



News Release

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Civil Air Patrol Helping Ensure Super Bowl Airspace Safety

Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. (Feb. 6, 2024) – Civil Air Patrol is participating for the 23rd straight year in an exercise to help the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) ensure the safety and security of airspace around the Super Bowl, set for Feb. 11 at Allegiant Stadium in Las Vegas.

To help NORAD fighter aircrews maintain their proficiency, Civil Air Patrol, acting in its role as the Air Force auxiliary, provides single-engine aircraft that fly into simulated restricted airspace as a target of interest so military fighter crews can practice intercept techniques.

When NORAD jets intercept the CAP aircraft, the military pilot attempts to make radio contact and safely guide the CAP plane out of the restricted airspace.

In practice scenarios, the CAP pilot may not initially respond to radio calls and will ignore the instructions to change course. In that case, the fighter jet performs a “headbutt” maneuver, flying through the CAP plane’s flight path. This maneuver provides both an obvious visual cue of the intercept and creates turbulence to get the pilot’s attention as the jet passes in front of the CAP aircraft at a safe distance.

CAP is involved in similar exercises around the U.S. throughout the year to test airspace security. The exercises are carried out as part of Operation Noble Eagle, launched by the Continental U.S. NORAD Region (CONR) after the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks. Along with CONR’s Western Air Defense Sector and CAP, the exercises are conducted in coordination with the Federal Aviation Administration and may also involve Customs and Border Protection.

In typical training exercises, one or two Civil Air Patrol single-engine aircraft fly as intercept tracks of interest, or TOIs, for NORAD fighter jets. CAP’s “low and slow” aircraft are considered ideal TOIs for these exercises.

An additional CAP aircraft, known as a “high bird,” may fly as a communications hub coordinating radio traffic from participants on the ground and in the air.

“Civil Air Patrol is pivotal in NORAD’s air defense mission, training our Aerospace Control Alert-trained units nationwide,” said Air Force Lt. Gen. Steven Nordhaus, CONR commander. “Their dedication shines as they help CONR prepare to enforce the 30-nautical-mile-restricted airspace that will be in place over Allegiant Stadium for Super Bowl LVIII, epitomizing CAP’s indispensable role in

safeguarding our skies."

The Federal Aviation Administration routinely implements Temporary Flight Restrictions around major events like the Super Bowl, national special security events, VIP visits, and natural or manmade disasters. Airspace around these TFR areas is restricted from all general aviation traffic for a specific radius and time to ensure no aircraft enter. The TFR is enforced by NORAD, which has fighter aircraft patrolling the area during the restriction.

Acting as a Total Force partner and official civilian auxiliary of the Air Force, Civil Air Patrol helps First Air Force rapidly respond to nonmilitary threats domestically in a Defense Support of Civil Authorities capacity to save lives, relieve suffering, prevent property damage, and provide humanitarian assistance.

About Civil Air Patrol

Founded in 1941 and established as the official civilian auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force seven years later, Civil Air Patrol is chartered by Congress as a nonprofit organization for the purposes of youth development, aerospace education, and general aviation promotion. In an auxiliary role as a Total Force partner of the Air Force, CAP operates the world's largest fleet of single-engine aircraft for search and rescue, disaster relief, training, and education. Civil Air Patrol is dedicated to serving America's communities, saving lives, and shaping futures.

Visit CAP.news or GoCivilAirPatrol.com for more information. Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#).

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