

Each gendarmerie force possesses a manual, the "gendarmerie handbook," which contains all of the instructions on the procedures to be followed in the collection of data on unidentified aerospace phenomena. Depending on the degree of complexity of the case reported, the level of intervention may range from the simple transcript of a testimony to an actual investigation, which may be conducted jointly with the GEPAN/SEPRA departments at the locations of sightings and often results in an in-depth report.

6.2.2 Use of Data Collected by the Gendarmerie Nationale

Once the information has been collected locally by the gendarmerie, it is forwarded in the form of a report to the Gendarmerie Nationale headquarters in Paris, which issues a copy of it to GEPAN/SEPRA. The latter processes it at two different levels:

- at the first level, the report is analyzed, then entered into a database, and perhaps is processed statistically for the purpose of establishing classifications and typologies of phenomena,
- at the second level, which relates to more complex "UAP D" (category D unidentified aerospace phenomena) cases, the investigation in the field generates a set of research activities with respect to elements for further processing that results in the drafting of a detailed, in-depth investigation report; the report may be used for track interpretation studies.

6.2.3. Assessment and Results of the Cooperation with the Gendarmerie Nationale

Since 1974, over 3,000 gendarmerie reports representing an average of three spontaneous testimonies per document have been collected and forwarded to GEPAN/SEPRA. Added to this are some one hundred investigations and interventions in the field, conducted jointly with the local [gendarmerie] forces. All of these have permitted the characterization of a set of rare, natural and artificial phenomena that have occurred with varying frequency which would not have been able to be identified without this type of organization. Thanks to this collaboration, it has been possible to study UFO cases like the Trans-en-Provence and "Amaranth" cases (see Chapter 4) under excellent conditions, showing that there was a remnant of events the nature of which had yet to be identified. A volume of information describing the objectives sought by CNES in the study of UFOs was widely disseminated to all of the regional [gendarmerie] forces. Supplemental information and training, [end of line cut off] direction of officers and lower-level gendarmes, is regularly provided by the Gendarmerie Nationale schools to sensitize the [gendarmerie] force commanders to this subject.

The results of this collaboration could be more effective. Regular updating of the data collection procedures would be desirable, as well as shorter time delays before intervention for investigations between the time the local [gendarmerie] force learns of the case and the time when SEPRA intervenes. This reduction in the intervention time would considerably diminish the loss of information, particularly with respect to effects on the environment. It would also be important for the gendarmerie forces to be routinely informed of the results of work and investigations carried out by SEPRA. However, the