



FEMA



FEMA Region 04  
UAS\Remote Sensing Strategy

Photo credit: NOAA/NASA

2019 Hurricanes Conference



## PDA Pocket Guide

May 2020



### FACT SHEET

## Preliminary Damage Assessment Guide 2020 Summary of Changes

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On May 8, 2020, FEMA released its [Preliminary Damage Assessment Guide](#) (PDA Guide), the update to the 2016 Damage Assessment Operations Manual. The purpose of the PDA Guide and its accompanying [PDA Pocket Guide](#) is to define a standard national-level framework for how state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) governments and FEMA staff collect and validate the cause, location, and details of damage following a disaster. Guidance in the PDA Guide will go into effect on June 8, 2020. This document highlights key changes between the process laid out in the PDA Guide compared to the earlier guidance.

### Background

A Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) is the mechanism SLTT governments and FEMA use to determine the impact and magnitude of damage following a disaster and the resulting unmet needs to individuals, businesses, the public sector, and communities. The primary objective of the PDA is to collect information, conduct analysis, and provide situational awareness to state, territorial, or tribal government leaders to determine whether the impacts of a disaster warrant a disaster declaration request under the Stafford Act (42 U.S.C. §§ 5121 *et seq.*).

### Summary of Changes

#### 1. Inclusion of Desktop Assessments as a Possible Methodology for Public Assistance PDAs

Visual confirmation of damage by FEMA does not necessarily need to be in-person. When a SLTT government has the capability to participate in a desktop assessment, it can submit Initial Damage Assessments (IDAs) to FEMA with documentation, including photographs, that allow FEMA to validate information remotely. The concept of operations for these desktop assessment PDAs will differ slightly from the normal process. For example, there will be more coordination between the SLTT PDA Coordinator and the FEMA PDA Coordinator on verified PDA information submitted by SLTTs to FEMA for review (remote validation) by a PDA Validator and team.



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### **Fiscal Year 2021 Continuing Training Grants (Federal Aviation Administration Center of Excellence Unmanned Aircraft Systems)**

The National Training and Education Division (NTED) Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) Continuing Training Grants (CTG) includes the following appropriations language “\$2,000,000 for FEMA to partner with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Unmanned Aircraft Center of Excellence to conduct a regional training program for SLTT responders in using UAS for disaster preparedness and response.”



The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) led by my Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Integration Office Research, Engineering, and Analysis Division is forming a Peer Review Panel to provide independent assessment and expert guidance for a new **FAA research project: UAS Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response**. Under Section 359 of H.R. 302 (P.L. 115-254), the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 and recent appropriations, the FAA is congressionally mandated to conduct this research. The goal of this research is to develop a safe, effective, and standardized approach to inform policies, procedures, guidelines, and best practices for UAS operations in response to disasters and emergencies. Additionally, this research is intended to inform how the use of UAS during these events can be optimized in order to aid the public and ultimately increase public safety.

# Florida Public Safety Summit 2022



# NIST First Responder UAS Triple Challenge

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH DIVISION**

- About +
- Research Portfolios +
- Funding Opportunities +
- Open Innovation Prize Challenges** -
- Current and Upcoming Prize Challenges -
- 2021 First Responder UAS Triple Challenge**
- 2021 Mobile Fingerprinting Innovation Technology Challenge
- Past Prize Challenges +
- Commercialization +
- Annual Stakeholder Meeting +
- Resource Library +

## 2021 First Responder UAS Triple Challenge

The First Responder Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Triple Challenge from NIST PSCR serves to help save lives faster and support advancing first responder search and rescue (SAR) operations. With **a total of up to \$720K in awards**, this competition is comprised of three challenges with three different focus areas — all aimed at advancing UAS technology to support critical, lifesaving missions.

As with every challenge, the aim of this year's challenge is to help ensure that our nation's first responders have access to the latest in UAS technology. Prize recipients will be determined by a panel of judges, assisted by a team of subject matter experts, through each stage of the competitions. For the most up-to-date contest information, refer to the contestant page here: <https://www.uastriplechallenge.com/>

**FIRST RESPONDER UAS TRIPLE CHALLENGE**  
SPEED • RESILIENCE • SECURITY

NIST PSCR First Responder UAS Triple Challenge Launch



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## Questions & Discussion

*FEMA Region 04  
UAS & Remote Sensing Strategy*

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