

## **NZ Air Force hunts UFOs**

**WELLINGTON, Tuesday (AAP-Reuter). —** The Royal New Zealand Air Force was to mount an all-night UFO patrol over the South Island's Kaikoura coast tonight. An Orion reconnaissance aircraft was to look for mysterious objects sighted in the area recently.

A Defence Department spokesman, Squadron Leader Geoff Clarke, said today, "We want to get to the bottom of these sightings".

The all-night patrol of the area south-east of Cook Strait replaced former plans to wait for more sightings and send up a Skyhawk to investigate.

Orions, which are also used for fisheries surveillance in New Zealand's 200-mile zone, are equipped with electronic tracking aids. The patrol aircraft was to be in constant touch with air-traffic controllers in Wellington who

have recorded many strange blips on their radar screens recently. Extra movie and still cameras were installed today.

An Australian television crew aboard an Argosy freighter on a newspaper delivery run filmed an unidentified flying object in the area on Sunday. The film has been shown in Britain, America and Australia, and was being screened in New Zealand tonight.

Wellington radar tracked scores of

Wellington radar tracked scores of inexplicable objects in the few hours before the television crew aboard the *Argosy* filmed "a large, white, glowing ball" on Sunday morning. At one time, there were 10 separate objects on the screen, an air-traffic controller, Mr Geoff Causer, said.

The sightings have produced a wave of explanations from all over the world. They range from the planet Venus,

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stars, meteors and reflected lights to an Australian theory that they are natural phenomena which presage an earthquake.

Mr Causer said, "We have now recorded sightings by six pilots of three *Argosy* aircraft over 10 days, and a host of radar sightings. There is obviously some strange phenomenon and it needs to be investigated.

"There were no aircraft in the area at the time, but the radar returns were similar to the size given by a [Fokker] Friendship".

**MELBOURNE:** A Melbourne mathematician who has studied the television film said yesterday that much work still had to be done to prove the existence of UFOs generally.

Dr Michael Deakin, a senior lecturer at Monash University, said the film must be looked at in conjunction with radar records for a case to be proven.

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The biggest problem was working out scales of the objects sighted and their distance from the aircraft. The

their distance from the aircraft. The objects range from small dancing lights to a larger, more steady object.

Dr Deakin said that for a proper analysis to be made the film would have to be examined frame by frame in conjunction with radar readings taken in Wellington at the time of the sightings.

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**BRISBANE:** People could be interpreting natural phenomena in supernatural terms when they reportedly saw UFOs over south-east Queensland since Sunday, a Queensland University tutor in sociology, Eena Job, said yesterday.

She said their imaginations could have been triggered after reading newspaper reports of sightings in other parts of the world.