

**CATEGORY 5** INTO THE UNKNOWN

# AREA 51

**CLASSIFICATION** AIRBASE SHROUDED IN SECRECY



**O**n a barren stretch of land in the Nevada desert lies one of the most secret places in the world. Since the 1950s, the Groom Lake area has been the home of a military base that has become part of UFO folklore. Better known as Area 51, the heavily guarded facility has been rumored to harbor alien spacecraft that are being “reverse-engineered” by the government to unlock their secrets. The truth is probably less far-fetched. But if the government has its way, we may never know.

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1

Factoids

## SPY SECRETS

It is thought that the Groom Lake facility was established in 1954 to develop spyplanes for the U.S. Air Force and the intelligence services.

## UNDERCOVER

The facility was designated Area 51 to make it appear to be no more than one of a series of like-named nuclear-testing sites located in the Nevada desert.

## HOT STUFF

The government has admitted that both the U-2 and SR-71 Blackbird ultra-secret spyplanes made their first flights from Groom Lake.

# ABOVE TOP SECRET

**L**ocated roughly 95 miles north of Las Vegas, Nevada, in an expanse of desert the size of Switzerland, the Groom Lake facility does not officially exist. Its name appears on none of the civilian or military maps of the region, which show little apart from rugged foothills, a large, dry lake bed and a network of unnamed roads. Yet smuggled Russian satellite views and amateur photographs of Groom Lake tell a different story. They reveal a large airbase, with hangars, extensive outbuildings and a runway no less than six miles long.

In reality, it is hard to travel within 30 miles of Groom Lake without being arrested by uniformed guards, and signs around the perimeter state that the use of "deadly force" is authorized on intruders. But a handful of people have sneaked a glimpse of what is popularly known as "Area 51." They tell of "saucer-shaped" objects and strange planes that fly "erratically" across the skies.

Stories of alien spacecraft in the hands of the military date back to 1947, when Colonel William Blanchard of Roswell Army Air Field issued a press release—later retracted—stating that the army had recovered a flying saucer in the New Mexico desert. But in 1989, the rumors began to fly as never before when a disgruntled former employee at the base named Robert Lazar claimed on Las Vegas television that he had directly participated in the investigation of alien technologies. The stir caused by his testimony seemed to cause the government even more embarrassment. In 1993, they closed the last publicly accessible place from which Groom Lake can be seen.

## TRUE STORY

### Robert Lazar

ON TV, LAZAR SPOKE OF NINE "SAUCERS" STORED AT GROOM LAKE AND CLAIMED THAT, AFTER LOSING HIS JOB, HE WAS TAILED BY AGENTS AND FEARED FOR HIS LIFE. PAPERS EXIST TO PROVE LAZAR DID WORK AT AREA 51, ALTHOUGH HIS NAME HAS BEEN STRUCK FROM THE OFFICIAL RECORD. UNFORTUNATELY FOR UFO BELIEVERS, A LATER CONVICTION FOR RUNNING A BROTHEL CASTS DOUBT OVER LAZAR'S RELIABILITY AS A WITNESS.

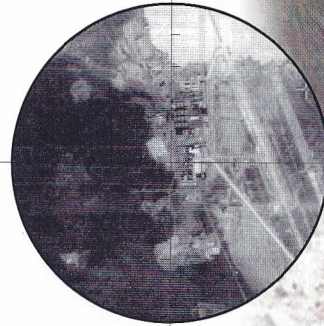


## GROOM LAKE

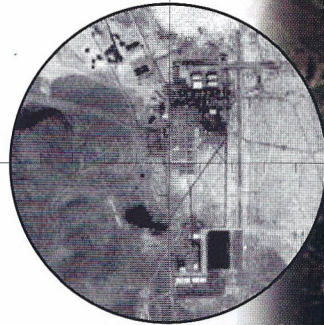
Highway 375

Groom Lake

Area 51  
airbase



*A Russian spy satellite photo of Area 51 shows the base and part of the six-mile runway.*



*A close-up aerial view of the buildings that Lazar claims house "alien spacecraft."*



*There are rumors of a gigantic network of tunnels beneath the unassuming buildings on the base.*



**A model of the supposed alien craft described by former Area 51 employee Bob Lazar. According to Lazar, the craft was powered by a baseball-sized device that radiated anti-gravity through a central shaft. Lazar also claims to have seen top-secret papers relating to UFOs, including pictures of captured aliens resembling small, gray humanoids.**

### Persistent Rumors

Over the last 20 or so years, there have been numerous video recordings made of strange objects in the Nevada skies. The

most compelling, which was captured in broad daylight and later broadcast in 1994 on Fox TV's *Sightings: The UFO Report*, shows a group of brightly lit objects hovering and looping rapidly across the sky.

These and other sightings have helped to fuel a host of conspiracy theories about Area 51, ranging from the barely plausible to the totally bizarre. One states that the government is planning to use its knowledge of alien technology to stage a fake extraterrestrial invasion. Another claims that the site contains Nazi technology from World War II and is manned by war criminals. It has even been suggested that Area 51 is an elaborate cover for the wholesale looting of the federal treasury by a cartel of corrupt government officials!

Almost certainly, there is a more rational explanation for the goings-on at Groom Lake, the most likely being that it is simply an advanced military test facility. Despite persistent denials by the authorities, this would account for the secrecy—and perhaps also for the strange sights reported in the area. The bat-shaped B-2 stealth bomber, which made its first flight in 1989 and is known to have flown from Groom Lake, looks remarkably like a flying saucer from certain angles. The “glowing objects” flying erratically in the sky could have been pilotless test vehicles. And the “radiation burns” and toxic injuries reported by some witnesses could be the result of tests of new propulsion systems—tests that perhaps went disastrously wrong.

