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RAAF now only bothers with threatening UFOs

CANBERRA — The RAAF will in future only bother with UFOs if they appear to be dangerous to national security.

The investigation of every sighting — the RAAF prefers to call them Unusual Aerial Sightings (UAS) — has proved too expensive for Australia's aerial defence force.

The Defence Minister, Mr Scholes, announced yesterday that the RAAF would in future investigate fully on those UAS which suggested "a defence or national security implication."

Mr Scholes said that while the RAAF would continue to be the first point of contact, UAS reports considered not to have defence or security implications would not be further investigated.

Instead, they would be recorded and the observer of the UAS would be given the address of civilian research organisations if the observer wished to pursue the matter further.

Mr Scholes said that in the past, the RAAF's investigations of all reports of UAS had often proved time consuming, unproductive and had led to many man-hours of follow-up action by the



• Mr Scholes

RAAF and other agencies such as the Aviation Department and the Bureau of Meteorology.

He said that procedures for investigating UAS reports had remained unchanged for many years.

Sightings of UFO's peaked in Australia during the late 1950s and early 1960s.

However, in the past decade, there have been between 110 and 150 sightings reported to the RAAF each year.

A Defence Department spokesman said last night that of these all except about three per cent had been explained.

The spokesman said the cost of investigating all the sightings was likely to have been in the millions of dollars.

"STANDARD"

Murray Bridge, S.A.

- 7 JUN 1984

'UFO' stops car on freeway

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MANNUM — Semi-retired couple Max and Gladys O'Malley believe an Unidentified Flying Object (UFO) caused their car, and surrounding street lights, to temporarily black-out on the South Eastern Freeway on Sunday night.

They were heading toward Murray Bridge around 11pm when, about 300m from the Hahndorf turnoff, the car engine and lights 'died' without warning.

'I've never seen anything as black,' Mr O'Malley said on Tuesday. 'There

was not a star in the sky — I could not even see the steering wheel. The only light was a circular glow in the sky, in the far distance.'

He steered the car over to the emergency strip, and turned off the

light switch. 'I was going to get a torch to check the fuse-box but, before doing that, I decided to give the lights one more try.'

The car lights came back on — as did the street lights, in the same moment. The incident lasted about 40 seconds.

Mr O'Malley said he had an open mind about the possible existence of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) before the incident, but now believes

there have been too many sightings for it to be explained away.

He reported the experience to the Australian International UFO Saucer Research organisation. Public relations officer Mr Colin Norris was convinced Mr O'Malley had had a genuine encounter (of the second kind).

Mr Norris told *The Standard* on Tuesday there were many similar

reports. Ufologists believe the probable cause of the blackout is the 'umbrella effect' of a large spaceship hovering above an area.

'This is why the night appears starless,' he said.

Mr Norris said the incident could not be explained by saying the O'Malley's car had a mechanical failure, because the street lights failed at the same moment.