

1. The sole interest of the Ministry of Defence in UFO reports is to establish whether they reveal anything of defence interest (eg. intruding aircraft). Reports are passed to operations staff who examine them as part of their normal duties. There is no unit within the Ministry appointed solely for the study of UFOs, and no staff are employed upon the subject on a full-time basis.
2. The Ministry of Defence does not deny that there are strange things to see in the sky. It believes, however, that there are adequate material explanations for these - satellite debris re-entering the earth's atmosphere, ball lightning, unusual cloud formations; meteorological balloons, aircraft lights, aircraft at unusual angles etc. It certainly has no evidence that alien spacecraft have landed on this planet. We are aware of independent scientific studies into UFOs, notably the report produced by the University of Colorado in 1969. This concluded that 90% of all UFO reports proved to be plausibly related to ordinary phenomena.
3. In response to demands for publication of UFO reports Viscount Long (in the House of Lords on 7 April 1982) said that he saw no objection to these reports being made public. We are therefore studying the best means of publishing this material. Publication of the reports would help us to rebut the notion that there is a MOD 'cover up' in respect of UFOs.
4. The earliest UFO reports retained by the Ministry of Defence date back to 1962. Prior to 1967, such reports, like other routine papers, were destroyed after five years. The decision to retain these reports instead of destroying them was taken in response to increasing public interest in the subject.