

# Missing pilot reported UFO 'playing with Cessna'

MELBOURNE: A pilot missing in Bass Strait reported being buzzed by an unidentified object for a quarter of an hour before losing radio contact with Melbourne air-traffic controllers, a Department of Transport spokesman said yesterday.

The department's public-relations officer, Mr Ken Williams, said

the pilot radioed air-traffic controllers at 7pm on Saturday and reported an aircraft flying below him at about 4,500 feet.

Mr Williams said the controllers told the pilot there were no other aircraft in the area. The pilot then asked control to check if it could be an air-force aircraft, considering the speed it was travelling. The controllers reported no other aircraft, including air-force aircraft in the area.

The pilot then told controllers the object was long and metallic, with four bright lights on the top, and appeared to be playing with the Cessna. The pilot's last communication with ground control was that he was having trouble with one engine after the object had hovered over him for some time but he was heading toward King Island.

The department believed it was possible the pilot was disoriented and was flying his aircraft upside

down during the conversation with ground control.

It was possible the pilot was seeing the lights of the Cape Otway lighthouse and that of King Island as he was flying inverted in the early evening.

However, the department had not discounted the possibility of an unidentified flying object, although there had been no other reports of anything unusual in the area.

An RAAF Orion search aircraft spotted an oil slick in the area. Light aircraft is believed to have gone down.

The search would resume at first light in the area of the slick where the Orion dropped a marker buoy.

The missing pilot is Mr Frederick Valentich, of Avondale Heights, Melbourne.

Sequence of events and radio changes with air-traffic controllers — Page 3.

# Pilot tells of UFO then vanishes

By LINDSAY MURDOCH

A pilot reported an unidentified flying object hovering over him seconds before his plane disappeared over Bass Strait at the weekend.

In a dramatic conversation with a Melbourne air base the pilot told of a long object with green lights which "seems to be playing some sort of game".

Seconds later the plane's engine began spluttering, there was a metallic sound, and communication was cut.

Department of Transport officials were last night investigating the mysterious disappearance of pilot Frederick Paul Valentich, 20, and the single-engined Cessna.

Valentich's last words to Melbourne Flight Service concerned the

conversation about the UFO as "quite extraordinary".

Valentich, an instructor with the Air Training Corp, was on a flight from Moorabbin to King Island to pick up crayfish.

At precisely 7.13 pm on Saturday, between Cape Otway and King Island, he and the plane were lost.

An RAAF Orion sighted an oil slick late yesterday and dropped a beacon.

A fishing boat was heading to it late last night. Samples will be taken to establish if the oil is from the plane.

Weather conditions were perfect on Saturday evening. It was a clear night and there was little wind.

Department of Transport officials working at Flight Service said there was a "sort of metallic sound" over

was possible Valentich was flying the plane upside down and crashed.

"He may have become disoriented and confused by reflection from the Cape Otway and King Island lighthouses," the spokesman said.

"The lighthouses may have reflected off particles of cloud."

Officials believe it is the first incident of its kind reported in Victoria.

Valentich got his pilots licence two years ago.

He had a night flying licence and intended sitting for his commercial pilot's licence.

Mr. Gusdo Valentich said last night that his son believed in UFOs.

"Frederick read about them and I know he believed they existed," Mr. Valentich said from the family's

home when he became interested in them when he started flying."

Mr. Valentich said Frederick was a voluntary instructor with the Air Training Corp in West Melbourne.

"He had no trade and wanted to become a commercial pilot," Mr. Valentich said.

"He has flown to King Island three or four times before. He was wanting to increase the time he has flown at night.

"A couple of weeks ago he flew to Echuca to get in four hours of night flying.

"He would do anything to get the money to be able to fly... he worked as a shop assistant in Moonee Ponds and even got a job in the foundry at GMH.

"All he wanted to do since he was 12 was to fly. It was his whole life."

## What the pilot said

This is the conversation Frederick Paul Valentich had with Melbourne Flight Service before he vanished:

7 pm — Valentich reports flying over Cape Otway, proceeding to King Island.

7.06 pm — Valentich asks Melbourne flight service if there are any aircraft flying below 5000 feet in the area.

