

Pentagon to Increase Low-Cost Drone Production in U.S.



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The Defense Department, with help from industry, will ramp up production and fielding of drones to maintain battlefield superiority.

Today at the Pentagon, 18 American-made drone prototypes were on display.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, who toured the displays, said the drones that are manufactured using off-the-shelf components for rapid production are examples of disruptive thinking.

Emil Michael, undersecretary of defense for research and engineering, said the prototypes on display went from concept to development in just an average of 18 months, a process that normally takes up to six years.

The department will continue to rapidly innovate and scale up production of drones and other systems using cost, resilience, firepower and range as driving factors, which are areas DOD wants to improve upon, Michael said.

Hegseth said in a [July 10, 2025, memorandum](#) that he's rescinding restrictive policies that hindered drone production.

"Drones are the biggest battlefield innovation in a generation, accounting for most of this year's casualties in Ukraine. Our adversaries collectively produce millions of cheap drones each year," he said, noting the U.S. military is lacking needed quantities of lethal small drones.

The secretary said there are three goals:

- Prioritizing the purchase of American-made drones and parts with help from industry's private capital;
- Arming combat units with low-cost drones made by America's world-leading engineers and artificial intelligence experts; and
- Training with drones in realistic battlefield scenarios, led by leaders who are not risk averse.

President Donald J. Trump signed a June 6, 2025, [executive order to speed up U.S. drone production](#) using the latest innovative industry technologies.

The president said he supports reducing regulatory uncertainty and streamlining approval and certification processes for safe and secure drone production.

Also, the Federal Aviation Administration and DOD will coordinate to streamline the approval processes to expand access to airspace for conducting drone training, Trump said.