

AREA 51 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Answered by the Area 51 Research Center, 10/12/96

For extensive Area 51 information see: <http://www.ufomind.com/area51>

WHAT IS AREA 51?

"Area 51" is a block of government land about 95 miles north of Las Vegas. It is surrounded by the Nevada Test Site and the Nellis Air Force Range. The name "Area 51" supposedly came from a designation appearing on an old map of the Nevada Test Site. Inside Area 51 is a large Air Force base, near the shore of Groom Dry Lake, that the government does not talk about. The airspace around the base is off-limits even to most military pilots and has been referred to on aviation frequencies as "Dreamland."

WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF THE GROOM LAKE BASE?

The base at Groom Lake has traditionally been America's testing ground for the latest generation of secret aircraft. The U-2, A-12, SR-71 and F-117A were flight tested here long before being made public. Since the government won't acknowledge anything about the base, it's hard to be know what is going on there now. Common rumors suggest several possible new aircraft, including an ultra-high speed spy plane dubbed "Aurora" by aviation watches, various unmanned aerial reconnaissance vehicles (UAVs), stealth helicopters and a possible replacement for the F-117A. The existance of these projects is speculative, however, and most activities at Groom are probably more mundane weapons and systems testing, of interest only to hard-core military buffs.

WHAT'S WITH THE UFOS?

This area has long been rich in UFO lore. Whatever you can imagine--captured aliens, underground bases, alien-government collusion--it's all been claimed at Groom Lake. One of the more restrained and interesting stories is the claim by a Las Vegan, Bob Lazar, that he worked with extraterrestrial flying saucers at an installation at Papoose Lake, south of Groom Lake, in an area he calls "S-4." He says he helped "reverse engineer" one of the craft, but that he saw no aliens himself. There seems to be no way to confirm or directly refute this claim, although Lazar's claimed educational credentials certainly are not real.

Since Lazar first made his claims in televised interviews, many tourists have been coming to the public lands closest to the base to try to catch glimpses of alien craft in flight. Many believe that they have seen UFOs here, but there are so many UFO-like natural and military phenomena on display here that its hard to separate the wheat from the chaff. Many people have lived in this area all their lives and never seen a UFO, while tourists coming for only one night often claim to see them everywhere. It is important to note the difference between the claim that the government has alien spacecraft in its possession and the claim that you can come here to see flying saucers on demand. Even if you

believe the first, it doesn't necessarily imply the second.

WHERE DO WATCHERS GO?

About 130 miles from Las Vegas, at Mile Marker LN 29.5 on remote Nevada Highway 375, is a lone mailbox used by a local rancher. Since the "Black Mailbox" (now a white mailbox) is the only landmark on this stretch of the highway, this is where the true believers come. Many visitors claim to have seen flying saucer here, although the rancher himself claims to have seen none. There is a lot of intense military war games activity in this area that produces a lot of flares and other interesting lights in the sky--great "UFOs" if you want to see them.

There used to be two viewpoints on public land close to the border--White Sides and Freedom Ridge--where a visitor could legally view the secret Air Force base. These areas were closed by the Air Force in April 1995. You can still see the base from a distant mountain, Tikaboo Peak, but it requires a strenuous 1-1/2 hour hike from a remote dirt road.

WHAT ARE THE "CAMMO DUDES"?

That's the nickname for the anonymous private security force that patrols the military border. They wear camouflage fatigues without insignia and drive white Jeep Cherokees with government plates. They keep close watch on any visitors that come within a few miles of the border, but they are under orders to avoid contact. Since you can't easily see the base itself, the Cammo Dudes are one of the few reliable tourist attractions.

WHAT ARE THE DANGERS OF VISITING THIS AREA?

The greatest danger is wandering across the unfenced military border, which would result in your immediate arrest and a fine of \$600. Wherever a road crosses the border, it is marked by clear "Restricted Area" signs which should not be crossed. In the desert, the border is marked by orange posts every 50 yards. It is unwise to hike near the border unless you are certain of the location of the border. It is even worse to hike at night because the posts become invisible.

Another major danger, when driving, is getting stuck on an remote, unmaintained dirt road that your vehicle cannot handle. To get stuck in the sand and then run out of water can be deadly.

RESOURCES

For the largest online database on Area 51, see the web site below. Includes hundreds of articles, maps and other revelent documents.

<http://www.ufomind.com/area51>

"The Area 51 Viewer's Guide," a 115-page, self-published book by Glenn Campbell, offers general information, a reference list, maps and practical advice for visitors. It is advisable to obtain this guide before you come so that you can be adequately prepared. The cost is \$15 plus \$4 Priority Mail postage (US), ordered from:

Area 51 Research Center, PO Box 448, Rachel, NV 89001.

A catalog of other publications is available at the web site above, or by mail for those without web access.

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