

# Shadows in the Sky: Unidentified Drones and the New Jersey Mystery

## How to Profile the Unknown? A Breaking Down of the Hypothesis for an Aeronautical Theatrical Play

Michaël Vaillant<sup>1</sup>

### An Unexplained Public Phenomenon

Since mid-November 2024, a wave of mysterious drone sightings across New Jersey has sparked concern among residents and officials.

The scenario is unsettling: these drones are flying over strategic areas for hours, with no apparent intervention from authorities. **Their behavior appears deliberate, almost "theatrical," with intentional visibility through navigation lights.** This display contrasts sharply with expectations for military or spy drones, which would normally seek to remain discreet. These events occur as the US Congress conducts an intense debate on Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena (UAP), following sworn testimony from former military officials claiming the existence of classified programs related to these phenomena.

These sightings, often involving multiple drones flying in formations at night, have been reported near residential areas, critical infrastructure, and even sensitive locations like the Picatinny Arsenal<sup>2</sup>, a military research facility, and former President Donald Trump's golf course in Bedminster<sup>3</sup>. This unusual activity has prompted investigations by local and federal agencies, including the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), to determine the nature and origin of these drones<sup>4</sup>.

### The Phenomenon and Its Impact

The first reports of drone activity emerged on November 18th from Morris County in northwestern New Jersey. Local law enforcement responded to these reports, noting the growing concern on social media but initially stating there was no known threat to public safety<sup>5</sup>. A New Jersey county sheriff's office even released a heat map to illustrate the spread of these sightings<sup>6</sup>. However, as sightings continued and spread across the state, including coastal areas and near military installations, public anxiety grew.

---

<sup>1</sup> Meta-Connexions, UAP Check Founder, GEIPAN Expert for the French Space Center, michael.vaillant@uapcheck.com

<sup>2</sup> [The Mystery Drones Are Back—This Time Over New Jersey | WSJ](#)

<sup>3</sup> [What we know about the mysterious drones buzzing over New Jersey | BBC](#)

<sup>4</sup> [New Jersey Drone Sighting Mystery Leads to Calls for Federal Investigation | Newsweek](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Mystery Drones Over New Jersey And Nearby States: Trump Weighs In As More Sightings Reported | Forbes](#)

<sup>6</sup> ['We Know Nothing': State, Local Officials Demand Answers About Mystery Drones | FLYING Magazine](#)

## A Public Spectacle: Drone Activity and Characteristics

The drones have become a nightly spectacle, with sightings occurring primarily after sunset and lasting into the early morning hours.

While most sightings occur between sundown and 11 p.m., there is evidence suggesting they might be operating outside these hours as well, potentially employing tactics to avoid detection<sup>7</sup>. Furthermore, there have been reports of these drones following a Coast Guard lifeboat off the Jersey Shore<sup>8</sup>.

Witnesses have provided varying descriptions of the drones, further deepens the mystery. Some reports describe them as "the size of a small SUV," significantly larger than typical consumer drones<sup>9</sup>. Others described them as "large and loud," with unusual flight patterns and maneuvers not characteristic of conventional aircraft<sup>4</sup>. In one instance, a "hobby or toy type drone" crashed into the backyard of a home in Pequannock Township<sup>10</sup>.

## Public and Official Reactions

These diverse observations have fueled speculation about the drones' purpose and origin. Some theories suggest potential involvement in surveillance, smuggling, or even foreign interference<sup>7</sup>. Congressman Jeff Van Drew, citing sources, proposed that the drones might be launched from an Iranian "mothership" stationed off the coast, a claim later denied by the Pentagon<sup>11</sup>.

Public reaction to the drone sightings has been a mix of curiosity, concern, and frustration. Some residents expressed frustration with the lack of clear answers from authorities and even threatened to take matters into their own hands by shooting down the drones<sup>12</sup>. Adding to the concern, there were reports of drones malfunctioning, with one incident in Morris County where a drone "fell out of the sky."<sup>3</sup>

Social media platforms have been abuzz with discussions and speculation, with some residents expressing anxiety about the lack of clear answers from authorities. Some have even threatened to take matters into their own hands by shooting down the drones. This public unease has prompted local law enforcement to increase patrols and issue statements assuring residents that they are monitoring the situation.

## Official Investigations and Statements

The FBI, working with New Jersey State Police and local law enforcement, initiated an investigation into the drone sightings<sup>3</sup>. They received over 3,000 tips from the public and analyzed available imagery and electronic data<sup>2</sup>. However, the FBI stated that they were unable to corroborate any of the visual sightings with electronic detection, adding another layer of complexity to the investigation<sup>6</sup>. The Department of Homeland Security also joined the effort,

---

<sup>7</sup> The New York Times. (2023, Dec. 13). The mysterious drone swarms over New Jersey, explained.

<sup>8</sup> Asbury Park Press. (2023, Dec. 12). 'We were being followed': Coast Guard boat off NJ Shore says it was pursued by drone.

<sup>9</sup> [What to Know About the 'Drone' Sightings in New Jersey | TIME](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Drone mystery befuddles New Jersey officials, frustrates residents | Fox News](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Drones mysteriously spotted in New Jersey: What we know | LiveNOW from FOX](#)

<sup>12</sup> [Drone mystery befuddles New Jersey officials, frustrates residents | Fox News](#)

briefing state and local officials on the situation<sup>2</sup>. However, these briefings reportedly left many officials with more questions than answers, leading to calls for greater transparency and federal support<sup>2</sup>. Senators from New Jersey and New York even sent a letter to the FBI, DHS, and FAA requesting a formal briefing on the sightings<sup>6</sup>.

Adding to the investigative possibilities, Senator Richard Blumenthal highlighted that the drones would likely leave a radio frequency footprint that could be used to trace their origin. He also suggested that they should be shot down if necessary, moreover if they fly over sensitive sites<sup>13</sup>.

On December 12th, 2024, the FBI and DHS issued a joint statement addressing the drone sightings<sup>14</sup>. They stated that, based on their investigation, there was no evidence of a national security or public safety threat or any foreign involvement<sup>11</sup>. They also noted that many reported sightings appeared to be misidentified manned aircraft operating legally<sup>11</sup>.

## Exploring the Possible Explanations

The abundance of unanswered questions is striking: why does the DoD, equipped with advanced technology, seem unable to intercept these drones? The first move, in every advanced country is to launch an Aircraft or even a Drone to Intercept and get information about the intruders. Do they represent a threat to national security, an internal military operation, or a signal of non-human origin?

Despite technological familiarity, the repeated sightings of drones with unconventional behaviors continue to challenge our frameworks for Understanding Aerial Phenomena, ***“An Unidentified Drone is just another UAP.”***

In an attempt to, if not solve, at least frame this mystery, I propose we evaluate several hypotheses, through their arguments “against” and “for” which will be examined in detail, following a methodology similar to that used by [GEIPAN](#)<sup>15</sup>. The GEIPAN is a French government body under CNES (the French Space Agency) tasked with investigating and analyzing reports of Unidentified Aerospace Phenomena (UAP).

It is crucial to consider all available evidence and perspectives before reaching a conclusion. Further investigation and information are needed to provide a definitive answer to this intriguing question.

---

<sup>13</sup> [US senator says mysterious drones spotted in New Jersey should be 'shot down, if necessary' | wkyc](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Joint DHS/FBI Statement on Reports of Drones in New Jersey | Homeland Security | DHS Gov](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Evaluation Methodology for UAP Cases | M. Vaillant](#)

## Hyp. 1. Drones of US Military Origin: Tests, Training, or Deception?

One of the leading hypothesis suggests that the drones may be part of a clandestine US military operation. This theory is supported by the advanced characteristics of the drones, including their extended flight times, precise maneuvers, and apparent resilience to adverse weather conditions. These capabilities, some argue, point to technology not readily available on the commercial market, suggesting a military or government origin.

### Potential Military Objectives

If the US military were involved, potential motivations could include testing new technologies, assessing vulnerabilities, or gathering intelligence.

Several potential military objectives could explain the drone activity if the US military were involved:

- **Training exercises** : the US military might be using these drones to test new technologies or evaluate the effectiveness of existing counter-drone measures. The overflights near military installations could be part of these exercises<sup>16</sup>. The overflights could be simulated scenarios designed to evaluate defense capabilities against drone incursions. This would allow the military to identify vulnerabilities in security systems and refine protocols for protecting critical infrastructure. The drones could be used for training, to collect information on specific targets or activities in the area, potentially related to national security concerns<sup>17</sup>.
  - **Surveillance and reconnaissance**: the drones could be deployed for surveillance purposes, gathering intelligence on potential threats or monitoring activities in and around sensitive areas.
  - **Assessing vulnerabilities**: as a collateral of the previous, the drones could be used to assess the vulnerabilities of critical infrastructure and military installations to drone intrusions<sup>18</sup>.
  - **Developing counter-drone strategies**: the overflights could be part of an effort to develop and test new counter-drone technologies and strategies in response to the growing threat of drone technology.
- **Intentional deception**: the drones could be a deliberate attempt to create confusion and distract from other activities. By leaving their origin ambiguous, the military could be testing the public's and the media's response to Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena, potentially laying the groundwork for future operations or narratives.

