

Co-ordinated effort needed to protect flight safety

By **Mark Pavilons** Editor Local Journalism Initiative

Be Prepared. The Boy Scouts had the right idea from the beginning. With the world in turmoil, one predominant thought is to be prepared and seek preventive strategies. The current pandemic is a case in point, and shows just how unprepared we are. We've known about potentially unfriendly aircraft since we first took to the skies, perhaps much earlier. Individuals, groups and government agencies have been documenting Unidentified Aerial Phenomena (UAPs) for decades. Even today, the U.S. military and the Trump administration have given UAPs recognition, through released documents, airforce pilot eye witness accounts, and the existence of special committees. World governments are giving credence to UAPs and are preparing preventive strategies. A Schomberg businessman is calling for a world-wide policy on notifying the public, and commercial aviation, about UAPs. Regardless of just what they are, they pose a potential threat to air travel and the safety of passengers. Andre Milne, of Unicorn Aerospace, said instead of burying the evidence and discounting such sightings, a global consensus could be preventive medicine, and may even prevent future airline crashes. Milne cited the example of a recent move by Japan's Self-Defense Forces (SDF) which created new protocols when encountering an unidentified flying object (UFO) that could potentially pose a threat to national security. Former Defense Minister Taro Kono said that members of the military need to make a visual recording of any unexplained phenomena they encounter and that the footage must be analyzed to the fullest extent. The military is also being tasked with looking into reports of UFO sightings from the public. Japan and the United States are working together on collecting data on UAPs. This partnership gained momentum following the Pentagon's release this past April of three video clips captured by U.S. pilots following a UAP. The videos captured what Navy fighter pilots saw on their video sensors during training flights in 2004 and 2015. In 2004, F/A-18 Super Hornet fighter pilots and sensor instrumentation associated with the USS Nimitz Carrier Strike Group reported unknown aerial objects. During 2014-2015, fighter pilots associated with the USS Theodore Roosevelt carrier strike group reported unknown aerial objects. The videos feature cockpit display data and infrared imagery. A Pentagon spokesperson confirmed that the released videos were made by naval aviators and that they are "part of a larger issue of an increased number of training range incursions by unidentified aerial phenomena in recent years." The Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Task Force (UAPTF) is a program within the United States Office of Naval Intelligence used to "standardize collection and reporting" on sightings of unexplained aerial vehicles. NAV Canada, a company that owns and operates Canada's civil air navigation service, does have a procedure for reporting sightings. Their Aviation Occurrence Reporting Procedure is used to address instances of unauthorized or unknown aircraft in NAV Canada managed airspace. Examples of this would include sightings of aircraft violating operating parameters, unidentified aircraft, unauthorized aircraft or any activity that may impact flight safety or pose a security threat. A spokesperson said depending on these details, NAV Canada may send a report to the Department of National Defence (DND), the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD), Transport Canada (TC) and/or the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). While there's no concrete evidence that UAPs are hostile or aggressive, Milne is adamant that unidentified objects were responsible for one of the worst airline crashes in modern history. The aviation expert spent many years investigating Egypt Air 990. He was asked to look into the matter by former Egyptian naval admiral Tarek Nour, after he returned from Cairo on an unrelated military air defence matter. The jet airliner crashed into the Atlantic Ocean roughly 100 kilometres south of Nantucket, Massachusetts, Oct. 31, 1999. All 217 people on board, including 21 Canadians, died. The 21st anniversary just passed, with no definitive answers. The U.S. National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) stated that the actions of the copilot caused the crash, but Egyptian authorities blamed mechanical failure. The FBI believed the crash was intentional. The United States has deemed the incident "classified." Using various radar sources, satellite readings and his own expertise, Milne is certain that the plane encountered two unknown objects and the pilot took emergency evasive action. He said EA990 crashed solely as a result of the pilots' inability to maintain controllable flight after the port engine experienced a catastrophic separation. Both pilots were conducting emergency evasion manoeuvres, Milne said. He doesn't believe it was pilot error or intentional, noting cockpit recordings show the pilot and copilot worked together to save the plane and passengers, not purposely destroy it. Milne's evidence suggests the two objects double-backed after some incredibly tight turns. Nothing in the air at the time could have made such moves. Further, a Jordanian airliner was in the air the same day and pilots reported seeing "fireballs" cross its path, just hours before the fatal incident. Milne was so adamant about his findings that he lobbied MPs, Canadian government officials and even the PMO in 2003 to look at his data and share the information with Egyptian officials. Unfortunately,

his concerns were never investigated. Milne's Unicorn Aerospace is calling on all world governments and organizations to build upon the Japanese model. He's pushing for Notices to Airmen (NOTAM) through the International Civil Aviation Organization, an agency of the United Nations. Such a cooperative move would not only add a layer of air safety, but would bring the world's "fragmented leadership" together. Regardless of the real nature of UAPs, the underlying message is to share data and real time sightings, to prevent any tragedies.