

Unmanned Systems Alert

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White House Issues Executive Order Aiming to Limit Federal Procurement and Funding for Certain Foreign-Manufactured Drones

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Today, the White House issued a long-rumored Executive Order (EO) targeting federal procurement and funding of drones from “adversary” countries, citing risks to national security. Over the past several months, through Departmental Orders and proposed legislation, the Administration and Congress has postured toward a country-of-origin ban for the purchase of drones by federal departments and agencies, restrictions on federal grant funds for purchases, and even restrictions on flying covered drones over federally managed lands.

Given the timing, the action may potentially be quickly reversed in the coming days by the Biden White House, but President Trump issuing this EO on his last full day in office sends a clear departing message on an issue that has been a consistent priority for his Administration.

In a slight departure from earlier leaked draft versions, this order does not directly enact a ban for covered drones, but rather states that it is the policy of the U.S. to prevent the use of taxpayer dollars to procure UAS that present unacceptable risk..., and directs federal department and agency heads to review their use of such UAS and potential authorities to limit procurement and funding of such systems. It also directs the FAA Administrator to propose regulations under section 2209 of the 2016 FAA Extension within 270 days to protect critical infrastructure.

The full text of the Executive Order can be found [here](#).

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