

WELCOME TO **WILLIAMTOWN**



ANNUAL GUIDE 2025 RAAF BASE WILLIAMTOWN & THE HUNTER REGION

ABOUT THE BASE
History, operational units
and community

FAMILY ESSENTIALS
Services, housing, health
and education

LIFESTYLE
Local attractions
and activities



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PHOTO: Destination NSW

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PHOTO: Destination NSW

ON THE COVER

Two RAAF PC-21 aircraft, from 4 Squadron, conduct sorties over the Newcastle region as part of Exercise Teak Action 2023.. PHOTO: LAC Samuel Miller.

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WELCOME TO WILLIAMTOWN

RAAF BASE WILLIAMTOWN is one of the busiest Air Force bases in Australia with over 3,800 employees, ranging from permanent and reserve members to Australian public servants and industry partners.

The role of the Senior Australian Defence Force Officer (SADFO) at RAAF Base Williamtown is to represent the base and its people. At Williamtown, the Commanding Officer No.26 Squadron fulfils the role and responsibilities of the SADFO appointment.

As a leading contributor of air power, RAAF Base Williamtown and, importantly, its workforce, continues to project and protect air power capability and be responsive and adaptable to directed tasks. It is a team effort and, year after year, the Williamtown workforce demonstrates professionalism, enthusiasm and commitment to the task.

It is also important to thank and appreciate the Defence families supporting that workforce – your support enables them to deliver that air power and deploy on exercises and tasks (sometimes at relatively short notice).

The community is a huge focus for us on this base. It is important that we do not underestimate that support and that we all get involved with the local community as you will find your participation both enriching and rewarding – and a great way to meet new friends as part of a network of community support. I encourage families to engage with the Defence Member and Family Support (DMFS) community (see page 22) and for aviators to consider joining one of the local welfare clubs – details provided in this guide (see page 19).

I would also like to highlight a number of other local organisations whose support to our Defence

community is really important and goes hand in hand with the DMFS. These include the Hunter Defence Support Network, Invictus Australia (formerly Veteran Sport Australia), Soldier On, Open Arms, your local RSL and of course the Air Force Association, just to highlight a few (see page 49 for more).

No doubt you will also find during your posting at Williamtown that this base and its aviators are held in high regard and the aircraft – either those based here or transiting – still draw a crowd at the main road leading into the base. The year 2025 will see the base continuing with its high tempo of exercises as well as ongoing support to any whole-of-government tasks that may arise.

To those new to the base in 2025, welcome to you and it is hoped you find this posting truly rewarding and make the most of the beautiful surroundings of Port Stephens, the Upper Hunter, Lake Macquarie and Newcastle.

For those returning to work at Williamtown in 2025, thanks are extended for your continued contributions.

WGCDR VICKY BEZUIDENHOUT
Senior Australian Defence Force Officer
RAAF Base Williamtown

WELCOME TO COUNTRY

GUUDJI-YIIGU WORIMI BARRAY. In the local Gathang language that means welcome to Worimi Country. My name is Neville Lilley and along with Uncle John Ridgeway, Worimi Elders of Port Stephens and Traditional Custodians, we extend to you this welcome. We thank the RAAF for acknowledging country.

As with tradition, I pay my respects to my Elders, past, present and future.

There is overwhelming evidence that the Worimi have occupied this area for hundreds of generations. Some ceremonial and meeting grounds, burial sites, artefacts and artwork can still be seen. We continue to walk on this land today. We are a part of this great land, which defines us as a people, including our languages, and our stories, which are the foundation of our culture.

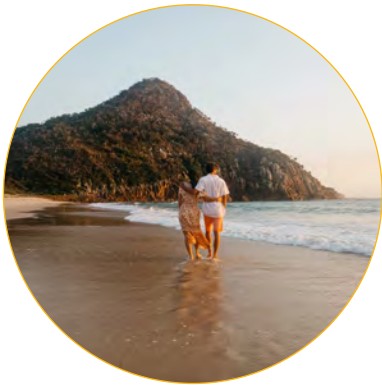
We are spiritually connected to this land that has sustained our people for many thousands of years. Our desire is to care for the land and for the environment. This is our commitment to our forefathers and to future generations.

On behalf of my people, I welcome you all to our God-given country. I trust that our journey together, both now and into the future will continue to be pleasant and productive.



PHOTO: LAC KURT LEWIS

↑ Worimi Elders Aunty Lorraine Lilley and Uncle Neville Lilley participate in a smoking ceremony at the opening of a Ngaralbaa (yarning circle), RAAF Base Williamtown.



WELCOME TO PORT STEPHENS
Port Stephens Council

WELCOME TO OUR UNIQUE AND BEAUTIFUL part of the world, which we think is one of the best places to live.

Port Stephens is growing and our Defence community is a big part of who we are. We are proud to have the defence industry as one of our largest employers and the strength it brings to our local community.

We welcome all people and it's important to us that the facilities and services you need are easily available to you. We can help you connect with a wide range of community and interest groups to help with a smooth transition as you call Port Stephens home.

We encourage you to get involved in what

the area has to offer. Spend time with family and new friends at our beautiful beaches, friendly townships and our historic hinterland. Visit our libraries and local parks, join local sporting teams or participate in the large number of events and programs we have to offer.

To keep up to date with what we have to offer, visit portstephens.nsw.gov.au or follow us on Facebook @PortStephensCouncil or Instagram @psCouncil. You can also call us on 02 4988 0255 or email council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au.

We hope you find home in our community whether it be your first time, or you are returning to this beautiful place.



MERYL SWANSON MP
Federal Member for Paterson

I'D LIKE TO PERSONALLY WELCOME you to Williamstown, beautiful Port Stephens and the broader Hunter Valley. We are blessed to live here.

I understand what an upheaval it can be to relocate repeatedly, especially with small children. I did it several times to follow my husband's work and I remember how overwhelming it can be.

We have great schools and educational facilities, sporting facilities, shopping centres and health and professional services. Plus, there are many community groups and organisations where you might find a kindred spirit.

We are only 30 minutes from Newcastle and less than two hours from Sydney, so all of those opportunities are also at your fingertips. Rest assured, we will do our best to help you settle in. Please reach out if you need help.

I am a big supporter of our Defence forces.

I appreciate the sacrifice and commitment serving personnel and their families make for our nation, and I am grateful. I work hard for my community and the Defence community is a strong part of that.

As your elected representative in Federal Parliament, I can help you with enquiries that relate to social services such as Centrelink, immigration, taxation, superannuation, telecommunications, including the NBN, employment and disability services including the NDIS.

Please contact me at any time if I can be of assistance. I am on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, you can phone me on 02 4983 2401, email me on meryl.swanson.mp@aph.gov.au, write to me at PO Box 156 Raymond Terrace, NSW, 2324, visit my office at 35 Sturgeon Street, Raymond Terrace, or visit my website merylswanson.com.au



KATE WASHINGTON MP
State Member for Port Stephens

A VERY WARM WELCOME to Port Stephens. I am honoured to represent the residents of Port Stephens in State Parliament, and I am committed to doing all that I can to support our community.

Having raised my family in an area that so many RAAF families call home, I have an enormous amount of respect for the work you do, and understand the challenges presented by the RAAF lifestyle.

I genuinely appreciate the contribution made by the RAAF to our community, not only in terms of being a local employer, but because RAAF personnel make significant contributions to the broader community in many ways.

If I can assist you in navigating any of the State

Government agencies such as Transport for NSW, NSW Health, Department of Education, Housing NSW or Fair Trading, my staff and I are here to assist.

