



Aliens On Earth.com

Resources for those who are stranded here



Our Bookstore is OPEN

Over 5000 new & used titles, competitively priced!

Topics: [UFOs](#) - [Paranormal](#) - [Area 51](#) - [Ghosts](#) - [Fortean](#) - [Conspiracy](#) - [History](#) - [Biography](#) - [Psychology](#) - [Religion](#) - [Crime](#) - [Health](#) - [Geography](#) - [Maps](#) - [Science](#) - [Money](#) - [Language](#) - [Recreation](#) - [Technology](#) - [Fiction](#) - [Other](#) - [New](#)

Search... for keyword(s)

in Page Titles

Location: [Mothership](#) -> [UFO](#) -> [Updates](#) -> [1997](#) -> [Aug](#) -> **Air National Guard Captain Interviewed On Arizona**

UFO UpDates Mailing List

Air National Guard Captain Interviewed On Arizona

From: Stig_Agermose@online.pol.dk (Stig Agermose)
Date: Fri, 8 Aug 1997 04:15:49 +0200
Fwd Date: Fri, 08 Aug 1997 09:55:40 -0400
Subject: Air National Guard Captain Interviewed On Arizona

Found on the site of T.A.S.K. (Tri-State Advocates For Scientific Knowledge).

"T.A.S.K. is a non-profit group dedicated to the study of UFOs and other 'unusual phenomena.' It is the group's intent to conduct investigations and research into these matters with the highest degree of scientific integrity."

The URL of the interview is:

<http://home.fuse.net/task/SULLINS.htm>

On Tuesday, August 5, 1997, Capt. Drew Sullins, of the Maryland Air National Guard was interviewed by Kenny Young of T.A.S.K. regarding the March 13th Arizona UFO reports.

YOUNG: Thanks for taking time from your busy schedule to talk this afternoon about Project Snowbird and the flare droppings over Arizona that generated some attention. One of the things I want to discuss is the TIME DELAY in announcing the explanation for this event, which was a duration of almost 4 to 5 months. Is there any reason to your knowledge for this delay?

SULLINS: Yes there is, and I don't think people are going to believe it, but it's the truth... it's a simple miscommunication. Apparently when the military in Phoenix was first approached, they looked at their flight logs, which are kept in two separate categories called "RESIDENT" and "VISITING" logs. These logs chart all of the incoming or outgoing air traffic. When the first inquiries of this went out, DAVIS-MONTHAN didn't check the visiting flight logs. The Public Affairs Officer down there called the people at operations who kept the flight logs, and they said, "we didn't have anything up that day." After several months, Captain Eileen Bienz was told by someone, and I can't remember who, that there was a project called Snowbird, which was an Air National Guard 'Op.' Bienz didn't have information on Snowbird, because Arizona units don't participate in it. Snowbird is an operation run during the winter when they take A.N.G. units located in the northern U.S. When it snows and the weather gets bad, they fly their units out there for a couple of weeks and train during the winter because the weather for flying is so good. Bienz put two and two together and checked the visiting flight logs, and sure enough it was discovered that there was an Air National Guard unit flying around.

YOUNG: So the miscommunication was due to Davis-Monthan?

SULLINS: Yeah, it wasn't on my part. Captain Bienz called me up and told me the whole story, just a couple of weeks ago and first I ever heard of it, and said, 'now can you confirm these things?' So I called our Ops guys of the 175th Wing & 104th Fighter Squadron, and they were able to confirm for me that they were flying that night in that area and dropping flares. The information was not held, as soon as we got it together it was released.

YOUNG: Why had the pilots in this unit, knowing they did this, not come forth in the hours after the publicity to announce the proper explanation?

SULLINS: First of all, the deployment for the unit was on the last day of a 15-day training mission happening during the first 2-weeks of March. It was one of the last missions they flew out there, and by the time it hit the news, they might have been gone. The story wasn't the big news event in Baltimore that it was in Phoenix. I think they seemed genuinely suprised that they were the cause of all the hub-bub.

YOUNG: When you say they were 'gone,' what do you mean by that?

SULLINS: They came back to Maryland. It was a 2-week training mission. They were there the first 2-weeks in March, and so by March 13th, that night, they landed and probably got up on March 14th or 15th and rolled out of there.

YOUNG: There was plenty of national media exposure regarding this, and also a second-wave of publicity in mid-June following the USA TODAY article. Is there any reason these pilots or affiliates with the squadron would not have come forth with this explanation in spite of all this?

SULLINS: Well I honestly don't think that they knew. I really don't. The lead pilot that night, a Lieutenant Colonel by the name of Ron Henry, was retiring about that time... he's retired now and commuting back and forth to Minneapolis and he's really busy. He's in the flight training program for Northwest Airlines learning how to fly a DC-9, and all these guys are really busy. They're citizen airmen and citizen soldiers, so they have full-time jobs and careers, families and other things they have to manage. Look, I'll be honest with you, until Captain Bienz called me up, I honestly had not even heard about this. I read two papers in the morning, one of them on the internet, one in my office, and so if I could miss it, then I guess they could too.

