

Japan scrambles record number of jets as tensions rise with China

OPSGROUP Team
25 April, 2018

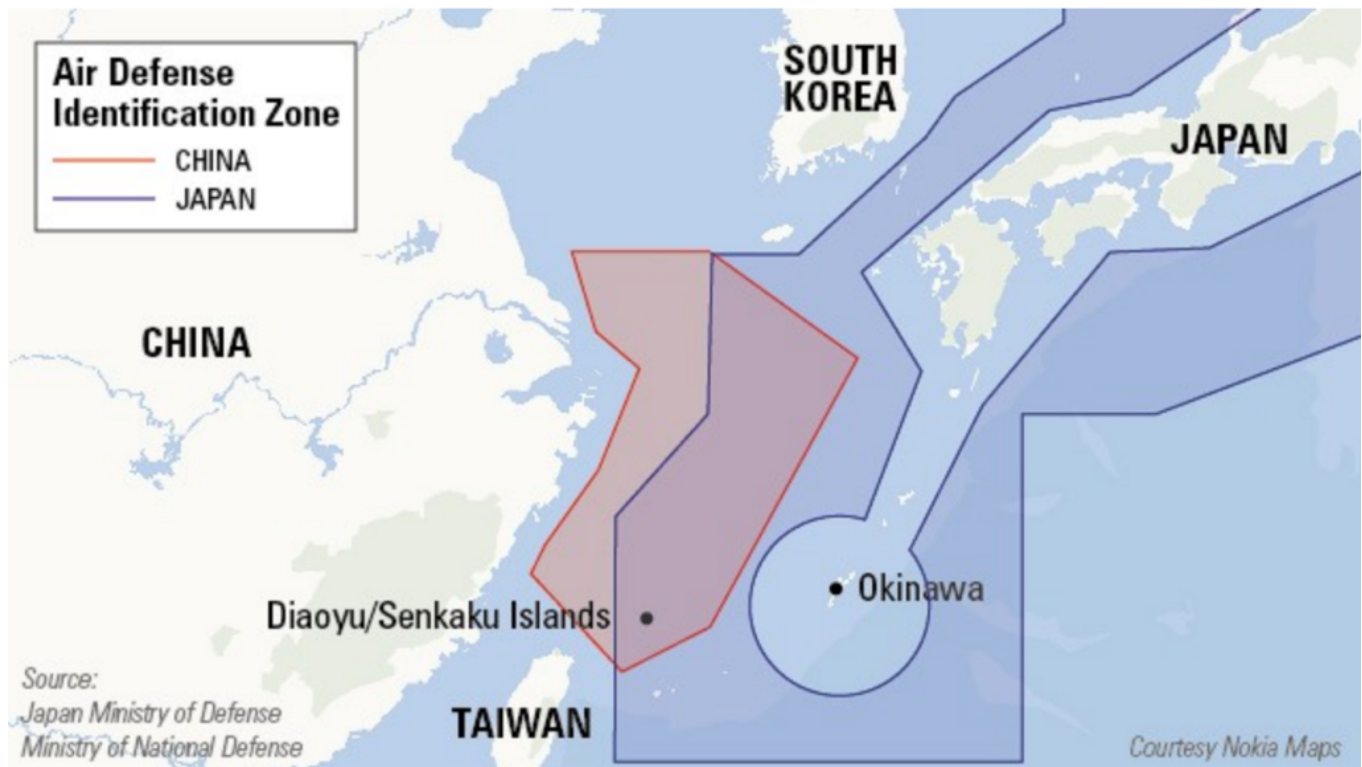


In Short: Japan scrambled a record number of fighter jets in the past year. The number rose to an all-time high of 1,168 in the year to March 2017, easily beating the previous record of 944 set at the height of the cold war in 1984. Chinese aircraft approaching Japanese airspace prompted 851 of the incidents, an increase of 280 over the previous year.

According to official figures released on Thursday, Japan's Air Self Defense Force is scrambling fighter jets in record numbers as Chinese military activity escalates. Interceptions of Chinese planes rose by half in the year to March 31, in response to increases in the communist country's activity in and around the East China Sea.

