



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Oregon Department of Aviation

3040 25th Street SE

Salem, OR 97302-1125

Office: 503-378-4880

Fax: 503-373-1688

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Oregon Department of Aviation Releases White Paper on Impacts of Federal UAS Restrictions on State Agencies

SALEM, OR – The [Oregon Department of Aviation](#) (ODAV) has released a white paper outlining the operational and financial impacts of recent federal restrictions affecting certain foreign-made uncrewed aircraft systems (UAS) used by state transportation and aviation agencies.

The report examines the effects of Office of Management and Budget Memorandum M-26-02, related guidance from the Federal Highway Administration, and Covered List determinations by the Federal Communications Commission. While these federal actions are intended to address national security concerns, state agencies report significant disruption to established UAS-enabled operations.

Uncrewed aircraft systems are essential tools used to support engineering and surveying, construction inspection, emergency response, infrastructure documentation, and public communications. Based on responses from more than 20 states, the white paper documents grounded fleets, deferred projects, increased costs, and operational uncertainty.

In Oregon, approximately 95 percent of ODAV's UAS fleet, representing 21 airframes, could be impacted under current interpretations of federal guidance. This represents more than \$250,000 in estimated investment exposure. At this time, Oregon does not have a dedicated budget to replace impacted aircraft with compliant systems.

The report identifies several operational impacts experienced by states, including:

- Reduced ability to collect high-resolution mapping and engineering data
- Limitations on UAS use for federally funded construction projects
- Impaired rapid damage assessment during wildfire and disaster response
- Decreased ability to provide visual project updates and emergency communications to the public

The white paper also provides order-of-magnitude cost modeling. Nationally, estimated replacement exposure for state agencies ranges from approximately \$10 million to \$50

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million, with a plausible upper bound approaching \$70 million depending on how broadly restrictions are applied. When local transportation agencies are considered, combined state and local replacement exposure could range from approximately \$35 million to \$105 million, not including secondary transition costs such as retraining, software migration, and workflow redevelopment.

While recognizing the national security objectives underlying federal policy, the report emphasizes the need for clear and consistent guidance, transitional allowances for legacy systems, and funding mechanisms to support mandated fleet replacement.

ODAV will continue working with federal partners, state agencies, and industry stakeholders to ensure aviation and transportation programs can operate safely and efficiently while aligning with federal policy requirements.

The full white paper is available on our website: [HERE](#).

About the Oregon Department of Aviation

Established in 1921, the Oregon Department of Aviation was the first state aviation department in the nation. ODAV enables and advocates for a safe and efficient aviation system that connects communities and drives economic growth.

Media Contact:

Kenji Sugahara, *Director*
Oregon Department of Aviation
Kenji.SUGAHARA@odav.oregon.gov

Alexis Morris, *Communications & Administrative Specialist*
Oregon Department of Aviation
Alexis.Morris@odav.oregon.gov