I encourage you to get involved with some of the impressive community organisations that are across Port Stephens. If you would like any information or assistance connecting with any of these activities or groups, please get in touch.

I hope you enjoy your time in beautiful Port Stephens. If I can be of any assistance while you are here please don't hesitate to contact me on 02 4987 4455, portstephens@parliament.nsw.gov.au, or on Facebook at [facebook.com/KateRWashington](https://www.facebook.com/KateRWashington).



PHOTO: LACW Taylor Anderson

AUSTRALIA'S **F A S T - J E T B A S E** PRIMARY

The busiest and most complex Australian Air Force base, RAAF Williamtown is the nation's main fighter training base and is home to Air Combat Group, Surveillance Response Group, and the majority of the RAAF's F-35A Lightning II aircraft.





↓ A RAAF E-7A Wedgetail deployed on Operation Kudu in Germany.

← A RAAF F-35A Lightning II aircraft, from No.77 Squadron.

PHOTO: CPL Nicole Dorrett

RAAF BASE WILLIAMTOWN is located north of the coastal city of Newcastle, NSW, in the local government area of Port Stephens. The military base leases its military airfield to Newcastle Airport for scheduled regular passenger transport. The nearest towns are Raymond Terrace, located west of the base, and Medowie to the north, which is home to many of the base's staff.

Today, the base is the primary fighter base for the RAAF, covering flying commitments and technical and training programs. The airfield handles, on average, just under 1,000 military and civilian air movements a week: and during busy periods, up to 1,200-1,300 movements a week.

HISTORY

RAAF Station Williamtown was established on 15 February 1941 to provide protection for the strategic port and steel manufacturing facilities of the Hunter region. The base was initially served by four runways, each 1,100m in length, to meet the needs of the Williamtown Flying School. The school consisted of

62 buildings, which accommodated 366 officers and men.

A number of Australian Empire Air Training Scheme squadrons were formed at Williamtown before proceeding overseas and No.4 Operational Training Unit was located at Williamtown from October 1942 until the unit was disbanded in April 1944. Following World War II, Williamtown was retained as the RAAF's main fighter base and was equipped with squadrons of Gloster Meteor and F-86 Sabre fighters.

In 1961, the Meteors were replaced with the Dassault Mirage aircraft. On-base facilities were gradually expanded post war and through until the late 1960s.

In 1983, the role of Williamtown was upgraded to a tactical fighter base in preparation for the replacement of the Mirages with 75 F/A-18 Hornets in 1989. The following year Williamtown became headquarters for the Tactical Fighter Group and acquired new headquarter buildings, hangars, workshops, stores, medical facilities and a base chapel.

THE BASE TODAY

RAAF Base Williamtown employs approximately 3,800 personnel (military and civilians) and a significant number of contractors. It generates more than \$280 million per annum by way of salaries in the Hunter region economy.

Williamtown is home to the F-35A Lightning II (operated by No.3 Squadron, No.77 Squadron and No.2 Operational Conversion Unit), Hawk 127 Lead-In Fighters (operated by No.76 Squadron), B737 E-7A Wedgetail Airborne Early Warning and Control aircraft (operated by No.2 Squadron) and Pilatus PC-21 training aircraft (operated by No.4 Squadron).

It is also home to Air Combat Group; Surveillance and Response Group; elements of Combat Support Group, Air Warfare Centre and Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group; the Australian Defence Force Warfare Training Centre and the Williamtown Aviation Heritage Centre (an element of History and Heritage Branch – Air Force).

As the nation's main fighter pilot training base, RAAF Williamtown is home to the majority of the Royal Australian Air Force's F-35A Lightning II aircraft.

WINGS: PROVIDING MUTUAL SUPPORT AND ADVICE FOR A LONG-LASTING CAREER

More women than ever before are enjoying successful Air Force careers but that doesn't mean it's always easy.

THE WILLIAMTOWN WOMEN'S INTEGRATED NETWORKING GROUP (WINGS) has been providing Air Force women of all ranks and specialisations unique leadership and growth opportunities through support, mentoring, networking and guest lecturers for more than a decade.

The program offers ongoing engagement with Air Force women throughout their career. It is designed as a retention initiative and is a localised program that enables Air Force women to build the support and networks required to sustain a long-term career in the Air Force.

RAAF Williamtown WINGS sessions are generally held every six weeks, over a lunch period, and provide a great opportunity to meet other Air Force women on base in a friendly, non-judgmental environment. While face-to-face participation is crucial for networking, there may be times when attendance is not possible: when working from home or on leave. For that reason, most WINGS sessions are available through virtual platforms such as Skype or Microsoft Teams and this may also extend to participating in other base WINGS sessions as well with guest presenters.

WINGS covers a variety of topics including imposter syndrome, assertive communication, resilience, leadership, unconscious bias, effective networking, health and wellness, mentoring and disc profiling, life balance and much more.

Opportunities are also available to participate in specialised professional workshops.

The WINGS program is inclusive of all ranks and occupational groups and encourages male attendance to contribute to the discussion.

Information on Williamtown WINGS (including resources and past presentations) can be found on the Williamtown WING's website, http://drnet/raaf/AirForce/RAAFWLM/BaseFunctions/RAAFWLMWINGS/pages/RAAF_WLM_WINGS.aspx, or by emailing the Williamtown WINGS Committee at WLMWINGS@defence.gov.au.

The WINGS National Program Coordinator, WGCDCR Sue Yates, is also based here at RAAF Williamtown and provides guidance and support to all WINGS OICs and committees nationwide.

↓ **WINGS meet and greet event at RAAF Base Williamtown.**



MATERNITY SUPPORT & NETWORKING GROUP



RAAF Williamtown has an established Maternity Support & Networking Group (MSNG) for Air Force women proceeding on, or currently on, maternity leave or returned from maternity leave. The group provides opportunity for women to come together to navigate all aspects of parenting including navigating the policies, returning to work, fitness, child care considerations, dealing with partner absence/deployments and more. Further details about the group and resources can be found on the WLM WINGS Webpage under the Maternity Support Networking Group tab or contacting the WLM MSNG Committee at WLM.MSNG@defence.gov.au

RAAF Williamtown also has a dedicated Maternity and Extended Leave Coordinator who provides individual support on maternity and paternity policies, health, financial considerations and personnel policies tailored to each aviator's specific situation. POC is FLTLT Rebekka Jurisic (@defence.gov.au)

INDIGENOUS LIAISON OFFICERS

In 2017, positions were established for Indigenous Liaison Officers (ILOs) to support the engagement of Air Force Commanders with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and assist in ensuring Air Force compliance with *Our Place, Our Skies* – Air Force's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy and the Defence Reconciliation Action Plan. RAAF Williamtown ILO can be contacted via email WLM.ILO@defence.gov.au.



↑ **ILO – RAAF Williamtown, Flight Lieutenant Coen Henry, speaking at the official opening of the Ngarralbaa (Yarning Circle).**



PHOTO: LAC Chris Tsakiris

AIR COMBAT GROUP



AIR COMBAT GROUP (ACG) is one of the largest Force Element Groups in the RAAF, with more than 2,000 personnel across three wings; comprising nine squadrons. ACG provides a single command structure for all of the RAAF's

fast-jet combat aircraft: the F-35A Lightning, F/A-18F Hornet, EA-18G Growler, Hawk 127

and the PC-21 Forward Air Control; and the Australian Defence Force's Combat Controller Teams. ACG's mission is to deliver Australia's capability to control the air and to conduct precision strike and airborne electronic attack. Air Combat Group is commanded by Air Commodore Pete Robinson CSM.