However, any of these aims and actions carry potential risks, including public safety concerns, privacy violations, and national security implications.

---

<sup>16</sup> [Send in the drones | Article | The United States Army](#)

<sup>17</sup> [Full article: The legal and ethical implications of drone warfare | tandofline](#)

<sup>18</sup> [Counter-Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems Strategy | media.gov](#)

### Table of Arguments for Hypothesis 1

The following table presents an evaluation of arguments related to a hypothesis. Each argument is scored on a scale from +1, indicating perfect alignment with the hypothesis, to -1, indicating complete contradiction. The lowest score within an argument highlights the weakest aspect of the argument and determines the overall evaluation. This methodology will be consistently applied to all argument tables.

Criteria or Element	Arguments For	Arguments Against	Score [-1, +1]
<b>Access to Technology with Advanced Capabilities</b>	The drones' capabilities, such as their size (>2 meters), flight patterns, and ability to avoid detection, may suggest military-grade technology <sup>19</sup>	Advanced drone technology is becoming increasingly accessible to non-military entities, including private companies and research institutions.	<b>0.95</b>
<b>Proximity to Sensitive or Strategic sites</b>	Drones spotted near sensitive sites could indicate military testing or surveillance. Otherwise they are coming from the sea where the military could have naval support <sup>20</sup> .	Military installations are potential targets for various actors, not just the US military. For example, foreign intelligence agencies or criminal organizations could be involved.	<b>0.50</b>
<b>Public Perception</b>		This protocol of Military action raises concerns about transparency and accountability, potentially damaging public trust and leading to questions about government oversight of drone operations.	<b>-0.10</b>
<b>Official Denials</b>	It is a perfectly normal defense to deny and minimize. This posture aligns with " <a href="#">plausible deniability</a> ": by maintaining a posture of denial, even if involvement exists, the military protects the confidentiality of sensitive programs and prevents the disclosure of technical or strategic information.	In a mirror situation, the argument "For" is also an argument "Against", The Pentagon has explicitly denied involvement in the drone activity, stating that the aircraft are not US military drones. <sup>21</sup> The lack of transparency and concrete evidence has led to public speculation, highlighting the challenges of addressing such phenomena.	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Lack of Transparency</b>	The reluctance to provide detailed information about the drones and their origin fuels suspicion and speculation. The focus on minimizing public concern could be seen as an attempt to downplay the significance of the events.	The military may be withholding information to avoid compromising the investigation or to prevent public panic. Sharing sensitive details could also alert the perpetrators and hinder efforts to apprehend them.	<b>0.25</b>

---

<sup>19</sup> The New York Times. (2024, Dec.13). *The mysterious drone swarms over New Jersey, explained.*

<sup>20</sup> The Drive. (2024, Dec. 8). *Mysterious drones are swarming over New Jersey and no one knows why.*

<sup>21</sup> Reuters. (2024, Dec. 12). *Pentagon says mystery drones over New Jersey are not from US military.*

Criteria or Element	Arguments For	Arguments Against	Score [-1, +1]
<b>Apparent lack of will to Intercept, Reduction of Information</b>	The lack of will to intercept aligns with a deliberate strategy to preserve secrecy, maintain plausible deniability, and avoid compromising classified operations. It allows the military to continue their objectives (protect the narrative) without drawing unnecessary attention or prematurely ending the operation.	The military's strategy of observation and information gathering, instead of immediate interception, suggests a coherent approach to understanding the drones' nature. The military follows strict protocols to secure airspace: they cannot shot down aircrafts which represent no danger above civilians. Inaction risks eroding public trust and fueling conspiracy theories about their ability to secure airspace.	<b>0.20</b>

While the US military has denied involvement, speculation persists due to the drones' proximity to military installations, their sophisticated capabilities, and the lack of a clear explanation. The timing of these events, coinciding with the upcoming presidential election, adds another layer of complexity.

In this hypothesis, the weakest aspect is that his situation draws attention to the advanced technologies associated with Special Access Programs within the Department of Defense, which are currently under scrutiny by legislators as part of a broader effort to gain access to UAP data. In the current political environment, where the US Congress is demanding increased transparency regarding classified programs, such an operation would entail significant political risks for the Department of Defense.

**Hypothesis value (from 0 to 1) : 0.45**                      **Not really Acceptable (almost).**

## Hyp. 2. Attention-Seeking Individuals: A Viral Phenomenon

While some incidents may be attributed to hobbyists unaware of airspace restrictions<sup>22</sup>, the possibility of coordinated efforts by private individuals to gain attention or disrupt operations cannot be ignored. It is based on the idea of a coordinated effort to draw media and public attention.

According to drone expert Mike Innella and Hayley Connelly<sup>23</sup>, the initial drone sightings may have inspired copycats, leading to a wave of similar activity.

These initiatives could aim to provoke a reaction from the U.S. government on sensitive issues such as critical infrastructure security or ongoing legislation on Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena (UAP).

This drone activity could also be intended to exploit public and media gullibility, orchestrated by those seeking attention or aiming to make a statement. The accessibility of advanced

---

<sup>22</sup> [Hundreds of drone incursions reported at military installations over past few years: NORTHCOM | Breaking Defense](#)

<sup>23</sup> [All of the leading theories surrounding mysterious drone sightings in New Jersey | NY Post](#)

commercial drones has enabled individuals to carry out complex aerial operations. As an example, In November 2021, French comedian Rémi Gaillard staged a UFO hoax using a drone equipped with special lights over the Occitanie region in France<sup>24</sup>. During several nights, residents of several cities of the same region, observed and filmed the strange lights, sparking media and social media speculation. The hoax even made it to the national TV journal, triggering a national sensation. Gaillard later revealed the UFOs were a prank, highlighting the ease with which public opinion and media can be manipulated. Gaillard's hoax cleverly exposed how easily misinformation can spread in the digital age, particularly when it taps into existing anxieties and beliefs about the unknown<sup>25</sup>.

Adding another layer to the analysis, a former FBI supervisory special agent, Tom Adams, who helped establish the FBI's counter-drone program, suggests that these drones might be part of organized criminal activity, potentially used for smuggling contraband<sup>26</sup>. However, this idea is dismissed due to the patterns being too broadly visible.

In resume, several motivations could be driving these individuals:

- **Highlighting security flaws:** they may be attempting to expose vulnerabilities in the security of sensitive sites, criticizing the perceived ineffectiveness of defense systems.
- **Pressuring the government on UAPs:** the drone activity could be a direct response to the ongoing debate on Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena, seeking to force the government to take a more transparent stance on the issue.
- **Creating a viral phenomenon:** the goal could simply be to generate a viral sensation, exploiting public fascination with drones and unexplained events.

**Table of Arguments for Hypothesis 2**

Criteria or Element	Arguments For	Arguments Against	Score [-1, +1]
<b>Access to Technology with Advanced Capabilities</b>	<p>The accessibility of advanced commercial drones has increased significantly, empowering individuals with sophisticated aerial capabilities<sup>27</sup>, enabling motivated groups or individuals to conduct sophisticated overflights. These drones boast features like high-definition cameras, thermal imaging, and extended flight ranges<sup>28</sup>.</p> <p>Some models can even operate beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS)<sup>29</sup> and withstand challenging weather. This raises concerns about potential misuse, especially regarding overflights of</p>	<p>The drones observed in incidents like those in New Jersey exceed commercial capabilities in size, endurance, and flight patterns. Industrial or military drones seem more likely due to their advanced features.</p> <p><b>Large dimensions:</b> witnesses reported objects significantly larger than typical drones, with wingspans estimated at 2-3 meters, aligning more with industrial or military drones. <b>Prolonged autonomy:</b> the drones were observed flying for several hours, far exceeding the</p>	<b>-0.25</b>

<sup>24</sup> [UFOs spotted in France? | Remi Gaillard](#)

<sup>25</sup> [A French prankster \(and definite misinformation agent\) faked UFO sightings and landings | AV Club](#)

<sup>26</sup> [Drone expert explains what he thinks is behind drone sightings | Youtube](#)

