

This category includes 40 sightings reported by individuals and in each case there were no supporting witnesses and no additional information or facts available to allow a valid scientific evaluation of the sighting. Sightings of this nature must be discounted because of a total lack of supporting data. This in effect reduces the total number of cases for the period to only 249 with 206 of these evaluated to date. In the case of the other 41 sightings in the insufficient category, additional witnesses corroborated the sighting but did not provide sufficient data to allow a valid conclusion. Percentages are straight mathematical computations carried out to only two places based upon totals and sub totals or categories. Therefore, when worked in reverse they will not reflect the exact original total or sub total.

When categorizing sightings of unidentified aerial phenomena the Air Force attempts to do so primarily by association to a responsible object. If the planet Venus was determined to have been the subject of a report, the case is categorized as an astronomical sighting. It should be noted that in most instances the condition under which an object is seen is the real cause of the sighting and not the object itself. An example of this would be a star or planet seen low on the horizon with the associated refraction and diffraction patterns. This brings to point the secondary method of categorizing sightings. In some instances the evidence in a case will indicate the probable cause as a refraction, etc., but the responsible object may not be as traceable as a planet or star. In these instances the cases are categorized according to probable cause. A third method is the categorizing of those cases which are determined to be illusions, probable resulting from over active imaginations. Usually these cases are one witness sightings and ultimately fall into the "insufficient evidence" category.

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There are still many sightings which are due to the viewing of startling natural objects for the first time; i.e., fireball type meteors. In most of these instances the object itself, coupled with the relative inexperience of the witness, is the resulting cause of the sighting.

To date no report of unidentified aerial phenomena gave any indication of a threat to the security of the United States, nor were there indications that these phenomena were other than natural.

UFO cases or files are not closed and should additional information be obtained at a later date, it can result in a revised case and/or any change the category previously assigned to the individual sighting (as in the case of a previously unidentified case being changed to the aircraft category). This open end policy on all UFO files results in minor changes from time to time in UFO category statistics. This also applies to individual reports submitted after the fact. These continuing reports account for additional minor changes periodically which, of course, are not consistent with previously released figures.

The total number of sightings reported to the United States Air Force since 1947 are as follows: