

RE: 16 January Mid-West Observables Update and Summation of Activities

From: "Manno, Claudio (FAA)" <claudio.manno@faa.gov>
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Date: Thu, 16 Jan 2020 10:43:38 -0500

Great. Thanks claudio

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Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2020 10:40 AM
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Subject: Re: 16 January Mid-West Observables Update and Summation of Activities

Thanks, Claudio. I will also provide this to OST as S1 has had calls with Senators Gardner and/or Fischer as well.
R/
Angela

Sent from my iPad

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On Jan 16, 2020, at 10:37 AM, (b) (6) wrote:

<image002.jpg>
Thanks Claudio. Appreciate the continued focus and support.

At some point AGI will need to follow up with Congressional staff if not being done already. The January 15th observation below is instructive, although I doubt it will be picked up in the media! Flights on approach to ORD is not nearly as sexy as drones and "mother ships...."

From: Manno, Claudio (FAA) <Claudio.Manno@faa.gov>
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Subject: FW: 16 January Mid-West Observables Update and Summation of Activities

Good morning,
The following is a summary of activities over the past five days by FAA and our Federal partners as well as State and local authorities in response to the continued drone sightings in the Mid-West. Phil/Andrew, you are welcome to package the update for the Hill." IF you have any questions please let me know. claudio

Background: The FAA engaged with state and local law enforcement and public safety authorities on December 19, 2019, after multiple reports of "UAS" sightings in Colorado. Reports had initiated in Colorado on December 17, 2019, and extended into Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota and Illinois. Cooperative engagement between the FAA, FBI, DOJ, DHS and state/local authorities in affected counties has continued throughout the period of sightings. FAA has invested an extensive amount of time and attention from two ASH LEAP agents and several FSDO ASIs in an effort to utilize all available FAA information and resources to attempt to confirm the sightings and identify operators, as well as engage and support federal, state, and local law enforcement response and investigative efforts.

Most Recent Update: FAA participated in an interagency telcon with DHS, DOJ and FBI on January 14, 2020, to

discuss the status of law enforcement and federal activities related to the UAS sightings in Colorado, Nebraska, and Kansas.

Reported sightings in Colorado, Nebraska, and Kansas have significantly diminished in the past week. FAA and the Colorado Information Analysis Center (CIAC) have run ground operations this past weekend and failed to observe any UAS activity; both organizations have suspended operations at this time. FAA LEAP agents surveyed sheriffs in multiple counties in Colorado and, working with the FBI Omaha Field Office, reached out to Nebraska county sheriffs; none reported activity over the past weekend, and the consensus is activities in their counties have either stopped or moved on. Additionally, it is possible citizens have grown tired of reporting.

Neither the Omaha nor the Denver FBI Field Offices have opened investigations, and FBI HQ has not received any request from their field offices or local LE for deployment of their UAS detection assets. DOJ and FBI noted none of the thresholds for their C—UAS use under 6 USC 124n have been met; therefore, the FBI was not contemplating deploying any technical resources. DHS also agreed no threshold had been met for DHS to deploy technical resources under 6 USC 124n.

In response to concerns the Army or one of their contractors was conducting UAS operations or testing and evaluation, on January 13, the FAA contacted multiple offices within in the Pentagon in both the Army and the Office of the Secretary. All provided negative responses. Combined with previous DOD engagement with USAF and NORAD/NORTHCOM, there is high confidence these are not covert military activities.

On January 13, the Morgan County, CO Sheriff, who established the Drone Sightings Task Force two weeks ago, announced he will be standing down the Task Force and is no longer investigating. Further, the latest press release from the Colorado Department of Public Safety provides their investigative findings of the Colorado sightings and concludes with their decision to scale back proactive operations, although they will continue to respond to and investigate reports of suspicious activity. The weblink to their press statement can be found here: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dhsem/news/news-release-update-colorado-department-public-safety-investigations-reports-suspicious-drone>

On January 15, after analyzing video of purported drone activity in Illinois, Chicago FSDO ASIs were able to correlate the lights to commercial air traffic on approach to Chicago O'Hare airport.

(b) (6)

(b) (5), (b) (6)

FAA will continue to coordinate with local, state, and federal law enforcement and public safety authorities to monitor the situation and provide updates as information warrants.