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# United States Air Force

Secretary of the Air Force, Office of Public Affairs, Washington, D.C. 20330-1000

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## Unidentified Flying Objects

### History

The Air Force began investigating UFOs in 1948 under a program called Project Sign. Later the program's name was changed to Project Grudge, and in 1953 it became known as Project Blue Book. On Dec. 17, 1969, the secretary of the Air Force announced the termination of Project Blue Book.

The decision to discontinue UFO investigations was based on a number of factors, including reports and studies by the University of Colorado and the National Academy of Sciences, as well as past UFO studies and the Air Force's two decades of experience investigating UFO reports.

As a result of these investigations, studies, and experience, the conclusions of Project Blue Book were:

- No UFO reported, investigated and evaluated by the Air Force has ever given any indication of threat to our national security.

- There has been no evidence submitted to or discovered by the Air Force that sightings categorized as "unidentified" represent technological developments or principles beyond the range of present-day scientific knowledge.

- There has been no evidence indicating that sightings categorized as "unidentified" are extraterrestrial vehicles.

Between 1948 and 1969 the Air Force investigated 12,618 reported UFO sightings. Of these, 11,917 were found to have been caused by material objects such as balloons, satellites, and aircraft; immaterial objects such as lightning, reflections, and other natural phenomena; astronomical objects such as stars, planets, the sun, and the moon; weather conditions; and hoaxes. Only 701 reported sightings remain unexplained.

### More Information Available

All documentation regarding the former Blue Book investigation was permanently transferred to the Modern Military Reference Branch, National Archives and Records Administration, 8th and Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, D.C. 20408, and is available for public review. A list of private organizations interested in aerial phenomena can be found in Gale's Encyclopedia of Associations, available in the reference section of most libraries.

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AIR FORCE TO TERMINATE  
PROJECT "BLUE BOOK"

Secretary of the Air Force Robert C. Seamans, Jr., announced today the termination of Project Blue Book, the Air Force program for the investigation of unidentified flying objects (UFOs).

In a memorandum to Air Force Chief of Staff General John D. Ryan, Secretary Seamans stated that "the continuation of Project Blue Book cannot be justified either on the ground of national security or in the interest of science," and concluded that the project does not merit future expenditures of resources.

The decision to discontinue UFO investigations was based on:

- An evaluation of a report prepared by the University of Colorado entitled, "Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects."
- A review of the University of Colorado's report by the National Academy of Sciences.
- Past UFO studies.
- Air Force experience investigating UFO reports during the past two decades.

Under the direction of Dr. Edward U. Condon, the University of Colorado completed an 18-month concerted study of UFOs and its report was released to the public in January, 1969. The report concluded that little if anything has come from the study of UFOs in the past 21 years that has added to scientific knowledge, and that further extensive study of UFO sightings is not justified in the expectation that science will be advanced.

The University of Colorado report also states that, "It seems that only so much attention to the subject (UFOs) should be given as the Department of Defense deems to be necessary strictly from a defense point of view. . . . It is our impression that the defense function could be performed within the framework established for intelligence and surveillance operations without the continuance of a special unit such as Project Blue Book, but this is a question for defense specialists rather than research scientists."

A panel of the National Academy of Sciences made an independent assessment of the scope, methodology, and findings of the University of

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Colorado study. The panel concurred in the University of Colorado's recommendation that "no high priority in UFO investigations is warranted by data of the past two decades." It concluded by stating that, "On the basis of present knowledge, the least likely explanation of UFOs is the hypothesis of extraterrestrial visitations by intelligent beings."

Past UFO studies include one conducted by a Scientific Advisory Panel of UFOs in January, 1953 (Robertson Panel); and, a review of Project Blue Book by the Air Force Scientific Advisory Board Ad Hoc Committee, February-March, 1966 (Dr. Bruce O'Brien, Chairman). These studies concluded that no evidence has been found that any of the UFO reports reflect a threat to our national security.

As a result of investigating UFO reports since 1948, the conclusions of Project Blue Book are: (1) no UFO reported, investigated, and evaluated by the Air Force has ever given any indication of threat to our national security; (2) there has been no evidence submitted or discovered by the Air Force that sightings categorized as "unidentified" represent technological developments or principles beyond the range of present-day scientific knowledge; and (3) there has been no evidence indicating that sightings categorized as "unidentified" are extraterrestrial vehicles.

Project Blue Book records will be retired to the USAF Archives, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. Requests for information will continue to be handled by the Secretary of the Air Force, Office of Information (SAFOI), Washington, D.C. 20330.

END