Flight Service: "No, know-



1  
00:00:05,210 --> 00:00:02,030  
well the most interesting one of the lot

2  
00:00:07,730 --> 00:00:05,220  
is this farmer that he was bailing high

3  
00:00:10,250 --> 00:00:07,740  
and he said the bearing in the Baylor

4  
00:00:11,810 --> 00:00:10,260  
started to scream and make a noise and

5  
00:00:14,030 --> 00:00:11,820  
he'd been having trouble with it and he

6  
00:00:15,589 --> 00:00:14,040  
thought oh no not this again so he

7  
00:00:18,109 --> 00:00:15,599  
stopped

8  
00:00:20,029 --> 00:00:18,119  
put the bar out of here

9  
00:00:21,950 --> 00:00:20,039  
dismounted from the tractor and turned

10  
00:00:23,510 --> 00:00:21,960  
around and the buyer had stopped and the

11  
00:00:26,929 --> 00:00:23,520  
noise was still going

12  
00:00:28,609 --> 00:00:26,939  
and he said I was trying to come to

13  
00:00:31,609 --> 00:00:28,619

grips with this for a minute and he said

14

00:00:34,610 --> 00:00:31,619

then I became aware of a shadow and

15

00:00:37,610 --> 00:00:34,620

looked up and he said I was under a big

16

00:00:40,310 --> 00:00:37,620

source that he called us

17

00:00:41,690 --> 00:00:40,320

and he said going from the length of the

18

00:00:43,850 --> 00:00:41,700

barrel on the track that would have been

19

00:00:45,830 --> 00:00:43,860

90 feet in diameter

20

00:00:47,990 --> 00:00:45,840

and

21

00:00:50,450 --> 00:00:48,000

it was kind of

22

00:00:52,190 --> 00:00:50,460

and as he's flown in aircraft and he

23

00:00:53,630 --> 00:00:52,200

gets his crops done he knows when an

24

00:00:55,130 --> 00:00:53,640

aircraft's about to stall and they've

25

00:00:57,410 --> 00:00:55,140

got strict this thing's going to drop on

26  
00:01:00,110 --> 00:00:57,420  
me and he ran out beside the paddock out

27  
00:01:02,630 --> 00:01:00,120  
from underneath or looking up and he

28  
00:01:04,789 --> 00:01:02,640  
said looking up under it it kind of came

29  
00:01:07,130 --> 00:01:04,799  
in and went up just dark you couldn't

30  
00:01:09,109 --> 00:01:07,140  
see anything but the most remarkable

31  
00:01:11,090 --> 00:01:09,119  
part was that you know on

32  
00:01:13,310 --> 00:01:11,100  
merry-go-rounds it shows and they have

33  
00:01:16,010 --> 00:01:13,320  
the horses and they have it's that wide

34  
00:01:17,630 --> 00:01:16,020  
they've got this little wooden lats

35  
00:01:19,310 --> 00:01:17,640  
have you noticed them that they they're

36  
00:01:22,370 --> 00:01:19,320  
nailed to it says you don't survive it

37  
00:01:24,350 --> 00:01:22,380  
oh yeah they're they're about oh inch

38  
00:01:25,429 --> 00:01:24,360

and a half by half an inch and then

39

00:01:26,690 --> 00:01:25,439

there's a gap and there's another one

40

00:01:27,830 --> 00:01:26,700

they're all around the edge but he said

41

00:01:29,990 --> 00:01:27,840

that's what it looked like underneath

42

00:01:32,990 --> 00:01:30,000

but there were two rows on them

43

00:01:36,710 --> 00:01:33,000

uh with your bleach you can see one row

44

00:01:38,630 --> 00:01:36,720

which was rotating very fast but the one

45

00:01:40,310 --> 00:01:38,640

the other one wasn't

46

00:01:42,710 --> 00:01:40,320

and it was rotating in the opposite

47

00:01:44,210 --> 00:01:42,720

direction but very slow you can see it

48

00:01:49,010 --> 00:01:44,220

quite plainly

49

00:01:52,010 --> 00:01:49,020

and he said as it moves slowly along

50

00:01:53,990 --> 00:01:52,020

