

Meet ET and make a phone call

By SIAN POWELL

This was a crisis line with a difference.

Forget the telephone numbers for alcoholics, the despairing, the lonely and the needy. This one was for people who had been abducted by aliens.

UFO Research Australia set up the service to help the increasing number of people who think they have been visited by little green fiends from other worlds.

But it's not for people with delusions or drug problems. All calls will be taken very seriously, according to UFO Research's convener, Mr Keith Basterfield.

Mr Basterfield said there was strong evidence which proved that people who believed they were abducted by aliens were not suffering from mental instability.

"In America, one of Harvard Medical School's top psychiatrists said he could find no known medical reasons to explain their stories, or the obvious anxiety states," Mr Basterfield said. "He did not think they were hoaxing."

UFO Research has already had expressions of interest from two clinical psychologists in Australia, and Mr Basterfield said he hoped more would come forward to investigate the stories.

Apparently, alien abduction stories are very similar worldwide, a pattern which has reinforced Mr Basterfield's belief in them.

"In Europe, Canada, the US and here, several hundred people tell the same very consistent story. If it was an urban myth,

you would expect some differences," he said.

One story Mr Basterfield had heard about concerned a young man in Lawitta, Tasmania. He was driving along an isolated country road about 9 o'clock one night when his car was flooded with an intense white light.

His car stopped and the lights went out. The man lost consciousness and when he came to, he was driving the car in Hobart. "But he didn't want to find out what happened," Mr Basterfield said.

Anyone who has been abducted by an alien and would like to talk about it is welcome to call the UFO Research hotline number (08) 251 2773 between 6 pm and 11 pm. It will operate until October