<sup>27</sup> [How drones are shedding their military image and moving into cities - SWI swissinfo.ch](#)

<sup>28</sup> [Advanced Air Mobility Makes Travel More Accessible | NASA](#)

<sup>29</sup> [Advanced Drone Operations: 3 need to know benefits for commercial pilots | AgEagle Aerial Systems Inc.](#)



Criteria or Element	Arguments For	Arguments Against	Score [-1, +1]
	<p>sensitive areas. Notably, even small, relatively inexpensive drones can possess significant range and payload capabilities, amplifying the potential threat posed by readily available technology<sup>30</sup>.</p> <p>A large-scale experiment coordinated by affluent individuals could be a possible explanation.</p>	<p>standard 30-40 minute range of commercial drones. <b>Weather resistance:</b> overflights occurred under harsh weather conditions, including strong winds and rain, ruling out most amateur drones. <b>Precise and coordinated flight patterns:</b> the drones appeared to execute carefully programmed trajectories, indicating advanced navigation and control systems typically inaccessible to the general public.</p>	
<b>Logistical Feasibility</b>	<p>Individuals with strong motivations can orchestrate such flights. Greenpeace, for instance, has been accused multiple times of flying drones over nuclear plants. In 2018, the organization deliberately crashed a drone into a French nuclear power facility to highlight a security flaw<sup>31</sup>.</p>	<p>Coordinating multiple overflights over an extended period, especially in sensitive and surveilled areas, requires advanced organization and significant technical resources. Here the extent (on many weeks) and importance of the demonstrations, sometimes with more than 50 drones together exceeds the capacity of amateur groups.</p>	<b>-0.20</b>
<b>Motivations (1)</b> Ideological	<p><b>Pressure on the Government Regarding UAP:</b> These overflights might directly respond to actual legislative debates on UAP, aiming to force authorities to take a clearer stance or act more transparently.</p> <p><b>Exposing Security Flaws:</b> Overflights could also aim to reveal vulnerabilities in sensitive infrastructure, serving as a critique of ineffective defense systems or as a warning about risks posed by potential foreign threats.</p>		<b>+0.90</b>
<b>Motivations (2)</b> <sup>32</sup> Hoaxing (Media and Public Manipulation)	<p>History offers examples of hoaxes that have successfully deceived uninformed populations. In this case, the goal could simply be to generate a viral event, leveraging the public's fascination with drones and UAP. These actions could exploit public curiosity and the amplifying power of social media. The</p>		<b>+0.90</b>

<sup>30</sup> [Overview of drone capabilities and potential risks | Airtight](#)

<sup>31</sup> [Greenpeace intentionally crashes drone into French nuclear power plant to reveal security vulnerability - ABC News](#)

<sup>32</sup> We have two entries for 'motivations' in the table: as they cover the same 'contextual axis', we keep the best of the two as the same value (+0.90). In another way, "motivations" should be on the same row, but for the sake of clarity we have split the rows.



Criteria or Element	Arguments For	Arguments Against	Score [-1, +1]
	<p>media attention generated by these overflights creates a buzz, amplifying their implicit or explicit claims. Social networks intensify these events, enabling rapid coordination and aggregation of unrelated observations ("false positives").</p>		
<p><b>Protocol</b> Create a viral effect by this way</p>	<p>Regarding significant media noise surrounding the New Jersey drone sightings it is a true success. It fosters a snowball effect, amplifying the events amidst heightened public anxiety and confusion. Misidentifications of airplanes, helicopters, or other conventional objects are increasingly merged into the narrative, further inflating the phenomenon.</p> <p>The chosen thematic is fantastic and evocative, inspiring not just fear and concern, but also a sense of fascination. The drones are intentionally made to be seen, turning the skies into a nightly spectacle—a <b>light festival where their navigation lights are fully illuminated</b>, drawing attention and awe.</p> <p>Witness confusion acts as a catalyst, drawing additional focus and creating a disproportionate sense of extraordinary activity. This is further magnified by media amplification and the viral nature of social media, which function like a socio-psychological contagion, spreading the narrative rapidly and uncontrollably.</p> <p>For any group seeking visibility or public attention, such an environment provides an ideal platform to achieve their objectives. By exploiting public curiosity and the media's appetite for sensational stories, these groups can effectively insert themselves into the spotlight with minimal effort, leveraging this self-sustaining cycle of attention like a <a href="#">socio-psychological</a> virus.</p>	<p>The visibility of drones may lead witnesses to immediately conclude that they are just hobbyist or commercial drones, limiting the "unknown" factor necessary for viral spread.</p> <p>Their identifiable nature will limit the extent to which the rumor becomes self-sustaining, as rational explanations may emerge quickly: professionals, authorities, and investigators will be quick to promote their own theories or opinions.</p>	<p><b>0.75</b></p>
<p><b>Legal risks</b> Proximity to Sensitive or Strategic sites</p>		<p>Flying near military or nuclear facilities entails significant legal risks, deterring most private individuals. Potential consequences include severe penalties and equipment</p>	<p><b>0.75</b></p>

Criteria or Element	Arguments For	Arguments Against	Score [-1, +1]
		confiscation.	
<b>Absence of revendication of the authors</b>	<p>If we can convey that a “mass hysteria” is occurring, then <b>most of the testimonies will be unrelated and due to misidentifications</b>. So you will not have an airplane pilot who will tell you: “<i>Hey that’s me!</i>”</p> <p>Same for a hobbyist who will - for the fun - join the party, making a growing socio-psychological phenomena inflating but will cautiously remain anonymous because of the risk of legal consequences.</p> <p>Finally, finding authors depends notably on the efforts made by the authorities to catch them. So it is symmetrical to the involvement of the justice to apply the law.</p>	<p>The fact that there is a mass hysteria connected to an objective phenomena is a point, but it does not tell us anything about the authors: the fact that authorities have not neutralized any author is disturbing.</p> <p>The FBI stated that they were unable to corroborate any of the visual sightings with electronic detection, adding another layer of complexity to the investigation<sup>6</sup></p> <p>Advanced surveillance systems would have likely detected and intercepted such unauthorized activity.</p> <p>It is not the first time that <b>no authors</b> were caught during a similar “Wave of Drones”, like in the past in other countries, and that’s the most disturbing (see chap. VI)</p> <p>As time passes without any evidence of private involvement, this explanation becomes less and less credible.</p>	<b>-0.15</b>
<b>Using commercial drones<sup>33</sup></b>	<p><b>Shape</b> : in some cases, objects initially reported as drones were later identified as planes, indicating potential misidentification of shapes.</p> <p>Also, drones with custom designs (e.g., hobbyist modifications) could account for unique shapes.</p>	<b>Shape</b> : witnesses consistently report unusual shapes (e.g., triangular, spherical) that differ from conventional drones. Certain shapes, such as large triangular forms, align with reports of advanced military or experimental craft.	<b>-0.20</b>
	<b>Angular size</b> : observers often overestimate the size of objects in the sky, especially at night, leading to reports of larger-than-actual sizes.	<b>Angular size</b> : witnesses have described the drones as “massive” and “as big as SUVs,” suggesting shapes larger than typical commercial drones. <sup>34</sup>	
	<b>Trajectory</b> : drones have been reported	<b>Trajectory</b> : witnesses have	

<sup>33</sup> To simplify the analysis, the examination of the descriptive elements (*shape, angular size, sound, duration of observation, flight formation, trajectory*, etc.) is made directly in this table, instead of creating a separate table of arguments for each. The notation will be determined by the weakest of these descriptive elements, as they are orthogonal. I show only the result (-0.20)

<sup>34</sup> [Mysterious Sightings of 'Massive' Drones Over New Jersey Spark Call for 'Limited State of Emergency' | People](#)

Criteria or Element	Arguments For	Arguments Against	Score [-1, +1]
	hovering over neighborhoods, which could be a misinterpretation due to the parallax effect <sup>35</sup> .	observed drones hovering just above the trees, suggesting intentional stationary positions rather than parallax illusions.	
	<b>Coordinated movements:</b> groups may conduct coordinated flights, leading to perceptions of formation flying.	<b>Coordinated movements:</b> reports indicate sightings of multiple drones flying in clusters or formations, which could suggest organized activity beyond hobbyist capabilities. The precision and scale of formations over sensitive sites may indicate foreign or domestic surveillance programs.	
	<b>Duration of flight:</b> Continuous sightings might be due to multiple drones operating in succession, giving the impression of prolonged flight by a single drone.	<b>Duration of flight:</b> many reports describe prolonged flights (hours), exceeding the battery life of most commercially available drones <sup>36</sup> .	
	<b>Flight in adverse weather:</b> high-end commercial drones, like those used for professional videography or industrial purposes, are designed to withstand wind, rain, and even snow to a certain extent.	<b>Flight in adverse weather :</b> Bad weather significantly drains drone batteries, reducing flight duration.	
	<b>Flight over sensitive sites :</b> The drones can be modified or they can use non commercial models;	<b>Flight over sensitive sites:</b> nowadays drones are restricted around critical infrastructure like those of DJI (geozones). It rules out certain drones being used near military installations.	

