

Cold-war shootdowns, recce-related losses and incidents

From the end of the Second World War there have been numerous occasions when aircraft military and civil have been attacked and sometimes shot down by Soviet or Chinese forces or their allies. In most cases the aircraft in question were presumed by the attackers to have been spying and in many instances this was true. The following list of incidents, including attacks as well as shoot-downs, is the most comprehensive I have been able to compile, but it is obviously incomplete.

I should be pleased to hear from anyone with authoritative additions or amendments by [e-mail](#)

Dates are given in British notation (day/month/year). Units are USAAF, USAF, USN unless otherwise stated. Unless noted the incident was a shootdown, or loss of aircraft to unknown cause. Losses of tactical reconnaissance aircraft during wars or confrontations are not noted.

Date	Type (serial/reg'n)	Unit	Location (note)
15.11.45	PBM-5	USN	Port Arthur, Manchuria (3)
20.2.46	PBM-5	VP-26	Tsingtao, China (3)
9.8.46	C-47	USAAF	Yugoslavia (1)
19.8.46	C-47	USAAF	Yugoslavia (1)
5.4.48	Viking (G-AIVP)	BEA	Berlin (coll with Sov fighter)
27.10.48	P-38 (MM.4175)	Italian Air Force 3 St	Yugoslavia (4)
0.0.49	DC-4	EI AI	Bulgaria
8.4.50	PB4Y-2 (59645)	VP-26	Leyaya, Latvia
0.12.50	RB-45C (480015)	91 SRS	North Korea
13.10.51	P-38L (MM.4203)	Italian Air Force 3 St	Yugoslavia (2)
6.11.51	P2V-3W (124284)	VP-6	Vladivostok
19.11.51	C-47	USAF	Hungary
13.6.52	RB-29	91 SRS	Sea of Japan (2)
13.6.52	DC-3/Tp-79 (79001)	Swedish AF	Gotland, Baltic
16.6.52	PBY-5A (47002)	Swedish AF	Baltic
3.7.52	RB-29	91 SRS	Far East
31.7.52	PBM-5S2	VP-731	Formosa (3)
20.9.52	P4Y-2S	VP-28	China coast (3)
7.10.52	RB-29A (4461815)	91 SRS	Kuriles
23.11.52	P4Y-2S	VP-28	Shanghai (3)
29.11.52	B-29	?	Manchuria
3.12.52	C-47	USAF	Hungary (1)
12.1.53	RB-29A	581 ARCS	Manchuria
18.1.53	P2V-5 (127744)	VP-22	Swatow, Formosa Straits

12.3.53	Viking	BEA	East Germany (3)
0.3.53	B-50	USAFE	East Germany (3)
10.3.53	F-84E	USAFE 53 FBS 36 FBG	West Germany
12.3.53	Lincoln B2 (RF531/C)	CGS RAF	East Germany
15.3.53	RB-50	55 SRW	Kamchatka (3)
0.7.53	Canberra PR3	540 Sqn RAF	Russia (3)
28.7.53	RB-50	55 SRW	Vladivostok
2.10.53	PBM-5	USN	Yellow Sea (3)
4.1.54	P2V-5 (127752/CC-3)	VP-2	Yellow Sea (4)
27.1.54	RB-45C	91 SRS	Yellow Sea (3)
12.3.54	AD-4	VA-145	Czech border (3)
23.7.54	DC-4	Cathay Pacific	Hainan
26.7.54	AD-4 x 2	VF-54	Hainan (3)
4.9.54	P2V-5	VP-19	Sea of Japan
7.11.54	RB-29 (4294000)	91 SRS	Sea of Japan (3)
5.2.55	RB-45C	91 SRS	Yellow Sea (3)
9.2.55	AD-5W	VC-11	Tachen Islands
17.4.55	YRB-47B (512054)	26 SRW	Kamchatka
22.6.55	P2V-5 (131515)	VP-9	Bering Strait (3)
22.8.56	P4M-1Q (124362)	VQ-1	Wenchow, China
10.9.56	RB-50	? 55 SRW	Sea of Japan
17.9.56	U-2A	WRSP-1/CIA	Kaiserslautern (4)
31.10.56	Canberra PR7 (WH799)	13 Sqn RAF	Syria
23.12.57	T-33 (514413)	USAFE	Albania
18.2.58	RB-57A (CNAF 5642)	CNAF	Yellow Sea
27.6.58	C-118A (513822)	USAF/CIA 7405 SS	Soviet Armenia
2.9.58	C-130A-II (560528)	7406 CSS	Yerevan
16.6.59	P4M-1Q (122209)	VQ-1	Sea of Japan (3)
24.9.59	U-2A (360)	WRSP-3/CIA	Fusigawa, Japan (4)
7.10.59	RB-57D (CNAF 5643)	CNAF	Nr Peking
0.0.60	U-2C	WRSP-2/CIA	Khartoum (4)
1.5.60	U-2C (566693)	WRSP-2/CIA	Sverdlovsk
25.5.60	C-47	USAFE	East Germany (1)
1.7.60	ERB-47H (534281)	55 SRW	Barents Sea
0.8.62	RF-101A	CNAF	Fukien, China
9.9.62	U-2C	CNAF	Eastern China
27.10.62	U-2C	4028 SRS	Cuba
20.11.62	U-2C	4028 SRS	Off Key West (4)
1.11.63	U-2C	CNAF	Shanghai
24.1.64	T-39 (624448)	701 ABW	East Germany

