

Navy Jets Have MTA, Downtown Ducking for Cover

(March 27, 2002) Two loud roars that shook the MTA about 2:30 p.m., Tuesday, and had Headquarters employees ducking for cover – did you hear 'em? Never mind, it was just a couple of Navy jets practicing fly-bys for opening day at Dodger Stadium.

But, the noise provided several scary moments for employees – and many others in downtown LA – especially when they looked out to the east and saw a large passenger jet as the military planes swooped by. Was it 9/11 all over again?

"The first thing I thought was, Twin Towers – it's all over," Gary Wosk of Media Relations told the *Daily News*. "We thought the worst. We thought they were trying to intercept one of our airliners."

Media Relations officer Ed Scannell concurred, telling the *LA Times*, "It seemed way too close. We were certainly startled."

The F-4 Phantom and F-14 Tomcat jets were flying out of the Naval Weapons Test Squadron at Point Mugu on what in past years has been a routine practice mission in preparation for Dodgers opening day.

The Dodger organization had filed a flight plan with the FAA and has mailed letters to some 15,000 homes around the stadium, according to a team official, but didn't think about alerting anyone downtown. The official promised to do a better job of communicating pre-opening day plans in the future.

The Navy jets' next appearance will be at the climax of the national anthem prior to next Tuesday's game pitting the Dodgers against the San Francisco Giants.

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Two Navy jets, like the ones pictured below, roared into Downtown skies on Tuesday afternoon. (U.S. Navy photos)



F-14 Tomcat



F-4 Phantom