

Military maneuvers force LA Airport to reroute flights

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Ongoing secret military activity west of Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) has forced the airport, one of the nation's busiest, to temporarily divert the routes for overnight landings and departures.

These secret military operations, which began on Friday November 6 and are expected to continue for about one week, are being conducted over the Pacific Ocean in an area just west of Los Angeles.

The airport began diverting flight paths Friday after being told by the Federal Aviation Administration that military airspace west of the airport would be active for a week.

Normally, LAX, which is situated on the coast, routes flights from midnight to 6:30 a.m. over the Pacific to reduce noise levels for nearby residents who live just east of the airport in areas such as Inglewood and Westchester.

"We clearly understand that neighbors and communities east of the airport will experience noise and we apologize for that," said Nancy Castles, LAX public relations director.

The military is not saying what exactly is causing the change, and LAX claims it's also in the dark. Castles said all they know is planes cannot be flying at low altitudes to the west of the airport.

On Saturday night, many residents in the Los Angeles area made panicked calls to the police when they observed a bright white light shooting through the sky over Southern California.

Shortly afterward, U.S. military officials issued a statement that the Navy Strategic Systems Programs had conducted a scheduled test of a Trident II D5 missile, which was fired at sea from the USS Kentucky, a ballistic missile submarine.

The Trident II D5 is a 130,000-pound missile capable of carrying up to 14 thermonuclear warheads. The

military has provided no explanation as to why this sea-launched test was directed over one of the most densely populated areas of the country.

Military exercises such as the one now taking place in Southern California have become an increasingly common feature in Los Angeles, as well as in major urban areas throughout the country.

In 2009, military Blackhawk helicopters were observed in downtown Los Angeles swooping between high-rises, close enough that residents were able to see armed soldiers in camouflage outside their windows.

Authorities claimed it was part of a training exercise designed to ensure the military's ability to operate in urban environments and to prepare forces for upcoming overseas deployment.

In December 2014, thousands of US Marines deployed throughout Los Angeles County as part of urban-combat training drills that saw teams of heavily armed combat troops inserted from helicopters into the middle of the downtown area.

In June of this year, US Army personnel simulated urban warfare in Flint, Michigan, staging mock gun battles and setting off explosions at several locations around the city.

Similar drills have been conducted in many other US cities, including Chicago, Miami, and Houston, often with little or no advance warning to local residents.

This summer, the US Defense Department conducted the largest of such military operations during a two-month-long "super drill" code-named Jade Helm 15 that encompassed a broad swath of the southern and western part of the United States and involved all four branches of the military.

Right before the operation began, the Pentagon declared that media would be completely banned from observing these drills.

Moreover, during the past two years alone, multiple US cities have been placed under police-military lockdown. This includes Boston, following the 2013 Marathon bombing; Ferguson, Missouri, in 2014; and Baltimore earlier this year to quell protests against police violence.

Invariably, a number of questions arise from these events and the recent domestic military exercises: What is the objective that these drills are preparing the military to accomplish, and which urban centers, internationally and domestically, is the US military planning to invade and occupy next?



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