

Reports choke airport control

MANY SAY 'WE SAW SAUCERS'

A flood of "flying saucer" and "flying mushroom" reports are pouring into the Air Traffic Control Office at Essendon Airport.

The reports follow an appeal to the public yesterday by the superintendent of Air Traffic Control, Mr R. M. Seymour, to tell the department of any unidentified aerial objects seen in the sky.

Two of the reports came from Preston women who reported today that they saw a strange object with a trail of vapor streaking east across the sky about 8.45 p.m. on Sunday.

Mrs D. Soma, of Edwin Street, Preston, said that as she was talking to a neighbor on Sunday night she saw what she first thought to be a rocket in the sky.

"It was like a ball of fire with a trail of smoke behind it," she said.

Terrific speed

Her neighbor, Mrs F. L. Weston, said that it was like a falling star.

"But it was much too big to be a falling star,"

she said.

"It was going at a terrific speed horizontally in an eastern direction."

Yesterday several people from Footscray, Spotswood and Blackburn reported seeing unidentified aerial objects in the sky on Sunday night.

But now Mr Seymour has a new request to make.

Write reports

He asked that people who see "unidentifiable objects" should not ring airport traffic controllers, but send their reports in writing to the department's public relations officer.

"The airport traffic controllers are busy with matters of air safety," he said.

ters of air safety," he said. "They cannot handle as many reports as they received last night and today."

Among reports submitted today were from members of the department's own staff, he said.

Apparently, the fear of ridicule had stopped many people from making such reports.

Not Neptune

Some people have suggested that the "mushroom" which an ANA pilot reported might have been the wing-tip and float of a Neptune banking in a cloud.

But the RAAF said today that no Neptunes were in the area at the time.

Sunday night's "flash in the sky" was definitely a meteor, a South Melbourne man reported today.

Mr Ken Ward, of Brooke Street, South Melbourne, said he was fishing in the Bunyip Creek at Bunyip about 8.30 p.m. when there was a "blue flash" which lighted the whole sky.

He saw a yellow ball of fire shooting from the sky with a long, pale blue tail.

Meteor claim

"It was an enormous meteor," he said.

The tail hung on to the body for about 20 seconds and as soon as the meteor hit the earth's atmosphere there was a flash and the body broke into a shower of sparks.

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"I have made a study of these phenomena, and

I'm quite sure it was nothing strange like a flying saucer."

Mrs A. E. Jerrems, of Camberwell Road, Camberwell, said that she saw the "flying mushroom" seen by ANA pilot Captain Barker.

Seen at races

"I was at Hanging Rock races on New Year's Day," Mrs Jerrems said.

"At about 2.30 p.m. I saw a perfectly round silver disc in the sky and pointed it out to my two sisters-in-law.

"It was visible for about a minute. It was stationary and made no noise.

"I could see it very clearly through the trees. It turned on its side and disappeared," she added.