→ **Air Commodore Pete Robinson.**



↑ **RAAF F-35A Lightning II aircraft fly in formation over the Northern Territory during Exercise Talisman Sabre 23.**

↓ **A RAAF combat controller from No.4 Squadron patrols during a training serial as part of Exercise Teak Action 2023 at Singleton Training Area, NSW.**

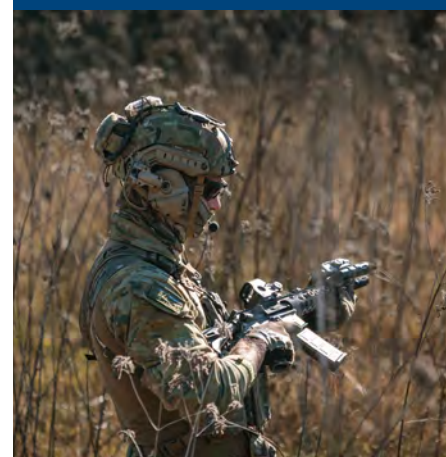


PHOTO: LAC Samuel Miller

close proximity to hostile forces. With these skills personnel execute the operational Combat Controller role which integrates and controls elements of air and space power to enable precision strike and advanced military force operations.

C Flight personnel train future Combat Controllers as well as delivering all ADF training for the internationally accredited Joint Terminal Attack Controller course and facilitating continual development and assessment.



NO.78 WING

No.78 Wing provides lead-in Fighter training and Air-Surface Integration in support of Australia's air combat capability. It comprises three squadrons:

No.4 Squadron, No.76 Squadron (based at RAAF Base Williamtown) and No.79 Squadron (based at RAAF Base Pearce, WA). Both No.76 Squadron and No.79 Squadron operate the Hawk 127 aircraft and are responsible for the Lead-In Fighter training continuum as well as broader ADF support for Land and Maritime training activities. No.4 Squadron operates the PC-21 aircraft, provides the Combat Control capability to the Joint force and is the ADF training and standardisation establishment for Joint Terminal Attack Control and Forward Air Control (Airborne).



NO.4 SQUADRON

No.4 Squadron supports a diverse range of Air Force capabilities and operations, both domestically and internationally. Located at RAAF Base Williamtown and organisationally part of 78 Wing, the

squadron consists of three flights as well as operational support sections including logistics, administration, intelligence, operations and human performance.

A Flight comprises aircrew responsible for operating the Pilatus PC-21 aircraft in the Forward Air Control and Close Air Support roles.

B Flight personnel are trained in specialist insertion techniques, ground combat skills, assault zone survey, and control of strike aircraft to enable air support to ground elements in



NO.79 SQUADRON (BASED AT PEARCE WA)

No.79 Squadron converts graduates from No.2 Flying Training School onto the Hawk 127 while also further

advancing their skills in formation and night flying. It also conducts air support for ADF agencies as required on the west coast in the form of adversary air, fleet support and close air support.



NO.76 SQUADRON

The role of No.76 Squadron is to train fast-jet aircrew on tactical applied flying prior to their conversion to operational types. It also conducts air

support for ADF agencies in the form of adversary air, fleet support and close air support. There are two introductory fighter courses (IFC) conducted by 76 Squadron – one for pilots and a separate one for air combat officers (rear-seat aircrew in the F/A-18F or E/A-18G). There are three flights at 76 Squadron: A Flight responsible for the pilots' IFC; B Flight responsible for the air combat officers' IFC; and C Flight responsible for graduate progression and ADF support tasking.

↓ A Hawk 127 from No.76 Squadron performs a touch and go at RAAF Base Williamtown.



NO.81 WING

No.81 Wing's purpose is to provide effective joint force combat air power in support of Australia's national interests.

No.81 Wing is the sole operator of Australia's F-35A Lightning II, from two main

operating bases: RAAF Base Williamtown, NSW and RAAF Base Tindal, NT. The transition from the AF/A-18A/B to the F-35A was completed in December 2021, when 75SQN commenced F-35A operations. HQ 81 Wing supports four flying units, comprising in total approximately 1,200 defence personnel and 150 contractors.

The squadrons that make up No.81 Wing are: No.2 Operational Conversion Unit, No.3 Squadron and No.77 Squadron, at RAAF Williamtown, and No.75 Squadron at RAAF Tindal. The professionalism, expertise and dedication of the aviators serving in all roles in No.81 Wing, maintenance, administration, supply and supporting sections, is essential to the capability and dependability of No.81 Wing in fulfilling its *Prepared to Fight* motto.



NO.2 OPERATIONAL CONVERSION UNIT

The primary mission of No.2 Operational Conversion Unit (2OCU) is to train the F-35A Warfighter. The unit

conducts Operational Conversion Course, qualifying pilots on the F-35A Lightning II.

The unit also hosts the F-35A Fighter Combat Instructor course, which is a component of the Air Force Air Warfare Instructors Course. Additionally, all initial technical training to sustain the F-35A fleet is undertaken at the 2OCU Integrated Training Centre, directly supporting all F-35A operations.



NO.3 SQUADRON

No.3 Squadron is Australia's oldest fighter squadron, forming in 1916 prior to the RAAF itself, and was the first RAAF squadron to operate the F-35A Lightning II.

Across domestic and international exercises in 2023, No.3 Squadron continued to hone the logistics and operational systems which support the aircraft and permits the execution of advanced air operations across Australia and internationally.



NO.77 SQUADRON

No.77 Squadron (77SQN) was formed on 16 March 1942 in defence of Australia after the bombing of Darwin on 19 February 1942. 77SQN defended Darwin and participated

in the WWII Pacific campaign. After the Japanese surrender in 1945, 77SQN was selected to form part of the occupation force in Japan.

In June 1950, it was the first Commonwealth unit committed to fight the war in Korea, undertaking the remarkable feat of transitioning from the piston engine P-51D fighter into the jet age with the Gloster Meteor in just two months and from where it received the Presidential Citation for Meritorious service.

77SQN finally returned to Australia in November 1954, 12 years after leaving its shores, returning to RAAF Williamtown where it is now based, firmly establishing its reputation and motto *Swift to Destroy* along with the iconic Asian temple Lion as its logo – signifying protector of peace, from where the squadron got its nickname, the Grumpy Monkeys.

77SQN is one of the three front-line F-35A Lightning II squadrons, charged with defending Australia and delivering lethal and survivable combat air power when and where called to do so. Team Grumpy Monkey regularly deploys abroad, operating with partner and allied forces in the delivery of integrated effects across the full range of combat roles, both offensive and defensive.



PHOTO: CPL Melina Young



↓ Air crew from No.2 Squadron board an E-7A Wedgetail to conduct flying operations during Exercise Diamond Shield 24.

PHOTO: LAC Kurt Lewis

SURVEILLANCE AND RESPONSE GROUP



APPROPRIATELY, THE SURVEILLANCE AND RESPONSE GROUP (SRG) motto is *Foremost Sentinel*. While retaining the individual combat capabilities of both the Maritime Patrol and Surveillance and Control

groups, SRG is also developing and delivering intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and electronic warfare capabilities to prepare the Air Force for the introduction of new systems including maritime unmanned aerial systems. SRG also supports the ongoing development and enhancement of information assurance and space capabilities to ensure Air Force and the ADF are mission-ready across multiple domains.



