



# SECURITY ASSESSMENT



**For North Korea Aviation Issues**

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## KEY JUDGMENTS – SECURITY

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The guidance published by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on 5 November 2014 is in reference to events that occurred between February and September 2014 and does not pertain to any critical development that has occurred in the last week or less. Instead, the guidance updates and expands upon information provided by the FAA earlier in 2014 regarding the activities of the North Korean military -- namely missile tests -- and how they might impact U.S. civilian aircraft lawfully operating within the Pyongyang (ZKPP) Flight Information Region (FIR).

The missile tests referenced in the notice from the FAA have trailed off in the last two months; however, tests in the future are likely to occur. The incidents often coincide with a triggering event that the North chooses to lash out against. For example, short-range rockets were fired into the Sea of Japan during joint U.S. - South Korea military exercises and during a visit to South Korea by Chinese President Xi Jinping. Missiles were also fired to coincide with a visit to South Korea by Pope Francis. Because the North reacts militarily to such a wide range of issues and perceived provocations, it is difficult to predict when exactly the country will choose to test fire missiles. In the most recent incidents, missiles were typically launched from Wonsan. Missiles and artillery shells have also landed near the maritime border between North and South Korea, and have at times compelled the South to respond.

In its document, the FAA references two classes of missiles that North Korea currently operates. The document refers to SCUD missiles, which are short-range tactical missiles. Open source information shows that the North employs two types of SCUD missile, called the Hwasong-5 and the Hwasong-6. The reported maximum range of the Hwasong-5 is 300 km, while the Hwasong-6 has a range of approximately 500 km. The number of Hwasong-5 in operation is not known, but the reports indicate that North Korea has deployed approximately 400 Hwasong-6 missiles.

The second class of missile mentioned in the FAA piece is the No Dong-1 (also referred to as the Rodong). The No Dong is a medium-range ballistic missile with a reported range of approximately 1,000-1,500 km. According to reports, approximately 150 No Dongs are deployed in North Korea.

While both of these missiles technically have sufficient range to exceed the boundary set by the Special Federal Aviation Regulation (SFAR), the North has typically fired shorter range missiles that fell west of the 132 east longitude. A relatively small number of the missiles test-fired landed beyond that boundary, but the fact that this has occurred is alarming.

It is worth noting that North Korea's air defense system is not well-equipped to distinguish between military and civilian aircraft. This fact, combined with its recent history of repeatedly testing short and medium range missiles for varying and unpredictable reasons, makes using airspace within the Pyongyang FIR, but east of the 132 east longitude, particularly hazardous.

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