

# **“UNUSUAL AERIAL SIGHTINGS”**

## **A SEARCH THROUGH THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT’S RECORDS SYSTEMS**

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## Introduction

Between Jun 2003 and Jun 2008 a major search was undertaken to locate and examine Australian Government files relating to “Unusual Aerial Sightings” (otherwise known as “Unidentified Flying Objects” - UFOs.) Although the search was as thorough as possible, there is no doubt it is incomplete. To begin with, the electronic RecordSearch system of the National Archives of Australia (NAA) indexes only about 10% of their collection. Secondly, the search was undertaken using both the Archives Act and the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, where the expense of the latter precluded broad spectrum requests such as *“for all material held on UFOs.”* In addition, unlike the detailed and indexed UFO fact sheet available for the UK Government Archives which guides researchers through file numbers; searching the NAA’s RecordSearch is a very hit and miss affair. Quite often, a slight adjustment of words, or even letters, would reveal yet other files.

## Nomenclature

The first issue was one of nomenclature. Was the search simply for files on “UAS?” Various key word searches eventually lead not only to such files, but also files where the title included the terms “flying saucers,” “aerial objects,” “unidentified flying objects,” “unusual sighting,” “strange sky lights,” “unusual occurrences,” and “strange occurrences.”

A second issue arose because the search was utilising both the Archive and FOI Acts. At times it was not clear which Act applied. For example, at one time, it was found that the Department of Defence held files inside the time frame of the Archive Act; and the NAA held files which could only be made available under the FOI! This meant asking Government authorities to transfer files to other authorities in order that they could be accessed under the correct Act.

In addition, the status of some files held by the NAA was shown as “not yet examined.” This meant that the file had to go from the NAA back to the controlling authority who originated the file, to be examined and cleared for release. This clearance could take quite some time; in fact over twelve months in some instances.

Despite the issues related above, the staff of the NAA could not have been more helpful in their efforts to assist. Thanks must also go to the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF)’s FOI staff, and staff at Edinburgh RAAF base, for their professional approach to what, to them, must have seemed a trivial topic of enquiry.

In the end, it is believed that a representative collection of files has been uncovered which allows researchers to gain insight into how the Australian Government viewed the UFO phenomenon.

## Government agencies with files on UAS

The search eventually found records of 151 files which are, or were, in whole or part, about UAS/UFOs or UFO organisations, originating with:

- The former Department of Supply
- The former Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) and the current Department of Transport & Regional Services (DOTRS)
- The former Department of Territories (DOT)
- The former Department of External Affairs
- The Attorney General's Department – Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO)
- The current Commonwealth Scientific & Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)
- The current Department of Defence (DOD):
  - Australian Army
  - Royal Australian Navy
  - Royal Australian Air Force
  - Former areas such as the Air Board; Department of Air (DOA) (1939-1973); and the Joint Intelligence Bureau/Joint Intelligence Organisation (JIB/JIO); Joint Intelligence Committee
  - Ministerial files.
  - Office of Air Force History.

## Questions

The main questions which arose before examination of Government files were:

- *“What did these Government Departments do with the material they gathered, and why?”*
- *“Did any Government Agency conduct scientific research into the subject?”*
- *Were there any interesting “unknowns” found in Government files?*

Firstly though, a look at each area of the Government where files were located.

## Former Department of Supply 1952-1972

According to the “Agency notes for agency CA 57” on the NAA web site, the Department of Supply came into being on 17 Mar 1950. The Department was responsible for a diverse range of functions which included:

- The control of materials used in producing atomic energy (1950-1953)
- Building of merchant ships (1950-1951)

- Promotion and production of liquid fuels
- Manufacture, acquisition, provision and supply of war materials
- Responsibility for operation and management of space tracking stations (from 1959)
- Participation in firing of European Launcher Development Organisation (ELDO) rockets at Woomera (from 1962)
- The operation of the Joint United Kingdom-Australia Weapons Research project
- Operation and management of space tracking stations and certain other facilities on behalf of the Government of the USA.

The Department's Central Office was located in Melbourne between 1950 and 1969, and then moved to Canberra. The Department was abolished on 12 Jun 1974. Most of its functions passed to the Department of Manufacturing Industry.

### ***File search***

To date, three Department of Supply files dealing with the topic of "flying saucers" or UFOs have been located. Two files were commenced in the year 1952. The earliest file so far located is from series D174, control symbol SA5281 titled "*Unusual Occurrences Flying Saucer at Woomera*" with a date range of 1952-1955. It was originally classified "Secret." It is a 25 page file, located at the Adelaide Office of the NAA and belonged to the Long Range Weapons Establishment (LRWE), Salisbury, South Australia. NAA agency notes for agency 3038 indicate that the LRWE was established in 1947 with the object of building a test range at Woomera, South Australia. The file contained details of a number of interesting observations from this early period. A summary of each report follows.

28 Apr 1952 Woomera West SA 0345hrs 15secs 3 wits

Three men waiting for transport, noticed at 45 degrees SE, a light in the sky. This light was moving WNW parallel to the ground, lighting up clouds and the surrounding terrain. It was visible through breaks in the clouds. The bus driver remarked, "*They are firing rockets early today.*" One witness replied: "*It was not a rocket.*" The light had an estimated size of one third that of the full Moon.

27 Sep 1952 Woomera SA ca2050hrs 5 secs 5 wits

Five witnesses were at the Woomera West Open Air Theatre. They sighted an object, variously described as a "cigar," an "airship," and "cylindrical" with an "exhaust" at the rear. It travelled horizontally from west to east, possibly NW to SE. One witness reported "*...two portholes with internal lighting.*" It was moving quickly, with no noise noted.

8 Oct 1952 Woomera SA 1345hrs 44 minutes 1 wit 3

While tracking an aircraft, a target was acquired by radar. However, no visual object could be seen by the radar operator. "*The signal to noise ratio was at least 5 to 1 which is similar to that obtained from a large aircraft.*" At one stage between 1345 and 1400hrs the target approached to within one mile. Between 1405 and 1429hrs the operator tracked the invisible target at heights between 1500 and 5600 feet. "*At times during the movement of the target smaller targets seemed to detach themselves from the main target and drift away.*" Weather was fine, 5/8 high cloud at 25000 feet-84 degrees F, north wind at 25-30 mph. Comments by the Security Officer included (note it snowed briefly at 0900hrs the next day): "*...it was most probably that the snow*

*cloud had some connection. However, the possibility of a neutron cloud is not ruled out...*" <sup>(1)</sup> A ground plot of the radar target was located on the file.

14 Nov 1953 Woomera SA 0145hrs 1 wit  
Sighting of a "glare" believed to be an aircraft.

5 May 1954 Woomera SA app1630hrs 5 mins 3 wits  
Three relevant documents were found, being statements by the two men involved and a covering letter forwarding the statements, from the Superintendent Long Range Weapons Establishment Range, Woomera, to the "Chief Superintendent". This letter included the statement: *"The persons reporting were separated by a distance of approximately three hundred yards and give corroborative accounts of what each observed."* <sup>(2)</sup>

One statement, dated 6 May 1954, read:  
Post "R"

RE: UNIDENTIFIED TARGET OBSERVED ON RADAR 5<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 1954

Sir,

*At about 1600 on 5<sup>th</sup> May, an unidentified Target was observed on radar AA Number 4 Mk. 6. The target appeared on High Beam at a range of about 60,000 yards Brg 355degrees approaching 'R', described a Hyperbols (sic) over 'R' and went out at a bearing of approx. 90 degrees. On its way out it passed behind Spotting Tower, "S2". I timed it over 15,000 yards 10 seconds which would make its speed approximately 3600 M.P.H. Cfn. KEANE observed this occurrence with me. Since the target was followed to 70,000 yards on High Beam the height would be greater than 60,000 feet. See Diagram on next page.*

The diagram referred to was not located in the file examined.

The other statement, dated 7 May 1954, which under the man's name had an entry: "Vickers-Armstrong," read:

REPORT ON A FLYING OBJECT SIGHTED ON 5<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 1954

*I was at Range R1 (Post R1), the Radar Post, standing by the Security Officer's Hut, and looking towards the radar Post at approximately 1645 hours, observing one of our trials through binoculars. This object appeared to be travelling towards me or directly across a path of the approaching Canberra. When it got to the path of the Canberra it turned to my right and was going in the direction from which the Canberra had just come.*

*When it got directly over the Canberra it slowed down. During this time I found it very hard to believe what I was seeing, so I shut my eyes and then looked again through the binoculars and the object was still stationary over the flight path of the Canberra.*

*Since it appeared to be the same relative size as the Canberra through the binoculars, I thought it would be possible to see it with the naked eye. However, when I looked over the top of the binoculars the object had either gone or I could not see it with the naked eye, and when I looked again through the binoculars I could not pick it up.*

*The object appeared to be travelling about three times as fast as the Canberra, but of course it is impossible to estimate, since I did not know what height it was. It was perfectly circular all the time and a dark grey colour, and gave the appearance of being translucent. It did not glisten at all when it turned or was it shiny.*



21 Oct 1954 Woomera SA 2125hrs 6 mins 3 wits

Observations of what witnesses described as a “dancing light,” from adjacent to launcher apron number 1 range. Azimuth 215 degrees T at approximately 3 degrees elevation. The light's colour varied from deep orange to a deep yellow. Described as three times the size of Venus. The planet Venus was at 238 degrees T 1 degree elevation at the time. The light was seen to move around in a small area. Weather 70F, wind NNE 10 mph. 3/8 cloud at 15000 feet. Scattered ice crystals at 30000 feet. No noise heard from light. Interestingly, a copy of this report was forwarded to the University of Adelaide, and a copy was actually located and obtained from that University for this Project.

### ***Missing from the first file***

There were at least four other 1953-1954 observations from Woomera on RAAF files.

1. 24 Jul 1953 Woomera. 0145hrs. A white oval light detected by Doppler seen by one witness overhead. Moving NW then SE at a speed greater than 80 degrees per minute. Estimated to be 10-12 feet in size. <sup>(3)</sup>
2. 29 Jul 1953. Woomera. 1030-1530hrs at intervals. White round objects seen through 10x binoculars and said to have been thistles. <sup>(4)</sup>
3. 22 Nov 1953 SE of Woomera. Green & red lights were reported on four separate occasions. The green lights were travelling north. <sup>(5)</sup>
4. 6 Oct 1954 Woomera. The Wing Commander Provost Marshal wrote to DAFI on 28 Oct 1954 “*Enclosed is a report...observed by...Gnr WILLIS, R J kinetheodolite observer at Woomera...Gnr Willis claims to have photographed the object for approximately three seconds with a kinetheodolite...this photograph has been handed to the Director.*” <sup>(6)</sup> The enclosed report form stated that Willis had been at site K5 on range A1 at the time. A 1952 map showing K1 to K5 indicates this placed the observation near “Shell Lagoon.” The object had been first sighted overhead while Willis was looking at a Jindivik pilotless aircraft. The object was silver white in colour and of a half Moon shape. No sound had been heard and there had been no vapour trail. The structure less object had travelled from SW to NW in a straight line. The weather at the time was described as very clear.

### ***Second file***

The previous file's date range was 1952 to 1955. The second file found had a date range of 1952-1968. File series D250 control symbol 56/483 “*Reports on unidentified aircraft, strange occurrences etc*” was found in the Sydney office of the NAA and came from the Weapons Research Establishment (WRE) area of Supply. According to NAA agency notes for agency

CA3039, the WRE was created in 1955 by the amalgamation of the LRWE and two laboratories. The file is 139 folios in length and contains copies of documents relating to observations dated 28 Apr 52; 27 Sep 52; 8 Oct 52; 14 Nov 53 & 5 May 54. It also contains the tracking plot of the object on 5 May 1954 which was not on file SA5281. An undated Memo from Group Captain Superintendent LRWE Range was sent to the Chief Superintendent with copies of various papers on recent "strange occurrences" at Woomera. The originals were forwarded by the Security organisation in Melbourne to the RAAF's Directorate of Air Force Intelligence (DAFI.)

On 29 Jul 1953 a number of unusual objects were reported over the range and were seen by the Range Operations Security Officer himself. At 1400 hrs using binoculars he saw spherical objects moving rapidly across the sky. One earlier observer thought he had seen a round or flattened disc. Elsewhere a round object was mistaken for a bomb being released and a series of photos were taken. The official explanation was "...*It is believed that the objects seen were balls of thistle seeds and vegetation...*"<sup>(7)</sup>

Other papers on this file relate to a number of instances where unidentified aircraft had been reported over the Woomera prohibited area. Sometimes identifications were later made, but others remained unknown and were of concern to security staff.

The rest of the file from 1957-1968 consists of reports from the general public of what are regarded on the file as satellites. Any reported UFO observations from Woomera, between 1958 and 1966, were not on this file.

### ***Missing from this second file***

There are two high profile reports made to UFO organisations which are not mentioned on this file.

At 2130hrs on the 28 Jun 1963 at Sandy Creek, near Gawler, South Australia a man was travelling on the Lyndoch-Gawler road going to Gawler, when upon rounding a corner, in his vehicle, the anonymous Willaston man came upon a blood-red coloured object extending across the roadway. This was close to the Sandy Creek Hotel. The man applied the vehicle's brakes and was within three metres of the object when it rose suddenly from the road. After rising one hundred meters or so, it turned on its side and sped off, streaming vapour. Described as eight metres across and four high, with a concave top and a flat base, it glowed blood-red when close to the ground and appeared to change to a light red yellow as it gathered speed and flew off towards Two Wells. Hervey<sup>(8)</sup> (cites the date as during the period 1955-1958) states that the sighting was reported to police and that a CIB Special Branch officer interviewed the witness. The Adelaide Advertiser Newspaper reports "...*He later reported the incident to the Weapons Research Establishment which arranged for him to be interviewed by a member of the CIB Special Branch.*"<sup>(9)</sup> An inquiry directed to the South Australian Police failed to provide any leads to any such Special Branch report.

The UFO literature provides us with details of a purported photograph of a UFO taken at Woomera on 5 Jun 1964. The English UFO magazine, Flying Saucer Review in its Sep/Oct

1964 issue on page 4 shows a photograph taken at the launching of a Blue Streak rocket, which shows an oval blob of light near the rocket. This black and white print in the FSR was apparently from a colour movie. There is nothing concerning this photograph on the second file. Efforts were made to track down this picture. On the NAA web site we located "Series notes for series D897 Unknown objects –DSTO WRE{A-K 1948-1957} –Australian Archives." The notes state that the "...series contains approximately 4800 colour and black and white slides. Controlling records for this series (D896) indicate there are some 6220 slides registered between 1947 and 1971. The whereabouts of the missing 1400 slides is currently unknown...There are slides of Skylark launches, Jindivik trials, Blue Streak movements and some unidentified objects..." We located a register for some of these slides in the Adelaide Office of the NAA. NAA staff produced two bound volumes which contained dates, reference numbers and details of the photographs. A close examination of the details of hundreds of pictures listed there revealed none of an unidentified or unknown nature.

### ***Third file***

File number SA5644/2/1 is a Department of Supply file "*Sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects*" registered to the WRE, Salisbury with a date range of 1966 -1974. This file contains a number of inquiries from the general public and other quarters about unidentified objects in the sky. As an example, the file actually opens in Jul 1966 with an inquiry from a person living in Victor Harbor, South Australia, concerning an object which traversed the sky. Interestingly, the letter commences with "*I understand that you have a section on unidentified objects etc...*" The WRE response advised that they had a "...satellite tracking section..." but was "...unable to identify the object..."<sup>(10)</sup> even though they suspected it was a satellite.

Other requests for assistance with identification came from the RAAF. For example, in Oct 1966 RAAF Richmond requested the Department to identify an object seen at Kurrajong NSW on 20 Jul 1966. An internal Departmental Minute headed "UFO Policy" states that inquiries of this nature would be referred directly to S/APD (Superintendent, American Projects Division) for reply by the PRO (Public Relations Officer). In this instance the Satellite Tracking Operations Group was "...unable to correlate the sighting reported on folio 4a with transits of the brighter satellites..."<sup>(11)</sup>

A 23 Jun 1967 Memo from Director WRE M W Woods to the DD/Trials advised Trials that the Director had, through Security channels, learnt that "...kine operators at Woomera sighted an alleged UFO during a Skylark firing on Apr 27<sup>th</sup>..."<sup>(12)</sup> and called for a report. A follow-up telex dated 18 Jul 1967 from Dep. Sec/R & Supply Melbourne asked why no report had yet been forthcoming and stated that the report involved positions K9, K12, K8, site 3, site 4 and X11 and asked "...Have you had the films examined as discussed..."<sup>(13)</sup> The subsequent investigation revealed two series of observations, the first on 27 Apr 1967 (some forms showed the date as 28 Apr 1967) and the second on 30 Jun 1967. Details follow:

*27 Apr 1967*

1. 28 Apr 67 1402hrs About 0.5-1secs K Simmons. Optical tracker. "*Object appeared round and white, as large as the Moon and passed to the right of the Skylark at approx +55s in sequence, no elevations angle noted-no further details.*"

2. 27 Apr 67. 1402hrs 2 secs Position K8 L. Davis. Optical instrument – tracking telescope. Skylark in sky. *“Between +55s and 60s a dull white object appeared high in the tracking telescope for approx 2 secs. Being high in the telescope the object was distorted but appeared to be long and wider in the centre than at the ends, the top piece being a slightly darker shade.”*

3. 28 Apr 67. 1402hrs +60s. 2/5 secs. I J Davis Site 4. Watch Skylark. Trial 23 A3. “85 degree el. The object appeared to be moving very fast, was white in colour and saucer shaped sighted in FOV for approx 2/5 secs. Flying in roughly the opposite direction to the vehicle-object appeared to be twice the size of the vehicle.”

4. 27 Apr 67. Site K12 A2 operator.  $\frac{3}{4}$  sec at +55 and =60 1402hrs. Using optical instrument watching Skylark. Sky-fine, slight wispy cloud. White object passed below vehicle in camera FOV.

5. 27 Apr 67. Site K9. 1402hrs 6mins. Through kino theodelite. Az 220 degrees el 70 degrees. *“Object acquired at +1m30s in sequence and lost at +8 to +9m in sequence. Bright object fell away from dull white object. Two objects kept coming back to larger object and flashing past. “Large object was fast moving in az when picked up then slowed down in az and gained speed in el. Small objects were fast in az.”* Larger object dull white. 2 smaller were bright yellowish white.

6. 28 Apr 67. L Fox at site 3. +60s in sequence. 1402hrs. Kinetheodelite. Watching sky saw a silver white coloured object.

7. 28 Apr 67. Site 3. 1402hrs. 6 mins. Optical-kine. Object acquired at approx +1m30s in sequence at 90 degrees elevation. Lost at +8m10s to +8m30s at an az of 220.2 and el of 7-10. Moved from 90 degrees el to 7/10 degrees el. And at 15 degrees el was at 220.2 az. Watching Skylark. The object flashed past the Skylark-was dull in colour. Dull round object with two (undecipherable) 2 small shot past and buzzing round elongated. Disappeared 8m10 to 8m30. Round just moved out and others with it and went away 220.2az 15 degrees el when lost 7-10 degrees.

30 Jun 1967

1. “Report on Aerial Object Observed” form. R Hodge Photographer. 3 secs. Overhead. One white round object. 60 to 90 degree very fast NNW to SSE straight line. Lost in mid-air. Blue sky. Target aircraft on dummy run.

2. Harvey. Asst Photog. Approx 1100 till 1200. Tracked at K12. Operator V34 drew attention. White objects. *“No definite formation but most appeared to be within 10 degrees az of each other at times.”* White. *“Most were spherical while others were appeared similar to meteorites.”* Lost. *“Mostly due size, distance and haze.”* L D East. Asst Photog. 1100hrs to 1140hrs intermittent. 165 degrees az 45 degrees el. Crossing path of missile in trail EC 23. Overhead. Silver white like aircraft without wings. 45 degrees el slightly arced path. *“Did not track long as trial imminent.”* Clear blue sky.

3. P Howard. Asst Photog. 1135hrs Fraction of a sec. Through 12x tracking scope of Congreves camera from site 6 K35. Travelling across path of a Jindivik aircraft. Ap 40-45

degree el very fast. Northerly direction gaining height. Went out of FOV. Clear blue sky. Object appeared to be closer to K35 than Jindivik.

4. M Randel. Asst Photog. 11 to 1140 Intermittent. 165az 45 degree el at 1100 cross path of missile in trial. Overhead. Intercom talk alerted. 45 degree slow to very fast. Went towards range head. Trial EC23.

5. M Wallbanks. Asst Photog. 1100-1145hrs. Site 2. Congreaves K14 kinetheodelite. App in tracking telescope. 40 degrees el. Travelling to 145 degrees az. Path on curve, others circled and disappeared. Disappeared over horizon. Clear blue sky. Jindivick trial.

6. I Neill. Asst Photog. 1100-1130hrs. Site 4. K16. Kinetheodelite. Overhead. Six objects white some appeared to have red others are rocket shaped. First sighted 80 degrees el. Lost over horizon. Jindivick trial,

7. Asst Photog. 1100-1115hrs. 10-15mins. K15. Overhead. Six to 12 objects white. All shaped. Travelled in all directions. Straight path. First sighted 80 degrees el. Faded into distance. Photographed at K15 for approx 5 seconds.

8. 1100-1130hrs. 10-15mins. K15. J Windner. Asst Photog. 6-12 objects in no apparent formation. White. First seen at 80 degrees el. Irregular cigar shapes-oblong. Appeared to fade in distance.

9. P Ratcliffe. Assist Photog. 1105-1130hrs. V34 at site 3. Gooney Bird. Approx 55 degree el az 120 degrees. Several white objects through binoculars. Some circular some cylindrical .NW to SE. Went over horizon. Jindivick dummy trial. Tracked three objects to just on horizon. Az 155-165 degrees.

### ***What did “the powers that be” think caused these observations?***

Given that the Woomera range was heavily instrumented and “secret”, observations of unusual objects at this location should have received critical analysis.

In a Memo dated 17 Jul 67 to Supt Trials from PO/Ranges it is noted that three to four such sightings occur each year usually in late autumn months. *“The “objects” are almost certainly wind-borne spider webs...The fact that attempts to photograph these “objects” have always been unsuccessful tend to support the theory that they are in fact extremely tenuous body at no great distance from the observer.”* <sup>(14)</sup> A file note of 19 Jul 67 from the D/D Trials to S/TRD adds *“I wouldn’t give the operators very high marks as observers.”* <sup>(15)</sup>

A further Memo two days later to the Supt Trials Division from the PO Ranges re the UFO sightings of 27 Apr 67 enclosed the original reports from various operators and concludes that *“It is however, quite possible that multiple sightings of wind carried webs could provide reasonable explanation.”* <sup>(16)</sup>

Finally, in a teleprinter message of the 25 Jul 67 from Woods Weapons to DS/R&E Supply Melbourne. Re alleged UFO sighting. "No, repeat, no films were exposed."<sup>(17)</sup> Reports came from kine operators and "...did not correlate with each other except in time." "Sightings of wind carried webs are possible explanations."<sup>(18)</sup> An amended teleprinter message on the next day from Woods Director Weapons to DS/R&E Supply Melbourne stated "Further to my W8476 about alleged UFO sightings. The sentence in my message saying no films were exposed may be misleading. In fact the normal trial kinetheodelite films were exposed during the trial. These should have shown the UFO crossing the field of view close to Skylark but nothing was recorded."<sup>(19)</sup>

## ***Project Moon Dust?***

The USAF had a Project called "Moon Dust." A check with the authoritative "The UFO Encyclopaedia" written by US Researcher Jerry Clark, indicated that "In 1961 the U.S. Air Force established the classified Project Moon Dust to "locate, recover and deliver descended foreign space vehicles.""<sup>(20)</sup>

A Memo on this file, originally from file SA5492/1/1 Part 1 and originally dated 16 Aug 1962 was to the Supt/Woomera from Controller WRE re identification of space vehicle fragments. It reported that a letter received from the Department of External Affairs relayed that the US Embassy was informally seeking assistance in "...obtaining information which might be used in the identification of space vehicle fragments."<sup>(21)</sup> It asked for details of sightings of "luminous objects" and "Observations of Impact(s) and/or recovery of fragment(s)." Observations were requested from members of staff.

In a Memo dated 4 Sep 67 the American Projects Division asked the Assistant Sec (Projects) if the 1962 processes regarding the reporting of space vehicle fragments were still needed? This was followed up in a minute from APD to S/APD, reporting that two avenues of reporting UFOs existed. Firstly, one for sightings at the ranges had the steps PO/Ranges to Supt/Trials to DD/Trials to Regional Security Officer Adelaide to Chief Security Officer to Dept of Air to? The second was for all other sightings. The route was observer to Supt/APD to Head Office to Dept of External Affairs to US Embassy. The Memo was trying to delete input to US Embassy.

A further Memo dated 13 Dec 67 from a/g Supt American Projects Division to Asst Sec Projects again asked for clarification if instructions contained in memo of 8 Aug 62 were still in effect. The 1962 memo stated that the US Embassy. "...had informally sought the assistance of the Department of External Affairs in obtaining information which might be used in the identification of space vehicle fragments..."<sup>(22)</sup> Subsequently, arrangements were made for Woomera staff to report sightings in that area. Reports outside Woomera details were sent to Head Office for transmission through Dept of External Affairs to the US Embassy as per memo of 8 Aug 62. Reports from WRE would go to the RAAF. It suggested changes to refer all reports to RAAF.

### ***Scientific, Technical & Astronomical Research Society (STARS)***

The powers that be were upset that the observations of the 27 Apr had been reported using an unofficial report form designed by a Woomera UFO group titled the Scientific, Technical & Astronomical Research Society (STARS). A Memo dated 7 Aug 67 to Director WRE Salisbury and WRE Woomera from the Superintendent about the UFO club, set out conditions under which STARS was officially allowed to operate. STARS created its own report form but the reports system was ordered to be discontinued.

A further Memo dated 10 Aug 67 to Captain F E Irvine (RAN) Supt/Woomera from M W Woods, Director, WRE Salisbury again concerned the UFO club and stated in part *"I am glad to hear that the "sighting report" to the STARS organisation have been discontinued. There are obviously security dangers in permitting unofficial reports of this kind."*<sup>(23)</sup>

Finally, a Minute dated 18 Sep 67 to the Director from the Trials Wing HQ., subject: UFO club at Woomera includes the words *"I have noted that the activities of the Woomera club have declined markedly in recent months..."*<sup>(24)</sup>

This is where the matter rested until 2008 when a re-check of the NAA Record Search for any recently released UFO files led to the discovery of a 100 page file, series D250, control symbol 56/3568 Part 1, titled *"Scientific, Technical and Astronomical Research Society."* This file covers the period 1966-1968. (See appendix ten.)

Entries during the period 1968 to 1974 on file SA5644/2/1 refer to queries about sightings and their possible explanations, although almost all seem to have been satellites. The last active entry was dated 5 Aug 74.

### ***More Department of Supply UFO papers on other Government files***

An examination of RAAF files reveals several items which are not on any of the three files located and examined. The first four relate to raw reports and are summarised below.

(1) 30 Jul 1965 70mls W of Cook SA 0835hrs 10mins 5Men

A gang of railway workers looking to the south of the railway line reported watching for ten minutes, a hovering silver coloured object apparently reflecting the rays of the Sun. It disappeared with a flash.<sup>(25)</sup>

(2) 20 Jul 1967 Karoonda SA 1537hrs 1M Seeholm

Object reported falling to earth. Seen travelling E to S.<sup>(26)</sup>

(3) 28 Oct 1971. Woomera SA 1315hrs 15secs 1M Murphy

Murphy was tracking a pre-launch meteorological balloon through an optical theodolite. Balloon was situated almost due East of range E (? Difficult to read document) at 6900m and bearing 088.4 True and 37.7 deg el. The balloon and its attached target were

backgrounded by thin lines of cloud. As the balloon moved slowly to the left side of the lens Murphy noted an object moving away from the balloon to the right of the lens. He initially thought that the target had separated from the balloon. He then tracked this object for 15 seconds. It was moving at a constant speed in a shallow upward curve. It was shaped like a cross. He concluded it was an aircraft. Light bluish grey in colour. Outline was reasonably well defined. Small image size. Image was twice the size of the balloon target and similar in size to the balloon (which was 10-15 feet diameter). Its 'fuselage' and "wings" appeared to be of uniform thickness and length. No evidence of engines or tail. DCA reported there was a BOAC 707 at 37000 feet at 150-200 miles SE of Leigh Creek at the time. <sup>(27)</sup>

*"Further to telephoned advice forwarded herewith is a copy of report 5/126/5 of 8<sup>th</sup> Nov 1971, together with attachment, from the ESO Woomera reporting the alleged sighting of an unidentified aircraft over the Woomera Prohibited Area at 1315hrs on 28.10.71 25 minutes prior to the launch of the Black Arrow missile."* <sup>(28)</sup> Range instrumentation at Parakylia Station 20 miles SE of range and Red Lake radar post R38 did not sight or hear an aircraft, nor at Roxby Downs 15 miles East, or Purple Downs (20 miles SE). In respect of R38 any object within 100,000 feet and height of no more than 5-10,000 feet should have been registered. *"In spite of all enquiries no confirmation of the alleged sighting has been obtained and the possibility that the object was a bird of the eagle variety, wedge tailed eagles are plentiful at Woomera cannot be entirely discounted without any prejudice to Murphy."* <sup>(29)</sup>

*"Two most likely explanations of this incident are:*

- (a) A mistaken identification of the object seen by Murphy through his theodolite*
- (b) A flight across the prohibited area by an aircraft for which a flight plan had not been submitted to DCA"* <sup>(30)</sup>

A telex dated 21 Dec 71 to DOA SUPDEP Canberra read *"For Morrison CSO. Reference your Y10/5/1 dated 20 Dec, no military aircraft in vicinity of Nurrungar prohibited area within one hour of 200659. DAFI unable to provide any assessment of sighting on 28 Oct 71 at this time."* <sup>(31)</sup>

#### **(4) 20 Dec 71 Woomera 0650hrs 1M Sketcher**

A meteorological observer at Woomera reported seeing an aircraft with the naked eye as a tiny silver dot ahead of a vapour trail. It was heading NE, and checks revealed that there were no known aircraft in the area. A Memo dated 7 Jan 72 from the Dept of Supply to DAFI (Ref Y10/5/1. Unidentified Aircraft –Woomera) in part read *"This sighting appears to be sufficiently authenticated, yet there is no official knowledge of any military or civil aircraft that could have intruded into the Woomera air space."* <sup>(32)</sup> DAFI responded to the Chief Security Officer, Dept of Supply on 13 Jan 1972 *"Although the known facts concerning this incident could lend themselves to speculation regarding the presence of a foreign aircraft in Woomera airspace on the 20<sup>th</sup> Dec, the Directorate of Air Force Intelligence considers this most unlikely. The Directorate believes that a more plausible explanation involves the re-entry of space debris into the earth's atmosphere but is unable to confirm this possibility."* <sup>(33)</sup>

(5) In a Memo dated 6 Sep 72 the Defence Standards Laboratories, Dept of Supply, wrote to the Department of Air re an Unidentified Fallen Object. The Memo stated that a preliminary exam revealed that the object submitted was probably a bit off a satellite. <sup>(34)</sup>



(6) However, perhaps the most interesting piece of paper in the RAAF files relating to the Department of Supply was a short Memo dated 27 Jul 1971 from DAFI to S/AIR/SS (whoever this is!) which stated in part *"You spoke to me recently on the matter of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) and you mentioned that the Department of Supply may be interested in investigating this subject. This minute provides a brief historical sketch of this subject and my reaction to the proposal."* <sup>(35)</sup> This issue will be reported upon later.

### ***Missing at the moment***

Looking at Department of Supply file reference numbers on various files, there are some files not yet located. For example there would appear to be UAS related correspondence on files numbered Y111/12/1 Part 4; Y121/1/1; Y123/3/17; YA26/9/2, Y10/5/1, A12/3/2. and A12/3/3. Some of these would appear to be Department of Supply Head Office files which have not surfaced on RecordSearch. Further research indicates the possibility that these files might be located at the Melbourne office of the NAA under series B6136.

## **The former Department of Civil Aviation 1952-1973 and the current Department of Transport and Regional Services 1973-2005**

### ***The Department of Civil Aviation***

On 16 Jan 1951 the Federal Government Air Board issued a standard pro forma titled *"Report on Aerial Object Observed"* for the reporting of 'flying saucers' within Australia. <sup>(1)</sup> This form was replaced in Jan 1952, and again in Nov 1953. <sup>(2)</sup> These pro formas were utilised by all RAAF units and were part of one reporting system. However, there was at least one other Government agency, the Department of Civil Aviation (DCA), which was active in collecting and collating reports. As will be seen below, yet other more secretive agencies seemed to also want to get into the act. How interested was the DCA in this era? Two references were found which bear on this question.

