

A NEW START UP COMPANY WANTS TO PREVENT PLANE AND DRONE COLLISIONS

News / Airlines



A recent study makes it seem clear that drones and airplanes are on a collision course—unless SkySafe has anything to say about it. The new startup company has technology that can stop a drone in its flight path and divert it before it collides with a commercial plane, *The Verge* reported.

SkySafe, which bills itself as in the drone protection business, doesn't just alert pilots to nearby drones, but actually hijacks the drone's signal, takes control of the drone, and gets it out of harm's way. "We don't just detect, we do the intercept side," founder Grant Jordan told *The Verge*. "We fully take control of the drone from the operator, it sees us as the legitimate controller, and we can move it to a safe location and land it." To see the technology in action, watch the video on the company's homepage.

SkySafe can also "distinguish authorized units from rogue ones; track the location of the drone operator; and if needed, take control of the drone—disabling it or bringing it in safely for a landing." The company just raised \$3 million in funding as passengers, pilots, and even U.S. Senators become concerned about the risks of drones running into planes. "Remember what happened when two seagulls were sucked into the engines of a flight called the Hudson River miracle,"

Florida Senator Bill Nelson told The Hill. "That's feathers and webbed feet and a beak. Can you imagine the metal and plastic of a drone being sucked into a jet engine?"

In response to such concerns, the U.S. Senate just passed a bill to reauthorize funding for the Federal Aviation Administration that included funding to develop or test technology that that could intercept or shut down drones if they get too close to airports. That could include technology like SkySafe's or that of Airmap, which has recently teamed up with 50 of the largest airports in the U.S. to share information between drone operators and air traffic controllers.

Concerns have been heightened recently with news that a British Airways jet may have been struck by a drone while landing at London's Heathrow Airport. The plane and its passengers were unharmed by the incident.

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