntlet, would you use it?
- Are you already working with munition vendor for payloads on your system or will you require other partners/government solutions to meet the OWA mission?
- The Department intends to utilize 10 USC 4022 via the S²MARTS Other Transaction Authority (OTA) consortia for purchases. Do you foresee any concerns with meeting the requirements of 10 USC 4022(d) – Appropriate Use of Authority?
- **Will you participate?** If not, what provision of the DDP would need to change to cause your participation?

Interested parties can find more information on the Drone Dominance opportunity via drone-dominance.io. DO NOT SUBMIT CLASSIFIED MATERIAL. All data received in response to this RFI that is marked or designated as corporate or proprietary will be fully protected from any release outside the Government.