Firstly, in one of the earliest Australian books written about Flying Saucers:

*"Officers of the Civil Aviation Department wanted to establish a special bureau to collect and collate facts about flying saucers. From Cabinet itself, however, came instructions that it was more properly a matter for the security services."* <sup>(3)</sup>

Secondly, a May 1952 news paper report titled "Hush ban on saucers" advised that:

*"Australian Security Intelligence Officers have refused the Civil Aviation Department permission to investigate reports of 'flying saucers' Mr R M Seymour said tonight. Mr Seymour is Superintendent*

*of Air Traffic Control. He said his department had planned to set up a special section to collate facts on "flying saucer" reports. Intelligence officials had told him that "flying saucers" were "security matters." Mr Seymour said "saucer" reports which he had collected followed the pattern of similar reports in the United States."*<sup>(4)</sup>

In 1953, one of the Department's own high level staff filmed an unknown object. At 1200hrs on 23 Aug 1953 Mr T. Drury, the then Deputy Director of the DCA for Papua New Guinea, was in Port Moresby. In the cloudless south-western sky he noticed what seemed to be "cloud building up" which grew in intensity for several minutes. Suddenly, an object appeared from one side of this cloud and climbed fast in a north-west direction. In size Drury said it seemed "*slightly bigger than a pin head.*" The soundless object left a clearly defined vapour trail. It "*finally disappeared with a rapid gain of altitude.*" Drury had a movie camera with him and filmed using a telephoto lens. The film was examined both in Australia by the RAAF and in the USA.<sup>(5)</sup>

The Victorian UFO Research Society published a research document in Sep 1978 titled "*A compilation of reports from the Victorian Press*" which gave an insight into the DCA's interest in 1954.<sup>(6)</sup>

The Melbourne Herald of 5 Jan 1954 reported that Mr R M Seymour, DCA Superintendent of Air Traffic Control said "*People who believe they have seen unusual objects in the sky should not keep the information to themselves for fear of ridicule...we do not regard this business as a joke. People are definitely seeing objects, some of which have not been explained.*"

Mr Seymour was also quoted the next day in The Melbourne Sun as saying that

*"The best we can do at the moment is try to establish that an aircraft was in the vicinity when the saucer was sighted. If we are unable to do that, then the report becomes inexplicable..."*<sup>(7)</sup>

The exposure the DCA received from media items resulted in it receiving 24 reports on the 6 Jan alone!<sup>(8)</sup> By the 12 Jan, it was being reported that the DCA had received about 50 reports.<sup>(9)</sup>

The Melbourne Sun (13 Jan) newspaper reported that these reports to the DCA spanned nearly 30 years and that the DCA were checking the reports before forwarding them to the RAAF. A DCA official was quoted as saying that "*Some highly qualified engineers in our department are convinced that there is something in the saucer mystery.*"

Only one DCA file has been located which contains raw reports from this era. This is file series C273/227 control symbol 1957/619 which contains reports commencing on 14 Jun 1953 and extending to 24 Feb 1960. There are a total of 15 reports on this file, with eight being reported in 1954. Many are of the lights in the sky variety.

One interesting case on the file was that of the Mena Murtee Station photographs. Claims were made that a large saucer shaped object had been seen at the Station, and that three photographs were taken showing this object. The DCA conducted an investigation as demonstrated by various piece of correspondence on the file. The story as given was that at 4pm Tuesday last before 4 Nov 1954, a Mr Keith Weston of Mena Murtee Station, 18 miles

NW of Wilcannia NSW had sighted an object. It was 500 feet from the ground, with an estimated size of 80-90 yards across. It came from the direction of Netalia and hovered over a wool shed on the Station. It was said that when it departed there was a sound like a loud explosion and a clanking sound. Three photographs were taken and developed at the homestead. It was the DCA who conducted the investigation, not the RAAF. Eventually, a Mrs Weston advised the Department (internal memo dated 10 Nov 1954) that: "...ask your Department to drop the matter, as it is a faked snapshot which was taken to have a joke with someone in Wilcannia and the matter has gone too far." Thus the incident was stated to have been a hoax. Interestingly, in an internal memo dated 23 Nov 1954 the DCA Head Office stated: "If the photographs are genuine, they will be of considerable interest and a request has been received from American 'Service' source for copies." One wonders who these "Service" interests were?

Throughout the period 1954-1957, the DCA was regularly forwarding reports it received on to the Department of Air. It utilised its own internal form labelled "Air Safety Incident"

At 1944hrs on 27 Sep 1957 L. Stinson, an Air Traffic Controller reported seeing a white light bearing 025 degrees from the Launceston Tasmania Control Tower. The light was travelling southwards, at the speed of a DC3 aircraft. After 90 seconds, the light was abeam of the field and viewed through binoculars. Checks with area control revealed that there was no known air traffic or meteorological balloons. After 3 minutes it was lost to view from Launceston. The cloud base was at 4000 feet and the sky was overcast. Ground wind was from 300 degrees at 10 knots. At 1950hrs staff at Hobart airport received a request from Launceston to undertake a radar search. At 2024hrs an echo was detected bearing 356 degrees at 34000 yards slant range at 5 degrees elevation, which moved at a fast speed. It was lost at 354 degrees at 17 miles, height 9-10,000 feet. <sup>(10)</sup>

RAAF files indicate that the DCA continued to refer reports, including ones from its own staff, throughout the period 1959-1963.

The subject of "unusual occurrences," as the DCA sometimes referred to reports of "flying saucers" or "UFOs" made its way on to the agenda of a meeting on Air Safety investigations held between 26-29 Nov 1963. The minutes of agenda item 21 read:

*"Reporting Unusual Occurrences. When a report of an unusual occurrence is received, and investigation indicates that it is not associated with any known aircraft, the report should still be communicated to Head Office in case it may be of interest to some other Authority."* <sup>(11)</sup>

Departmental staff themselves continued to report 'unusual occurrences. On Thursday 15 Jul 1965 six members of the Canberra Air Traffic control, employed by the DCA were involved in a UFO incident. At 10.50am T. Lindsay, an Air Traffic Controller, was looking for an aircraft, and reported seeing to the north-east "...a large yellow luminous balloon...It wasn't Venus...I'm sure of that from the position." Another controller, Tony Frodsham reported "...in colour it looked like a metallic object...After all that time-nearly forty minutes-it was gone, just like that." <sup>(12)</sup> Officer-in-charge A.B. Lindeman said that the object was visible to the naked eye and was stationary at 020 degrees for 20 minutes. Binoculars revealed no further details. <sup>(13)</sup>

By the following year, 1966, the Department of Air was concerned at the publicity still surrounding the topic. Indeed, the Secretary of the Department of Air wrote to the Director-General of the DCA on 12 Oct 1966 as follows:

*"Sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects have during recent months been receiving considerable publicity...Royal Australian Air Force is responsible for the investigation of reports...it is now considered that all authorities that could throw any light on these incidents should be officially associated with the investigation...Your agreement is therefore sought to the proposal that whenever the UFO investigation suggests that your department might be able to provide some assistance a copy of the ufo report should be sent for your comment."* <sup>(14)</sup>

The DCA responded on 26 Oct 66 that *"We will be pleased to provide any assistance you require in connection with the investigation of reports on unidentified flying objects."* The DCA suggested using the same system as previously proposed for RAAF/DCA air safety incident reports.<sup>(15)</sup> The RAAF agreed, noting that the idea of RAAF bases liaising directly with the appropriate DCA Regional office was supported. In a memorandum dated 14 Mar 1967 (ref 21/1/387) the DCA Head Office in Melbourne wrote to regional offices. The memo advised regions that the RAAF investigated UFO reports and that *"...all authorities that could provide any information should be officially associated with the investigation system."* DCA has agreed to participate and this memo sets out procedures.

If it wasn't for the reporting system via the DCA, researchers would still not know about an interesting South Australian Jul 1967 CE2 case. A witness named Langsford of Robby's Aerial Services was travelling by motor vehicle five miles NNE of Murray Bridge one clear night with thick ground fog. Suddenly, the car radio experienced interference. Within 100-150 yards the vehicle's engine stopped by itself. Although the ignition was on, the dash warning lights came on. Looking up he saw a "large dark shadow" at an estimated height of 20 feet. Above the shadow was a greyish-blue glow. He stopped the vehicle but shadow and light had gone. Returning to the car he started the engine; switched on the radio and found there was no interference.<sup>(16)</sup>

Two years later, a radar visual event occurred on the 23 May 1969 which involved a DCA radar operator at Kalamunda WA. At 1835hrs two civilian witnesses saw a moving light which travelled from 10 degrees S, through the SE to the E then to the N of them. It appeared as a steady red light on top of a blue-white light. Finally it settled in a stationary position 10-15 degrees bearing 015 degrees. It was described as circular, half the size of the full Moon. It was there for 15-20 minutes before, at 1900 hours it moved off at high speed to the N/NE. The female witness at 1901hrs telephoned Kalamundra radar. On checking the radar screen the operator saw a large echo 9 miles distance at 300 degrees. This meant it was some 2.5 miles N of the civilian witnesses. Contact was held for 30-40 seconds. The echo appeared for short instances on five occasions and finally disappeared at 1942hrs. Interestingly, despite the radar having Moving Target Indicator which meant that it suppressed targets moving less than 6 knots. The target had no noticeable displacement.<sup>(17)</sup>

Other 1969 events involving airline pilots:

- 18 Jan 69 on a flight between Singapore and Perth airline Captain Morris travelling 350 degrees tracking 157 degrees True. The plane was at 35000 feet in a Boeing 707. He reported a yellow/white light which descended from 0 degrees to minus 2 degrees. The object gradually fell behind the aircraft. The duration of the event was 5-10 minutes <sup>(18)</sup>
- 5 Feb 69. An airline pilot Tillotson was at Ferny Creek, Vic at 2350hrs. He reported seeing a bright white point source travelling 5 degrees/minute soundlessly W to E. It was lost behind a hill <sup>(19)</sup>.
- 22 Apr 69. A pilot named Hill was over Bass Strait at 1991hrs. A green light was initially seen at 60 degrees elevation and lost in mid-air at 30 degrees at 240 degrees T. Another pilot Rayment at the same time over Bass Strait reported a bright white wound balls in the sky with 2-3 very small incandescent balls trailing <sup>(20)</sup>.
- 5 Aug 69. While 18nm NW of Melbourne, an airline pilot , first officer and 2 hostesses at 18000 feet saw a green fluorescent light 30 degree to port at 20-30 degrees elevation. It was 2-3 times the size of the full Moon <sup>(21)</sup>

More airline crew reports continued in 1970:

- On 23 May at 1810hrs Captain Knott of an ANA DC9 flight 200nm SE of Townsville reported a beam of light in the direction of Alice Springs. It was pale yellow in colour. It was vertical and stationary. The pilot of a nearby TAA DC9 also saw it. <sup>(22)</sup>
- On 29 Jun Keog, the pilot of a F27 aircraft on descent from 12500 feet noted echoes on radar 60 degrees abeam. The echo appeared to be 60nm from his aircraft and keeping station with him. These were five cigar shaped objects. DCA advised there were no aircraft in the area. <sup>(23)</sup>
- A pilot Harrington was at 8500 feet 40nm SE of Katherine NT on 22 Jul at 2130hrs. He sighted two objects for two minutes, one vertically above the other at 270 degrees relative. In colour they were red and green and level with the aircraft. It moved through 10 degrees in 20 seconds. <sup>(24)</sup>

After at least 20 years of involvement in processing and investigations into “Unusual occurrences”, the DCA was abolished in 1973 and its function taken up by the Air Transport Group of the Department of Transport and Regional Services (DOTS).

### ***The Department of Transport and Regional Services (DOTS)***

As mentioned above, the Department of Transport and Regional Services took over the role of the former Department of Civil Aviation. An FOI request was submitted and the Departmental decision maker for the request, Rob Graham, Director, Safety Investigations, stated that:

*“A thorough search has been made and to the best of my knowledge this decision covers all documents relevant to the Freedom of Information application made...This FOI request seeks access to documents concerning unidentified flying objects held by the Department of Transport and*

*Regional services including the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB). The relevant documents from a search of the ATSB's OASIS aviation occurrence database are listed below with a decision on access under the Act.*

Nine cases were located in the database and these are listed below.

**Occurrence number 196901691**

Occurrence id 129813. 2 Jul 1969 "Burn marks rep on 2 golf courses. Reported as poss UFO landing. RAAF notified.

**Occurrence number 196902473**

Occurrence id. 130595. 31 Jan 1969. Diamond Creek Vic. Rep sighting a UFO white in colour moving very fast in a straight line.

**Occurrence number 197502943**

Occurrence id 91062. 12 Jan 1975. Albury NSW. UFO sighted on radar at 20000ft in CTA. Not possible to identify.

**Occurrence number 197703195**

Occurrence id 77512. 16 Apr 1977. Near King island Tas. UFO report from pilot. Passed to RAAF for study. CFT beacon abeam VH-KRY. Cessna 401.

**Occurrence number 197802563**

Occurrence id 70857. 21 Oct 1978. Near cape Otway Vic. Plt reported UFO then rough running eng. TX ceased-ACFT missing. Cessna 182L.

**Occurrence number 197904600**

Occurrence id 66734. 22 Sep 1979. near Banka Banka NT. Object in area. Search ACFT found burnt trees and white ash but no object. (Sneaky Martians?) Misc UFO consisting of white light trailing smoke. Sighted by three witnesses. F27 Plt reported white.

**Occurrence number 197904657**

Occurrence id 66791. 19 Oct 1979. Near Broken Hill NSW. Acft, however no known aircraft in area. Misc F27 crew sighted UFO whilst on climb out. Flashing white light similar to strobe on high flying Fokker. B.V. F27 Mk 200.

**Occurrence number 198300234**

Occurrence id 40550. 7 Apr 1983. Near Manly West Qld. No known acft or balloon activity in area. Inside radar coverage but no radar return. UFO reported silvery object size of Cessna without wings flying from east to west at 2000ft.

### **Occurrence number 199804923**

Occurrence id 164236. 8 Nov 1998. 28km NW Perth, Aerodrome. WA. The pilot reported an unidentified flying object, bright red/orange in colour 100ft below and travelling very fast as the aircraft passed 9,000ft. The object was approximately 2 metres across and the pilot believed that it may have been a model aircraft.

## **The former Department of Territories 1959-1965**

At 1200hrs on 23 Aug 1953 Mr T. Drury, the then Deputy Director of the Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) for Papua New Guinea, was in Port Moresby. In the cloudless south-western sky he noticed what seemed to be "cloud building up" which grew in intensity for several minutes. Suddenly, an object appeared from one side of this cloud and climbed fast in a north-west direction. In size Drury said it seemed "slightly bigger than a pin head." The soundless object left a clearly defined vapour trail. It "finally disappeared with a rapid gain of altitude." Drury had a movie camera with him and filmed using a telephoto lens. The film was examined both in Australia by the RAAF and in the USA.

The dramatic events of the reported Jun 1959 CE3 events at Boianai, Papua New Guinea are well documented in the UFO literature. What is far less known is the flow of UFO reports from that region as documented in Federal Government files.

It all started with a memo from the Secretary, Department of Territories (DOT) <sup>(1)</sup> to the Secretary, Department of Defence (DOD) dated 17 Jun 1959 informing Defence of a "Reported sighting of falling object." At 1900 hours on 24 May 1959 a UFO was reported to the west of Baniara, which descended erratically to the south-west. Brilliant blue in colour, alternating to red, it disappeared at 2015 hours.

The DOT again wrote to the DOD on 4 Aug 1959 <sup>(2)</sup> recording a number of other sightings in Papua. Copies of the memo were also sent to the Department of Air (DOA); DCA; Department of National Development and the CSIRO. Two internal DOT memos were attached.

It is understandable why copies should have gone to DOA and DCA, but why CSIRO? Two previously located CSIRO files were cross-checked. A copy of the 4 Aug 1959 DOT memo was found on CSIRO file series A8520 control symbol HM1/30. The copy had simply been filed on the CSIRO file titled "Miscellaneous Enquiries – General - UFOs" with no apparent action or further analysis/comment undertaken. Also on the file were copies of six other DOT memos containing reports from PNG; no action noted on the file.

Who was the Department of National Development, and why was the DOT forwarding them copies of UFO reports? NAA "agency notes" on that Department indicated it was created on 16 Mar 1950 for the planning and co coordinating the development of national resources on a national basis. It was abolished in 1972.

Back to the reports. In the 4 Aug 1959 DOT memos Bishop Doyle of Sideia reported that in Jun 1958 a round, pale blue object the size of the Moon, was seen and emitted brighter light than moonlight. It approached and hovered over the Mission. After five minutes it moved north and disappeared in mid-sky.

In late Oct/early Nov 1958 at about 1900 hours a white light travelled from north-west to south-east on two evenings. On the second evening the light flashed on and off at two second intervals.

In May 1959, nine school boys reported seeing a large, green elliptical object moving rapidly across the sky.

On 13 Jun 1959 at 1815 hours, twenty boys reported a fast, green, elliptical object travelling east to north-east.

Mr E Evenett of Samarai was at Giwa, 8 miles from Baniara in Goodenough Bay on 26 Jun 1959. Some time between 1915 and 1930 hours he went outside to see an object approaching from the north or north-east. It descended then hovered an estimated 500 feet above the ground at an angular elevation of 45 degrees. He estimated it to be 60 feet long and in shape was described as like a "rugger football." It had a "kind of ring around it with about four semi-domed portholes." A glow came from the 'portholes.' After hovering for four minutes it disappeared rapidly to the south.

Finally, on 27 Jun 1959 at 2030h hours, two men noted a half-Moon sized object, in the western sky which moved slowly over a ten minute period.

One of the accompanying memos went on to discuss the possibility that Venus was unlikely to be the cause of the events. It closed by stating that "*The Regional Director, Attorney General's Department has been kept fully informed of these reports.*" From the phrasing, this suggests ASIO was the agency informed. We do know that other agencies were keeping files on "unidentified aircraft" over PNG. For example:

- File series MT1131/1 control symbol A31/1/133 is titled "*Unidentified aircraft Papua & New Guinea.*" The date range is 1958-1959. The controlling agency at the time was The Department of Army
- File series A452 control symbol 1969/1630 is titled "*Flights by unidentified aircraft over Papua New Guinea.*" The date range is 1958-1970. The controlling agency was the Department of Territories 1958-1968; then the Department of External Territories 1968-1970.

It could simply be that ASIO, like other Government Departments, was keeping an eye on "unidentified aircraft" over PNG.



Another of the attached memos told of yet more sightings:

- 27 Jun 1959. Baniara. At 1940 hours Mr R Smith and two others saw a bright, white spherical light. It was initially stationary and then slowly moved to the west. Red and green lights were seen on the object. It cast light on the water. At 2025 hours a "bronze coloured disc" was seen below and to the right of the light. It was lost at 2045 hours below low cloud low in the west
- 28 Jun 1959. Baniara. 1820 hours. Mr and Mrs Orwin saw the same light as on the 27<sup>th</sup>. At 2001 hours it traversed a distance in one minute which took 30 minutes the previous night. It was in the western sky where it disappeared low down at 2115 hours
- 7 Jul 1959. At 0500 hours Mr R Smith noted a very bright light. After 15 minutes an object like a falling star came from near the object and shot earthward at speed. Five minutes later another falling star was seen. After a total of an hour it moved westwards.

What is absent from these reported observations is any mention of the 26 and 27 Jun 1959 Boianai CE3 events which do not feature at all in the reports from the DOT.

It appears that it wasn't until 12 Sep 1959 when Peter Norris of the Victorian Flying Saucer Research Society (VFSRS) wrote to DAFI <sup>(3)</sup> that DAFI became aware of the Father Gill sightings. Norris wrote *"My society has been undertaking investigations into the alleged sightings of unidentified flying objects reported by the Reverend W B Gill of Boianai Anglican Mission, Papua, New Guinea."* Norris wrote that Gill et al had reported humanoid beings on the object and *"...these sightings, once established as authentic, appear to furnish the much-coveted proof that the UFOs are intelligently guided machines."* Norris asked DAFI if they had inquired into the Gill sightings and if so what were their conclusions?

In an undated response letter, Squadron Leader Gilson from DAFI replied *"We have no official information on any sightings by Gill in New Guinea, but we are now making inquiries into the matter."* <sup>(4)</sup>

By replies dated 20 Oct 1959 VFSRS gave DAFI Gill's current Victorian address <sup>(5)</sup> and on 16 Nov 59 <sup>(6)</sup> VFSRS forwarded a copy of their 15 page report <sup>(7)</sup> on not only the Gill sightings but others from PNG. VFSRS again asked DAFI if they had received official information and could DAFI please respond to their letter of 12 Sep 59 with questions re DAFI's conclusions?

On the 25 Nov 1959 five of the main Australian UFO groups sent a joint letter to the Right Honourable R G Menzies-providing a copy of the VFSRS Gill report. The groups wrote that one possible explanation was that the Gill sightings were caused by a secret weapon of a foreign power. *"We feel strongly that an investigation should be made..."* <sup>(8)</sup>

On the 26 Nov 59 DAFI responded to VFSRS that *"We have initiated enquiry into Father Gill's claims, but it is too early to have reached any conclusions."* <sup>(9)</sup> Despite two statements by DAFI that they had initiated enquiries into Gill's account, there is no evidence on their files of any such enquiries.

Interestingly, out of all the time which DAFI could have chosen to undertake their next action, DAFI chose 26 Nov to also write to the DOD's RAAF liaison in both London and Washington with a question. The question was for the liaison staff in each country to ascertain the latest views of the respective governments on the issue of UFOs. <sup>(10)</sup>

Politics entered the scene at this point, on the 15 Dec 59 when the Secretary for the DOD advised the Secretary of the DOA that the Minister for Defence had received a letter from VFSRS. The Secretary DOD asked for a report on the subject of Papuan UFO reports which were received some months ago. <sup>(11)</sup>

On the 16 Dec 59 the DOD forwarded the PNG reports contained in the 4 Aug 59 DOT memo to the Australian Embassy in Washington. These reports were then forwarded to the "Aerospace Technical Intelligence Centre" for evaluation (USAF).

The question arises as to whether DAFI in the DOD or some other area in the DOD requested the evaluation? There are no copies of correspondence from DAFI on this topic in the files we have seen. The memo reference involved was W.183/59 and this isn't the style used by DAFI. It does appear that while DAFI was dealing with questions re Father Gill's report; someone else in the DOD was dealing with the other PNG reports, seeking an evaluation of their cause in the USA.

Although they had had Gill's Australian address since Oct, it wasn't until 18 Dec 1959 that DAFI wrote to Father Gill, who was by then in Victoria, asking if a Squadron leader Lang could interview him. <sup>(12)</sup>

On the day before Christmas, a reply came back from London to the effect that 90 % of all UK UFO reports could be explained and that the remaining 10% "...only remain unexplained because of lack of reliable information about them." <sup>(13)</sup>

Following the Secretary DOD's request for a report, Squadron Leader Lang interviewed Father Gill. On 8 Jan 1960 Sec DOA forwarded a copy of this two page report to the Sec DOD. The report, solely based on the interview, and lacking any attempt to check with PNG sources, concluded "*It seems probably that the lights observed by Mr Gill were natural phenomena.*" With a Defence orientation the memo concluded "*In the light of our own and overseas military experience, the reported sights by Reverend Gill do not contain sufficient additional evidence to warrant any firm opinion that illegal flights by alien countries are being made over Australian Territory.*" <sup>(14)</sup> A copy of this report was also sent to the Prime Minister's Department on 8 Jan 1960. <sup>(15)</sup>

The Australian Embassy in Washington responded on 12 Jan 60 advising the latest position on UFOs of the US Government. They referred to "Air Technical Intelligence Centre" Special report No 14." <sup>(16)</sup>

The VFSRS asked, once again <sup>(17)</sup> on 25 Jan 60 if DAFI had reached any conclusion on the Gill sightings? DAFI replied on 22 Feb 60 "...although it is not possible to reach any positive conclusion, we do not believe that the phenomena observed by the Reverend Gill and his party were manned space vehicles." <sup>(18)</sup>

A memo dated 16 Feb. 60 <sup>(19)</sup> from the Office of the High Commission for Australia in London revealed that it wasn't only the US Government who had been asked for an evaluation of the 58/59 Papuan reports. This memo from London referred to a DOD letter of 16 Dec 59 ref 128.1.21 and advised "...the reports have been studied by the Air Ministry, the representative of the British Astronomical Association and the Royal Greenwich Observatory." The Air Ministry' statement included "I am directed to regret that the investigations, except in two instances, were inconclusive." The BAA suggested the reports of May 59 and 13 Jun 59 were of meteors. Of other reports they said "In fact I cannot reconcile the descriptions with any known celestial phenomenon, and can only assume that they are either wildly inaccurate, deliberately falsified, or are bona-fide reports of known or unknown objects of terrestrial origin." Greenwich observed "The only possible astronomical explanation of these various reports would be that they were of the planet Venus. However, some of the observers at least appear to have been aware of this possibility and so this seems an unlikely explanation."

The USAF response to what could have caused the Papuan reports (in the 4 Aug 59 DOT memo) came in Mar 1960. Firstly, dated 4 Mar 60 <sup>(20)</sup> is a memo from the Washington RAAF Intelligence Representative to DAFI. Secondly, dated 24 Mar 60 <sup>(21)</sup> is a memo from the Sec DOD to the Sec DOA. Attached to both memos was a two page report from ATIC, Dayton, Ohio, USA. Table one presents their conclusions:

Table one

Date	Reporter	Location	Conclusion
Jun 1958	Doyle	Sideia	Insufficient information
Oct/Nov 58	Doyle		Poss aircraft
May 1959	Doyle		Prob meteor
24 May 1959	Orwin/Smith	Baniara	Prob Sirius
13 Jun 59	Doyle		Prob meteor
26 Jun 1959	Evenett	Samarai	Prob search light
27 Jun 1959	Doyle		Prob Venus
27/28 Jun 1959	Smith/Orwin		Prob Venus

On the 8 Mar 1960 the sec DOD forwarded a memo <sup>(22)</sup> to the Sec DOA attaching the memo of 4 Aug 1959 from DOT. DOD advised DOA that they had forwarded the matter to Head of Australian Joint Services Staff (AJSS) in London and Washington for comment. This is actually the first time details of these reports appears in a DAFI referenced file as opposed to a DOD referenced file. This supports the view that DAFI was dealing only with the Gill sightings while someone else in the DOD was dealing with the other 1958/59 Papuan reports. Why this should be so, when DAFI was recognised as the lead area for the Government's UFO investigation, is not known from reading the files.

Finally, on 14 Mar 1960 the Sec DOD forwarded to the Sec DOA an additional piece of correspondence from the AJSS in London. This included a reply from Bristol University advising that although one of their projects was flying large plastic balloons they knew of no agency flying such balloons in the area of Port Moresby PNG. <sup>(23)</sup>

#### *Later reports*

In total, 49 distinct UFO reports from PNG for the period Jun 1958 to Aug 1971 were extracted from these files. The 1970 Sepik River radar case stands out from the rest as one of interest to us. On 29 Jun 1970 the pilot of F27 aircraft VH-FNK reported a radar observation. On descent from 12,500 feet he noted echoes on radar 60 deg abeam his plane. Radar scale set at 180nm and echoes appeared to be 60nm from plane and keeping station with him. There were five cigar shaped objects. With the radar scanner on maximum depression or elevation the echoes disappeared. DCA advised there were no aircraft in the area. The DAFI file has a single page reporting this event, with no analysis and no follow up, yet it is written off in the Annual Summary as “electro-meteorological” what ever that means!

## **The former Department of External Affairs 1954**

The Federal Minister for this Department, the Rt Hon R G Casey, took a personal interest in the subject in 1954-1955 according to the single Departmental file (M1148 “Flying Saucers 1954 to 1955”) located. Casey corresponded with various overseas Australian Embassies collecting information on the topic. He also engaged in correspondence with CSIRO staff.

## **Australian Security Intelligence Organisation 1952-1972**

### ***Commonwealth Investigation Service***

One of the files which is digitally available from the NAA, is 56/2773 titled: “The Australian Flying Saucer Research Society.” Interestingly, the file cover indicates it was a file of the “Commonwealth Investigation Service Canberra.” The Australian Flying Saucer Research Society was a civilian UFO group. The Commonwealth Investigation Service’s functions included, according to NAA “Agency notes for agency CA 650, “...*maintenance of liaison with customs, postal, taxation and state police services; security at Government factories, dockyards and facilities; and provision of personnel as required for special investigations...*” In 1949 some of the roles of CIS passed to the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), while the rest of the CIS role went to the Commonwealth Police Force in 1960.

The archive file currently holds a single document, a copy of a newspaper article. The article is headlined: “Men from Mars!” and concerns a close approach of the planet Mars to Earth in 1956, and notes in part that: “*The Australian Flying Saucer Research Society (AFSR) will have its telescopes trained on the planet...*”

### ***ASIO***

There are indications that ASIO was involved from at least 1952. One of the earliest Australian books written about Flying Saucers:

*"Officers of the Civil Aviation Department wanted to establish a special bureau to collect and collate facts about flying saucers. From Cabinet itself, however, came instructions that it was more properly a matter for the security services."*<sup>(1)</sup>

Secondly, a May 1952 news paper report titled "Hush ban on saucers" advised that:

*"Australian Security Intelligence Officers have refused the Civil Aviation Department permission to investigate reports of 'flying saucers' Mr R M Seymour said tonight. Mr Seymour is Superintendent of Air Traffic Control. He said his department had planned to set up a special section to collate facts on 'flying saucer' reports. Intelligence officials had told him that 'flying saucers' were 'security matters.' Mr Seymour said 'saucer' reports which he had collected followed the pattern of similar reports in the United States."*<sup>(2)</sup>

On 23 Aug 1953 Mr T. Drury, the then Deputy Director of the DCA for Papua New Guinea, was in Port Moresby and viewed and filmed an unusual object. All was quiet on the file until 1958 when an American citizen Max B Miller wrote to DCA asking to have a copy of the film or borrow the original to copy. The expressed intent was to photogrammetrically analyse the film. The response letter, signed by one T P Drury, (who identified himself as the photographer of the film) of DCA Melbourne, dated 19 Feb 1958, included: *"Immediately after taking this film it was handed over to the Commonwealth Security Branch for processing and investigation, and it has not been sighted by me since."*<sup>(3)</sup>

In 1959 there were a number of reports originating from the Department of Territories, from Papua. One of their memos closed by stating that *"The Regional Director, Attorney General's Department has been kept fully informed of these reports."*<sup>(4)</sup> This implies ASIO.

Requests were made to ASIO in 2005, via the National Australia Archives, to search their files to see if they held any records on the following Australian UFO research groups:

*Australian Flying Saucer Bureau; Australian Flying Saucer Club; Australian Flying Saucer Investigation Committee; Australian Flying Saucer Research Society; UFO Investigation Centre; Victorian Flying Saucer Research Society; Victorian UFO Research Society; Perth UFO Research Group; Queensland Flying Saucer Research Bureau; UFO Research Queensland.*

Responses (one per group) were received from ASIO via the NAA, stating that: *"A check of our indices has failed to locate any open or closed period records with respect to the above named subject."*

Later however, a search of RecordSearch did in fact reveal that ASIOI had released one file to the NAA. File series A6122, control symbol 2155 has a date range of 1959-1973 and is "open with exception." It is titled *"Queensland Flying Saucer Bureau Volume 1."* The file cover, as shown on the released copy, carries the original ASIO file number 3/2/979 vol 1 and is titled "Flying Saucer Research Bureau (Qld.)"

Two pages of the file are a *"Statement of reasons under section 40 of the Archives Act 1983"* why exemptions are claimed for not releasing the entire file. The next page is titled "Access application title" and indicates that of the original 36 pages:

- Total exemption was sought and given for 15 folios
- Leaving 21 pages to be released.

### ***The main body of the file***

There is a four page Aug 1959 “secret” report and covering letter, on the Queensland Flying Saucer Research Bureau which indicates the reason for ASIO’s interest in the organisation. The author of the reports states *“There is some communist influence in the Bureau...”* naming a committee member, whose wife’s parents are stated to be *“...pacifists and communists.”* Concerning another committee member, the report says *“He is a fanatic in matters relating to U.F.Os and all attempts to prove their validity and would resort to any means to obtain information concerning them.”* The report concludes:

*“At present the Queensland Bureau does not appear to constitute any serious concern...but its activities will be constantly watched as there is the ever present possibility that...together with Soviet contact and any increased Communist Party of Australia membership, the Bureau could become of far greater interest.”*

This report was forwarded by ASIO Qld to ASIO HQ.

