

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **1362**



Introduced by: HON. VINCENZO RENATO LUIGI R. VILLAFUERTE

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill aims to acquire, deploy and integrate military-grade Unmanned Aerial Systems (AES) involving Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) otherwise known as 'drones' to strengthen the country's military defense, surveillance, and disaster response, amongst others.

Drones became beneficial when it made its way into the daily operations of different sectors due to their numerous functions such as photography and videography. However, before they were utilized for commercial activities, they were initially manufactured for military purposes. They were meant to perform tasks that were difficult and dangerous for mankind. Their employment made military operations ten times swifter and efficient in terms of surveillance and security, search and rescue, and monitoring climate change as human capacity and capabilities are limited.

In as early as 2013, the Department of National Defense (DND) has already planned to incorporate the acquisition of drones as part of the agency's Marine Forces Imagery and Targeting Support System Acquisition Project worth P684 million. It was only in 2017 that the Philippine Marine Corps started using them for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) purposes.

In 2018, the Philippine Army and the Philippine Air Force likewise incorporated the utilization of drones in their operations by acquiring (6) brand new ScanEagle UAV, through the support of the US Foreign Military Financing Program, and in 2023, the Philippine Coast Guard has finally incorporated UAVs into their operations to monitor coasts and shorelines, especially since the aggression of China against the Philippines on the West Philippines Sea controversy.

The former DND Secretary Delfin Lorenzana even said that the newly acquired UAV will prepare the country in the conduct of "*intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance operations*

in support to a variety of missions such as territorial defense, security and stability; humanitarian assistance and disaster response, and international defense and security engagement”¹

As part of the country’s continuous initiative to protect its sovereignty, the Philippine Army has recently recruited and trained First-Person View (FVP) drone pilots to keep up with the technological advancement of warfare and its disaster response operations.

Therefore, In light of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



HON. VINCENZO RENATO LUIGI R. VILLAFUERTE
District 2, Camarines Sur

¹ UAV Acquisition part of military modernization: Lorenzana retrieved from [https:// www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1028436](https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1028436) on July 5, 2025

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House Bill No. 1362

Introduced by: HON. VINCENZO RENATO LUIGI R. VILLAFUERTE

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE ACQUISITION, DEPLOYMENT, AND INTEGRATION OF MILITARY-GRADE UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS (UAS) TO STRENGTHEN THE PHILIPPINES' DEFENSE, SURVEILLANCE, AND DISASTER RESPONSE CAPABILITIES, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Section 1. Short Title. this act shall be known as the “**National Defense Drone Act.**”

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. It is the policy of the State to modernize the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and enhance national defense and resilience by adopting advanced technologies such as unmanned aerial systems (UAS), commonly known as military drones. These technologies shall also be utilized in disaster response, maritime security, anti-terrorism, and environmental protection missions.

Sec. 3. Objectives. - The program shall have the following objectives:

- a) Provide a dedicated and sustainable budget for the procurement of military-grade drones;
- b) Strengthen the surveillance, intelligence, and strike capabilities of the AFP, particularly in contested and remote areas;
- c) Support border and maritime patrol operations, especially in the West Philippine Sea;
- d) Enable real-time disaster assessment and search-and-rescue operations;
- e) Develop local drone manufacturing capabilities and technical expertise.

Sec. 4. Definition of Terms. - For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall be defined as the following:

- a) *Unmanned Aerial Systems* refers to a system of components consisting of an autonomous control system controlled by a remotely piloted air system of an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV);
- b) *Unmanned Aerial Vehicle* refers to an aircraft, commonly known as ‘drone’, operated remotely by a pilot from a well calculated distance to oversee a wide range of landscape, seascape, riverscape, cityscape, amongst others. Its purpose ranges from aerial

photography and aerial videography, surveillance and security, search and rescue, delivery of goods and services, monitoring climate change and other environmental changes, and military operations.

Sec. 5. Creation of the Philippine Unmanned Aerial Systems Program (PUASP). The Department of National Defense (DND), in coordination with the AFP and the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), shall establish the Philippine Unmanned Aerial Systems Program (PUASP) to oversee:

- a) Acquisition of drones
- b) Deployment strategy across military branches
- c) Inter-agency usage protocols
- d) Training of drone operators and technicians
- e) Data security and mission compliance

Sec. 6. Acquisition of Drones. The program shall prioritize the acquisition of the following drone types:

- a) Surveillance and Reconnaissance Drones – for real-time monitoring of maritime, border, and insurgency-prone areas
- b) Combat Drones – equipped with precision-guided munitions for defense operations
- c) Logistics and Medevac Drones – for supply transport and medical emergency support in inaccessible areas
- d) Disaster Response Drones – for rapid assessment, search-and-rescue, and delivery of aid during calamities

Sec. 7. Research, Development, and Local Industry Participation. To encourage local innovation and reduce long-term costs, the government shall:

- a) Support R&D partnerships with Filipino universities and tech startups;
- b) Encourage licensed local manufacturing and maintenance hubs;
- c) Provide tax incentives for private sector contributions to drone development under the Strategic Defense Technology Transfer Program

Sec. 8. Congressional Oversight and Reporting. A Congressional Oversight Committee on Drone Defense and Technology (COCDDT) shall be created to:

- a) Review the drone acquisition pipeline;
- b) Ensure accountability and data privacy compliance;
- c) Evaluate program effectiveness and recommend updates to Congress

Sec. 9. Appropriations. An initial amount of ₱10 billion is hereby appropriated for the implementation of this Act, to be sourced from the national budget and/or defense modernization fund. Additional allocations shall be included in the General Appropriations Act (GAA) annually.

Sec. 10. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - The DND, in coordination with relevant agencies, shall issue the necessary Implementing Rules and Regulations within ninety (90) days after the effectivity of this Act.

Sec. 11. Separability Clause. - If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

Sec. 12. Repealing Clause. - All laws, executive orders, administrative orders, and rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

Sec. 13. Effectivity Clause. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,