YOUNG: Was the lead pilot and others involved aware that dropping these flares would produce the results among the population below that it did?

SULLINS: No, I don't think they would have known because it's a standard routine training mission out there. Flares are dropped alot on that range. On that particular night, the visibility and atmospheric conditions were such that the things could have been viewed from the southwestern suburbs of Phoenix. These flares can be seen from hundreds of miles if the weather conditions are right. Apparently, they're not the only unit out there that dropped flares. Who's to say, perhaps the weather conditions and everything just kind of came together and these things could be seen from Phoenix.

YOUNG: You speculate that other units could have also been involved?

SULLINS: The only units we had flying that night were the eight aircraft from the 104th Fighter Squadron.

YOUNG: What about the arguments that the flares were visible longer than 1-hour, when the actual burn-time for parachute flares would be around 4 or 5 minutes?

SULLINS: They were dropping alot of flares. They were over that range for over an hour. One aircraft would go in, drop a couple of flares, make its run and attack a target, then another aircraft would come in from behind and illuminate the range again, so they were continually dropping flares in that area.

YOUNG: So the pilots could see the flares from their plane?

SULLINS: Oh yes.

YOUNG: Would they have been able to visualize that this could be something the population below would notice as well?

SULLINS: I can't speak for the pilots because I wasn't flying, but the dropping of flares out there is so routine that I don't see why they would've had any cause for alarm.

YOUNG: Again, the delay in this announcement is somewhat odd. How many men would have been involved with the 104th Fighter Squadron that would have had knowledge of this operation?

SULLINS: There were eight aircraft. Eight pilots.

YOUNG: Were there also officers loading the flares in pods under the wings who would have had knowledge of this?

SULLINS: I'd have to call the squadron on that, but once Davis- Monthan checked the visiting flight logs, they were able to explain it. The base knew about it, but they just didn't check the visiting flight logs.

YOUNG: How would this activity have been specified or listed on a flight log?

SULLINS: That's a good question. I don't have an answer to that one.

YOUNG: Do they list flare exercises in flight logs?

SULLINS: Anytime you're flying at night in the A-10 Thunderbolt on a night training exercise, it's probable that you'll always be dropping flares. It's very routine, there's ABSOLUTELY NOTHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY about what they did out there.

YOUNG: It was obviously extraordinary in light of the public reaction to the operation.

SULLINS: Well that was, but not the mission itself.

YOUNG: Do they announce flare exercises in advance so as not to cause public alarm?

SULLINS: No.

YOUNG: They do not?

SULLINS: No, they never have before. It's never produced this public response before and our pilots have flown this same mission out of that range a number of times before, and done so without so much as raising an eyebrow.

YOUNG: Would all the reports of a triangular object, mentioned in the USA Today article, be attributable to the flare droppings?

SULLINS: I don't know. I've only seen videotapes twice, and they looked like flares to me.

YOUNG: I recalled that some of the early reports on this that some Air Tower Operators were looking at these flares and at the same time detected no radar track of any aircraft on radar. Could you please tell me if eight A-10's which were dropping flares would have any Stealth capabilities which would have caused them not to be detected by radar?

SULLINS: Nope, and the pilots told me that they had everything operating that night and that they should've shown up on radar. Sky Harbor International Airport held radar surveillance for this area, and I don't want to speak for them, and don't know what their coverage area is, but I understand that the area is restricted military airspace. Sky Harbor International Airport will have to answer for those questions. The A-10's do not have any Stealth technology on it, and they were flying with all of their navigation radar systems and everything operating.

YOUNG: Since we had some alarm and concern generated from the public over the March 13 flare droppings, would it be possible to duplicate an identical event for the public, and arrange for the media to be present to document the event?

SULLINS: As the pilots explained it to me, it may have been the atmospheric conditions that night which allowed this thing to be seen so far away in Phoenix, but I'm not so sure we could replicate or duplicate the exact conditions that night. But secondly, it costs a hell of a lot of money to fly these planes for an hour, and I don't know that the United States Air Force would authorize that expenditure. I'd be willing to bet that since this has happened, a whole bunch of flares have dropped over that range since then.

YOUNG: So a repeat performance to satisfy the populace would not be possible?

SULLINS: I'm not saying it's not possible, I'm just saying that I'm the wrong guy to ask. You're not going to get the Maryland Air National Guard to fly all the way across the country to replicate the event. That's a request that'll have to be made to the United States Air Force in the Pentagon, and that would then be handed down to the National Guard Bureau, and it goes from echelon to echelon, through the bureaucratic process. Davis- Monthan could assist there, if one were to inquire when the next training mission would be scheduled over Luke AFB where A-10s will be dropping flares from between 10 and 15 thousand feet. That is essentially all you have to replicate. The thing that people are getting all bent out of shape about is the fact that I never offered this as the 'definitive explanation' for what happened. We only offered this up because an inquiry was made to the military regarding unidentified lights. We released all the information on our operation, but we are not prepared to say definitively that these are, in fact, the lights. I'm not trying to stir anything up here, but I can only say that our unit was there, we flew these missions, we dropped these flares. A lot of people think it's flares. Some of the pilots who've looked at the videos flat out said it was flares. According to what every military expert and A-10 pilot told me leads me to believe it was flares.

