

## **FAA Background Information Regarding U.S. Civil Aviation – SEA OF JAPAN AND FUKUOKA (RJJJ) FLIGHT INFORMATION REGION (FIR)**

North Korea continues to perform unannounced ballistic missile test launches as part of its strategic weapons development program. The missiles have been increasing in range and are increasingly traveling beyond the boundaries of Special Federal Aviation Regulation No. 79. Some of these missiles have impacted in the Sea of Japan, beyond the boundaries of the Pyongyang (ZKKP) FIR, or traveled over Japan, impacting in the ocean east of Japan within the Fukuoka (RJJJ) FIR. These unannounced missile launches pose a potential safety hazard to U.S. civil aviation operating over the Sea of Japan and in the Fukuoka (RJJJ) FIR.

On 28 August 2017, North Korea launched an intermediate range ballistic missile (IRBM) that overflowed portions of Hokkaido in the Japanese island chain, impacting in the Pacific Ocean east of Japan and nearly within the Oakland Oceanic (KZAK) FIR. The missile flew roughly 2,700 kilometers (1,458 nautical miles). In addition, during the month of July 2017, North Korea conducted two high-profile test launches of the Hwasong-14 (KN20), an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). On 28 July 2017, North Korea launched a Hwasong-14 which flew approximately 1,000 kilometers (540 nautical miles), and on 04 July 2017, North Korea conducted a ballistic missile test launch of an alleged Hwasong-14, with the missile flying in an easterly direction. The missile launched on 28 August impacted in the Sea of Japan within the Fukuoka (RJJJ) FIR and in close proximity to international air routes. North Korea also conducted an extensive number of ballistic missile launches during 2016. North Korea did not notify ICAO or publish a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) warning of any missile launches in 2016 or 2017.

During periods of heightened political tension, combined military exercises, and/or significant North Korean national anniversary dates, unannounced North Korean missile launches remain a possibility.

U.S. operators are advised to use caution when planning to operate over the Sea of Japan and in the Fukuoka (RJJJ) FIR.