

Russian Drone over Lake Maggiore, Investigations by Milan Prosecutor's Office

Published on 02/04/2025

The Milan Prosecutor's Office has launched an investigation for alleged political or military espionage, aggravated by the purpose of terrorism, following reports of repeated overflights by a Russian-made drone over the *Joint Research Centre* (JRC) of the European Commission, located in Ispra, in the province of Varese.

According to initial reconstructions, the drone allegedly passed six times, in five days, over the European research center, which is located within a *no-fly zone* extending for about five square kilometers. The area also includes some industrial facilities of Leonardo S.p.A., a strategic company in the defense and aerospace sector.

The investigations, coordinated by magistrates Eugenio Fusco and Alessandro Gobbis of the anti-terrorism pool, and conducted by the ROS of the Carabinieri, are based on the analysis of data collected by a captor present in the JRC infrastructure. The software reportedly detected

low frequencies compatible with the passage of a Russian technology drone. Radar tracks have been requested from ENAV and the Air Force for objective verification of the aircraft's movements.

In parallel, any further overflights on other sensitive targets in the area, including Leonardo's sites, are being examined, and the possible presence in the area of individuals with pro-Russian orientation is being assessed, also based on participation in events or public demonstrations.

The Position of the European Commission

In an official statement, the European Commission declared that it had not recorded any violations of the no-fly zone and clarified that it was not aware of specific threats related to the site's security. Spokesperson Thomas Regnier reiterated the Commission's commitment to the protection of data, personnel, and infrastructure, emphasizing that no further communications will be provided on operational security aspects.

Crosetto: “Hybrid War Underway”

The Minister of Defense, Guido Crosetto, also intervened on the matter, speaking of a “proven attempt at industrial espionage” and framing the episode in a broader scenario of “hybrid war.” According to the minister, it is an unconventional conflict manifested through cyberattacks, disinformation campaigns, patent thefts, and recruitment of individuals by hostile foreign entities.

Investigative activities continue with the questioning of witnesses, including researchers and security personnel of the center, and with checks on the area's video surveillance systems and aerial surveillance.