

AIRBORNE OBSERVATION OF UNIDENTIFIED LIGHTS

Western Kentucky / Lower Ohio Valley

5 September 2026 | approximately 0350-0405 UTC

Field	Information
Flight	UPS 781 - Houston (IAH) to Louisville (SDF)
Aircraft	Boeing 767
Witness position	Right seat; viewing across cockpit toward captain-side forward glazing
Flight phase	Descent / MBELL arrival; strongest event recalled approximately FL300-FL180
General sightline	NW to NNW, visually below the Big Dipper
Radio context	Other pilots heard discussing 'the lights' on 121.5 MHz Guard
Report purpose	Factual witness record and technical package for independent UAP investigation

FINAL SUBMISSION EDITION

This report separates recorded flight data, witness recollection, and post-event analysis. It does not assert extraordinary origin.

1. Executive Summary

While operating UPS781 from Houston to Louisville late on 4 September / early 5 September 2026, the witness observed numerous very bright point-like lights in the low NW/NNW sky below the Big Dipper. The lights repeatedly brightened and faded and appeared to move in different directions. Other pilots were heard discussing the lights on 121.5 MHz Guard.

Much of this recurring activity is plausibly explained by Starlink or other low-Earth-orbit satellite flaring. The aircraft's position, the low NNW sightline, and the Sun's below-horizon geometry align closely with the type of satellite-flare observations discussed in AARO's published Starlink analysis.

One discrete sequence appeared qualitatively different from the surrounding lights. Two lights were initially vertically separated. The upper light moved upward; the lower remained apparently stationary and faded. The upper light then appeared to stop for approximately one second or less. At essentially that same apparent location, two lights were perceived and separated almost instantaneously in opposite horizontal directions, approximately perpendicular to the prior upward motion. They continued to diverge at an apparent angular rate dramatically faster than the other lights observed that evening and disappeared while moving apart.

Final analytical classification: the recurring background lights are strongly consistent with satellite flaring. The discrete stop / two-light / rapid-divergence sequence remains **UNRESOLVED PENDING HISTORICAL ORBITAL CORRELATION**.

2. Observation Context

Item	Recorded / recalled detail
Viewing position	Witness seated in right seat of Boeing 767.
Viewing geometry	Looking across cockpit toward captain's side and out captain-side forward windshield/glazing.
Visual reference	Lights low in NW/NNW sky, below the Big Dipper.
Strongest-event altitude	Approximately FL300-FL180.
Approximate UTC window	0350-0405 UTC, 5 Sep 2026.
Object appearance	Very bright point sources, brighter than surrounding stars; recurring fade-in / fade-out activity.
No claimed measurement	No range, physical size, physical speed, acceleration, radar return, or structure was established.

3. Detailed Witness Sequence

- Two bright lights were visible, approximately one above the other.
- The upper light began moving approximately straight upward relative to the horizon / stellar background.
- The lower light remained apparently stationary and then faded from view.
- The upper light continued upward and then appeared to stop for approximately one second or less.
- At essentially the apparent stop point, two lights were perceived.
- The two lights separated almost instantaneously in opposite horizontal directions, roughly 90 degrees from the preceding upward motion.
- The lateral separation continued rapidly. The apparent angular motion was dramatically faster than the other Starlink-like lights observed that evening.
- The separation grew across a large portion of the captain-side cockpit glazing before both lights disappeared while moving apart.

Terminology note: 'split' is used only to describe visual appearance. With no range information, the observation cannot establish that one physical object divided into two, nor can physical velocity or acceleration be calculated from the visual observation alone.

4. Aircraft Track Reconstruction

The following points were transcribed from witness-supplied flight-tracking screenshots. They constrain the moving observer's location during the period of interest.

UTC	Latitude	Longitude	Altitude	Approx. track
03:35Z	36.39 N	90.58 W	FL370	~040
03:39Z	36.79 N	90.17 W	~FL359	NE
03:43Z	37.11 N	89.70 W	~FL345	~066
03:47Z	37.32 N	89.10 W	FL310	E/NE
03:52Z	37.61 N	88.29 W	~FL308	E
03:56Z	37.68 N	87.54 W	~FL257	E
04:00Z	37.72 N	87.05 W	~FL236	E
04:03Z	37.74 N	86.72 W	~FL180	E

This descent profile closely matches the witness's independent recollection that the strongest event occurred between approximately FL300 and FL180. Because the aircraft was generally eastbound, a NW/NNW target would be substantially left of the nose, consistent with the witness looking across the cockpit from the right seat.

