

Dawn-patrol Pcs spark UFO alert



Steven Balon
... many calls.

TWO policemen who reported seeing mystery lights in the sky have set off a UFO puzzle for Manchester air traffic controllers.

Senior Civil Aviation Authority officials at Manchester Airport said it sounded as if it was just a British Airways jet landing at Ringway.

However, Pc Ian Walmsley, one of the two Panda patrolmen who saw it at 6.20 am yesterday said: "I've seen hundreds of planes flying over Cheadle ... but this certainly did not look like a plane or helicopter."

Piccadilly Radio's switchboard was jammed with calls after the sighting was mentioned in early morning news reports today. Listeners rang to say that they'd seen similar unidentified flying objects in the past few weeks.

A spokesman said: "We had to appeal to people to stop phoning us. We had more than 100 calls and the switchboard couldn't take them all."

Sank down

And North West UFO researcher Steven Balon said: "The report did not surprise me ... I have been inundated with calls about similar events over the past two weeks."

The police UFO sighting came as Pcs Ian Walmsley and Chris Evans, from Cheadle Hulme, were driving in their Panda along Ladybridge Road, towards Bird Hall Lane, Cheadle Heath, just before dawn.

Said Pc Walmsley: "We both saw the lights absolutely stationary in the sky. We stopped the car to look. It was standing

By Bernard Spilsbury

still in the sky for about 20 seconds, then it sank down out of sight.

The two Pcs mentioned it to their sergeant at Cheadle Hulme police station later, but they did not file a report on the incident. But last night, on duty again, the two policemen decided to check with Manchester Airport.

"I only phoned air traffic control out of curiosity," said Pc Walmsley. "I talked to the air traffic radar people and a controller told me they had seen nothing unusual on their screens, but he did not think it could have been an aeroplane. He said they get a lot of calls about strange objects."

At Manchester Airport today Mr Wally Scott, the man in charge of air traffic control, said: "The report was of lights descending at about 6.20 am, and at 6.22 am a British Airways TriStar landed from New York."

But Mr Balon, of Woodlands Avenue, Pennington, Leigh, who has been researching and investigating UFOs for 23 years, said: "I have been getting a lot of letters and calls from people reporting things like this at the rate of about a dozen a day."