

Pentagon's UFO agency report shows analytic bias

By Tom Rogan

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The All-Domain Anomaly Resolution Office reflects the Pentagon's love for acronyms. AARO also leads the government's research of "unidentified flying objects" or what the government calls "unidentified aerial phenomena." On Friday, AARO released a report documenting its study of UFO-related reports since 1945.

The report has real problems. Nevertheless, AARO also deserves some credit for its work. Take the following quote:

"Although many UAP reports remain unsolved or unidentified, AARO assesses that if more and better quality data were available, most of these cases also could be identified and resolved as ordinary objects or phenomena. Sensors and visual observations are imperfect; the vast majority of cases lack actionable data or the data available is limited or of poor quality."

This is likely in relation to the fact that sensor systems, such as radars and sonars, sometimes produce variant results when targeting the same object. Sensor returns are sometimes transitory and insufficient to make effective conclusions. What may appear to be a hypersonic vehicle may actually sometimes simply be a balloon. And it is clear that the vast majority of UFOs are foreign or U.S. technology, weather phenomena, civilian balloons, or something else with a prosaic explanation.

AARO also deserves credit for meeting with private defense industry leaders to ask them directly whether their organizations are in possession of "extraterrestrial technology." Those leaders said they are not. The organization also rightly points out that some UFOs of a strange nature actually constitute secret U.S. government programs that otherwise credible witnesses are not aware of. And AARO deserves praise for meeting with and requesting

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A major problem is AARO's reassessment of historic UFO reports, such as the purported 1947 UFO crash in Roswell, New Mexico, because these reassessments appear to center very heavily on the replication and synthesis of other prior reports of questionable quality. This reassessment strategy negates the full range of evidence and the opportunity for a less biased analysis of the events in question. Prior studies sometimes offered poorly justified conclusions with incomplete data foundations, along with ignorance of highly credible witness reports and sensor data.

The idea, for example, that we can have faith in the Air Force's 1990s reassessment of the Roswell event **is spurious at best**. The central problem with these historic but often questionable reports is the exact same as that which caused AARO's creation in the first place — namely, the **stigma-driven incentive** in science, media, academia, military, and government to provide prosaic explanations for otherwise extraordinary circumstances.

The nature of the national security bureaucracy also matters. On the defense contractor possession of UFO material claim, for example, I would suggest that it would be relatively easy to hand over something exotic to a trusted defense contractor and tell them that the material is from a downed **Soviet prototype aircraft/satellite** when, in fact, the origin is unknown. Such a delivery statement would provide the government and the contractor with plausible deniability for the origin of the material while also allowing continued research in relation to it.

The broader challenge here is the obvious cherry-picking by AARO as to what it assessed or reassessed in order to reach its assessment conclusions. This approach bears much similarity to the intelligence community's study of the so-called Havana Syndrome problem of American personnel suffering strange, apparently noise-related illnesses. And while it is true that AARO cannot be expected to reassess circumstances where limited evidence exists, there is a vast portfolio of cases that the study ignores or simply closes by accepting verbatim the conclusions of prior reports. As with **Havana Syndrome's links to the Russian intelligence services**, AARO's selective analysis allows for the mitigation or elimination of challenging evidence in order to provide an indirect but seemingly credible route to reach a desired conclusion.

To be sure, this concern of rigorous analysis goes both ways. Those passionate about UFOs are too often unwilling to accept internal scrutiny. When I reported on how Chinese espionage activity **had been misidentified** as more exotic UFOs, for example, *Skinwalker Ranch* TV star Travis Taylor told a conference he wanted to fight me. Similar was the furious response to Ken Klippenstein's reporting on purported UFO whistleblower David Grusch's prior medical history. But if Grusch is to **make extraordinary claims**, he must also expect to be scrutinized. (Stanford professor Garry Nolan blocked me on X for pointing out that

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systemic effort at deception, hallucination, or delusion by persons who appear otherwise credible and never met one another.