The next two documents are a report dated 12 Aug 1959 on a “Play Reading” evening of the “New Theatre Club” listing those who attended. One attendee is said to be *“...a member of a writers’ group; also of the Flying Saucer Research Group.”*

A memo dated 5 Jul 1960 from the Regional Director ASIO ACT to ASIO HQ forwarded a letter, from one Fred Stone of the Australian Flying Saucer Research Society, which Stone had sent to the RAAF. In this letter Stone referring to a Sydney based UFO group wrote *“...the Sydney one which has some folk in its control who have ‘pink’ tendencies...”* The ASIO memo says *“The writer (STONE) may have some potential value for Regional Director, S.A., and Regional Director N.S.W. may be interested in the reference to the Sydney Society.”*

The next folio, dated 17 Jul 1961, is from the Regional Security Officer SA to the Chief Security Officer Melbourne cc Regional Director ASIO Adelaide, concerning one Donald Frederick Stone who commenced employment at the WRE Salisbury.

A “secret” 9 Jan 1962 memo from Regional Director ASIO SA to ASIO HQ forwarded a report from the (blanked out) about the Australian Flying Saucer Research Society. The report is not on the file released to us.

The next two Department of Supply folios (dated 14 and 19 Jun 1963) are about Donald Frederick Stone’s involvement with the subject of Scientology.

There are then no papers on the released file until 17 Feb 1971 when the acting Establishment Investigations Officer WRE Salisbury wrote to the Establishment Security Officer Salisbury. This memo advised that Donald Frederick Stone ceased employment with the WRE on 29 Jan 1971. It also advised that Stone was off to the United Kingdom to

Scientology headquarters. The covering memo dated 23 Feb 1971 from the RSO(SA) Department of Supply advised that *"Stone has been kept under notice since 1961..."*

A 3 Nov 1972 ASIO SA memo headed "Australian Flying Saucer Research Society" refers to a 13 Oct 1972 report concerning Colin Norris who the report says *"...claims to be in correspondence with Soviet academicians on the subject of unidentified flying objects...Norris spoke to members of the Young Socialists League in South Australia about UFOs..."* This report refers to an earlier 1969 report, which is not on the file.

Finally, a 15 Aug 1973 "Telephone message" from "Supervisor (Intelligence)" concerned Donald Frederick Stone, and posed questions re his connection to Scientology.

There was a prominent South Australian UFO researcher named Fred Stone, but his name was Frederick Phillip Stone.

## **The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation 1952-1989**

The Science and Industry Research Act 1949 established the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO). Included in its powers and functions:

- The initiation and carrying out of scientific researches and investigations in connection with, or for the promotion of, primary or secondary industries
- The training of scientific research workers
- The collection and dissemination of information relating to scientific and technical matters.

### ***The early days***

In May 1952, the Department of Civil Aviation was thinking of setting up its own investigation unit into "flying saucers," but that Security agencies were said to have told them that they could not do so:

*"Shortly afterwards a security spokesman confirmed they had investigators working on the reports with the aid of scientists from the radio-physics division of the CSIRO."*<sup>(1)</sup>

It was therefore with some interest that a CSIRO file was located dealing with "Flying saucers" in the NAA. This CSIRO file was from file series A9778 control symbol M1/F/31, date range 1952-1957, and was simply titled "Flying saucers."

The initial piece of correspondence was dated 26 Aug 1952 and was from a Mr May of Grenfell NSW, who at 3.40am on the 22 Aug 1952 was awoken by his son to "come and see the flying saucer." Looking into the sky they saw a *"misty phosphorescent phenomenon"* moving from the NW to NE, which disappeared after several minutes. It then re-appeared in the

NW, moving again to the NE. It was last seen about 4am. It transpired that the son had been watching since 3am and the light travelled along the same course each time.

The Secretary of the Industrial and Physical Sciences area of the CSIRO replied on the 10 Sep 1952. *"It is difficult, on the basis of the information you have given, for us to make any attempt at a detailed explanation of your observations."* <sup>(2)</sup> He went on to advise that searchlights can illuminate clouds without the beam being visible from the ground.

In a letter dated 9 Sep 1952 the Australian representative of The Chicago Daily News Foreign Service advised that the paper was doing a piece on "flying saucers" and asked a number of questions of the CSIRO. These were:

- "1. Do you know of any evidence in Australia tending to prove or disprove 'flying saucers' as mysterious aircraft?*
- 2. Do you know of any cases which defy scientific explanation of the phenomena Australians have reported seeing in their skies?*
- 3. Have you made any discoveries or formed any theories about these phenomena?"* <sup>(3)</sup>

The Chairman of the CSIRO, Dr Clunies-Ross, responded on 18 Sep 1952:

*"I am afraid it is not possible for this organisation to make any useful contributions to the survey, since we know of few, if any, reports of the observations of 'flying saucers' in this country and certainly none which deserve serious consideration."* <sup>(4)</sup>

Government Minister R G Casey wrote a letter to the Editor of a number of Australian newspapers and on 5 Feb 1954 sent a copy of a press clipping to Dr Clunies-Ross. The clipping included:

*"I have lists of the dates over the last several years on which people have reported having seen 'flying saucers' in Australia and have compared them with the dates on which the earth passes through the principal meteoric showers. There appears to be a noticeable relationship between these two sets of dates."* <sup>(5)</sup>

Minister Casey, as then Minister in charge of the CSIRO, wrote to Dr Clunies-Ross on 22 Feb 1954 advising that he (Casey) had sent a copy of his meteor article to Dr Bowen, Chief of the Division of Radio physics, who said *"This is the first time such a relationship has been suggested and it might well be the complete answer."*

On another Government file there is an exchange of correspondence between Casey and Bowen. At one point Casey asked Bowen for his views on a book by Keyhoe "Flying Saucers from Outer Space." Bowen responded *"I must say, however, that I am far from convinced by any of the anecdotes or arguments."* <sup>(7)</sup> The earlier reporting that security agencies were *"...working on the reports with the aid of scientists from the radio-physics division of the CSIRO"* must be seen in the light of this statement by the Chief of the Division of Radio physics.

Finally, the file contains a letter from a person in Esperance WA to the CSIRO asking for the identity of a "luminous egg" shaped object seen travelling from SW to E at 8.15pm on



16 Aug 1957. Dr Clunies-Ross wrote back on 17 Oct 1957 *"I am afraid I can offer no explanation of this object...I shall, however, refer your letter to others more competent in this field..."*<sup>(8)</sup>

### ***Comments from elsewhere than this file***

In Feb 1958 at Tarcutta NSW a witness reported hearing an unusual noise and observing the tops of trees unnaturally waving around. Chunks of a clinker type of material were discovered. *"Specimens of the material were sent to the CSIRO in Sydney but no analysis was forthcoming."*<sup>(9)</sup>

Also, in 1958 a CSIRO physicist, Mr R Taylor of Adelaide reported observing an object in the sky with a cone shaped rear flame. This object, which travelled SW to NE was associated with a low pitched droning sound.<sup>(10)</sup>

### ***Another CSIRO file***

A second CSIRO file located was in file series A8520 control symbol HM1/30, titled *"Miscellaneous Enquiries-General-UFO's – Unidentified Flying Objects."* with a date range of 1959-1989. The NAA have a digital copy of this file which is currently open between 1959 and 1969.

In the 1959 to 1961 period there are a number of pieces of correspondence from the Department of Territories on file. The originals were forwarded to the Department of Defence, with copies to the CSIRO. The CSIRO appeared to have simply filed the papers on this miscellaneous file.

### ***An aside***

In the early 1960's USAF U-2 aircraft flew missions out of RAAF East Sale. Details of these missions under the High Altitude Sampling Program, Operation "Crow flight," are only just now being released in Government files under the Archives Act. Reading one recently available "Crow flight" file revealed that CSIRO equipment was flown on USAF U-2 aircraft. The CSIRO used these flights *"...for observations connected with its experimental programme in cloud physics and rain making."*<sup>(11)</sup> An irony of this situation is that the CSIRO may have been involved in U-2 flights which ended up being reported as UFOs!

In May 1963, a letter came in from a Phillip Mayall, of the "UFO Research Centre" in Blackwood, South Australia. In part it read:

*"It has recently been drawn to my attention that in recent months certain members of your organisation have been in attendance at places where Unidentified Flying Objects had been recently observed."*<sup>(12)</sup>

Myall offered his assistance to the CSIRO in investigations. In a response dated 10 May 1963 the CSIRO replied "*CSIRO has not carried out any work in this field although, of course, some of its officers may have a private interest in it.*"<sup>(13)</sup> The letter continued that it was possible one CSIRO member may have been involved, and on the same day a letter went from the CSIRO to a Dr G F Bornsmisza of Boolara, Vic:

*"I do not know whether you have been interrogating anyone in Moe lately, concerning flying saucers, but if you have, and your interest in them is more than a casual one, you might care to write to Mayall."*<sup>(14)</sup>

This reference to Moe, concerns the Willow Grove, via Moe, Victoria CE1 case of 15 Feb 1963 where a Mr Brew reported seeing an extraordinary object at close range. The RAAF sent two officers to interview Brew. These officers also interviewed a Dr Berson and a Mr Clark of the CSIRO about the possibility of the Moe object being a meteorological phenomenon, possibly a tornado. The RAAF report does not say that any CSIRO staff members interviewed Brew.<sup>(15)</sup> However, Bill Chalker states:

*"Dr Berson and an associate visited Charles Brew at the Willow Grove property. According to Brew, Dr Berson was interested in the headache that he had, and indicated that Berson had said that it tied in with their theory of a possible electromagnetic nature of the incident. The CSIRO's field investigation had in fact preceded the RAAF by about a week."*<sup>(16)</sup>

Clyde Cameron MHR for Hindmarsh in South Australia wrote to Senator the Hon J G Gorton, then Minister in charge of the CSIRO on 13 Jul 1964 regarding one Colin Norris of Adelaide asking "... *whether you could give him a job watching for flying saucers...*"<sup>(17)</sup>

Answering a 1964 query from a Mr Hennessey of London in the United Kingdom, the CSIRO advised "...*it [the CSIRO] has not been specifically concerned with unidentified flying objects.*"<sup>(18)</sup> Interestingly, the CSIRO made no mention of the fact that the Department of Air was the central Australian agency collating UFO reports on behalf of the Government. It turns out that Julian Hennessey was a British UFO researcher who was behind the later (1967) attempt at lobbying the British Government to release copies of the UK Ministry of Defence's (MOD) most impressive cases. However, this request for access was rejected<sup>(19)</sup>

During 1965, more Department of Territories' reports were copied to the CSIRO. Internally, copies were forwarded to both the Radio physics and the Upper Atmosphere sections.

Sylvia Sutton of the Commonwealth Aerial Phenomena Investigation Organisation (CAPIO) the national level UFO organisation forwarded a list of CAPIO officers to the CSIRO in Oct 1966. A hand written note on the file read "*Records. UFOs are Mr Wilson's worry-as from Exec meeting today.*"<sup>(20)</sup> Other papers on the file revealed Mr L G Wilson was the Secretary, Administration, CSIRO.

## ***Co-operation sought between Government Departments***

The Department of Air wrote to the CSIRO on 12 Oct 1966 advising that "...*Sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects have during recent months been receiving considerable publicity.*" <sup>(21)</sup> The DOA invited the CSIRO to comment on specific UFO cases to be sent to them by the RAAF. The minutes of the 92<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the CSIRO executive committee on 25 Oct 1966 para 10, on file, revealed that the CSIRO agreed to the DOA's request. They responded on 7 Nov 1966 when Mr L G Wilson replied "*The organisation is quite happy to assist in this way...*" <sup>(22)</sup>

As in 1963, a piece of 1968 correspondence suggested that the CSIRO was in fact interested enough in UFOs to investigate a case. A memo dated 28 Nov 1968 from the DOA said in part:

*"During the course of an investigation into the unusual sightings made by Mr A S Ricketts of Bacchus marsh, Victoria, it was learned that a 'team of CSIRO scientists' had visited him on 7<sup>th</sup> Jul 1966."* <sup>(23)</sup>

It then asked the CSIRO for any information on this matter. By way of reply on 5 Dec 1968 the CSIRO commented "*I have made enquiries...but with negative results.*" <sup>(24)</sup> An inspection of the report of the RAAF interviewing officer located a paragraph:

*"Mr Ricketts had a visit from a team of CSIRO scientists who saw something but would not confirm that this was a UFO. Mr Ricketts would not divulge the names of the CSIRO scientists."* <sup>(25)</sup>

## ***Enter Dr Michael J Duggin***

As foreshadowed in a comment in 1963 that some CSIRO staff members might have a private interest in UFOs, came a memo from the DOA dated 5 Jan 1967. It provided a copy of a letter from one Dr M J Duggin on CSIRO letterhead (National Standards Laboratory) to the DOA. Duggin referred to a previous telephone call, then described work on the UFO phenomenon being undertaken by Vallee and Hynek in the USA. Advising that several scientists in different countries were gathering UFO data he wrote "*I would like to investigate cases myself where possible and would be very willing to be of any help which I can.*" <sup>(26)</sup> Also attached was a "To whom in may concern" letter from J Allen Hynek introducing Duggin. Duggin had met Hynek and Vallee when Duggin visited Chicago in Nov 1966. <sup>(27)</sup>

The DOA memo stated, re Duggin's letter:

*"It is understood that this scientific investigation is quite unofficial...This department has no objection additionally to passing reports of all ufo sightings to Dr Duggin provided that this would not cause you any embarrassment."* <sup>(28)</sup>

A hand written CSIRO note on the file read "*Discussions with Colin Harper (at Chippendale)-has no objections to Duggin's extra-curricular activity.*"

An examination of RAAF file 554/1/30 (their policy file at this stage) reveals the original of Duggin's letter to Squadron Leader Baxter in DAFI. Folio 115 of 554/1/30 dated 29 Dec 1966 is an internal memo from D/DAFI (Ops) to DAFI which included:

*"You will note that these scientists are mainly interested in the unexplained UFO's, but as far as I can make out they would like information on all sightings... These scientists, with all the documents and facilities available to them, are obviously in a position to assist us in this matter, and though I am not too keen on releasing the details of the RAAF investigations or anything which may increase the interest of the general public in this field, I think we should give these scientists the information they require."*

On file, DAFI do not discuss what assistance it was felt Duggin et al could provide.

Dr Duggin conducted an investigation of a report from Sydney on 8 Mar 1967 where a dull grey-black object emitting a low humming sound was observed. Duggin forwarded the details of the case to Hynek in the USA and a copy of the report appears on a RAAF file <sup>(29)</sup>

When the Project interviewed former Government employee Harry Turner (see appendix three) he was asked about a proposal for a rapid investigation team within the DSTI area of the Joint Intelligence Bureau, Department of Defence. Turner told us he was the instigator of the idea. A request was made to the Secretary of Defence, who referred it on to DAFI. DAFI reacted badly against it and it was rejected. Mike Duggin was the other main player with Turner. Together they had investigated a reported UFO landing on a Sydney golf course. They took samples and looked at what temperature would have been required to make the marks/holes. From memory Turner thought hotter than an oxy-acetylene torch would have been needed. Turner and Duggin went there privately to investigate and interviewed the green keeper who had found the marks. Turner thought it was quite a convincing case.

In 1970 Duggin investigated a trace case at Boggabri NSW. A year later he presented a paper titled *"The analysis of UFO Reports"* at a symposium held on 30 Oct 1971, in Adelaide. The symposium, on UFOs, was organised by the SA Division of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science.

In Aug 1973 Hynek was in Australia and together with Duggin and Harry Turner, Hynek attended a Department of Defence DAFI meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup>. A DAFI file note <sup>(30)</sup> called it *"An unofficial meeting...in an endeavour to expand the scientific relationship to the problem."* In the meeting, Duggin was described as *"...a member of the CSIRO and is currently based in Sydney (North Ryde) and heading the Australian research aspects of ERSAT."* Paragraph 5 of the note read:

*"DAFI suggested that CSIRO or the Dept of Science (but preferably the former) seemed to be logical agencies to conduct greater in depth investigation in Australia. DAFI agreed that a selection of reports (mainly those which were unanswerable and scientific in context) could possibly be made available to CSIRO for further study and computerization."*

A biography located on a United States Air Force web site indicates Duggin left Australia in 1979 and became an Associate Professor in the Department of Environmental Resources and Forest Engineering, Division of Engineering, College of Environmental Science and

Forestry, State University of New York, Syracuse, USA. The biography goes on to say that in 2002 Duggin left that position and became Senior Scientist, Space Vehicles Directorate, Air Force Research Laboratory at Kirtland Air Force Base in New Mexico, USA.

### ***Back to the second CSIRO UFO files***

The Journal "Science" in its 14 Oct 1966 issue wrote about the establishment of the Condon investigation into UFOs in the USA. Someone at CSIRO was interested enough in it to forward a copy of the article to the DOA.<sup>(31)</sup>

A 19 Apr 1967 letter from Peter Norris of CAPIO referred to the University of Colorado's USA UFO study and stated *"The purpose of my letter is to enquire whether the CSIRO would consider establishing a similar investigation in Australia..."*<sup>(32)</sup> There is no evidence on file that this request received any in-depth attention. The CSIRO's reply went out five days later, on 24 Apr 1967- *"I am sorry to tell you that it is felt it would not be appropriate in Australia at this time for CSIRO to embark on such an investigation..."*<sup>(33)</sup> CSIRO then referred Norris to the DOA, and forwarded a copy of Norris's letter and their reply to the DOA (copy sighted on RAAF file 554/1/30.)

The CSIRO Division of Fisheries and Oceanography referred a UFO report to the Royal Australian Navy from the M S Seaway on 27 Apr 1967. The report referred to an observation of three comet-like objects seen at 2130hrs EST on 5 Apr, travelling to the NNE over a 25 second period.<sup>(34)</sup>

It wasn't until late 1967 that the DOA/RAAF took up the CSIRO's offer to look at an individual UFO case. On 20 Dec 1967 RAAF Pearce forwarded a report from Derby WA for comment. It was an unusual report involving a strange vehicle and a human-like figure. CSIRO despatched a reply on 4 Jan 1968 *"The nature of the report attached to your letter is such that CSIRO cannot usefully comment on it."*<sup>(35)</sup>

Jun 1968 brought in two more reports from RAAF Pearce to the CSIRO for comment. They were referred internally to Dr E G Bowen, Chief of the Division of Radio physics and to Dr D F Martyn, Chief of the Upper Atmosphere area. Martyn responded that there was too little data. Bowen wrote *"...We are not very good at UFO's and I find it difficult to comment..."*<sup>(36)</sup>

Jun 1968 also saw a copy of a letter on file from the Department of External Affairs to the Secretary Prime Minister's Department concerning another letter from UK Ufologist Hennessey. In part it read: *"...the history of this subject reveals that the more time and effort that is spent by experienced scientists in investigating the smaller becomes the residue of unexplained phenomena...in spite of these difficulties the Australian Government continue to keep records of all "sightings" and associated phenomena reported within Australian and associated territories."*<sup>(37)</sup>

As we have previously seen, raw reports were made to the CSIRO from time to time. In Mar 1969, a Mrs Gibbs of Kyogle NSW reported finding a twenty foot diameter "scorched grass" area and toadstools. The CSIRO sent the toadstool to the Government Botanist who

identified it and suggested the cause of the “scorched grass” was in fact a “fairy ring” fungus. The CSIRO forwarded a copy of this correspondence to the DOA. <sup>(38)</sup>

The last relevant item concerning the CSIRO is from 1972 where the main RAAF DAFI policy file contains a cryptic file note dated 14 Sep 1972. “*CSIRO has a very high resolution radar which is mobile and which we could possibly utilise at some future date.*” <sup>(39)</sup> Looking at DAFI files to see what was occurring at that time we found that there were a number of UFO reports generated in Victoria around Maffra, Morwell, Stratfield and Sale since 14 Sep 72. <sup>(40)</sup>

## **The Department of Defence 1951-2007**

### ***Royal Australian Navy***

Four Navy files have been located, of which two of these dealt with the 1954 Nowra Navy pilot incident. Of the other two, file series E499/18 control symbol C21/4/41 was located at the Darwin office of the National Australia Archives and was titled “Unidentified flying object sightings.” The file was from Defence Establishment Berrimah (Formerly HMAS Coonawarra) and consisted of 41 pages. Its date range was 1959-1974 and although no analysis was present on the file, someone, for some reason was keeping a file on the subject. The final file A6826 control symbol 1361/1/1-3 titled “Earth satellites, space vehicles, Unidentified Flying Objects-general” is a mere three pages and mentions one report of low level interest.

### ***Australian Army***

Three Army files were located and examined:

- MP742/1 control symbol 177/1/2356 titled: “Flying saucers re O L Alwin” contained a letter from Mrs O L Alwin of North Manly to “Army inventions etc(?)” dated 4 Jan 1951
- File AWM 288 control symbol R723/1/1 titled “Reports-General-Flying Objects” located in the Australian War Memorial contained a Memo dated 23 May 1966 from Brigadier Commander HQ Puckapunyal Area to S Comd. Reference S Comd 109-S1-3 dated 17 May 66. It said that enquiries have failed to locate any info on the reporting of a UFO
- MT1131/1, A31/1/102 of 9 pages deals with correspondence from one R Baudish to the Department of Army in 1957. Baudish asked if there had been UFO reports in association with military exercises. The combined reply from the Department of Army, Navy and Air was there had been none.

### ***The former Air Board/Department of Air/current RAAF***

The Air Board, in a memorandum dated 16 Jan 1951, issued a pro forma to be used to gather information on sightings of "flying saucers." (file PP474/1 control symbol 5/5/ Air p2) Given that some of the earliest memos are from the "Air Board," a search was undertaken of series A7668 controls symbols 8, 9 & 10 which were the "Air Board's Executive Council Minutes 1947-1950. However, no reference could be found to the topic of 'flying saucers.'"

The Air Board was still receiving reports up until at least Nov 1953 when it issued a revised pro forma for reports.

The Directorate of Air Force Intelligence (DAFI) of the former DOA (1939-1973) then took the lead in collecting and examining reports of UASs from around 1953. How and why the DOA was tasked with this role is not yet clear from any documents so far examined. The search continues to look for early (1947-1951) material, including an apparently lost internal DAFI file numbered SEC.CD2/2 which may throw light on this topic.

One file was located which carried six folios dated earlier than 1953. This was file series number B5758, control symbol 5/6/AIR part 1 titled "*Training Command Headquarters. Reports on unusual activity and Aerial Phenomenon.*" The front cover indicates the Unit which held it as "Headquarters Training Command." It also carries a rubber stamped number 80/3/105. There are six folios earlier than Oct 1953. These are:

1. Confidential memo from RAAF East Sale to HQ Southern Area dated 15 Aug 1950. Relates to a report of light flashes seen from Perry Bridge on Lake Wellington.
2. Memo dated 24 Aug 1950 forwarding report at folio 1 from Southern Area RAAF to DAFI.
3. RAAF telegram dated 20 Aug 1950 from Wing Commander SASO to RAAF HQ giving details of aircraft navigation exercises in vicinity of Port Albert re reported flares and lights in that area.
4. Memo. 14 Feb 1951. From RAAF East Sale to HQ Southern Command. Report that Captain of RAAF aircraft on 7 Feb 1951 observed at 2330hrs a brilliant light. The pilot believed it to be either a flare on the ground or one at very low altitude.
5. Memo. 16 Jan 1951. From Chief of Air Staff to HQs Southern Area; Eastern Area; North Eastern Area; North Western Area and Western Area. "A number of reports have been made by Areas regarding unusual sightings which have been brought to the notice of various authorities. In order to standardise the reports made about these occurrences, the attached pro-forma has been drafted...It would obviously be unwise to draw any publicity towards Service interest in these reports, and persons making the reports should be asked to treat Service interest as Confidential."
6. Memo. 13 May 1952. From Air Officer Commanding HQ Southern Area to DAFI. Details of a sighting. 3 May 1952 0545hrs Kew. Bullet nosed object travelling at high speed leaving a vapour trail.

File A703 control symbol 554/1/30 is titled "*Investigations of Flying Saucers-policy.*" The earliest folio on the file is dated 20 Jul 1953 and is from the Office of the Air Attaché of the

American Embassy in Melbourne and addressed to DAFI. The letter thanks DAFI for copies of previous correspondence and refers to a meeting on 18 May 1953 between the author and DAFI. The author writes "...my headquarters is very interested in receiving reports of all unusual sightings..." and seeks DAFI's input of data on sightings.

On 16 Nov 1953 an internal memo from the Chief of the Air Staff went out to various RAAF Headquarters forwarding a revised pro-forma for the gathering of information on "unusual sightings." The memo advised that this new form replaced one initially distributed on 16 Jan 1951. It closed by stating "*These new instructions do not emanate from any renewed interest in 'Flying Saucers' or any new intelligence on the subject, but are merely intended to improve the standard of reporting.*"

A 20 Nov 1953 "Note of Action" was a reply to a Ministerial question on the subject and noted that "...all reports are still being investigated closely and recorded as an aid to further research into future reports of this nature." Later folios revealed that the information sent was to answer a question from Mr Downer MP.

Folio 7A is a draft statement of RAAF policy, but has a written note to the effect that it was approved by DCAS (presumably Deputy Chief of Air Staff) and issued in Apr 1954. It is the earliest statement of policy and read:

*"1. The RAAF accepts reports on flying saucers and attempts an allocation of reliability. Those that fall in the reliable class are then subjected to further investigation as and when the opportunity occurs. As a result of this further investigation, a smaller number of reports are followed up and investigations are made with the Meteorological Services, the Government Astronomer and the Civil Aviation Authorities in an attempt to fit the original occurrences in with any normal flying activity or meteorological phenomena.*  
*2. As a result of investigations in the past, there is no doubt that reliable observers have reported sightings which today are inexplicable within the resources available to the RAAF. Reports of this type are continuously filed in an attempt to develop sufficient depth of evidence for accurate analysis to be made. It may however, be several years before the required depth of evidence is available."*

On 16 Dec 1954 a telegram was sent from Athol Townley, who had the Government portfolios of air and civil aviation, to Mr E W Hicks, Secretary Department of Air, asking if any factual information had been received on an "*aircraft phenomenon Canberra Nowra*" as there were constant enquiries from journalists. It went on to joke "*Trust no mermaid is associated with this sighting.*"

Instant action came from DAFI who, on the same day, wrote a minute to the Secretary, Department of Air titled "*Ministerial enquiry-radar sightings of unidentified flying objects.*" The minute attached a copy of a report (not on the file) from the Department of the Navy. It also stated that "*Since the beginning of Aug until quite recently, all reports on unidentified flying objects were referred to Mr O H Turner of the Physics Department of the University of Melbourne, who had offered to carry out a statistical analysis of such report.*"

Harry Turner tabled his report by way of a letter dated 26 Dec 1954 which he sent from London to the Secretary, Department of Air in Melbourne. In it he stated that DAFI had given him two files of reports to examine. He had also read books by Keyhoe, Menzel and



Leslie & Adamski, and had discussions with other staff members of the Physics Department of the University of Melbourne, plus had personally investigated some local sightings.

Under the heading of conclusions he remarked that: *"If one assumes these Intelligence reports are authentic, then the evidence presented is such that it is difficult to assume any interpretation other than that unidentified flying objects are being observed....Indeed, the superiority is such that it is highly improbable that such objects have a terrestrial origin...the evidence presented by the reports held by the RAAF tend to support the above conclusion-namely that certain strange aircraft have been observed to behave in a manner suggestive of an extra-terrestrial origin."* Turner went on to make a number of recommendations including at least one full time investigator; publicity to encourage more people to report; an liaison with the USAF to exchange information and verify Keyhoe's claim; liaison with the RAF and the possibility of forming a panel to assist analyse reports.

On 24 Feb 1955, D/DAFI Ops wrote a minute to the D/CAS to accompany Turner's report to him including Turner's suggestion of at least one full time investigator. The DCAS on 15 Mar 1955 noted the minute but stated *"I am not prepared to afford a full time investigator."*

On 30 Jul 1955 the first of an extensive range of correspondence commenced between DAFI and Fred Stone from Adelaide, of the Australian Flying Saucer Research Society. Stone arranged an appointment to visit DAFI in Melbourne.

Further DAFI response to the Turner report, in Sep 1955, included writing to RAAF liaison in Washington in the USA seeking any information on the subject that the USAF may hold and for the USAF's assessment of Keyhoe's work. The reply from Washington came dated 19 Oct 1955 and included a part re Keyhoe which read *"He has, however, no official status whatsoever and a dim view is taken officially of both him and his works."*

On 2 Nov 1955 A/DAFI wrote to D.Ops which included the statement *"A Ministerial statement in the House on 19 Nov 53 to the effect that the RAAF make detailed investigations of every report received (which in truth we are not yet doing)"* It went on to say *"To honour the Minister's statement and the Press release, some effort should be made to investigate any reported "sightings." This could only be done by a panel including operations, technical, navigation and meteorological staff."*

Feb 1957 saw a letter from Peter Norris to DAFI which requested clarification of the attitude of the Department of Air towards investigations of reports. The reply stated *"All reports received by this Department area investigated within the limits of our capability."*

In Apr 1957 DAFI sought assistance with the task of investigation and evaluation of reports, from the Joint Intelligence Bureau (JIB.) Noting that the JIB had established a Scientific Intelligence Section, it suggested the JIB would be better placed to look at the material. No response from JIB has been found on any file, despite the JIB UFO file having been located (see appendix eight.)

Correspondence continued to flow from civilian research societies to DAFI; for example the Victorian Flying Saucer Research Society wrote in Sep 1959 to inquire about the Department's knowledge of the Father Gill case. DAFI's responded by citing the five year old RAAF policy statement that reports are *"continuously filed"* and it *"may, however, be some time before the required depth of evidence is available."*

These communications triggered a minute from DAFI to their Australian representative at the UK Air Ministry. *"Would you be good enough to let us have the latest official views of the United Kingdom government."* A similar request went to Washington.

The UK response was that questions had been asked in the House but Parliament had not debated the topic. Sighting reports were being processed *"through Air Ministry intelligence."*

Stimulated by the letter from the Victorian Flying Saucer Research Society DAFI interviewed Rev Gill and tabled their report in Jan 1960. DAFI found *"It seems probable that the lights observed by Mr Gill were natural phenomena."* and concluded *"In the light of our own and overseas military experience, the reported sights of UFOs by Reverend Gill do not contain sufficient additional evidence to warrant any firm opinion that illegal flights by alien countries are being made over Australian Territory."*

The Australian Embassy's RAAF Intelligence representative wrote to DAFI dated 12 Jan 1960 responding to their earlier request for an update of USAF conclusions and included a copy of a "News Release" from the Department of Defense, Office of Public Affairs, Washington dated 15 Jul 1959 which started off *"Over twelve years of investigating and evaluating unidentified flying object sightings has provided no evidence to confirm the existence of the popularly termed 'flying saucers', as interplanetary or interstellar space ships."* The US and UK responses were then given to the Minister on 7 Mar 1960.

Similarly, the 14 Oct 1960 sighting at Cressy, Tasmania, was also followed up by the Victorian Flying Saucer Research Society. A memo dated 27 Jan 1961 from DAFI stated *"We are of the opinion that the phenomena was the result of the moon rise associated with meteorological conditions...could have produced the impression of flying objects."*

Interestingly, some one hand crossed out the words *"could have"* in the memo so that a letter dated 7 Mar 1961 from DAFI to VFSRS read *"produced the impression of flying objects."*

A little light hearted banter occurred in a letter from the Public Relations Officer of the Department of Civil Aviation to the Director of Public Relations, (DPR) Department of Air (DOA), dated 20 Feb 1963. *"Our Embassy in Washington has sent us the attached letter...You know how we feel about saucers-we prefer to concentrate on cups..."* This was followed by a minute from DPR DOA to DAFI *"Without being saucy (pardon the pun) do you think you could accept the chore of replying to the attached enclosures..."*

One of these DAFI responses included part of the text of the statement of the Minister for Air dated 29 Oct 1960 in Parliament. In part it stated:

*Although reports of this sort have been investigated very carefully for some years, nearly all of them are explainable on a perfectly normal basis...of all these reports, only three or four percent cannot be explained on the basis of some natural phenomena, and nothing that has arisen from that three or four per cent of unexplained cases gives any firm support for the belief that interlopers from other places in this world or outside it have been visiting us."*

A 22 Apr 1965 report from the Secretary of Air to a private US citizen included:

*"The RAAF has to date neither received nor discovers in Australia or overseas any evidence to support the belief that the earth is being observed, visited or threatened by machines from other planets; nor is there any evidence to prove the existence of flying saucers."*

Apr 1966 saw the preparation of a "*Summary of Unidentified Aerial Sightings reported to Department of Air, Canberra ACT from 1960*" by the DOA DPR, which sent them to DAFI for comment. DAFI's response, dated 18 May 1966, argued that as there was renewed interest "*in the UFO question*" DAFI would prefer that the summary not be passed to the public as it "*will only whet their appetite rather than satisfy them.*" This was followed by "*Also I believe that the SAAB challenge some of the causes-could this be checked please.*"

A 12 Oct 1966 memo from the Secretary DOA, which went to the CSIRO; Bureau of Meteorology; Dept of Civil Aviation; Mt Stromlo observatory, and Supervisor of United States Projects Tidbinbilla, sought their co-operation. "*Your agreement is therefore sought that whenever the UFO investigation suggests that your organisation might be able to provide some assistance a copy of the UFO report should be sent to you for your comment.*"

A minuted dated 12 Oct 1966 from EO(Air) to DAFI, DPR, SAAB and (unreadable) discussed apparent confusion within Departmental UFO policy. A Ministerial statement had advised that "*...Anyone...interested in the sightings of UFOs...is welcome to a synopsis of UFO sightings, which includes a very brief assessment of the probable cause.*" This conflicted with the 18 May 1966 DAFI view that the synopsis should not be given out to the public. The EO also suggested rationalisation of the Department's UFO files, there being at least four different files at that time. "*Three of these files are classified – two of which are secret, although there appears to be nothing on these files consistent with this classification.*" File numbers given were 2/25/1; 580/1/1; 554/1/30. DPR opened file 574/3/88.

