



# Acquisition Directorate

# UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The Coast Guard is exploring the use of Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) 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 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 the acquisition of small UAS, as a cost-effective capability to address the National Security Cutter's operational need for a persistent airborne surveillance capability. The Coast Guard is analyzing small UAS to fulfill this capability. To support this activity, the Coast Guard Research and Development Center has conducted technical demonstrations of the ScanEagle UAS aboard two NSCs and will conduct an additional demonstration in early 2014 to investigate small UAS 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 project's website at <http://www.uscg.mil/acquisition/uas/>.



A Coast Guard Stratton crewmember launches a ScanEagle UAS during a demonstration, Aug. 12, 2012. The Coast Guard Research and Development Center (RDC) has conducted several UAS demonstrations both from land and onboard the Coast Guard's National Security Cutters to support development of a small UAS for NSC acquisition project.

Mission execution begins here.