YOUNG: Since another demonstration would be difficult, would it be possible to notify the public in the event of future exercises of this nature?

SULLINS: Look, I gotta be completely candid here, we're not going to pick up the phone every darn time we do something. Military operations are just that - military operations. They're not things that the public is used to seeing on an everyday basis, and if everytime we conducted something that we thought the general public would find unusual, I'd spend my whole life on the phone telling people about our training. And in Maryland, we don't drop flares. And the reason we dropped so many flares in Tucson is because it's one of the few places we can go to execute that mission. There is no place in Maryland that we could drop these flares safely. The Warfield A.N.G. base outside of Baltimore is not properly equipped to load, handle and store these type of flares and other ordinances. When we go to Arizona, we fly lots of these missions, and try to maximize our time out there because we can't do it at home. So we don't have any need to call people here at home and tell them our plans.

YOUNG: If it were ever deemed needful to announce anything, who would be contacted?

SULLINS: I would put out the release. If my boss came to me and said that we were going to be conducting an exercise that would alarm the general public, then I would put out a news release to the TV, radio and newspapers.

YOUNG: Do you also handle NOTAM (Notice To Airmen) reports or advisories to other airports or pilots in the area of exercises?

SULLINS: I don't know what a NOTAM report is, I've never heard of one here.

YOUNG: I do appreciate your time and detailed information today.

SULLINS: My pleasure.

COMMENT:

It was obvious that Capt. Sullins was knowledgeable about the flight operations of the Maryland A.N.G. and familiar with the flare maneuvers.

He had clearly handled several of these questions previously, and had also indicated that he interviewed several of the pilots involved. He may have been briefed on how to handle these inquiries, as much of what he said was strikingly similar to comments made to me by a captain from the 178th Fighter Group and 162nd Fighter Squadron Flying Unit Fighter Operations division from Springfield Air National Guard base after a separate but identical incident happened in Southern Ohio on March 26.

I found Sullins to be courteous and very professional.

However, I am uncomfortable by the fact that the pilots of the eight aircraft responsible, or the other airman involved in the unit operations of the 175th Wing & 104th Fighter Squadron, would supposedly have 'not heard' of the March 13th debacle involving UFOs over Arizona. I cannot fathom that these persons would not "do the right thing" and put the matter to rest as abruptly as possible.

Recall that Snowbird remained in Arizona at least the following afternoon, or possibly several days after the March 13th event, giving them plenty of opportunities to hear of the UFO reports which had saturated the Arizona media.

Furthermore, Sullins seemed befuddled by the lack of radar returns for the A-10 activity from Sky Harbor International Airport. He also didn't elect to address the reports of a triangular object supposedly observed, and dismissed the public reaction of a 'routine' exercise to weather conditions, an identical scenario first advanced to T.A.S.K. from the Springfield A.N.G. units after the Ohio disturbance on March 26.

In an honest assessment of this drama, I must observe that the Arizona scenario is highly suspicious and all-too-similar to the March 26th Ohio happening. And due to the delayed confession from the Maryland Air National Guard, one must seriously consider if an ulterior motive may be at work in this travesty.

The Ohio event dealt also with a large, triangular object traveling overhead, and also a 'bouncing' object that was witnessed by a fire and E.M.S. coordinator from New Vienna, Ohio. The Arizona flare explanation, like the Ohio story, is complicated by nagging inconsistencies that come against the flare explanation.

I am satisfied that flares were there, but if the other reports are to honestly considered, then we only have a partial resolution to this very interesting mystery.

K. Young

Search for other documents to/from: [stig_agermose](#)

[[Next Message](#) | [Previous Message](#) | [This Day's Messages](#)]
[[This Month's Index](#) | [UFO UpDates Main Index](#) | [MUFON Ontario](#)]

UFO UpDates - Toronto - updates@globalserve.net
Operated by Errol Bruce-Knapp - ++ 416-696-0304

A Hand-Operated E-Mail Subscription Service for the Study of UFO Related Phenomena.
To subscribe please send your first and last name to updates@globalserve.net
Message submissions should be sent to the same address.

[[UFO Topics](#) | [People](#) | [Ufomind What's New](#) | [Ufomind Top Level](#)]

To find this message again in the future...
Link it to the appropriate [Ufologist](#) or [UFO Topic](#) page.

Archived as a public service by [Area 51 Research Center](#) which is not responsible for content.
Software by Glenn Campbell. Technical contact: webmaster@ufomind.com

Financial support for this web server is provided by the [Research Center Catalog](#).