

Communications and Information Technology Alert

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President Trump Continues to Make Unmanned Aircraft Systems a Priority

The President's fiscal 2019 (FY19) budget proposal was outlined yesterday, and it shows a willingness to invest in the safe integration of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) or drones into the National Airspace System, to the tune of more than \$73 million. This is welcome news to UAS manufacturers, enablers and end users in light of the plan's \$3 trillion in overall discretionary spending cuts over a 10-year period.

Digging a bit into the initial [Department of Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration budgetary support documents](#) for its FY19 UAS efforts, here are some highlights for the breakdown of the \$73 million:

- \$50.8 million in Operations to set policies, procedures and standards for the safe integration of UAS
- \$18 million in Facilities & Equipment to develop technologies that will automate UAS flight authorization requests and eventually bring UAS under air traffic control
- \$3.3 million in Research, Engineering & Development to study the safety implications of new operational concepts and technology, as well as support for the development of new regulatory standards
- \$1.2 million in Grants-in-Aid for Airports to safely integrate UAS into airport operations.

Within the \$18 million for Facilities & Equipment, \$14 million is to assist in making UAS Traffic Management (UTM) concepts a reality. Additionally, the administration signaled support for furthering efforts of the Low Altitude Authorization and Notification Capability, which it views as "the first step in developing" a UTM system.

This budget outline is a strong indicator for clients and all UAS stakeholders that decision-makers across the administration and on Capitol Hill are committed to advancing UAS integration. Whether your interests lie in underscoring the business needs for expanded small UAS operations, educating decision-makers about the rise of urban air mobility to alleviate the strains on our current transportation infrastructure, or showing how the automation of UAS-related services can provide enhanced safety, the time is now to make your voice heard.

Contact Information

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