

New Jersey 2024 and the European Wave of 2025 — A Focused Deep Dive

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The first reports of “drones” in New Jersey in November 2024 began as a nightly curiosity at the edges of New York’s controlled airspace and, within days, turned into a case of real operational complexity. What initially looked like irregular clusters of lights soon challenged the “recreational device” narrative and placed pressure on safety protocols. Public messaging alternated between prosaic explanations and the practical realization that part of the objects did not align with the habitual repertoire of aircraft and known UAS. This article sharpens those points while remaining consistent with the broader overview, and for the unresolved subset it adopts a functional classification of UAP with unknown/advanced technology.

In New Jersey, the axis of reports concentrated in Essex, Morris and Monmouth counties, repeating across multiple nights. One witness became particularly salient: Michael Melham, the mayor of Belleville. Far from a casual observer, he provided his own recordings—including an infrared capture—and described a visual sequence that became the case’s hallmark: luminous orbs that, within seconds, assumed the morphology of small aircraft. Television segments in December 2024 and subsequent interviews reinforced the consistency of his account and consolidated the “orb-to-aircraft” motif at the center of the discussion. The motif does not contradict the earlier overview; it adds qualitative depth to the previously noted reports.

Size added another layer of anomaly. Local officials described objects “the size of SUVs” in more than one setting—outside the spectrum of recreational drones and even beyond most commercial platforms that routinely operate over dense areas. The combination of out-of-band dimensions and persistent night activity along routes skirting critical infrastructure produces a mismatch with regulatory expectations for identification, coordination and electronic visibility. That mismatch surfaced during real-time ADS-B checks: during part of the night-time peaks there was no clear correlation between what was seen in the sky and what appeared on screens, even as temporary UAS flight restrictions were imposed across dozens of localities. This does not imply that every sighting evades conventional explanations; it indicates, rather, that a relevant subset failed to meet the expected thresholds of electronic visibility for the airspace in question.

Lighting signatures also pointed to non-conformity. Numerous recordings show steady white configurations without the classic navigation triad—red/green position lights, beacon and strobes—used to support situational awareness in flight. The technical reading is straightforward and consistent with the previous article: the existence of lawful flights in the region is not in dispute; the point is that some reported objects displayed lighting consistent neither with normal use of landing or wing-inspection lights nor with anti-collision patterns when cruising. That detail, set alongside the recurring “orb → aircraft” narrative, supports the analytical UAP classification for unresolved cases.

Between 12 and 16 December 2024, official statements emphasized that many reports corresponded to lawful manned aircraft and authorized drones and that there was no evidence of an immediate threat to national security. This is compatible with the overview and need not be disputed to recognize the core problem: even with multiple detection resources and inter-agency

coordination, no object-by-object public map was provided to exhaust those episodes with the strongest technical oddities. In this middle ground—between what was explained and what lacked satisfactory identification—the functional UAP classification is applied here.

Crossing the Atlantic, Europe from September to November 2025 displays an institutionalized version of the same dilemma, with measurable operational impact. Copenhagen and Oslo closed airports for hours after observations of two to three large objects inside controlled airspace. Intermittent suspensions and resumptions followed in Aalborg and Billund, together with reports near air bases in Jutland. The recurring description referenced capable operators, repeated routes over consecutive nights, and lights being switched on and off as if to signal presence. In Norway, one specific inquiry was closed weeks later for insufficient evidence, which does not erase the essential fact: the system was stressed, with flights halted and diverted. In Sweden, episodes near naval installations at Karlskrona contributed to a landscape of investigations with low material capture, underscoring the challenge of timely apprehension.

Germany experienced nighttime suspensions in Munich and parallel reports in other cities, including mentions of formations over federal police installations. In one case a recreational operator was identified, a reminder that waves like this often blend trivial events with incidents that are harder to reconcile. Belgium added a strategic layer: Brussels and Liège saw multiple suspensions and diversions in sequence, while three objects were reported over Kleine-Brogel, a sensitive base in NATO's nuclear context; at least one jammer reportedly proved ineffective, exposing practical limits of countermeasures in the field. In response, authorities announced additional funding, a national air-security center and accelerated C-UAS acquisitions—a shift from operational nuisance to public policy.

