

Film of NZ UFO 'probably of Venus'

WELLINGTON, Wednesday (AAP-Reuter). — The unidentified flying object film shot by New Zealand's Television One was almost certainly Venus, the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research said in Wellington today.

The department, which gave its verdict after making a computer analysis to clean up the pictures said the film was out of focus and made the object look about 10 times bigger than it really was.

The object was filmed by a Television One crew from the Clarence River Valley, in the South Island, early on the morning of January 3, and shown on the channel's news program that night.

The film was sold to overseas television.

The department stopped just short of saying that the object was definitely Venus.

It did say the film, after analysis, showed that the object had been about the same size and intensity as Venus was that day, and it followed the same path across the sky.

The director of the department's physics and engineering laboratory, Mr M. A. Collins, and scientist Dr M. J. McDonnell said there were two main factors distorting the film.

Firstly, the special long-range lens used on the camera had been out of focus, as the crew was not familiar with it.

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Secondly, inversion layers in the atmosphere over the Canterbury coast that night blurred images and could have caused the heavenly bodies to appear to move.

A third, but less important, cause of blurring was a spherical aberration in the lens.

Dr McDonnell applied highly sophisticated computer analysis techniques to the film to correct these aberrations and graininess and developing errors in the film.

In this process the image shrunk to about a tenth of its original size.

The new image was so small that the scientists could not be sure of the shape of the object filmed.