The question of the synopsis was resolved in a minute dated 10 Oct 1966 from DAFI:

*"In view of the Minister's statement...the synopsis of UFO sightings at F95 may be released to the public...I see no reason why files on this subject should not be UNCLASSIFIED; this Directorate will close off any classified files on this subject."*

1966 also brought the USAF announcement that Dr E U Condon would head a USAF funded inquiry into UFOs.

Dr M J Duggin of the CSIRO – National Standards Laboratory – wrote to Sqd Ldr Baxter on 20 Dec 1966, following their telephone discussion. Duggin had met Dr J Vallee and Prof J A Hynek in Chicago and he (Duggin) was interested in the scientific investigation of UFOs. Duggin told DAFI that he was interested in investigating cases himself and offered his assistance to DAFI.

Wing Commander Marshall, D/DAFI(ops) wrote to DAFI on 29 Dec 1966 and in part

*"These scientists, with all the documents and facilities available to them, are obviously in a position to assist us in this matter, and although I am not too keen on releasing the details of the RAAF*

*investigations or anything which may increase the interest of the general public in this field, I think we should give these scientists the information they require."*

A memo dated 6 Jan 1967 went from the Secretary DOA to the Secretary CSIRO "...this Department has no objection additionally to passing reports of all UFO sightings to Dr Duggin provided that this will not caused you any embarrassment..." CSIRO responded on 12 Jan 1967 "the organisation has no objection to you passing reports of UFO sightings to Dr Duggin..."

The Commonwealth Aerial Phenomena Investigations Organisation was quick to seize on the USAF study and wrote to the CSIRO requesting it to consider a similar study. A copy of the CSIRO's response dated 28 Apr 1967 was found on 554/1/30 part 1. "I am sorry to tell you that it would not be appropriate in Australia at this time for CSIRO to embark on such an investigation." File 554/1/30 part 1 ended here and part 2 commenced on 23 Nov 1967.

On 1 Mar 1968 Wing Commander Pembridge for Chief of the Air Staff, wrote to HQ Op Cmd and HQ Supt Cmd:

*"The investigation of unidentified flying objects is understandably a tedious task and one in which the investigator may frequently have little faith or interest. Whilst this Department has every sympathy with this point of view it is nevertheless necessary to obtain a comprehensive as record as possible. The main RAAF object in investigating these reports is to determine whether Australian airspace has been violated."*

A letter dated 16 Mar 1968 from Judith Magee, then Secretary of VUFORS, to Chief of Air Force Intelligence requested "...a conference, for the purpose of discussing current investigations carried out by the Air Force, into Unidentified Flying Objects." A file note stated that the original letter had been transferred to file 574/3/88 and actioned there.

Later, CAPIO requested a RAAF officer to attend the third conference in Canberra to provide a synopsis of UFO sightings. This caused concern in that to send an officer from DAFI "...underlines that our interest in this subject is that associated with Air Defence/Intelligence aspects, and this could cause some problems and lead to some unwanted publicity." The memo, from A Sec A to the Minister dated 3 Jun 1968 also stated that DOA intended to see if any other Commonwealth Department e.g. Defence, Supply, Education & Science, Prime Ministers may be better placed to investigate reports.

A 2 Jun 1969 memo from Wing Commander Murphy, DAFI, to HQ Supt Cmd and HQ Ops Cmd read in part:

*"In an attempt to obtain slightly more scientific date on sightings, the Defence Science Section has requested that the following report form be used...as Defence Science are the advisors on the reports..."*

The file contains a copy of a summary of UAS sightings between 23 Jan 1960 and 30 Nov 1968 at this point. Of the 400 or so reports listed there, are 7 (or 1.75%) labelled "unknown."

Later, on 11 Nov 1969, Wing Commander Murphy for the Chief of Air Staff asked for better attention to detail when completing UFO report forms “...*the public is becoming more and more susceptible to the UFO syndrome, and the press and radio thrive on it. This in turn generates questions in Parliament which require answers sometimes at ministerial level, and unless effort is put into the investigations then the correct answers cannot be given.*”

At this point in the file there is an undated summary document titled “UFO Investigation in the RAAF” prepared by Flt Lt K Jordan AI-4. It consists of two pages plus 24 pages of annexes.

*“Research into this subject has come up with some unrewarding answers; firstly the inquiry can not go back any further than the 11<sup>th</sup> Nov 1953. The cause of this blockage is the loss of Part 1 of 114/1/197 (ex SEC CD2/2) in the move of the Department from Melbourne to Canberra.”*

The document goes on to summarise “Australian Government policy.” “RAAF Investigation Policy,” “Overseas observations” and “Mr O Turner’s interests.”

A memo from Flt Lt K Jordan, DAFI AI-4 to D/DAFI (Ops) dated 2 Jan 1970 revealed that “*One of the secondary duties of AI-4 has been the handling of all UFO reports submitted to the RAAF. This involves making a final decision on the nature of the observed phenomenon in each case...*”

In Dec 1969 the USAF terminated Project Blue Book and a copy of the relevant News Release arrived with DAFI. Wind Commander Murphy wrote, on 15 Jan 1970, to D/D(CIV)JIO “*In view of this conclusion and decision by the USAF, we are investigating the possibility of reducing the RAAF effort in investigating UFO reports in Australia.*”

There was a sighting on 15 Jul 1965 in Canberra which became the subject of a 6 Jun 1970 letter from a member of the public. In preparation of a reply someone included on the file a copy of a Ministerial press release dated 30 Jul 1965. This stated that there were several possible explanations for the event, ranging from a condensation trail of an aircraft, to Venus to a meteorological balloon.

Dated 1 Apr 1970 is an “Operational Command, Air Staff Instruction No 3/A/5 Intelligence – report on Unusual Aerial Sightings.” It set out the then current action to be taken with reports.

The Committee of the South Australian Division of Australian and New Zealand Association of the Advancement of Science convened a one day symposium on “The Unidentified Flying Object problem” on 30 Oct 1971, and requested a RAAF officer attend and explain the processing of reports. DAFI recommended no one be made available and a negative response was sent, but included “*There is no evidence that UFOS have landed in Australia...*”

The question of the numbers of DOA files again arose in Jul 1971. It was then stated that there were only two files 580/1/1 and 554/1/30. A third was created “*Correspondence from individuals and organisations re UFOs.*”

As mentioned previously, DAFI was looking for someone else to take over the reins of UFO investigations. A memo dated 27 Jul 1971 from Group Captain Royston, DAFI to S/Air/SS wrote

*"You spoke to me recently on the matter of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) and you mentioned that the Department of Supply may be interested in investigating this subject...As I advised you, although I am directly concerned with any possible threat to Australian security, I am not particularly interested in the subject of UFOs, even though my directorate devotes valuable time to the problem. I accept the US assessments without question and consider that it would be a complete waste for we here in Australia to spend valuable time and money in further detailed investigations..."*

Sep 1971 saw DAFI draft a general pro forma reply to anyone who inquired/reported UFOs. This was brought in because *"Observers have in the past seldom been informed of subsequent investigation of their sighting and this has, no doubt, created bad publicity for the RAAF."*

RAAF Edinburgh wrote to DOA on 12 Apr 1972 regarding the increased public interest in UFOs and the re-organisation of UFO research groups in South Australia, stating that it *"...is straining parameters for UFO reporting in this state"* and asked about a new policy on UFOs being issued. A further communication from RAAF Edinburgh to DOA dated 10 May 1972 *"Several airmen at this base are active members of one or other of the flying saucer quote research unquote societies which are competing with each other in South Australia in similar fashion to tow-truck operators."*

554/1/30 part 3 was opened 28 May 1972. The first undated memo was from Chief of Air Staff to HQ Op Cmd and Spt Cmd *"Changes to investigation of UFO policy."* *"The main purpose of the ...changes is to eliminate unnecessary duplication of effort and to streamline the process of investigations."* The DOA would henceforth deal directly with bases.

A DAFI memo dated 30 Jan 1973 to A/EXECO A referred to Ministerial Correspondence. It provided a summary of RAAF involvement then *"Paras 3,4 and 5, and the comparatively low volume of reports necessitating investigation (623 in 12 years) would seem to indicate that a central research body as advocated by (blanked out) and (blanked out) is unnecessary..."*

May 1973 again saw a revised report pro forma issued.

A single page "Record of discussion" dated 24 Aug 1973 revealed that *"An unofficial meeting"* was held attended by Prof J A Hynek, Dr M Duggin, Mr O Turner and DAFI. *"Each member was present in a private capacity to discuss certain procedures of investigation into unusual aerial Sightings in Australian and throughout the world, in an endeavour to expand the scientific relationship to the problem."*

The meeting notes revealed that *"All present agreed that the scientific aspects were of prime importance. DAFI suggested that CSIRO or the Department of Science...seemed to be logical agencies to conduct greater in depth investigation in Australia...Any such study should be low key and not known to the lunatic fringe of ufologists."*

One week after this meeting, a memo from HQ Supt Cmd to DAFI stated *"...unidentified flying objects are not a defence threat. It is therefore suggested that UFO investigation be discontinued."*

A HQ Supt Cmd memo dated 16 Oct 1974 to DAFI sought approval to

*"...issue the contents of Reference A and all previous unusual aerial sightings (UAS) policy as revised 'Support Command Air staff Instruction No 3/3.' At present UAS policy is spread over a number of policy letters...The proposed Air Staff Instruction contains relevant information that has not previously been incorporated in UAS policy but which will help promote a clearer understanding of a subject which has suffered from pseudo-scientific reports and speculation in the past." CAS granted approval.*

In 1977 the file contained papers relating to a letter from Harry Griesberg of the ACOS and a request for RAAF co-operation.

There are then no papers on the file until 1981, a four year gap. The fading photocopy appears to be a response to an article in the Australian newspaper dated 9-10 May and sets out that each reported sighting takes 3 hours, and completed reports are forwarded to DAFIS for filing and *"...used by the Foreign Liaison Officer to produce a yearly sightings summary."* *"Whilst it is therefore true to say from the foregoing that UFO investigations are a part-time occupation for fourteen RAAF officers and one senior RAAF intelligence officer."* The memo contains a hand written note *"It seems to me that the newspaper article basically supports our contention that we should not be doing this! Perhaps we can use that fact!"*

DAFIS on 26 May 1981 wrote a memo to DCAS titled *"Investigation of Unusual Aerial Sightings (UAS).*

*"My Directorate is charged with the responsibility for UAS investigation and reporting. It has been a contentious issue for many years with opinion varying from a questioning of the need for monitoring such sightings, to the organisational area most appropriately placed to deal with them...The only advantage I see in retaining UAS investigation responsibilities are:*

*a. it allows a security oversight of unusual events which, on the odd occasion, may bear some military implication*

*b. it provides 'cover' if we wish to investigate some incident, not necessarily related, in more details, and...*

*...I seek your views on whether the RAAF should continue to carry the responsibility for the investigation of UAS..."*

The response was *"We spoke. While I agree with you in principle, the practicalities suggest we will continue to wear the responsibility. You should, however, ensure that the impact of this chore does not unduly impede our normal business."*

The file then contains an 8 Sep 1983 request for information from overseas to Pearce AFB re a 1980 Ogilve trace case.

The file ends with a copy of a blank VUFORS report form.

The top paper indicates the file was closed in 1984 and subsequent correspondence placed on file AF 84/3508. A Freedom of Information request to the Department of Defence by this author resulted in their advice that they were unable to locate this file.

## ***Summary so far***

All the material examined indicates that DAFI was, for the main, not really interested in conducting any scientific research into the phenomenon. The impression gained from comments on the RAAF's UAS policy file series (control symbol 554/1/30) was that, for the most part, examining UAS reports was merely a job that had to be done:

- *"The investigation of Unidentified Flying Objects is understandably a tedious task and one in which the investigator may frequently have little faith or interest."*<sup>(1)</sup>
- *"As you are probably aware the Department of Air is concerned solely with any possible threat to Australian security and does not go into detailed scientific investigation of UFO reports."*<sup>(2)</sup>
- *"We spoke. While I agree with you in principle, the practicalities suggest we will continue to wear the responsibility. You should, however, ensure that the impact of this chore does not unduly impede our normal business."*<sup>(3)</sup>

There were however, indications at times of a softening of this attitude. For example an examination of file 554/1/30 reveals the original of a letter from Dr M J Duggin employed by the CSIRO to Squadron Leader Baxter of DAFI. Folio 115 of 554/1/30 dated 29 Dec 1966 is an internal memo from D/DAFI (Ops) to DAFI which included:

*"You will note that these scientists are mainly interested in the unexplained UFO's, but as far as I can make out they would like information on all sightings...These scientists, with all the documents and facilities available to them, are obviously in a position to assist us in this matter, and though I am not too keen on releasing the details of the RAAF investigations or anything which may increase the interest of the general public in this field, I think we should give these scientists the information they require."*<sup>(4)</sup>

What is interesting here is the comment "...the unexplained UFO's..." This is an internal memo, way before the FOI Act allowed outsiders to see it. Here are DAFI staff writing of "unexplained UFO's." It is realised that this is in the context of what Duggin was interested in. However, the author does not dispute the fact that there were some UAS reports which remain unexplained after investigation.

## ***Pass the buck***

DAFI tried on a number of occasions to pass off at least part of the task to other agencies:

1. *The Joint Intelligence Bureau* of the DOD in 1957. A letter dated 1 Apr 1957 from DAFI to the JIB, said in part "...reports could best be investigated and evaluated by one of your scientific research officers..."<sup>(5)</sup> See the later sections on the Joint Intelligence Bureau/Joint Intelligence Committee.

2. *The Department of Supply* in 1971. A Memo dated 27 Jul 1971 from DAFI to S/AIR/SS stated in part:



*"You spoke to me recently on the matter of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) and you mentioned that the Department of Supply may be interested in investigating this subject. This minute provides a brief historical sketch of this subject and my reaction to the proposal."*<sup>(6)</sup>

The possible Department of Supply interest also came up within the Joint Intelligence Organisation when the then Director R W Furlonger wrote on 27 May 1971 to Deputy Secretary B as follows:

*"The Department of Supply has personnel with an appropriate range of scientific and technical expertise and laboratory and field facilities that suitably be employed on UFO investigations.*

*(a) I suggest that Department of defence should consider passing responsibility for investigation of Australian UFO sightings from the RAAF to the Department of Supply under the following general conditions.*

*(1) That a limited number of selected reports, say six per year, be thoroughly investigated by Department of Supply;*

*(2) That at the end of two or three years (or earlier if suggested by the investigators) the results of Supply investigations be examined by interested parties; eg Defence, RAAF and Supply, with a view to determining whether there is any defence interest in UFO sightings that could justify further investigation."*

3. *The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation* in 1973. In Aug 1973 Prof J Allen Hynek was out here in Australia and together with Dr Michael Duggin and Harry Turner of the JIB, attended a DAFI meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup>. A DAFI file note 7 called it *"An unofficial meeting...in an endeavour to expand the scientific relationship to the problem."* In the meeting, Duggin was described as *"...a member of the CSIRO and is currently based in Sydney (North Ryde) and heading the Australian research aspects of ERSAT."* Paragraph 5 of the note read:

*"DAFI suggested that CSIRO or the Dept of Science (but preferably the former) seemed to be logical agencies to conduct greater in depth investigation in Australia. DAFI agreed that a selection of reports (mainly those which were unanswerable and scientific in context) could possibly be made available to CSIRO for further study and computerization."*

However, nothing officially came from any of these three approaches by DAFI to shift the "UAS problem" from them to somewhere else in the Government. DAFI remained the "Official" Government UAS agency.

## **1984 onwards**

A major change of policy was announced in the media on 2 May 1984:

### **"UNUSUAL AERIAL SIGHTINGS - RAAF CHANGE IN POLICY"**

*The RAAF in future will investigate fully only those Unusual Aerial Sightings (UAS) which suggest a defence or national security implication. The Minister for Defence, Mr Gordon Scholes, said today that while the RAAF would continue to be the first point of contact, UAS reports not considered to have a defence or security implication would not be further investigated.*

*Instead they would be recorded and the UAS observer would be given the address of civilian UAS research organisations if the observer wished to pursue the matter further. Mr Scholes said that in the past the RAAF's investigation of all UAS reports had often proved time consuming, unproductive and had led to many man-hours of follow-up action by the RAAF and other agencies such as the Department of Aviation and the Bureau of Meteorology.*

*He said that procedures for investigating UAS reports had remained unchanged for many years. The vast majority of reports submitted by the public had proven not to have a national security significance."*

A deduction from the last paragraph of the announcement is that some reports in fact had a "national security implication." It is generally understood just what a "defence implication" is, e.g. an unauthorised intrusion into Australian air space by an unidentified man-made aircraft. However, just what constitutes a "national security implication" as opposed to a "defence implication" remains unclear.

Nothing was known previously of the inside deliberations behind this policy shift. However, when examining files at RAAF Base Edinburgh a file was located with a draft Support Command Air Staff Instruction no 3/A/3 ( AF 84/3508 part 1 of 12 Apr 1984.) This said that the RAAF is the first point of contact and that most UAS from the public are found to be natural or man-made.

*"The RAAF accepts reports on UAS and attempts an allocation of reliability. However, few reports are of any direct interest to the RAAF."*

This was followed by a piece about the Condon report conclusions, then:

*"Experience in the RAAF since the early 1950s supports the Condon report conclusion...The RAAF is responsible for the acceptance and evaluation of UAS reports. Those which suggest a defence or national security implication are further investigated and a probable cause determined..."*

The draft went on to say that DAFI is to assess such reports. Reports considered not having defence or national security implications are not investigated further and are filed at Command HQ's:

*"On return of part 2, the report is to be examined in terms of defence or national security implications, to assess whether further investigation is warranted. In general terms, further investigation is to be confined to sightings of a terrestrial, rather than an extra-terrestrial nature. Sightings of interest to the RAAF would involve incursions into Australian airspace by man-made objects, and particularly include sightings near defence or other sensitive establishments. The traditional "lights in the sky" are no longer cause for RAAF investigation."*

The sentence "...further investigation is to be confined to sightings of a terrestrial, rather than an extra-terrestrial nature." is very intriguing! This seems to be saying that although the RAAF knew some sightings were of an extra-terrestrial nature, it wasn't interested in these! A very rare admission indeed for the RAAF. The document goes on:

*“Command intelligence staff are to be made aware immediately of any report warranting further investigation. On receipt of such a report, CINTO is to:*

- a. inform DAFIS and the Chief of Staff (COFS)*
- b. commence an immediate investigation and instruct the UAS investigator at the reporting unit to complete Annex A part 3 (Unit report).*
- c. complete Annex A part 4 on receipt of completed parts 1-3 and report the findings of his investigation to COFS and DAFIS.”* <sup>(8)</sup>

Note that the 2 May 1984 media release didn't contain the reference to “extra-terrestrial nature.”

This new policy lasted ten years, and then in 1994 the DOD policy again changed:

*“Unidentified Aerial Sightings. Revised policy.*

*“Consideration of the scientific record suggests that, whilst not all UAS have a ready explanation, there is no compelling reason for the RAAF to continue to devote resources to recording, investigating and attempting to explain UAS. The RAAF no longer accepts reports on UAS...”*

*“Some UAS may relate to events that could have a defence, security or public safety implications, such as man-made debris falling from space, a burning aircraft or an aircraft making an unauthorised incursion into Australian air space. Where members of the community may have witnessed an event of this type they are encouraged to contact the police, civilian aviation authorities or coast watch.”*

*“2. The change in policy will not be publicised by press release. Known UFO groups will be contacted individually by mail and provided with a copy of the new policy together with a brief explanations of the implications for them.”* <sup>(9)</sup>

Three points of the above, call for comment:

- The use of the phrase “*Consideration of the scientific record...*” when it is clear from the DOA's own statements that it “*...does not go into detailed scientific investigation.*”
- The statement “*... not all UAS have a ready explanation...*” indicates that the DOD recognised that some reports were puzzling (indeed their own investigations sometimes labelled a report as “unidentified” or “unknown.”)
- That “*The change in policy will not be publicised by press release.*” After 45 years it was to be a quiet exit.

### ***The Joint Intelligence Bureau/Joint Intelligence Organisation***

File 3092/2/000 whose title is “Scientific Intelligence – General – Unidentified Flying Objects” was originally classified “Secret.” In bold letters on the cover is “JIO” with a sticky label stating “Box 2738 JIO Archived file no. 3390P. The words “Retain permanently RDA 1040 class S.1” are stamped on the cover.

Papers on the file commence on 1 Apr 1957 with a memo from the Department of Air, Directorate of Air Force Intelligence (DAFI) to the Director, Joint Intelligence Bureau (JIB). DAFI advised that the Department of Air receive UFO reports and:

*“As your Branch has now established a Scientific Intelligence Section, it would appear that these reports could best be investigated and evaluated by one of your Scientific Research Officers, who will have a broader background of knowledge than anyone in this Directorate.”*

DAFI asked if JIB would take on the commitment.

D T Forsyth the Acting Director of JIB wrote on 3 Apr 1957 to Sc I O *“What do you think about this?”* R H Mathams, the then Scientific Intelligence Officer, replied;

*“As DAFI points out these reports cover a number of subjects...and hence would, I suggest be an appropriate study for the STISC...”*

The STISC was the Scientific and Technical Intelligence sub-committee of the Joint Intelligence Committee.

On 9 Apr 1957 Forsyth sent a memo to the Controller, Joint Services Organisations suggesting that the UFO subject:

*“...would be an appropriate study for the STISC, when formed...I would suggest that we ask DAFI to continue to hold the papers they have acquired and bring the subject forward again preferably for JIC discussion, when the STISC has been formed and in operation.”*

Subsequently on 18 Oct 1957, agenda item 71/1957 of the Joint Intelligence Committee was headed “Investigations into reports of Unidentified Flying Objects” and scheduled for a later meeting of that Committee. See below for more on this.

At this time, 1957-1958, UFO reports were being sent to a number of Federal Government agencies both from the public and from other Government agencies. Recipient agencies included the CSIRO; the Department of Territories; and the Department of Air (DAFI).

The JIB file contains a Minute dated 24 Feb 1958 from the Controller, Joint Service Organisations to the Director JIB. The Minute covers a report from the Department of Territories concerning a UFO report from the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, dated 6 Dec 1957. Here, two servicemen had reported seeing a bright white light at 2130hrs which was seen to fall over the SE horizon. A bright glow lasted for 5 seconds after the light disappeared from view. A muffled impact was heard as if something had hit the ground. The Controller's Minute asks that the report be passed to the JIB Bureau in London and the Central Intelligence Agency in Washington. This was done as shown by referral letters on the file.

Next on the file is a report from the captain of the ship “Woomera” which had sighted an unusual object while on passage between Port Lincoln, South Australia and Melbourne, Victoria. At 1400hrs EST 8 Feb 1958 a contrail had formed in the sky at 50 degrees elevation, 290 degrees from the ship and travelled to 40 degrees elevation, then disappeared

only to reform at 30 degrees elevation finally disappearing from view at 15 degrees elevation, bearing 110 degrees. It lasted for some 30 minutes before finally fading. Again copies of this observation were sent to JIB London, and JIB Washington to pass to the CIA.

On 7 Aug 1961 a teleprinter message arrived at JIB reporting that that day's "Melbourne Sun" newspaper carried details of an observation of 12 flying objects leaving a white trail of streamers which floated to the ground. DAFI was asked by JIB for a copy of the report but later RAAF Pearce advised they had not investigated the sighting.

There were no papers on the file between 1962 and 1966, then a Nov 1967 letter from a Swedish citizen, addressed to the Department of National defence, Intelligence Section made it to the JIB file. However, it was promptly despatched to DAFI to handle.

In Dec 1969 the Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense Public Affairs released a News Release which informed that the US Air Force was to terminate their UFO research project "Project Blue Book." A copy was forwarded by the RAAF Intelligence Representative in Washington to DAFI. This led to Wing Commander T W Murphey, A/DAFI to send a minute dated 15 Jan 1970 to D/D (CIV) JIO which read

*"Further to teletalk Mr McMichael/Wg Cdr T W Murphy on Thursday 8 Jan 70, a copy of the USAF news release on UFO Investigation is attached. In view of this conclusion and decision by the USAF, we are investigating the possibility of reducing the RAAF effort in investigating UFO reports in Australia."*

On 28 Jan 1970 the JIO DD(c) Mr McMichael, wrote to the DSTI:

*"May I have your advice and comments...I have received a number of papers from Mr Turner on UFOs in the last year ...should we maintain an incipient capacity in this field?"*

Mathams, DSTI replied to the DD(C) on 2 Feb 1970.

*"I have discussed the paper (loosely enclosed ) with Mr Turner and have told him that my views on the subject of UFOs, from a scientific point of view, are as follows:*

- (a) The present establishment of DSTI has been designed to meet the research demands arising from our studies of defence science in countries in the Far East and South East Asia, and to keep abreast of major developments in defence science in the Soviet bloc. There is no surplus research capacity within the establishment that could be diverted to problems such as the investigation of UFO reports.*
- (b) I am not convinced that there is a sufficient scientific intelligence component in the UFO problem such as to warrant any diversion of Australia's very limited resources for scientific intelligence research.*
- (c) It is evident that there is still considerable controversy concerning UFOs and this will undoubtable continue until the subject is fully examined by some competent authority. Such an examination, however, would require a considerable effort to collect information on UFO sightings, to investigate reports of such sightings and to examine all information in an objective, scientific manner. It is for consideration as to whether the Department of Defence could (or would) approve such an effort."*

On 3 Feb 1970 the DD(C) McMichael, wrote to DSTI

*"I have by now read a considerable amount of material on this subject. I am sure that there is an area for investigation that should be pursued by some authority. That authority, however, would need very considerable resources indeed.*

*I have considered carefully whether a part of the subject might be undertaken by us, but this approach doesn't seem practicable I am forced, therefore, whilst agreeing that the subject should be studied somewhere, to decide that JIO cannot be that somewhere. Without considerable back-up we would be wasting our time and the RAAF have apparently cancelled out the little they were doing. I would be obliged if you would show this minute to Mr Turner."*

By 1971 the JIB had become the Joint Intelligence organisation (JIO.) The then Director R W Furlonger wrote on 27 May 1971 to Deputy Secretary B as follows:

*"Further to our discussions on the question of investigation of Australian reports on unidentified flying object, I would summarize my attitude as follows:*

- (b) There appears to be sufficient evidence from RAAF and US reports of investigations of UFO sightings to indicate that some reports cannot readily be explained by natural phenomena or man-made activities. Thorough investigation of selected Australian reports of UFO sightings seems to be warranted, but the effort should be restricted to those occurrences that cannot easily be explained.*
- (c) The Department of Supply has personnel with an appropriate range of scientific and technical expertise and laboratory and field facilities that suitably be employed on UFO investigations.*
- (d) I suggest that Department of defence should consider passing responsibility for investigation of Australian UFO sightings from the RAAF to the Department of Supply under the following general conditions.*
  - (3) That a limited number of selected reports, say six per year, be thoroughly investigated by Department of Supply;*
  - (4) That at the end of two or three years (or earlier if suggested by the investigators) the results of Supply investigations be examined by interested parties; eg Defence, RAAF and Supply, with a view to determining whether there is any defence interest in UFO sightings that could justify further investigation.*
- (e) I believe that, although Defence should have general oversight and broad direction of the UFO investigation, significant JIO resources should not be devoted to this until it can clearly be shown from the results of the investigation that a strategic intelligence interest exists. Even then, the matter would have to be related to other priorities; there are many things that it would be desirable for us to do but which cannot be tackled because of higher priorities."*

The final set of papers on the file were attached to a Minute dated 27 May 1971 written by O H Turner, Head of the Nuclear Branch of JIO to the JIO Director through DSTI. Attached to the Minute were the following pages headed:

1. "US Official attitude to UFOs" 7 pages
2. "RAAF attitude to UFOs" 2 pages
3. Chronology of US Investigations into UFO phenomena 13 pages
4. Summary 2 pages.

There was a handwritten note on the minute *"Director after you have read the attachments, I would like to discuss this matter with you, please."* R A Mathams DSTI. 27/5/71.

Turner's minute titled "Scientific and Intelligence aspects of the UFO problem" argued that there were genuine intelligence aspects to the UFO issue:

*"Intelligence aspects include assessment of real from false reporting, capabilities of propulsion methods and possible weapons used, motivation of operations (harmful or not, defensive, offensive, scientific etc) for both short-term and long-term and whether there are more effective ways to detect these operations or defend them if necessary."*

In the two page summary, Turner argued that:

*"The RAAF...give credence only to the USAF public façade and appear to have uncritically accepted the associated information....Project BLUE BOOK was terminated, but presumably this would have little effect on the main programme. It would appear wrong for Australia to remain ignorant of the true situation. We lack an intelligence viewpoint that can assess the nature and possible consequences of the problem, a scientific viewpoint that could derive scientifically valid data from the reports and public relations viewpoint that can honestly satisfy public interest. To overcome these deficiencies in the Australian investigation of UFOs, it would seem that strong case exists for the acceptance of the RAAF suggestion that another government department assume responsibility for the investigation and analysis of UFO reports."*

In the pages titled "RAAF attitude to UFO's he wrote:

*"In general, the RAAF attitude has been guided by the USAF public releases which were aimed at allaying public interest by denying the reality of UFOs. Consequently, most of the Australian reports were given identifications without a great concern for rational correlation. ...as a result there has been a negligible scientific analysis of the data....If Australia is to follow the US lead, then instead of following the public USAF attitude, it would be preferable to follow the USAF/CIA role of concentrating on gaining a knowledge of the power sources involved. However, it may be preferable to act independently of the US and initiate a programme that is scientifically sound and intellectually honest towards unravelling the UFO mystery."*

It is at this point that the next document on the file is simply a "File closed" one.

### ***The Joint Intelligence Committee***

As noted above, the JIB file stated that *"The matter will be listed for consideration by the Joint Intelligence Committee at an early date"* agenda no. 71/1957.

Who was the Joint Intelligence Committee? Folio 88 of file series A1838, control symbol TS663/4 Part 3 (in 1957) states that:

*"The Joint Intelligence Committee formed part of the Australian Joint Service machinery, and is responsible to the Defence Committee. It comprises the Director of Naval Intelligence, the Director of Military Intelligence, The Director of Intelligence RAAF, a representative of the Department of External Affairs, and the Controller Joint Services organizations who also represents the Department of Defence.."*

*"The function of the Committee includes all matters of Joint Intelligence Policy, control through the Controller of Joint Services Organisations of intelligence policy of the Joint Intelligence machinery; propagation of reports, appreciations etc as may be required; liaison with the Joint Planning Committee and the appropriate scientific advisory body."*

The attendees list for the 10 October 1957 meeting was:

- Group Captain A D Henderson, Director of Air Force intelligence
- A P Fleming, Controller, Joint Services Organisation
- W H King, Director Joint Intelligence Bureau
- Colonel T F B MacAdie, Director of Military Intelligence
- T W Cutts, Representing Department of External Affairs
- Commander D J Beckley, Representing Director of Naval intelligence.

Agendum item 71/1957 went to the Joint Intelligence Committee on Tuesday 22 October 1957. A copy of the agenda was found on file series A1838 control symbol 663/4/1/ Part 1 titled *"Australian Defence Organisation Joint Intelligence Committee Business papers."* Item 5 was *"Investigations into Reports of Unidentified Flying Objects"*. The meeting was held in room 108 'A' block (New wing) at Victoria Barracks in Melbourne. The distribution list on the agenda shows copies of the agenda went to "List 'B'; ASIO & E L D White Esq."

Unfortunately a search of this file and also two other files:

- A1838 TS652/3/2 Part 2 *"Australian Defence Organisation Joint Intelligence committee Minutes"*
- A1838 TS663/4 Part 3 *"Australian Defence Organisation Joint Intelligence Committee"*

failed to locate a copy of the minutes of the meeting, so no record of the discussions or outcomes are available from these files.

However, on the front cover of file series JIO63, control symbol 3092/2/000, there is a notation to the effect that the matter *"Will be put on agenda of next STISC meeting."* This note is dated 1 November 1957 and is signed "Sc I O" presumably short hand for Scientific Intelligence Officer. R H Mathams was the JIB Scientific Intelligence Officer at the time.

