

# Top U.S. Air Defense Commander: Turkey's Shootdown of Russian Jet "Had to Be PRE-PLANNED"

By [Washington's Blog](#)

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Lt. General Tom McInerney is an expert on handling threats from fighter jets.

McInerney [served as](#):

- Commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command (Norad) – the military agency responsible for [protecting the United States and Canada](#) from foreign jet attacks – for the Alaska region
- Commander of the Alaskan Air Command
- Commander of 11th Air Force in Alaska
- Commander of the 3rd Tactical Fighter Wing, Clark Air Base, Philippines
- Commander of the 313th Air Division, Kadena Air Base, Japan
- Commander of 3rd Air Force, Royal Air Force Station Mildenhall, England
- Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force
- A command pilot with more than 4,100 flying hours, including 407 combat missions

In his role as Norad commander for Alaska, McInerney dealt with more Russian fighter jet incursions (which he calls "bear penetrations") than anyone else in the world.

So McInerney knows how to tell innocent from hostile incursions by foreign fighter jets, standard rules of engagement of foreign fighter jets, how to read radar tracks, and the other things he would need to know to form an informed opinion about the shootdown of a foreign jet.

Yesterday, McInerney told Fox News – much to the surprise of the reporter interviewing him – that assuming the Turkish version of the flight path of the Russian jet is accurate, Russia *wasn't* threatening Turkey, and that Turkey's shoot down of the Russian jet "had to be *pre-planned*", as the jet wasn't in Turkish air space long enough for anything other than a

premeditated attack to have brought it down.

McInerney is right ... especially given that a U.S. official [told](#) Reuters that the Russian jet was *inside of Syria* when it was shot down:

The United States believes that the Russian jet shot down by Turkey on Tuesday was hit inside Syrian airspace after a brief incursion into Turkish airspace, a U.S. official told Reuters, speaking on condition of anonymity.

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