



The Association for Uncrewed Vehicle Systems International's (AUVSI) Air Advocacy Committee (AAC) sets the legislative and regulatory priorities in the air domain for the association via input and feedback from its membership. The AAC works intimately with federal regulators in the Executive Branch, lawmakers in the Legislative Branch, and their staffs, as well as state, local, and tribal officials, to help scale Unmanned/Uncrewed Aircraft Systems (UAS) and Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) integration in a meaningful way. Our goal is to ensure government keeps up with industry and that our regulatory framework fosters innovation rather than stifles it. We aim to spur U.S. competitiveness in this space.

The AAC is comprised of a diverse group of member companies, including UAS operators, UAS manufacturers, software companies, defense contractors, Counter-UAS companies, AAM companies, Drone as First Responder (DFR) companies, public safety experts, and much more. The AAC engages on both authorization and appropriations efforts each year and AUVSI leadership, in addition to several of our members, have testified before Congress. We pride ourselves in our ability to check our parochial interests at the door and come together to enable a unified voice for all stakeholders within the uncrewed systems ecosystem.

Sub-Committees

Advanced Air Mobility (AAM)

Counter-UAS

Defense

Committee Members

Actus Advanced Systems
AECOM
ADS, Inc.
Aerolane
AeroVironment
AirMatrix
Airspace Link
AirWise Solutions
All Azimuth Solutions
Amazon
Applied Intuition
Archer
AscentAerosystems
AT&T
Aura Network Systems
BNSF
BETA Technologies
Boeing
Booz Allen Hamilton
BRINC Drones
Cherokee Nation Technologies
Censys Technologies
Compound Eye
Crown Consulting
CubePilot
Dark Wolf Solutions
Draganfly
DroneShield
DroneUp
Echodyne
Edge Autonomy
ElbitSystems
Epirus
Eve Air Mobility

FedEx
Ferrovia
Flex Force Enterprises
General Atomics
Guardian Agriculture
Highpoint Aerotech
Honeywell
Hoverfly Technologies
Joby
Kaman
KEF Robotics
Kongsberg Geospatial
Leidos
Lilium
Lockheed Martin
MatrixSpace
Metron
Mobilicom
MTSI
Near Earth Autonomy
Near Space Corporation
Northrop Grumman
Ondas Holdings
OKSI
OPT
Overwatch Imaging
Padina Group
Paladin Drones
Parrot
Performance Drone Works
Phoenix Air Unmanned
Pierce Aerospace
Primordial Labs
Proximavision

PteroDynamics
Real-Time Innovations
Red Cat Holdings
Reliable Robotics
Rafael Systems Global Sustainment
RTX
Saab
Sagetech Avionics Inc.
SAIC
ScientificSystems Company
Secmation
Shield AI
Shift5
Skydio
Skyfire Consulting
Skyfish
Skyports
SkySafe
Soaring Technologies
SwissDrones
Textron
Tulsa Innovation Labs
uAvionix
UPS
UXV Technologies
Valor Robotics
Vayu Aerospace
Vertical Aerospace
Wing
Wisk
WISPR Systems
XTEND
Xwing
Zipline

