



Paul Norman says UFOs are not to be scoffed at.

Picture: CHRIS EASTMAN. N21MS205

# Group shines a light on UFO sightings

By Dennis Bertoldo

TO MEMBERS of the Victorian UFO Research Society, UFO sightings are no cause for paranoia, alarm or scepticism.

For this group, based at Moorabbin airport, sightings of bright lights in the skies are treated with utter seriousness.

The society's a publicity officer Paul Norman has been on the UFO case since the 1950s.

He said the realm of UFOs continued to fascinate him, even after more than four decades.

In June this year, the former trainee pilot headed up to the Grampians to check out repeated claims of UFO sightings.

It was not the appearance of the

strange lights that interested him; it was their sudden disappearance.

Mr Norman said people had observed bright glowing lights over the hills, but since two jet aircraft had been heard in the area, the sightings had stopped.

He wrote in *The Australian UFO Bulletin* of September this year: "I visited the site, and for the first time in two years, I did not see any UFO activity."

"To date, there have been no reports of UFO activity received from other witnesses since the time of the jet overflight."

Mr Norman said it was hard to know if the military would send aircraft over the Grampians to investigate the lights.

"They won't admit it - they don't report sightings to us," he said.

"Probably because they don't have the answers themselves."

Mr Norman says the 1978 disappearance of pilot Frederick Valentich, who had flown out of Moorabbin Airport, was "the greatest mystery in Australian aviation history".

Like so many other reports, Valentich reported seeing several bright lights and interference with his instrument panel.

After radioing the control tower with his strange encounter, Valentich's radio went dead and he and his Cessna 182 have not been seen since.

Mr Norman, the research society's investigation officer at the time, said the Valentich case sparked off a big interest in UFOs in Australia and many reports flowed in afterwards.