What was the STISC? The STISC was the Scientific and Technical Intelligence sub-committee of the Joint Intelligence Committee. No mention of STISC agenda, business papers or minutes can be found on any file so far examined. However, a 1960 list of STISC members showed the following:

R H Mathams (Chairman) Head, Scientific Intelligence Branch, JIB  
 Lt Cdr K J Price, Naval Representative, Joint Intelligence Branch  
 Major K Whyte, GSO2 M.18 Directorate of Military Intelligence  
 Sqn Ldr P T V Jessop, Guided Weapons Section, Department of Air, Melbourne.  
 G C Shaefer, Aeronautical Research Laboratory, Department of Supply.



No record of any files relating to the STISC can be found in the National Archives of Australia Recordsearch, so for now the trail goes cold.

A check of the above mentioned three files failed to locate any other JIC agenda items relating to UFOs between the years 1955 and 1961.

### ***Other areas of the DOD since 1977***

A check of other areas of the DOD, namely the Army, the Navy, the DSTO and the DOD intelligence areas by way of an FOI request in 2004 was met with a response that they were unable to locate any files originating in these areas dealing with the topic of UASs for the period 1977 to 2004.

### ***Post 1994***

With the latest change of policy, came a call for all areas of the RAAF to close off their files dealing with UAS. Twenty three such files were collected and lodged with the NAA in 1994. These files were examined at the Edinburgh RAAF Base in 2004.

So, since 1994 the DOD has referred all sighting reports from the general public to civilian UAS groups, and there has been no evidence that the RAAF has investigated any UAS reports in the period 1994 to date.

Courtesy of Adrian Ross of Canberra, the Project acquired a copy of a previously unknown "Defence Instructions (General) ADMIN 55-1," dated 13 Jun 1996. ADMIN 55-1 concerns "Unusual Aerial Sightings Policy".

Interestingly, as a DOD document, it has "Single service filing instructions," namely "This instruction should be filed as NAVY ADMIN 65-7; ARMY ADMIN 77-1 and AIR FORCE ADMIN 13-7."

It sets out the Department's interest, or rather lack thereof, in UAS reports and advises callers should be directed to civilian UFO organisations and provides a listing of known Australian civilian groups.

Does the DOD have a position in 2008? It certainly does. The current Department web site has the following statement regarding UAS sightings:

*"Unidentified Aerials Sightings (UAS)*

*Sightings of unusual or unidentified aerial objects or UFO's.*

*Provided by: Directorate of Concepts and Capability Development Royal Australian Air Force  
Postal: Russell Offices Department of Defence Canberra ACT 2600*

*The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) formerly had a responsibility for investigating and assessing the validity of UAS. After careful examination of the factual data and historical records that had been gathered over many years, it was determined that the collective evidence did not warrant the continued allocation of resources by the RAAF to investigate and report on UAS. Subsequently, the RAAF ceased this function.*

*Current Defence policy on UAS where members of the public may have questions on, or seek to report sightings, is to direct them to their local police authorities or civil Unidentified Flying Object (UFO) research organisations, through the relevant state telephone directory.” <sup>(10)</sup>*

## Answers to the first two questions

The answers to the first two questions posed at the beginning of this work are:

- Australian Government Departments, who received UAS reports, ultimately passed them on to the RAAF, which was the official repository for such reports within the Government. They did so because it was Government policy
- From examination of Australian Government UAS documents, no evidence has been uncovered so far that any Government Department ever admitted conducting any “official” scientific research in to the UAS phenomenon. However, the line of inquiry re the JIB/JIO suggests that “unofficial” research was conducted by O Harry Turner who was a JIB/JIO staff member, within the Department of Defence. This interest commenced in 1954 when DAFI asked Turner to examine UFO reports it held as at that date, and continued through to 1982 when Turner left the JIB/JIO.

## A detour to the United Kingdom

The RAAF's early policy files reveal that from time to time (1955 <sup>(11)</sup>; 1959 <sup>(12)</sup> ) the RAAF inquired as to the British Government's position on the UAS phenomenon. It is therefore pertinent to ask did the UK Government ever conduct any scientific research into the UAS phenomenon?

Dr David Clarke and Andy Roberts in their 2002 book titled “*Out of the Shadows*” <sup>(13)</sup> reported upon their examination of hundreds of files generated by the UK's Ministry of Defence (MoD); the Royal Air Force and other Government bodies.

Clarke and Roberts found that the MoD's Directorate of Scientific and Technical Intelligence (DSTI), its predecessors and later counterpart, had indeed studied UAS reports:

*“The documentary evidence we have presented demonstrates that DSTI...has indeed played a significant role in UFO research and investigation, dating back to the first “flying saucer” waves of the 1950's...” <sup>(p251)</sup>*

What was the purpose of DSTI's interest in looking at UAS reports? In 1967, the Deputy Director of Intelligence wrote:

*"In our case, we have tailored our efforts to meet the minimum requirement of protecting UK airspace from any incursions which might pose a threat or a hazard."* (p179)

Consideration was given to the creation of a scientific post with DSTI for UAS investigations (p184). At that time, responsibility for investigation of interesting reports which had survived initial screening was the province of a scientist in DI55, Dr John Dickison (p182). Dickison was a space weapons expert (p172.)

However, by 2001 DSTI (now retitled DIST) decided to cease reviewing UAS reports made to the MoD as it had determined that UFOs were of no defence interest (p252.) That same year the MoD stated:

*"The Ministry does not question the existence, or otherwise, of extraterrestrial life forms, about which it remains open minded. To date we are, however, unaware of any evidence which proves that these phenomena exist."* (p256)

Subsequent to this, a MoD analysis, published in the year 2000, became public knowledge. The Executive Summary contained the words: "...the information studied...leads to the conclusion that it does not have any significant Defence Intelligence value..."<sup>(14)</sup>

## Answer to question three

Question three at the start of this article was "Were there any interesting "unknowns" found in Government files?" Appendix nine lists such cases. There are multiple cases which cried out for further intensive examination. Unfortunately, based on the evidence available on the Government's own files, they did not receive the scientific attention they deserved.

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## List of appendices

The following appendices are the text of various articles published in Disclosure Australia Newsletters 1 – 31, (which may be found at <http://disclosureaustralia.freewebspages.org>) and throw light on to specific topics of interest to UAS researchers.

- 1 Australian UFO sightings caused by a secret USAF U-2 aircraft program
- 2 Moon Dust & Mystery Spheres:
- 3 The project interviews Harry Turner
- 4 Australian Federal Parliament questions and answers
- 5 Unidentified aircraft over Papua & New Guinea and the Drury film
- 6 The Valentich disappearance and Government documents
- 7 What really happened at Westall, Victoria in 1966?
- 8 The Office of the Minister for Defence.
- 9 List of interesting UAS cases found in Government files.

The following appendix adds further information on aspects of the research:

- 10 The Scientific and Technical & Astronomical Research Society.

## APPENDIX ONE

### Australian UFO sightings caused by a secret USAF U-2 aircraft program

Over the years there have been a number of occasions when overseas UFO researchers have run into UFO sightings generated by observations of “secret” aircraft. One classic example is

*“In the late 1950s an agent of ours in Canada tracing down UFO reports, uncovered the fact that high-flying reconnaissance planes were over-flying parts of Russia from a secret base in Canada...In the immediate pre-Bay of Pigs era, another of our agents, while checking out reports of repeated landings of UFOs in the Florida everglades, discovered a complete military airbase equipped with unmarked (United States manufactured) vehicles and planes...”<sup>(1)</sup>*

To the best of our knowledge, no Australian researcher or group has previously suggested that “secret aircraft” have been the cause of any Australian UFO reports. It was therefore with surprise that the Disclosure Australia Secretariat came across the following report when reviewing a RAAF UFO reports file.

A Department of Agriculture inspector reported a UFO sighting to the RAAF in May 1961. Based on the information on the typed RAAF “Report on aerial object observed” pro forma, located in a digital copy of file series A703 control symbol 580/1/1/ Part 3, a reconstruction of the incident is given below.

At 8.35 am on 25 May 1961 children were playing in the backyard of a house in Devonport, Tasmania. The children saw something in the sky which caused them to get a Mr Y. out of the house. This male witness reported seeing one definite object in the sky. In colour, it was “silvery but not reflective” and in shape “shaped like a thermometer or a pencil without a point.” No detailed structure was noted and there was no sound associated with the sighting. The object’s speed was stated as “slow.” It was seen to the NNW of Devonport travelling in a straight line. No direction of travel is given. It was lost to sight behind bushes on the property. The form indicates the weather at the time was “Fine trace cumulus cloud on horizon.” Question 26 on the pro forma, which was filled in by the RAAF interviewer/analyst, asks “Location of any air traffic in the vicinity at the time of sighting.” Typed here were the words: “U2 aircraft over Great Lake at approximately 8.15 am travelling in a northerly direction, leaving a distinct vapour trail.”

Neither the RAAF pro forma or the covering letter<sup>(2)</sup> from RAAF HQ Melbourne to the Air Board) contains any analysis of what could have caused the UFO report. However, an examination of the RAAF’s “Summary of Unidentified Aerial Sightings reported to Department of Air, Canberra, ACT, from 1960” reveals that “aircraft” was the listed “possible cause.”

The RAAF therefore concluded that this UFO report was explainable by an aircraft, and the RAAF pro forma indicates that the only known air traffic was an American built U-2 secret aircraft. Can we conclude that the Devonport sighting was indeed an American U-2 secret aircraft? If one was over Great Lake at 8.15am that morning travelling north it seems reasonable to conclude it could have been seen from Davenport at 8.35 am, as speed, direction and description fit the witness' account.

From the Secretariat's examination of the first three parts of the RAAF sightings file series 580/1/1 this is the only time a U-2 aircraft was mentioned as a possible explanation for a UFO event. Finding this comment on a 1961 Tasmanian case sent us looking for other possible examples of such aircraft causing sighting reports in the RAAF files of this era.

On the 3 Nov 1962 between 11.15 and 11.30am a woman at Liffey, (9 miles west of Cressy-near the Great Lake) sighted for 2 seconds, a very bright light in the daytime sky. One definite object was seen and described as "needle shaped", and colour "bright glinting metallic." There was no sound and no structure reported. It was travelling in a straight line to the east of her position, and was lost to sight behind cloud. Weather wise the RAAF pro forma stated it was "Light SW breeze. Cloud approx. 4/8 cu. Base 3500 feet." The response to q. 26 about any air traffic read "*No air traffic operating in area...*" The covering RAAF letter from RAAF HQ Melbourne to the Air Board dated 15 Nov 1962 states that the report was forwarded through the Department of Civil Aviation Melbourne. Interestingly, as with the Devonport sighting, the RAAF's own summaries, listed this case's "possible cause" as an "aircraft."

A check at this point with the Tasmanian UFO Investigation Centre uncovered another possible sighting, not in the RAAF files. On the 14 Oct 1960, a Hagley, Tasmania couple reported a "pencil-like" object high in the night sky, It was "pencil thick" and seen toward the Great Lake – it seemed like a vapour trail.

Having found two potential U-2 observations from Tasmania in the RAAF files, and another in TUFOIC's records, we looked for instances elsewhere in Australia in the "Summary of Unidentified Aerial Sightings reported to Department of Air, Canberra, ACT, from 1960" and RAAF files in the National Archives. We found the following:

1. On 5 May 1962 RAAF air traffic controllers at **Richmond Victoria**, reported seeing a contrail in the sky to their NW. There were no known aircraft in the area at the time. The object causing the contrail was travelling north to south. Through binoculars one observer reported seeing the glint of an aircraft ahead of the trail. The report states that there was no known air traffic and yet, the "Summary of Unidentified Aerial Sightings reported to Department of Air, Canberra, ACT, from 1960" states the "possible cause" as "aircraft."<sup>(3)</sup>

2. On 7 May 1962 "Dark glinting object leaving 4 condensation trails-climbing vertically over **Holbrook, Victoria**." No report details were found on RAAF file 580/1/1 Part 3

which covers this era but, the "Summary of Unidentified Aerial Sightings reported to Department of Air, Canberra, ACT, from 1960" states the "possible cause" as "aircraft."

3. On 17 Dec 1962 numerous reports were received from many sources on **Norfolk Island** about: "Object appeared cylindrical in shape with two vertical projections" above travelling very high in a NNE/SSW direction. No aircraft were reported in the area. (4) The "Summary of Unidentified Aerial Sightings reported to Department of Air, Canberra, ACT, from 1960" states the "possible cause" as "aircraft."

4. On 7 Mar 1963 "Long slender, silvery-white, pencil-like object-soundless, **Forster, NSW**. "Summary of Unidentified Aerial Sightings reported to Department of Air, Canberra, ACT, from 1960" states the "possible cause" as "aircraft."

Interestingly, after this spate of "possible cause" aircraft there are no such suggested explanations labelled "aircraft" in the "Summary of Unidentified Aerial Sightings reported to Department of Air, Canberra, ACT, from 1960" until at least 2 Dec 1965.

The next question that arises, is that apart from the RAAF's own comment on the pro forma associated with the May 1961 Devonport, Tasmania sighting, is there any other evidence that USAF U-2 aircraft were flying in Australian skies in the period May 1961 to Mar 1963?

An internet search brought some answers.

<http://www.blackbirds.net/u2/u2tl60.html> informs us that in Oct 1960 the "U-2 deployed to East Sale RAAF, Australia for HASP missions." The same site tells us that in Mar 1963 the HASP program was terminated, and that in Jun 1966 "HICAT equipped U-2 deployed to Christchurch , NZ, then to Laverton, Australia.'

<http://www.johnson7170.freeseve.co.uk/4080th.htm> tells us that:  
*"The 4080<sup>th</sup> SRW was formed in 1956 and consisted of two flying Squadrons. The 4028<sup>th</sup> SRS flying Lockheed U-2 and the 4025<sup>th</sup> SRS flying the Martin RB-57D. Both of these squadrons performed sensitive surveillance missions world wide." SRS stood for Strategic Reconnaissance Wing of the United States Air Force. The site goes on to say: "other more high profile missions included...the High Altitude Sampling Program (HASP-"Crowflight") which were flown around the world measuring the radiation levels in the upper atmosphere following Atomic bomb detonations. "*

<http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/bevacqua.html> shows a photograph of Lt Col. Tony Bevacqua "In the cockpit of U-2A #696 at RAAF Laverton, Australia."

[http://www.blackbirds.net/u2/u2\\_photo\\_gallery/u2\\_pic\\_pages/56-6718.html](http://www.blackbirds.net/u2/u2_photo_gallery/u2_pic_pages/56-6718.html) shows a photograph labelled "Jim Campbell was kind enough to send along these photos that he took while he was deployed with the U-2 in the town of East Sale, Australia in 1961."

<http://www.habu.org/meandu2/> concerning a book written by TSgt. Glenn R. Chapman USAF (Ret) has a section titled: "Oscar Down Under" which "talks about the U-2 sampling program that was flown for about five years from Australia."

<http://www.danshistory.com/u2.shtml> indicates U-2s were deployed to East Sale RAAF, Australia.

The Australian Federal Parliament website <http://parlinfoweb.aph.gov.au> records that the response to Question No 396 asked by Senator Allison of the Minister for Defence about Chemical Weapons testing in Australia in the 1940s-1960s, on 25 Jun 2002 includes: "*It does indicate that the Defence representative at a meeting to consider the Australian approach to the site review expressed the view that Australian cooperation on nuclear weapons issues and U2 basing indicated that cooperation on biological and chemical warfare research could not be ruled out.*"

The above, and other material, does seem to indicate the existence of a publicly little known, or unknown, USAF U-2 surveillance program based at RAAF East Sale, Victoria between Oct 1960 and Mar 1963 which caused some reported UFO sightings. Interestingly, these dates coincide remarkably well with the date range of UFO observations described above.

Given the above, we would like to suggest that Australian UFO groups conduct a review of UFO cases from their files during the period Oct 1960 and Mar 1963 with a view to seeing if other UFO reports might have their origin in observations of USAF U-2 aircraft.

2008 notes:

NAA has 13 files on Operation Crow Flight. Series A1838 control symbol 694/7/22. Parts 1,2 & 4 have now been digitised. Last U-2 reported to have departed Australia by Feb 1966. However, documentary film maker Rosie Jones advised she had corresponded with someone who stated the U-2 was here in May 1966.

## References

- (1) Lorenzen, J and C. "UFOs Over the Americas" 1968. New York. Signet. p187.
- (2) National Archives of Australia B5758, 5/6/Air p68a.
- (3) National Archives of Australia A703, 580/1/1 part 3, pp70-72.
- (4) National Archives of Australia A703, 580/1/1 p6.



## APPENDIX TWO

### Moon Dust & Mystery Spheres

A number of “mystery spheres” were found in Australia during the 1960’s. At that time there was some speculation among UFO researchers that these balls might, somehow, be connected to the UFO phenomenon.

As far back as 1964, the English UFO magazine, “Flying Saucer Review” [10(1):5] related the finding of such objects in New South Wales and South Australia, between Apr and Jul 1963. In that article, Mr Allen Fairhall, then Federal Minister of Supply is quoted as stating that inquiries to the relevant American and Russian space agencies had failed to determine the origin of these spheres, thus raising speculation in some quarters.

In his 1996 document: “UFOs Sub Rosa Down Under-The Australian Military & Government Role in the UFO Controversy” Bill Chalker wrote:

*The Joint Intelligence Organisation (the reorganised JIB) maintains a secret BOLIDE file. It still seems to be anchored to the premise that “UFOs” could involve the chance of retrieval of Soviet hardware and therefore contribute some useful intelligence. It appears JIO have a “rapid intervention” capability as they have been able to instigate prompt widespread ground searches in suspected “hardware” crashes. They do this through “special access” channels. This operation may be similar to US activity operating under the code name Project “Moondust.”*

#### What was Project Moondust?

A check with the authoritative “The UFO Encyclopaedia” written by US Researcher Jerry Clark, [Clark, J. 1996. “The UFO Encyclopaedia” Volume 3. Omnigraphics. Detroit p 128] indicates that:

*In 1961 the U.S. Air Force established the classified Project Moon Dust to “locate, recover and deliver descended foreign space vehicles.”*

#### Did Australia participate in this Project?

We recently uncovered a file which seemingly indicates that yes we did. Department of Supply file SA 5644/2/1 contains a 1962 memo from the Controller WEA to the Superintendent Woomera. In it, it stated that “the United States Embassy” informally sought WRE’s assistance to obtain information about sightings, or of downed fragments of space vehicles. This location and recovery of fragments was exactly the role of the USAF Project Moon Dust, and the request to Australia was made the year after the Project commenced. In our reading of the Supply file, there is never actually a mention of the words “Project Moon Dust.” However, as it was a classified US project perhaps this is not surprising.

Listing of known falls of space vehicle fragments

A check of various sources available to us, lead to the compilation of the following list of nine such objects, found in Australia between 1963 and 1988.

Table 1

Date of find	Location of find	Description	Source
8 Apr 1963	Bouilla Station NSW	5.5kg & 35.5cm diameter	FSR 10(1):5. 1964
28 Jun 1963	Mount Sturt Station NSW	8kg & 41cm diameter	FSR 10(1):5. 1964
12 Jul 1963	Muloorina SA	15cm diameter	FSR 10(1):5. 1964
Sep 1965	Merkanooka WA	Titanium sphere. 50cm diameter	Department of Supply file SA5644/3/1
Apr 1968	Mudgee NSW	29kg & 61cm diameter	AFU Newsletter 46, Jul 2003
Mar 1968	Inkerman Qld	60cm diameter sphere. Grey colour with 4 holes in it.	RAAF file J63/25 5/40/AIR PART 1
Dec 1972	NSW	3 spheres. 61cm diameter	UFORA Research Digest Issue 30:10
17 Oct 1973	Mouroubra WA	51cm diameter	UFORA Research Digest Issue 30:10
Jun 1988	Marble Bar WA	Titanium 37cm diameter sphere.	<a href="http://www.reentrynews.com">http://www.reentrynews.com</a>

"Sphere" files located

In Dec 2003, as a result of our examination of paper file listings at the Adelaide office of the NAA, we located two more files relevant to our inquiries.

The first file was a Department of Supply file SA5644/3/1 titled "Joint Intelligence Bureau requests for an examination of a sphere found at Merkanooka WA." The file revealed that:

- On 6 Oct 1965, the JIB asked the WRE to examine and report on the sphere
- The ball reached WRE on 18 Oct 1965
- A memo dated 1 Apr 1966 to the Chief Scientist from the WRE stated that: *"Our examinations show that the object is certainly of USA origin and that it could be assumed to have formed part of a space vehicle."*
- A memo dated 10 Aug 1966 from the Chief Scientist to the WRE asked that the ball be forwarded to Defence R & D Attaché in Washington for handing on to NASA

- A later report stated that the ball had been found on 10 Sep 1965 and that NASA determined it "...was a fragment from the Gemini 5 spaceflight" specifically a Gemini 20 inch OAMS fuel tank used as a water tank.

The second file, was again a Department of Supply file, number SA 5644/3/2 Part 1. Here appeared the story of the first three spheres listed in table 1.

#### Bouilla ball

A 14 inch diameter, 10lbs in weight, sphere was discovered on the 8 Apr 1963 by Jim McClure on Bouilla Station, near Broken Hill NSW (30 deg 06mins S; 141 deg 52mins E). It was delivered to the Weapons Research Establishment in South Australia for examination, where it was determined to be of American origin. After much discussion with the USA, the sphere was returned to there.

#### Johnson ball

Another sphere turned up on Mount Sturt Station (29deg 32mins S; 141 deg 34 mins E), near Broken Hill on 29 Jun 1963 and was named after the finder, Colin Johnson. It weighed 18lbs. The Bouilla and Johnson balls were found at location 50 miles apart. This sphere was also determined to be American and returned there.

Later analysis, documented on the file, indicated that both of these two balls were from a US Agena rocket used to launch test satellites.

#### Muloorina "ball"

On 9 Jul 1963 Tom Churches reported finding a metal sphere with a red rubber balloon attached. The sphere was 6 inches in diameter with a hole at the bottom and was said to have been found on Muloorina Station some 3 miles SE of Lake Eyre South. However, examination of the sphere soon indicated that it was a hoax, two halves taped together with "sticky tape." We do not believe that this find has been revealed as a hoax before.

#### Proposed explanations

The following table lists explanations which have been put forward for these objects:

Table 2

Location of find	Explanation
<b>Bouilla Station NSW</b>	US Agena rocket stage used to launch USAF test satellites on 14 Dec 62 & 7 Jan 63. Re-entered in Jan 63. [http://www.reentrynews.com]
<b>Mount Sturt Station NSW</b>	
<b>Muloorina SA</b>	Hoax. [Dept of Supply file SA 5644/3/2 Part 1]
<b>Merkanooka WA</b>	Water tank from Gemini 5 spaceflight [Dept of Supply file SA5644/3/1]

Location of find	Explanation
<b>Mudgee NSW</b>	Pressure vessel from Delta booster used to launch biosatellite II on 7 Sep 67. [http://www.reentrynews.com]
<b>Inkerman Qld</b>	Given to US Embassy Australia. No known results. [RAAF file J63/25 5/40/AIR PART 1]
<b>NSW</b>	Probably high pressure gas storage tank. [UFORA Research Digest No 30 Sep-Oct 1992]
<b>Mouroubra WA</b>	WRE says American satellite. [UFORA Research Digest No 30 Sep-Oct 1992]
<b>Marble Bar WA</b>	Probably from Soviet Foton 4 launched 14 Apr 88, re-entered 28 Apr 88. [http://www.reentrynews.com]

*If something fell today who would respond?*

An Internet search reveals that Australian has a plan titled "The Australian Contingency Plan for Space Re-entry debris." According to <http://www.arpansa.gov.au> this plan "...has been prepared to coordinate the activities of Commonwealth, State and Territory Departments/Authorities involved in recovering and neutralizing any radiological threat arising from the re-entry of space debris over Australia and the island territories." Emergency Management Australia coordinates emergency responses under this plan. The Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency provides a number of services under the plan.

## APPENDIX THREE

### The Project Interviews Harry Turner

#### *Introduction:*

Over the months, as we have examined Government documents relating to the UFO phenomenon, a number of questions have passed through our minds. These included:

- Was any scientific research conducted on the reports?
- Out of all the individuals whose desks reports passed over, was anyone really interested in what lay behind the accounts?

The impression we have gained from comments on the RAAF's UFO policy file series 554/1/30 was that, for the most part, examining UFO reports was merely a job that had to be done:

- *"The investigation of Unidentified Flying Objects is understandably a tedious task and one in which the investigator may frequently have little faith or interest."*<sup>(1)</sup>
- *"As you are probably aware the Department of Air is concerned solely with any possible threat to Australian security and does not go into detailed scientific investigation of UFO reports."*<sup>(2)</sup>
- *"We spoke. While I agree with you in principle, the practicalities suggest we will continue to wear the responsibility. You should, however, ensure that the impact of this chore does not unduly impede our normal business."*<sup>(3)</sup>

In his earlier research, Bill Chalker interviewed a former Government worker, by the name of Harry Turner, who had a serious interest in the topic. Turner's name crops up from time to time in documents on Government files in the Archives. Inquiries revealed that Turner was still alive and willing to be interviewed by the Disclosure Project. Therefore, in Jun of this year, Dominic McNamara and Bill Chalker spoke to Turner about his involvement.

*Q. How did Harry become interested in the subject of "flying saucers/UFOs?"*

He was undertaking research at Melbourne University in the field of nuclear physics and read a book by Donald Menzel, an astronomer at Harvard University in the U.S. Harry found the book to do an excellent job of exploring the problem, but that the solutions Menzel offered in individual cases were at variance with the data provided on that case. This book steered Harry towards an interest in the subject. He then went to the other extreme and read a book by George Adamski. Harry felt that Adamski was confusing his experiences with "astral projection," and couldn't regard Adamski's experiences as real.

A number of local cases then occurred. The first was in a suburb of Melbourne where a young man reported seeing an object with “passengers” in the “cabin.” The second report came from Dandenong, another Melbourne suburb. <sup>(4)</sup> These reports received attention in Melbourne newspapers, which Harry read.

Harry went to the RAAF Intelligence area and asked them what they were doing about these kinds of reports? Interesting, according to Harry, the RAAF told him that the day before they had been communicated with by the Secretary for the Department of Air who had asked them to “start giving answers” about the “flying saucer” reports that were coming in! RAAF intelligence asked Harry if he would like to become an investigator for them given his background. <sup>(5, 6)</sup> He agreed; the RAAF checked this out with the Department of Air who apparently upgraded his existing security clearance and even offered him expenses. He declined the expenses, believing this would allow him to remain more independent.

He went to work by investigating the sighting at Dandenong. He found that the newspapers had covered only a small part of the story, and there were in fact a series of witnesses and a series of sightings. The brother of one of the girls involved had found that the girl's watch had stopped at the time of the observation and indeed was magnetised. The watch started running again after it was demagnetised. Harry interviewed the person who had checked the watch; and for the first time had found a piece of physical evidence associated with a flying saucer report.

At about this time, Harry says the Department of Transport measured the magnetic field of a fence the object was reportedly over. They measured the polarity of the fence posts—they are normally magnetised by the passing traffic—the posts being of alternate polarity. In the vicinity of the sighting, all fence posts were reported as aligned in one direction—which was abnormal. Here again was another piece of physical evidence.

Harry prepared a report on the Dandenong sightings. He found the family convincing and the sixteen year old female witness to be competent. While Harry did come across other civilian investigators of this case, he knew of no other “official” investigations.

Aside from investigating the local sightings, Harry was given two RAAF files on sightings and allowed to take them to the University to analyse. He studied the files, prepared a report and submitted this to the RAAF <sup>(7,8)</sup>

*Q. Were files of any other agencies shown to Harry?*

Harry's recollection was that he was not shown any other files than the ones provided by the RAAF.

*Q. I understand that shortly after completing your report you travelled to the United Kingdom to work at Harwell. While in the UK did you conduct any research into UFOs?*

Harry did not conduct any research into UFOs while in the U.K., but when there was put on to a NATO project and given honorary U.K. citizenship in order to do so. One day in 1956

an unusual notice appeared on a board at Harwell. It was outlining job opportunities for scientists to go to the States to work on anti-gravity research. The opinion of staff at Harwell was that this was odd, as we didn't know what gravity itself was, let alone researching anti-gravity.

Harry was aware of details of the 1952 mass sightings over Washington-where the objects behaved as if they didn't have any mass. His knowledge of radar systems made him think that the official explanation of temperature inversions was not correct. He therefore thought that perhaps the research into anti-gravity might have something to do with the Washington sightings. Harry understands that eventually this anti-gravity research money went into gravity research.

*Q. In a letter dated Mar 1955 Peter Birch of the Directorate of Air Force Intelligence (DAFI) advised Harry that copies of his report were to go to Washington and London for comment. <sup>(9)</sup> We asked Harry if he recalled receiving any official feedback about this referral?*

He could not recollect receiving any official feedback on this. He did however later meet the Secretary of Air who recalled Harry's report. Harry was impressed that the Secretary for the Department of Air would recognise him.

*Q. We understand that from 1956 to 1964 Harry was stationed at Maralinga in South Australia and asked him what was his role and did he conduct any UFO research while there?*

Harry confirmed that he had indeed been stationed at Maralinga. The position he held was in charge of the Health Physics area with a role to ensure safety of staff, indigenous population and station owners. He did not conduct any UFO research while there. However, at one stage the range commander was a Dick Durant (phonetic spelling.) Harry learnt first hand from Durant that Durant had been an Army Attaché in Washington at the time of the Jul 1952 mass sightings. On the second Saturday night of these events Durant had been in the radar room watching events unfold and was very impressed that the events were due to physical objects.

*Q. In Apr 1957 the Director of DAFI wrote to the Director of the Joint Intelligence Bureau (JIB). DAFI asked if JIB would take over their role of collecting and investigating UFO reports. <sup>(10)</sup> We asked Harry if he had any personal knowledge of this?*

Harry advised us that as he had not joined the JIB until 1964, he had no personal knowledge of this request or the response.

*Q. We understand that in 1968 you were in the Directorate of Scientific and Technical Intelligence (DSTI) of the JIB. Also that you were the JIB liaison with DAFI concerning UFOs. Is this correct?*

Harry confirmed that he was in the DSTI of the JIB in 1968. He was the (unofficial) liaison point between JIB and DAFI on the subject of UFOs.

*Q. Was JIB officially involved in any kind of research on the topic of UFOs? If so, what?*

JIB was “pretty cold” to the whole idea of UFOs and felt that they didn’t want to get involved in something so insubstantial. Harry didn’t have opposition to his involvement in the subject, but he didn’t have official support either. He was not aware of any other official Government investigation of UFOs, other than DAFI. Directors of DAFI came and went, and at least one Director considered that the subject was a nuisance, taking up time better spent on other matters and something DAFI would like to get rid of. It seemed to Harry that DAFI didn’t want to lose the role, but they didn’t want to do anything about it either. Down at the lower levels; of Squadron Leader and Wing Commander, Harry felt that these officers couldn’t afford to become too enthusiastic about incoming reports. He felt that when they received a report they looked for a simple explanation-they didn’t want to go out and investigate a case-but also didn’t want anyone else to do the work for them.

*Q. We understand that in 1969 there was a proposal for a rapid investigation team within the DSTI. We understand that four other people had a part in this proposed Team. We believe they were:*

- *Dr John Morton from ANU*
- *Dr John Symonds from the Australian Atomic Energy Commission*
- *Dr Michael Duggin from the National Standards Laboratory CSIRO*
- *Mr George Barlow of Defence Science and Technology*

*Can you tell us about this please?*

Harry told us he was the instigator of the idea. A request was made to the Secretary of Defence, who referred it on to DAFI. DAFI reacted badly against it and it was rejected.

Symonds was an old friend of Harry’s from the early days, who was interested but not directly involved. He was on the fringe of interest in the subject.

Mike Duggin was the other main player with Harry. Together they had investigated a reported UFO landing on a Sydney golf course. <sup>(11)</sup> They took samples and looked at what temperature would have been required to make the marks/holes. From memory Harry thought hotter than an oxy-acetylene torch would have been needed. Harry and Mike went there privately to investigate and interviewed the green keeper who had found the marks. Harry thought it was quite a convincing case.

George Barlow was the number two man in Defence Science. He had an intellectual interest in the subject of UFOs and had read on the subject. He thought there was something to it which needed to be investigated.

DAFI rejected the idea, so it was dropped by DSTI.

*Q. Did you see any serious level of interest inside the Australian Government about UFOs?*

No. When Prof Allen Hynek came out from the USA, Harry and Hynek went to interview O’Farrell, in 1973. <sup>(12)</sup> All this was done via the back door. People didn’t want to be involved



due to potential risk to their careers. Harry said that it was the first time that O'Farrell had openly talked about his personal sighting in 1954.