Comparing New Jersey with Europe, three traits converge without contradicting the initial overview. First, multi-night persistence around sensitive infrastructure with paths suggesting coordination rather than randomness. Second, visual and behavioral signatures that deviate from standard aeronautical patterns, including steady white lights and, in part of the reports, rapid transitions from orbs to “aircraft.” Third, the contrast between high operational impact—closures, diversions, deployment of assets—and low forensic materiality, with few apprehensions or unequivocal attributions. In both settings, official statements that many events involved lawful flights coexist logically with a technically anomalous residual set. It is within that set that, carefully and consistently, the classification of UAP with unknown/advanced technology remains the most economical working description.

Methodologically, the analysis stays anchored on three pillars: official records and operational decisions that produced measurable effects; testimonies and audiovisual materials with verifiable context; and comparison against regulatory requirements for lighting, electronic identification and traffic coordination. Where public documentation does not settle the matter—because of classification, technical limits of detection, or inquiries closed without capture—the article does not infer exotic explanations by exclusion; it records the status of non-identification precisely. That was the case in New Jersey when the “orb → aircraft” motif, out-of-pattern lights and patchy ADS-B correlation accumulated; and it was the case in Europe when airports repeatedly closed without, in the end, a robust inventory of recovered objects and responsible operators.

Appendix — Comparative Table (UAP 2022–2025)

Compact comparison across regions and periods (see article text for context).

Region /Period	Visuals	Kinematics	Altitude	Acoustic	Transponder	Sensors	Timing	Infrastructure	Interactions	EM Effects	Evidence	Response	Classification
Porto Alegre–RS (Sep/2022–Jan/2023)	Orbs; white/red/green; variable brightness.	Erratic; coordinated; pacing airliners; high-speed reports (Mach 3–8, est.).	9–12 km (30–40k ft).	Silent.	None observed; no standard nav-light pattern.	ATC/pilot reports; no confirmed anomalous traffic by AF.	Mostly night/early morning (~02:00).	Airways and Salgado Filho TMA.	Escort-like pacing reported; no declared conflict.	None reported.	Multiple witnesses; pilot audios; civilian videos; multi-week persistence.	Routine checks; no prolonged interdiction.	UAP (unknown/advanced tech).
United States (Jan–Apr/2023)	Cylindrical/octagonal; high-altitude envelope.	Stationary/drift; intercepts; evasive maneuvers not conclusive.	6–18 km (20–60k ft).	Not relevant due to distance.	No public ID; RF signatures undisclosed.	NORAD radars; pilot confirmations.	Day & night.	Broad territory; some sensitive areas.	Intercepts; three shootdowns mid-Feb.	Not publicly reported.	Radar; pilot; photo/video; limited debris.	Presidential remarks; NOTAMs; closures; shootdowns.	UAP (unknown/advanced tech).
New Jersey–USA (Nov/2024–Jan/2025)	Orbs & small/medium craft; steady white lights; angle-dependent 'disappearance'.	Hover; swarms; sudden displacements; helicopter evasion.	Low–medium (urban/suburban).	Predominantly silent.	No transponder/remote ID in many events.	Local ATC calls; some radar captures; many 911 calls.	Mostly night.	Near police/power lines/Salem nuclear/coast.	Helicopter pursuits; temporary restrictions.	Reports of 'mist'/camouflage (unconfirmed EM).	Civilian videos; official notes; some cases labeled tests (not all).	Statewide drone restrictions; interagency coordination.	UAP (unknown/advanced tech).
Europe (DK/NO/SE/DE/BE) (Sep–Nov/2025)	Medium/large craft; some dark; some with red/green nav lights.	Coordinated routes over bases & airports; multi-night persistence.	Low–medium near runways/perimeters.	Low or unreported.	Often none/unknown; EM discipline suspected.	ATC/police confirmations; airport closures.	Mostly night.	Air/naval bases; airports; munitions depots; Kleine Brogel (BE).	Runway closures; diversions; helos/jets deployed.	Jammer ineffective in BE (reported).	Official statements; witnesses; media; ATC logs.	Crisis meetings; rapid C-UAS; legal & budget moves.	UAP (unknown/advanced tech).

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