Chairperson Benjamin Ivers, Boeing
Vice-Chairperson Amanda Armistead, Amazon

AAC Policy Priorities

1. Establishing the AAC as the preeminent industry voice influencing UAS and AAM regulations and legislation and positioning the AAC, and AUVSI, positively during the 2023-2024 Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization bill (more on this below).
2. Establishing a clear pathway for advanced UAS operations Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) and ensuring the rulemakings associated with the BVLOS Aviation Rulemaking Committee (ARC) recommendations are issued as quickly as possible.
3. Ensuring domestic UAS and AAM companies have the resources they need to globally compete with companies that are heavily subsidized by their respective governments.
4. Ensuring a favorable National Airspace System (NAS) for key UAS operations, including drone deliveries, routine public safety operations, critical infrastructure inspections, defense operations, counter-UAS operations, and other high-value, low-risk use cases.
5. Fostering an inclusive airspace for AAM, Urban Air Mobility (UAM), and Regional Air Mobility (RAM) aircraft and operations.
6. Creating a new regulatory framework that shifts away from the traditional aviation safety continuum, which does not work well for advanced aviation, and looks forward to establish rules that unlock the full potential of UAS and AAM technologies.
7. Developing next steps for the integration of Unmanned Aircraft Systems Traffic Management (UTM) to work alongside the current air traffic management system.
8. Ensuring that the FAA retains exclusive sovereignty of airspace of the United States in order to maintain safety and operational consistency across all users of the NAS.
9. Providing law enforcement with the proper authority to mitigate errant or potentially malicious UAS and ensuring Preventing Emerging Threats Act compliance and consistent reauthorization.
10. Developing strong public-private partnerships to foster voluntary, risk-based approaches to data security and operations management, the development of industry-driven initiatives on data management best practices and security standards that ensure critical mission information is accessed by authorized parties, and the development of industry-driven security standards.
11. Ensuring UAS have access to spectrum to conduct operations, including the use of command-and-control technologies at higher altitudes, use of detect-and-avoid systems, ability to transmit payload data, and to conduct operations that ultimately strengthen the operation of UAS in the NAS. AUVSI continues to look for regulatory efforts we can comment on, after filing comments to the FCC's recent C-Band Notice of Proposed Rulemaking.
12. Opening markets, reducing barriers and regulations, and injecting more certainty and predictability into the marketplace, trade, and investment agreements, which are key catalysts for the innovation progress that drive our global economies and markets.
13. Promoting technology transfer and international harmonization of standards to realize the full potential benefits of UAS.

About AUVSI

The Association for Uncrewed Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI) — the world's largest non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of uncrewed systems and robotics — represents corporations and professionals from more than 60 countries involved in industry, government, and academia. AUVSI members work in the defense, civil and commercial markets. For more information, visit AUVSI.org. For more information, please contact Max Rosen at mrosen@auvsi.org.

2023 FAA Reauthorization – AAC Core Priorities

The 2023 FAA Reauthorization bill is the AAC's top priority this year. Specifically, the AAC urges Congress to enact, at a minimum, a five-year FAA Reauthorization bill before the September 30, 2023, deadline. Our key areas of advocacy in the context of the FAA Reauthorization bill are:

- **Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS)**
 - Inclusion of the Increasing Competitiveness for American Drones Act of 2023 (S. 307) in the bill.
 - Enabling low altitude UAS operations and standardizing the Part 135 process.
 - Part 108 drone pilot rules.
 - Extension of and clarity around Section 44807.
- **AAM**
 - Certification standards for powered-lift aircraft.
 - Special Federal Aviation Regulation (SFAR) powered-lift rule.
 - Sense of Congress in support of AAM.
 - Timelines to enable the operationalization of AAM.
- **Spectrum & Data**
 - Spectrum rules to ensure UAS have access to necessary spectrum to conduct operations.
 - Secure access to National Airspace System (NAS) data and more streamlined data sharing between industry and government.
- **Federal Airspace Preemption**
 - Clarification that the FAA is the sole regulator of matters pertaining to aviation safety, including the use of the airspace at all altitudes and the categorization of drones as aircraft.
- **U.S. Competitiveness**
 - Inclusion of the Drone Infrastructure Inspection Grant (DIIG) Act (S. 4744 and H.R. 5315) from the 117th Congress in the bill. 118th Congress House and Senate versions of the DIIG Act are expected to be introduced imminently.
 - Operations Over the High Seas.
 - Inclusion of the Unmanned Aircraft Systems Competitiveness Act of 2023 (an AUVSI drafted piece of legislation).
 - Tax credits and grant programs to level the playing field for U.S. UAS companies.
 - Inclusion of the Securing American Mineral Supply Chains Act (H.R. 8981) from the 117th Congress in the bill.
- **UAS Traffic Management (UTM) and Remote Identification (Remote ID)**
 - Implementation of UTM via FAA adoption of international standards.

Key Engagements

New Members

The AAC added several new members in 2022 and so far in 2023. The AAC now has approximately 65 members across several different areas of the uncrewed systems industry.