↑ **Commander Surveillance Response Group, AIRCDRE Louise DesJardins, CSC.**



NO.41 WING

No.41 Wing comprises five units that provide surveillance, air battle management, airborne early warning and control and specialist

operator and technical training. Williamtown-based No.41 Wing units include No.3 Control and Reporting Unit, Surveillance and Control Training Unit and No.2 Squadron.

The capabilities delivered by these units contribute to the No.41 Wing Mission, which is to deliver persistent multi-domain understanding and control to the joint force.

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NO.3 CONTROL AND REPORTING UNIT

No.3 Control and Reporting Unit (3CRU) operates from the Control and Reporting Centre providing air battle management to coordinate and deliver

integrated air and missile defence effects.

The unit conducts air surveillance and air battle management for operations and training from the Eastern Region Operations Centre. 3CRU deploys the new HPAR radar system, as well as tactical datalink and communications assets across the country using a suite of specialist vehicles to provide sensor and communications coverage wherever required.

The unit employs a variety of RAAF specialists, from air battle managers and air surveillance operators to engineers, technicians and logistics and personnel capability staff. 3CRU is home to the Navy's Fleet Fighter Control Element, which provides RAN fighter controllers with training and experience to meet at-sea requirements, and also personnel from the Army's 16 Regiment RAA, working closely to build experience and relationships as part of the new air and missile defence capability.



SURVEILLANCE AND CONTROL TRAINING UNIT

Surveillance and Control Training Unit (SACTU) mission is to train air and space power professionals ready to provide battle management capability

for the joint force. SACTU was formed at Williamtown on 9 August 1999.

Currently consisting of approximately 90 staff, the unit conducts initial entry and post-graduate training for officer aviation (air battle managers) and air surveillance operators, in addition to driver training and specialist technical training for maintainers. Furthermore, various Integrated air and missile defence (IAMD) courses are managed and delivered to air and missile defence professionals employed across the ADF.

SACTU comprises administration, training development, quality management, technician training, driver training, air warfare simulation, air battle management training, air surveillance operator training and SACTU Detachment Edinburgh.



PHOTO: LAC Kurt Lewis

↑ Air Surveillance Operators conduct taskings during Exercise Diamond Shield 24, No.3 Control and Reporting Unit, RAAF Base Williamtown.

The unit manages and delivers more than 90 courses a year to ensure graduates have the underpinning knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them and supported units to deliver integrated airborne intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance effects and decision superiority to the joint force in support of Australia's national interests.

↓ First graduates of the Enlisted Fighter Controller program, Corporal Baden Oakley and Corporal Emily Smeaton with their certificates following graduation from SACTU.



PHOTO: LACW Sonja Canty



NO.2 SQUADRON

Formed in 1916 as one of the RAAF's oldest squadrons, No.2 Squadron (2SQN) is also the RAAF's most decorated squadron with citations from WWII and the Vietnam War. Through the operation of the E-7A Wedgetail

Airborne Early Warning and Control aircraft, 2SQN provides the ADF with the critical element of integrated air and missile defence and long-range strike in the defence of the nation. The E-7A Wedgetail is the most advanced airborne battlespace management capability in the world, providing command and control and threat warning for the joint and combined force, across air, land and surface environments.



NO. 44 WING

No.44 Wing's (44WG) mission is to deliver joint battlefield airspace control and air navigation services for ADF operations and national tasking. 44WG provides the tactical control of forward airfields and the control, coordination and deconfliction of battlefield airspace and aviation activity throughout the ADF's area of operations both ashore and afloat. The wing is also responsible for the delivery of air base air traffic services, communication and navigation services, and aeronautical information services to all three arms of the ADF and the civil aviation industry. 44WG's Williamtown-based unit is No.453 Squadron

(Williamtown Flight) with wing and squadron headquarters also based at RAAF Base Williamtown.



NO. 453 SQUADRON – HEADQUARTERS & WILLIAMTOWN FLIGHT

Having a distinguished history as a WWII fighter squadron, No.453 Squadron was reformed in 2010

as an air traffic control (ATC) squadron. No.453 Squadron – Williamtown Flight provides ATC for RAAF Base Williamtown/Newcastle Airport. It has more than 50 personnel comprising ATC officers, communications electronics technicians and logistical staff. The Williamtown flight is responsible for managing Williamtown's airspace, roughly the size of England, and for the separation and sequencing of all aircraft movements, civil and military, that use the air base. Headquarters 453 Squadron is staffed by a small but critical nucleus, comprising the commanding officer, executive officer, senior engineering officer, personnel capability officer, orderly room and CAMM2 maintenance management cells. Their principal function is to command, support and report on the squadron's operational capability, which includes five other ATC Flights at Richmond, East Sale, Edinburgh, Pearce and Naval Air Station Nowra.



↑ No.44 Wing Deployable Defence Air Traffic Management and Control System operations cabin and transportable air operations tower set up at RAAF Base Curtin during Exercise Talisman Sabre 2023.

PHOTO: LACW Annika Smit

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← RAAF aviators from No.26 Squadron provide assistance to occupants disembarking Beechcraft B200 Super King Air VH-XDV after an emergency wheels up landing at Newcastle Airport, NSW.

COMBAT SUPPORT GROUP

PHOTO: LAC Kurt Lewis



COMBAT SUPPORT GROUP (CSG) was formed on 29 September 1998 at Headquarters Air Command and then relocated to RAAF Base Amberley on 6 December 1999. CSG prepares for and conducts flexible combat

support operations and provides the ADF with an expeditionary airbase capability in either a joint or combined environment. CSG is able to employ a range of flexible combat support capabilities to meet joint or coalition operational requirements.



NO. 26 SQUADRON No.26 Squadron (26SQN) has a proud history at RAAF Base Williamtown, being formed at the base on 1 July 1981. The unit is Williamtown's Airbase Operations Squadron (AOS),

forming part of No.96 Wing within CSG. As an AOS, the squadron has over 250 Air Force and APS members; responsible for providing coordinated support for air and ground operations at RAAF Base Williamtown, with members of the unit also tasked to deploy in support of the CSG AOS expeditionary capability in Australia and overseas.

At Williamtown, 26SQN delivers a wide range of functions to maintain base operations, including management of the Airbase Operations Centre, airfield security, airfield engineering and support,



NO. 381 SQUADRON 381SQN is one of three Contingency Response Squadrons (CRS) under the command of 95WG. CRS provide a scalable airfield capability, to establish and operate expeditionary airfields or airbases to

project air power. The unit can be activated at very short notice and is capable of deploying to austere and uncertain security environments.

381SQN personnel are trained to provide deployed air base operations support in a variety of environments. Tasking includes humanitarian assistance and disaster relief support through the provision of an Evacuation Handling Centre in support of Non-combatant Evacuation Operations.

381SQN has 30 cadre staff who form the foundation of the CRS capability. Personnel come from diverse backgrounds including personnel

capability specialists, suppliers, air movements, chefs, firefighters, physical training instructor, network technician and integrated security elements. When activated, the squadron is augmented by other CSG personnel to achieve the directed mission.



↑ Aviators responding to a simulated missile strike threat during Exercise Diamond Shield 24, Airbase Operations Centre, No.26 Squadron, RAAF Base Williamtown.



↑ Members of No.381 Squadron and No.17 Squadron Security Flight conducting a brief during Exercise Stoic Gauntlet 24, a Combat Support Group-led activity.

