

Drone Dominance Program

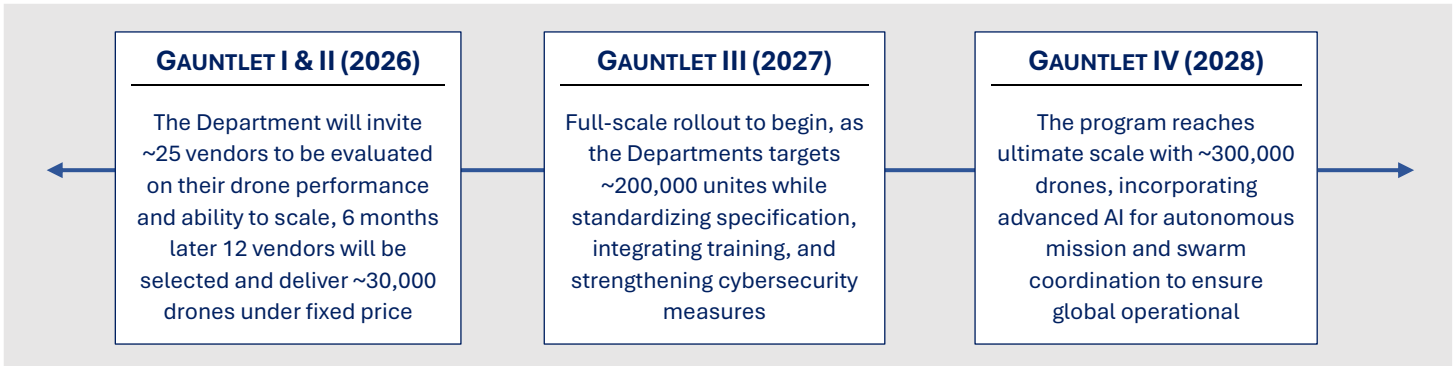
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Overview

The Drone Dominance Program (DDP) is a major U.S. defense initiative, spearheaded by Secretary of War Pete Hegseth. The program is a follow-up initiative to [Executive Order 14307: Unleashing American Drone Dominance](#), signed in June, which established the foundational policy framework for its development. The program is established to rapidly scale procurement and deployment of small uncrewed aerial systems (sUAS). The program will receive \$1 billion in funding from the One Big Beautiful Bill and focuses on affordability, mass production, and integration into combat units

Structured around a four “Gauntlet” phases, the program invites vendors to demonstrate performance in realistic strike scenarios before awarding fix-price contracts for large-scale production. This approach will not only accelerate acquisition but foster industrial competition and strengthen domestic supply chain, as was emphasized in EO 14307. Beyond procurement, the DDP seeks to transform doctrine and training, integrating drones into combined arms operations and ensuring warfighters can leverage swarm tactics effectively. Ultimately, the program represents a strategic pivot toward distributed lethality and industrial readiness for modern warfare.

Timeline: GAUNTLET PHASE



What This Means for Vendors

For drone vendors, the program represents both a major opportunity and a competitive challenge:

- **Massive Market Potential:** The programs set procurement targets in the hundreds of thousands of drones by 2028, creating a predictable, high-volume demand pipeline. Vendors that secure contracts can scale production significantly and establish themselves as key players in the U.S. defense industrial base
- **Competitive “Gauntlet” Process:** Vendors must pass through multiple competitive “Gauntlets” where performance in realistic strike scenarios determines eligibility for larger contracts.
- **Pressure on Cost and Supply Chain:** The program aims to reduce unit costs from **\$5,000 to \$2,300** (between Gauntlet phases II through III) pushing vendors to adopt lean manufacturing, automation, and secure domestic supply chains. Those unable to meet these cost and sourcing requirement risk elimination in later phase.
- **Long-Term Strategic Position:** Beyond immediate contracts, vendors that align with DDP priorities (U.S.-based production, cyber-secure components, and scalable designs) will be well-positioned for future defense programs and export opportunities under EO 14307 trade promotion directive.