Experts offer contrasting perspectives on the nature of these drone overflights.

The idea of a concerted effort by individuals to orchestrate these overflights remains credible, especially for isolated incidents or less secure areas.

However, the scale and complexity of the drone activity, particularly around sensitive locations, raise doubts about the feasibility of this explanation. The logistical challenges and legal risks associated with such operations would likely deter most individuals<sup>37</sup>.

For instance, Mike Innella points to the advanced capabilities of some observed drones, including their extended battery life and weather resistance, suggesting they are not typical hobbyist models. This highlights the uncertainty surrounding the motives behind these operations.

<sup>35</sup> [Video shows drones circling the skies over New Jersey. Here's what the FBI is doing about them | CBS News](#)

<sup>36</sup> [FBI joins hunt for answers behind nightly drone sightings in New Jersey | NBC Philadelphia](#)

<sup>37</sup> [Mysterious Drones Spark Panic Across New York And New Jersey | The Pinnacle Gazette](#)

Here is a testimony which is very representative of many other observations:

“I’m an Army veteran with some training on AAA weapons systems and aerial threat identification. I’ve seen the drones with my own eyes and they are in fact drones, as opposed to manned aircraft, -and they are very large with incredible flight times. It’s true that it’s hard to gauge size and distance, especially at night, but what I saw wasn’t any commercially available drone that I’m aware of. Just yesterday I saw about 10 large drones over the ocean off the coast on a windy night that were all clearly coordinating with each other and had flight times measured in hours, at the very least. They all slowly made their way onto shore over neighborhoods where it appeared they were up to something. Something is going on. I don’t know what, but this isn’t a case of people just flying their hobbyist drones. It’s either a large commercial enterprise with a fleet of some new/unique type of very large and expensive drones, or it’s military/government. If it’s a large commercial enterprise, we have a right to know what they are up to since they’re disturbing the peace at a minimum [...]”<sup>38</sup>

These characteristics suggest that private individuals, even with advanced equipment, would struggle to access the level of drones and technologies required for such sustained and complex operations. However, this does not entirely rule out their involvement. Private operators could potentially blend their activities with those of military or other entities, adding to the overall noise and confusion surrounding these events.

If you have doubts about the capacity of individuals to organize a phenomenon of this scale, there is a striking parallel that demonstrates how a **well-funded, coordinated network of individuals can orchestrate large-scale hoaxes or activities**. In November 2020, a mysterious metallic monolith was discovered in a remote area of the Utah desert. Shortly thereafter, similar monoliths began appearing in various parts of the world, including Romania, the United Kingdom, the United States, France, Australia, and across Europe<sup>39</sup>. These monoliths were beautiful pieces of design, fueling global speculation about their origin and purpose.

The monolith story is a compelling example of how a coordinated, well-funded network can execute a global hoax while maintaining anonymity. Through the use of NDAs (non-disclosure agreements) and contracts with local artists<sup>40</sup>, the organizers successfully orchestrated a viral, international event. This serves as a proof of concept for how similar efforts—whether artistic, activist, or mischief-driven—could be carried out at scale, requiring global coordination, anonymity, and substantial resources, all with a common goal: creating a viral impact.

That said, the complexity and risks associated with prolonged drone overflights, especially over sensitive sites, demand a far higher degree of organization, resources, and technical expertise. This raises significant questions about the feasibility of private individuals orchestrating such events without external support or advanced capabilities.

**Hypothesis value (from 0 to 1) : 0.375                      Not credible enough.**

---

<sup>38</sup> [The New Jersey Christmas Drone Mystery - The Most Logical Explanation | 51 Drones. Matt Hartman](#)

<sup>39</sup> [Monolith Tracker](#)

<sup>40</sup> [Monolith mystery over? Stunt artists take credit and sell copies. | Mashable](#)

### **Hyp. 3. Foreign Powers at Play: Coordination, Provocation or Espionage?**

The possibility of foreign involvement has also been raised, with some suggesting that the drones could be part of espionage or surveillance operations by countries like China or Russia, both known for their advanced drone capabilities. The strategic importance of some of the overflight locations, including military bases and critical infrastructure, could make them attractive targets for intelligence gathering.

Representative Jeff Van Drew even suggested the drones could be launched from an Iranian "mothership" stationed off the coast<sup>41</sup>, though this claim was quickly dismissed by the Pentagon. Similar drone activity has been reported near US military bases in the UK, raising concerns about a broader pattern of foreign surveillance.

Adding another layer of complexity, these drone sightings could be part of a joint military exercise between the US and its allies. Such exercises could serve to test interoperability, evaluate responses to unconventional threats, or even send a subtle message to potential adversaries. This scenario could explain the advanced technology employed, the strategic locations targeted, and the lack of official acknowledgment.

However, the conspicuous nature of the drone activity, with their visible navigation lights, seems counterproductive for covert espionage. Foreign incursions into US airspace, particularly those attributed to China<sup>42</sup>, have typically involved stealthier methods, such as high-altitude balloons. Furthermore, no concrete evidence has emerged linking the New Jersey drones to any specific foreign power.

---

<sup>41</sup> [Mystery NJ drones are coming from Iranian mothership offshore, congressman suggests: 'Should be shot down' | NY Post](#)

<sup>42</sup> [All of the leading theories surrounding mysterious drone sightings in New Jersey | NY Post](#)

**Table of Arguments for Hypothesis 3**

<b>Criteria or Element</b>	<b>Arguments For</b>	<b>Arguments Against</b>	<b>Score [-1, +1]</b>
<b>Access to Technology with Advanced Capabilities</b>	Countries like China and Russia have well-documented, advanced drone technologies capable of precise surveillance operations.		<b>0.95</b>
<b>Logistical Feasibility</b>	<p>A Marine logistical platform could be used to launch drones of 2 to 3 meters size. It even can be done through submarines, they are advanced enough to carry and deploy such systems.</p> <p>The Type 093 nuclear-powered attack submarine could theoretically be modified to launch drones<sup>43</sup>.</p> <p>The recent Chinese balloon incident suggests that they have the motivation to conduct such operations.</p>	In the absence of concertation, such actions near U.S. sensitive sites would be extremely risky and could provoke significant geopolitical consequences, and other countries will certainly think twice before invading the US.	<b>0.50</b>
<b>Motivations (1)<sup>44</sup></b> Joint Military Exercises	Joint military exercises strengthen alliances, allow intelligence sharing, and demonstrate unity among nations, particularly among the "Five Eyes".	<p>The lack of transparency about these operations fuels public anxiety and distrust, while adversaries might misinterpret this as disorganization or vulnerability.</p> <p>The fact that observations are near sensitive sites like military bases, nuclear facilities, and critical infrastructure is doubtful: it could allow foreign entities access, even in the context of a joint exercise, would expose vulnerabilities and create potential for intelligence leaks.</p> <p>There are very few examples, if any, of joint military exercises with foreign nations being conducted over U.S. sensitive sites.</p>	<b>-0.30</b>
<b>Motivations (2)</b> Espionnage	Military bases and critical infrastructure are high-priority targets for intelligence gathering, making them plausible targets for foreign espionage.	Visible navigation lights are uncharacteristic of covert foreign espionage, casting doubt on the plausibility of foreign power involvement in this specific case. Standard espionage tactics, prioritize stealth and minimal visibility.	<b>-0.80</b>

---

<sup>43</sup> This could be either, one-way or recoverable drones.

