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Implementing a Counter Unmanned Aircraft System Program at a high-security nuclear facility

Implementing a Counter Unmanned Aircraft System (CUAS) Program at a high-security nuclear facility is a challenge and requires a certain degree of empathy toward system owners as you migrate toward planning, installation and final operational status. Resistance and conflict will arise during the project lifecycle. An appreciation for the level of dedication and concern demonstrated by owners of existing safety/security systems is critical. The installation of CUAS will most likely be placed on an expedited schedule once the decision to implement the program is made by leadership. Assembling the correct teams and working in a collaborative manner will lead to project success. CUAS implementation does not have to be cloaked in darkness. Many of the commercially available systems utilize technology that has existed for many years. Collaborating with other system owners will allow for CUAS integration into existing security infrastructure and provide a greater defense-in-depth strategy. Providing Subject Matter Experts (SME) who are not affiliated with the project will add value and integrity to any recommendations or opinions regarding concerns and potential impacts. All attempts to resolve safety and security concerns should be exhausted before energizing the CUAS. Early interaction with Safety Basis and Cybersecurity SMEs will benefit project timelines and avoid redundancy. Tactics associated with presentation and protection of information will be discussed as well as segregating of task lists. A clear demarcation in duties allows additive effects to be realized as the project evolves and helps reduce or eliminate delays.

Projects will fail when effective communication channels are not in place. Methods for aligning resources to tasks must be tracked and progress assessed at frequent intervals. An early appreciation for true and accurate complexity of the task is critical to avoid over-resourcing and cause project delays. A major component of implementing a CUAS Program is deterrence. A healthy CUAS Program communicates its presence to help educate UAS operators who may be careless or clueless about flight regulations or restrictions. Messages about potential impacts to their drone, fines and penalties is usually enough to deter curious operators from flying into restricted areas. UAS operators engaging in criminal activity will not usually respond to any form of deterrence. These individuals should be considered a more determined malefactor and met with a rapid and coordinated response to neutralize and disrupt the unauthorized UAS activity.

This presentation will provide successful concepts and strategies used to deploy an effective and efficient CUAS Program at a high-security nuclear facility in a rapid, safe and secure manner.

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