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File

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
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INTELLIGENCE

Unidentified Flying Objects (UFO)

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This regulation establishes the responsibility and procedure for reporting information and evidence on unidentified flying objects (UFO) and for releasing pertinent information to the general public.

SECTION A—GENERAL

1. Background Information. The Air Force investigation and analysis of UFO's over the United States are directly related to its responsibility for the defense of the United States. Prompt reporting and rapid identification are necessary to carry out the second of the four phases of air defense—detection, identification, interception, and destruction; therefore, the Air Force maintains the Unidentified Flying Object Program. To implement this program successfully requires strict compliance with this regulation by all commanders.

2. Definitions. To insure proper and uniform usage in UFO screenings, investigations, and reportings, the objects are defined as follows:

a. *Familiar or Known Objects*—Aircraft, birds, balloons, kites, searchlights, and astronomical bodies (meteors, planets, stars).

b. *Unknown Aircraft:*

(1) Flying objects determined to be air-

craft. These generally appear as a result of ADIZ violations and often prompt the UFO reports submitted by the general public. They are readily identifiable as, or known to be, aircraft, but their type, purpose, origin, and destination are unknown. Air Defense Command is responsible for reports of "unknown" aircraft and they should not be reported as UFO's under this regulation.

(2) Aircraft flares, jet exhausts, condensation trails, blinking or steady lights observed at night, lights circling or near airports and airways, and other similar phenomena resulting from, or indications of aircraft. These should not be reported under this regulation as they do not fall within the definition of a UFO.

(3) Pilotless aircraft and missiles.

c. *Unidentified Flying Objects*—Any airborne object which, by performance, aerody-

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dynamic characteristics, or unusual features, does not conform to known aircraft or missiles, or which does not correspond to definitions in a and b above.

3. Objectives. Air Force interest in UFO's is three-fold: First, as a possible threat to the security of the United States and its forces; second, to determine the technical or scientific characteristics of any such UFO's; third, to explain or identify *all* UFO sightings as defined in paragraph 2c.

a. *Air Defense.* The great majority of flying objects reported have been found to be conventional, familiar things of no great threat to the security of the United States and its possessions. However, since the possibility cannot be ignored that UFO's reported may be hostile or new foreign air vehicles of unconventional design, it is imperative that sightings be reported rapidly, factually, and as completely as possible.

b. *Technical and Scientific.* The Air Force will continue to collect and analyze reports of UFO sightings until all can be scientifically or technically explained, bearing in mind that:

- (1) To measure scientific advances, the Air Force must have the latest experimental and developmental information on new or unique air vehicles or weapons.
- (2) The possibility exists that foreign air vehicles of revolutionary configuration or propulsion may be developed.
- (3) There is a need for further scientific knowledge in such fields as geophysics, astronomy, and the upper atmosphere which the study and analysis of UFO's and similar aerial phenomena may provide.
- (4) The reporting of all pertinent factors will have a direct bearing on scientific analyses and conclusions of UFO sightings.

c. *Reduction of Percentage of UFO "Unknowns."* Air Force activities must reduce the percentage of unknowns to the minimum. Analysis thus far has provided explanation for all but a few of the sightings reported. These unexplained sightings are carried statistically as unknowns. If more immediate, detailed objective data on the unknowns had been available, probably these too could have been explained. Due to the human factors involved, and the fact that analyses of UFO sightings are based primarily on the personal impressions and interpretations of the observers, rather than on accurate scientific data or facts obtained under controlled conditions, it is improbable that all of the unknowns can be eliminated.

4. Responsibilities:

a. *Reporting.* Commanders of Air Force bases will report all information and evidence of UFO sightings, including that received from other Services, Government agencies, and civilian sources. (See section C.)

b. *Investigation.* The commander of the Air Force base nearest to the location of the reported UFO sighting will be responsible for the conduct of all investigative action necessary to submit a complete initial report of a UFO sighting. Every effort will be made to resolve the sighting in the initial investigation. A UFO sighting reported to an Air Force base other than that closest to the scene of such sighting, immediately will be referred to the commander of the nearest Air Force base for appropriate action. (See paragraph 6.)

c. *Analysis.* The Air Technical Intelligence Center (ATIC), will analyze and evaluate:

- (1) Information and evidence reported within the zone of interior after the investigators of the responsible Air Force base nearest the sighting have exhausted their efforts to identify the UFO.
- (2) Information and evidence collected in overseas areas.