Key Meetings

The AAC met with many different leaders in the FAA, Department of Transportation (DOT), Department of Defense (DoD), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and other agencies at multiple times throughout 2022 and so far in 2023, including:

- **Jay Merkle**, Former Executive Director, UAS Integration Office (AUS), FAA
- **Marc Nichols**, Chief Counsel, FAA
- **Billy Nolen**, Acting Administrator, FAA
- **Abigail Smith**, Former Deputy Executive Director, AUS, FAA
- **Laurence Wildgoose**, Assistant Administrator for Policy, International Affairs, and Environment, FAA
- **Paul Fontaine**, Acting Assistant Administrator for NextGen
- **Andrew Wishnia**, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Climate Policy, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy, DOT
- **Annie Petsonk**, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs, DOT
- **Brad Mims**, Deputy Administrator, FAA
- **Carlos Monje**, Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy, Office of the Secretary, DOT
- **John Putnam**, Deputy General Counsel, DOT
- **Peter Irvine**, Deputy Director, Office of Aviation Analysis, and Executive Lead for Aviation Policy, DOT
- **Robert Hampshire**, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology, DOT
- **Vinn White**, Senior Advisor for Innovation, DOT
- **Robert A. Pearce**, Associate Administrator, Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate, NASA
- **Major General Sean A. Gainey**, Director, Counter-Unmanned Aircraft Systems Office/Director of Fires, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3/5/7, United States Army
- **Jeffrey Vincent**, Executive Director, UAS Integration Office, FAA
- **FAA Office of the Chief Counsel**

In 2022 and so far in 2023, we have had direct interaction with lawmakers, including Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA), Rep. Jeff Van Drew (R-NJ), and others. All of the engagements listed above have included key staff for these officials/lawmakers.

Hill Day

AUVSI held its annual Hill Day on March 22, 2023. We Had a fantastic day on the Hill with over 35 AAC members participating. In total, across all domains, we conducted close to 100 meetings and had close to 100 AUVSI members in Washington, D.C. We had several meetings with actual Members of Congress and, collectively, all our talking points and FAA Reauthorization priorities got the same amount of focus across all meetings.

2023-2024 FAA Reauthorization Efforts

Throughout each year, AUVSI and the AAC meets with Members of Congress and their staffs to brief them on ongoing developments in the industry, opportunities for Congressional support, and areas of concern within all applicable federal agencies. We have met with the leadership of key Congressional committees, Caucuses, and much more with an interest in the UAS and AAM spaces.

AUVSI and its AAC underwent a methodical and complex process to solicit 2023 FAA Reauthorization priorities from the membership, which informed a comprehensive priorities letter, inclusive of legislative text for Congressional

offices and staff to consider. That document, which included priorities across the entire UAS ecosystem, was circulated to all members and committee staff of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, House Science, Space, and Technology Committee, and Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, and several officials within the FAA and DOT. To date, we have met with several offices on our FAA Reauthorization priorities outside our annual Hill Day. Those conversations have been very positive. This engagement has led to House and Senate FAA Reauthorization bills that are extremely beneficial to AUVSI. AUVSI secured significant wins and legislative language in the House and Senate FAA Reauthorization bills related to UAS and AAM. Key language/wins included the following non-exhaustive list:

- BVLOS language and aligning the bill with the Increasing Competitiveness for American Drones Act
- Operations Over the High Seas
- Unescorted UAS Operations
- Test Site extension and expansion
- Section 44807 and Part 107 improvements
- Section 2209
- UTM
- Acceptable Levels of Risk
- Environmental Reviews and NEPA
- Carriage of HazMat
- Powered Lift SFAR and related issues
- Vertiports and supporting AAM infrastructure

AUVSI was lauded by the industry, including by both UAS and AAM companies, for our real time information sharing during FAA Reauthorization markup proceedings. We shared a significant amount of information with our AAC members, and mobilized behind the scenes to support and oppose various amendments with great success in markup and on the House floor. Additionally, AUVSI pushed heavily to ensure that FAA authorities were extended as part of the recent continuing resolution, including critical expiring authorities like Section 44807, UAS Test Sites, and DHS/DOJ C-UAS authorities. We are currently engaged in the conference negotiation process following significant work during both House and Senate markups of their respective FAA Reauthorization bills.

FAA BVLOS Listening Sessions

AUVSI led the organization of and participated in an FAA listening session on the BVLOS rule, along with many industry companies. FAA held two formal listening sessions, and everything was captured in the docket, which may take a while to come out. The first listening session included just UAS industry companies, and the second one featured traditional aviation organizations.