<sup>44</sup> We have three entries for the 'motivations' in the table: as they cover the same 'contextual axis', we keep the highest values of the three as the best possibility : -0.30. This is also the value which more generally constrains the hypothesis

Criteria or Element	Arguments For	Arguments Against	Score [-1, +1]
<b>Motivations (3)</b> Provocation	Perhaps it is a signal for those who can decipher it, but in this case, it is a very special form of “communication”	This pattern is occurring in multiple nations, but no foreign government has ever claimed responsibility. The duration of the incident appears inconsistent with a show of force.	<b>-0.50</b>
<b>Lack of Transparency</b> (with Motivations 1)	The military’s reluctance to provide detailed information about the drones and their origin fuels suspicion and speculation. The focus on minimizing public concern could be seen as an attempt to downplay the significance of the events.	The military may be withholding information to avoid compromising the investigation or to prevent public panic. Sharing sensitive details could also alert the perpetrators and hinder efforts to apprehend them.	<b>0.25</b>
<b>Lack of Transparency</b> (with Motivations 2 or 3)	<p>Maybe it is too late to admit it is a foreign state: being unable to stop “enemy” drones would demonstrate the flagrant inability of the US to stop a foreign power.</p> <p>Is such an admission of weakness possible? Clearly not, at least not publicly. Acknowledgment of an inability to defend airspace would be <b>politically disastrous</b>. In addition to domestic consequences, admitting this publicly could encourage <b>foreign adversaries</b> to exploit the weakness further or even provoke <b>allies</b> to question U.S. security commitments.</p> <p>The official strategy of minimizing the phenomenon aligns with how governments often respond to situations where there is an inconvenient truth, deflecting attention to avoid further embarrassment or panic.</p>	<p>This is a strong counterargument. The absence of concrete evidence, despite investigations, weakens the hypothesis significantly.</p> <p>If these drones were truly part of <b>foreign espionage</b>, there would likely be:</p> <p><b>Signals intelligence (SIGINT)</b> revealing their command sources.</p> <p><b>Physical evidence</b> recovered from intercepted drones.</p> <p>Without such evidence, the hypothesis remains speculative.</p> <p>The absence of geopolitical reactions - which would be probably very quick in the case of China or Russia - leaves us to think that there is no concrete evidence.</p>	<b>0.50</b>

The hypothesis that foreign powers are involved in drone overflights has **weak to moderate plausibility**.

Advanced capabilities and the strategic value of the targeted locations offer some support. However, the conspicuous nature of the drones and the lack of concrete evidence undermine the credibility of this explanation. Additionally, the disorganization observed in these events makes the possibility of joint military exercises less likely, though not impossible.

While joint military exercises can serve as a motivation for drone overflights, their use over highly sensitive U.S. sites remains improbable due to security concerns, public perception risks, and legal constraints. However, if such exercises did occur, they would likely be carefully planned and involve close allies like the Five Eyes nations, focusing on testing advanced



capabilities or responses to unconventional threats.

**Hypothesis value (from 0 to 1) :** **0.35** **Not credible.** (for a Joint Military Exercise)

Note: this hypothesis is built upon hypothesis (1), so it is also limited by it<sup>45</sup>

## Hyp. 4. Psychological Operations (PSY-OPS): Controlled Chaos and Manipulation

The persistent drone activity over New Jersey has sparked numerous theories, including the possibility of a psychological operation ([PSYOP](#)) orchestrated by the US military or other agencies. This report delves into this hypothesis, examining the potential motivations, historical precedents, and arguments for and against such an operation.

### Controlled Confusion

Full-scale “stress tests” involving crisis simulations or controlled events to observe the reactions of the population and institutions are not unprecedented:

- **Controlled confusion:** by deliberately leaving the origin and purpose of the drones ambiguous, authorities could observe the reactions of the population and institutions under conditions of uncertainty and potential threat. This could be seen as a "stress test" to assess public resilience and preparedness in the face of an unknown aerial phenomenon.
- **Intentional manipulation of perceptions:** the ambiguity surrounding the drones could be used to manipulate public perceptions and narratives. By blurring the lines between natural phenomena, advanced technology, and foreign intervention, authorities could gauge how different groups interpret and respond to the events . This could also involve amplifying the perceived inability of authorities to provide clear answers, potentially impacting the credibility of institutions and fostering a sense of dependence on government pronouncements<sup>46</sup>.
- **Exploiting existing paradigms:** the "military" yet "unidentified" nature of the drones could be a deliberate attempt to tap into existing paradigms surrounding UFOs and UAPs. This could serve to either divert attention from other activities or to shape public perception of future events involving advanced aerial technology.

### Historical Precedents:

- **Cold war secret operations:** governments, particularly the United States and the USSR, frequently conducted psychological experiments, including on threat perception. For instance, Project Blue Book and other UFO investigations were sometimes suspected of being used to divert or downplay public attention regarding unidentified events<sup>47</sup>.

---

<sup>45</sup> In this case,  $0.375 < 0.45$  so there is no reduction of the value

<sup>46</sup> [Mysterious drones reported flying over New Jersey? What we know | AP News](#)

<sup>47</sup> [United States aerial reconnaissance of the Soviet Union - Wikipedia](#)

- **Large-scale social experiments:** military exercises such as Operation Sea-Spray<sup>48</sup> (where bacteria were released into San Francisco Bay in 1950) or Project SHAD<sup>49</sup> (testing chemical agents on naval ships) demonstrate that governments have used civilian populations as study subjects without prior consent<sup>50</sup>.

### Possible Objectives:

If the New Jersey drone overflights were indeed a PSYOP, several potential objectives could be at play:

- **Testing defense infrastructures:** the drone activity could be designed to evaluate the ability of local and federal security forces to detect, track, and respond to unconventional aerial incursions. This could involve assessing the effectiveness of existing surveillance systems, communication protocols, and counter-drone measures<sup>51</sup>.
- **Studying social reactions:** the incidents could be used to analyze the reactions of media outlets, local authorities, and the general population to an ambiguous and potentially threatening situation<sup>52</sup>. This could involve monitoring how fear and misinformation spread through social media, how citizens organize themselves in response to perceived threats, and how public trust in institutions is affected.
- **Preparing public opinion for a narrative:** repeated occurrences of similar events, coupled with controlled information releases, could be used to shape public opinion and prepare the ground for the adoption of new laws, policies, or technologies. This could include justifying increased surveillance measures, stricter drone regulations, or the deployment of anti-drone defense systems in civilian areas.

### Command Chain and Decision-Making of PSYOP Program

While specific details about the command chain and decision-making process for a PSYOP program are likely classified, some general information can be gleaned from publicly available sources:

- **Initiation:** the decision would typically originate from the **Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD)** or an intelligence agency like the CIA, NSA, or DIA. The **National Security Council (NSC)** might also weigh in if the program has broader implications for national security or foreign policy.
- **Execution, military oversight:** PSYOPs within the US military fall under the purview of the United States Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) (USACAPOC(A)). As the USACAPOC(A) is foreign oriented it should require an extraordinary authorization to ensure compliance with U.S. laws, particularly those limiting propaganda directed at U.S. citizens.
- **Interagency coordination:** depending on the objectives and scope of the operation, other agencies, such as the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI, and the National Security Council, might be involved in planning and execution.
- **Authorization and approval:** a PSYOP program of this nature would likely require

---

<sup>48</sup> [Operation Sea-Spray | Wikipedia](#)

<sup>49</sup> [Project SHAD | Wikipedia](#)

<sup>50</sup> [Unmanned Aerial Systems: A Historical Perspective | army.mil](#)

<sup>51</sup> [DOD poised to respond if unidentified drones over New Jersey 'escalate to threaten' military assets | DefenseScoop](#)

<sup>52</sup> [Homeland Security shares new details of mysterious drone flights over New Jersey | NBC New-York](#)

high-level authorization and approval, potentially involving the Secretary of Defense, the President, or other senior officials.

It's important to note that this is a general overview, and the specific details of any potential PSYOP program related to the New Jersey drone overflights would be subject to strict secrecy and compartmentalization.