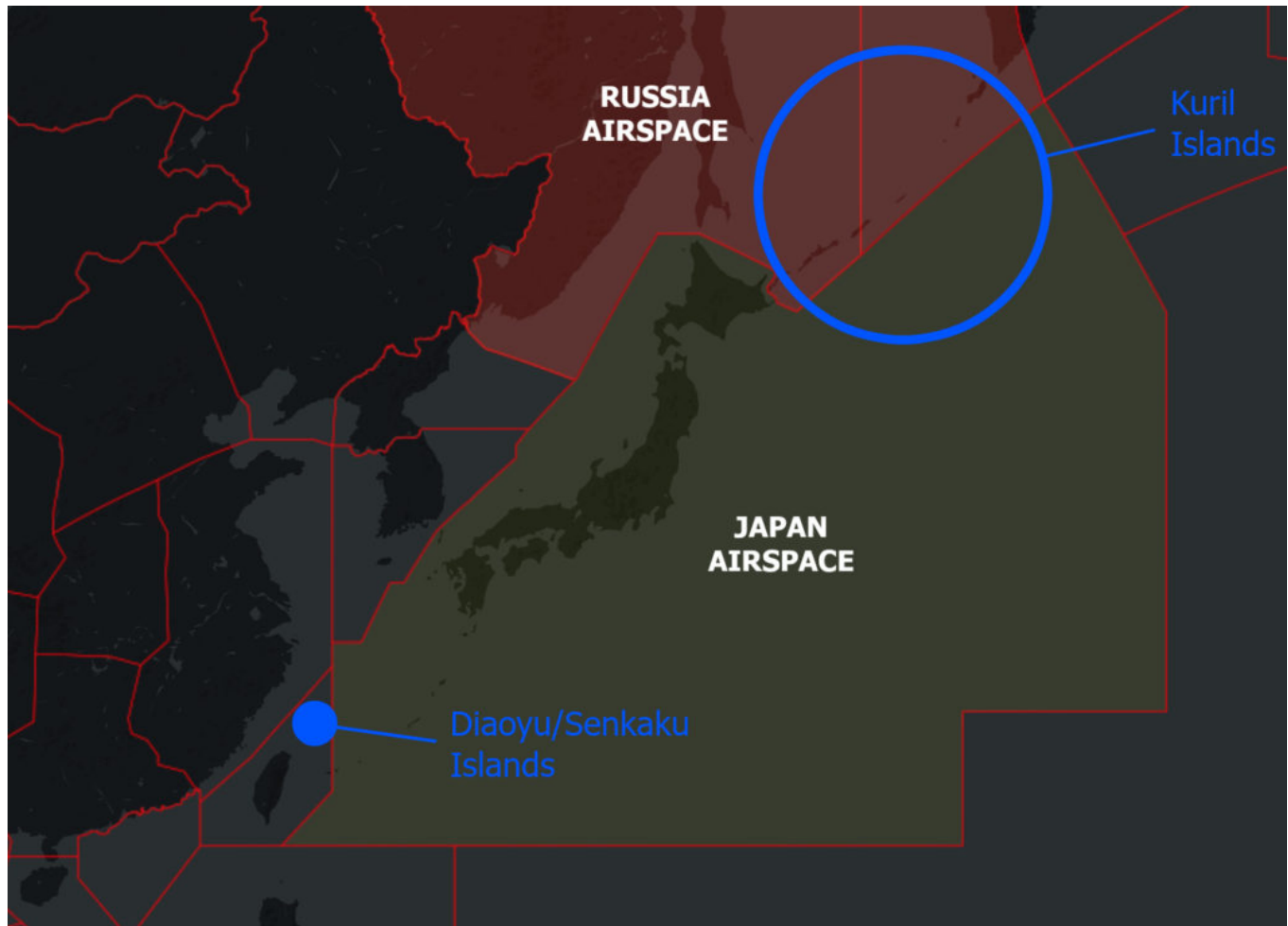
Japan worries that **China** is probing its air defences as part of a push to extend its military influence in the East China Sea and western Pacific, where Japan controls an island chain stretching 1,400 km (870 miles) south towards Taiwan. The figures highlight China's growing assertion of military power in East Asia as it expands and modernises its armed forces in line with rapid economic growth.

For the first time, Chinese jets recently began flying through the Tsushima Strait into the Sea of Japan, and through the Miyako Strait into the Pacific Ocean.



But it's not only China that Japan is worried about. Last week, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe warned **North Korea** may be capable of firing a missile loaded with sarin nerve gas towards Japan. "There is a possibility that North Korea already has a capability to deliver missiles with sarin as warheads," he told a parliamentary national security committee.

And then there's **Russia**. Scrambles by Japanese aircraft were high throughout the 1980s in response to flights by Soviet aircraft during the cold war. They fell back to 100-200 incidents a year during the 1990s and 2000s, but began to pick up again a decade ago as both China and Russia grew more assertive.



