

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROBERT BENTLEY  
GOVERNOR



STATE CAPITOL  
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130

(334) 242-7100  
FAX: (334) 242-3282

## STATE OF ALABAMA

July 18, 2014

John McMillan  
Commissioner  
Alabama Department of Agriculture & Industries  
1445 Federal Drive  
Montgomery, AL 36107

John Cooper  
Director  
Alabama Department of Transportation  
1409 Coliseum Boulevard  
Montgomery, Alabama 36110

Gunter Guy  
Commissioner  
Alabama Department of Conservation  
and Natural Resources  
64 North Union Street  
Montgomery, Alabama 36130

Spencer Collier  
Secretary of Law Enforcement  
Alabama Law Enforcement Agency  
201 South Union Street, Suite 300  
Montgomery, Alabama 36104

Jimmy Reynolds  
2915 Jamestown Dr.  
Montgomery, Alabama 36111

Gentlemen:

Thank you for the information you provided regarding the proposed use by the State of Alabama for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) and Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS). As a member of the State of Alabama's Drone Task Force, please review the necessary requirements for the State's use of UAVs and UASs for agricultural, conservation, and law enforcement purposes.

Airspace over the State of Alabama is governed by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and includes UAV and UAS systems. The FAA maintains that flight safety applies equally to manned and unmanned aircraft operations regardless of the size of the drone in regulated airspace.

To further our State's potential use of drone aircraft, I request that you, as a member of the Drone Task Force, do the following:


1. Study the requirements for UAV and UAS operations in the State of Alabama, and the process for FAA approval. This will include all necessary steps to obtain a Certificate of Waiver Authorization (COA), which is required by the FAA and must be approved in advance of drone operations.
2. Take the necessary steps to apply online for a COA as a public entity to fly UAS in U.S. airspace; this will require each COA or state agency to determine the potential use by a state agency for a defined block of airspace, which will include special provisions unique to the proposed State operations. It is contemplated that these special provisions would include the flight of drones only under Visual Flight Rules (VFR) during daylight hours.
3. Meet with stakeholders. Organize and conduct meetings with my staff, key legislators, and outside stakeholders from groups they represent, which at a minimum includes agricultural, conservation, and law enforcement interests.
4. Recommend a statewide plan for use of UAVs by the State of Alabama. This plan must be (1) science based, data driven, and in compliance with anticipated FAA regulations to be promulgated in early 2015; and (2) in the best interest of the State of Alabama, taking into account the privacy interest of Alabama citizens. Include in your recommendation any proposed legislation necessary to implement such plan prior to the beginning of the 2015 Legislative Session.

Please submit your statewide drone management plan to me by January 15, 2015.

Thank you for the work you have already done on this potentially significant State resource and thank you in advance for what you will do in carrying out the goals and objectives set forth herein

Please keep me posted on your progress. Do not hesitate to call upon my Office and Staff for help. I believe use of UAVs can benefit the State of Alabama now and for generations to come.

Sincerely,



Robert Bentley  
Governor