In reality, we may never know the truth about Area 51. While tales of UFOs and aliens continue to divert attention from more serious investigation, the government is unlikely to own up.



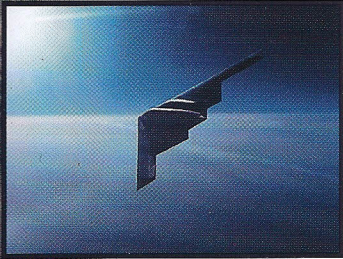
### FENCED IN

What appear to be sophisticated surveillance cameras sprout up at regular intervals above the miles of sturdy wire fence that surrounds Area 51. There is no denying the secrecy of the area.



### PLANE SIGHT

The exceptionally long runway and large hangars (left) lend weight to the theory that the true purpose of Area 51 is—and always has been—to test new kinds of advanced military airplanes.



### FLYING SAUCER?

The revolutionary B-2 stealth bomber, now in service with the Air Force, is known to have flown from Groom Lake. Could UFO watchers have mistaken it for a flying saucer?



### ALIEN STORE

Pictured are the buildings that Robert Lazar claims house nine saucer-shaped alien spacecraft. Lazar also claims that the bodies of the crafts' former occupants are stored there in steel canisters.

### TRUE STORY

#### Triangular UFO

AMONG THE MOST FAMOUS UFO PICTURES TAKEN NEAR AREA 51 IS THIS NIGHTTIME SHOT OF A WEDGE-SHAPED CRAFT DISPLAYING BRIGHTLY GLOWING LIGHTS.

SKEPTICS POINT OUT THAT IT COULD EASILY BE ONE OF A NUMBER OF MILITARY AIRPLANES ALREADY KNOWN TO EXIST, INCLUDING THE B-2 STEALTH BOMBER.



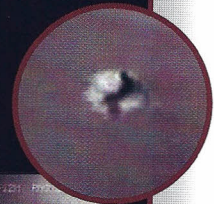
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## UFO EVIDENCE FROM AREA 51?

THE "NELLIS RANGE UFO" VIDEO WAS ALLEGEDLY SHOT IN NOVEMBER 1994 INSIDE AREA 51 AND SMUGGLED OUT BY AN ANONYMOUS EMPLOYEE AT THE BASE. THE FOOTAGE IS UNIQUE AS EVIDENCE BECAUSE IT INCLUDES RADAR POSITIONAL DATA AND A TIME CODE.

THE RADAR POSITIONAL DATA ON THE FOOTAGE SHOWS THE OBJECT TO BE FLYING AT AROUND 90 MPH AT AN ALTITUDE OF 11,000 FEET.

VOICES OF MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE AUDIBLE BUT INDISTINCT. AS IT SPINS IN THE SKY, FOUR SPHERICAL LOBES CAN BE SEEN AROUND A CENTRAL CORE.



# F U T U R E S

What if...

## ...AREA 51 IS HOME TO A NEW GENERATION OF SPYPLANES?

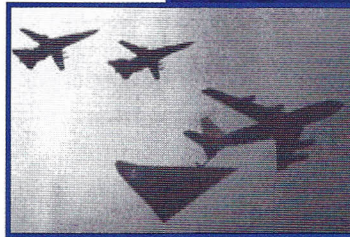
Since the early 1950s, the U.S. has been building secret reconnaissance airplanes that use technologies far in advance of those in the regular military domain. Few Americans knew of the existence of the subsonic U-2 spyplane until 1960, when the Soviets shot one down with a missile over Russia and announced it to the entire world. And even then, plans were far advanced for the Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird, which throughout the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s flew secret reconnaissance flights across the globe at speeds of up to Mach 3 and altitudes of over 80,000 feet.

It now seems more than likely that both planes were at least partly developed and proved at Groom Lake, as was the F-117A stealth fighter and the B-2 stealth bomber.

Both stealth planes are now officially in service with the Air Force, and the F-117A played a key role in the Gulf War of 1991. So what else is on the drawing board?

Aviation experts have identified a number of so-called "Black Plane" projects that may be under development within Area 51. These include the TR-3A Black Manta reconnaissance plane that was allegedly used in tandem with the F-117A during the Gulf War, but whose existence is still officially denied. Even more intriguing is the already legendary Aurora Project, which former President Ronald Reagan and, more recently, former Joint Chief of Staff General Colin Powell are both said to have visited at Groom Lake.

Aurora is reputed to be a hypersonic reconnaissance plane that operates on the very edge of the Earth's



An artist's impression of the Aurora spyplane (above) and what may be the first picture of the real thing (left), taken over the North Sea in 1989 by an oil rig worker.

atmosphere at speeds approaching an incredible Mach 8. The first credible sighting of the plane was made over Europe's North Sea in 1989, when an oil rig engineer named Chris Gibson photographed a wedge-shaped aircraft being escorted by two F-111 fighters, apparently in the act of mid-air refueling from a Lockheed KC-135 tanker.

Experts such as Paul Czysz, Professor of Aerospace Engineering at St. Louis University, think that the Aurora is powered by a new type of engine, part jet, part ramjet and part rocket, that allows it to operate like a moveable spy satellite on the fringes of space. Czysz believes that such a device would be far cheaper to deploy than the satellites currently in service. It could be that Area 51 is even saving taxpayers money!