NOTE. *Exceptions:* The ATIC, independently or in participation with pertinent Air Force activities, may conduct any additional investigations necessary to further or conclude its analyses or findings.

d. *Public Relations and Information Services.* The Office of Information Services, Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, will be responsible for releasing information on sightings, and, in coordination with ATIC, for answering correspondence from the public regarding UFO's. (See paragraphs 7 and 8.)

e. *Congressional Inquiries.* The Office of Legislative Liaison will:

- (1) In coordination with the ATIC and/or the Office of Information Services, when necessary, answer all congressional mail regarding UFO's addressed to the Secretary of the Air Force and the United States Air Force.
- (2) Forward those inquiries which are scientific and technical to the ATIC for information on which to base a reply. The ATIC will return this information to the Office of Legislative Liaison for reply to the inquiry.
- (3) Process requests from congressional sources in accordance with AFR 11-7.

f. *Cooperation.* All Air Force activities will cooperate with Air Force UFO investigators to insure the economical and prompt success of investigations and analyses. When feasible, this cooperation will include furnishing air or ground transportation and other assistance.

5. Guidance. The thoroughness and quality of a report or investigation of UFO's are limited only by the skill and resourcefulness of the person who receives the initial information and/or prepares the report. The usefulness and value of any report or investigation depend upon the accuracy and timeliness of its contents. Following are aids for screening, evaluating, and reporting sightings:

a. Logic, consistency, and coherence of the observer's report should be given careful study. An interview with the observer by personnel preparing the report is especially valuable in determining the source's reliability and the validity of the information given. Particular attention should be given to the observer's age, occupation, and education; whether his occupation involves observation reporting or technical knowledge.

b. Theodolite measurements of changes of azimuth, and elevation and angular size.

c. Interception, identification, or air search if appropriate and within the scope of air defense regulations.

d. When feasible, contact with local aircraft control and warning (ACW) units, ground observer corps (GOC) posts and filter centers, pilots and crews of aircraft aloft at the time and place of sighting. Also contact with any other persons or organizations that may have factual data on the UFO or can offer corroborating evidence—visual, electronic, or other.

e. Consultation with military or civilian weather forecasters for data on tracks of weather balloons released in the area and any unusual meteorological activity which may have a bearing on the UFO.

f. Consultation with navigators and astronomers in the area to determine whether any astronomical body or phenomenon would account for the sighting.

g. Contact with military and civilian tower operators, air operations units, and airlines to determine whether the sighting could have been an aircraft. Local units of the Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) are often of assistance in this regard.

h. Contact with persons who may know of experimental aircraft of unusual configuration,

rocket and guided missile firings, or aerial tests in the area.

i. Contact with photographic units or laboratories. Usually, these installations have several cameras available for specialized intelligence or investigative work. Photography is an invaluable tool and, where possible, should be used in investigating and analyzing UFO sightings. (See paragraph 19.)

6. Zone of Interior Collection. Both the Assistant Chief of Staff Intelligence, Headquarters USAF, and the Air Defense Command have a direct and immediate interest in the facts pertaining to UFO's reported within the zone of interior.

a. All Air Force activities will conduct UFO investigations to the extent necessary for their required reporting action (see paragraphs 15, 16, and 17); however, investigations should not be carried beyond this point, unless such action is directed by Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Headquarters USAF.

b. After initial reports are submitted, the ATIC may require additional data, such as narrative statements, sketches, marked maps and charts, and other required data, which can be supplied more quickly and economically by the Air Force activity that made the initial report. Therefore, ATIC is authorized to contact the appropriate Air Force activity.

c. Direct communication is authorized between ATIC and other Air Force activities in matters pertaining to UFO investigations. Specifically, the ATIC may call upon the 1006th Air Intelligence Service Squadron (AISS) to assist the base commander responsible for further field investigation if review of the initial report indicates such a requirement. (See paragraph 4b.)

