



Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of the Governor

Executive Order

NUMBER FORTY THREE (2015)

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNMANNED SYSTEMS COMMISSION

Importance of the Issue

The Commonwealth of Virginia is home to the eighth largest concentration of unmanned system firms in the nation at a time when the use of unmanned systems is rapidly expanding. Unmanned systems could provide Virginia with numerous practical benefits: crops could be inspected and maintained using unmanned aerial technologies; traffic jams could be ameliorated by self-driving ground vehicles; and, Virginia's waterways could be protected from contamination with advanced unmanned marine systems. As these new and exciting possibilities emerge, Virginia is in a highly competitive position to take the greatest advantage of the industry's development and reap benefits from it.

Virginia has already succeeded in winning a test-site designation from the Federal Aviation Administration to develop unmanned aerial technologies through the Mid-Atlantic Aviation Partnership. In addition, a number of Virginia's higher education institutions are focused on studying and developing the industry. The sector's development will align nicely with areas in which the Commonwealth is already a leader, such as data industries, manufacturing, and military/civilian government sectors.

Virginia stands poised to leverage its unique resources to create an innovation ecosystem that will not only underpin industry development and support the advancement of beneficial applications of unmanned systems of today, but also to provide a foundation for the technologies, cyber security, big data, and manufacturing facilities necessary to create a highly reliable unmanned systems industry for the future. Virginia should be doing all it can to obtain the economic development benefits of this industry's growth, and the creation of this Commission will bring needed focus to how Virginia can strengthen its position in growing the unmanned systems industry.

Composition of the Commission

The Commission will consist of the Secretaries of Technology, Commerce and Trade, Education, Veterans and Defense Affairs, two Representatives from the Virginia Congressional Delegation, and (11) citizen members whose background shall include relevant expertise to be appointed by the Governor and serve at his pleasure. The Governor shall designate a Chairman and Vice Chairman from among the appointed members. The Governor may appoint additional persons to the Commission at his discretion.

Establishment of the Virginia Unmanned Systems Commission

Accordingly, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor under Article V of the Constitution of Virginia and under the laws of the Commonwealth, including but not limited to § 2.2-134 and § 2.2-135 of the *Code of Virginia*, and subject to my continuing and ultimate authority and responsibility to act in such matters, I hereby establish the Virginia Unmanned Systems Commission.

Responsibilities of the Commission

The Commission shall:

1. Identify the state of all unmanned systems industries in Virginia. This review should look comprehensively at the industry, including the supply chain from pre-competitive research and development through production and operation.
2. Identify challenges and needs of the unmanned system industry that may be met with Virginia assets for each domain of unmanned systems (aerial, land, maritime) including but not limited to workforce, research and engineering expertise, testing facilities, manufacturing facilities, and economic development opportunities within the Commonwealth.
3. Provide recommendations that will encourage the development of the unmanned systems industry in Virginia.
4. Develop the value proposition for Virginia that will provide a basis for marketing Virginia to the current unmanned systems industry and that will position Virginia for emerging needs and applications within that industry.

The Commission shall provide an interim report to the Governor of recommendations by November 30, 2015.

The Commission shall also submit an annual report giving its findings, as well as any other reports as either the Commission or the Governor deem necessary.

Commission Staffing and Funding

Necessary staff support for the Commission’s work during its continued existence shall be furnished by the Office of the Secretary of Technology and other such agencies and offices as designated by the Governor. An estimated 300 hours of staff time will be required to support the work of the Commission.

Necessary funding to support the Commission and its staff shall be provided from federal funds, private funds, and state funds appropriated for the same purposes as the Commission, as authorized by 2.2-135 of the *Code of Virginia*, as well as any other private sources of funding that may be identified. Estimated direct costs for this Commission are \$5000. Commission members shall serve without compensation and shall receive reimbursement for expenses incurred in the discharge of their official duties.

The Commission shall serve in an advisory role, in accordance with 2.2-2100 of the *Code of Virginia* and shall meet upon the call of the chairman at least three times per year.

Effective Date of the Executive Order

This Executive Order shall be effective upon its signing and shall remain in force and effect until June 12, 2016, unless otherwise amended or rescinded by further executive order.

Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this 12th day of June, 2015.



Terence R. McAuliffe, Governor

Attest:

Levar M. Stoney, Secretary of the Commonwealth