

NORAD and USNORTHCOM Prepared to Engage Threats

Press Release

NORAD and USNORTHCOM Prepared to Engage Threats

Posted Jul 01, 2004 at 7:00:AM MDT

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. ? As Independence Day (July 4) approaches, the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) are taking appropriate measures to help ensure the safety of Americans throughout the holiday period.

?We adjust our alert levels and irregular air patrols as appropriate,? said Mike Perini, Director of Public Affairs for NORAD and USNORTHCOM. ?We remain at a high level of readiness, prepared to engage a variety of threats.?

NORAD and USNORTHCOM are two military commands that are a part of a multi-layered, local, state, federal and military effort to protect Americans where they live and work. In close coordination with the Department of Homeland Security and other federal agencies, the commands continually plan and stand ready to execute measures to deter, prevent or defeat those who may wish to do America harm. "We have options such as increasing our fighter presence, both alert and airborne around the nation; layering our air defenses with both ground and air assets; and deploying other people and assets as directed by the President or Secretary of Defense to support lead federal agencies,? said Perini. ?NORAD and USNORTHCOM maintain a flexible alert posture and a number of response options.?

Since 9/11, NORAD has scrambled fighters or diverted air patrols more than 1,500 times to respond to possible air threats, and have combined with Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWAC) and air-to-air refueling tankers to fly more than 35,000 sorties. NORAD is a bi-national Canadian and American command that is responsible for the air defense of North America. The command has jet fighters on alert throughout North America, supported by air-to-air refueling tankers, airborne and ground-based radar, surveillance systems and satellites.

USNORTHCOM, a combatant command, deters, prevents and defeats threats and aggression aimed at the United States and its interests within its assigned area of responsibility – generally the North American continent and maritime approaches out to approximately 500 nautical miles from the coastline. As the command in charge of providing military assistance to civil authorities in the United States, USNORTHCOM provides "one-stop shopping" for federal agencies when directed by the President or Secretary of Defense to lead efforts to mitigate disasters and their after-effects.