

Unidentified Aerial Phenomena

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Notes

Key Messages

- Defence does not have a policy governing the reporting or recording of Unidentified Aerial Phenomena (UAP) by either members of the public or Defence members.
- The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) ceased the handling of reports of UAP in 1996 after determining there was no scientific or other compelling reason to continue to devote resources to the recording and investigation of UAP.
- Defence safety of flight incidents, including those potentially posed by UAP are handled by the Defence Aviation Safety Authority (DASA), with civilian safety of flight incidents the purview of the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA).

Process/Protocol to Report UAP/UFO in Australian Air Space [\(Answers from previous QoNs\)](#)

- Under RAAF Aviation Reporting protocols, there has been no records of observations or sightings of unidentified aircraft over past ten years.
- Any unidentified aircraft identified by Air Force pilots or personnel entering military controlled airspace or pose a safety risk to military aircraft are subject to RAAF Aviation Safety Reporting protocols.
- There is no specific encouragement given to pilots to report aircraft they cannot identify, rather to report unusual or unexpected events through RAAF Aviation Safety Reporting procedures.
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- The Report does not draw conclusions on what UAP are and most remain unexplained, mainly due to lack of data.
- The Report finds no evidence that UAP are extra-terrestrial in origin.
- The Report did reach the following conclusions:
 - In a limited number of incidents, UAP reportedly appeared to exhibit unusual flight characteristics. These observations could be the result of sensor errors, spoofing, or observer misperception and require additional rigorous analysis.
 - There are probably multiple types of UAP requiring different explanations based on the range of appearances and behaviours described in the available reporting.
 - UAP clearly pose a safety of flight issue and may pose a challenge to U.S. national security. UAP would also represent a national security challenge if they are foreign adversary collection platforms or provide evidence a potential adversary has developed either a breakthrough or disruptive technology.
- On 23 November 2021, the US Director of National Intelligence directed the establishment of the Airborne Object Identification and Management Synchronisation Group to coordinate reporting across US Department of Defense and other US agencies, with the goal to minimise flight safety and national security concerns.
 - Defence has no plans to replicate a similar mechanism. DASA and CASA already serve this function across flight safety issues and apparatus exist for concerns regarding National security.
- Historically the RAAF was responsible for handling UAP reports, however that ceased in 1996. If civilians wish to report UAP they should contact their local police authorities, or get in contact with a civil UFO research organisation.
 - The Defence Instruction was cancelled in November 2000 and not replaced.
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Timeline of Significant Events/Decisions

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Questions on Notice

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Other QoNs

Committee Inquiry	Senator – Question #	Broad Topic
Nil	Nil	Nil

Freedom of Information

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Contact and Clearance Offices

Clearing Officer	s47E(c) Commander Defence Space Command	Air Force	s22
Consultation	s47E(c) Assistant Secretary Strategic Capabilities Policy Development	Strategy, Policy and Industry Group	s22
	s47E(c) Director General Systems and Integration	Army	s22
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Strategic Narrative

- UAP are likely to be one of three things:
 - natural or other benign phenomena
 - anomalies with sensors, or
 - (human-made) technologies.
- UAP could be other nations systems, either contemporary or advanced. Information regarding the collection and investigation of these systems is the remit of the Intelligence Community and is classified.

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Background

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- The Report did reach the following conclusions:
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- On 23 November 2021, the US Director of National Intelligence directed the establishment of the Airborne Object Identification and Management Synchronisation Group to coordinate reporting across US Department of Defense and other US agencies, with the goal to minimise flight safety and national security concerns.
 - Defence has no plans to replicate a similar mechanism. DASA and CASA already serve this function across flight safety issues and apparatus exist for concerns regarding National security.
- Historically the RAAF was responsible for handling UAP reports, however that ceased in 1996. ADF policy shifted to civilians wishing to report UAP to contact their local police authorities, or get in contact with a civil UFO research organisation.
 - The Defence Instruction was cancelled in November 2000 and not replaced.
 - UAP may also be referred to as Unidentified Flying Objects (UFO) or Unusual Aerial Sightings (UAS). UAP is the contemporary term for such phenomena.

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Talking Points

How are UAP reported to Defence?

- Defence does not have a policy for reporting or recording UAP.
- Historically, the RAAF was responsible for handling UAP reports on behalf of Defence, however that ceased in 1996 after determining there was no scientific or other compelling reason to continue to devote resources to the recording and investigation of UAP.
- Defence safety of flight incidents, including those potentially posed by UAP are handled by the Defence Aviation Safety Authority (DASA), with civilian safety of flight incidents the purview of the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA).