SECTION B—PUBLIC RELATIONS, INFORMATION, CONTACTS, AND RELEASES

7. Maintaining Public Relations. The Office of Information Services is responsible for:

a. In coordination with the ATIC when necessary, maintaining contact with the public and the press on all aspects of the UFO program and its related activities.

b. Releasing information on UFO sightings and results of investigations.

c. Periodically releasing information on this subject to the general public.

d. Processing, answering, and taking action on correspondence received from the general

public, pertaining to the public relations, interest, and informational aspects of the subject. (See paragraph 9.) This office will forward correspondence and queries which are purely technical and scientific to ATIC for information on which to base a reply.

8. Releasing Information. All information or releases concerning UFO's, regardless of origin or nature, will be released to the public or unofficial persons or organizations by the Office of Information Services, Office of the Secretary of the Air Force. This includes replies to correspondence (except congressional inquiries) submitted direct to ATIC, and other Air Force activities by private individuals requesting comments or results or analysis and investigations of sightings.

9. Exceptions. In response to local inquiries resulting from any UFO reported in the vicinity of an Air Force base, information regarding a sighting may be released to the press or the general public by the commander of the Air Force base concerned only if it has been *positively identified as a familiar or known object*. Care should be exercised not to reveal any classified aspects of the sighting or names of persons making reports. (See paragraph 18.) If the sighting is unexplainable or difficult to identify, because of insufficient information or inconsistencies, the only statement to be released is the fact that the sighting is being investigated and information regarding it will be released at a later date. If investigative action has been completed, the fact that the results of the investigation will be submitted to the ATIC for review and analysis may be released. Further inquiries should be referred to the local Office of Information Services.

10. Release by Non-Air Force Sources. If newsmen, writers, publishers, or private individuals desire to release unofficial information concerning a UFO sighting, every effort will be made to assure that the statements, theories, opinions, and allegations of these individuals or groups will not be associated with or represented as being official information.

11. Contacts. Private individuals or organizations requesting Air Force interviews, briefings, lectures, or private discussions on UFO's will be referred to the Office of Information Services, Office of the Secretary of the Air Force. Air Force personnel, other than those of the Office of Information Services, will not contact private individuals on UFO cases nor will they discuss their operations and functions with unauthorized persons unless so directed, and then only on a "need-to-know" basis.

SECTION C—PREPARING AND SUBMITTING REPORTS

12. General Information:

a. Paragraphs 2 and 5 will be used as an aid and guidance to screenings, investigations, and reportings. The format will be as outlined in paragraph 15. Activities initially receiving reports of aerial objects and phenomena will screen the information to determine if the report concerns a valid UFO within the definition of paragraph 2c. Those reports not within that definition will not be considered for further action under the provisions of this regulation.

b. To assist activities and personnel responsible for handling, screening, and processing initial, incoming UFO information, the general sources and types of reports are given here:

(1) Generally, initial UFO reports are received from three sources:

- (a) Civilian (airline, private and professional pilots, tower operators, technical personnel, casual observers, and the public in general), by correspondence, telephone, or personal interview;
- (b) Military units and personnel (pilots, observers, radar operators, aircraft control and warning units, etc.), by telephone, electrical message, or personal interview;
- (c) Quasi-military units (Ground Observer Corps (GOC) posts, observers, and filter centers), usually by telephone.

(2) Generally, UFO reports received from civilian sources are of two types:

- (a) Those referring strictly to an observed UFO, containing either detailed or meager information;
- (b) Those referring only in part to an observed UFO, but primarily requesting information on some aspect of the UFO program.

c. Reports considered to fall primarily in a public relations or information service category (see paragraphs 4d, 7, 8, 9 and b(2) above) should be referred to the Office of Information Services. UFO data sufficient for investigation and/or analysis may be extracted before referral to that office.

13. Methods for Transmitting Reports. Coupled with any necessary screenings and investigations that must be performed preparatory to reporting, all information on UFO's will be reported promptly. Reports under 3 days from

date of sighting will be electrically transmitted with a "Priority" precedence. Electrically transmitted reports over 3 days old should carry a "Routine" precedence.