*Q. Did you ever come across JIB UFO files?*

Harry was in JIB between 1964 and 1982 and did not see any such files.

*Q. We understand that in 1969 you participated in the investigation of a radar UFO case in Kalamunda. Can you tell us about this please?*

This was a key issue in Harry being "expunged" from his liaison link with DAFI. The UFO investigator at Pearce RAAF base in Perth was overloaded in investigating local cases. Harry says this officer was lacking support from above and spending his own time investigating local reports. The officer sent in a request for assistance and Harry was sent to Perth to help. The two of them investigated a number of WA cases. The radar/visual case from Kalamunda <sup>(13)</sup> was one of these. This radar was situated on a hill top and had a moving target indicator; this meant that no stationary objects should show on the radar screen. However, on one occasion a stationary object was picked up on the radar. It was also seen by people on the ground. One of the radar operators who saw it on the screen called his wife who looked up and saw the object. Harry interviewed the woman; her son and the crew in the radar room and wrote up a report. Another radar report from the Guildford (WA) airport was found to be caused by a wireless mast.

Harry's report recommended that more be done to investigate UFO cases, which DAFI did not like.

*Q. Could you please describe the UFO incident or incidents which most interested you?*

One of the cases which impressed Harry was the Cressy, Tasmania, Reverend Browning event. He felt that the RAAF's response to Browning's observation was bad. He was pleased when the report went up to high circles and someone up there knew the Cressy witness personally and asked for a full report from DAFI which caused a RAAF officer (Waller?) to go and talk to the witness.

A radar/visual case at Woomera most impressed him, (see full details in Disclosure Australia Project Newsletter three) although he added that he did not conduct a personal investigation on this one, but drew his information from RAAF files. This was the case where the velocity of the object had exceeded any aircraft of the day. He recalled it involved a Canberra bomber and he thought the "G" range. An aircraft came in at 30,000 feet and dropped a bomb which was tracked on radar until impact. He recalled the object had been at 60,000 feet and deduced from the fact that its angular size was the same as the aircraft, had to have been twice the aircraft's size. As the aircraft dropped its bomb the object accelerated away. The aircraft crew saw nothing.

*Q. Did you ever come across a USAF "Report 14?"*

Yes. Report 14 was published in two versions. Version one was a military version and was complete. Version two was a public version with some sections deleted. Harry had access to the military version <sup>(14)</sup>. Harry said he was impressed with an analysis of the experience of the observer versus the quality of the data they provided. The report said that the more experience you had as an observer the less an investigator could find a loop hole and a conventional explanation. He felt this went contrary to the official view that the "unexplained" cases in files were due to the low quality of the observers. If the observers provided more data, then investigators would be more likely to find a mundane explanation. Report 14 showed the opposite. Harry said he wrote a JIB report on "Report 14" pointing out that this line of argument was faulty.

*Q. In JIB did you ever review documents on UFOs from other world governments?*

Through DSTT's connection with the UK, Harry Turner in JIB got copies of material from the UK, but not a great deal. He recalled that the Report 14 document came through to the Joint Intelligence Bureau. Harry also wrote a critique of the US Condon report for the Joint Intelligence Organisation (JIO) (JIB changed its name to JIO in 1969), pointing out that the summary and bulk of the report were contradictory.

### **Notes:**

- (1) National Archives of Australia: A703, 554/1/30 Part 2. Memo 1 Mar 68. CAS to HQOC & HQSC.
- (2) National Archives of Australia: A703, 554/1/30 Part 2. Memo. 6 Dec 68. DAFI to HQSC.
- (3) National Archives of Australia: A703, 554/1/30 Part 3. Memo. 26 May 1981.
- (4). National Archives of Australia: A705, 114/1/197. Pages 130-134 are a typed report on the East Dandenong sightings.
- (5) National Archives of Australia: A705, 114/1/197. Page 162. Letter from Harry Turner dated 30 Jul 1954 to the Secretary, Department of Air offering his services.
- (6) National Archives of Australia: A705, 114/1/197. Page 161. Letter from the Secretary, Department of Air dated 5 Aug 1954 to Harry Turner, accepting the offer of his assistance.
- (7) National Archives of Australia: A705, 114/1/197. Letter from Harry Turner dated 13 Jan 1955 to "Terry" – submitting his hand written report.
- (8) National Archives of Australia: A703, 554/1/30 Part 1. Covering letter dated 29 Mar 1955 from Peter Birch of DAFI to Harry Turner, together with a typed copy of Turner's report.
- (9) National Archives of Australia: A705, 114/1/197. Page 9. Letter dated 18 Apr 1955 from Harry Turner to Squadron Leader Birch.
- (10) National Archives of Australia: A703, 554/1/30 Part 1. Memo 1 Apr 57 from Group Captain Henderson DAFI to Director, Joint Intelligence Bureau.
- (11) The RAAF investigated a report of a trace on a golf course in 1969 details are as follows:  
Jun 1969 St Michaels Golf Club La Perouse NSW Trace  
Unusual ground marks discovered 0800hrs. Not there night before. When discovered grass of course had heavy dew but no evidence of footprints or tyre tracks. Assistant green keeper noted an "oily residue" which had gone by the time RAAF investigators visited on 25 Jun 69. RAAF "Could have been the work of a clever hoaxter, but it would have been a very difficult job..."  
*pp42-44 of 580/1/1 part 12.*
- (12) The AURA summary of file 554/1/30 Part 3 indicates that pages 49-50 are two copies of the same typed file note of record of discussions on 24 Aug 1973 with Prof A Hynek; Dr M Duggin and Mr O Turner.
- (13) National Archives of Australia: A703, 580/1/1 Part 11 contains the following details:

23 May 69 Kalamunda WA RV

At 1101,1108,1115,1118,1136 & 1142z, ATC radar-strong stationary paint 300 deg 9NM from Kalamunda. Seen at same time as object like a "big street slight" reported over Cloverdale by a Mrs Cosgrove. Radar returns were strong-stationary. Met. Radar at Perth also had unusual returns but times/dates did not tally with above. Return from this latter radar could have been due to inversion over OTC antennas on ground.

Mrs Cosgrove 1835hrs (1035z) of Cloverdale WA. Blue/white light, with red light on top from SE 12 deg el. Very fast but slow at other times. Stopped overhead for 15mins then left at speed to N.

*pp238-241 of 580/1/1 part 11.*

(14) National Australia Archive: A703, 554/1/30 Part 1. Page 191 of 554/1/30 part 1 is a note from "R & P Branch Joint Intelligence Bureau." 25 Feb 1960. "DAFI...the following material is forwarded for perusal and return. US Air Technical Intelligence (unreadable word) 'Special Report No 14. Analysis of Reports on Unidentified Flying Objects. Forwarded on loan at request JIB Rep, Canberra ref JIB rep Canberra Teleprinter K189 of 22 Feb 60.'" As Turner joined JIB only in 1964, this rep was not Turner.

## APPENDIX FOUR

**Australian Federal Parliament questions and answers**

Back in Jun 2003 in the very first Newsletter, eight Project “action” items were listed. Item six on that list was “*Australian Government Parliamentary questions and answers concerning the UFO phenomenon are located and documented.*” The purpose of this work was to examine past questions and answers which might provide a lead as to how to have future questions raised about UFOs in Federal Parliament as part of this Project.

Thanks to the dedicated work of an associate of the Project, who lives in Canberra, work on this action item has now been undertaken. David Header, private researcher, has compiled a listing of occasions when UFOs/flying saucers have been the subject of Parliamentary attention. The Project has then utilised its knowledge of examined Government documents, where possible, to set these questions and answers in the context of the time.

**(1) 13 Aug 1952***“Flying saucers*

*Mr DOWNER-My questions, which are directed to the Minister for Air, relate to the number of flying saucers that are alleged to have been seen in various parts of Australia during recent months. Can the minister say whether such reports have been investigated by his Department, and if so, will he state the conclusions that his officers have reached? Furthermore, is the Minister in communication with the United States authorities concerning these intruders? Does he share the opinion expressed by certain American officials that the flying saucers may be visitants from another sphere, or, alternatively, that they are a novel form of espionage by a potential enemy? In reality, are they not more likely to be simply an aerial version of the Loch Ness monster?*

*Mr McMahon-I have not received any report from the Air Force on flying saucers in Australia. I share the view of the honourable member that these reports are probably based on flights of imagination in which honourable members who sit on the other side of the House so frequently indulge. I do not think that the Air Force has been in communication with the United States authorities on this matter. I shall certainly cause a thorough investigation to be made. If I can ascertain the source of these rumours, I shall let the honourable member have full information about them. I impress upon the House my belief that most of the rumours that have circulated in Australia have resulted from the activities of a particular political party. It is highly probable that that party is flying kites as a new form of political propaganda.”<sup>(1)</sup>*

Comments:

In 1952, the RAAF policy file series A703, control symbol 554/1/30 had not yet been commenced. However, the project has located four other files from that era:

- A11066, 5/1/27 Part B titled “*Eastern Area Headquarters Intelligence report on Unusual Sighting 3/5/1952*” which contained reports about the sky object seen over Sydney on that date

- B5758, 5/6/Air part 1 "Report on unusual activity and aerial phenomenon" extending back to Aug 1950 including reports from 7 Feb 1951 and 3 May 1952
- Department of Supply file D250, 56/483 which contains reports from Woomera
- RAAF file PP474/1, 5/5/Air "Unusual aerial sightings" with a number of reports from WA in 1951 and 1952.

However, none of the above files throws any light on the Parliamentary question and answer.

## **(2) 20 Nov 1953**

### *"Flying saucers"*

Mr DOWNER –*Last year, when I directed a question to the Minister of Air about flying saucers, the honourable gentleman gave a facetious reply. Is he aware of the attention now being devoted by air force authorities in Canada and England to the nature and origin of these mysterious objects? Are similar investigations contemplated by the Royal Australian Air force, or does the Minister still regard flying saucers as a problem for psychologists rather than Defence authorities?*

Mr McMAHON –*On the last occasion when a question on this subject was addressed to me by the Honourable member for Angas, I gave a facetious reply. I still think the problem is one more for psychologists than for defence authorities. The Royal Australian Air Force has received many reports about flying saucers, as have the Royal Air Force and the Royal Canadian Air Force, but the phenomena has not yet been identified. It is peculiar that, shortly before these phenomena are observed, a meteorite flashes across the sky. It is felt that some optical illusion may follow in its wake. After the honourable gentleman asked me a question on this matter last year, I caused enquiries to be made. The Royal Australian Air Force has advised me that, so far, the aerodynamic problems relating to the production of flying saucers have not been solved. It is possible to produce a flying saucer aircraft and to fly it in a circular manner by means of ram jet engines. Aircraft of this type may be developed in the future, but I do not think there is any immediate need for them."*  
(2)

### Comments:

- Relevant documents were found on Government files. Firstly, on A705, 159/2/304 titled "Mr Downer (MP)-Parliamentary question re flying saucer." On this file the Minister called for some information from the RAAF. The file contains a copy of an undated letter from the Air Vice Marshall, Air Member for Technical Services, to the Minister. The letter advised that there were two concepts of flying saucers:

*"(a) the topical concept of mysterious missiles probably from outer space, (b) the "flying saucer" as seen on the technical plan of the aircraft designer. All I can say about concept (a) is that no one has yet come forward who can say they have found one, either intact or crashed on our earth's surface, neither have the existence of strange men been confirmed."*

*"...the topical concept of mysterious missiles probably from outer space..."* Was this the author's opinion of their origin or simply the author stating the popular opinion of the day? The rest of the letter is about concept (b). The only other paper on this file is a copy of the question and answer from Hansard.

- Secondly, folio 5A of the RAAF policy file A703, 554/1/30 part 1, (created in 1953) has:

*"Mr Downer, MP is going to ask the Minister the following question in the House at 10am tomorrow morning.*

*"Last year I asked the Honourable Gentleman a question about flying saucers to which he gave a facetious reply. Is the Minister aware of the attention now being devoted in Canada and by the RAF in England to the nature and origin of these mysterious objects? Are similar investigations contemplated by the RAAF or does the Minister still regard flying saucers as a problem for psychologists rather than the defence authorities? Phoned through at 4.40pm 19/11/53."*

- *"The Royal Australian Air force has received many reports..."* This is in Nov 1953, so the question arises as to just where the DAFI documentation of these reports may be found? As described above, the project has found WA reports from 1951 and 1952 but no DAFI file has yet been located with "many" 1953 reports on. Harry Turner's 1954 report for DAFI lists 3 cases for 1950; 4 for 1951; 5 for 1952 and 10 for 1953 (drawn from two DAFI files Turner had access to.) The RAAF's sightings series of files A703, 580/1/1 did not carry sightings pre 1955, and its 114/1/197 only from Jun 1954. B5757, 5/6/air part 1 Training Command Headquarters, contains a few 1953 reports. The Project is on the trail of an early file, number SEC CD2/2, which research indicates is a DAFI file. Folio 54A of SEC CD2/2 is mentioned at folio 3A of A703 554/1/30 part 1. Two leads are currently being pursued (1) NAA card indices; (2) the RAAF historical records section in Canberra
- *"...but the phenomena has not yet been identified."* No talk of what analysis had been conducted, which lead to this statement.

### **(3) 24 Nov 1959**

#### *"Unidentified Flying Objects*

*Mr Cash-My question is directed to the Minister for Air. Do the Australian and overseas Air Forces exchange information about the frequent sightings throughout the world of unidentified flying objects, usually known as U.F.O.'s? Further, have Royal Australian Air Force intelligence officers investigated reports of recent sightings of mysterious objects in the skies over Papua and New Guinea?*

*Mr Osborne-The Department of Air does exchange with other air forces information about unidentified flying objects. It exchanges information with the United States Air force which maintains a study research group on this subject. All well-reported sightings in Australia and its Territories are investigated by the Department of Air. The objects generally turn out to be weather balloons, high flying aircraft, stars, comets and things of that sort. The statistics on the subjects show that only a very small percentage-something like 3 per cent-of reported sightings of flying objects cannot be explained. I realize that in this age of technological mysteries it does not do to be sceptical about anything, but the honourable member may be interested to know that on the last occasion that I can recall on which a full-scale investigation was carried out into a sighting, which had taken place west of the Blue Mountains and had been reported by a number of people, the object in question was found to be the planet Venus setting."*<sup>(3)</sup>

Comments:

- This question was apparently triggered by reports from Papua New Guinea. On the 25 Nov 1959 five of the main Australian UFO groups sent a joint letter to the Right Honourable R G Menzies-providing a copy of the VFSRS Gill report. The groups wrote that one possible explanation was that the Gill sightings were caused by a secret weapon of a foreign power. *"We feel strongly that an investigation should be made..."* It is unknown whether there was any connection between the letter and the question in Parliament
- Note, it also talks of a 3% unexplained rate
- Case in the Blue Mountains. No case at this location can be found in RAAF sightings file 580/1/1 part 2.

**(4) 13 Oct 1960**

*"Flying Saucers"*

*Mr Haylen-I direct a non-combatant question to the Minister for Defence. Has the Minister investigated the statement by a Tasmanian clergyman that in a recent rainstorm he saw a group of five flying saucers, attended by a mother ship, hovering over a north Tasmanian town? Has the Minister seen a statement yesterday by the president of the Victorian Flying Saucer Association, Mr P.E. Norris, that as reputable observers are still, sighting flying saucers the federal Government should satisfy itself that un-friendly nations are not infringing Australian territorial sovereignty? Will the minister appoint a committee consisting of the honourable member for Moreton and the honourable member for Griffith to ascertain whether anything red is going on up there in the sky and report to the Government?*

*Mr Townley-Yes, I saw the first statement, by the clergyman in Tasmania. I did not see the second statement.*

*(4)*

**(5) 18 Oct 1960**

*"Unidentified Flying Objects"*

*Senator O'Byrne-My question is addressed to the minister representing the Minister for Defence. During the last two or three weeks there have been two eye-witness reports from Tasmania and one from Victoria of the sighting of air-borne objects known as flying saucers. Will the Minister inform the Senate whether these reports of air-borne objects have been accepted officially by the Department of Defence, or whether the air-borne objects are part of our defence system? Can he say whether investigations have been carried out to test the authenticity of these numerous reports so as to allay the concern that many people may entertain because of their growing frequency?*

*Senator Spooner-Perhaps, Mr Deputy President, this question could more appropriately have been addressed to the Minister for Customs and Excise. I have seen the newspaper reports but I must say that I have read them with some reservation. I have not heard any official comment upon them. I have heard a little light-hearted exchange of views, and I think I can say, on behalf of the Minister for Defence, that he does not accept the reports as something that should cause us to go to the length of remodelling our defence programme.*

*(5)*

**(6) 20 Oct 1960**

*"Unidentified flying objects*

*Mr Duthie-Has the minister for Air read the reports of unidentified flying objects sighted in Australia in the last two years, especially the detailed description of such an object seen at Cressy in my electorate by the Reverend Lionel Browning and his wife two weeks ago, and twice last week-end? Incidentally, the reverend gentleman was my Liberal opponent at the 1951 and 1954 elections. Does the Minister accept responsibility for investigating these sightings? Does his department make any record of them? Has the Minister any information about them that may be of interest to the people of Australia?*

*Mr Osborne-I have read the press reports of these sightings in Tasmania, and in accordance with the usual practice, all the information that is available concerning them has been furnished to my department and is now being examined. The Department of Air does obtain information about all well reported cases of unidentified flying objects. The department not only receives information about them but also exchanges it with the Royal Air Force and the United State Air Force. There is a regular exchange of information on these matters. I can tell the Honourable member for Wilmot that although reports of this sort have been investigated very carefully for years, nearly all of them are explainable on a perfectly normal basis. Sometimes they are found to be weather balloons, high-flying aircraft or even stars. On one occasion, it was established that a reported space ship was the Moon. Of all these reports, only 3 per cent or 4 per cent cannot be explained on the basis of some natural phenomenon, and nothing that has arisen from that 3 per cent, or 4 per cent, of unexplained cases gives any form support for the belief that interlopers from other places in this world, or outside it, have been visiting us."*<sup>(6)</sup>

Comment on (4) – (6):

- These three q's and a's were generated by the Rev Browning's Cressy observation
- Note that the unexplained rate is now described here as 3-4 %.

**(7) 23 May 1963**

*"Unidentified flying objects*

*Senator Cavanagh asked the Minister representing the Minister for Air, upon notice:-*

*Has the Department of Air or the Royal Australian Air Force a dossier of investigations on reported sightings of unidentified flying objects?*

*Senator Wade-The Minister for Air has supplied the following answer:-*

*The Department of Air does obtain information about all well reported cases of unidentified flying objects and maintains a dossier of investigations made into these. For the Honourable Senator's information, although many reports of this nature have been investigated very carefully, nearly all of them are explainable on a perfectly normal basis. On occasion they are found to be weather balloons, high flying aircraft or even stars. On one occasion it was established that a reported "space ship" was, in fact, the Moon. Of all these reports received to date, only approximately 3 or 4 per cent cannot be explained on the basis of some natural phenomenon and nothing that has arisen from this 3 or 4 per cent of unexplainable cases lend any support for the belief that interlopers from other places in this world, or outside it, have been visiting us."*<sup>(7)</sup>



Comment:

Note that three years after the 1960 question and answer, that someone was still trotting out the same response re weather balloons and the 3-4% etc.

**(8) 11 Aug 1964**

*"Unidentified flying objects*

*Mr Benson-My question to the Minister for Air relates to the state of our radar readiness. Has the Minister seen recent reports in the press that radar units in our northern area go out of operation during weekends? Are these reports correct? If they are, will the minister take steps to ensure that a constant watch is kept?*

*Mr Howson-Yes, I have seen those reports. As a rule, the radar stations in the north are not manned continuously, but it is not correct that they are only manned in normal working hours. At the moment we do not consider that the dangers to our north are such that we need to keep a constant watch. I suppose the honourable member would want a string of radar stations all the way from Canarvon to Cape York, and fighter squadrons located all over our northern area. We do not hold the fortress concept that is so beloved by members of the Opposition, but we have certain commitments. The chief demand on us at this time is to help our friends to our north, to meet any requests for assistance that they may make to us. At this stage we regard that as our first priority."* <sup>(8)</sup>

Comment:

Although the heading is Unidentified flying objects, note that there is no mention of UFOs in the text.

**(9) 11 Aug 1964**

*"Unidentified flying objects*

*Mr Harding-I direct a question to the Minister for Air. In view of reports of unidentified objects flying over north Queensland and northern Australia, can the Minister inform the people living in the area whether the sightings are imaginary? Has he any plans for positive identification in the event of future sightings?*

*Mr Howson-The honourable member may have read the statement I made on this subject only a few days ago, in which I said that we cannot state positively that these were not enemy aircraft. However, I can say that of such sightings that have been reported and investigated not more than 3 per cent, have been thought to have involved anything other than birds, showers of meteors and the other objects to which I referred in the statement. The object that was reported over Longreach was sighted at exactly the same time that a DC8 aircraft was passing over that town. Showers of meteors have also been sighted over Longreach in similar circumstances. I very much doubt whether the objects were anything other than what we believe them to be. As I stated in my reply to the question asked by the Honourable member for Batman, if the Honourable member for Herbery thinks that we should devote all the resources of the Royal Australian Air force to operating radar stations around our north instead of getting on with the job of meeting what we regard as a first priority, he will have to think again."* <sup>(9)</sup>

Comment:

- An interesting statement "...I said that we cannot state positively that these were not enemy aircraft." What enemy is being referred to?

- The unidentified rate is back at 3% again.

**(10) 20 Aug 1964**

*"Unidentified aircraft*

*Senator McClelland asked the Minister representing the Minister for Air, upon notice:-*

1. *How many reports have been received this year of unidentified aircraft flying in Australian air space?*
2. *From which areas have the reports been received?*
3. *Has radar equipment been available in the areas concerned to spot such aircraft?*
4. *Were instructions given to Australian Air Force personnel to identify and/or intercept such aircraft; if not, why not?*

*Senator Wade-The Minister for Air has supplied the following answers:*

1. *Six reports.*
2. *One case from Mangoora, Northern Territory; two from Cocos Islands; two from Longreach, Queensland; and one from Barrow island off Western Australia.*
3. *No.*
4. *All reports were evaluated and where necessary the Royal Australian Air Force unit nearest the area of the reported sighting was instructed to investigate. In each case a logical explanation followed."*<sup>(10)</sup>

Comment:

- This heading is about unidentified aircraft not specifically UFOs
- A check of RAAF files reveals only one of the locations mentioned. Longreach in Queensland was the location of a UFO report on 23 Jul 1964.

**(11) 24 Nov 1965**

*"Unidentified flying objects*

*Mr L R Johnson asked the minister for Air upon notice-*

- 1 *What records are kept regarding reported sightings of flying saucers and other unidentified flying objects?*
- 2 *Does the Royal Australian Air Force or any other government authority investigate reported sightings. If so, how many sightings have been investigated over each of the last five years?*
- 3 *Have R.A.A.F. personnel or civil aviation personnel reported sightings over the last five years; if so, what are the details?*
- 4 *Does Australia consult with other countries regarding the sighting of unidentified flying objects?*
- 5 *If so, when and where have the conferences been held, what countries have been involved in the discussions, and what findings have resulted?*
- 6 *From evidence available, is it reasonable to speculate that some unidentified flying objects originate from other (a) countries or (b) planets?*

*Mr Howson-The answers to the honourable member's questions are as follows:-*

- 1 *Persons reporting unusual aerial sightings complete a form entitled "Report on Aerial Object Observed." If possible, this report is completed in the presence of a RAAF officer in order that the*

- best possible information can be obtained. After examination and evaluation, these reports are filed in the Department of Air.*
- 2 *Yes, the RAAF Sightings reported and examined since 1960 are-*  
 1960..... 20  
 1961..... 14  
 1962..... 26  
 1963..... 17  
 1964.....17  
 1965 (up to mid Sept) 46  
*The increase in 1965 can be explained by a spate of reports from Tasmania and Papua and New Guinea arising from a flurry of public interest.*
- 3 *Yes. Fifteen reports of unidentified flying objects have been submitted by RAAF or civil aviation personnel from 1960 to Sep 1965. The majority of these were assessed as being caused by meteors.*
- 4 *Yes.*
- 5 *Consultations occur with other countries as necessary in relation to the examination of these reports. My department receives advice from other countries about their investigations of unidentified flying objects through its overseas offices.*
- 6 *No.”<sup>(11)</sup>*

Comment:

A count of the raw reports on the relevant RAAF 580/1/1 series files reveals the following numbers for cases

1960 20  
 1961...16  
 1962...23  
 1963...18  
 1964...16  
 1965...37

#### **(12) 4 Jun 1968**

*“Unidentified flying objects*

*Mr Stokes-I ask the minister for Air a question which relates to representations which I have made to him on behalf of the Commonwealth Aerial Phenomena Investigation Organisation, requesting a government grant to assist with research into unidentified flying objects. Has the Minister seen recent press reports of sightings of unidentified flying objects in the Wonthaggi district of Victoria? Is he in a position to say whether some Commonwealth assistance in this matter may be expected?*

*Mr Freeth-I have acknowledged receipt from the honourable member on representations seeking Commonwealth assistance in the investigation of reports of unidentified flying objects. This matter is being considered. I cannot undertake to give the honourable member very great encouragement, because as far as government are concerned, no precise determination has ever been made as to where science fiction begins in relation to reports of unidentified flying objects or to what extent the reports are related to reality.*

*Mr Stokes-The United States of America is making investigations.*

*Mr Freeth-I know that far more intensified investigation of this matter is proceeding in the United States. I hope to be able to give the honourable gentleman a reply to his representation in the near future.”* <sup>(12)</sup>

Comment:

- “...sightings of unidentified flying objects in the Wonthaggi district of Victoria...” We have been unable to locate such cases in the RAAF sightings files
- 554/1/30 part 2 folio 10 contains a copy of this q and a.

### **Beyond 1968**

On the 10 Oct 1984 Sen The Hon. G J Evans, Attorney General, in response to a question from Sen. G N Jones, in a question without notice stated:

*“Unidentified Flying Objects: Cunnamulla*

*Senator Jones-Has the attention of the Minister representing the Minister for Defence been drawn to a Press report last week in the Brisbane Daily Sun of an unidentified flying object terrorising people in the Cunnamulla area of outback Queensland? It was not the National Party. Is he aware that a number of Cunnamulla women who were playing golf at the time were startled by a loud explosion and the sight of what appeared to be a delta-winged aircraft in the distance, a view that was confirmed by 25 trail bike riders? There was a further report of great vapour clouds and violent shaking homesteads. Will the Minister indicate whether the Royal Australian Air Force was operating any delta-winged aircraft in the Cunnamulla area at the time or whether similar reported sightings of UFOs in that area have been received?*

*Senator Gareth Evans- The Minister for Defence has been advised that there were no delta-winged RAAF aircraft in the Cunnamulla area at the time and that there have been no reports to the RAAF of such a sighting. The only suggestion of which the Minister for Defence is aware is that it may have been Beryl flying off course.”* <sup>(13)</sup>

David also found the following Parliamentary “Question on notice” from 1996 on the Federal Government Parliament web site:

Question 835 from Mrs Johnston on 2 Dec 1996, responded to by Peter McGauran, MP, Gippsland, Science and Technology.

*“Mrs Johnston asked the Minister for Science, Industry, and Technology, upon notice on 17 Oct 1996:*

- (1) How many reports of unidentified flying objects have been received by the Minister’s Department and agencies under the Minister’s control in each year since 1994.*
- (2) Are the reports investigated; if so, (a) how and (b) by whom.*
- (3) How many of the reports have not been explained by natural or human activity.”*

*Mr McGauran-The answer to the honourable member’s questions is as follows:*

- (1) There have been no reports of unidentified flying objects (UFO) received by the Department of Industry, Science and Tourism (DIST) in the years since 1994. The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) receives approximately 30 UFO reports per year.*

- (2) *Neither CSIRO or any other agency in my portfolio undertakes any investigation of UFO reports.*
- (3) *Many of the CSIRO UFO reports received lack sufficient detail upon which to base a definitive scientific investigation; nevertheless the great majority could be reasonably interpreted as being consistent with observations of natural phenomena or human activity."*  
(14)

Question 836 from Ricky Johnston, MP Canning responded to by Ian McLachlan, MP Barker, Defence on 18 Nov 1996:

*"Mrs Johnston asked the Minister for Defence , upon notice on 17 Oct 1996:*

- (1 )How many reports of unidentified flying objects have been received by the Minister's Department and agencies under the Minster's control in each year since 1994.*
- (2) Are the reports investigated; if so, (a) how and (b) by whom.*
- (3) How many of the reports have not been explained by natural or human activity."*

*Mr McLachlan-The answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:*

- (1) The Australian Defence Force (ADF) ceased recording and investigating sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) in Dec 1993. Members of the community seeking to make reports to the ADF are referred to a number of civilian UFO research organisations (presently these number 11, including two national organisations.) I have provided the honourable member with a list of these organisations.*
- (2) & (3) I am not aware of the subsequent handling of reports by the civilian UFO research organisations. <sup>(15)</sup>*

Question 837

Mrs Johnston asked the Minister for Transport and Regional Development, upon notice on 17 Oct 1996:

- (1) How many reports of unidentified flying objects have been received by the Minister's Department and agencies under the Minster's control in each year since 1994.*
- (2) Are the reports investigated; if so, (a) how and (b) by whom.*
- (3) How many of the reports have not been explained by natural or human activity."*

*Mr Sharp-The answers to the honourable member's question is as follows:*

- (1) Nil*
- (2) Not applicable*
- <sup>(3)</sup> Not applicable." <sup>(16)</sup>*

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## References

- (1)Australia, House of Representatives 1952, Debates, Senate and House of Representatives – 1 Eliz II in three volumes, p223.
- (2) Australia, House of Representative 1953, Debates, vol H of R2 (new series), p364.
- (3) Australia, House of Representatives 1959, Debates, vol H of R2 (new series), p2990.
- (4) Australia, House of Representatives 1960, Debates, Vols H of R 28 &29 (new series), p1987.

- (5) Australia, Senate 1960, Debates, vol S 18 (new series), p1110.
- (6) Australia, House of Representatives 1960, Debates, vol H of R 29 (new series), p2208.
- (7) Australia, Senate 1963, Debates, vol S23 (news series), pp794-795.
- (8) Australia, House of Representatives 1964, Debates, vol H of R 43 & 44 (new series), p18.
- (9) Australia, House of Representatives 1964, Debates, vol H of R 43 & 44 (new series), p19.
- (10) Australia, Senate 1964, Debates, vols S 26 & 27 (new series), pp153-154.
- (11) Australia, House of Representatives 1965, Debates, vol H of R 49 (new series), p 3163.
- (12) Australia, House of Representatives 1968, Debates, vol H of R 59, p1888.
- (14) [http://parlinfoweb.aph.gov.au/plweb/view\\_document.aspx?id=33922&table=HANSARD](http://parlinfoweb.aph.gov.au/plweb/view_document.aspx?id=33922&table=HANSARD) of 23 Feb 2004.
- (15) [http://parlinfoweb.aph.gov.au/plweb/view\\_document.aspx?id=49958&table=HANSARD](http://parlinfoweb.aph.gov.au/plweb/view_document.aspx?id=49958&table=HANSARD) of 23 Feb 2004.
- (13) [http://parlinfoweb.aph.gov.au/plweb/view\\_document.aspx?id=180246&table=HANSARD](http://parlinfoweb.aph.gov.au/plweb/view_document.aspx?id=180246&table=HANSARD) of 23 Feb 2004.
- (16) <http://demos.anu.edu.au:7007/cgi-bin/passtimepub/article.pl?dir=years/1996/nov/18/hansard/rep&cart+141>

## APPENDIX FIVE

## Unidentified aircraft over Papua & New Guinea and the Drury film

Readers will recall the famous incidents at Boianai, Papua on the 26 and 27 Jun 1959 involving the Reverend Gill's observations of UFOs and humanoids. Recently, a file was uncovered at the NAA titled "Unidentified aircraft Papua & New Guinea 1958-1959." File series MT 1131/1 control symbol A31/1/133. It was a five folio Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) file. Unfortunately, although of the same time frame as Boianai it did not contain any documents relevant to the Gill incidents, but did however have one UFO related item.

Folio 3, dated 17 Jun 1959 was from the Department of Territories, Canberra to the Department of Defence (DOD) regarding a "falling object."

*"Apparently unidentified object sighted from Baniara 1900 Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> May in westerly direction appeared high in the sky but commenced to descend erratically in SW direction. Colour was of brilliant blue alternating at long intervals to a reddish glow and ending with a green flash. Object disappeared at 2015hrs."*

Folio 4 is a 29 Jun 1959 memo from the DOD to the Department of Air (DOA) and DCA referring on the report of folio 3.

A second file, labelled "Secret" and titled "New Guinea F.I.R.-Operation of Unidentified and foreign aircraft" file series MP1279/1, control symbol 99/1/478, is also a DCA Head Office, Melbourne file. This file has a date range of 1948-1965 and deals with reports of unidentified and foreign aircraft. It also featured a number of folios relating to the 1953 Drury sighting and film.

