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● 'WEIRDEST JOB'

British UFO files land

BRITAIN has released an archive detailing government briefings on unidentified flying objects.

The 25 files released by the UK's National Archives include "a lengthy briefing on UFO policy to then prime minister Tony Blair's office", along with a job description for the post of UFO desk officer, described as the "weirdest job in Whitehall".

According to a former employee of the UFO desk, which closed in 2009, the perception that it consisted of "top secret teams of specialist scientists scurrying around the country in a real life version of *The X-Files*" was "total fiction".

Instead, daily duties included providing briefings on the ministry of defence's position on UFOs, undertaking UFO investi-

gations, handling freedom of information requests and managing UFOlogists (UFO "experts").

The stranger investigations included one into a UFO sighting by a police officer at Chelsea Football Club and another into a visit by three "men in black" to a person who reported a UFO encounter in Lincolnshire in the east of England.

According to the files, a hotel

owner in Wales once complained to her MP after a UFO landed in a field "from which two tall, silver-suited 'faceless humanoids' emerged and began "making measurements".

Also included are details of a 1995 briefing by one of the defence ministry's UFO intelligence officers, which speculated on why aliens would visit Earth.

Despite having no hard evi-

dence for alien craft, the officer explained that any visit would most likely be motivated by military reconnaissance, scientific development or tourism.

The release of the files came after a request by David Clarke, author of *The UFO Files*.

"We now have a fascinating insight into some of the extraordinary reports and briefings," Clarke said of the documents.