5. Astronomical / Solar Geometry

Preliminary calculations at representative aircraft positions place the Big Dipper low in the NNW sky and the Sun far below the horizon in nearly the same azimuth sector.

UTC	Approx. solar azimuth	Approx. solar altitude
03:52Z	321.3°	-37.5°
03:54Z	322.2°	-37.9°
03:56Z	323.2°	-38.3°
03:58Z	324.1°	-38.7°
04:00Z	324.9°	-39.0°
04:02Z	325.7°	-39.3°
04:03Z	326.2°	-39.4°

Representative Big Dipper positions around the same period:

Star	Approx. azimuth	Approx. elevation
Alkaid	320°	17°
Mizar	327°	18°
Alioth	331°	16°
Megrez	336°	13°
Phecda	336°	8°
Merak	344°	7°
Dubhe	346°	12°

Astronomical values are post-event analytical estimates and should be independently reproduced by an investigator.

6. Starlink / Satellite-Flare Assessment

AARO's paper 'Correlations of Starlink Satellite Flaring with UAP Observations' describes how sunlight reflecting from Starlink spacecraft can create bright low-elevation lights that appear, disappear, move on differing tracks, and sometimes form misleading geometric patterns. It specifically addresses observations from aircraft.

- The witness's recurring lights were low in the NNW, beneath the Big Dipper.
- The Sun's reconstructed azimuth was approximately 321-326 degrees true during the key interval - essentially the same sector.
- Solar depression during the key interval was approximately 38-39 degrees below the observer's local horizon, a geometry highly relevant to known low-elevation satellite-flare observations.
- Multiple satellites in different orbital planes can brighten and fade independently, creating apparent crossing or changing patterns.

Accordingly, satellite flaring is the leading explanation for the recurring background lights and should be treated as the baseline conventional hypothesis.

7. Why the Discrete Sequence Remains Unresolved

A single satellite cannot physically stop, divide, and depart simultaneously in opposite directions. A satellite-based explanation for the discrete sequence would therefore require a multi-object perceptual coincidence: one source fading at or near an apparent stop point while two different satellites brighten in nearly the same apparent location and then separate on strongly divergent tracks.

That explanation is possible in principle, but it should be demonstrated with historical ephemerides rather than assumed. The witness's strongest discriminating observation is the large apparent angular separation achieved in a very short period, at an apparent rate markedly faster than the surrounding Starlink-like lights seen before and after.

Hypothesis	Current assessment
Starlink / LEO satellite flaring	Strong candidate for recurring background activity; discrete event requires satellite-by-satellite reconstruction.
Single satellite maneuver	Not physically compatible with a literal stop/split/opposite departure; only a multi-satellite visual sequence could mimic it.
Aircraft	No conventional navigation/strobe pattern or structured traffic was identified by the witness; traffic correlation is still recommended.
Meteor / reentry	Does not naturally fit the recurring fade behavior or stop followed by opposite lateral departures.
Illumination flares	Could produce bright point sources but do not readily reproduce the full reported maneuver; military activity should still be checked.
Perceptual / optical effects	Night viewing, lack of range cues, cockpit glazing and sequential illumination can create apparent continuity and must remain in the analysis.

8. Reconstruction Figure - Flight Track and Sightline

Figure 1. UPS781 Track and Reconstructed Observation Sector
5 September 2026, approximately 03:35-04:03 UTC

