

Denmark's airports hit by 'systematic' drone attacks

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Denmark suffered a "systematic" and "professional" hybrid attack when drones were spotted by police at four regional airports including two used by the military, according to ministers in the Scandinavian country.

Unauthorised drones closed Aalborg, Denmark's third-largest airport and used by both commercial and military aircraft, for more than three hours overnight on Wednesday.

Local police said they also saw drones at the smaller airports of Esbjerg, Sønderborg and Skrydstrup in western Denmark. The latter is home to some of Denmark's fleet of F-16 and F-35 fighter jets. "It looks systematic, and what I would define as a hybrid attack," said Troels Lund Poulsen, defence minister.

Peter Hummelgaard, justice minister, said: "The goal with this kind of hybrid attack is to create fear and divisions, and make us scared." On Monday, three large drones closed airspace over Copenhagen airport for four hours.

Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen refused to rule out the involvement of Russia, after its aircraft and drones recently violated the airspace of Poland, Romania and Estonia.

Denmark's defence forces also confirmed a drone sighting over the base of the Jutland Dragoon Regiment in Holstebro, in the west of the country. "The Danish Armed Forces may choose to take down drones over military installations, taking into account the specific threat and risk assessment," it added.

Russia's embassy in Denmark said it "firmly rejects the absurd speculations of involvement in the incidents", adding they were a "staged provocation" set to be used "as a pretext for further escalating tension".

Danish police said they had received scores of sightings, including one near Danish oilfields. They added that there were also unverified reports of drones at airports in Billund and on Bornholm, a strategic island in the Baltic Sea.

Nato has responded to violations of European airspace by launching Operation Eastern Sentry to boost air defence in frontline states. But experts have said most European countries do not have a reliable strategy against often cheap drones, and are either not able to shoot them down or have to depend on expensive weaponry such as fighter jets or surface-to-air missiles.

Frederiksen said on X she had spoken about the "serious situation related to drones over Danish airports" with Nato secretary-general Mark Rutte. "We agreed that Nato would work with Denmark on what we can do together to ensure safety and security," she added.

Defence ministers from eastern frontline states will meet today to discuss plans to construct a "drone wall", while EU leaders will hold an informal summit in Copenhagen next week on defence and support for Ukraine.

Several opposition parties criticised the government for not being prepared for the drone warfare in Ukraine. Poulsen conceded Denmark did not have the technology to take down some types of drones. Hummelgaard said the government would prepare a new law giving owners of critical infrastructure the authority to shoot down drones.

Additional reporting by Laura Dubois