**Table of Arguments for Hypothesis 4**

Criteria or Element	Arguments For	Arguments Against	Score [-1, +1]
<p><b>Plausibility of emergence of PSYOP of this scale in the actual context</b></p>	<p>Historical precedent: Governments have conducted psychological experiments on populations to study responses to perceived threats, such as Cold War-era tests (e.g., <b>Operation Sea-Spray</b>, the <b>MKUltra program</b><sup>53</sup>).</p> <p>Aligns with potential PSY-OPS objectives like shaping public perception or gauging responses to ambiguous threats like UAPs maybe.</p> <p>Proponents might argue that a PSYOP is necessary to protect national security by controlling the narrative surrounding UAPs, preventing panic, and deterring potential future risks.</p>	<p>Approving a PSYOP focused on UAPs while simultaneously claiming to pursue transparency and truth in the same domain would be inherently contradictory.</p> <p>Such a program would contradict the stated goals of transparency and truth-seeking in the UAP domain, potentially leading to accusations of hypocrisy and a further erosion of public trust in government institutions.</p> <p>This could be perceived as disingenuous and manipulative, potentially causing significant damage to public trust and government credibility .</p> <p>The legislative focus on SAPs makes it less likely that a covert program involving public manipulation would be initiated now, as such actions could easily escalate into a <b>political scandal</b>.</p> <p>Moreover, the USACAPOC(A) is foreign oriented and it should require an extraordinary authorization to ensure compliance with US Law.</p> <p>Ultimately, the implementation of this program would necessitate extensive inter-agency collaboration, a complex undertaking given the required level of secrecy.</p>	<p><b>-0.5</b></p>
<p><b>Motivations (1)</b><sup>54</sup> Testing Defense</p>	<p>The drone overflights align with potential PSYOP objectives, such as testing</p>	<p><i>These arguments apply for all Motivations (1), (2) and (3):</i></p>	<p><b>0.00</b></p>

<sup>53</sup> [Project MKUltra | Wikipedia](#)

<sup>54</sup> The score selected for the **Motivations** criteria is:  $\max(0.0, 0.2, 0.3, -0.5) = 0.3$

Criteria or Element	Arguments For	Arguments Against	Score [-1, +1]
Infrastructures	defense infrastructure, studying social reactions, and shaping public opinion.		
<b>Motivations(2)</b> Studying Social Reactions	<p><b>Understanding public behavior:</b> observing how the public reacts to ambiguous threats can provide valuable insights into behavior patterns, information dissemination, and the formation of public opinion. This knowledge can be used to improve communication strategies, crisis management protocols, and public safety measures in future events<sup>56</sup></p> <p><b>Assessing media influence:</b> analyzing media coverage and social media discussions can reveal how information spreads, how narratives are shaped, and how public perception is influenced by different sources. This can help authorities understand the role of media in shaping public opinion and develop strategies to counter misinformation or manage public perception during crises<sup>57</sup></p> <p><b>Identifying vulnerabilities:</b> observing how individuals and communities respond to drone overflights can expose vulnerabilities in social structures, communication networks, and emergency preparedness. This information can be used to strengthen community resilience and improve responses to future threats</p>	<p><b>Ethical concerns and potential backlash</b></p> <p>Conducting psychological operations (PSYOPs) that manipulate public fear to study social responses raises ethical concerns about potential psychological harm and the violation of public trust. Such actions could be perceived as exploiting public vulnerability for research purposes, potentially eroding democratic values and leading to government overreach.</p> <p><b>Challenges in drawing conclusions</b></p> <p>The uncontrolled nature of real-world events like the drone overflights limits the ability to draw definitive conclusions about social reactions. The complexity of human behavior and the influence of various external factors make it difficult to isolate the specific effects of the PSYOP<sup>55</sup>.</p>	<p><b>+0.2</b></p>
<b>Motivations (3)</b> Preparing Public Opinion for a Narrative	<p><b>Shaping public discourse:</b> by controlling the information flow and manipulating perceptions, authorities could steer public discourse towards a desired narrative. This could involve creating a sense of urgency or fear to justify increased security measures, stricter regulations, or the acceptance of new technologies<sup>58</sup></p> <p><b>Manufacturing consent:</b> the drone overflights could be used to gradually acclimate the public to the presence of drones in civilian airspace, paving the way for the normalization of drone surveillance or other applications that might otherwise face public resistance. More speculatively, it could also pave the way for the existence of NHI (Non Human</p>	<p><b>Risk of exposure and damage to credibility</b></p> <p>If the operation were exposed, it could severely damage the credibility of the Department of Defense and other involved agencies, particularly at a time when public trust in government institutions is already under scrutiny.</p> <p><b>Potential for increased oversight and transparency</b></p> <p>A potential consequence of exposure <b>could be tighter control of the Department of Defense</b> and increased transparency regarding</p>	<p><b>+0.3</b></p>

<sup>55</sup> [Do People Use Stories or Reasons to Support their Views? | Policy and Politics Blog](#)

<sup>56</sup> [Drones over Yemen: Weighing Military Benefits and Political Costs | Army War College](#)

<sup>57</sup> [Constructing Public Opinion: How Politicians and the Media Misrepresent the Public | California State University](#)

<sup>58</sup> <https://fiveable.me/key-terms/narrative-documentary-production/shaping-public-opinion>

Criteria or Element	Arguments For	Arguments Against	Score [-1, +1]
	Intelligence). By <b>shaping public opinion</b> , authorities could create a favorable environment for the adoption of specific policies or legislation related to drone technology, national security, or public safety .	UAP activities.	
<b>Motivations (4)</b> Spy & Commercial War	U.S. government is using this event to stoke <b>fear of drones</b> to push a <b>Chinese drone ban</b> (e.g., targeting DJI and Autel) and push <b>fear as a political tool</b> to create a new legislation	It is speculative. While governments have historically used fear for political gain, this claim lacks supporting evidence. It leans toward conjecture and requires more context or corroboration.  Why use large drones in this case? It is complicated for nothing. In this case, you will use commercial drones to create an event.  Moreover, it does not explain why the same pattern of events occurred in other countries?	<b>-0.5</b>

While the PSYOP hypothesis cannot be definitively proven or disproven without concrete evidence, it presents a plausible explanation for the New Jersey drone overflights. The potential motivations, historical precedents, and observed behaviors of authorities all contribute to the plausibility of this theory. However, the potential risks and ethical concerns associated with such an operation should not be overlooked.

**In this case, it could align with the objective to gauge responses to ambiguous threats like UAPs maybe.**

Further investigation and information are needed to determine the true nature of these events and the intentions of those involved.

**Hypothesis value (from 0 to 1) :** **0.25**                      **Not Credible.** (for any kind of motivations)

Note: this hypothesis is built upon hypothesis (1), so it is also limited by it<sup>59</sup>

---

<sup>59</sup> In this case, 0.25 < 0.45 so there is no reduction of the value

## Summary of the previous hypothesis evaluated

We are now going to merge the previous results obtained from each table of arguments into a table with all the hypothesis:

Hypothesis	Description	Score [0, 1]
<b>Drones of U.S. Military Origin</b>	Advanced technology testing or operational exercises conducted by the U.S. military	<b>0.450</b>
<b>Attention-Seeking Individuals</b>	Coordinated efforts by private individuals or groups to generate media buzz, provoke institutions, or expose vulnerabilities	<b>0.375</b>
<b>Foreign Powers at Play</b>	Espionage, surveillance, or coordinated exercises with other nations	<b>0.350</b>
<b>Psychological Operations (PSYOPS)</b>	Deliberate manipulation to study societal reactions, test defenses, or prepare the public for strategic narratives	<b>0.250</b>
<b>Strangeness Value (provisional)</b>		<b>0.550</b>

We observe that none of our four hypotheses, based on the information currently available, exceeds a score of 0.50. **Therefore, no hypothesis is credible enough to be fully accepted at this stage.** This underscores the need for further investigation.

The **provisional Strangeness value of 0.550**—complement to 1 of the best hypothesis—suggests that the phenomena fall into a moderately high level of ambiguity—neither entirely unknown nor easily explainable with current hypotheses.

**This initial assessment, based on preliminary analysis rather than a conclusive determination, likely stems from insufficient information:**

- 1. First, it necessitates further substantiation through concrete evidence and on-site investigation of specific instances**
- 2. Then, if no single, clear hypothesis still emerges, the results and analyses should undergo review by a panel of transdisciplinary experts.** Ideally, this would involve a blind evaluation process to minimize bias, with the panel critically evaluating each argument to further refine the findings.

## The Strangeness Concept

The **Strangeness value** ( $S = 0.550$ ) measures the distance of the observed phenomena from what is currently known or understood. It is calculated as the complement to 1 of the best-scoring hypothesis (in this case, 0.450).

- $S = 0$  indicates something perfectly explainable and well-documented, with all necessary information and knowledge available to classify it conclusively.
- $S = 1$  represents something entirely indescribable, so far removed from existing knowledge and understanding that it defies any categorization.

Importantly, the **strangeness evaluation** does not follow a linear progression. Small increases in the strangeness value may represent disproportionately larger gaps in understanding, particularly as the value approaches 1. This non-linear behavior reflects the increasing difficulty of explaining phenomena as they deviate further from known frameworks.

The GEIPAN's methodology incorporates this concept for several reasons<sup>60</sup>:

### It bridges known and unknown realms

By defining **strangeness** as the complement to the best available hypothesis, we provide a quantitative framework to measure how far a phenomenon deviates from established knowledge.

This helps frame the unknown in a systematic way, offering a starting point for further investigation while avoiding premature conclusions.

### It scales the uncertainty

The use of a **non-linear progression** in the strangeness metric is particularly important, as it captures the exponential challenges of explaining phenomena as they move farther from known parameters.

This approach aligns well with how human understanding tends to work—where small gaps in knowledge are easier to close, but larger gaps require exponentially more effort, resources, and breakthroughs.