PHOTO: LAC Kurt Lewis

PHOTO: FLOGOFF Michael Thomas



NO.2 EXPEDITIONARY HEALTH SQUADRON

No.2 Expeditionary Health Squadron (2EHS) is the custodian of the deployable Role 1 Medical Treatment Facility, the Hazard

Assessment Team capability, the Agile Medical capability and a Squadron Aviation Medicine team capability for Air Force. The squadron is required to generate and posture forces to deliver agile and scalable aerospace health capabilities for the integrated force in a range of threat environments. 2EHS provides specialist health advice and scalable aerospace health support to aviators operating across the national airbase network, at remote locations and globally across deployed airbases. 2EHS partners with Joint Health Command (JHC), providing the airmindedness overlay to the delivery of garrison health services in JHC health facilities that support flying operations. In addition to its primary capabilities, 2EHS also have dental, radiography, pharmacy, logistics, administration and specialist health reserve personnel that can contribute to the Air Force Role 2 Medical Treatment Facility. 2EHS encompasses a main headquarters located at RAAF Base Williamtown with detachments at RAAF Bases Darwin, Edinburgh, Pearce and Tindal.



NO.1 SECURITY FORCES SQUADRON

The origins of No.1 Security Forces Squadron (1SECFOR SQN) extend back to World War II and the Northern Territory. In 2014, 1SECFOR relocated to Williamtown

from Amberley as part of change in how Air Force conducted security across its airbases. 1SECFOR SQN provides contemporary and essential security functions through the employment of security forces personnel at Williamtown, Amberley, Richmond, and Point Cook. The squadron is responsible for providing global force protection for air and space assets via measures including flight-line security, airbase security operations (ASO), incident response to global crises and ASO training to Air Force personnel on the bases. In 2022, Chief of Air Force initiated an Air Force Security Transformation which tasks 1SECFOR with the expeditionary responsibility for security effects, protecting deployed Air Force assets on exercises and operations globally. 1SECFOR SQN continues to focus on supporting aircraft and other assets that deploy, and no longer focuses on the National Airbase Network Security functions at Williamtown, Richmond, Canberra, Point Cook and East Sale.



PHOTO: ACW Laura Flower

That will see 26SQN at Williamtown increase in size as it absorbs the airside security function. As always, 1SECFOR SQN will remain adaptive to meet the evolving security needs of Air Force as it moves into the future.

↑ Aviators from 2EHS treating a patient during a mass casualty exercise at RAAF Base Williamtown.



PHOTO: LAC Adam Abela

↑ A network technician from 1CCS providing secure network support during Operation Kudu 2023.



NO. 1 COMBAT COMMUNICATIONS SQUADRON – WILLIAMTOWN DETACHMENT

No.1 Combat Communications Squadron (1CCS) is Air Force's only specialist expeditionary

communication and information systems (CIS) squadron. Headquartered at RAAF Base Amberley, the squadron has detachments at Amberley, Edinburgh and at Williamtown. Formed in 1965, the squadron's role has evolved from basic field communication centres and radio networks, to now providing IT systems through deployable networking solutions. The CIS elements from 1CCS scale from small, agile teams supporting a few users, to providing CIS solutions for large scale, expeditionary airbase activations.

The 1CCS mission is to provide assured network operations capability to enable the conduct of expeditionary air operations in support of the joint force.

WILLIAMTOWN HEALTH CENTRE

WLMHC provides health care to ADF members and ensures the health preparedness of all ADF personnel posted to the Newcastle area. Health Service delivery is provided by a mix of ADF, APS and contracted civilian staff. WLMHC is part of Joint Health Unit Northern NSW, Joint Health Command.

The Health Centre, on the corner of McNamara and Henderson Roads, provides sick parade, dental, pharmacy, mental health and psychology services, and occupational rehabilitation support for ADF personnel. With augmentation from 2EHS, WLMHC enables a health response for local military flying and an airfield emergency health response.

Opening Hours

7.30am-3.30pm Monday to Thursday,
7.30am-2.30pm Friday.

Sick parade: 7.30-10am daily.

Dental: 7.30am-3.30pm Monday to Friday.

Dental sick parade: 7.45-8.15am daily.

Mental health: 7.30am-3.30pm Monday to Friday.

Physiotherapy: 7.30am-3.30pm Monday to Friday, 7.30am-3.30pm Friday.

Physiotherapy sick parade: 7.30am-10.00am daily.

Pharmacy: 7.30am-2.30pm Monday to Thursday, 7.30am-3.30pm Friday.

For general enquiries and appointments call 02 4078 5048 or email jhunns.williamtownhc@defence.gov.au

For After Hours advice call 1800 IMSICK

In an emergency, please call 000.



WILLIAMTOWN SERVICE CONNECT HUB is located on the ground floor of the Len Waters Building (958) and includes representatives from service groups across RAAF Base Williamtown. Each customer service group provides its services direct to customers through the one physical location and through a number of individual access channels. Within Williamtown Service Connect Hub you will find the following services.

BASE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Service Delivery – East & West zone is a part of the Security and Estate Group and provides base management support to RAAF Williamtown.

Led by the base manager, the team has responsibility for the allocation and purpose of facilities, base security and access control, estate maintenance and upkeep, cleaning, land management, War on Waste, hospitality and catering. The Base Management Team is responsible for the coordination of base-wide plans which cover emergency management, security and work health and safety. The team can be contacted on 02 4034 5999 or basemanagement.wlm@defence.gov.au.

CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE

The Customer Service Centre is part of the Customer Service Network (CSN) providing information and assistance to ADO members, their families, visitors and external service providers on a wide range of products and services. Friendly staff are there to help with a range of enquiries including: pay, allowance, leave, change of name, personal data, D1 self-service, travel and individual readiness.

Depending on the nature, urgency and complexity of your enquiry, the team will be able to provide you with detailed information, resolve your enquiry or refer your enquiry to the appropriate specialist area. DPN terminals are available for you to access and staff can guide you through a range of self-service products.

Visit CSN at the hub 0800-1600 Monday to Friday or call the Defence Service Centre on 1800defence or email yourcustomer.service@defence.gov.au.

REGIONAL ICT

The Regional ICT team is your local team reacting to jobs logged through the ICT service desk or online. To log a job please call 133 272 or click on the ICT symbol on your Defence Projected Network home page.

If you are experiencing difficulties with jobs that have already been logged or need urgent assistance, you can contact WLM ICT Connect via Skype instant message, just type WLM ICT Connect into your Skype window.

RELOCATIONS & HOUSING TEAM

At RAAF Williamtown, the Directorate of Relocations and Housing (DRH) is represented by a small number of dedicated staff. The team is part of a network of defence relocations and housing officers who assist DRH with the provision of quality housing and related services to ADF members under national contracts and in accordance with Defence policy.

The DRH team assists ADF members and families with their relocations and housing enquiries. The key services offered by the DRH team to members and the Defence community include:

- Providing relocation and housing support to ADF members and their families
- Engaging with customers and service providers to assist in resolving issues relating to ADF housing benefits, maintenance, and removals
- Delivering essential functions including validation, invoicing, purchase order support and payments
- ADF tenant and removal services dispute resolution.

Enquiries can be directed to seg.drhm@defence.gov.au. Further information regarding accommodation options, application forms and to access DHA online services, visit DHA's website dha.gov.au or phone 139 342. For information regarding your removal and relocation queries, visit the Toll Transitions website tws.defenceuniform.movemaestro.com or phone 1800 819 167.

You can now manage you posting through Posting Connect, a dedicated portal that supports members through their domestic posting. The site provides a step-by-step guide through the posting process, with direct access to Toll Transitions and DHA.