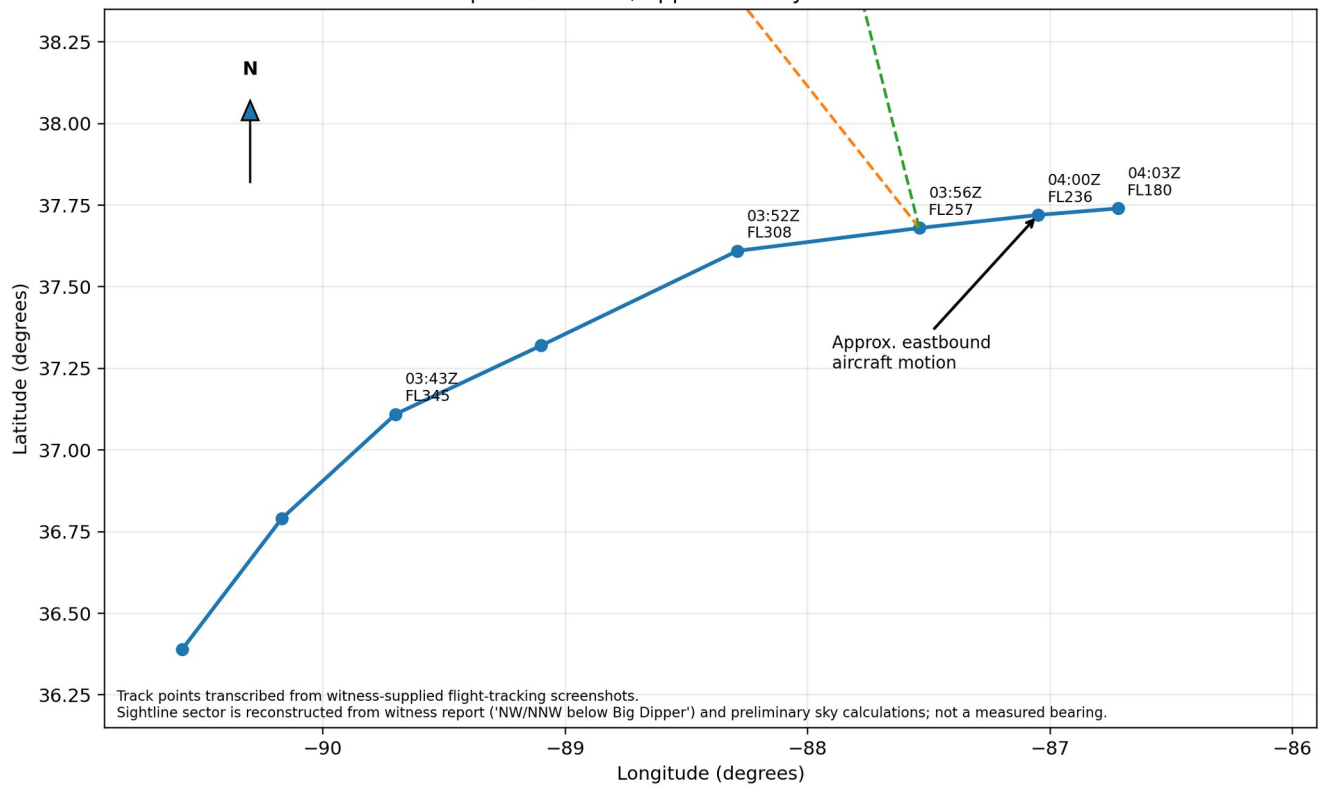


Figure 1. Track points are transcribed from witness-supplied flight data. The 320-345 degree sightline sector is reconstructed from the reported NW/NNW location below the Big Dipper; it was not measured in real time.

The diagram shows why the viewing direction is internally consistent: the eastbound Boeing 767 placed the NNW sightline well left of the aircraft's nose, requiring a right-seat observer to look across the cockpit toward the captain-side forward windows.