### It is objective but flexible

Tying the strangeness value to the complement of the **best hypothesis score** creates an **objective baseline** for evaluating phenomena.

At the same time, the methodology remains **adaptive**, allowing for refinement as new hypotheses or data become available.

### It supports multidisciplinary analysis

---

<sup>60</sup> [Evaluation methodology for UAP cases at GEIPAN - M. Vaillant](#)



This approach can facilitate discussions across disciplines, providing a common language for scientists, sociologists, engineers, and policymakers to evaluate the "distance" of phenomena from what is known in their respective domains.

### **It encourages humility and open-mindedness**

Acknowledging a high strangeness value reflects intellectual humility—it recognizes the limits of current knowledge while maintaining an openness to explore new possibilities. This is particularly important in UAP research, where preconceived notions can often skew analyses.

## **The Robustness Concept: The Need for Reliable Evidence**

While Strangeness is an essential dimension for evaluating a case, it is not sufficient on its own to draw conclusions. Strangeness measures how far a phenomenon deviates from known frameworks, but without corroborating evidence, it remains speculative. Equally important is the dimension of **Robustness**, which quantifies the **Quantity of Reliable information** available. Robustness can be expressed as:

$$R = \lambda \times \rho$$

where  $R$  represents **Robustness**,  $\lambda$  is the **Quantity of useful Information collected**, and  $\rho$  is the **Reliability of that information**, both ranging from 0 to 1. The product illustrates a key principle:

- Collecting **large amounts of data** is meaningless if it is unreliable ( $\rho = 0$ , so  $R = 0$ ).
- Conversely, even the most reliable source ( $\rho = 1$ ) is useless if it provides no meaningful or verifiable data ( $\lambda = 0$ , so  $R = 0$ ).

Like Strangeness, **Robustness** is also ranging from 0 to 1, with a non-linear progression. This balance ensures that robustness reflects both the extent and the reliability of the available evidence.

Unlike a mathematical proof, where conclusions are absolute, evaluating unexplained phenomena resembles a **judicial process**: a convergence of facts must collectively align to form the most plausible explanation, while uncertainties inevitably remain due to the complexity of the real world.

As Carl Sagan famously stated, *"Extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence"*, and so to close a case we need to ensure that  $R > S$

In this sense, as **Strangeness increases**, so too must **Robustness** be reinforced proportionally to maintain a grounded and rigorous analysis.

Thus, while plausible explanations are explored, the unresolved aspect of robustness—due to incomplete or unsourced testimonies—should remain a key focus to complete this work. Evaluating robustness demands access to sourced evidence, such as direct testimonies, imagery, or physical data. Without it, even the most striking phenomena risk falling into conjecture.

## IV. The “Impossible” Hypothesis: What About “Non-Human Intelligences”?

### A Theatrical Display for a Greater Purpose?

When conventional explanations fall short, it can be interesting to explore the possibility of the so-called “Non-Human Intelligences” (NHI). Its inclusion in recent U.S. legislative efforts and through the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2024<sup>61</sup>, highlights the need to approach this hypothesis with scientific rigor and institutional accountability.

Although speculative, this idea has been voiced by residents of New-Jersey and officials alike, reflecting the mystery surrounding the observed drone activity. The central premise suggests that these drones—highly visible yet non-aggressive—are deliberate manifestations orchestrated.

This idea aligns with my previous **spatial and temporal analysis of UAP data**<sup>62 63</sup>, which reveal consistent patterns across generations of witness reports. These patterns suggest a calculated effort to conduct what can be described as a **theatrical display**, gradually accustoming humanity to the presence of something beyond our current understanding and potentially culminating around **2035**<sup>64</sup>. The **multi-level communication approach** embedded in these phenomena combines **ecological, observable, and psychological** dimensions.

### Symptomatology

These manifestations appear to operate as well in the case of the New Jersey drones, on two distinct yet interrelated levels of communication:

1. **One at the military level, to pressure sensitive levels in the chain of command:** UAPs have historically been observed near **nuclear and military forces**. These sites may serve as symbolic or practical focal points for these manifestations, drawing the attention of human authorities. Notably, this pattern has been documented in numerous reports, where Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena were reported in close proximity to nuclear and military installations<sup>65</sup>, including the famous Minuteman missile base incidents of the 1970s<sup>66</sup>.

And here, the message behind these manifestations may extend beyond nuclear risk, potentially serving as a warning about **Environmental Systemic Risks** (“Eco-Systemology”), including overwatch of long-term environmental degradation and pollution.

---

<sup>61</sup> [Implications of the UAP Amendment in the 2024 National Defense Authorization Act \(NDAA\) | Inside Government Contracts](#)

<sup>62</sup> [Spatial Point Pattern Analysis of the Unidentified Aerial Phenomena in France | T. Laurent, C.Thomas-Agnan, M. Vaillant](#)

<sup>63</sup> For spatial patterns: GEIPAN Database; For Temporal patterns: L. Hatch U\*Database

<sup>64</sup> [Can we Get Insight into the Nature and Origin of UAPs? | U-Sphere](#)

<sup>65</sup> [UAP Activity Pattern Study 1945-1975 Military and Public Activities | I. M. Porrit, L.J. Hancock, S. Grosvenor, L. Cattes](#)

<sup>66</sup> [Background | The Minot AFB UFO case | 24 OCTOBER 1968](#)

- 2. One at the public level :** the concept of an "aerial theater" posits that these phenomena aim to attract attention while subtly acclimating humanity to the idea of Exogenous Phenomena.

In this view, the phenomenon acts as the **marionettist**, orchestrating the timing and targeting of its appearances. By appearing in **visible yet ambiguous forms**—such as navigation lights or non-aggressive maneuvers—these manifestations might prepare the groundwork for **more direct contact** while simultaneously testing human reactions.

A prominent hypothesis suggests that this process could mitigate the **shock of future global contact**, reducing the risk of **cultural ethnocide like stated by Robert Jaulin**<sup>67</sup>—the loss of cultural identity resulting from overwhelming external influence.

## Strategic Timing and Legislative Context

The hypothesis of an "aerial theater" posits that these phenomena are not merely coincidental but part of a larger, long-term strategy. By targeting both the **military chain of command** and **public awareness**, these manifestations could simultaneously probe human institutions' readiness and shape societal perceptions.

While speculative, this idea gains traction from the timing of these events, which coincides with intense legislative debates on UAP transparency. The visibility and ambiguity of these drones compel governments to confront the issue, fueling public and institutional discussions.

However, and again, I must insist that **the absence of direct evidence and the plausibility of human-made explanations call for caution in drawing conclusions**. While the observed technical characteristics appear advanced, they remain consistent with existing human technologies and closely resemble military drones.

**For now, these phenomena remain enigmatic, requiring thorough investigation and an open-minded yet critical approach to all possible explanations.**

---

<sup>67</sup> [Ethnocide - Mass Violence and Resistance | Sciences Po](#)

## V. A Global Pattern: Drone Sightings Beyond New Jersey

The drone sightings in New Jersey are not isolated incidents. Similar drone activity has been reported near US airbases in the UK and military facilities in Virginia around the same period. This raises the possibility of a broader pattern of drone activity with potentially wider implications.

### An international Context: Nuclear Sites Under Scrutiny

It is worth noting that similar incidents of unidentified drones overflying nuclear sites have been reported in several countries, highlighting the persistent vulnerability of these sensitive installations:

- **USA:** in December 2023, U.S. military personnel observed drones in restricted airspace above Langley Air Force Base in Virginia for over two weeks<sup>68</sup>. This activity triggered investigations and heightened concerns about potential security breaches. Similar incidents have been reported at other military bases, including RAF Mildenhall in England, where British troops were deployed amid concerns of potential deception or sabotage<sup>69</sup>, and Ramstein Air Base in Germany<sup>70</sup>. The U.S. military has reported hundreds of drone flights over its installations in recent years, raising significant alarm<sup>71</sup>.
- **UK:** between November 20 and 26, 2024<sup>72</sup> a series of unauthorized drone activities was detected over and near four US Air Force bases in the United Kingdom: RAF Lakenheath, RAF Mildenhall, RAF Feltwell, and RAF Fairford<sup>73 74</sup>. These installations, located in Suffolk, Norfolk, and Gloucestershire, are critical to US military operations in Europe<sup>75</sup>. The drone activity persisted for several days, raising concerns about the coordination and intent behind the incursions<sup>76</sup>.
- **France:** between October 2014 and January 2015, more than 50 drone overflights<sup>77</sup> were recorded over 19 French nuclear sites, including 14 power plants operated by EDF. These overflights exposed flaws in the aerial security of nuclear facilities<sup>78</sup>, raising concerns about their protection against malicious acts.
  - A public hearing was held on November 24, 2014: The Parliamentary Office for Scientific and Technological Assessment (OPECST)<sup>79</sup> to examine the security issues posed by drone overflights of nuclear power plants. The session brought together public authorities, industry representatives, and laboratories to discuss potential threats and countermeasures.

