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Close encounters of the vocal kind

Twin UFO reports spur police probe

SYDNEY, Australia (AP) — Police said yesterday they received two reports of unidentified flying objects, one of which looked like a huge egg cup, and that they were treating the matter seriously.

Four members of a family said the object shaped like an egg cup pursued their car along a remote stretch of outback highway Wednesday morning, plucked it from the ground and covered it in ash, police reported.

Faye Knowles told police that her speech and that of her three sons changed during the encounter on the highway.

Crewmen of a tuna boat 50 miles away said a UFO buzzed their vessel a few minutes later and their voices become unintelligible.

"We were a little bit skeptical at first, but after investigating we are treating the reports very seriously," said Jim Furnell, a police sergeant in the state of South Australia.

He said forensic scientists would examine the black powdery ash

found inside and outside Knowles' car. She told police she was driving on the Nullarbor Plain from Perth in Western Australia when she first saw a glowing object in her rear window at 2:45 a.m. Wednesday

"It apparently picked the car up off the road, shook it quite violently and forced the car back with such pressure that one of the tires was blown," Furnell said. "While this was happening the family said their voices were distorted and it was as if they were talking in slow motion."

He said the crewmen of the tuna boat could not have known about Knowles' experience when they reported a UFO sighting in the Great Australian Bight.

Keith Basterfield of UFO Research Inc., an international organization that records such sightings, said "it will certainly be the most physical of encounters ever recorded in Australia" if the reports are confirmed.



Brothers Sean, left, and Wayne Knowles say their car was chased by a UFO on a rural Western Australian road. ^{AP}