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### JAL pilot reports second UFO sighting

By JEFF BERLINER

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (UPI) — A Japan Air Lines pilot reported a UFO near his cargo jet for the second time in two months, prompting the Federal Aviation Administration Monday to broaden its investigation of the mystery above Alaska.

Unlike the first UFO report on Nov. 17, the second sighting Sunday over sparsely populated northeast Alaska did not appear on radar and may be explained by ice crystals 5 miles up catching lights from a village below, reflecting them up toward the passing JAL cargo jet, FAA officials speculated.

Capt. Kenju Terauchi, 47, was the pilot for both flights. But he had a different crew with him Sunday when they reported spotting lights as they flew at 37,000 feet near the Arctic Circle on a Paris-to-Anchorage leg of a Tokyo-bound flight.

"The Federal Aviation Administration is not in the business of looking for or identifying unidentified flying objects, commonly called UFOs," spokesman Paul Steucke explained. "We are involved in investigating these reports because the unknown lights or objects or whatever, as reported by the captain, created a hazard to the use of our national airways, which we use to direct and control aircraft so they will not hit each other.

"In essence, we are investigating these reports because the lights violated our federal regulations, as humorous as that might sound, which say, sort of, 'You cannot fly here without out permission because if you do you might hit another airline that is under our control.' That's how we got where we're at," Steucke said.

A full-blown FAA inquiry already was under way to figure out what was in the sky over Alaska on Nov. 17 when all three crewmen said objects trailed their cargo jet for nearly an hour over 400 miles. Whatever it was also showed up on FAA and Air Force radar screens, but some FAA officials think the two radar objects may have been a double image of the JAL jet.

FAA investigators, just as they did two months before, met the JAL crew at Anchorage International Airport when they landed Sunday and questioned them.

Terauchi said Sunday's sighting was different than what he and his crew saw Nov. 17. Terauchi, whose 29-year career includes three years based in Alaska, said he firmly believes he saw three objects near his Boeing 747 last November.

Terauchi said he can accept an FAA theory that Sunday's lights may have been an illusion — a trick played by a combination of lights and arctic weather in which village lights passed through high ice crystals and appeared as something other than what they were.

But despite the pilot's willingness to buy an explanation for the most recent sighting, the FAA has decided to broaden its current probe to include the new report.

[From UPI newswire. Copy courtesy of Mark A. Hall.]