---

<sup>68</sup> [Unidentified Drone Swarm over US Military Base Sparks Alarm - Newsweek](#)

<sup>69</sup> [Drone sightings over US bases prompt British troop deployments | VOA News](#)

<sup>70</sup> [Unidentified Drones Spotted Over German Military, Industrial Sites | The Defense Post](#)

<sup>71</sup> [Hundreds of drone incursions reported at military installations over past few years: NORTHCOM | Breaking Defense](#)

<sup>72</sup> [Security at US bases in England tightened after unidentified drone sightings | Aero Time](#)

<sup>73</sup> [Unidentified drones spotted over three UK airbases, US air force confirms | The Guardian](#)

<sup>74</sup> [US airbase drone fliers will face 'force of law' | BBC](#)

<sup>75</sup> ['Unidentified drones' caught flying over £40m RAF base where US wants to keep nukes | Mirror Online](#)

<sup>76</sup> [Drone Incursions Over USAF Bases In UK Enter Second Week | Yahoo](#)

<sup>77</sup> [Drones over Nuclear Facilities in France, 2014 | Vinz Moreau](#)

<sup>78</sup> <https://www.greenpeace.fr/drones-et-securite-des-installations-nucleaires-francaises/>

<sup>79</sup> [Drones and the security of nuclear facilities \(French\) - Senate Audition](#)

- **Belgium:** in December 2014<sup>80</sup>, the Doel nuclear power plant in the north of the country was overflowed by a drone. This incident raised questions about the security of Belgian nuclear facilities against unauthorized aerial intrusions.
- **Germany:** beyond military installations, drones have been sighted over sensitive industrial sites like the BASF chemical plant in Ludwigshafen, Germany<sup>81</sup>, underscoring the vulnerability of critical infrastructure to drone surveillance and potential attacks.
- **Sweden:** in January 2022, unidentified drones simultaneously overflew at least two Swedish nuclear sites<sup>82</sup>. These events led to investigations to determine the origin and intentions behind the overflights, reflecting growing concerns about the security of nuclear facilities in Sweden.

A list of UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) related incidents is updated on Wikipedia<sup>83</sup>.

On the security level, these incidents demonstrate a worrying trend of unauthorized overflights of nuclear sites by drones, underscoring the need to strengthen security measures to protect these critical installations from potential threats.

At the investigatory level, it was observed in the past that “UAPs” have regularly followed “archetypal trends”: from airships, to flying saucers, robotic humanoids, black triangles, and now, for at least the past decade, we are in a rather specific trend involving the overflight of sensitive sites by what appear to be high-tech drones.

## VI. A Troubling Trail of Clues

The mystery of the New Jersey drones remains unsolved. To date, none of the proposed hypotheses have been confirmed, and investigations by the FBI and other federal agencies are ongoing to determine the origin and intent of these drones.

While military authorities and the Department of Defense (DoD) continue to deny their involvement, this stance raises important questions about the complexities of monitoring airspace and the potential need for enhanced collaboration and/or resources. The proposed hypotheses—military, foreign, psychological, or non-human—highlight inconsistencies and paradoxes that only fuel further speculation.

If these drones are designed to be seen, with their navigation lights and prolonged presence, it resembles more of a staged display than a genuine stealth threat.

Yet, this very visibility invites questions—and possibly challenges—institutions. Whether the intent is to test defenses, highlight vulnerabilities, or simply spark broader public and political discourse, these events mark a turning point in how we perceive Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena.

---

<sup>80</sup> [Nuclear power plant overflights: the saga continues \(French\) | Greenpeace](#)

<sup>81</sup> [Unidentified Drones Spotted Over German Military, Industrial Sites | The Defense Spot](#)

<sup>82</sup> [Des drones non-identifiés ont simultanément survolé au moins deux sites nucléaires suédois | Zone Militaire](#)

<sup>83</sup> [List of unmanned aerial vehicle-related incidents | Wikipedia](#)

## The Difficulty of the Military's Role: Transparency vs. Security

The role of the military in addressing the New Jersey drone mystery is inherently complex, as it must navigate the fine line between ensuring national security and maintaining public trust. On one hand, the military is tasked with protecting sensitive airspace, anticipating risks, and preparing for potential threats. This requires a certain level of discretion to avoid revealing vulnerabilities or operational capabilities that could be exploited by adversaries.

On the other hand, the public and legislative scrutiny surrounding Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena places increasing pressure on the military to demonstrate transparency. Balancing the need for discretion in classified operations with public expectations for transparency is a challenge that risks fueling speculation and public concern about airspace security.

This tension creates a paradox: too much transparency could compromise security by revealing detection capabilities, response protocols, or other strategic assets. At the same time, excessive secrecy could undermine trust and lead to heightened public anxiety, particularly when visible phenomena like the New Jersey drones challenge institutional credibility.

Striking this balance is no easy task. The military must manage public and political expectations while safeguarding its ability to operate effectively in an increasingly complex and contested airspace. This balancing act underscores the difficulty of its role and highlights why the military's response to incidents like these often appears cautious or ambiguous.

## The Future of the Mystery: What Lies Ahead?

The wave of drone sightings in New Jersey has brought to light the growing challenges associated with unmanned aircraft systems.

The need for clear regulations and robust enforcement regarding drone usage is a world-scale problem, concerning all the countries. In New Jersey, both recreational and commercial drone operations are permitted, but operators must be FAA-certified and adhere to federal and local regulations. These regulations include restrictions on flying near airports, over populated areas, and above certain altitudes<sup>84</sup>. However, the recent incidents have exposed potential gaps in these regulations and the need for enhanced monitoring and enforcement capabilities<sup>85</sup>.

While official investigations have not found evidence of malicious intent, the incidents have raised concerns about airspace safety, surveillance, and the need for greater transparency and public awareness. As drone technology continues to evolve and become more accessible, it is crucial for authorities to develop effective strategies for monitoring and regulating drone activity to ensure public safety and address potential security risks.

---

<sup>84</sup> [No fly zone – Where you can and cannot fly a drone in New Jersey](#)

<sup>85</sup> ['We Know Nothing': State, Local Officials Demand Answers About ... accessed December 14, 2024.](#)

Some key concerns include:

- **Airspace safety:** the possibility of drones sharing airspace with commercial airlines raises concerns about potential collisions and disruptions to air traffic.
- **Surveillance and data collection:** the drones' unknown origin and purpose raise questions about their potential for gathering sensitive information or conducting unauthorized surveillance.
- **Lack of transparency:** the perceived lack of clear and timely information from authorities is fueling public distrust and anxiety, with some believing the government may be withholding crucial details. This erosion of trust can hinder public cooperation and create further challenges in addressing the situation effectively.
- **Escalating drone activity:** the increasing frequency of drone sightings across multiple states raises concerns about the potential for similar incidents in the future and the need for effective countermeasures.

To move forward, potential solutions include investing in advanced drone detection technologies, implementing community awareness programs to educate the public about drone regulations and safety, and fostering international collaboration on aeronautical regulations to address the global nature of this challenge. Equally important is the need to leave doors open for scientific access to high-quality data, which could help decipher the unknown phenomena.

Progress in understanding such events requires rigorous, on-site investigations, prioritizing the collection of firsthand evidence. This involves interviewing direct witnesses, thoroughly documenting their observations, and, whenever possible, **obtaining original, uncompressed photos and videos**. Each piece of evidence should be accompanied by detailed information about the observer and the context of the sighting (through a questionnaire), ensuring a robust and verifiable foundation for analysis. Reliance on low-quality, highly compressed media, such as YouTube videos, should be avoided wherever possible, as such sources often lack the resolution and reliability necessary for credible evaluation.

By proactively addressing these issues and continuously refining drone regulations, authorities can mitigate risks and ensure the responsible use of drone technology for the benefit of society.

The events in New Jersey serve as a valuable reminder of the need for ongoing dialogue and collaboration between government agencies, law enforcement, the scientific community, and the public to navigate the complex landscape of drone technology and its implications.

For now, this mystery reflects the tensions between transparency and secrecy, security and control, and human curiosity versus institutional limitations. Whether it is a staged theater or a signal from elsewhere, the stage remains set, and the next acts may well redefine our understanding of what flies over our world.