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## FAA Threat Analysis Division Iran – Information Note as of 20 June 2019

**Note: This information is provided for situational awareness only and does not constitute an FAA flight advisory or prohibition.**

### Strait of Hormuz/Gulf of Oman – Iran Shoots down U.S. UAS

According to media reporting, on 19 June at 2335z, Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) elements shot down a U.S. military Global Hawk unmanned aircraft system (UAS) operating in airspace over the Gulf of Oman. While Iranian authorities stated the incident occurred in sovereign Iranian airspace, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) officials disputed this claim, stating the shoot down occurred in international airspace (e.g., outside of Iranian sovereign airspace). This incident follows the 13 June 2019 suspected Iranian intercept attempt of a U.S. military UAS flying observation over the damaged oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman following the suspected limpet mine tanker attack.

The Iranian government stated a Khordad system was used in the UAS intercept. The Iranians publically showcased a new surface-to-air missile (SAM) system, the Khordad 15, on 9 June. Although there may be different variants of the Khordad, the system used in the 19 June shoot down was likely a long-range radar-guided SAM capable of reaching the high altitudes where the Global Hawk is capable of operating (up to 60,000ft).

### Potential Threat to U.S. Civil Aviation

According to the U.S. military statement, the shoot down occurred in the Gulf of Oman at 2335z in international airspace (see below graphic) in relative close proximity to international air routes.



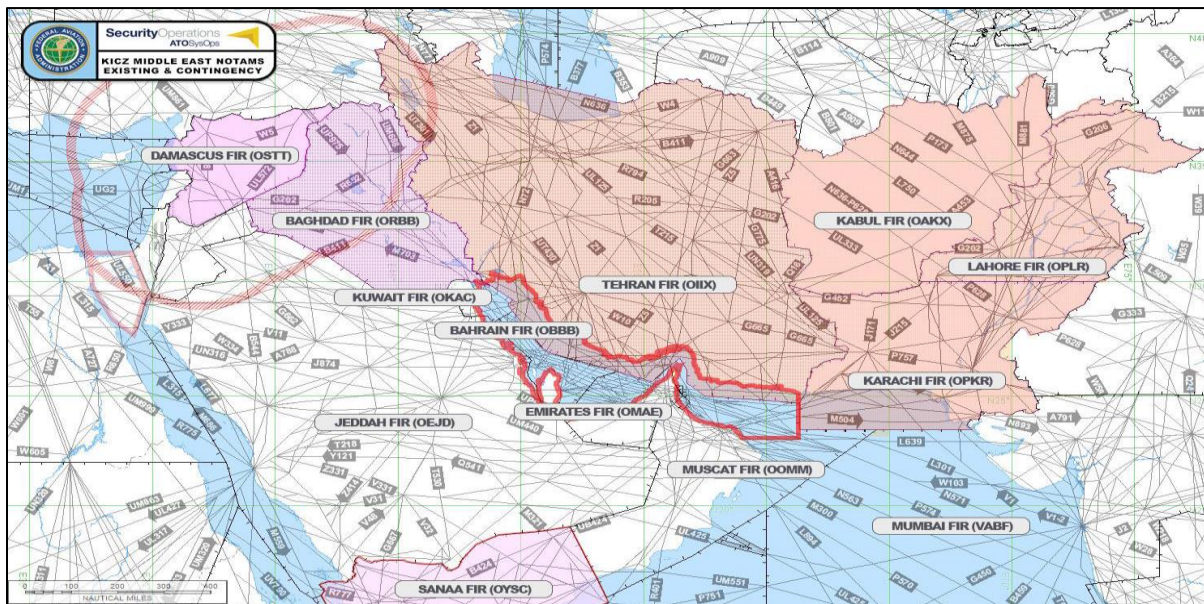
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Although the exact location of the attack is not yet available, there were numerous civil aviation aircraft operating in the area at the time of the intercept. According to flight tracking applications, the nearest civil aircraft was operating within approximately 45nm of the Global Hawk when it was targeted by the Iranian SAM. FAA remains concerned about the escalation of tension and military activity within close proximity to high volume civil air routes and the Iran's willingness to use long-range SAMs in international airspace with little to no warning. As a result, there is concern about the potential for misidentification or miscalculation which could result in the inadvertent targeting of civil aviation.

As a reminder, FAA issued advisory Notice-to-Airmen (NOTAM) KICZ A0015-19 on 16 May 2019 for the overwater areas of the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman, which advises operators to exercise caution due to heightened military activities and increased political tensions in the region; these heightened military activities and increased political tensions, present an increasing inadvertent risk to U.S. civil aviation operations due to the potential for miscalculation or misidentification. Additionally, aircraft operating in the overwater areas of the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman may encounter inadvertent GPS interference and other communications jamming, which could occur with little to no warning. FAA also issued advisory NOTAM KICZ A0016/18 on 9 September 2018, which advised U.S. civil aviation to exercise caution when flying into, out of, within, or over the Tehran Flight Information Region (FIR) (OIIX). The NOTAM also advised U.S. civil operators operating in or adjacent to the Tehran FIR (OIIX) to carefully review current NOTAMs and other sources of aeronautical information and be familiar with current conditions in the Middle East. Below is a graphic of the current FAA advisory and prohibition posture for the region.

The FAA continues to monitor the situation for any changes to the risk to U.S. civil aviation.



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