

# AGE OF DISCLOSURE – AG73 & AG79

Perceptions of pilots and other researchers

By fran ridge



The AEGIS radar system

When my own brother—a lifelong skeptic regarding the idea of a God-approved non-human intelligence operating in today’s world—expressed genuine interest in the documentary *Age of Disclosure*, I took notice. While I have followed the congressional hearings closely for the past five years and was not surprised by the testimony presented, the broader context raised important questions relevant to MADAR and long-standing UAP detection issues.

In *Age of Disclosure*, U.S. Navy pilot Lt. Ryan Graves reiterated a point he has made consistently in interviews and during the 2023 House hearings: the unidentified objects encountered by Navy pilots were not new. They had always been present but were effectively invisible until changes in radar architecture altered what aircraft systems could detect.

Graves was flying from Naval Air Station Oceana while assigned to VFA-11 Red Rippers, and was the F/A-18 pilot involved in the 2014-2015 UAP encounters associated with the USS Theodore Roosevelt. He explained that the transition from legacy radar processing modes—what pilots shorthand as “AG-73”—to the AN/APG-79 AESA radar fundamentally changed what could be observed. As

Graves summarized it, upgrading the radar did not create the phenomenon; it revealed it.

Three operational changes were central to this shift.

First, clutter filtering was reduced. Earlier radar systems routinely discarded slow, drifting, or non-ballistic returns as noise, classifying them as weather, birds, or atmospheric artifacts. AESA systems allowed operators to relax those filters. Once the system stopped discarding ambiguous data, previously unseen targets appeared.

Second, persistent tracking became possible. The APG-79 could maintain track continuity on objects without transponders, detect low-radar-cross-section targets, and hold returns that appeared stationary relative to the surrounding air mass. Graves emphasized that pilots began seeing objects that were simply “there,” often continuously, which he found operationally troubling.

Third, multi-sensor correlation confirmed reality. Radar detections were corroborated by infrared (FLIR) systems, followed by visual sightings and confirmation by multiple aircraft. This eliminated the longstanding dismissal of such contacts as mere radar glitches.

The importance of this shift cannot be overstated. It demonstrates that the post-2000 increase in UAP encounters does not represent a sudden emergence of unknown objects, but rather a sensor threshold crossing driven by improved sensitivity, revised data-retention practices, and a doctrinal decision to stop ignoring unknowns. This mirrors a pattern repeatedly documented in MADAR operations: when sensitivity increases, anomaly rates rise sharply.

Graves’ observations align temporally with improvements in the Aegis/SPY-1 processing environment, explaining why such objects became trackable—often only briefly—despite being visually observable for much longer periods. The discrepancy between short detection windows and extended visual encounters reflects the same physics-plus-filtering limitations observed in MADAR data.

Another Navy pilot who testified publicly was Cmdr. David Fravor, who described the 2004 “Tic Tac” encounter near the USS Nimitz. Fravor reported an object descending rapidly from 80,000 feet to near sea level in seconds, then remaining in the area for three hours—performance well beyond known aerospace capabilities.

MADAR’s own development reflects similar lessons. Although an early MADAR system operated successfully from 1970 to 1990, the current MADAR network became operational in May 2018. However, it was not until April 2020 that a recognizable UAP “signature” was identified. At the Millerton, Pennsylvania site (Node 104), a six-second anomaly coincided with a close encounter lasting approximately ten minutes. At the time, the discrepancy was unexplained.

Subsequent research into Operation Foal Eagle (South Korea, 2003) provided an important analog: objects tracked descending vertically into the atmosphere with a brief but intense energy burst, followed by a quiescent phase with minimal detectable output. This clarified the nature of MADAR “Code Blue” events and led to the identification of a related class of anomalies now termed Sub-Code

Blues (SBCs)—brief spikes occurring at or near the time of significant sightings. Sensor behavior can distort detection duration and tracking continuity, but it cannot generate structured objects, coordinated motion, or close-range visual encounters. MADAR detections do not depend on cooperative targets, transponders, or air-traffic assumptions. As with modern naval radar systems, changes in sensitivity and filtering reveal phenomena that were previously present—but unrecorded.