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Pentagon concerned by Russia bomber flights: US commander

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The Pentagon is increasingly concerned by long-range Russian bombers flying near American airspace, says a top US commander.

Admiral Samuel Locklear, head of the US military's Pacific Command, issued the warning Thursday after US jets intercepted six Russian Bear long-range bombers that neared US airspace off Alaska last week.

Locklear said the “Cold War-style activity” by Russia was raising questions for US military officials.

"Certainly the return of the long-range aircraft flights that we haven't seen in any significant number over the last decade or so is concerning. And it's something that we watch very carefully," Admiral Locklear told reporters, according to Reuters.

In August, US military officials said that Russian strategic nuclear bombers conducted at least 16 incursions into northwestern US and Canadian air defense zones over a 10-day period.

The United States and Russia are at loggerheads over the conflict in Ukraine, where pro-Russian forces have been fighting for control of eastern provinces.

Washington and its Western allies accuse Moscow of fueling unrest in eastern Ukraine by supplying arms to the pro-Russian forces. An accusation denied by the Kremlin.

The conflict has dragged US-Russia relations to their lowest levels since the Cold War.