HR SERVICES TEAM

The HR Services team works with APS employees and their supervisors regarding APS HR matters, including coaching on how to manage staff, difficult situations and difficult conversations, to workshop approaches to resolve your particular HR issues or concerns, will assist you in drafting responses where difficult messages may need to be given; work with you to find the answer to your HR query and provide advice and guidance on HR policy and procedures and much more.

Visit the team in the Service Connect Hub, phone 1800 333 362 or email yourcustomer.service@defence.gov.au.

BASE MAIL SERVICES

The Williamtown Base Mail Room is located in the retail precinct (Building A0960) and is open 0600 -1800 Monday to Friday. Please undertake safety checks of the mail while in the mail room, before taking to your workplace. Collection of mail is self-service only. All mail must meet Australia Post address standards and have a return to sender clearly identified (including unit name and box number). Outgoing mail is to be placed in one of the Street Post Boxes located outside of AAFCANs or in the NACC precinct carpark. To ensure you receive mail while at Williamtown, it is important that it is addressed correctly including your full name and unit details (including unit allocated box number). Additionally, on both arrival and posting out, it is important that you also update the Corporate Directory with your new details. For further information on Williamtown mail services visit My Base.

REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER

The Regional Environment and Sustainability Officer role is to ensure compliance under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1975*, as well as look for creative ways to work sustainably for long-term usability of our Defence estate. That can be challenging when we work across highly industrialised sites. However, working with ADF and APS personnel alongside base contractors, the committed team is making small and big gains in land management.



PHOTO: LAC Kurt Lewis

↑ RAAF Williamtown Ngarralbaa (Yarning Circle)
Officially opened by GPCAPT Anthony Stainton.

AIR WARFARE CENTRE



HEADQUARTERS TACTICS AND TRAINING DIRECTORATE

The Tactics and Training Directorate (TTD) came into operation within the Air Warfare Centre in 2017. It is tasked with the development of

multi-discipline, high-end integrated tactics and training across the Air Force and the joint force through a combination of training, education and integrated exercises. TTD will transform the way Air Force thinks about and teaches air warfare. It will also conduct operational analysis to inform integrated tactics analysis to better enhance war fighter effects. TTD incorporates No.88 Squadron and the Air Warfare School. The crest features Athena, the Ancient Greek goddess of war and wisdom, as well as an owl. Athena combined with the owl is a fitting allegory for TTD and its academic and integration function of the AWC motto, *Warfighter Ascendancy*.

THE EXERCISE CONTROL TEAM

The Exercise Control (EXCON) Team is a specialised workforce, contracted to perform specific tasks and solve complex problems to meet capability needs. EXCON collaboratively deliver specialised tasks and exercise services in the most applicable environment to assist Defence in the generation of superior war fighters and tactics.



NO.88 SQUADRON

No.88 Squadron (88SQN) was formed within the Air Warfare Centre during 2016 and was officially established as a unit on 9 January 2017. The mission of 88SQN is to maximise air power lethality through the delivery of proven high-end integrated tactics and training. Three core activities of the unit contribute to this mission: the annual Australian Weapons and Tactics Conference; the annual Australian Tactics Analysis Team; and the biennial Air Warfare

Instructors Course. Through these activities 88SQN develops, validates and disseminates the high-end integrated tactics required to give our aviators the winning edge.



NO.87 SQUADRON

No.87 Squadron (87SQN) was re-formed on 1 July 2006 and is Air Force's mission intelligence squadron. Geographically dispersed across seven RAAF bases, 87SQN comprises 10 tactical intelligence flights (TIFs), the headquarters (HQ) flight and the Training & Standards (T&S) Flight, providing leading-edge mission intelligence for Air Force to fight and win. 87SQN comprises approximately 170 talented and motivated personnel, predominantly air intelligence analysts and officers, with RAAF Base Williamtown being home to 87SQN HQ, T&S Flight, 81 TIF, CCT TIF and IAMD TIF. 87SQN personnel provide air intelligence support to a range of RAAF and ADF operations, exercises and activities across single service and joint domains.



AIR WARFARE SCHOOL

The Air Warfare School (AWS) was established in 2016 to deliver operational level advanced air warfare training (AAWT) in order to develop combat mastery of the tactical war-fighter in preparation for the operational level of war. To achieve this, AWS offers a suite of AAWT courses that emphasise the challenging facets of integrated multi-domain operations, command and control, joint air planning and targeting all set against the background of a complex, contested and denied environment. The AWS complement of courses is cross-career stream and delivers post initial employment training. Courses are aimed at personnel taking up positions in the Air Operations Centre, Headquarters Joint Operations Command or on Joint Task Force staff.



AIRCRAFT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT

Aircraft Research and Development Unit (ARDU) was formed in 1943 in response to intensifying operations in the Pacific theatre. Its purpose was to conduct flight testing of aircraft variants and airborne systems for tactics development and aerospace research. Since then ARDU has conducted flight testing in support of Defence, other governmental departments and aircraft manufacturers, with a spin-out unit of ARDU, Air Trials Unit, supporting activities such as missile and drone testing at Woomera and NASA's manned space program, Project Mercury. Ongoing development of the F-111 and F/A-18 Hornet were a cornerstone of its role in the 1990 and 2000s. ARDU now has test and evaluation flights at RAAF Bases Williamtown, Amberley and Edinburgh. Since its origin, ARDU's mission has evolved to focus on flight test of RAAF in-service and developmental aircraft. These operations occur throughout the continuum of test and evaluation from developmental through to operational test and evaluation.

RAAF DISTRIBUTED TRAINING CENTRE

Advanced Test and Training Directorate's RAAF Distributed Training Centre (RAAF DTC) is a fully accredited system capable of connection to the Defence Training and Experimentation Network (DTEN) and the Naval Continuous Training Environment (NCTE). The system provides AWC with a platform to conduct constructive forces generation, synthetic exercise control and exercise scenario development.

The RAAF DTC provides a networked synthetic distributed mission training system interconnecting simulators across Air Force, providing force-level training, experimentation and integration to support fifth-generation capability training and tactics development through exercises like Virtual Pitch Black and Magpie Alpha. The system, capable of running live, virtual and constructive simulations also provides operator development through mission-readiness exercises and work up activities for live exercise preparation. Through the DTEN and NCTE, the RAAF DTC supports connection to US and UK networks, enabling Air Force simulators' participation in Joint and coalition virtual exercises such as Navy's Viking Raider and Coalition Virtual Flag. The system is supported through a blended staff of Air Force personnel and industry partners.



↑ **Combat Controllers in the Field.**

OTHER KEY UNITS



SURVEILLANCE AND CONTROL SYSTEMS PROGRAM OFFICE (S&CSPO)

S&CSPO is part of the Capability & Acquisition Sustainment Group's Air Defence and Space Systems Division and provides acquisition and sustainment support of ADF Air & Space Surveillance and Control Branch and their installations. S&CSPO is delivering on acquisition projects, like the replacement of the fixed tactical air navigation aids and of the instrument landing system at 11 Defence sites across Australia. Simultaneously S&CSPO ensures operational capability by sustaining Chief of Air Force products across air traffic control systems and air battle management systems. Offering a supportive, innovative workplace, S&CSPO is committed to ensuring the team of ADF, APS and industry partners work together in a collaborative environment that values and empowers its people.



