



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

AUG 27 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Establishment of Joint Interagency Task Force 401

- References:
- (a) DoD Directive 3800.01E, "DoD Executive Agent for Counter Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems for Unmanned Aircraft Groups 1, 2, and 3," February 21, 2020
 - (b) Executive Order 14305, "Restoring American Airspace Sovereignty," June 6, 2025
 - (c) Title 10, United States Code, section 130i, "Protection of certain facilities and assets from unmanned aircraft"
 - (d) DoD Strategy for Countering Unmanned Systems, December 1, 2024
 - (e) Secretary of Defense Memorandum, January 17, 2025, "Implementation Plan for the Department of Defense Strategy for Countering Unmanned Systems"

Purpose. To direct the Secretary of the Army (SecArmy) to disestablish the Joint Counter-small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (C-sUAS) Office (JCO) and to establish a Joint Interagency Task Force 401 (JIATF 401) that reports to the Deputy Secretary of Defense, to better align authorities and resources to rapidly deliver Joint C-sUAS capabilities to America's warfighters, defeat adversary threats, and promote sovereignty over national airspace. The JCO disestablishment will take effect upon the establishment of JIATF 401. The JIATF 401 will have a sunset review at 36 months.

Background. DoD Directive (DoDD) 3800.01E designated the SecArmy as the Department of Defense (DoD or Department) Executive Agent (EA) for C-sUAS for Unmanned Aircraft Groups 1, 2, and 3, under the oversight of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD(A&S)), who serves as the principal staff assistant for the DoD EA. The SecArmy established the JCO to lead and synchronize DoD efforts to counter the small unmanned systems threat while minimizing unnecessary duplication and redundancy. The Department has maintained pace with its adversaries in conventional warfighting capabilities. However, the small UAS threat continues to grow exponentially and is becoming increasingly sophisticated. The number of DoD organizations involved in C-sUAS since DoDD 3800.01E was issued in 2020 has increased, and those organizations often are unconnected to each another. DoD needs a single focal point to centralize, coordinate, and lead these efforts.

My priorities for transformation and acquisition reform include improving C-sUAS mobility and affordability and integrating capabilities into warfighter formations. DoD must focus on speed over process by disestablishing the JCO and establishing JIATF 401 with expanded authorities to execute capability development and delivery timelines that outpace the threat. This change is fully aligned with the President's direction to reestablish air



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sovereignty over the United States. DoD must enhance its C-sUAS capabilities to protect personnel, equipment, and facilities at home and abroad.

I direct the following actions:

- The SecArmy will take steps to establish the JIATF 401 as the Department's lead organization to develop capabilities to C-sUAS. The JIATF 401 will have a director with acquisition and procurement authority and will serve as the supported organization for the DoD's forensics, exploitation, and replication for C-sUAS. Consolidate Replicator 2 resources into JIATF 401 and apply funding in collaboration with the Defense Innovation Unit. The JIATF 401 Director will submit unfunded requirements for fiscal year 2026 (FY26) to the USD (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer of the Department of Defense (USD(C)) for review within 30 days.
- JIATF 401 will be a joint activity and established as a jointly manned organization. The Military Services will support JIATF 401 with timely joint manning. The JIATF 401 Director will have access to such special hiring authority with exemption from established competitive processes as is legally available to the SecArmy to facilitate rapidly hiring the most talented individuals to support the JIATF 401 mission. The JIATF 401 Director will immediately pursue hiring or detailing a technical lead and four personnel from DoD Science and Technology Reinvention Laboratories and will serve as the hiring authority for all personnel actions. The Secretaries of the Military Departments will designate four personnel from their Military Services with operations, acquisition, electronic warfare (EW), intelligence, or other C-sUAS competencies to include one officer in the grade of O-5 or higher who will have access to his or her Military Service's decision-making officials. The Secretaries of the Military Departments will, within 30 days, update the Secretary of Defense on the status of joint staffing for JIATF 401. Although JIATF 401 will be a DoD organization composed of DoD personnel, the JIATF 401 Director will request that the heads of other appropriate Federal departments and agencies provide liaisons to JIATF 401.
- The Deputy Secretary of Defense, through coordination with USD for Research and Engineering (USD(R&E)) as the Department Chief Technical Officer (CTO) according to statute, will consolidate all DoD-wide C-sUAS research, development, test, and evaluation (RDT&E) efforts and resources under the JIATF 401, except for Military Service-specific and U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) C-sUAS program of record development activities. The JIATF 401 Director will be empowered to determine whether new Military Service-specific C-sUAS will be adopted. Existing Military Service and USSOCOM programs of record are excluded from this authority. The JIATF 401 Director may approve up to \$50 million in funding per effort for initiatives to C-sUAS.
- The USD(C), with USD(R&E) as the CTO, will review funding profiles for DoD Components and realign all RDT&E, procurement, and operation and

