



POLICY BRIEF

Federal Actions Impacting Drone Industry

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Overview

Federal actions are rapidly unfolding that may significantly impact the availability and use of drone technology in the U.S.—especially drones that incorporate components manufactured in China. There are two primary issues:

1. Executive Orders from the White House

The current administration is preparing a series of executive orders intended to boost the U.S. drone manufacturing industry. These measures include:

- Prioritizing beyond-visual-line-of-sight (BVLOS) operations via Part 108
- Restricting drone operations around critical infrastructure
- Launching a joint task force to improve counterdrone security
- Potential bans on DJI and Autel if found to pose national security risks
- Expedited rulemaking to strengthen the U.S. drone supply chain

These changes aim to reduce reliance on Chinese-made drones and enhance national security, with the potential for significant procurement and regulatory shifts.



2. Department of Commerce BIS Threat Assessment

In parallel, the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) is developing a rule that would restrict the import of drone components from China. This includes critical parts such as:

- Cameras, radios, and ground control stations
- Flight controllers and autopilots

This BIS rule is advancing without a draft or public comment period, and could take effect rapidly. It's important to note an agricultural exemption in place for autopilot units coming from China, but not specific to drones.

Agri Spray Drones' Position on Federal Policy Changes

At ASD, our mission has always been to empower rural America by making advanced, affordable ag tech—especially spray drones—accessible to end-users. In light of the recent federal developments, we want to be clear about where we stand and what actions we're taking.

We support a long-term transition towards U.S.-based drone manufacturing—but we believe it must be managed in a realistic, phased manner that ensures continuity for our customers, especially in agriculture and rural communities.

1. Acknowledging National Security Concerns

We understand the national security rationale behind the Executive Orders and the BIS rule. Our commitment is to work constructively with federal agencies and the White House to support secure, American-made drone systems.

2. Advocating for a Practical Timeline

The reality is that full U.S. manufacturing cannot happen overnight. Our outreach to federal agencies and the White House proposes the critical need to consider a multi-year **phased approach**:

- **Year 1:** U.S.-based assembly using currently available global components
- **Year 2:** Begin diversifying the supply chain



- **Year 3:** Integrate more U.S.-made parts into a scalable domestic manufacturing operation

3. Ensuring Access for Rural and Agricultural Users

ASD's mission is rooted in **empowering rural America** through access to affordable spray drone technology. Any new policy must recognize the vital role drones play in:

- Boosting crop yields and operational efficiency
- Helping farmers return to the land
- Creating rural employment opportunities

We are working to advocate for **agricultural exemptions** as part of any forthcoming restrictions.

4. Clear, Honest Communication

We are committed to **truthful, transparent communication** with our dealers and customers. While we won't downplay the challenges ahead, we also won't create unnecessary alarm. Our focus is on helping stakeholders understand what's happening, what it means, and what we are doing about it.

5. Preparing for the Future

We are using this moment to double down on our long-term goal: building a **resilient, American-made drone industry** that serves farmers, contractors, and rural innovators without compromising on cost or capability. At Agri Spray Drones, our mission remains to empower rural America with advanced, affordable ag tech, particularly spray drones. Regarding recent federal developments, we aim to clarify our position and actions. We support the broader goal of a transition towards U.S.-based drone manufacturing, recognizing the importance of a realistic, phased approach that maintains service for our customers, especially in agriculture and rural communities.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q1: Are drones currently banned from flying?



A: No. The proposed restrictions only affect the import of drones and components. Existing drones in the U.S. can continue to operate as usual

Q2: Will I still be able to buy drones that contain Chinese parts?

A: Possibly in the short term, but new import restrictions could limit availability over time. We are monitoring developments closely and will provide updates as they unfold

Q3: What specific components are at risk under the BIS rule?

A: The BIS rule could impact all Chinese-made components, including cameras, radios, ground control stations, flight controllers, and autopilots—even for U.S.-assembled drones

Q4: What is the government's reasoning behind these changes?

A: These actions are part of a national security review to reduce reliance on foreign adversaries, particularly the Chinese Communist Party, and to protect sensitive data and infrastructure

Q5: How long will it take for U.S. manufacturing to replace Chinese components?

A: A full shift to U.S. manufacturing is expected to take several years. A flight controller alone could take 6–10 years to develop domestically. A proposed three-year phased approach includes:

- Initial U.S. assembly with existing parts
- Diversification of the supply chain
- Full-scale integration of U.S.-made components

Q6: Is there a call to action for dealers or drone users?

A: At this stage, the focus is on providing accurate information and supporting a smooth transition. Internal teams are working on a unified communication plan for dealers and customers

Q7: What is being done to advocate for agricultural use exemptions?



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A: The regulatory team is actively engaged in conversations with the White House, congress and other stakeholders to ensure agricultural users are considered in final rulemaking

Q8: What can I do?

A: These orders are executive in nature, and therefore less subjective to congressional intervention. It never hurts to reach out to any connections you may have, and to continue sharing your story of how ag spray drones impact you and your local community. You can also consider joining the [American Spray Drone Coalition](#), an organization that provides a united voice for spray drone operators in the United States.