Written reports of sightings over 3 days old may be submitted on AF Form 112, Air Intelligence Information Report (AIIR) and AF Form 112a, supplement to AF Form 112 (see paragraphs 14 and 15); however, their use should be kept at a minimum in reporting initial sightings. The delays often involved in processing and transmitting AF Forms 112 through channels may make followup investigations difficult, producing only limited usable information. This factor must be considered in cases where an immediate investigation or study of a reported sighting is considered necessary. Reporting by electrical means will eliminate delays. A follow-up and/or complete report of all sighting initially reported electrically will be submitted on AF Form 112.

14. Where to Submit Reports:

a. *Electrical Reports.* Submit multiple addressed electrical reports to:

- (1) Commander, Air Defense Command
Ent Air Force Base
Colorado Springs, Colorado
- (2) Nearest Air Division (Defense). (For zone of interior only.)
- (3) Commander, Air Technical Intelligence Center
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
Dayton, Ohio
- (4) Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence Headquarters USAF
Washington 25, D.C.
- (5) Office of Information Services
Headquarters USAF
Washington 25, D.C.

b. *Written Reports:*

- (1) Within the zone of interior, submit all reports direct to ATIC. ATIC will reproduce each report and distribute it to interested zone of interior intelligence activities and to Office of Information Services, if such action is deemed necessary.
- (2) Outside the zone of interior, submit reports as prescribed in "Intelligence Collection Instruction" (ICI) June 1954, direct to:
Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence
Headquarters USAF
Washington 25, D.C.

c. *Reports from Civilians.* Where possible, civilian sources contemplating reporting UFO's should be advised to submit the report, for processing

and transmission, to the nearest Air Force base, other than ATIC.

15. Basic Reporting Data and Format. Show the abbreviation "UFO" at the beginning of the text of all electrical reports and in the subject of written reports. Include in all reports the data required, in the order shown below:

a. *Description of the Object(s):*

- (1) Shape.
- (2) Size compared to a known object (use one of the following terms: Head of a pin, pea, dime, nickel, quarter, half dollar, silver dollar, baseball, grapefruit, or basketball) held in the hand at about arm's length.
- (3) Color.
- (4) Number.
- (5) Formation, if more than one.
- (6) Any discernible features or details.
- (7) Tail, trail, or exhaust, including size of same compared to size of object(s).
- (8) Sound. If heard, describe sound.
- (9) Other pertinent or unusual features

b. *Description of Course of Object(s):*

- (1) What first called the attention of observer(s) to the object(s)?
- (2) Angle or elevation and azimuth of the object(s) when first observed.
- (3) Angle or elevation and azimuth of object(s) upon disappearance.
- (4) Description of flight path and maneuvers of object(s).
- (5) How did the object(s) disappear? (Instantaneously to the North etc.)
- (6) How long was the object(s) visible. (Be specific, 5 minutes, 1 hour, etc.)

c. *Manner of Observation:*

- (1) Use one or any combination of the following items:
Ground-visual, ground-electronic, air electronic. (If electronic, specify type of radar.)
- (2) Statement as to optical aids (telescopes, binoculars, and so forth) used and description thereof.
- (3) If the sighting is made while airborne, give type of aircraft, identification number, altitude, heading, speed, and home station.

d. *Time and Date of Sighting:*

- (1) Zulu time-date group of sighting.
- (2) Light conditions. (Use one of the following terms: Night, day, dawn, dusk).

e. Location of Observer(s). Exact latitude and longitude of each observer, and/or geographical position. A position with reference to a known landmark also should be given in electrical reports, such as "2mi N of Deeville;" "3mi SW of Blue Lake." Typographical errors or "garbling" often result in electrically transmitted messages, making location plots difficult or impossible.

Example: 89 45N, 192 71W for 39 45N, 102 21W.

f. *Identifying Information on Observer(s):*

- (1) Civilian—Name, age, mailing address, occupation.
- (2) Military—Name, grade, organization, duty, and estimate of reliability.

g. *Weather and Winds-Aloft Conditions at Time and Place of Sightings:*

- (1) Observer(s) account of weather conditions.
- (2) Report from nearest AWS or U.S. Weather Bureau Office of wind direction and velocity in degrees and knots at surface, 6,000', 10,000', 16,000', 20,000', 30,000', 50,000', and 80,000' if available.
- (3) Ceiling.
- (4) Visibility.
- (5) Amount of cloud cover.
- (6) Thunderstorms in area and quadrant in which located.

h. Any other unusual activity or condition, meteorological, astronomical, or otherwise, which might account for the sighting.

i. Interception or identification action taken (such action may be taken whenever feasible, complying with existing air defense directives).

j. Location, approximate altitude, and general direction of flight of any air traffic in the area at time of sighting.

k. Position title and comments of the preparing officer, including his preliminary analysis of the possible cause of the sighting(s).

l. Existence of physical evidence, such as materials and photographs.

