

PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE  
**HEADQUARTERS AIR DEFENSE COMMAND**  
Clark Air Base, Mabalacat City, Pampanga

OACCS-3/CAAdj

25 August 2023

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE  
NUMBER 2023-16**

**THREAT ASSESSMENT OF UNKNOWN TRACKS**

**I. GENERAL:**

References:

- A. Executive Order 292: Administrative Code of 1987
- B. Republic Act 9522 defining the Archipelagic baselines of the Philippines;
- C. Presidential Decree 1599 series of 1978: Establishing the Philippine Exclusive Economic Zone;
- D. Administrative Order no. 222 s. 1953 Establishing the Philippine Air Defense Identification Zone (PADIZ)
- E. National Military Strategy;
- F. AFP Standing Rules of Engagement (SROE) 2005;
- G. Rules of Engagement (ROE) for Air Defense Operations 2020;
- H. PAFM 3-03 Air Defense Manual 2016;
- I. PAFM 3-05.04 Fighter Intercept and Escort Manual; and
- J. 1944 Chicago Convention/Convention on International Civil Aviation

**II. PURPOSE:**

This Standing Operating Procedure (SOP) prescribes the policies and procedures on the assessment of Track of Interest (TOI) or Unknown Track(s), as directed by Philippine Air Defense Control Center (PADCC), within the Philippine airspace and PADIZ.

**III. SCOPE:**

This SOP applies to Commanders, Staff, and Operators of the Integrated Air Defense System (IADS).

**IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS:**

- A. **Air Defense** – The protection of territorial airspace in order to secure the sovereignty of the state and territorial integrity of the national territory from air threat.

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B. **Engagement** - Maneuvers opposing aircraft attempting to achieve  
/prevent weapons firing position.

C. **Hostile Aircraft** – track declared as hostile by the Commander-in-Chief, it may be based on the recommendation by the Chief of Staff or the Air Component Commander (Commanding General, Philippine Air Force) or the Air Defense Commander.

D. **Hostile Act** – an attack or other use of force against the Republic of the Philippines, the PAF, and other AFP units, and its personnel or properties.

E. **Hostile Track** – During peacetime operations, track is declared hostile by the Commander-in-Chief, based on the recommendation by the Chief of Staff; or the Air Component Commander (Commanding General, Philippine Air Force); or the Air Defense Commander; or by the Interceptor invoking self-defense.

During wartime operations, all enemy fighter/ attack aircraft are declared  
hostile track.

F. **Lethal Tactical Action** - Use of deadly force to neutralize confirmed Hostile Tracks with due respect to the Rules of Engagement (ROE).

G. **Non-Lethal Tactical Action** - Use of other means to force, compel or drive suspected hostile track(s) away from Defended Assets (Critical Asset List) and/or Philippine Territorial Airspace.

H. **Suspected Hostile** - track suspected to be with hostile intent against the Philippines based on the current flight profile and initial assessment from Intelligence sources.

I. **Threat Assessment** – the Assessment given to TOI, Unknown Track or Tracks based on behavior or the logic of its maneuvers, intent, utilized squawk code, altitude, speed, heading, distance, and current Intelligence Summary (INTSUM) Report, Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) or Electronic Intelligence (ELINT) Report.

J. **Unknown Tracks** - Aircraft with no data from CAAP (Squawking or non- Squawking) nor from other relevant agencies. This includes aircraft that responded to radio challenges.

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**V. POLICIES:**

A. The Air Defense Command shall be responsible for the Air Defense of the Philippines.

B. The freedom of overflight in international airspace shall be guaranteed and maintained.

C. The procedures enumerated in this SOP are based on existing international and domestic laws, and shall be strictly followed by all Air Defense elements during the interception phase of the active Air Defense.

**VI. PROCEDURES:**

A. The TOI detection, identification, and Correlation provisions shall be performed in accordance with the provisions of the Air Defense Manual.

B. The Office of the Assistant Chief of Command Staff for Intelligence, C2, ADC shall provide air intelligence based on the current INTSUM, OSINT, and ELINT reports.

C. The PADCC shall coordinate the list of cleared diplomatic flights for foreign military aircraft.

D. The PADCC shall coordinate the scheduled flights of the Philippine Navy, Philippine Army, JUSMAG, Philippine Coast Guards, and Philippine National Police.

E. The PADCC shall coordinate with the Area Commands through the Tactical Operations Wing with regard to the monitored TOI/Unknown Track/s that is posing a possible threat within their respective AORs.

F. The PADCC shall coordinate with CAAP for the data, radio contact, and flight plans of the TOIs.

G. The PADCC shall coordinate with Air Force Command Center, Army Operations Center and the Navy Intelligence Fusion Center for the possible threat assessment based on electronic warfare capabilities or data gathered on different intelligence sources.

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H. All TOIs considered as Unknown Tracks shall be classified according to the following classifications:

1. **Routine** – TOIs/Unknown Tracks that are regularly monitored at a specific area on the PADIZ.

2. **Passersby** – TOIs/Unknown Tracks that are entering and exiting the PADIZ on a straight line or almost straight path without performing unusual or hostile maneuvers.

3. **Interloper** - TOIs/Unknown Tracks that are entering and exiting the PADIZ that doesn't follow a straight path and perform unusual or hostile maneuvers.

4. **Danger-Close** - TOIs/Unknown Tracks that are heading towards or traversing areas considered as COG and declared No-Fly Zones.

I. All TOIs/Unknown Tracks classified as "Routine" and "Passersby" shall be monitored by PADCC and Battle Control Center (BCC) in coordination with CAAP and other concerned Agencies that can provide information.

J. All TOIs/Unknown Tracks classified as "Interloper" shall be considered as Suspected Hostile and must be closely monitored by the PADCC and BCCs. If the Interloper TOI remains uncooperative and poses a threat or performs a hostile maneuver, a scramble procedure shall be immediately implemented to perform an intercept and visual identification (VID) mission and possibly neutralize the said TOI/s. Likewise, the Air and Missile Defense components shall also be alerted.

K. All TOIs/Unknown Tracks classified as "Danger-Close" shall be considered as "Suspected Hostile" unless otherwise positively identified as "Hostile" by the engaging interceptors.

L. Interceptors follow the provisions of the Rules of Engagement; Fighter ROE Card; or Air Defense Operation Annex "I" – Guidance on the Determination of Hostile Intent and Annex "H" – Guidance on the Determination of Hostile Act, shall be applied in the performing lethal and non-lethal actions.

## **VII. RESPONSIBILITY:**

A. Chief PADCC is responsible for the implementation of this SOP thru the supervision of Commander, ADC.

B. ACCS for Intelligence, C-2 shall monitor the implementation of this SOP and take appropriate actions to correct the deficiencies noted.

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**VIII. RESCISSION:**

All publications and instructions to this effect are hereby rescinded.


**IX. EFFECTIVITY:**

This SOP takes effect upon publication

**BY COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL MALINIT:**

OFFICIAL:

**AUGUSTO N PADUA**  
Colonel PAF (NSA)  
Chief of Command Staff

  
**REDEMER B PUTOL**  
1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant PAF  
Command Adjutant

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