

DJI denies that it's discontinuing its iconic Phantom drones

See the picture at the top of this post? I don't need to tell you that's a DJI Phantom, because you already know. It's an instantly recognizable, practically prototypical drone design that's attracted imitators around the world – and now, rumor has it that owner DJI is killing it off for good.

Well, it's a *little* more than a rumor, because DJI's own Director of Public Safety Integration Romeo Durscher said as much on a podcast last month: "Yes, the Phantom line with the exception of the Phantom 4 Pro RTK has come to an end," he told the Drone Owners Network, as spotted by *DroneDJ*.

Durscher's answer was in response to a question that's been on drone enthusiasts' minds for a while now: What happened to the Phantom 4? Because every single version of that latest Phantom, save the commercial RTK model, been out of stock for at least a month now. Some retailers are showing them

What happened to the Phantom 4?

And today, *DroneDJ* is reporting that an unannounced Phantom 5, one that would have had interchangeable lenses, has been canceled as well.

One tiny problem with all this: DJI denies that the reports are true. "Romeo misspoke," DJI communications director Adam Lisberg tells *The Verge*.

"Due to a shortage of parts from a supplier, DJI is unable to manufacture more Phantom 4 Pro V2.0 drones until further notice. We apologize for any inconvenience this might cause and recommend our customers explore DJI's Mavic series drones as an alternative solution to serve their needs," reads an

official statement from DJI.

It's worth noting that DJI has been offering that same explanation for five months now. That's a very lengthy parts shortage.



Photo montage by DroneDJ

"As for the Phantom 5 rumors, we've never said we considered making a Phantom 5 in the first place, so there's nothing to cancel," adds Lisberg, who told *DroneDJ* last fall that the leaked photos of a suspected Phantom 5 (see above) were actually just a one-off design for a customer.

If you ask me, it's a little weird that DJI would still have a parts shortage five months later if it really wanted to sell a Phantom drone, and it's an *awful lot of trouble* to design and manufacture an interchangeable lens drone – and lenses! – just for a single customer unless they're a Saudi royal. Killing off the Phantom also isn't implausible, since DJI doesn't exactly need two lines of prosumer drones when it's already

got the more compact folding Mavic in its pocket.

But I do think it would be shortsighted of DJI to ditch its original, iconic drone design and name so easily. That's why I'd be a little surprised if we've seen the last of the Phantom line.

<https://www.theverge.com/2019/4/26/18519255/dji-deny-discontinue-drone-phantom-4-5-mavic-2-pro>