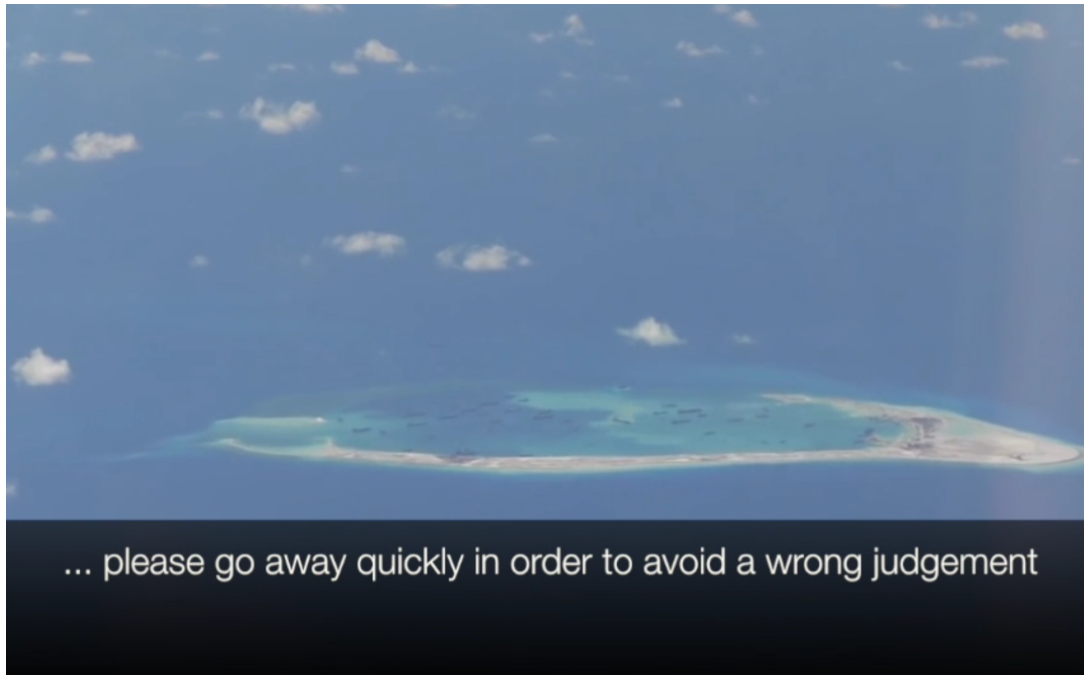
Mr Abe has been trying to negotiate with Russian president Vladimir Putin over the future of four disputed islands in the Kuril chain to Japan's north, but has made limited progress, with the jet scrambles showing Moscow's determination to make its presence felt on its eastern border. There were 301 scrambles to intercept Russian aircraft during the year, 13 more than the previous year, including incidents where Russian jets circumnavigated the Japanese Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands to the south.

Extra Reading:

- Why I'm Thankful for Japan and South Korea

US 737 tests the China ADIZ

Declan Selleck
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China: Go away quickly please

US Aircraft: Nope

China: Go away quickly!

US Aircraft: No!

The US is doing us all a huge favour at the moment. In fact, it's been providing this service to the world for some time.

Every so often, a country extends its borders a little too far – outside the normal 12nm limit, for example. **China has been busy.** They've been building some things in the South China Sea. Islands, in fact. And on those islands they've built runways, control towers, and big radars. Naturally, they confirmed last Friday that they are for civilian use only. Hmmm.

So the US dusts off an airplane and knocks on the door. Flies around for a bit. Sees what's going on. And reminds the country that international waters are just that. They publish a list each year of where they've done this. Worth a read.

In 2013 they popped up an ADIZ. And made everyone passing through it copy their Flight Plans to Beijing. In principle, ADIZ's are a pretty good idea. The normal 12nm isn't really much time for the military to figure out if you're coming to bomb them. Especially on the weekend.

But you can't tell airplanes to get out of an ADIZ. It's an Identification Zone, not an Intercept Zone. So, normally ADIZ's require you to squawk something and have a Flight Plan.

That much is OK. But China has been warning aircraft to get out of 'their airspace'. And it's not. This 737 (aka P-8 Poseidon) went for a nosey.

These operations help us all operating internationally to have less rules to worry about. Which is good.

Initially, most abided by the 2015 ADIZ rules. In 2016 that adherence quietly eroded. And China quietly didn't care too much. It did threaten a second ADIZ in the South China Sea, but since the first one didn't really take off, they probably won't.

