

## **Unmanned Aerial Systems NRC Licensed Facilities**

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### **Key Messages**

- No known specific, credible threats against U.S. nuclear power plants involving UAS.
- NRC continually assess whether exploitable risk-significant vulnerabilities exist at NRC licensed facilities, considering increased UAS capabilities.
- UAS activity at/around NRC licensed facilities is required to be reported by licensees.
- Suspicious activity reporting of UAS helps inform agency decision-making regarding potential threats and mitigative actions.
- NRC is cooperating with U.S. Government Agencies on efforts to enhance critical infrastructure protection from UAS.

#### How are we seeing UAS being used in the current threat environment?

### **Current Threat Environment**

- Many non-state actors
- Use of commercial and recreational models
- Variety of tactical applications

# **Key Considerations for UAS**

- What commercial and recreational models are easy to acquire?
- What is the cost to acquire them?
- Who can acquire them?
- What are the capabilities flight time, payload, ease of operation/navigation?
- How are we seeing them used?

# What is happening with UAS at/around NRC licensed facilities?

# **UAS Activity**

- •NRC has observed an overall increasing trend in UAS flyovers;
- In each of the cases in which a UAS operator was identified, law enforcement authorities concluded that the overflight was non-malicious in nature and had no nexus to terrorism.
- Early reporting of UAS was voluntary by NRC licensees
- •Today (2024), reporting of suspicious activity involving UAS is required.

#### New Suspicious Activity Reporting Requirement

- 10 CFR 73.1215, "Suspicious activity reports," effective January 1, 2024.
- Implementing guidance in Regulatory Guide (RG) 5.87, "Suspicious Activity Reports Under 10 CFR Part 73."
- Suspicious activity, including surface, underwater, manned aerial, and unmanned aerial activity must be reported within 4 hours of the time of discovery.



#### UAS – Example Agency Communications

- Security Advisory SA-21-06, "Updated Voluntary Reporting Guidelines for Suspicious Flyover Activity—Unmanned Aircraft Systems," dated March 19, 2021
- Security Advisory SA-22-08, "Recent Unmanned Aerial System Activity Over Nuclear Regulatory Commission-Licensed Facilities," dated October 20, 2022



#### What can NRC licensees do today?

# **Licensee Mitigative Actions**

- Strategy Assessment
  - Perform an assessment of their security response strategy and defensive positions to identify positions potentially vulnerable to a UAS attack.
- Visual Awareness
  - Train personnel on awareness and reporting of UAS.
- Physical Barriers
  - Install physical barriers (e.g., nets, turbine grating, heavy plastic curtains, wire cages) around relevant assets, at routine access points to important site structures, or at appropriate points along pathways between the access points and relevant assets.
- Restricted Airspace

# **Proposed Regulation**

- There is a legislative proposal intended to expand where/how we can protect against nefarious UAS activity, who is authorized to take action, and how it can be accomplished lawfully.
  - This is part of The Domestic Counter-Unmanned Aircraft
    Systems National Action Plan<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/04/25/fact-sheet-the-domesticcounter-unmanned-aircraft-systems-national-action-plan/

# **Closing Remarks**

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#### **QUESTIONS?**