16. Negative or Inapplicable Data. Even though the source does not provide or has not been asked for specific information by an interviewer, do not use the words "negative" or "unknown" until all logical leads to obtain the information outlined under paragraph 15 have been exhausted. For example, information on weather conditions in the area, as requested in paragraph 15g, may be obtained from the local military or civilian weather facility. Use the

phrase "not applicable" (N/A) only when the question does not apply to the particular sighting being investigated.

17. Comments of Preparing Officer. The preparing officer will make a preliminary analysis, and a comment on the possible cause or identity of the object being reported, together with a statement supporting his comment and analysis. Every effort will be made to obtain pertinent items of information and to test all possible leads, clues, and hypotheses concerning the identity or explanation of the sighting. (See paragraph 5.) The preparing officer receiving the report initially is in a much better position to conduct an "on-the-spot" survey or followup than subsequent investigative personnel and analysts who may be far removed from the area, and who may arrive too late to obtain vital data or the missing information necessary for firm conclusions.

18. Classification. Do not classify reports unless data requested in paragraph 15 require classification. Classify reports primarily to protect:

a. Names of sources reporting UFO's and other principals involved, if so requested by these persons or considered necessary;

b. Intelligence, investigative, intercept, or analytical methods or procedures;

c. Location of radar and other classified sites, units, and equipment;

d. Information on certain types, characteristics, and capabilities of classified aircraft, missiles, or devices that may be involved in the sighting.

19. Reporting Physical Evidence. Report promptly the existence of physical evidence (photographic or material):

a. *Photographic:*

- (1) *Still Photographs.* Forward the negative and two prints. Title the prints and the negatives, or indicate the place, time, and date of the incident.
- (2) *Motion Pictures.* Obtain the original film. Examine the film strip for apparent cuts, alterations, obliterations, or defects. Include in the report comment on any irregularities, particularly if received from other than official sources.
- (3) *Supplemental Photographic Information.* Negatives and prints, in themselves, often are insufficient to provide certain valid data or to permit firm conclusions. (See AFM 200-9—a

classified document receiving limited distribution.) Information that will aid in plotting or in estimating distances, apparent size and nature of object, probable velocity, and movements includes:

- (a) Type and make of camera,
 - (b) Type, focal length, and make of lens,
 - (c) Brand and type of film,
 - (d) Shutter speed used,
 - (e) Lens opening used, that is, "f" stop,
 - (f) Filters used,
 - (g) Was tripod or solid stand used,
 - (h) Was "panning" used,
 - (i) Exact direction camera was pointing with relation to true north, and its angle with respect to the ground.
- (4) *Other Camera Data.* If supplemental information cannot be obtained, the minimum camera data required are the type of camera, and the smallest and largest "f" stop and shutter-speed readings of the camera.

- (5) *Radar.* Forward two copies of each still-camera photographic print. Title radarscope photographic prints in accordance with AFR 95-7. Classify radarscope photographs in accordance with section XII, AFR 205-1, 3 January 1956.

NOTE: If possible, develop photographic film before forwarding. If undeveloped film is forwarded, mark it conspicuously to indicate this fact. Undeveloped film often has been destroyed by exposure during examinations made while en route through mail channels to final addressees.

b. *Material.* Each Air Force echelon receiving suspected or actual UFO material will safeguard it in a manner to prevent any defacing or alterations which might reduce its value for intelligence examination and analysis.

c. *Photographs, Motion Pictures, and Negatives Submitted by Individuals.* Photographic and motion picture material is often submitted by individuals as part of their UFO reports. All original material submitted, will be returned to the individual upon completion of necessary studies, analyses, and duplication by the Air Force.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE:

OFFICIAL:

J. L. TARR
Colonel, USAF
Director of Administrative Services

THOMAS D. WHITE
Chief of Staff

DISTRIBUTION:

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