um it kind of came up like that

51  
00:01:56,690 --> 00:01:54,000  
there was a piece sticking up out of the

52  
00:01:59,210 --> 00:01:56,700  
top like a dome around the bottom of the

53  
00:02:00,530 --> 00:01:59,220  
Dome appeared to be a black seal at some

54  
00:02:02,870 --> 00:02:00,540  
point that's what he took it through

55  
00:02:04,730 --> 00:02:02,880  
like a weather sword or something and he

56  
00:02:06,469 --> 00:02:04,740  
said the Dome had it like a true story

57  
00:02:09,109 --> 00:02:06,479  
and it was a nice top

58  
00:02:10,729 --> 00:02:09,119  
but no windows that he could see and no

59  
00:02:12,890 --> 00:02:10,739  
handle on the door or anything

60  
00:02:16,610 --> 00:02:12,900  
and he said on what he could could be

61  
00:02:19,910 --> 00:02:16,620  
the rear of it it was slight protrusions

62  
00:02:21,050 --> 00:02:19,920  
that he would call rudders two big round

63  
00:02:22,610 --> 00:02:21,060

holes

64

00:02:25,190 --> 00:02:22,620

and he said there was shimmering heat

65

00:02:27,710 --> 00:02:25,200

coming out of one and the other one

66

00:02:29,589 --> 00:02:27,720

a little skirts of foam coming out of it

67

00:02:31,910 --> 00:02:29,599

and he

68

00:02:33,110 --> 00:02:31,920

gained the impression that one engine

69

00:02:34,729 --> 00:02:33,120

wasn't working

70

00:02:37,130 --> 00:02:34,739

you know because one dish wasn't

71

00:02:39,410 --> 00:02:37,140

spinning and

72

00:02:41,150 --> 00:02:39,420

uh then

73

00:02:43,550 --> 00:02:41,160

as he committed he said the most

74

00:02:53,470 --> 00:02:43,560

remarkable thing of all he was a Cessna

75

00:03:00,229 --> 00:02:56,869

and the tire was kind of hanging down a

76  
00:03:02,570 --> 00:03:00,239  
bit clearer The Edge and he said there

77  
00:03:03,949 --> 00:03:02,580  
are no chains or ropes or anything like

78  
00:03:07,250 --> 00:03:03,959  
that

79  
00:03:11,570 --> 00:03:08,690  
and I think he said there was some oil

80  
00:03:14,030 --> 00:03:11,580  
running down the side of the Cessna and

81  
00:03:16,009 --> 00:03:14,040  
he thought this may have been ingested

82  
00:03:18,649 --> 00:03:16,019  
if if there's an ear intake underneath

83  
00:03:21,050 --> 00:03:18,659  
or something because heat and Flame

84  
00:03:25,190 --> 00:03:21,060  
coming out would suggest air burning

85  
00:03:30,290 --> 00:03:28,670  
um anyhow he scratched the registration

86  
00:03:32,030 --> 00:03:30,300  
number

87  
00:03:33,770 --> 00:03:32,040  
on the tractor with a nail and he said

88  
00:03:35,750 --> 00:03:33,780

next time I come up I'll give you the

89

00:03:38,990 --> 00:03:35,760

number and he did it's written down at

90

00:03:41,930 --> 00:03:39,000

the shop in a book and the interesting

91

00:03:43,729 --> 00:03:41,940

thing is it was the day following when

92

00:03:46,430 --> 00:03:43,739

that time went missing between Victoria

93

00:03:47,509 --> 00:03:46,440

and Tasmania you know when that one he

94

00:03:50,509 --> 00:03:47,519

rang up and said there were lights

95

00:03:52,670 --> 00:03:50,519

around them yeah just so this would have

96

00:03:56,809 --> 00:03:52,680

put it back in around about October 78

97

00:03:58,910 --> 00:03:56,819

yes yeah and it was the day following it

98

00:04:01,369 --> 00:03:58,920

he said anyhow he said this thing moved

99

00:04:03,410 --> 00:04:01,379

off in the direction of where the

100

00:04:05,630 --> 00:04:03,420

military Maneuvers were they said it

