

My Sky Technologies Developing Counter-UAV Defence for Australia



My Sky Technologies has announced the development of defence drones in Australia to seek out and bring down hostile military UAVs. According to My Sky Technologies director Steve Auch-Schwelk, Military drones have changed the landscape of the modern battlefield in recent years but the technology to counter them has not kept pace.

Two models are currently in development. The first is a compact counter UAV drone with metal rotors that can be stored in a soldier's pack and launched when an enemy drone is believed to be in the area. Using a range of sensors including RF, infrared, video and GPS, the 600-gram drone can quickly locate and reach an enemy UAV and then attack it with saw-like rotors to bring it down. It can also reach speeds of up to 250kmh, fly to an altitude of 5000m and has a range of about 8km.

The second model, which uses a similar suite of sensors and is just as portable, is designed to provide fast battlefield assessments. "If you come under fire and you don't know where it is coming from you can throw one of these drones into the air and it will go up about 200m to get a tactical picture of radio chatter, heat signatures and acoustic firing lines," Auch-Schwelk said. "If you are in a forward position, the same model can scan out a particular area and you can also strap wings to it to give it a longer range."

My Sky Technologies pitched its attack drone to the Australian Defence Force at Army Innovation Day 2017 in Canberra. They also recently responded to a Request for Proposals from the Australian Government's Defence Innovation Hub with its surveillance drone. It hopes to hear the outcome of both projects in the coming weeks.

Auch-Schwelk said combining off-the-shelf sensing technologies and shrinking them down onto their own boards would allow the drones to be compact, lightweight and affordable. "The big picture is that in three or four years there are going to be drones flying all over the place delivering packages and they are going to need situational awareness in the same way as driverless cars need to know everything that's happening on the road. We want to get the cost of this sensor suite down and into a turnkey system that we can start selling to drones being manufactured around the world."

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