

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Gift of heritage aircraft 'shares Air Force history'**

Friday 5 February 2016

The Royal Australian Air Force has today announced the successful recipients for three retired Air Force heritage aircraft being gifted to Australian historical organisations.

These three aircraft have been on display at various RAAF Bases across Australia for decades but, following a competitive evaluation, they will now be restored by the successful organisations and placed on public display within their museums.

Chief of Air Force, Air Marshal Gavin Davies, AO, CSC said the gifting of these aircraft strengthens the continuing collaboration between Air Force and the historical aviation community across Australia.

“Air Force is delighted to be able to gift these aircraft to public organisations that can help to preserve our aviation history and to help make our proud heritage available to all Australians,” Air Marshal Davies said.

Lockheed SP-2H Neptune A89-272 served with 10 Squadron in the 1960s in a maritime patrol role, and until recently was on display at the entrance to RAAF Base Townsville in north Queensland. This aircraft has been gifted to the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society at the Illawarra Regional Airport for restoration and display at its facility at Parkes in western NSW.

Canberra A84-203 was built in Australia in 1953 at the Government Aircraft Factory at Fishermans Bend in Melbourne. It served with No 2 Squadron at RAAF Base Amberley, was converted to a dual control Mk 21 trainer in 1958, and has been on display at the RAAF Amberley Aviation Heritage Centre near Ipswich, in south east Queensland. This aircraft has been gifted to the Evans Head Memorial Aerodrome and Heritage Aviation Association, for restoration and display at the Evans Head aerodrome in NSW to augment its collection of aircraft.

Canberra A84-226 was built at the Government Aircraft Factory in 1955 and served with No 2 Squadron. This aircraft participated in a goodwill visit to the USA in 1956, became a 'training aid' at RAAF Base Wagga, and was a long term resident adjacent to the trainees' Mess inside the Base. This aircraft has been gifted to the Australian National Aviation Museum (the Australian Aircraft Restoration Group) at Moorabbin aerodrome in Victoria for restoration to enhance its collection of Australian built aircraft.

Air Force continues to preserve historical military aircraft and artefacts at the RAAF Museum at Point Cook in Melbourne, where the focus is on telling the story of Air Force people and the history of the RAAF, which was established on 31 March 1921. Most RAAF Bases have one or more static display aircraft while regional Heritage Centres have been opened at RAAF Bases Wagga, Amberley, Williamstown, and shortly at Townsville to celebrate the link between the RAAF and the local community.

Images of the aircraft can be found at the following link <http://images.defence.gov.au/S20160155>

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