

Seattle, WA  
Times  
(Cir. D. 246,690)  
(Cir. S. 331,060)

MAY 27 1985

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888

# UFO mystery solved — it was 392 a submarine testing missiles

LOS ANGELES (UPI) — Two brilliant streaks of light that prompted curious stargazers from Phoenix to San Francisco to call authorities were probably test missiles, a Navy spokesman said yesterday.

The streaks, which one witness said "looked like a bizarre kind of comet," confounded observers after officials at Vandenberg Air Force Base, 170 miles north of Los Angeles, denied reports that two unarmed missiles had been launched from the base shortly after 9 p.m. Saturday.

A Federal Aviation Administration spokesman said the regional officer was notified by the Air Traffic Control facility in Palmdale that Vandenberg had reported it would launch two test missiles Saturday night.

The report was denied by Air Force officials, but the mystery apparently was solved yesterday when the Navy said a submarine had conducted a missile-firing exercise off the Southern California coast at about the same time Saturday "to verify its missile system's effectiveness."

"Such exercises are conducted periodically and are considered routine," said Lt. Cmdr. Don Lewis, spokesman for the Navy's Pacific Missile Test Center at Point Mugu, 60 miles north of Los Angeles.

"The details of such operations are classified. But due to atmospheric conditions, it is conceivable that the firing could have been witnessed from the West Coast."

Hallen said the first of many calls to the FAA office came at 9:18 p.m. Asked if that missile testing may have prompted the calls, Lewis answered, "Yes, we're assuming that's what everybody saw, and it fits in when we had our testing."

Hallen said people from as far away as Phoenix and Tuscon, Ariz., inquired about the lights, described as two whitish-blue streaks with trailing tails resembling those of comets.

A Los Angeles resident said the flash "looked like a bizarre kind of comet, but almost nebulous. . . Then you could see the burn of two rockets."