

UFO was a balloon

MELBOURNE, Sunday. — A practical joker alarmed hundreds of residents in Melbourne suburbs on Saturday night with a fake UFO.

Callers jammed the switchboards of newspapers and TV stations to report a strange object and lights in the sky, during the hour in which it remained stationary over the northern suburb of Preston.

Air traffic control officers at

Essendon Airport were unable to offer any help, except to say that it was not an aircraft or helicopter.

However, police solved the problem when they went to the area in answer to numerous calls. Their powerful spotlight revealed a balloon moored about 60ft in the air.

It was about 4ft long with a silver tail and four red lights suspended beneath it.

was too quick for police trying to follow the balloon's descent and a later search of the area revealed neither the balloon nor its owner.

"You couldn't tell what it was until we put the spotlight on it", a policeman said. "All you could see were the four red lights and a vague shape".

But the practical joker wound the balloon in. He was too quick for police