

NZ UFO sightings alert air force

WELLINGTON, Monday (AAP). — The Royal New Zealand Air Force strike squadron has been put on standby to investigate any further positive UFO sightings over the country.

A Defence spokesman said tonight that one or two Skyhawk fighter-bombers would take off if the Wellington Airport radar picked up more positive sightings that "looked as though they could be interesting".

A UFO was sighted over the north-west of the South Island late on Saturday and early yesterday morning and it was filmed by an Australian television crew. The film has already been screened in Australia and Britain. [CTC-TV showed it last night]

"We do not consider there is a defence threat", a Ministry spokesman said tonight. "But it's all very interesting".

The Wellington Airport radar

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The Wellington Airport radar picked up several unexplained signals in the Clarence River area of the South Island on Saturday night. Strange lights were seen at the same time by an Argosy

freighter on a newspaper run with the television crew aboard.

Melbourne's Channel 0 television station says its film is the best documented sighting of a UFO so far.

The Argosy pilot, Captain Bill Startup, said today, "It was spectacular. I have never seen anything like it in 23 years of flying". He said the mystery object had apparently tracked his aircraft.

Early yesterday a Safeair pilot flying the Wellington-Christchurch-Wellington cargo flight, also reported sighting a brilliant white light off the Kaikoura coast at the same time as Wellington Airport radar operators logged what one described as "double-sized blips" on their aircraft-control screens.

Air-traffic controllers in Wellington got more mystery blips on radar screens early today. Controllers described them as less pronounced than some other recent indications of unidentified objects

indications of unidentified objects over Cook Strait.

In the early hours of December 21, another Safeair crew sighted airborne objects they could not identify in airspace which they were supposed to have to themselves. On the ground, Wellington

air-traffic control picked up five "very strong radar targets" in an area where nothing should have been.

MELBOURNE: Television reporter Quentin Fogarty, 32, said yesterday the sighting of an unidentified flying object over New Zealand's east coast at the weekend was "an emotionally and physically upsetting experience".

He said that as the objects came closer he noticed one was saucer-shaped with a perspex dome and another was egg-shaped with white lights moving at "fantastic speeds" around it.

"The whole feeling was that we were in their domain", he said. "We were the only plane in New Zealand airspace at the time. They seemed in control and aware we were filming. I don't think they were going to harm us".

MELBOURNE: The mystery

MELBOURNE: The mystery disappearance on October 21 of Cessna pilot Mr Frederick Valentich, 20, who radioed that he was being buzzed by an object with four green lights over Bass Strait has not been solved despite a large-scale sea and land search.