

Nick Pope statement / press conference Barcelona, July 24, 2009

My name is Nick Pope. I worked for the British government, at the Ministry of Defence, for 21 years.

Since 1950 the Ministry of Defence has received over 12,000 UFO reports. From 1991 to 1994 I was responsible for investigating these UFO sightings.

Most UFO sightings are misidentifications of aircraft lights, satellites and meteors, but in around 5 per cent of cases no explanation was found.

These cases included incidents where reliable witnesses such as police officers and pilots reported structured craft performing speeds and manoeuvres significantly in excess of anything they had seen military jet aircraft perform.

Other cases involved UFOs tracked on radar and incidents where photos or videos were available and where the government's technical experts found no evidence that these images were fakes.

In March 1993 I investigated a case where a UFO was seen by about 60 witnesses, including military personnel at two air force bases.

Witnesses included a patrol of air force police, together with a meteorological officer with 8 years experience.

This latter witness described a triangular-shaped craft about the size of a Boeing 747.

He said that it was emitting a low frequency humming sound and he said it moved slowly at first, before accelerating away many times faster than a military jet.

My Head of Division wrote to the Assistant Chief of the Air Staff and said that "In summary, there would seem to be some evidence on this occasion that an unidentified object (or objects) of unknown origin was operating over the UK".

Britain's best known UFO sighting occurred in 1980 and involved United States Air Force personnel from two military bases in the UK.

There were numerous witnesses and an object was seen to land in a place called Rendlesham Forest.

A Geiger counter was used to take radiation readings at the landing site and the assessment undertaken by the Defence Intelligence Staff stated that the levels recorded were significantly higher than the average background levels.

[The image that you see here is a sketch made by the military witness who got closest to the object – SHOW SKETCH].

The UFO was seen on the following night, where the witnesses included Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt, possibly the highest-ranking military officer to see and report a UFO while on duty.

Halt saw the UFO fire beams of light at a sensitive area of the base. These sightings are corroborated by official documents from the Ministry of Defence and the United States Air Force. [Here is Halt's official report to the Ministry of Defence – SHOW HALT MEMO].

UFO sightings continue in the United Kingdom. In 2008 there were over twice as many sightings as in 2007.

Cases include an incident where a police helicopter had to take evasive action to avoid a UFO.

The Ministry of Defence figures for 2009 suggest that we will have more UFO sightings this year than in any previous years.

The Ministry of Defence does not have an explanation to the UFO phenomenon, but those of us who worked on the mystery were convinced that it raised important defence, national security and flight safety issues.

Thank you.