9. Reconstruction Figure - Reported Visual Sequence

Schematic view across cockpit toward captain-side forward glazing

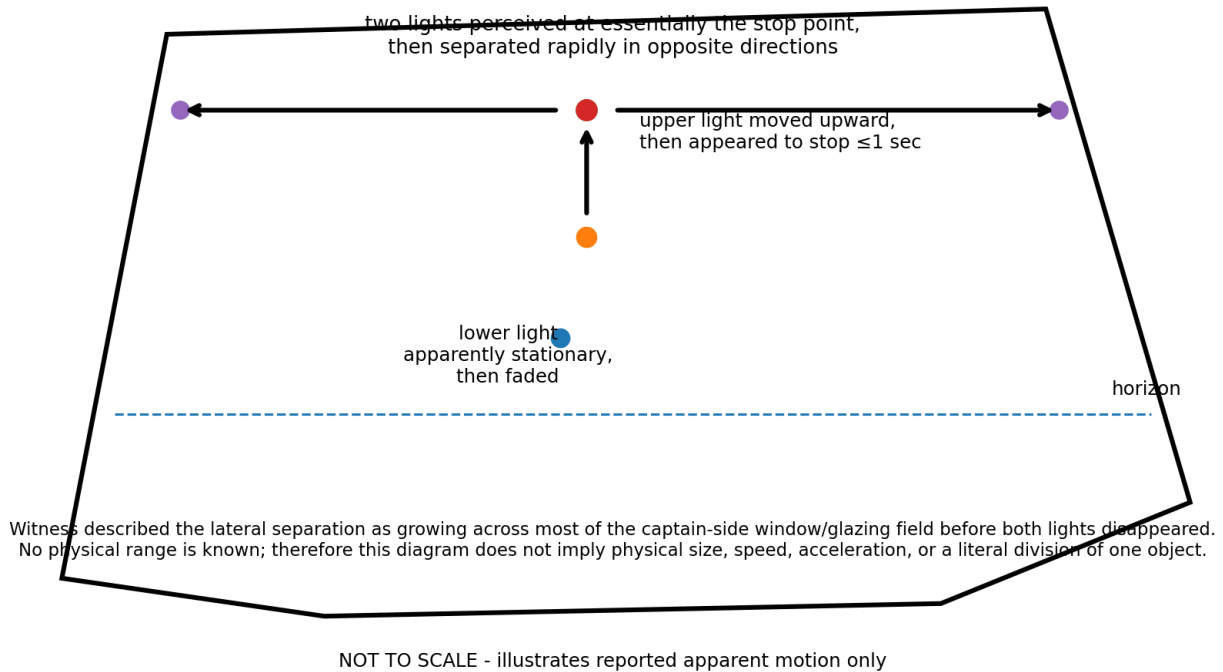


Figure 2. Schematic only; not a scale Boeing cockpit drawing. It records the reported apparent motion and deliberately does not assign a physical range, speed, size or acceleration.

The witness described the final separation as spanning a large portion of the captain-side cockpit glazing. Boeing 767 published visibility figures should not be interpreted as the angular width of a single windshield pane, so this report does not assign a falsely precise separation angle.

10. Supporting Flight Evidence

The following FlightAware overview image was supplied by the witness and shows the complete UPS781 route from Houston to Louisville. The detailed observation occurred during the later portion of the flight while descending toward Louisville.

