

RAAF resets UFO targets

By FRANK CRANSTON

The RAAF has closed its equivalent of the US Air Force "Blue Book" on unidentified flying objects.

It will now investigate only those unexplained aerial phenomena which suggest a defence or national-security implication. It will not even refer to them as UFOs, but instead as UASs (unusual aerial sightings).

The Minister for Defence, Mr Scholes, who announced the change of policy yesterday, said that though the RAAF would remain a point of initial contact for people seeing things in the skies, those sightings not considered to have defence or security interest would not be further examined.

Instead, they would be recorded and the observer given the address of a civilian organisation which researched UASs if the observer wished to pursue the matter.

Past RAAF investigation of reports had often been time-consuming and unproductive, and had led to many man-hours of follow-up action by the RAAF and other agencies.

Procedures for investigating UAS reports had not been changed for many years, and the vast majority of sightings had proved to have no defence or national security signifi-

fence or national security significance.

The sort of report which could be expected to be still investigated by the RAAF was the sighting by a Qantas and a Singapore Airlines pilot of a vapour trail over Derby about two years ago during an ANZUS naval exercise off north-western Australia. No satisfactory explanation for this sighting has been established.
