

S PARKER/COUD-I

JAL pilot reports another UFO sighting during flight

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — A Japan Air Lines pilot who said his cargo jet was shadowed by a huge unidentified flying object over Alaska in November has reported another encounter of the eerie kind.

Capt. Kenjyu Terauchi and his co-pilot reported the sighting of lights Sunday morning on a flight from London to a refueling stop in Anchorage.

"His statement to the controller was 'irregular lights, looks like a spaceship,'" said Federal Aviation Administration spokesman Paul Steucke. But Steucke said there may be an easy explanation for Sunday's sighting: light reflecting off ice crystals in the atmosphere.

Terauchi, a veteran pilot, said he saw the lights twice Sunday, once for about 20 minutes and again for about 10 minutes as his plane flew at 37,000 feet, Steucke said.

The plane's co-pilot reported seeing the lights, Steucke said, but the flight engineer, who sits in the cockpit, "indicated he was uncertain whether he saw any lights at all."

Both the November sighting and the Sunday sighting were near Fort Yukon, but there were few other similarities,

Steucke said. "The second sighting 'doesn't seem at all like the first one,'" he said.

On Nov. 17, Terauchi reported that two bright lights and an object as wide as two aircraft carriers placed end-to-end followed his JAL Boeing 747 cargo plane for more than 300 miles as it flew to Anchorage from Iceland. The lights stayed with the plane even when it changed altitude and took other evasive action, Terauchi said.

The pilot said that in both cases the lights approached from the front of the Boeing 747, went beneath the aircraft and reappeared to the rear.

In November, the object showed up on the plane's weather radar and may have appeared on FAA radar, but there was nothing on radar Sunday, Steucke said.

Steucke said FAA officials and experienced pilots speculated that Sunday's sighting could have been caused by light bouncing off ice crystals in an inversion layer. In a temperature inversion, a layer of warmer air traps a layer of colder air closer to the Earth's surface.

But the same theory couldn't explain the November sighting, Steucke said.