

Wide belief in space life

The possibility that some form of intelligent life exists in other parts of the universe is accepted by a large number of Australians.

The latest ASRB poll has found that 15% of Australians over 18 are convinced that intelligent life exists somewhere in the rest of the universe. And 51% think that intelligent life forms may exist.

Two thousand people in 80 city and country electorates in every State and the ACT were asked which of the following statements came close to their feelings.

I am convinced there is some form of intelligent life in other part of the universe.

I believe there may be some form of intelligent life.

I feel it unlikely that there is any form of intelligent life.

I am convinced there is no form of intelligent life.

Eighteen per cent of the sample thought the exist-

ence of intelligent life was unlikely but only 13% completely rejected the idea.

Women were generally more sceptical than men about the possibility but a slightly smaller percentage of women than men totally rejected the idea.

Blue-collar workers were much more likely to reject the possibility of other intelligent life (16%) than white-collar workers (9%).

Education levels had some bearing on the results. While only 1% of people with a university education were prepared to state firmly there was no intelligent life elsewhere, 22% of those with

only primary education took this view.

People with complete secondary, trade or tertiary education all recorded a higher-than-average belief in the existence or possible existence of intelligent life.

Those who professed to be atheists, agnostics or to have no religion were considerably more open to the idea that other intel-

the idea that other intelligent life exists — 84% thought it definite or possible — than religious groups.

Contact with earth

Those people who thought there was or could be intelligent life elsewhere were then asked whether that intelligence had already tried to make contact with earth.

A number of possible

contact methods were presented.

The unidentified flying object proved the most-favoured form of contact. Forty-nine per cent thought that UFOs represented contact with intelligent life somewhere in the universe.

Nineteen per cent thought contact had been tried through radio signals and 13% believed direct contact with people on earth had been tried.

More than one-third of the "believers" felt it was unlikely that contact had been attempted.

Younger people were also more liable than older people to regard UFOs as a possible means of contact. Agnostics and atheists, while much more

ists, while much more prepared to accept intellectually the existence of other intelligent beings, were highly sceptical of attempted contact. Forty-seven per cent thought no contact had been tried.

The ASRB Poll is conducted for The Canberra Times, the Sydney Morning Herald and The Age, Melbourne, by the Australian Sales Research Bureau in association with the Department of Political Science at Melbourne University.

(C) Australian Sales Research Bureau Pty Ltd.