

VICTORIA POLICE

Form No. 287

STATEMENT

Date 22 / 7 / 83

Name	FERGUSON / Peter James <small>(Family Name in Capitals) (Given Names)</small>	
Address	Melton Police Station	
Occupation	Constable of Police	Tel. No.

STATES—

On Friday the 22nd day of July, 1983, I was divisional van patrol of the Melton area in company with Constable ELLENS 20875. Constable ELLENS was the driver of the police vehicle and I was the observer.

At approximately 12.40 am we were travelling in a westerly direction along the Keilor-Melton Road towards the township of Melton. When we were at a position approximately 2 kilometres east of the town we observed a bright light in the sky which appeared to be stationary of the centre of the town. We then continued into the town and observed that the light was actually two white lights which resembled car high beams and was hovering directly over the Western Highway in the vicinity of Palmerston Street. When we were approximately 500 metres from the lights it appeared to turn about and travelled slowly west and took up a position hovering over the Melton Regional Shopping Centre.

Constable ELLENS then followed the object and stopped the van in the driveway of the shopping centre car park. We alighted from the van and observed the lights to be hovering over the shopping centre at a height of about 200 feet. We attempted to shine the spotlight on the object and observed its tail section to be of tubular framework construction with a fin at the rear. The object had two bright white lights at the front and a single red light at the rear. The object then flew off in a south-easterly direction. The object made a low pitched humming sound quite different to a helicopter or aero engine. We then notified D24 and Air Traffic Control at Tullamarine Airport.

We observed the object gain height to approximately 500 feet and travelled in a wide arc over the Melton township and out along the Western Highway. We proceeded east along the highway following the object and observed it to continue to arc to the north and eventually appear to be following the Melton-Keilor Road or the Diggers Rest-Coimadai Road. We then lost sight of the object over the horizon.

A short time later we were travelling north in the Melton-Gisborne Road towards Toolern Vale when we again sighted the object travelling in an westerly direction. Fogarty Field is an airfield approximately 1 kilometre west of our position and the object appeared to be travelling in the same general direction. We then attended at Fogarty Field in Coburns Road and checked the airfield hanger area on foot. Whilst walking around we observed lights similar to the object at ground level behind properties the Coimadai Road. We attended in Coimadai Road and observed the object in the sky above the properties. The object then commenced to move away to the south-east.

We commenced to follow the object from a position in Coburns Road. We received information from Tullamarine Air Traffic Control that the object had appeared on radar. We requested assistance from the Police Air Wing but they were unable to assist. We continued to observe the object travel in wide arcs around the horizon. We were checked in this location by the duty officer, Inspector MCGILL at 1.35 am. We remained in this position observing the object making similar arcs and returning to a position approximately 1 to 2 kilometres east of our position. The object seemed to be making use of the Western Highway and a red beacon in the vicinity of Tullamarine for its orbits.

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We then drove to the Toolern Vale area to higher ground where we again sighted the object on the ground near the area at the rear of properties in Coimadaal Road at about 2.40am. We attended at Lot 4 Diggers Rest-Coimadaal Road and spoke to the owner and his wife, Mr and Mrs WANLES, who stated that they had saw or heard nothing. We checked the area to the rear of the WANLES property but saw nothing unusual.

We then attended at the Toolern Vale Park Stud. There were no lights on at this premises and did not disturb the owner. We checked the rear from the roadway but did not observe any lights. We then patrolled the surrounding area but made no further sightings.

At about 3.00 am we were patrolling in the vicinity of the Melton Regional Shopping and there had a conversation with David ROWE of the Melton Security Service. ROWE agreed that he had sighted a light in the sky over Melton during the night. We then attended at the Melton Police Station for a meal and correspondence.

At about 4.30am we cleared the police station and commenced to travel in a westerly direction along the Western Highway towards Bacchus Marsh. As we approached the Regional Shopping Centre we again sighted an object hovering approximately 200 feet over the centre. We shined the spotlight on the object again and it commenced to fly away to the south-east again. When we observed the object on this occasion it appeared to have more lights operating than when first sighted. We followed the object along the Western Highway and observed it start to arc to the north over the Bockbank area. We proceeded along Beatties Road towards Leakes Road and observed the object slightly to the north of our position start to descend. The object was travelling close to the ground and disappeared behind a small rise. We patrolled Leakes Road, Beatties Road and Tareltons Road and searched the paddocks with the spotlight. We were travelling west in Tareltons Road and re-sighted the object directly in front of the van on the west side Leakes Road. The object then travelled west for a short distance and then turned about and proceeded east over Leakes Road. At this stage there was another police unit, Western 211, in Leakes Road and after the object proceeded past Leakes Road and along the highway we stopped and had a conversation with them.

We were stationary in Leakes Road about 500 metres from the intersection with the highway and observing the object arc slowly to the north when it disappeared below the horizon. We remained at this position continued a surveillance of the area where the object disappeared. Whilst the object was out of sight Sunshine 311 attended at our position and we had a conversation with the crew.

At about 5.00 am we again sighted the object to the east of our position. Sunshine 311 were still in attendance. We observed the object travelling directly towards our position. Between the object and our position was the Australian Army Bockbank Receiving Station. The object appeared to be travelling slowly directly towards the antenna array. At this time the object appeared to be below the height of the antenna and if it continued on its path a collision would have occurred. The object then turned about and started to arc again to the north. After a few minutes we again lost sight of the object over the far horizon.

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At about 5.30 am we patrolled Leakes Road as the object had been out of sight for approximately 20 minutes. At about 5.45 am we turned west into the Western Highway and started to travel towards Melton. We then observed the lights in the sky above the Melton township again. We contacted the police station by radio to advise them of the location of the object.

The object then proceeded from over Melton in an easterly direction directly towards our position. As the object got closer and eventually passed directly over head we shined the spotlight onto its underside and observed it to be of gun metal grey in colour and to have the appearance of a very large rubber raft with two lights inset in the front and two white lights on the rear and a red flashing light in the centre. The underside appeared to be slightly curved and the side slightly panels curved also. The object was approximately 30 feet in length and was approximately 20 wide. The object made a low pitched humming sound and appeared to be travelling at about 70 to 80 kph. The object was approximately 200 feet above us and was illuminated by the spotlight. The object proceeded in an easterly direction towards the Sunshine van which was near Clarkes Road. We observed the object disappear below the horizon to the north east.

At about 6.10 it was starting to become light. The object was not sighted again. During the time the objects were being observed we lost sight of them at times by it dropping to a low altitude and apparently landing. At these times I am of the impression that the lights were turned off and the object then gained height and moved away some distance before turning the lights back on.

The object first sighted at 12.40 am which appeared to have a framework structure was different object to the one which passed over us at 5.45am. During the time both objects were under observation they appeared to fly in a triangle bounded by Melton, Rockbank, Sydenham and Diggers Rest. The majority of travel was in an anti-clockwise path. The height of the objects varied during the night from 200 feet to approximately 1500 feet.

The night was clear and still with a $\frac{3}{4}$ moon until about 3.00am. After 3.00am a breeze from the north-west rose and it became partially cloudy. These clouds were high and did not affect the visibility of the objects.

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