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Drone reported near Logan Airport on Christmas Day

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By **Matt Rocheleau**

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On Christmas Day just before 1:30 p.m., the flight crew aboard an Air Canada jet spotted something hovering troublingly close to a runway at Boston's Logan International Airport.

And it wasn't Santa or his reindeer-powered sleigh.

It was a drone flying at an altitude of about 800 feet, roughly 2 miles from the approach end of Runway 22-Left, said officials with the airport and Federal Aviation Administration.

The sighting prompted FAA officials to alert Massachusetts State Police. No further details of the sighting were released.

FAA rules say drones should not be flown higher than 400 feet from the ground or within 5 miles of an airport without contacting the airport and its control tower.

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Close calls between drones, planes on the rise

The FAA received 26 reports of drone encounters in Mass. in a nine-month period ending Aug. 20, the seventh-highest total in the US.

“It’s a stupid and potentially dangerous thing to do, in addition to it being illegal,” said Logan spokesman Matthew Brelis.

Reports of drones flying too close to airports and aircraft have become increasingly common in recent months.

With drones a particularly popular gift this holiday season, officials have moved to raise awareness about how users can fly devices legally and safely. The FAA has announced a requirement that owners of small drones register devices with the agency by mid-February.

Aviation safety officials warn it is just a matter of time before some of the unmanned crafts crash into planes or helicopters, potentially causing significant damage and even deaths.

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There have been reports of drones disrupting aerial firefighting and crashing into people on the ground. A drone even interrupted President Obama's motorcade this week in Hawaii.

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