maintenance (O&M) supporting joint C-sUAS to JIATF 401. The USD(C) will, within 60 days:

- Provide resource options for JIATF 401’s validated FY26 unfunded requirements to the Secretary of Defense.
 - In coordination with the Director, Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE), prepare an above-threshold reprogramming for the Secretary of Defense’s review to allocate FY26 funding for JIATF 401.
 - Work with the JIATF 401 Director to pursue multi-year, flexible funding through legislation to enable RDT&E, procurement, and O&M efforts to outpace adversaries’ sUAS capabilities.
 - The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)), in conjunction with the Director, CAPE and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), will utilize the FY27 Program Budget Review (PBR) to resource and align the Joint C-sUAS University under the JIATF 401 Director.
- The USD(R&E) as the CTO will make recommendations to establish a dedicated C-sUAS test and training range within 30 days. Coordinate with the JIATF 401 director on RDT&E efforts in accordance with statutory requirements.
 - The Director, CAPE will resource the JIATF 401 through the FY27 PBR process to match their mission to include sufficient RDT&E, procurement, and O&M funding to put solutions in the hands of our warfighters faster and ensure funding for JIATF 401 is appropriately balanced.
 - The USD for Intelligence and Security (USD(I&S)) will work with JIATF 401 to ensure threat-informed acquisition decisions and inform intelligence threat assessments for the JIATF 401.
 - The Army will provide Washington Headquarters Services (WHS) with unmet facilities requirements for the JIATF 401 within 5 days of the signature of this memorandum. WHS will, in conjunction with the Army, provide an assessment and solution for office space designated for the authorized discussion, processing, and storage of classified information and storage of classified information systems to accommodate JIATF 401 personnel within the Pentagon reservation or closely located space within 30 days.
 - The USD(A&S) will:
 - Serve as the principal staff assistant supporting C-sUAS and the JIATF 401.
 - Designate an acquisition executive to support JIATF-401 rapid procurements.

- Incorporate the direction set forth in this memorandum into an updated DoDD 3800.01E.
- Expedite the updated DoDD 3800.01E for the Secretary of Defense's signature in 60 days.
- The Director of the DoD Special Access Program Central Office, in coordination with USD(R&E) and USD(A&S), will establish a C-sUAS portfolio and provide appropriate billets to the JIATF 401 Director, who will serve as the billet manager and access approval authority for the portfolio.
- The SecArmy, within 30 days, will provide the Secretary of Defense with an implementation plan to include the required resources, structure, and authorities to enable JIATF 401 to execute at speed and scale. In coordination with USD(A&S), the USD(C), and the Director, CAPE, this implementation plan will address acquisition authority, procurement authority, a Joint Program Executive Office-like structure, and flexible funding. In addition, the SecArmy will:
 - Restructure and realign current human capital to support the JIATF 401 organization.
 - Develop an accelerated governance process for inclusion in the updated DoDD 3800.01E, including a lead governance role for the USD(A&S) and an appropriate official designated by the SecArmy.
 - Submit issue papers for consideration in the PBR process.
 - Update the Secretary of Defense or Deputy Secretary of Defense monthly on C-sUAS progress.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "PBJ" followed by a stylized flourish.