

aeronautical phenomenon which numerous civilian and military pilots have come face to face with. Of the several hundred confirmed aeronautical cases, there are primarily five types of implications:

- simple sighting of a phenomenon by the crew, passengers, or ground personnel,
- detection of a track on a radar screen, which occurs in one out of five aeronautical cases, sometimes culminating in the recording of a track, as was the case on January 28, 1994, at the Cinq-Mars-la-Pile Control and Detection Center (CDC) (cf. Chapter 1),
- interferences with ground (San Carlos de Bariloche) or onboard (Tehran) electrical or electronic equipment,
- shadowing of aircraft (San Carlos de Bariloche, RB-47, etc.),
- apparently aggressive conduct (Colonel Giraud in his Mirage IV, student pilot at Tours, the Tehran incident, etc.).

The number of testimonies and the quality of the witnesses are such that one cannot dodge the phenomenon and aeronautic personnel, and more especially defense personnel, must be sensitized and prepared to deal with the situation. In fact, how can one try to ignore a phenomenon that is manifested by the regular crossing of our air space by moving objects the behavior of which suggests that they are piloted by an intelligent [being]? Can one claim, because this appears to exceed our technical knowledge, that it does not fall within our purview? If we do nothing, the very principle of defense and air intelligence would be called into question.

The first sightings made by aviators date back to the beginning of the 40s. Since then, the number of unexplained sightings (after an expert's appraisal: UAP Ds) reported by pilots or [air traffic] controllers has risen to over 500. As a reminder, in France, this figure is three or four since 1951. It is the responsibility of the Air Force to take into account these phenomena, which, until proven otherwise, occur primarily in air space.

11.2 Who is Involved?

11.2.1 Flight Crew

The flight crew is naturally involved, particularly the pilots, because whether they are civilian or military, they are in a more advantageous position for making sightings and would be the first affected in the event of an incident (risk of collision, in particular). This is especially true for a combat pilot, because he is trained to constantly monitor the sky and he now has more and more advanced weapons systems capable of detecting faster and faster and smaller and smaller targets at greater and greater distances. The pilot/weapons system pair is now more than ever an excellent sighting instrument and would be our first means of intervention if, by chance, this were to prove necessary. The concerns of a commercial airline pilot are different because, in addition to the fact that he does not have the same equipment, his priority is obviously the safety of his passengers. Although he remains a primary partner in the quest for information, he would be totally powerless in the face of an aggressive stance by a UFO.

11.2.2 [Air Traffic] Controllers

The radar [air traffic] controller is, of course, involved, but depending on whether he is civilian or military, the control equipment at his disposal offer him different options. In both cases, since he is in radio contact with the pilot, it is he who is the first to receive the sighting report from the crew.