Congressional Unmanned Systems Caucus Events

AUVSI held four Caucus events in 2022, and one so far in 2023. with participation from several members of Congress, including Caucus Co-Chairs Dina Titus (D-NV) and Garret Graves (R-LA). The first event in 2022, which was held at the end of February, relaunched the Caucus. We convened to hear from the UAS/AAM and traditional aviation communities about needs before the 2023 FAA Reauthorization. The second event in 2022, which was an in-person/Zoom hybrid event at AUVSI XPONENTIAL in Orlando, focused more on traditional UAS issues, and specifically the BVLOS ARC final report and the path forward. The third event in 2022 focused on certification and operational issues related to UAS. The fourth and final event in September of 2022 focused on AAM and featured several key players in the industry. Lastly, the first event in 2023 relaunched the Caucus for the year and included robust discussion of our FAA Reauthorization priorities.

Operations Over the High Seas

The AAC organized several meetings with the FAA and Capitol Hill to discuss ongoing issues related to approval for Operations Over the High Seas. AUVSI secured an FAA briefing for Capitol Hill staff on the issue, and the Hill sent a

letter to the FAA on the issue. AUVSI remains in dialogue with the FAA and the DOT about the issue, resulting in significant pressure on the FAA to change course away from policy that unduly limits AUVSI member operations. This led to robust language in the House FAA Reauthorization bill.

Federal Authority of the Airspace

AUVSI has engaged extensively to discuss issues related to federal authority of the airspace with the Executive and Legislative Branches. Amid the ongoing effort to deregulate the airspace, our position that the FAA must remain the sole regulator of the NAS is well known. We are currently engaged in efforts to enshrine that into law, which certain Members of Congress are focused on as an amendment to the Senate FAA Reauthorization bill. AUVSI also pushed for an update to the UAS Fact Sheet, which finally occurred in July 2023.

Chinese Drones

AUVSI and the AAC remained closely engaged and apprised of efforts related to Chinese drones, including the American Security Drone Act and other similar House and Senate efforts. We engaged on broader efforts to attach language barring Chinese drones and components in certain scenarios to the House and Senate Fiscal Year 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) bills and the House and Senate's respective China competitiveness bills, the United States Innovation and Competition Act (USICA) and the America Creating Opportunities for Manufacturing, Pre-Eminence in Technology and Economic Strength (COMPETES) Act. AUVSI is supportive of the American Security Drone Act and continues to track its prospects of being enacted into law, which almost occurred at the end of 2022. The AAC has been working closely with AUVSI on the [Partnership for Drone Competitiveness](#), which aims to level the playing field for domestic UAS manufacturers. The Partnership formally launched in September and we held a successful launch event in November.

Executive Order

AUVSI has been closely engaged on the idea of an executive order related to autonomy and UAS/AAM. We have been routinely meeting with Executive Branch officials on the effort and remain a key participant in discussions.

AAM

AUVSI has brought on several AAM companies as members in the last year and a half, and we have been industry leaders in fostering an equitable NAS for these companies. We spoke directly to the FAA and interested parties on the "powered-lift" decision and its impacts and implications. AUVSI and the AAC have worked diligently to keep up the momentum of the White House AAM/Advanced Aviation Summit in last August (an example of this is our aforementioned executive order effort). To date, we pushed for the enactment of both the Advanced Air Mobility Coordination and Leadership Act and the Advanced Aviation Infrastructure Modernization (AAIM) Act, both of which were enacted into law in 2022. We have also filed several comments on airworthiness criteria for certain powered-lift aircraft.

Counter-UAS (C-UAS) and Defense

AUVSI, and specifically the AAC's C-UAS Subcommittee, has provided feedback to interested parties on a number of occasions on the Biden Administration's Domestic Counter-Unmanned Aircraft Systems National Action Plan. We've also involved our Defense Subcommittee in those conversations, and we are actively tracking Preventing Emerging Threats Act reauthorization, C-UAS hearings, and actions/discussions with the House Homeland and Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committees. It remains a top priority of the AAC to ensure that current Preventing Emerging Threats Act authorities never lapse. Additionally, we are closely monitoring the House and Senate companion versions of the Safeguarding the Homeland from the Threats Posed by Unmanned Aircraft Systems Act.

Low Altitude Airspace

In 2022, AUVSI defeated state-level attempts to privatize low altitude airspace in WV, OH, and TX and worked against a federal legislative proposal to give state governments authority to regulate drones under 200 feet.

Miscellaneous

- Held a successful AAM show and tell event on Capitol Hill.
- Rolled out the Partnership for Drone Competitiveness to over 1,000 staffers on Capitol Hill and have been conducting meetings ever since.
- Organized a successful DFR meeting at XPONENTIAL and working on sanctioning a DFR study, potentially with Deloitte.