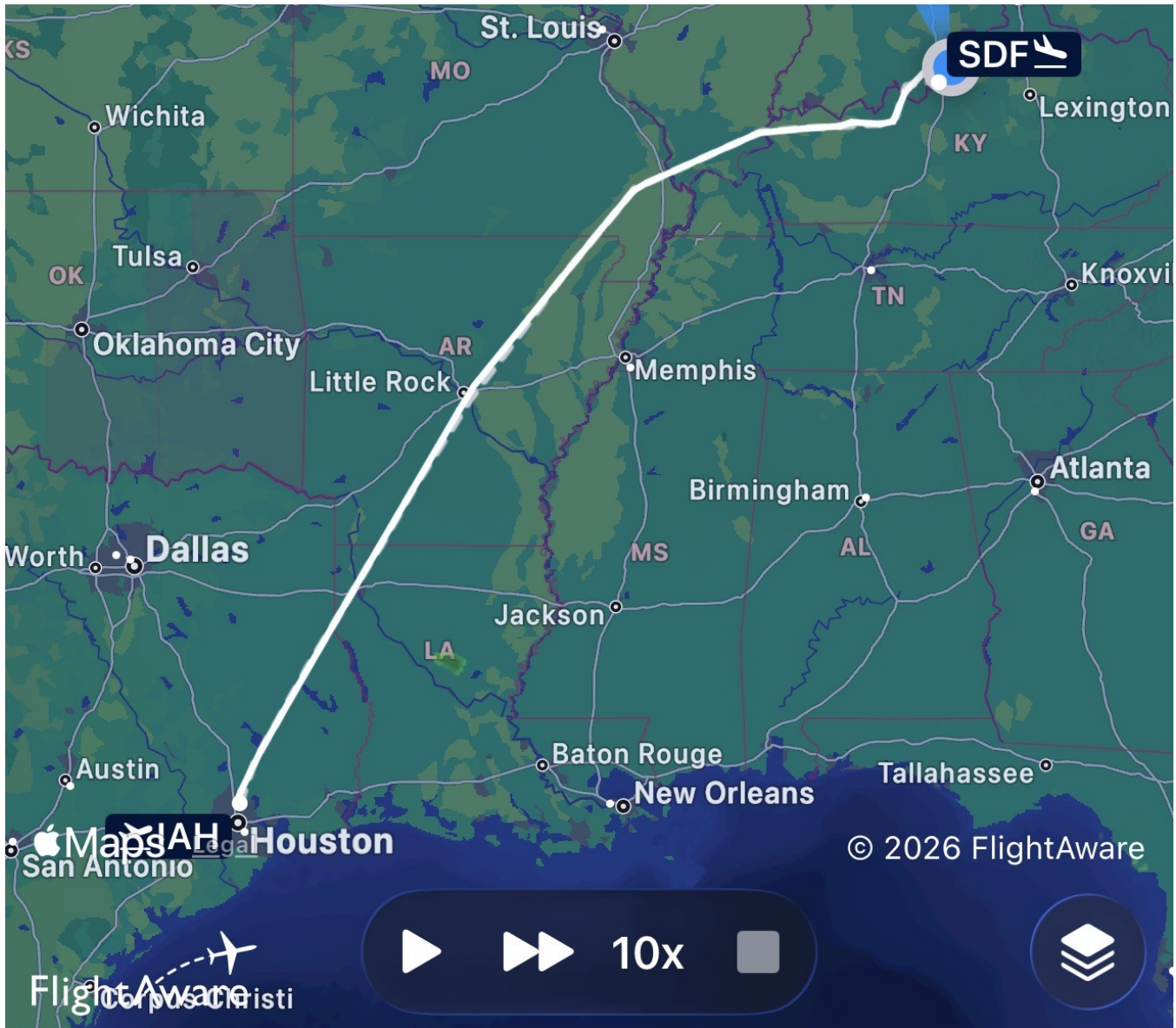


Figure 3. Witness-supplied FlightAware route overview, reproduced without analytical alteration other than scaling.

11. Historical Orbital Correlation Status

At finalization, a complete historical satellite-by-satellite propagation for the full Starlink constellation at 0350-0405 UTC on 5 September 2026 had not been obtained. Historical GP/TLE or SpaceX ephemeris data from CelesTrak, Space-Track, or another authoritative orbital archive are appropriate for this follow-on analysis.

The absence of a completed propagation is not evidence against Starlink. It simply means the discrete event has not yet been tested at the individual-satellite level. No launch occurring at the observation time was identified as an obvious match for the point-source behavior described.

12. Requested Investigator Actions

- Propagate historical Starlink and other LEO satellite positions for 0350-0405 UTC from the moving aircraft coordinates and altitudes in Section 4.
- Model illumination / flare visibility rather than plotting geometric satellite positions alone.
- Search for candidate tracks through approximately 320-345 degrees true at low elevation that could reproduce the discrete sequence.
- Specifically test whether separate satellites could create an apparent upward-moving source, a brief apparent stop, near-coincident two-light appearance, and rapid opposite-direction divergence.
- Review contemporaneous ADS-B / Mode-S traffic and any available FAA radar for conventional traffic in the sightline.
- Search FAA, ATC and airline records for contemporaneous 121.5 MHz Guard discussion of 'the lights' during approximately 0345-0410 UTC.
- Check military flare activity, NOTAMs, launches, reentries and other astronomical events for the same period.
- Interview other pilots who independently saw the lights without first exposing them to this report's detailed sequence.

13. Suggested NUFORC / Enigma Submission Narrative

Airline pilot seated in the right seat of a Boeing 767 observed numerous very bright point-like lights low in the NW/NNW sky below the Big Dipper while descending on the MBELL arrival toward Louisville, approximately 0350-0405 UTC on 5 Sep 2026. Other pilots were discussing the lights on 121.5 Guard. Much of the recurring activity may be consistent with Starlink/LEO satellite flaring. One event appeared different: an upper light moved vertically while a lower light remained stationary and faded; the moving light appeared to stop for about one second or less, after which two lights were perceived at essentially the same point and separated almost instantaneously in opposite horizontal directions, roughly perpendicular to the original motion. Their apparent angular motion was dramatically faster than the other lights and their separation expanded across a large portion of the captain-side cockpit glazing before both disappeared while moving apart. No range, physical speed, structure or radar correlation is claimed. Historical satellite ephemeris correlation is requested.

14. Submission Integrity Statement

This report intentionally distinguishes recorded flight data, witness recollection and post-event analytical reconstruction. 'Unidentified' means only that the discrete event has not yet been satisfactorily correlated with a known source. It does not imply extraordinary origin. The witness welcomes independent reconstruction and correction of astronomical or orbital calculations.

15. Technical References

AARO - Correlations of Starlink Satellite Flaring with UAP Observations:

https://www.aaro.mil/Portals/136/PDFs/Information%20Papers/AARO_Satellite_Flaring_Paper_508_FINAL_04222025.pdf

Boeing - 767 Airplane Characteristics for Airport Planning:

https://www.boeing.com/content/dam/boeing/v2/airports/acaps/767_REV_K.pdf

CelesTrak - General Perturbations orbital data: <https://celestrak.org/NORAD/elements/>

CelesTrak - Historical / special-data requests: <https://celestrak.org/NORAD/archives/request.php>

Space-Track: <https://www.space-track.org/>

NUFORC sighting report form: <https://nuforc.org/reportform/>

Enigma Labs sighting submission: <https://app.enigmalabs.io/submit>