ADF WARFARE TRAINING CENTRE

The Australian Defence Force Warfare Training Centre (ADFWTC) is responsible for the provision of joint

individual training and education for ADO and selected overseas forces staff, and assists with the training of joint headquarters' staff in the concepts of joint warfare. The ADFWTC conducts approximately 30 online and residential courses and other activities annually reaching approximately 1,400 students in joint disciplines ranging from foundational joint concepts through to highly specialised courses.

The training and education is designed to prepare students for appointments in joint HQ and enables them to conduct the planning of

operations including supporting functions to those operational plans.

The courses conducted by the ADFWTC are: Introduction to Joint Operations (online), Joint Warfighting Basic, Joint Warfighting Intermediate, Joint Fires Effects and Targeting Staff Officer Course, Introduction to Amphibious Planning Course, Information Operations Staff Officers Course, Joint CIMIC Staff Planning Course, Mortuary Affairs Officer Course, Operations Contract Management Course and Overseas Joint Warfare Course. The ADFWTC also conducts a number of domestic and international mobile training team activities.



AIR WARFARE SYSTEMS PROGRAM OFFICE (AWSPO)

AWSPO is part of Aerospace Combat Systems Branch in Aerospace Systems Division, part of the broader Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group inside the Department of Defence. AWSPO is the primary CASG organisation responsible for delivering acquisition and sustainment outcomes to the lead-in fighter training system (LIFTS), combat control capability and advanced training and test environment.

OUR VISION: We drive transformative change to accelerate delivery of world-class capability to the ADF.

OUR MISSION: We acquire and sustain Air Force's operational aircraft fleet and related systems in support of Defence's Mission and Purpose.

Working in close collaboration with our Enterprise partners – capability manager and industry representatives, AWSPO seeks to deliver optimal value by balancing the cost, risk and performance of products and projects. AWSPO leadership is focused on maturing the asset management of the LIFTS to ensure it is capable of providing Air Force with a training system that is

responsive to fast-jet aircrew throughput demand, continues to be relevant and provides value-for-money through to 2032. We are also building advanced training, test and mission rehearsal environments to provide Air Force, Navy and Army with "live" and "synthetic" capabilities that are able to serve the needs of the integrated force over the next decade. We will also continue to evolve the level of coordination support provided to the combat control capability within 4SQN.

AWSPPO supports its customers (Air Combat Group, Air Warfare Centre and Maritime Warfare Centre), with an integrated workforce of ADF, public service and major service provider integrated work partner contractor personnel.



AIR COMBAT SYSTEMS PROGRAM OFFICE (ACSPO)

ACSPO is the unit within

Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group responsible for the asset management of Australia's next-generation fighter aircraft, the F-35A Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter. Australia's F-35A combat force is currently the largest and most capable fifth-generation fighter force outside of the United States and is at the forefront of Australia's air combat capability. This makes ACSPO's task of equipping and sustaining the F-35A fleet both exciting and critically important.

ACSPO works closely with 81 Wing to deliver the through-life support for the F-35A capability at their home bases of Williamstown and Tindal, and while they are operating domestically and internationally on Exercises. The ACSPO workforce consists of approximately 100 ADF, APS and contractor personnel working from RAAF Williamstown with some ongoing acquisition support provided from Canberra-based personnel. ACSPO partners with the Australian defence industry to provide engineering, maintenance, supply support, information systems and training services for the F-35A platform.

ACSPO is also the conduit into the US-based support organisations, specifically the F-35A Joint Program Office, providing Australia with a link into the global F-35A Lightning II program. This ensures ACG can continue to train and operate Air Force's fifth-generation aircraft now and into the future.



AIRBORNE SURVEILLANCE CONTROL AND INTELLIGENCE SYSTEMS PROGRAM OFFICE

Airborne Surveillance Control and Intelligence Systems Program Office (ASCISPO), formerly Airborne Early Warning and Control Systems Program Office, is a unit within Aerospace

Surveillance and Response Branch, Aerospace Systems Division of the Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group. ASCISPO is responsible for providing in-service support and upgrades for the E-7A Wedgetail capability and the MC-55A Peregrine airborne intelligence surveillance reconnaissance and electronic warfare capability.

ASCISPO has staff in both Williamtown and Edinburgh, co-located with the respective Air Force operating units. ASCISPO partners with defence industry and international military services to provide the engineering, maintenance, supply, and training services for both E-7A Wedgetail and MC-55A Peregrine capabilities. The ASCISPO motto, *Trusted to Deliver*, is derived from the unit vision, and reflects the importance of assuring capability delivery to Air Force for both programs.

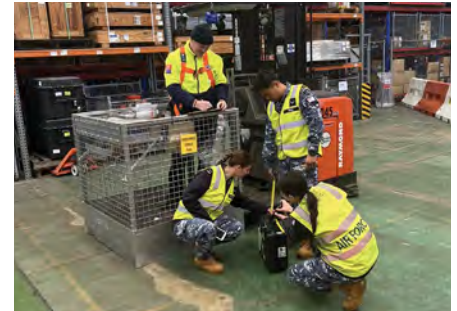


JOINT LOGISTICS UNIT EAST – WILLIAMTOWN

Joint Logistics Unit East – Williamtown (JLU(E)-W) is the primary warehouse facility at RAAF Williamtown and provides the base with an interface into the greater

ADF and JLC supply chain network.

The JLU(E)-W footprint consists of 20 RAAF members including three APS, working alongside 15 Linfox members. The role of JLU(E)-W is to provide warehousing and distribution services for all units at RAAF Base Williamtown. A non-exhaustive list of JLU(E)-W functions includes: storage of assets and inventory, distribution, both intra-site (locally) and inter-site (off-base)



↑ **Commonwealth and Linfox members from JLU(E)-W preparing a consignment.**

and dangerous goods storage. Traditionally JLU(E)-W largely supported the Classic Hornet fleet, but with the retirement of the Hornet, there is capacity for units and platforms to utilise JLU(E)-W capabilities.

CLUBS & SPORTS GROUPS

Joining one of the many social, welfare or recreation clubs at the base is a great way to make new friends.

RAAF WILLIAMTOWN BASE WELFARE has a number of clubs and sporting groups for the benefit of Defence members and offers membership at amazing rates. Whatever your interest, have a look at the Williamtown home page on the Intranet for details of clubs currently operating. This is just a sample.

FISHING CLUB

The Fishing Club clubroom is open every Wednesday from 4pm to 7pm for group discussion on what is biting where, with a monthly competition targeting those hotspots. Single membership is \$30, or \$50 for a family. Additional information can be found at the RAAF Williamtown home page under the Welfare and Base info tab. Visit <http://drnet.defence.gov.au/raaf/AirForce/WLMFISH/Pages/Welcome.aspx>.

FLYING CLUB

The RAAF Williamtown Flying Club runs for the benefit of Defence members and civilian employees of the base. It aims to promote camaraderie and an interest in aviation in a social setting. The club has numerous aircraft available for training and hire at some of the cheapest

rates in Australia. Training from *ab initio* through to Private Pilot's Licence is conducted on most weekends. Membership information can be found at rwfc.org.au or just head down to the club (Club Hangar, BLD 170), where on most Saturday mornings you'll find one of our friendly instructors or members to answer all your questions.

GOLF CLUB

The RAAF Williamtown Golf Club holds fortnightly events on 'Pay Friday' afternoons from February to November at various courses throughout the region. All levels of golfers are welcome to join and social players are welcome to participate, including visitors to the base (conditions may apply). Membership application forms and information can be found at the RAAF Williamtown home page under the Welfare and Base Info tab. Visit <http://drnet.defence.gov.au/raaf/AirForce/WLMGC/pages/Welcome.aspx>.

