Get ready for more North Korean missiles

OPSGROUP Team
14 March, 2023



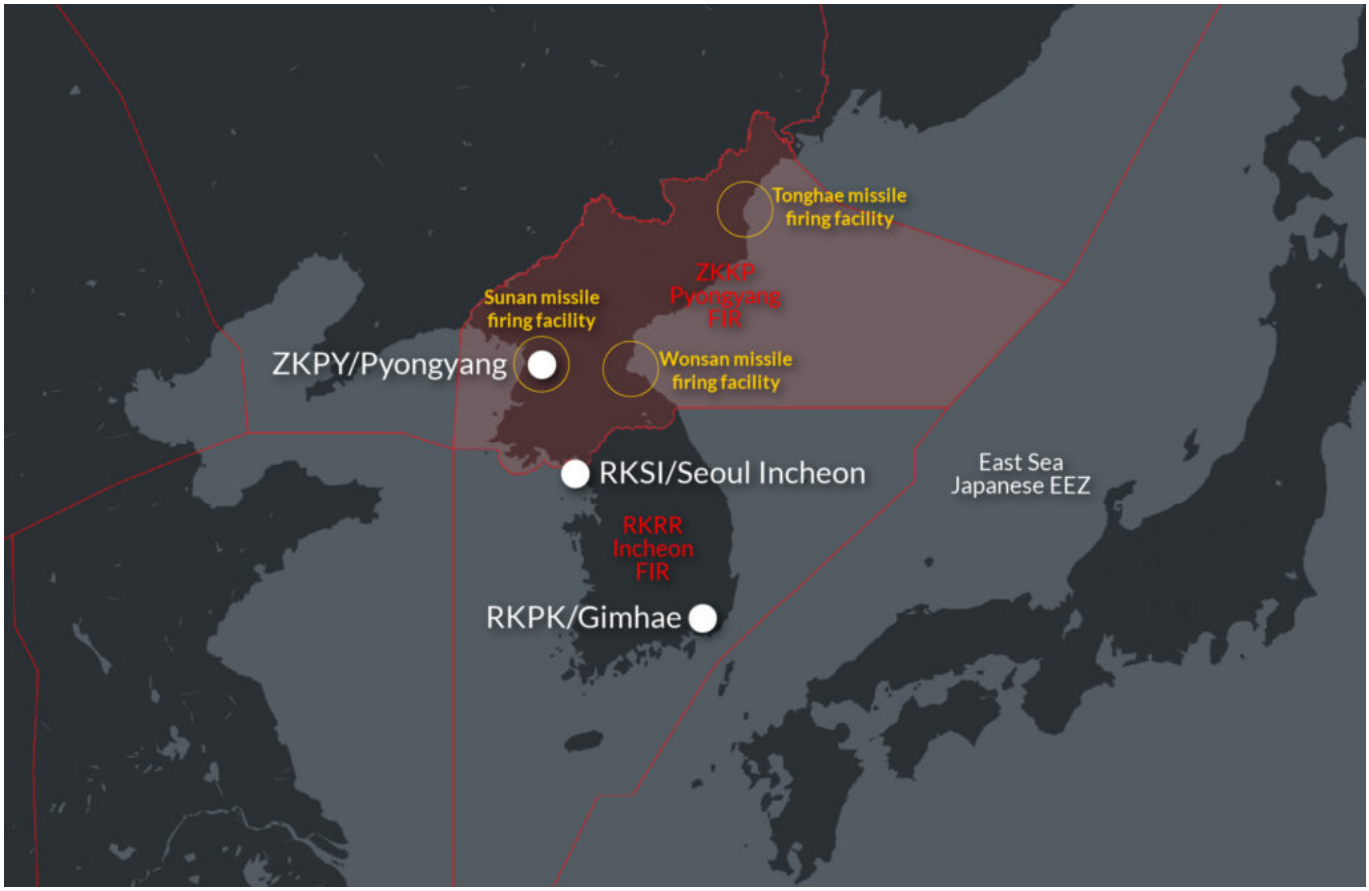
Exercise “Freedom Shield” is happening now – which means that **more North Korean missile tests are likely in the coming days.**

What is Freedom Shield?

Freedom Shield is a **joint US-South Korean military exercise**. They run joint exercises every year, but this one is the largest in a long while and so is likely to cause more ‘retaliatory responses’ from North Korea. Particularly as South Korea is specifically **simulating responses to potential North Korean threats.**

The exercises run for **11 days from March 12th.**

It is not clear where the exercises will take place, but the general advice is stick to flight plan routes, maintain a very good listening watch on the radio, follow ATC instructions and keep a good look out.



Main missile firing sites.

What is the risk?

North Korea tend to respond to these exercises with **significant missile activity**, which they never announce. This exercise is likely to see similar levels of response, if their 'announcement' is anything to go by…

Pyongyong is resolved to respond with **"overwhelming powerful forces"** to so-called military manoeuvres by the **"the US imperialists and the South Korean puppet forces"**. So probably a lot of missile launches.

The missiles rarely have any impact, generally falling into the East Sea (Sea of Japan) outside the EEZ. However, they do pose a threat within the Pyongyang FIR, and a higher level of activity is expected this year.

Here is an earlier post covering this is more detail.



Full overview (BBC) of military and missile sites in relation to South Korea

While North Korea do not announce missiles, South Korea do release notams (although generally after the event).

As of March 14, they have fired:

- Two strategic **cruise missiles,** from a submarine off the east coast of North Korea
- Two short-range **ballistic missiles** fired towards the East Sea, from Jangyon
- They ran their own military exercises in Feb 2023, firing several long range cruise missiles
- At the end of 2022, **180 North Korean 'warplanes**' were detected in North Korea, but did not infringe on South Korean airspace
- **5 North Korean drones** entered South Korean airspace in December 2022



Image of recent missile firing from submarine

In other North Korean news...

Not a lot.

They have been **trialling ADS-B** in their airspace since 2009, according to Notam A0050/09

For full updates on the airspace risk in North Korea, as well as Japan and South Korean, visit Safeairspace.