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**Unidentified Aerial Phenomena RTQ**

**Background (FOUO):**

The Washington Post and other outlets queried following a Politico article on the Navy changing its reporting procedures for Unidentified Aerial Phenomena.

**Posture:** *RTQ ONLY*

**PA Lead:** *CHINFO, N2/N6 PA*

**Statement:** "There have been a number of reports of unauthorized and/or unidentified aircraft entering various military-controlled ranges and designated air space in recent years. For safety and security concerns, the Navy and the USAF take these reports very seriously and investigate each and every report. As part of this effort, the Navy is updating and formalizing the process by which reports of any such suspected incursions can be made to the cognizant authorities. A message to the fleet details the steps for reporting each incident. In response to requests for information from Congressional members and staff, Navy officials have provided a series of briefings by senior Naval Intelligence officials as well as aviators who reported hazards to aviation safety." Attributed to Joseph Gradisher, spokesperson for Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Information Warfare.

**Talking Points:**

- The Navy is updating and formalizing the process by which reports of any such suspected incursions of unauthorized and/or unidentified aircraft entering various military-controlled ranges and designated air space can be made to the cognizant authorities.
- For safety and security concerns, the Navy takes these reports very seriously and investigates each and every report.

**Q&A:**

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[[Updated statement as of 1525 on 24APR2019]]

“The safety of our aircrews is always a paramount concern to the US Navy and the Department of Defense. The wide proliferation and availability of inexpensive unmanned aerial systems (UAS), such as commercially available quadcopters, has increasingly made airspace de-confliction an issue for our aviators. In this increasingly complex airspace including both military and civilian aviation environments, the US Navy is proactive in exercising due diligence in investigating any observation in training areas that could affect the safety of our aircrews. Based on this increased airspace complexity, US Navy aircrews were provided with reporting instructions in order to determine the frequency and location of any UAS operating in our training areas.

In response to past reports, the US Navy issued guidelines for reporting observations. Based on continued reporting under those guidelines, the US Navy has decided to further develop ways to help better understand the source and nature of the observations.

As an example, in 2012 there were a number of lasing events near Naval Air Station Oceana, the US Navy took these hazards to aviation very seriously and working with Law Enforcement identified and prosecuted the individual responsible. While the US Navy acknowledges that these events may be creating inadvertent or unintended hazards, just as with the lasing events, the US Navy remains vigilant in addressing any and all hazards to aviation.

We are currently updating guidelines to be more aircraft specific in order to facilitate reports that support an objective data driven analysis while simultaneously helping to remove any stigmas from reporting anything unknown in the airspace. Due to the operational and aircraft specific nature of these guidelines, security considerations preclude their disclosure. The US Navy is at the forefront of this effort but works across the Department of Defense to ensure other service partners maintain awareness for the safety of their aircrew. The US Navy is not working with any entities outside of the US government regarding this matter.

Military and civilian aviation have always had channels for reporting airspace violations and hazards to aviation safety authorities. However, based on the enhanced guidelines that were implemented, reporting became more consistent, which lead to our recognition that more specific guidelines were needed. The US Navy continues to operate and train safely throughout the world."

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**Q: Can you confirm the Navy has established a policy for reporting “UFOs”?**

**A:** We are currently updating guidelines to be more aircraft specific in order to facilitate reports of unidentified aircraft/unmanned aerial systems (UAS) that support an objective data driven analysis.

**Q: What prompted the Navy to draft these guidelines now?**

**A:** The wide proliferation and availability of inexpensive unmanned aerial systems (UAS), such as commercially available quadcopters, has increasingly made airspace de-confliction an issue for our aviators. In this increasingly complex airspace including both military and civilian aviation environments, the US Navy is proactive in exercising due diligence in investigating any observation in training areas that could affect the safety of our aircrews. Based on this increased airspace complexity, US Navy aircrews were provided with reporting instructions in order to determine the frequency and location of any UAS operating in our training areas.

**Q: What are the drafted guidelines? Could you provide us with a copy of them?**

**A:** Due to the operational and aircraft specific nature of these guidelines, security considerations preclude their disclosure.

**Q: Has there been an increase in sightings over that time period or has it remained constant?**

**A:** Consistent with the wide proliferation and availability of inexpensive unmanned aerial systems (UAS), sightings of this nature have increased in frequency from 2014 until now.

**Q: What does the U.S. Navy constitute as a strange aerial sighting, for purposes of the new guidelines?**

**A:** The Navy constitutes anything unknown or unidentified in the airspace as a sighting. The US Navy remains vigilant in addressing any and all hazards to aviation. The safety of our aircrews is always a paramount concern to the US Navy and the Department of Defense.

**Q: Prior to this, was there anything similar in place for unidentified aircraft sightings?**

**A:** Military and civilian aviation have always had channels for reporting airspace violations and hazards to aviation safety authorities. However, they recognized that more specific guidelines were needed in order to bring consistency to the reporting. The US Navy continues to operate and train safely throughout the world.

**Q: Are there parallel guidelines for other branches of the U.S. Armed Forces, like the Air Force?**


**A:** Military and civilian aviation have always had channels for reporting airspace violations and hazards to aviation safety authorities.

**Q: What type of analysis will be conducted?**

**A:** Navy, Department of Defense, and other government agencies will analyze all reports, to include any eyewitness statements, flight profiles, any video, and any other materials to support the safety and security of our aircrew and operations.

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