

Defence Portfolio

SENATE ESTIMATES QUESTION

(Question No.29)

Senator Peter Whish-Wilson asked the Department of Defence the following question, upon notice, on 27 October 2021:

Air Marshal Hupfeld: None from any aircrew or aviation organisation that I'm aware of. The only experience that I have in this was over 40 years ago when some reports were made and we launched Mirage aircraft. The phenomena turned out to be errors on the radar screens in our normal civil air-traffic control system, but no physical objects were detected.

Senator WHISH-WILSON: Does the characterisation of the DOD, in relation to their report, of both intent and advanced technology concern you? Basically, they're saying they can't explain what these things are, but they would like to better understand them.

Air Marshal Hupfeld: I can't answer for another sovereign nation. That is a matter for the US and the Pentagon and the Department of Defense in the US.

Senator WHISH-WILSON: Would it be possible for you to see if, across the other services, there has been any kind of reporting system in relation to this in Australia?

Air Marshal Hupfeld: Certainly, I can take that on notice. But I feel confident that, as the airspace control authority within Australia, if there had been any detections or items such as this, I would have been aware of them. But I can take that on notice to double-check.

Senator WHISH-WILSON: Okay. Typically, would something like Jindalee be able to pick-up fast-moving objects, or is it more designed to look at ships and—

Senator Peter Whish-Wilson – The Department of Defence provides the following answer to the Senator's question:

The Department of Defence does not have a protocol for reporting or recording of Unidentified Aerial Phenomena or Unidentified Flying Objects.