DSPA

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HOW TO COMMENT ON FCC PS DOCKET NO. 26-189

Comments due September 2, 2026 | Your real-world experience matters

What this proceeding is about: The FCC proposes to stop future importation and marketing of certain previously authorized foreign-produced UAS and critical components it considers "military-grade." Existing owners would still be allowed to operate equipment they already possess. The FCC is asking the public whether its definition is too broad, whether replacements really exist, what the economic impact will be, and whether 180 days is enough

WHAT THE FCC IS ASKING - AND WHAT YOU CAN ADDRESS

1. Did the FCC define "military-grade" too broadly?

The proposal includes categories such as thermal-equipped UAS, LiDAR-equipped UAS, docking stations, 55+ lb aircraft, and certain coordinated/swarm systems, including multi-UAS light shows.

- Possible answer: Thermal, LiDAR, docking, and coordinated flight are also ordinary commercial technologies. Explain exactly how you use them for roofing, solar, surveying, construction, utilities, public safety, mapping, entertainment, or another civilian mission.
- Possible request: Ask the FCC to use a risk-based definition tied to design, intended use, data handling, autonomy, or actual military capability instead of treating the presence of a commercial sensor or feature as "military-grade."

2. Do these systems create especially acute national-security risks?

The FCC asks whether the listed "military-grade" systems pose particularly acute risks because of their capabilities.

- Possible answer: Acknowledge legitimate security concerns, but explain that a thermal camera, LiDAR sensor, or dock does not by itself create the same risk in every use case.
- If relevant, describe security controls your business uses: offline operations, local data storage, controlled networks, customer data policies, or restrictions around sensitive sites.

3. Will the economic and supply-chain impact really be "relatively minor and contained"?

This is one of the most important questions for commercial operators. The FCC specifically asks for data and evidence of economic costs.

- Possible answer: No. Give real numbers: current fleet investment, replacement aircraft cost, payload cost, batteries, software, retraining, downtime, lost contracts, and higher customer prices.
- Do not compare only aircraft prices. If changing brands means replacing an entire ecosystem, explain the total transition cost.

4. Are domestically produced alternatives actually available and cost-effective?

The FCC asks whether domestic alternatives exist and whether obtaining trusted replacement equipment would be cost-effective.

- Possible answer: “Available” is not the same as “equivalent.” Compare mission capability, payloads, thermal resolution, flight time, portability, wind performance, RTK, obstacle sensing, software, API support, parts, delivery time, reliability, and price.
- If no replacement meets your mission requirements, say so clearly. If one exists but costs substantially more, document the difference.

MORE QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS

5. Will compliance or transition costs go down?

The FCC asks whether providers will save money as they move to trusted equipment.

- Possible answer: For many operators, costs will increase because transition can require new aircraft, batteries, payloads, software, training, SOPs, integrations, testing, calibration, and downtime.

6. Do domestic-manufacturing benefits outweigh the harm?

The FCC expects restrictions to encourage investment in U.S. manufacturing.

- Possible answer: Support stronger U.S. manufacturing, but explain that future investment does not solve today’s replacement gap. Investment is not the same as commercially available, equivalent, affordable equipment.

7. Do national-security benefits outweigh economic and public-interest harms?

The FCC asks how it should balance national security against effects on consumers, industry, government partners, and the public.

- Possible answer: Ask for targeted protections that address the actual security risk without unnecessarily eliminating ordinary commercial tools. Explain downstream effects on customer prices, inspections, safety, jobs, and competition.

8. Is the proposed 180-day transition period enough?

The FCC proposes that affected importation and marketing stop 180 days after the final action is published.

- Possible answer: Explain pending purchases, contracts, fleet-expansion plans, dock deployments, replacement lead times, training needs, or the lack of any equivalent replacement. If 180 days is not enough, propose a realistic timeline.

TELL YOUR STORY - THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART

Write like a business owner, not a lawyer. Tell the FCC what you do, what aircraft or capability you rely on, why you chose it, what it cost, and what would happen if you could no longer buy another one. Then identify the closest realistic replacement and explain what is missing or what the transition would cost. Connect the impact to your customers: higher prices, fewer services, delayed projects, lost contracts, reduced safety, or even whether you could remain in business. Specific facts and numbers are far more useful than simply saying “don’t ban DJI.”

A SIMPLE COMMENT STRUCTURE

- Who I am: My name/company, location, size of business, and the work I perform.
- What I use: Aircraft, thermal, LiDAR, dock, payloads, or other affected capability.
- Why I need it: The commercial mission and why that capability matters.
- What replacement means: Closest alternative, missing capability, price difference, and full transition cost.
- What happens next: Effect on my business, employees, customers, pricing, contracts, or safety.

- What I want the FCC to do: Narrow the definition, create commercial-use relief, allow conditional approval, or provide more transition time.

HOW TO FILE YOUR COMMENT

- FCC Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS): Go to www.fcc.gov/ecfs and file under PS Docket No. 26-189.
- Federal Register option: The notice page also provides an online comment form: www.federalregister.gov/d/2026-15659.
- In ECFS, identify the proceeding as PS Docket No. 26-189, enter your filer information, and type your comment or upload a prepared document.
- Review your filing before submitting. Save the confirmation or tracking information for your records.
- Remember: this is a public docket. Your comment and attachments may be publicly viewable, so remove confidential customer information, private data, and anything you do not want published.
- Deadline: September 2, 2026.

Source: FCC Public Notice DA 26-758, PS Docket No. 26-189; 91 FR 48870 (Aug. 3, 2026). Federal Register notice