10.3.64	RB-66C (54451)	19 TRS, 10 TRW	Gardelegen, Germany
7.7.64	U-2G (3514)	CNAF	Southern China
8.9.64	P-2	VP-42	S China Sea
0.0.65	F-104C	USAF	S China Sea
0.0.65	A-6 x 2	USN	S China Sea
10.1.65	U-2C (3512/566691)	CNAF	South of Beijing
21.1.65	Canberra PR3 (WF926)	39 Sqn RAF	? (2)
0.3.65	RF-101A	CNAF	China
27.4.65	ERB-47H	55 SRW	North Korea (3)
11.9.65	RB-57F	24 Sqn PAF	India
14.12.65	RB-57F (6313287)	7407 CSS	Black Sea
0.1.66	HU-16	CNAF	Formosa Straits
1.1.66	KA-3B	?	Southern China
28.7.66	U-2	4080 SRW	Bolivia
8.10.66	U-2A (566690)	4080 SRW	Bien Hoa
0.0.67	Boeing 707	PanAm	Kamchatka (1)
19.7.67	KC-135R (591465)	55 SRW	Offutt AFB (4)
9.9.67	U-2	CNAF	Eastern China
2.4.68	U-2	CNAF	China
5.6.68	A-12 (606932)	CIA (9 SRW)	S of Philippines (2)
30.6.68	DC-8	?	Kuriles
0.1.69	U-2	CNAF	China
13.1.69	RC-135S (591491)	24 SRS 6 SW	Shemya AFB (4)
0.3.69	U-2	CNAF	Inner Mongolia
10.3.69	RC-135S (591491)	6 SW	Eielson (4)
15.4.69	EC-121M (135749)	VQ-1	SE Chongjin North Korea
5.6.69	RC-135E (624137)	24 SRS 6 SW	Bering Strait (4)
0.0.70	U-2	CNAF	China
21.10.70	U-8	USAF	Soviet Armenia
21.3.73	C-130B-II	USAF 7406 CSS	Libyan coast (3)
13.10.74	WC-130H (650965)	54 WRS	South China Sea (5)
29.5.75	U-2C (566700)	349 SRS	Winterberg, Germany (4)
15.8.75	U-2R (6810334)	99 SRS	Gulf of Siam
7.12.77	U-2R (6810330)	99 SRS	Akrotiri (4)
23.4.78	Boeing 707	Korean Air Lines	Murmansk (1)
16.9.80	RC-135U (6414847)	55 SRW	Libyan coast (3)
15.3.81	RC-135S (612664)	24 SRS 6 SW	Shemya AFB (4)
1.9.83	Boeing 747 (HL7442)	Korean Air Lines	Sakhalin
26.2.85	RC-135T (553121)	6 SW	Valdez, Alaska (4)
7.6.94	Lockheed L-100	? (US contract)	Adler (Black Sea) (1)

0.9.95	Balloon (D-CARIBBEAN) ?	Belarussia
1.4.01	EP-3E ARIES II (156505) VQ-1	Hainan (landed Lingshui)

Notes

- 1 Transport/passenger aircraft forced down
- 2 Aircraft missing from potentially operational sortie
- 3 Aircraft attacked by air or ground units but returned safely, if damaged
- 4 Aircraft crashed during potentially operational sortie
- 5 Aircraft disappeared

As an indication of the extent of activity towards the end of the cold war, Soviet Lt Gen G Dubrov of Air Defence Forces said in 1991 that NATO intelligence-gathering flights over or around the USSR had dropped from 3,380 in 1989 to 2,730 in 1990. These were distributed roughly 2/3 in the west and 1/3 in the east.

Further information supplied by Charles Beasley, Gene Cartee, Tony Gorst, Mike Hodges, Frank McMeiken, Gerhard Moroff, Lee Russell, Jon Waltho, Johan van der Wei and W.Yip for which many thanks.

Further information:

For full details of aircrew losses of US military shootdowns go directly to:

[Cold War Shootdown Incidents.](#)

For fuller details of USN incidents, including aircraft damaged by AAA fire, go to:

[US Naval Aviation Cold War Incidents.](#)

For details of one typical incident go to:

[The Disappearance of 3 Cape Cod.](#)

List ends