As an ally, have the United States offered to or asked to collaborate on UAP investigations?

- No, the United States nor any other nation or ally have requested or offered to collaborate on UAP reporting or investigation.
- Defence has no desire to seek collaboration on this issue.

With the US calling UAP a potential threat to national security, should Australia be concerned too?

- UAP are likely to be one of three things, natural or other benign phenomena, anomalies with sensors or (human-made) technologies. Information on the human-made technologies is classified and the remit of the Intelligence Community.
- Countering capabilities spanning the maritime, land, air, cyber and space domains that could threaten our national security is a core business of the Australian Defence Force (ADF), any threat to National security is a concern but also a priority for Defence.

Are UAP a risk to flight safety?

- Flight safety is a high priority for ADF aviation. Any risks to flight safety are considered serious, but Defence is not aware of UAP being the cause of an aviation safety incident or featured prominently in a safety investigation.

Are these likely to be extra-terrestrial in origin?

- There is no evidence to suggest that UAP would be extra-terrestrial in origin.

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Unidentified Aerial Phenomena

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Timeline of Significant Events/Decisions

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Unidentified Aerial Phenomena

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Relevant Media Enquires

Date	Event
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Relevant Ministerial Comments

Date	Minister	Details
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Questions on Notice

Estimates QoNs

Hearing	Date	Senator – Question #	Broad Topic
Supplementary Budget Estimates, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade	27 October 2021	Peter Whish-Wilson - QON 90	Unexplained Aerial Phenomena

Other QoNs

Committee Inquiry	Senator – Question #	Broad Topic
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Freedom of Information

Request Date	Who	Relating to	Documents released
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Contact and Clearance Offices

Clearing Officer	s47E(c) Commander Defence Space Command	Air Force	s22
Consultation	s47E(c), Assistant Secretary Strategic Capabilities Policy Development	Strategy, Policy and Industry Group	s22
	s47E(c) Director General Systems and Integration	Army	s22
	s47E(c) STaR Shot Leader – Resilient Multi-mission Space	Defence Science Technology Group	s22
Contact Officer	s47E(c) Director General Space <u>Capability Strategic Plans</u>	Air Force	s22

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Talking Points

How are UAP reported to Defence?

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As an ally, have the United States offered to or asked to collaborate on UAP investigations?

- No, the United States nor any other nation or ally have requested or offered to collaborate on UAP reporting or investigation.
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With the US calling UAP a potential threat to national security, should Australia be concerned too?

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Timeline of Significant Events/Decisions

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25 October 2021	Remo News	The NASA leader suggests that UFOs may be aliens

Relevant Media Enquires

Date	Event
Nil	Nil

Relevant Ministerial Comments

Date	Minister	Details
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Questions on Notice

Estimates QoNs

Hearing	Date	Senator – Question #	Broad Topic
Supplementary Budget Estimates, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade	27 October 2021	Peter Whish-Wilson - QON 90	Unexplained Aerial Phenomena

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Other QoNs

Committee Inquiry	Senator – Question #	Broad Topic
Nil	Nil	Nil

Freedom of Information

Request Date	Who	Relating to	Documents released
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

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Unidentified Aerial Phenomena
CAF BRIEF

Contact and Clearance Offices

Clearing Officer	s47E(c) Commander Defence Space Command	Air Force	s22
Consultation	s47E(c) Assistant Secretary Strategic Capabilities Policy Development	Strategy, Policy and Industry Group	s22
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	s47E(c) STaR Shot Leader – Resilient Multi-mission Space	Defence Science Technology Group	s22
Contact Officer	s47E(c) Director General Space Capability Strategic Plans	Air Force	s22

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Notes

Key Messages

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Unidentified Aerial Phenomena

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Unidentified Aerial Phenomena

CAF BRIEF

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Unidentified Aerial Phenomena

CAF BRIEF

Other QoNs

Committee Inquiry	Senator – Question #	Broad Topic
Nil	Nil	Nil

Freedom of Information

Request Date	Who	Relating to	Documents released
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

Unidentified Aerial Phenomena

CAF BRIEF

Contact and Clearance Offices

Clearing Officer	s47E(c) Commander Defence Space Command	Air Force	s22
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