Firstly, folio 66a was a 31 Aug 1953 memo from the Regional Director, DCA Port Moresby to the Director-General, of Civil Aviation Melbourne. It was headed "Secret" and titled "Unidentified aircraft sighting 1200hours 24 Aug 1953." It was a report of the Drury sighting in Drury's own words. The 24 Aug date is incorrect, as immediately below in Drury's own words the date is given as 23 Aug 1953. This confusion of 23 or 24 occurs through the rest of the file on folios referring to this case. The memo states *"We do not know of any aircraft of the operational performance implied by this observation operating in this area..."* Copies of the memo were sent to 1) the resident RAAF Officer, Port Moresby; 2) HQ RAAF Townsville; 3) the Government Secretary, Port Moresby.

On 5 Sep 1953 another secret memo went from the DCA Port Moresby to the Director-General DCA, Melbourne transferring the film *"...herewith undeveloped film."*

On the 22 Sep 1953 there was yet another secret memo, from DCA Melbourne to the DOA with a covering memo titled *"Flying saucer" – New Guinea.* In part it read: *"...herewith is a photographic film..."*

On 12 Jul 1954 a memo (reference 114/1/197(52a) ) recorded that the DOA referred the film back to the DCA Melbourne. *"We have subjected the film to detailed study and processing, but have been unable to establish anything more than the fact that a blur of light appears to move across the film."* Memos then show the film being returned to DCA Port Moresby for return to Drury.

All was quiet on the file until 1958 when an American citizen Max B Miller wrote to DCA asking to have a copy of the film or borrow the original to copy. The expressed intent was to photogrammetric ally analyse the film. The response letter, signed by one T P Drury, (who identified himself as the photographer of the film) of DCA Melbourne, dated 19 Feb 1958, included: *"Immediately after taking this film it was handed over to the Commonwealth Security Branch for processing and investigation, and it has not been sighted by me since."*

This 1958 statement by Drury himself that he had not seen the film since 1954 is at odds with the earlier Jul 1954 memo stating that the film was returned to Port Moresby for Drury.



## APPENDIX SIX

**The Valentich disappearance and Government documents**

Recently, the Project received an unsolicited communication from a woman who identified herself as the former girlfriend of Frederick Valentich, the Australian pilot who disappeared while flying an aircraft over Bass Strait in 1978. She was seeking our knowledge of the existence of any Government documents on the event. It is intended to interview her shortly, to obtain her own knowledge of the events of that time. In the meantime, was there anything in the Government's UFO files about this disappearance?

Government files from the year 1978 are not yet accessible under the Archives Act. Files have to be at least 30 years old in order to access them. However, under the Federal Freedom of Information (FOI) Act it is possible to go back to 1978.

The Project had already submitted an FOI request to the Department of Defence (DOD) for their UFO files of that era. The DOD in Canberra transferred a number of UFO files to their Edinburgh Air Force Base in Adelaide in order that they might be inspected. Hand written notes were allowed to be taken but papers could not be photocopied. One of the files in that batch had some relevant papers on them re Valentich. The following is a typed version of our handwritten notes:

*(1) "Memo. 27 Nov 78 from Department of Transport Melbourne file ref V116/783/1047 to Command Intelligence officer HQ Support Command. Re missing aircraft Cessna 182 VH-DSJ on 21.10.78. "A recent letter to you...concerning missing aircraft VH-DSJ and other matters, was despatched without the mentioned attachments. These attachments are included with these letters for your attention." Attachments are RAAF proforma mentioned in the list above. Sightings around the time of Valentich's disappearance"*

*(2) "File note: "SNCIO I/C General Registry" on with compliments slip. From SOI HQSC "Please file these UAS reports on 5/6/1/Air Part 8 (closed). They were kept apart from the file during the inquiry into the Valentich incident and never replaced. Folio number is unimportant." Flt Lt Int 1"*

*(3)" File note: "Note for further Intelos lumbered with questions about Frederick Valentich "In 1983 all paper work on Valentich's disappearance was photocopied by the UFO Research Society in Victoria and all enquiries should be directed to them." CINTO. 10 Feb 1989."*

In the above a reference will be seen to a Department of Transport (DOT) file number V116/783/1047. The DOT's Air Safety area was the Government agency responsible for conducting the official investigation into Frederick's disappearance, not the RAAF. This file was presumably the official DOT file on the investigation.

In (2) above, note the words “*They were kept apart from the file during the inquiry into the Valentich incident and never replaced.*” What inquiry? The DOT’s or the RAAF’s? As far as is known the RAAF has always maintained that it did not investigate this disappearance.

An FOI request was therefore submitted to the DOT on 10 Aug 2004 which in part asked for a copy of file V116/783/1047. Their reply on 1 Sep 2004, in part, read: “*I understand that file V116/783/1047 has been destroyed by the National Archives of Australia.*” (NAA). An electronic search of files held by the NAA failed to find any record of such a file. However, only 10% of NAA files are available through their electronic database.

Another part of the current DOT is the Australian Transport Safety Bureau which maintains an electronic database, called “OASIS,” of aviation “occurrences.” The Project asked the DOT to search this database and provide any information on references to “UFO.” They did so and one of the references related to Valentich. It was brief: “*Occurrence number 197802563. Occurrence id 70857. 21 Oct 1978. Near Cape Otway Vic. Plt reported UFO then rough running eng. TX ceased-ACFT missing. Cessna 182.*”

Interestingly, the DOT’s OASIS data base also contained another pilot report from Bass Strait. This one was dated 16 Apr 1977 and occurred near King Island:

“*Occurrence number 197703195. Occurrence id 77512. 16 Apr 1977. Near King island Tas. UFO report from pilot. Passed to RAAF for study. CFT beacon abeam VH-KRY. Cessna 401.*”

The Project was unable to locate any such report in the RAAF’s UFO files examined at Edinburgh RAAF base.

## APPENDIX SEVEN

**What really happened at Westall, Victoria in 1966?**

An incident which occurred on 6 Apr 1966 at Westall, a Melbourne suburb, has long intrigued Australian UFO researchers.

A report appeared at that time which described a dazzling, silver object flying around, “hovering” then “descending” behind some trees near a school. When the object was out of sight several private aircraft were reported flying towards these trees. The UFO then re-appeared and rose to the level of the approaching aircraft. The UFO was described as lengthy as a Cessna aircraft, but very thin. As the aircraft approached the UFO tilted at a 45 degree angle and started to move into the distance, gradually gaining height. The aircraft increased their speed and began to follow it but the object streaked away. It was later said that ground traces were found nearby, and that uniformed men, possibly RAAF attended the scene

Recently, Shane Ryan of Canberra has led a re-investigation of the event and he has established, and partly moderates, an excellent online Yahoo group about this event at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Westallhighschoolufo>. A number of original witnesses have surfaced and the group is conducting some retrospective research into the nature of the incident.

A question arose as to the existence or otherwise of Federal Government documents on this incident. A search through the known RAAF UFO policy and sightings files of that era failed to locate any such paperwork. Likewise, no relevant documents could be found in RecordSearch on the National Australia Archive's web site, from any other Government agency.

Two, completely opposite, conclusions could be drawn from this lack of visible Government documentation of what, at first, appears a classic UFO case. Firstly, that the incident was so secret that papers about it never made it to the UFO files. Secondly, that the event did not involve a UFO and so there was no reason it should be found on the UFO files. UFOlogists argue for the former possibility; others are not so sure.

If it wasn't an incident involving a UFO what could be the nature of the event? Taking the original report and the forty year later recollections of original witnesses, a few suggestions come to mind including:

- A conventional aircraft incident – e.g. a “fuel dumping” from an aircraft in difficulty (Shaun Matthews, apparently one of the closest witnesses, cited in the Melbourne Age newspaper in 2005, mentions a silvery object with a “sort of purple hue to it”)
- A “secret” aircraft incident – (USAF U2's were based at nearby Laverton RAAF base in early 1966)
- A satellite re-entry
- A balloon incident.

A NAA RecordSearch using various keywords failed to reveal any directly relevant files. However, the following leads are being pursued:

B94 33/Air/7/Part 1 titled "Crash of USAF aircraft." Laverton RAAF base. The date range of file is 19 Sep 1962 to 5 Nov 1965 and therefore shouldn't have any relevance to Westall. (See note 1 below)

A1533 1956/2626 Part 2 titled "Incidents, bombs and hoaxes-other than aircraft." This is a Commonwealth Police file covering the year 1966. (See note 2 below)

Note 1: The file was located and examined but did not throw any light on Westall.

Note 2: The file was located and examined but did not throw any light on Westall.

Subsequent note made January 2011.

A detailed re-examination of some Australian Government files relating to Operation Crowflight (U-2 and RB-57 aircraft) has been undertaken. The results may be read at <http://ufos-scientificresearch.blogspot.com>.

## APPENDIX EIGHT

### The Office of the Minister For Defence

In 2005 a letter was directed to Robert Hill, then Minister for Defence, as follows:

*"Over the last two years I have been locating and examining federal Government files relating to the subject of Unusual Aerial Sightings (UAS), utilising both the Archive and FOI Acts.*

*I understand that up until 1994 the Department of Defence (DOD) was the federal government agency tasked with the collection and analysis of such reports from the general public. I further understand that in 1994 the DOD ceased this function and that from that date reports of UAS by members of the public to the DOD are referred to civilian UFO research organisations.*

*The current DOD website (at <http://www.defence.gov.au> access contacts under UAS) has a statement of the current position of the Dept. on UAS reports, which states in part:*

*"Current Defence policy on UAS where members of the public may have questions on, or seek to report sightings is to direct them to their local police authorities or civil Unidentified Flying Object (UFO) research organisations..."*

*DOD files I have examined demonstrate that between the 1950's and early 1990's, besides reports from the general public, the department received reports from members of the DOD, civilian airline crew and air traffic controllers.*

*I would therefore seek your response to the following questions:*

- 1. If current UAS reports from the general public are referred onwards, what happens to reports made by members of the DOD, civilian airline crew and air traffic controllers?*
- 2. How many reports have been made since 1994 to the DOD from members of the DOD, civilian airline crew and air traffic controllers?*
- 3. If there have been any such reports made by members of the DOD, civilian airline crew and air traffic controllers since 1994 may I obtain full details of these?*
- 4. Since 1994, has the DOD maintained any personnel whose duties include the monitoring, collection or analysis of UAS reports from members of the DOD, civilian airline crew and air traffic controllers?*
- 5. In the years between 1947 and 1994 did the DOD ever conduct any scientific research into the subject of UAS, and if so, who conducted this research and what were their findings?*
- 6. Given that the RAAF was the area of the DOD involved with the collection and analysis of UAS reports between 1947 and 1994, and publicly announced it was ceasing this function in 1994; did any other area of the DOD continue with this role between 1994 and today?*
- 7. Has any area of the DOD conducted any scientific research into the subject of UAS between 1994 and today, and if so, who conducted this research and what were their findings?*

*I look forward to your response."*

A response, dated 18 Nov 2005 was received and read as follows:

*"As you have correctly asserted, the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) formerly had a responsibility for investigating and assessing the validity of UAS. However, after careful examination of the factual data and historical records that had been gathered over many years, it was determined that the collective evidence did not warrant the continued allocation of resources by the RAAF to investigate and report on UAS. Subsequently, the RAAF ceased this function.*

*I can advise that Defence does not accept UAS reports, but directs any such reports to local police authorities or civil unidentified flying object research organisations, through the relevant state telephone directory. I can also advise that defence does not maintain records on UAS or on the number (if any) of attempts to report them. Neither does the RAAF maintain any personnel whose duties include the monitoring, collection or analysis of UAS reports from any source. In addition, Defence has never conducted any scientific research into UAS."*

*An interesting read!*

This is where it remained until I read a book in early 2007. "The Weapons Detective" by author Rod Barton was published in Melbourne in 2006 by Black Inc. Agenda. Barton was said to be "...recently retired Australian defence scientific intelligence officer" who worked in the Department of Defence. In 1977 he was transferred to the nuclear section of the Scientific and Technical Intelligence area of the Joint Intelligence Organisation (JIO.)

The head of the nuclear section was one Harry Turner. Barton writes "At the time of my joining the section, his abiding passion was the mystery of UFOs and he pursued the investigation of sightings using JIO resources. Although Bob Mathams was not happy about this, he turned a blind eye on the assumption that he could not have stopped Harry anyway." Here for the first time was a former JIO officer stating that another JIO officer had been investigating UFOs. Barton went on to write " ...Harry collected much of the reporting that came through RAAF Intelligence." I decided that this in house reporting suggested that perhaps the Department of Defence had indeed been conducting scientific research on UFOs, by allowing Turner to conduct "unofficial" research.

So, on the 29 Apr 2007 I again wrote to the current Minister of Defence as follows:

*"In a letter (copy attached) dated 18 Nov 2005, Senator the Hon Robert Hill, the then Minister of Defence responded to a series of questions I had directed to him concerning research I have been undertaking into the topic of "Unusual Aerial Sightings" (UAS).*

*One of the main aims of my research was to try and answer the question "Did the Department of Defence (DOD) ever conduct scientific research into UAS? My own research to date has led me to believe that the answer is no, the DOD did not conduct any scientific research. This negative answer was also given to me in the Minister's letter of 2005.*

*However, a newly published book suggests otherwise. The book titled "The Weapons Detective" is written by Rod Barton (Black Inc. Agenda, Melbourne, 2006.) Author Barton is stated to be a "...recently retired Australian defence scientific intelligence officer." The author further provides the information that in 1977 he was transferred to the nuclear section of the Scientific and Technical Intelligence area of the Joint Intelligence Organisation (JIO.)*

*On page 10 of the book (photocopy attached) Barton writes that, in relation to the subject of UFOs (UAS), that the head of the nuclear section "...pursued the investigation of sightings using JIO resources...collected much of the reporting that came through RAAF Intelligence."*

*This suggests to me that at least one JIO staff member was conducting scientific research into UAS, contrary to the former Minister of Defence's assertion, and my original belief.*

*In order to attempt to resolve this apparent contradiction I would seek your assistance by way of a response to the following questions, please. Where I refer to JIO, I also include its predecessor, the JIB; and its successor the DIO.*

- (1) Can you confirm the statement made by author Rod Barton that in 1977 he was a JIO staff member in the "nuclear section" of the Scientific and Technical Intelligence area?*
- (2) Given that the RAAF Directorate of Air Force Intelligence (DAFI) was tasked with receipt of, and investigation of UAS reports made to the Government between the early 1950's and 1994, what was the relationship, if any, between DAFI and JIO in regards to the investigation of UAS reports?*
- (3) Did JIO undertake analysis of, or other scientific research on, UAS?*
- (4) If so, what were the findings, if any, of any scientific research carried out by JIO staff regarding UAS?*
- (5) Can you confirm that the then head of the "nuclear section" did in fact undertake scientific research into the subject of UAS?*
- (6) If so, when did this research commence and conclude?*
- (7) What was the nature of this research?*
- (8) Does any written JIO documentation still exist on the topic of UAS?*
- (9) If so, may I obtain a copy, to further my understanding of the Government's interest in this topic? I have previously searched through*

*National Archives of Australia files, and submitted several applications under the FOI Act to the DOD. However, none of the documents located concerning UAS was generated by the JIO. If access is denied to any such document which might be located I would appreciate advice under what grounds access is denied.*

*Thank you for your assistance in looking to resolve this apparent contradiction. ”*

A response was received, dated 4 Jun 2007 which read:

*“Thank you for your letter of 29 Apr 2007 to the Minister for Defence, the Hon Dr Brendan Nelson MP, regarding questions about possible involvement of Defence personnel in the investigation of Unusual Aerial Sightings (UAS). The Minister has asked me to respond on his behalf.*

*With respect to your queries about Mr Rod Barton’s book, I am unable to comment on the employment history of specific individuals. However, no Joint Intelligence Organisation (JIO) or Defence Intelligence Organisation (DIO) personnel have undertaken any official inquiries into UAS. If any research into UAS was carried out by JIO or DIO personnel as Mr Barton’s book suggests, DIO has no record of such tasking or research.*

*RAAF’s Directorate of Air Force Intelligence did not work with JIO on UAS reports between the 1950s and 1994. As JIO did not conduct official scientific investigations into UAS phenomenon, there are no records held by DIO of such activities or investigations. Investigations of this nature lie beyond the remit of JIO.”*

Following this letter I re-examined the Department of Defence UAS Policy file 554/1/30 parts 1-3 then wrote another letter to the DOD as follows:

*“Thank you for the letter dated 4 Jun 2007, from your adviser Lachlan M Colquhoun (copy attached) regarding my letter of 29 Apr 2007.*

*“I have re-examined RAAF file 554/1/30 parts 1 to 3 titled “ Investigation of Flying Saucers-Policy” which is publicly available in the National Archives of Australia (NAA.) A number of documents on this file mentions Defence Science; the JIO and Mr O H Turner of the JIO. These are as follows:*

*Attachment one – NAA digital image p84 of file 554/1/30 Part 3 – is a summary paper.*

*Commenting on Mr Turner “...he again approached DAFI from his new position in the Scientific Intelligence section of JIB. Permission was again given for him to investigate the UFO files...This permission was given unofficially by D/DAFI (Ops), with the Director’s agreement.”*



*This indicates to me that a JIB Scientific Intelligence officer was in fact researching DAFI files with DAFI's concurrence.*

*Attachment two – NAA digital image p162 of file 554/1/30 Part 2 – a memo from DAFI dated 2 Jun 69*

*“In an attempt to obtain slightly more scientific data on sightings, the Defence Science Section...The use of these forms will enable a decision to be made by Defence Science personnel as to whether the sighting warrants further investigation. As Defence Science are the advisors on the reports...”*

*This indicates to me that JIB/JIO were actively involved in analysing UAS reports.*

*Attachment three – NAA digital image p76 of file 554/1/30 part 2 – a memo from DAFI to JIO dated 15 Jan 70.*

*“Further to teletalk Mr McMichael...”*

*The DIO's current website lists Mr A W McMichael as Director JIB 1968-1969 and JIO Director 1978-1982. This indicates to me that DAFI and JIO were communicating about UAS in 1970.*

*Attachment four – folio 16 of 554/1/30 part 3 – a DAFI file note dated 24 Aug 73*

*These file notes report on a DAFI meeting, albeit labeled “unofficial” which involved Mr O H Turner, a member of JIO.*

*This sampling of documents taken together appear to indicate that at least between 1968 and 1973 DAFI and the JIB/JIO did indeed mutually work on UAS reports. The 1969 and 1970 documents strongly argue that the working relationship was an “official” one.*

*My questions today are:*

*(1) Given that even a cursory examination of the RAAF's policy file on UAS reveals that there appears to have been a working relationship between DAFI and JIO on the subject of UAS, do you still maintain that “ RAAF's Directorate of Air Force Intelligence did not work with JIO on UAS reports ... ”? (your quote.)*

*(2) Your letter stated that “...no Joint Intelligence Organisation (JIO) or Defence Intelligence Organisation (DIO) personnel have undertaken any official inquiries into UAS...” Does this mean that Mr Turner's JIO research was completely “unofficial” despite apparently being undertaken in official time and utilising JIO resources?*

*(3) If “unofficial” how do you reconcile his advice given on a revised UAS report form – May 1969 - (attachment one) being “officially” adopted by DAFI? How do you reconcile him being given access to “official” DAFI UAS reports?*

*(4) I would appreciate your current answer to my original question “In the years between 1947 and 1994 did the DOD ever conduct any scientific research into the subject of UAS, and if so, who conducted this research and what were their findings?”*

*I fully appreciate that your response to the above will necessitate your deeper examination of RAAF and JIB/JIO historical files and speaking to current and former DAFI/JIB/JIO personnel, which will take some time, but I look forward to your detailed responses to aid my research.*

*I might add in closing that the United Kingdom’s Ministry of Defence has recently released their year 2000 report into UK UAS sightings, which was undertaken by their Scientific & Technical area. The report, memo 55/2/00 is available on the internet at <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/FreedomOfInformation/PublicationScheme/SearchPublicationScheme/UnidentifiedAerialPhenomenauapInTheUkAirDefenceRegion.htm>*

*In view of the historically close links between the UK and Australian Defence Scientific & Technical areas, it would not be surprising if the Australian DOD did conduct scientific research into UAS, and not be inappropriate to acknowledge this, at this time.*

*Thank you again for your time.”*

A reply dated 25 Jul 2007 read as follows:

*“Thank you for your letter of 13 Jun 2007 to the Minister of Defence, the Hon Dr Brendan Nelson MP, concerning your ongoing research into unusual aerial sightings (UAS). The Minister has asked me to respond on his behalf.*

*With respect to the issues in which you seek clarification, my advice remains that the Defence Intelligence Organisation has no record of formal tasking or scientific research into UAS. To assist in your research I recommend you consider applying to the National Archives of Australia for access to the following file:*

*Series: JIOxx*

*File: y/y/y*

*Title: ‘Scientific Intelligence-General-Unidentified Flying Objects’*

*Date: 1957-1971*

*This file contains some correspondence sent to the Joint Intelligence Organisation (JIO) and held in accordance with legislative requirements. It does not contain official JIO research or tasking. It also confirms that the JIO did not have sufficient resources to devote to UAS investigations, and that investigating UAS incidents was not a JIO priority. The file will remain security classified until it is reviewed and released in accordance with the Archives Act (Cwlth) 1983.*

*Access to Commonwealth records which are at least 30 years old may be obtained in accordance with Part V, Division 3 of the Archives Act. For further information concerning access to Commonwealth records I suggest you contact the National Archives of Australia who will be able to assist you with your enquiries.*

*I have enclosed the National Archives Service charter and some fact sheets to aid your enquiries.*

*I trust this information will be of assistance to you.*

*Lachlan M Colquhoun  
Adviser."*

File note made January 2011.

The JIO file was obtained from the National Archives and its contents have been incorporated in the main body of this report.

## APPENDIX NINE

### List of interesting uas cases found in government files

#### (1) 7 Dec 1956 Tambar Springs NSW 1215hrs 10mins 2wits Hayne DO

Heard jet engines and saw object in E "coming down." White in colour. "Disk shaped" and spinning. "At one stage a wing was visible, appeared to have one wing on one side." Then "...went straight up until it became a speck in the sky. It then went to the East, and straight up out of sight." (*Pages 71-67 & 81-85 on digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 1. Original file reference 5/1/air (11a)*)

#### (2) 27 Sep 1957 Tasmania (1944-2025hrs) 41 mins 3 wits (Stinson, Carter & Powell) RV

0944GMT 1944 local Launceston airport

L Stinson, an Air Traffic controller reported seeing a white light bearing 025 degrees from the tower. The light was travelling south at the speed of a DC3 aircraft.

0945.5 GMT 1945.5 local Launceston airport

L Stinson. The light was abeam of the field and viewed through binoculars. It was seen passing over Evindale bearing 125 degrees. Check with area control revealed no known air traffic. Check for balloons also negative.

0947GMT 1947 local Launceston airport

L Stinson. Last sighting of light from Launceston. It had been moving steadily horizontally. Through binoculars it was spherical or circular. Sky overcast. Cloud base 4000 feet. Ground wind was from 300 degrees at 10 knots.

0950GMT 1950 local Cambridge airport Hobart

Carter and Powell. On duty-received request from Launceston to undertake radar search.

0957GMT 1959 local Cambridge airport

Hoggie at Cambridge received request to look at it.

1020GMT 2020 local Cambridge.

Carter and Powell. Hobart radar search commences.

1024GMT 2024 local Launceston airport

Eddy. Hobart tower advises that their radar had two signals. Last at 354 degrees 17 miles at 1023GMT Height 9-10,000 feet. Appeared to accelerate and disappear.

1025GMT 2025 local Cambridge airport

Echo located bearing 356 degrees at slant range of 34,000 yards at 5 degree elevation. Moved at a fast speed. Tracked for 15 seconds. Range increased by approximately 200 yards. Continued attempt further till 1045GMT 2045 local but unsuccessful. 356 degrees height 9000 feet. Distance 17NM north of Cambridge.

1027GMT 2027local Cambridge  
Hoggie. Hobart radar trace 356 degrees 17NM height 9/10,00 feet.

*(Pages 53-57 & 61-62 on digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 1).*

**(3) 26 Jun 1959 Goodenough Bay Territory of Papua and New Guinea (1915-1930hrs)  
4mins 1 wit M Evenett NO**

Object approached from N to NE, descended and then hovered some 500 feet up in air. 45 degree elevation. "Silhouette of a rugby football," and had a kind of ring around it with about four semi-domed portholes visible in the side. A glow came from the portholes. *(Pages 89 & 180 on digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 2. Original file reference AD.93/5/2 Port Moresby.)*

**(4) 7 Jul 1959 Burren Junction (NSW) 2120hrs 1m Taylor NL**

A Police constable saw a bright red light which was on an object in the sky. It was reddish on top. From the object's bottom shone a red light. The object hovered over trees. Seemed close. Appeared to go away to the WNW and went out of sight. The Police constable reported that at 0700 that day a man in the same area reported seeing "big grey cattle float" on the side of a road. Later two workers reported seeing a large grey thing" with a dome on top which they watched for several seconds before the dome suddenly disappeared. The policeman recalled that on 17 Jul 1959 he had seen the same thing again in the W moving. *(Pages 171-173 on digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 2 .Original file reference 5/2/1 Air (56a) Penrith.)*

**(5) 24 Sep 1959 Mandourah and Doctors Gully NT 1830hrs NO**

Large 80-100 foot object reported. Black, shallow. Close to surface-speed 80-90 mph. Shot upwards towards Delissaville Creek. "A green very light shot off from the water in a direction east or north from Mandourah, after the object was seen." At 0715hrs 25 Sep, the same object was again seen off Mandourah and shot up Middle Arm. *(Pages 107-108 on digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 2. Original file reference BS.5/6/Air (32a) Darwin.)*

**(6) 4 Oct 1960 Cressy Tas 1810hrs 2 mins 1M +1F Browning DO**

While looking at a rainbow, they saw a "long cigar shaped object" emerge from a rain squall. It was dull grey in colour, and had "four or five vertical dark bands around its circumference." With something that looked like a "short aerial array" on it. It travelled northwards. Seconds later, 5-6 small saucer like objects came out of the cloud at high speed. These and the cigar then reversed back into the rain squall and did not re-emerge. *(Pages 19-29, 32, 34 ,54-55 and 59 on digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 2. Original file reference 704/1/P1 (2A) Hobart. [Astronomical])*

**(7) 15 Nov 1960 15 miles north of Launceston Tas 1040hrs (5-7 secs) DO**

A USAF JB-57 aircraft crew operating out of RAAF East Sale reported seeing an unusual object. The aircraft was at 40,000 feet at 350 knots flying a heading of 340 degrees. The object was estimated to be at 35,000 feet heading 140 degrees at high speed. It disappeared under the aircraft's left wing. The pilot banked the plane but they did not re-establish visual. In colour the object was said to be "rather translucent." "There were no sharp edges but rather fuzzy." The size was estimated at 90 feet in diameter, and it did not appear to have any depth to it. *(Pages 44-45 on digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 2. [Astronomical])*

**(8) 3 Jun 1961 Darwin NT 2130hrs 1M Casey Radar**

Radar RAAF Darwin "reported radar contact during met balloon flight 2130hrs. "Contact at 40000 feet descended to 32000 feet in approximately 5 minutes. Contact with no apparent lateral movement. First sighting azimuth 180 elevation 80 deg range 15000 yards." *(Page 148 of digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 3. Telex originally classified "Secret.")*

**(9) 15 Feb 1963 Willow Grove via Moe Vic 0710hrs 1M Brew CE1**

While milking cows, he saw an object descending from the E to a height of about 75 feet. It hovered, then ascended to the W. It was 25 feet in diameter, and 9 feet high. The lower portion was 3 feet high and rotating anti-clockwise. It was of a bluish colour. The upper portion appeared stationary and was a battleship grey colour. Protruding out of this dome was something which resembled "a broom handle." "There was a swishing and burbling-type sound." *(Pages 313-319 on digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 4. Original reference 5/6/Air (26) Victoria Barracks. [Tornado like meteorological manifestation])*

**(10) 19 May 1963 Mt Gambier SA 2130hrs (1-1.5mins) 1m Busbridge CE1**

Was 1-1.5 miles from Piggery on the old Glencoe Road when he saw an object on the side of the road. It was bright red/white and shaped like a bull-dozer. No sound. "It came across the road and then it went straight up." Lost in mid-air. The object is said to have followed the route of the car for three miles then disappeared as an on-coming car approached the witness. *(Pages 305-307 on digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 4. Original reference 5/6/Air (31) Victoria Barracks. [Meteor])*

**(11) 25 Jul 1963 Warragul Vic 1930hrs 20secs 1M Ashcroft NO**

One circular object "light shade of grey" with a noise similar to a jet aircraft. "The upper portion of object appeared to have a smaller diameter." Approx 400 feet up. Lost in mid-air. "The upper part of the object appeared to be revolving." While the object was in sight the air was unusually warm. *(Pages 292-294 on digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 4. Original reference 7/6/Air (39) Victoria Barracks. [Tornado])*

**(12) 23 Jan 1964 Between Cape Grey & NE Point, off Groote Eylandt NT 5M NL**

A compass on board a boat behaved erratically over a lengthy period of time. A strange light was seen in the water. "Ghostly white light, in the centre was a shadow which rotated in a clockwise direction causing the light to pulsate...it is estimated that it was miles across and a few hundred yards through." Another light patch approached, then another. At 0300hrs the compass finally settled down. *(Pages 226-228 on digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 4. Original reference BS5/6/Air (91). Darwin. [Unknown])*

**(13) 13 Jan 1965 41S 167E 0845Z 1M Shannon +others NO**

Report of UFOs by Qantas flight 363. Course 275 degrees mag at 20,000 feet. Shortly after sunset. "Single vapour trail appeared to north west travelling east...became seven distinct contrails apparently made by large aircraft in loose formation..." "Second pilot also recalls that at approximately longitude 166E this morning on the Sydney to Wellington flight he noticed what he considered as eleven ships in group on his radar screen." RNZAF-radars at Wellington and Ohakea had nothing at height within 15-200mls. Except "angels" S of Wellington speed 100kts. Copy passed to US Air Attaché. Search of the area by aircraft on 14 Jan revealed nothing, except an unusually large number of high density cloud radar contacts. Up to 10 at a time were obtained at ranges up to 70Nmls. *(Pages 121-122 on digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 4. Telex originally classified "confidential." [Meteor shower])*

**(14) 4 Aug 1965 Orange NSW 1015hrs 10mins 1M Musgrove DO**

What appeared to be a "helicopter" approached from the SW. No wheels or rotor blades were noticed. It was silver in colour and had an "aerial" sticking out the top. It moved slowly, coming within one mile of the town at an estimated 3000 feet altitude, before departing to the SE. *(Page 56 on digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 4. Original ref: 5/2/1/Air (74). [Met balloons])*

**(15) 19 Jan 1966 Tully Qld 0900hrs 4 secs 1M Pedley CE2**

Travelling in a tractor when noted hissing noise. Saw object 25 yards away 30 feet above ground, rising vertically. Light grey, dull not reflecting. Object 25 feet long and 8-9 feet deep. Rose to 60 foot. Departed SW climbing at 45 degrees. Appeared to be rotating at all times. Receded into distance. Clearly defined circular area in swamp grass 32 foot long by 25 feet wide. Reeds lying in clockwise curves. *(Pages 164-169 & 175 of digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 5. Original ref: 5/2/1/Air (6) Penrith.)*

**(16) 10 May 1966 Melbourne Vic 0030Z 40mins Radar**

ATC reported trace on radar at range 140-150 miles bearing 261 degree True. Trace disappeared and reappeared at intervals in the same place. No known civilian aircraft in the area. Probably aircraft crop dusting. *(Page 76 of digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 5. Original ref: 5/6/Air (130) Victoria barracks.)*

**(17) 14 Aug 1966 Kunnunurra WA 2345hrs 270mins 1M Joanston NL**

Bright light came from the SW and slowed down and became stationary. 6-8 red lights in a row. 4 lights approached until they were within 400 yards. Hovered 20 feet above ground. White light illuminated the area. "Flying saucer" there. "Machine tilted" as it rose. Silver colour and oval. 10 feet high 180 feet long-80-100 feet wide. Moved around and appeared to land. *(Pages 133-139 of digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 6. Original ref: 5/15/1/Air (54) Op.Cmd.)*

**(18) 4 Sep 1966 Yarram Vic (2200-2230hrs) 1M +1F Tratford + others NL**

In a car, saw "extended light flat on the ground." Stationary to their ENE. Then it rose vertically to 100 feet darkening as it did so-then it completely disappeared. *(Pages 108-113 & 117 of digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 6. Original ref: 5/6/Air (169). [Astronomical])*