Congo, 1952: Witnesses **described** seeing “flying saucers” over uranium mines. This fits with a vast litany of reports suggesting a sustained interest by more exotic UFOs in nuclear-related sites and activities. Numerous Navy and government sources have told me they believe this is why the Navy’s nuclear-powered carriers and submarines appear to attract sustained attention from exotic UFOs. Considering nuclear deterrence concerns, this nuclear factor is deemed highly sensitive. A number of Soviet and U.S. Air Force nuclear weapons officers have even claimed that UFOs temporarily appeared and disabled their weapons. (I know and trust Robert Hastings, who **wrote the defining reported work** on the UFO-nuclear connection.)

Italy, 1954: **Thousands** of soccer fans described witnessing cigar-shaped UFOs stopping above their game. Play was temporarily suspended.

There are other reports of a similar nature, but in 1966 **Australia**, 1977 **England**, and 1994 **Zimbabwe**, more than a dozen schoolchildren in each case (sometimes many dozens) described witnessing exotic UFOs landing near to their schools and then taking off. Yes, these were child witnesses. But the children were judged as unlikely to be lying by psychologists, and many stand by their claims. That they never met one another in a time before the internet makes their common tales more compelling.

Socorro, **New Mexico, 1964**: Police officer Lonny Zamora, whom the FBI considered “sober, dependable, mature, not known to engage in flights of fantasy,” saw an apparent exotic UFO on the ground, which then took off. Burn marks on the ground were found and photographed. Two days later, a rancher 170 miles north of Socorro described by the FBI as “sober and frightened” said that he went outside at 1 a.m. to see what he described as “something shaped like a butane tank, possibly twelve to fourteen feet high and ‘long as a telephone’ poll” sitting on the ground.

Pacific Coast, 2004: Navy pilots **intercept and maneuver** with a “Tic Tac” (butane?)-shaped object of apparent extreme technical capability. If you want to go down the rabbit hole, there are literally hundreds of military eyewitness reports of similarly exotic appearing/behaving UFOs going back to the “Foo Fighters” of World War II. If even some of these witnesses did indeed see what they say they saw, it is hard to believe that a nation on Earth has had this technical capability since the 1940s but has failed to employ it to political effect.

These events involve incidents that suggest some UFOs are truly exotic and have been

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assessments would appear to align with, I was not invited to a media briefing with AARO's acting Director Tim Phillips in advance of this report. Even the *New York Post's* Steven Greenstreet, who has written extensively offering a far more skeptical stance toward the suggestion that some UFOs represent a non-human technology, was not invited. He told me that "it's clear they don't want any actual tough questions asked."

This is not good for transparency or for AARO's credibility — especially when the Chinese **are confident** they are seeing highly advanced non-U.S./other nation technology in their airspace.

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Phillips doesn't appear to get it. He told *DefenseScoop* **that** "we're hoping that the more transparent, the more that we can declassify and post to our site is going to demystify this topic." But *DefenseScoop* continues: "Phillips also did not confirm whether AARO has resolved any cases with "transmedium" or shape-shifting objects, or breakthrough technologies generated by the U.S., China or Russia. 'As far as other advanced technologies — there's been some cases, but we can't discuss that here,' Phillips told DefenseScoop."

So much for transparency. This just further underlines how the bureaucratic incentive structure in government is firmly weighted against the novel analysis of UFOs. Former AARO Director Sean Kirkpatrick has written numerous op-eds in recent days that push back hard against the suggestion that there is good evidence to suggest any UFOs represent an exotic origin/form. He is now serving in a prestigious position at Oak Ridge National Laboratory. (Amusingly, in October 1950, Oak Ridge was the site of a **series of extremely strange UFO sightings** and radar returns. The witnesses involved were regarded by investigators as credible.)

But ask yourself one final question: Why do members of Congress, especially officials on the Senate Intelligence Committee, keep pushing legislation for greater disclosure and clearer reporting requirements? Does that suggest they are satisfied with the status quo? And if not, why not? After all, this is a topic imbued with stigma, and politicians don't like to waste capital on endeavors that end up making them appear to be fools.

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