It's part of a bigger diplomatic game. Interesting to watch, though.

Monday Briefing: China ADIZ Flight Planning Rules, Warsaw FIR reroutes

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China ADIZ FPL Rules Dec 4: Last weeks introduction of a new Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) in the East China Sea requests operators to send FPL data to Beijing. There is no new requirement for overflight permits or prior permission. Advice being given to operators is to copy the ATC plan to the two AFTN addresses listed. Read more below ...

Poland FIR reroutes Dec 3: With the introduction of a new ATC System in Poland, significant restrictions exist in the Warsaw FIR and will continue into the new year. To reduce complexity, traffic originating in Russia is rerouted around Poland, the ACC is at 65% capacity and TMA at 75%.

LSGG/Geneva Transition to new stripless ATC system will be complete 11DEC. Approach running at 80% capacity until 10DEC.

EPWW/Warsaw ACC Significant restrictions in place for the next few months due to new system. Overall Enroute capacity reduction of 35%. Restrictions affect traffic departing from U... with destinations LI** LE** LO** EG**, LFP* and EHAM from 26 November until 15 January.

Afghanistan PPR is Mandatory for all flights to Bagram (OAIX), Jalalabad (OAJL), Kabul (OAKB), Kandahar (OAKN) and Tereen (OATN). For operations to more than one airfield, a separate PPR request form must be submitted for each one.

NAT/North Atlantic The FAA will publish a NOTAM on 12DEC detailing plans for the rollout of Phase 2 of the North Atlantic datalink mandate. Implementation will begin with Phase 2a on 05FEB2015, at which time flights within the North Atlantic Tracks (NAT) between FL350 and FL390 must be equipped with Fans 1/A controller-pilot datalink communications (CPDLC) and ADS-C systems. The program expands to these altitudes in the entire ICAO NAT region on Dec. 7, 2017, and to all flights in this region above FL290 on Jan. 30, 2020.

Philippines Due to ongoing relief efforts, fuel supply at the following locations is limited: RPMB/General Santos, RPMD/Davao, RPVI/Iloilo, and RPVK/Kalibo. There are also intermittent shortages at RPLL/Manila.

YMML/Melbourne is introducing Ground Delay Program capability as an ATFM measure. Currently exists at Sydney, Brisbane, and Perth. Operators will be issued a COBT slot time and must adhere. Slots are available from the Australian National Operations Centre (NOC).

South America Chile and Peru have introduced Oceanic Procedures for flights operating within their Antofagasta and Lima Oceanic FIRs, particularly on routes Lima-Santiago and vv. Refer AIC 5/13.

LTAI/Antalya Technical Stops are now accepted during the Winter Period. Previously, AYT did not accept any technical stops due to slot demand.

Russia New requirements for API and PNR data for Airlines operating both scheduled and non-scheduled

flights in effect 01DEC. API data should be transmitted 15 mins prior departure to SITA MOWRU8X. NOTAM A2345/13 and AIC 04/13.

Central America. Many operators overlook payment of Navigation invoices in Central America, overdue payment of which is not discovered **until a permit is applied for**. COCESNA, the agency managing ATC in the region, has reminded operators that flights will not be allowed with overdue balances. The following are contact email addresses for the CAA/DGAC Billing department each country – check that your balance due is nil. Belize: est-belice@cocesna.org. Guatemala: cobrosguatemala@cocesna.org. El Salvador: cobroselsalvador@cocesna.org. Honduras: cobroslamesa@cocesna.org. Nicaragua: cobrosnicaragua@cocesna.org. Costa Rica: cobroscostarica@cocesna.org. **Ensure that you apply for a CENAMER Permit (CENAMER Notification)** before your flight into any FIR in this region.

Saudi Arabia Any flights landing at King Abdulaziz International Airport (KAIA) with passengers from Jijiga, Ethiopia (HAJJ) will be subject to a fine.

Turkey The DGCA announced on 27NOV that with immediate effect, original insurance certificates are required for **overflight** as well as landing permits related to scheduled flights. Previously, a PDF copy was accepted for overflights.

India Crews operating Ferry Flights and General Aviation crews can once again secure visas or TLP's (Temporary Landing Permits) on arrival into Indian airports. In addition, Indian missions and posts abroad have been authorized to grant business visas to crew of private non-revenue and charter flights within three days of the visa application. These visas will be endorsed on their national passport and not on the crew member certificate. These visa processing times also do not apply to crew who are nationals of a PRC country. Visas for these crew members could take as many as 30 days.