



Hanover: staff saw the drone, the detection system did not

A drone flew around Hanover Airport for two hours, closing the runways repeatedly and hovering over the apron. Airport workers and police saw it. The federal counter-drone equipment installed to detect exactly this registered nothing.

INCIDENT DETAILS • 5WH

Who Unattributed - no operator identified, no suspect, no claim. An internal police report states the possibility of hybrid activity cannot be excluded, but no actor has been named.

What A single drone in restricted airport airspace for about two hours, closing runways repeatedly. Six departures delayed; an inbound cargo flight from Paris diverted.

Where Hanover-Langenhagen, Lower Saxony. First seen outside the fence but inside the no-fly zone, later over an airline building, and at one point directly above the taxiway and apron.

When Overnight into Tuesday 11 Aug 2026; closures between about 03:44 and 05:20 local.

Why Undetermined. No motive established; investigators are examining whether the flying was deliberate.

How Flown at about 25 metres for roughly two hours. Federal police detection generated no alert and air traffic control could not fix its position. Casualties - none.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

A Police reason it was not a consumer drone: their equipment reacts to those and did not react

B 4-5 Aug: an explosive drone struck an Antonov at Leipzig/Halle

C 7 Aug: six overflights of the Mechernich Patriot depot

1 03:44: a freight worker reports a drone at about 25 metres

2 Police patrols see it near the fence; airport closed by 04:00

3 Brief reopening after it moves away

4 04:21: it returns, then hovers over the taxiway and apron

5 04:40: last seen; operations resume at 05:20

IMPACT

- Human: none. No injuries, no damage, no contact with any aircraft.
- Operational: about ninety minutes of closures, six departures delayed and a cargo flight diverted to another city.
- Detection: the substantive finding - counter-drone equipment produced no alert while staff and police repeatedly saw the aircraft.
- Confidence: the aviation industry association had recently described Germany's counter-drone position as exceptionally strong.

ASSESSMENT, LESSONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- A detection system that produces no alert is worse than none, because it produces confidence.
- The police inference - not a consumer machine - is legitimate and should not be inflated into attribution.
- Hovering over the apron separates probing from nuisance; that is where Leipzig's device came down.
- It is almost certain that drone disruption of European airports continues while the exchange rate holds.