

Week commencing 5 October 2026

COVERAGE

21 September — 4 October
2026

AUDIENCE

Security directors · C-UAS programme leads · airport and critical
site operators

HANDLING

Internal use — not for onward
distribution

IF YOU JUST REMEMBER ONE THING FROM THIS BRIEFING...

Moldova absorbed eight drone and missile transits in four days, with debris landing beside a public road — overflight risk is now a debris risk, not only a detection problem.

Between 30 September and 3 October, Moldova recorded three drone incursions, then three missiles and two more drones two days later, with wreckage falling across four districts; one turbojet Geran exploded beside a road in Orhei. Chişinău summoned Russia's ambassador twice in four days. Ask whether your site's risk model for "drone overflight" already covers fragment radius from a transiting weapon, not only a direct strike.

FORTNIGHT IN REVIEW

Incidents and sector activity

PRIORITY

23 SEP

Berlin Brandenburg closes for 45 minutes — its eighth stoppage of 2026

A drone reported near BER's north runway at 20:00 on 23 September triggered a sequential shutdown of both runways; arrivals diverted to Dresden and Leipzig. Controllers logged 28 drone sightings at Germany's capital airport in H1 2026 alone, with operations halted seven prior times.

So what: Europe's most drone-affected airport treats an unconfirmed sighting as an automatic stop order. Confirm your continuity plan assumes repeated closures, not one rare event.

PRIORITY

30 SEP—3 OCT

Moldova absorbs repeated drone and missile overflights, debris lands near a road

Three drones crossed Moldovan airspace on 30 September, one exploding beside a road in Orhei; three missiles and two further drones followed on 3 October, scattering debris across four districts. Moldova summoned Russia's ambassador twice within four days.

So what: a neutral state is absorbing weapon debris, not merely detecting overflights. Sites near an eastern transit corridor should assess fragment risk.

WATCH

3 OCT

NATO jets scrambled as Vilnius closes over object from Belarus

Vilnius airport shut for roughly 50 minutes on 3 October after an object approaching from Belarus triggered a Baltic Air Policing scramble. Officials later said it was not conclusively identified as a drone before the alert was lifted.

So what: the closure preceded identification by hours. Build escalation plans around restrict-then-verify, not confirm-then-restrict.

WATCH

30 SEP

MOD's £5m Project PANOPTES closes for bids on force-protection C-UAS

UK Defence Innovation's PANOPTES sought affordable, modular detect-to-defeat architectures to protect deployed troops and sites against mass drone attack; Stage 1 closed 30 September, alongside a separate £125m MOD CUAS Exploration tender whose own Stage 1 closed 23 September.

So what: expect a wave of UK C-UAS awards before year end. Track which architectures succeed as a signal for your next tender.

ACTION TABLE

Developments to track this fortnight

DEVELOPMENT	TYPE	WHY IT MATTERS FOR A PROTECTED SITE	ACT BY / WATCH
Berlin Brandenburg drone stoppages	Incident	Unconfirmed sightings alone trigger full runway closures, repeatedly.	Watch: pattern
Moldova drone/missile overflights	Incident	Debris risk extends to sites near an eastern transit corridor.	Watch: pattern
Vilnius NATO scramble, 3 Oct	Incident	Precautionary closure preceded identification by hours.	Watch: Baltic frontier
MOD CUAS Exploration tender, £125m	Procurement	Stage 1 assessment shapes the near-term UK C-UAS supplier field.	Act: track Stage 2
CAA CAP 1616 / airspace directions	Regulation	Faster temporary airspace process affects C-UAS trial corridor authorisation.	In force: 1 Oct

Casualty, debris and attribution details are as reported by named sources; none are independently verified here.

REGULATORY AND SECTOR WATCH

What changed, and what is coming

In force now

- CAA's revised Air Navigation Directions and updated CAP 1616 framework took effect 1 October, streamlining temporary airspace authorisation.
- Defeat measures stay restricted to police and authorised bodies under the 2021 Air Traffic Management and Unmanned Aircraft Act; operators may only detect and track.

Approaching

- Stage 2 invitations for PANOPTES and the CUAS Exploration tender are expected ahead of November/December contract starts.
- CAA's BVLOS roadmap continues toward routine operations by 2027; no further milestone is due before the next edition.

Standing watch — SAPIENT NATO ratification. BSI Flex 335's path to a formal NATO STANAG, needing 14-nation approval, remains unresolved. No change this fortnight; treat as backdrop, not the story.

RECOMMENDED

Three things to do before the next edition

- Check your continuity plan assumes repeated short unplanned closures, not a single rare event.
- Confirm escalation criteria allow a precautionary restriction before sensor confirmation, per Vilnius.
- Track PANOPTES and CUAS Exploration award outcomes for vendor and architecture signals ahead of your tender.

OUTLOOK — NEXT FORTNIGHT

We assess it is likely that further short-notice closures affect European airports, particularly Berlin and Baltic-frontier airfields. A realistic possibility exists of further debris-causing overflights reaching Moldova or another NATO-adjacent state. Stage 2 invitations for PANOPTES and CUAS Exploration are unlikely before the next edition.

NEXT EDITION

Monday 19 October 2026. Send additions, corrections or sector intelligence to your ClearPath engagement lead.