**(19) 10 Oct 1966 Laverton Vic 2022hrs 83mins 2M NL**

Two Air Traffic Controllers saw light moving from 280 degrees magnetic to 320 degrees magnetic. It manoeuvred then remained stationary. Radar check was negative. *(Pages 60-68 of digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 6. Original ref: 5/6/Air (3) VB. [Satellite])*

**(20) 28 Oct 1966 King Sound WA 1636S 12315E 1155Z 20mins NL**

MV Kabbarli. Conical shaped glow half degree across at 242 degrees azimuth, 18 degrees elevation. Travelling fast to NE. Lost when overhead in light of Moon. *(Page 68 of digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 6. Original telex from Darwin.)*

**(21) 26 Nov 1966 Daly Waters NT 0013Z 2mins 1M Munstermann DO**

While tracking a balloon through a theodolite, saw an object at 280 degrees az and 59.2 degrees el. Metallic grey in colour and oblong in shape. Lost in mid-air. No aircraft in the area. *(Pages 324-327 of digital copy of file 580/1/1 part 7.)*

**(22) 14 Jan 1967 Armidale NSW 1210hrs 3mins 1M Hodes DO**

Phone call received by Police Sgt Hodes. Resident reported possible aircraft in distress-noise heard. Hodes sighted a noiseless white object-"square like large box kite." E to W. Revolved rapidly. *(Pages 318-320 of digital copy of file 580/1/1 part 7.)*

**(23) 21 Jan 1967 Kurri Kurri NSW (1015-130hrs) 1min 2F Robinson & McCarthy DO**

In a car. Object seen and strange noise heard. Object passed in front of car and climbed rapidly away. Very loud hum intermingled with "undecipherable voices." The car did not have a radio fitted. *(Pages 303-305 of digital copy of file 580/1/1 part 7. [Nearby debris airborne by Willy Willy])*



**(24) 5 Jul 1967 Murray Bridge SA 1M Langsford CE2**

Five miles NNE of Murray Bridge on the Murray bridge to Karoonda Road. It was a clear night with thick ground fog. Witness was driving a motor vehicle when he experienced interference on the car radio, which became a high pitched whine. He turned the radio off. Within 100-150 yards the motor of the vehicle stopped by itself. The ignition was on but the warning lights on the dash came on. The ignition key was still in the on position. Looking up he saw a distinct break in the fog with stars visible. A "large dark shadow" was seen at a height of 20 feet. The shadow seemed 120 feet thick., Above this shadow was a greyish-blue glow. The top of the shadow appeared convex. He stoped the vehicle and got out to look but the shadow and light had gone. There was no sound. The object had vanished. The two banks of fog came together. The witness returned to the vehicle and tried the ignition and the motor worked. He switched on the radio and there was no interference. *(Pages 178-184 of digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 8. Reported through DCA.)*

**(25) 22 Apr 1968 RAAF Williamstown NSW 2030hrs (5-10mins) 1 wit Furlonger NL**

Call from Fl Lt Churches. Furlonger was on Approach Control radar at the time. Attempted to pick up on radar but found no target. Yellow light in the sky travelled S to N. Did not watch continuously. *(Pages 190-191 of digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 Part 9)*

**(26) 9 Sep 1968 RAAF Laverton 1628hrs 1min 1m Gref DO**

RAAF pilot in a Sabre aircraft saw an object below and to his left. Thought it was a Mirage aircraft, which travelled rapidly and was lost into cloud. Seemed to be just above cloud tops which were at 5000 feet. Pilot checked Melbourne radar and Avalon airfield-there were no aircraft in the area. *(Pages 20-23 of digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 Part 9. [Refraction of light in canopy])*

**(27) 22 Aug 1968 Zanthus WA 1740hrs 10mins 2M Smith & Gardin**

Aircraft VHRT0 was flying a charter run between Adelaide and Perth. Was at 8000 feet, 190-195 knots, tracking 270 degrees magnetic. Gardin saw a UFO and woke Smith. Ahead of the aircraft at the same level and 50 degrees to the right of Smith's seat, Smith said "I saw, a formation of aircraft. In the middle was a large aircraft, and formatted to the right and left and above, were 4 or 5 smaller aircraft." Kalgoorlie DCA advised them there was no traffic in the area. Then radio communications were lost. "Main ship split into two sections still maintaining the same level, and the smaller aircraft then flew out left and right...At this time there appeared to be about 6 smaller aircraft taking turns of going out and coming back and formatting in the two halves...Sometimes the two halves joined and split, and the whole cycle continued for 10 minutes...smaller craft had a constant cigar shape...At 0950 GMT the whole formation joined together as if at a single command. Then departed at a tremendous speed...departed in about 3 or 4 seconds, diminishing in size till out of sight." Weather was fine, no haze above 5000 feet, 2/8 alto stratus to the south. Immediately after the departure of the objects radio communications resumed. *(Pages 218-223 of digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 10. [Not in RAAF summary])*

**(28) 18 Oct 1968 Darwin NT 1417Z 7mins RAF aircrew**

A RAF Hercules aircraft no 9651 took off from Darwin. When at 1500 feet, heading 290 degrees, the crew made a visual observation of a light which they took to be another aircraft. This aircraft showed white lights "Presumed to be those from fuselage windows." But did not have any navigation or anti-collision beacons.

This aircraft crossed the path of the Hercules from right to left in front of the Hercules. The crew estimated its height to be 2500 feet. The radar on the Hercules indicated a target at 15 miles range, estimated speed 200 knots, travelling on a heading of 230-250 degrees magnetic. Its estimated size was at least that of the Hercules. No unauthorised aircraft were in the area.

A check revealed that ground radar was not operating at the time. No additional information was gained from DCA, Met, Navy, Customs or ASIO. No unscheduled aircraft landed at Broome, Derby, Port Headland or Wyndham.

In a memo dated 1 Nov 68 Penrith to Dept of Air ref 5/2/7/Air (86) & 5/15/1/Air (26). "The fact that the sighting was made by experienced RAF aircrew and detected by the aircraft's radar leaves very little doubt that an aircraft was in the area. As the aircraft has not been identified, the possibility of the violation of our national airspace cannot be discounted." (*Pages 197-203, 205 of digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 10. [Unidentified aircraft]*)

**(29) 13 Nov 1968 Darwin NT 120hrs 53mins 1mM Byrne Radar**

A met. Officer at Darwin Airport detected an object on radar. "A fairly strong paint on PPI." "Appeared as a definite echo, observer first thought it to be a helicopter because of slow speed." Height 7000-7500 feet. Speed 17-25 knots. "Object appeared to come directly towards observer then reverse to SW." "Lost in permanent echoes." Two other people attempted a visual observation through binoculars. No sighting was made. Report includes weather details and radar tracking data. (*Pages 176-182 of digital copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 10. [Flock of birds]*)

**(30) 17 Feb 69 Flinders Park Adelaide SA 0250hrs 25mins 1F Ballestrin CE3**

Noise attracted witness. Silver grey inverted saucer on ground. Surrounded by pure white light. Saw humanoid figure walking around object. Heard beeps similar to Morse code for about 10mins. (*Pages 67-71 of copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 11.*)

**(31) 23 May 69 Kalamunda WA 1F Cosgrove + ATC RV**

At 1101,1108,1115,1118,1136 & 1142z, ATC radar-strong stationary paint 300 deg 9NM from Kalamunda. Seen at same time as object like a "big street light" reported over Cloverdale by a Mrs Cosgrove. Radar returns were strong-stationary. Met. Radar at Perth also had unusual returns but times/dates did not tally with above. Return from this latter radar could have been due to inversion over OTC antennas on ground.

Mrs Cosgrove 1835hrs (1035z) of Cloverdale WA. Blue/white light, with red light on top from SE 12 deg el. Very fast but slow at other times. Stopped overhead for 15mins then left at speed to N. (*Pages 238-241 of copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 11.*)

**(32) 5 Jul 69 Roleystone WA**

**(a) 1640hrs 40mins 2wits Spackman DO/Photo**

Silver metallic object several times larger than Moon 20-25 deg el. Object turned and banked frequently. Disappeared into cloud in W. (see 45-47). Polaroid 180 camera used to take photo. RAAF-“May have been a hoax...two enlarged prints are included...” (*Pages 95-99 of copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 12.*)

**(b) 1700hrs Fleeting 1F Martin DO**

A 33 year old secretary was travelling by car and nearly ran over a man who ran out of scrub, gazing upward. Witness looked forward and up to see a silver, metallic mushroom (elliptical) shape in the sky. It was contoured underneath with a short cubic stem. It seemed to glide/cruise along. No noise. Seemed to slowly gyrate. Lost behind her high over a road rise. (*Pages 45-47 of copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 12.*)

**(33) 29 Apr 71 Richmond NSW 1850hrs 150mins 1M Price RV**

ATC. Flashing red, green and white 1.5sec duration 035 deg az 8miles at nearest approach 5000-6000 feet. Slow drift from 035 deg az to 025 deg az. Last seen 7 deg el 025 deg az. Was three times the size of Venus. Radar contact at 1910hrs “Contact painted similar to small fabric aircraft on both azimuth and elevation scopes. Contact terminated at 1935hrs.” Clear sky. Sydney radar had a faint trace. RAAF “This Headquarters has no explanation of what the sighting may have been.” (*Pages 141-146 of copy of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 14.*)

**(34) 2 Jun 70 Zanci Station NSW 60nm SE of Mildura(1930-200hrs) (15-20mins) 1M Vigar CE1**

Twenty year out spotlighting saw two small red lights and gave chase. Got closer and saw a bright diamond shaped object. Bright all over and larger than a semi-trailer standing on end. There was an audible whistling sound. He got to within 60 yards. The object rose up and at 100 feet faded out but the sound continued for a while. Mr Vigar revisited the spot the next day but there were no visible tracks. RAAF conclusion-“If this is not a hoax and the object seen has been described correctly, then despite all efforts no explanation can be offered.” (*pp64-69 & 70 of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 13. [Unexplained].*)

**(35) 29 Jun 70 Sepik River PNG 1720hrs 1M Keog Radar**

Pilot of F27 aircraft VH-FNK reported radar observation. On descent from 12,500 feet noted echoes on radar 60 deg green to abeam his plane. Radar scale set at 180nm and echoes appeared to be 60nm from plane and keeping station with him. There were five cigar shaped objects. With the radar scanner on maximum depression or elevation the echoes

disappeared. DCA advised there were no aircraft in the area. File ref 69/4393. *(p53 of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 13. [Electro-meteorological phenomena])*

**(36) 18 Jun 71 Burketown Qld 1838hrs 17mins Multi wits DO**

An object resembling an illuminated cigar shaped object (pointed at both ends) was seen to the NE. It was orange to red colour and lastly a clear light colour. Seemed eight feet long. Sighted W of Burketown on the southern side of the setting Sun. Clear sky. Travelled N to S slowly. Stationary a moment then lost altitude before went to the E towards Burketown for a few minutes then again changed direction to the SW. *(pp165-172 of RAAF 580/1/1 part 16.)*

**(37) 28 Nov 71 Woomera SA 1315hrs 15secs 1M Murphy DO**

Murphy was tracking a pre-launch meteorological balloon through an optical theodolite. Balloon was situated almost due East of range E (? Difficult to read document) at 6900m and bearing 088.4 True and 37.7 deg el. The balloon and its attached target were backgrounded by thin lines of cloud. As the balloon moved slowly to the left side of the lens Murphy noted an object moving away from the balloon to the right of the lens. He initially thought that the target had separated from the balloon. He then tracked this object for 15 seconds. It was moving at a constant speed in a shallow upward curve. It was shaped like a cross. He concluded it was an aircraft. Light bluish grey in colour. Outline was reasonably well defined. Small image size. Image was twice the size of the balloon target and similar in size to the balloon (which was 10-15 feet diameter). Its 'fuselage' and "wings" appeared to be of uniform thickness and length. No evidence of engines or tail. DCA reported there was a BOAC 707 at 37000 feet at 150-200 miles SE of Leigh Creek at the time.

. "Two most likely explanations of this incident are:

- (b) A mistaken identification of the object seen by Murphy through his theodolite
- (c) A flight across the prohibited area by an aircraft for which a flight plan had not been submitted to DCA." *(pp144-150 of RAAF 580/1/1 part 16.)*

**(38) 20 Dec 71 Woomera SA 0650hrs 1M Sketcher DO**

Met observer saw aircraft with the naked eye as a tiny silver dot ahead of a vapour trail. Heading NE. No known aircraft in the area. *(pp119-124 & 128-129 of RAAF 580/1/1 part 16.)*

**(39) 3 & 25 Jul 72 Mooraduc Level Crossing Vic 2100hrs (15-20mins) 1F Puddy CE1**

Weather clear. Object above car. 20 foot forward. 45 deg angle. Iridescent blue light. Bright. At nearest 100 feet up. Wider than the road. Sound similar to elevator. Hovering. Followed car. Last seen Junction of Mooraduc and Nepean Highways. Object 20 foot high. Notes on p 31. "No military helicopters operating. Checked with DCA and local helicopter operators. Only traceable IFR helicopter based at Sale. When Mrs Puddy made initial sighting report by phone she expressed a wish not to be interviewed. *(pp26-31 of RAAF file 580/1/1 Part 17.)*

"The information supplied by Mrs Puddy on the attached pro forma differs markedly from that reported by the Duty Officer on the evening of Monday 20<sup>th</sup> Jul. On that occasion Mrs

Puddy reported as follows. She said that the object like two saucers together, silver blue in colour appeared above the road emitting blue light. The object 'took control of the car' so that Mrs Puddy pulled over to the roadside but could not open the doors, nor could she restart the engine. She reported that she 'sensed' but did not hear the following message. 'All your tests will be negative. Tell the media not to panic. We mean no harm. You now have control.' The UFO then vanished and a very scared Mrs Puddy started the car and headed home via the Rye Police station. (It subsequently transpired that she had reported the incident to the Rosebud Police station.) Senior Constable Cox of Rosebud told me that Mrs Puddy was known to him, and appeared to be a rational woman not given to flights of fancy. He was somewhat amazed when Mrs Puddy asked him the meaning of the word 'media'. She said she had never heard it before. Senior Constable Cox also advised that a Mr and Mrs Beale of Main Ridge ..." (p103 of RAAF file 580/1/1 Part 18.)

25 Jul 72 Main Ridge Vic Approx 2200hrs 2mins 2 wits Mr & Mrs Beale NO  
An object appeared suddenly to the W of their property. Over tree tops Object surrounded by light. Pinkish glow. Sort of a hum sound. Heading E. (pp96-98 of RAAF file 580/1/1 Part 18.)

25 Jul 72 Montrose Vic App2000hrs 50secs 3wits Toal NL  
A blue/white glow was seen at 5 deg el SSW. Soundless. [Unknown] (p99 of RAAF file 580/1/1 Part 18.)

**(40) 4 Feb 1973 Near Kimba SA 2150hrs (secs) 2wits 1M Hunt 1F Finkler CE3**

Hunt was driving a car 34 miles out of Kimba with passenger Finkler. He noted a strange light on the western side of the highway just off the road. The red and orange rectangle of light appeared 10 feet high by 5 feet wide and 2-3 foot off the ground. Inside this light was the figure of a person some 6 foot tall in a white space suit with a mask over the head and face. Passenger Finkler who was dozing at the time woke to see the light but not the figure of the person. Hunt reported the incident to Kimba police who returned to the site with him. Police regarded Hunt as reliable and could not explain the event. Later, the Police advised the RAAF that two other independent witnesses had reported seeing the orange light in the same location within a 15 period. The RAAF advised the Kimba police that "A possible theoretical cause is a sighting of a phenomenon known as IGNIS FATUUS-methane gas...." (Pp 166-175 of RAAF file 580/1/1 part 21.)

**(41) 13 Jun 1985 Lake Clifton WA 0500hrs 1M CE2**

WA Police 19 Jun 85 to Pearce including two page statement from Lake Clifton case witness. Abstract is as follows:

Report from 43 year old self employed farmer with property at Manjimup WA. Started off driving at 0430hrs 13 Jun 85. Driving in car. Between 0500 and 0515hrs near Lake Clifton saw a bright orange light in the middle of the road travelling south like the witness. It appeared 300-400 yards away. Speed same as him 100-110km/hr. He travelled around a bend and the light disappeared. 6-7kms later it reappeared. "My back became extremely hot and my stomach became chewed up." Shadow came over the car-smell-smouldering. Shadow accompanied by light like Moon-light. He continued on at the same speed. Light

stayed behind him. It faded every now and then. The light above his head was gone by then. Other traffic was passing in the opposite direction. No traffic behind him travelling his way. He came to another bend and the light disappeared. 6-7kms later it re-appeared behind him and above him. Back became hot and stomach upset again. Smouldering smell. Light then disappeared at a bend. Re-appeared without warning near Binninup on a straight part of the road. This time there were two lights. Then for a few minutes he slowed down expecting two lights to pass him but they disappeared. He then travelled on to Bunbury. "My car was not affected in any way." Note on file that there was a note in the Police log Bunbury that a person called at 0550hrs 13 Jun 85 to report being followed by a UFO. (*Folio 34 of RAAF file 5/3/1/AIR Part 11. "Reporting on Unusual Aerial Sightings."*)

**(42) 9 Jun 1987 Learmouth WA 1900hrs 10mins 2M NL**

UAS report

Report form 1 -2SASSQN SASR Age 36 Witness A

At RAAF airstrip Learmouth. North/south runway. 9 Jun 1987. 1900-1910hrs. Wispy thin cloud at 10,000 feet. Nil ground wind. Visibility good. First observed East at 1600mils 45 deg el. Last seen NE at 800mils 45 deg el. Initially object at 5000 feet then moved up into cloud at 10,000 feet. Used naked eye and binoculars. One white light changing/pulsating to amber. About 5m in diameter. Round. Like a bright star. Zig zag movement from E to W. Nil sound. Approx speed 200km plus slowed to 80km. Disappeared with great speed.

Approached from E towards the strip. Strip lights were on. It zigzagged to left and right of its axis at 5000 feet. Arrived over the strip (northern end) and went into hover and remained stationary for 6-7 minutes. Light changed colour from white to amber, then it moved upwards into light cloud. Moved NE slowly, then at great speed.

Part 3 of the pro forma is investigating officer's evaluation.

14 Jul 87 at SASR RHQ. Witness has stable personality and is reliable. "Cause is unknown." "It would not appear to have been an aircraft."

Witness A was setting up a DZ for a night free-fall descent. At 1855K was at the W side of the strip opposite civilian terminal. At 1900K the light came from the East. The C130 aircraft involved in the exercise was still on the ground. It became airborne at 1915hrs. Once aircraft airborne tried to establish VHF comms. Two VHF radios used-could not communicate. Fresh batteries in radios. When activity finished witness spoke to pilot of C130. Aircraft had tried to communicate with no success. This was the first time 3-9 Jun 1987 that comms ground to air failed.

Report form 2 Witness B age 26

Same details as witness A. Witness B is a medic. No connection with any UFO organisation. Stable and well balanced. (*Folio 7 on RAAF file 5/6/1/Air part 15. "UFO-reports"*)

**(43) 25 Jul 1987 Near Jamestown SA 1815hrs 90mins 1M CE2**

Aged 51. Farmer near Jamestown. 25 Jul 87. 1815hrs to 1945hrs. Clear weather at time. First seen 60 feet from ground to the north. "Craft sighted whilst it parked on ground." Craft

approx 20 yards wide. Colour- light-iridescent bright red. Craft-bright aluminium appearance. Size-light-cone shape travelling to ground. Craft-12 feet wide 8-9 feet high. Portholes approximately 4 feet above ground. No sound from craft. "Sound of shuffling type of walk treading on plastic heard outside while I was inside house..." "Don't know how craft left. The light just went off like they had been switched off. Light appeared to be used for directional purposes only." "Ground was marked by flattened grass and dried ground and slight indentation." There was a witness to part of the event-son in law aged 28 was there on the appearance of the first light only he then left to go home. Form signed by witness on 4 Aug 87. (pp23-30; 33;41-43;51-52 of RAAF file 6/16/Air part 1. "Unusual Aerial Sightings" 92WG INTEL RAAD Edinburgh.)

## APPENDIX TEN

### The stars at woomera

By Keith Basterfield

© Mar 2008

#### Introduction:

A recent multi-part article by this author, in "The UFOlogist" magazine, described the history of South Australian UFO reports, researchers and UFO groups. After writing it I found that I had accidentally overlooked one UFO group while preparing the article.

Previously, while examining National Australia Archives file SA5644/2/1 a Department of Supply file held by the Weapons Research Establishment (WRE) at Salisbury covering the years 1966-1974, I had come across a group called the Scientific, Technical and Astronomical Research Society (STARS) which had existed in Woomera in about 1967. Nothing more about STARS was found on any other of the 150 files the Disclosure Australia Project examined.

This is where the matter rested until 2008 when a re-check of the NAA Record Search for any recently released UFO files led to the discovery of a 100 page file, series D250, control symbol 56/3568 Part 1, titled "*Scientific, Technical and Astronomical Research Society.*"

#### STARS:

The file opened with a folio dated 28 Apr 1966. This was a memo from Colonel J D Honeysett, Superintendent, to the Director of the Weapons Research Establishment, Salisbury. Headed "*Unidentified Flying Object Club*" it advised that "*Officers of the Security branch, Woomera have been approached for advice regarding the formation of a local Unidentified Flying Object club to be associated with the Australian or Victorian Flying Saucer Research Society.*" Colonel Honeysett did not support the proposal as he believed "...*personnel associated with Range activities*" could not "...*refrain from providing...some classified information on what was seen...*"

The Director, WRE responded on 11 May 1966 and agreed "...*that any proposal should not be supported officially*" but that Woomera personnel mutually interest in such matters could not be denied "...*indeed there would be some merit in the club being properly formed and operating 'in the open.'*" The Director was concerned at the possibility of revealing classified activities, and suggested that if the Superintendent Woomera was officially approached re the formation of a club they should be reminded "...*that Woomera is a prohibited area and the disclosure of information relevant to the area is prohibited.*"

A letter dated 3 Jun 1966 was sent from Superintendent Woomera to a Mrs P J Ross at Woomera. It was Mrs Ross who had inquired about forming a Woomera based UFO club. The Supt advised her that no restriction would be placed on a group of Woomera personnel



gathering to foster an interest. A reminder that *"...the disclosure of any information originating in the area is prohibited."* was then given, followed by *"...you would not be permitted to publish any such information either locally or through any affiliated society."* Finally, *"...I could therefore not permit any publicity on the formation of such a club in Woomera to be made."*

The next document, dated 14 Jun 1966 was a letter from Colin Norris, of the Australian Flying Saucer Research Society to Mrs Ross. *"I am writing to you as there was a report of an object up your way seen by two technicians of ELDO..."*

Norris's letter was passed on to Colonel Honeysett on 16 Jun 1966 together with advice that the new club would be formed *"...under conditions laid down by yourself."* Colonel Honeysett passed on an AFSRS report form included in Norris' letter, to a Mr D Needham C/-ELDO Lake hart requesting Needham to complete and return the form to the AFSRS.

A sighting was reported by S Mollenhauer, A/g Superintendent Warburton Ranges Mission. At midnight on 13 Jun 1966 a group were 20 miles north of the Mission, and saw an object larger than the Moon travelling from West to East. It seemed to be burning, had a red glow and very long tail, *"...with large pieces burning and falling away..."* Colonel Honeysett passed this on to Mrs Ross, and replied to the Warburton Ranges mission that *"We have no record here as to what this might have been but I am forwarding your letter to our local Unidentified Flying Object society."*

### **Initial meeting:**

The initial meeting of STARS was held on 3 Jul 1966 in the Woomera RSL Hall. Ten people attended with apologies from five others. A proposal was made by a Mr B West that *"...an organisation be formed in Woomera, based on a strictly scientific aspect, for the investigation of Aerial Phenomena including Unidentified Flying Objects."*

The minutes of the 27 Jul 1966 showed a general meeting was held at the Woomera Area School attended by 15 people. A draft constitution for STARS was tabled and accepted. The 15 point constitution showed that the aims of the group were:

*"to promote interest in the investigation of Aerial phenomena on a strictly scientific basis; to collect data on sightings both in Australia and overseas; in a long term project attempt to analyse data collected through computer processing; subscribe to selected magazines both national and international for worldwide sighting report correlation; to hold discussion groups on the scientific aspects of aerial phenomena; to maintain sky watches at irregular intervals; to be available to assess local sighting reports (if requested.)"* Paragraph 13 gave a power of veto to Supt Woomera. *"The power to veto any decisions including activities in the Woomera area..."* Paragraph 14 *"Security conditions for the operation of the society within the Woomera area will be as directed by Superintendent Woomera..."*

Colonel Honeysett's response by letter of 3 Aug 1966 asked that paragraph 11 be re-written and supplied a suggested text.

The minutes of the 31 Aug 1966 STARS AGM showed that Mr J McCarthy was appointed as President; Mr O Rock as Vice-President; Treasurer Mr G Wallace; Secretary Mrs P Ross; Librarian Mrs A Holmes; Scientific Advisory Officer Mr G Mickleburgh; Sighting report

officer Mr M L Neale; Committeemen Mr J Whitmarsh, Mr J Russell, Mr J Adams ; Mr L Beare. The first STARS Newsletter was read to the meeting and discussions ensued on sightings reported in it. The meeting closed after two hours.

Six people attended the 13 Sep 1966 meeting. The STARS Newsletter was re-named the Journal and was to carry sightings, reports, articles on UFOs, book reviews and the serialisation of M K Jessup's book "*The case for the UFO.*" Finally, that the STARS sighting report be amended as discussed at the AGM.

The file contains a 24 page edition of Volume 1 Number 3 of the Journal of the STARS dated Oct 1966. The first item was about local sightings.

(1) 30 Jul 1966 1930hrs Wirrapa SA 5 witnesses

Clear sky with bright stars. Round object, a bright blue phosphorescent light with a fiery coloured jet stream tail. Travelled horizontally in SE direction. No sound. No aircraft in the area.

(2) 23 Sep 1966 2230hrs Mt Gunstan 1 witness Dr D P McGregor

Circular object, white. Clear sky. Object travelled in a straight line behind Mt Gunstan towards Port Augusta. Vapour trail.

News items followed re "Universe that runs backward"; "Why UFOs go" by D D Keyhoe; the Madrid landings by A Ribera, report from Argentina; Michigan Furore by C Bowen; Tully Nests by J Magee –mainly taken from the English Flying Saucer Review magazine.

Eight people were at the 4 Oct 1966 committee meeting. Members had been actively investigating halls for hire; the possibility of subscribing to a news clipping service was being pursued and the revised report form tabled. Two copies of the book "*Flying Saucers Over Australia*" by James Holledge were added to the Library. It was announced that Mr Homer Eichhon, an American would be willing to address the society on UFOs.

The STARS President wrote to Colonel Honeysett on 13 Oct 1966 seeking a ruling as to whether Mr Homer Eichhon, a logistics officer with the American SPARTA team could address them. Colonel Honeysett had no objection.

Eight people attended the 27 Oct 1966 meeting. Miss L Humphries became the sighting report officer.

Mr Eichhon spoke on 16 Nov 1966 at length on his experience of UFOs and the American UFO groups of which he was a member. The presentation was well received and questions followed.

The 24 Nov 1966 STARS meeting saw seven members present. NICAP's work "UFO evidence" was entered into the Library. Twenty nine financial members were on the books. Arrangements had been made for another talk by Mr Eichhon for 1 Dec 1966.

The final meeting of 1966 saw nine attending and a note that Mr Eichhon's second talk was a great success with twenty two persons in attendance. The Journal had been published each month.

### **Into 1967:**

Meetings in 1967 commenced on the 24 Jan. News clippings were regularly being received and published in the Journal. Jacques Vallee's book "*Challenge to Science*" was being sought. Local sightings had been analysed and presented at discussion groups. "*No conclusive evidence had been provided to show that UFOs were active in this area.*" The Woomera Gibber Gabber newspaper had carried a UFO article on 20 Jan-STARs wished to contact the author.

By Feb 1967 Colonel Honeysett had handed over the role to F E Irvine, Captain RAN.

A general meeting, attended by fifteen financial members was held on 13 Feb 1967. Mr Patterson was elected as sighting reports officer. Requests were to be submitted to the University of Colorado; Project blue Book and NASA for research results on UFOs.

A letter to the Superintendent dated 15 Feb 1967 sought approval to amend the STARs constitution "to publish Journal or publication." An internal memo from J J A Hanlon, Establishment Security Officer WRE Woomera to Supt Woomera dated 20 Feb 1967 recommended that permission be refused.

The Superintendent wrote to the STARs President on 23 Feb 1967 that "*I would be prepared to approve...sighting reports correlation; subject to no information originating in the Woomera prohibited Area being included; to publish for private circulation amongst members of the society, journal or publication...*"

The meeting of 27 Feb 1967 considered this letter among other items and the group accepted the Superintendent's suggestion. The Library reported that members were not borrowing and it was reported that a STARs film night on 15 Feb 1967 had been a success.

Mr McGowen presented a talk on "Propulsion Methods" of UFOs at the discussion meeting of 14 Mar according to the minutes of the STARs meeting of 22 Mar 1967. NASA had responded to the STARs letter for information advising they were unable to supply any information.

At the 2 May 1967 meeting it was advised that the University of Colorado had advised that its findings were not yet available.

The 5 Jun 1967 minutes recorded that a Mr R Mathison joined the STARs committee. It was noted that "*...interest appeared to be lagging in society activities...*" It was suggested that a list of possible projects be circulated, such as "*Building project of a meteorological, optical, electronic, psychological or propulsion nature, astronomy, ESP, Ancient ideology, Anti gravity etc.*"

The 17 Jul 1967 meeting set the agenda for the AGM of 1 Aug 1967. Two projects had been suggested to try and revive interest in STARs's activities. These were:

- (1) The building of a telescope for the society and
- (2) Experiments in telekinesis.

**Director's query:**

The Director of WRE Headquarters/Salisbury, M W Woods wrote a memo (reference SA5753/1/2) to the Superintendent Woomera dated 25 Jul 1967. The Director stated that *"I have heard no more about the proposed club and had assumed that the proposal had died. It now appears, however, that there is in existence at Woomera some body called the "Scientific, technical and Astronomical Research Society" to which members report alleged UFOI sightings, including observations made while they are on duty at the range."* (Details of these observations may be found at the end of this article) The director sought information on the group saying *"It is clear that we shall have to take some action from a security point of view."*

The reply, dated 7 Aug 1967 informed the Director WRE Salisbury that copies of each STAR meeting minutes were passed to the ESO. In addition that in May 1967 STARS "sightings reports" had been seen which were submitted by STARS members while on duty. The ESO had been instructed to have this reporting system discontinued. The memo continued *"It is my opinion that the STARS has become somewhat moribund of late and as the activity of the organisation are closely scrutinised, I consider there is no need to feel that any security risk exists at present..."*

The Director, in a memo dated 10 Aug 1967 thanked the Superintendent Woomera for this information, then went on to inquire about *"...another system for reports 'aerial objects'"* which appeared to be in place. Later investigations showed this was not originated by STARS.

The STARS AGM on 14 Aug 1967 was attended by thirteen of the twenty six financial members. Mr A Patterson chaired the event. Discussion ensued on building a telescope for the society and Mr J Adams offered to organise an experiment in telekinesis. A reduced version of the Journal would continue. The new committee comprised Mr J McCarthy President; Mrs Ross Secretary; Vice President Mr Rock; Mr P O'Neil Treasurer; Mr Adams Librarian; Mr Patterson SAO and SRO; Committeemen Mr Whitmarsh.

Attendance at the 3 Sep 1967 meeting was down to four. Nil activity for the Library; little renewal of membership subscriptions and a society film night scheduled for 4 Oct 1967.

Five participants were at the 18 Oct 1967 meeting, which noted the cancellation of the 4 Oct film evening due to trials programs and insufficient attendance. The Oct Journal had been cancelled.

Mrs P J Ross, STARS Secretary forwarded the 18 Oct 1967 minutes to the Superintendent who hand wrote on them *"ESO-The numbers are dwindling!"*

**Winding down:**

STARS carried on into 1968 and its 1 Feb 1968 meeting saw 5 people present. The Journal continued to be published. It was proposed that a 6inch reflector telescope be purchase "*Mr Rock suggested that members now keep a constant sky watch whenever practicable, to ascertain any increased activity, as Mars opposition is expected...*"

The numbers attending the 22 Mar 1968 meeting were three. The Mar Journal had not been published due to insufficient material.

The final set of meeting minutes on the file were dated 7 May 1968, four people in attendance. The president suggested that "for the present time, formal monthly meeting be abandoned in favour of informal meetings..." A hand written note on the file read "ESO. They are weakening!"

This file was closed on 9 Apr 1968 with subsequent papers to be filed on A26/3/12. The National Australia Archives Adelaide office, searched for this new file but were unable to locate it.

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