CAR AND HOBBY CLUB

The RAAF Williamtown Car and Hobby Club provides a dedicated area for Defence members and civilian employees to pursue hobbies such as vehicle maintenance, restoration and metal

working. The club offers a friendly environment to meet and work with like-minded people and to share knowledge. For more information, please visit <http://drnet.defence.gov.au/raaf/AirForce/WlmCarClub/Pages/Home-.aspx>, or just drop by the clubhouse across the carpark from the Kittyhawk Club. We look forward to seeing you there.

TOUCH CLUB

The RAAF Williamtown Touch Club was established for the benefit of Defence members and civilian employees, and operates a number of different grades including a mixed competition for all skill levels. The club runs a summer competition that commences in early February and a winter competition that starts in July, as well as informal touch games most Monday and Thursday lunchtimes. If interested, head to the playing fields and ask for a committee member or visit the webpage at <http://drnet.defence.gov.au/raaf/AirForce/RWTC/pages/Welcomes.aspx>.

WILLIAMTOWN MILITARY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Williamtown Military Christian Fellowship (WLM MCF) is an inclusive, non-denominational Christian initiative to support those with a Christian faith working at, or associated with, RAAF Williamtown. The service is available to all uniformed, APS and contractor staff and their families. WLM MCF is supported by the base chaplains and meets most Wednesdays from 11:40am to 12:30pm in the Len Waters Building (LWB-958-01-074-Meeting Room). Email Samuel.hays@defence.gov.au for more information or visit mcf-a.org.au.

CHAPLAINCY @ RAAF WILLIAMTOWN

RAAF Base Williamtown is served by a team of chaplains and support staff who provide chaplaincy services to Defence Force personnel and their families.



A WARM WELCOME

to each of you from the RAAF Base Williamtown chaplaincy team, comprising Senior Co-ordinating Chaplain Andrew Knox, Chaplains Mitch Herps, Gabriel Ezenwa, Stephen Gibbins and Janelle Moeck, assisted

by Chaplains Joe Ward and Mohamed Khamis (Reserves). The WLM chaplaincy team is here to support you in a number of ways, which primarily includes caring for you and your family if and when needed. Chaplaincy support is required for many and varied reasons by members seeking counsel or advice for specific religious/spiritual matters right through to everyday work and life events. There are many reasons why we often need a helping hand or a listening ear to help us deal with relationship problems, wellbeing concerns, workplace issues, grief and loss, or for when life gets a bit too hard; we all need someone to talk to.

Chaplains extend a welcoming hand as a friend and fellow member of Defence, so you know that confidentiality is assured (with few exceptions). Chaplains give you the time and pace you need to explore options and possibilities in a safe environment. We can also refer you on to other health professionals if need be while continuing to support you through that process as well.

The Chaplaincy Centre is located in the Community and Welfare Hub (BLD 589, near the North Gate), which we share with the teams from Defence Member and Family Support, Military Support Coordinators and Transitions, including a Veteran Support Officer from Defence Veterans Association, and representatives from Open Arms, RSL – LifeCare, and Soldier On.

The base chapels are still located at BLD 94 and continue to function as the chapel precinct. We encourage you to use the surrounding area and space there as a quiet place to sit and reflect, to have lunch or to just take some time out.

The chapels are also available to our members for those more sacred ceremonial moments in life, such as baptisms and weddings. The chaplaincy team is committed to supporting you and your families with any of these important life events.

The base chaplains provide on call 24/7 phone

support if an emergency arises and support is needed. That number is: 0457 772 854.

Almost every unit on base has a designated chaplain and we can join unit/section personnel in sport and fitness sessions, section meetings and social gatherings. We also provide briefings on topics such as mental health awareness, character and values development, and present wellbeing forums on a wide variety of topics such as resilience, workplace relationships and moral injury.

Additionally, we support a number of annual events and opportunities to get to know the wider base community.

We also support the promotion and awareness of the profiles of important Defence campaigns such as domestic violence and mental health and wellbeing.

RAAF WELFARE TRUST FUND

Chaplains are also agents for the RAAF Welfare Trust Fund loan service. This fund is available to all serving members for professional development expenses, new furniture or vehicles, holidays and travel, and so on. Please chat to us about the RAAF Welfare Trust Fund or check out their website: <http://drnet/raaf/AirForce/RWTF/Pages/Welcome.aspx>

On behalf of the Williamtown chaplaincy team it is a great joy to welcome each of you to Williamtown, and to Newcastle. We look forward to meeting as many of you as possible and we do hope your time at Williamtown is a genuinely wonderful experience.

We look forward to journeying with all who make up the very eclectic and diverse RAAF community here in the Newcastle area.

HUNTER DEFENCE SUPPORT NETWORK

The Hunter Defence Support Network (HDSN) is a not-for-profit organisation established in 2015 by a group of passionate Hunter business leaders and volunteers. Its key objective is to provide the local business community with an avenue to support the serving members of the ADF, believing it is imperative to develop, promote and maintain positive and productive relations between the Hunter business community and the ADF. The Hunter Community and the ADF have been close neighbours for over 75 years and RAAF Base Williamtown continues to be one of the largest single employers in the region.

HDSN works in partnership with the ADF and the Hunter community to raise support for base programs and activities. It educates the community and advocate for base interests. Each year, HDSN works with Defence leadership to determine specific ways to support the men and women of the ADF. Past initiatives have focused on financial planning, superannuation, health and wellbeing, disability support and employment. Recent events and seminars have included a property seminar, first aid course, multiple health and wellbeing seminars, home-based business, a focus on the NDIS for families with special needs and family fun with a day at Treetops Adventure Park.

As part of our effort to connect the base with its community, HDSN facilitates an Honorary Commanders (HC) Program which strengthens relationships between the leaders of the ADF and leaders within the Hunter community. The HC Program matches voluntary commanders from the Hunter business community with a participating Military Commander from RAAF Base Williamtown. The goal is to provide each unit on the base with an HC. Both community and military leaders personally benefit from the program through a mutual sharing and understanding of the leadership challenges faced by each other in different disciplines.

HDSN is committed to supporting ADF members posted to the Hunter to find appropriate housing, childcare and partner employment, as well as ensuring they are connected to the community as quickly as possible.

For further information or assistance email contact@hdsn.org.au, visit hdsn.org.au to see upcoming events and seminars, and 'like' the HDSN Facebook page to find out more about events.



RESERVE A CAREER

Defence Reservists have played an important part in Australian history since early colonial days.

THE RESERVE PRE-DATES Federation, when each of the states maintained locally based naval and army militia. Those forces served in the Sudan, in China during the Boxer Rebellion and in South Africa during the Boer War.

The modern Australian Army was drawn from that base at Federation on 1 January 1901, with the Royal Australian Navy and Royal Australian Air Force following some years later.

Volunteers participated in active service during World Wars I and II, with large numbers transferring to the permanent armed forces.

Since World War II, the role has changed gradually from separate Reserve units and formations, each with their own identities and roles, to a concept where permanent and Reserve personnel have combined to form a strong and viable force.

In early 2001, Federal Parliament passed key legislation to enhance and modernise the Reserve. This legislation affects both Reservists and their employers, and has resulted in significant changes to Reserve conditions of employment.

Reservists join the Navy, Army or Air Force as part-time members of the ADF. There are about 31, 000 Reservists (Service Categories 5, 4 and 3 and continuous full-time service (Service Option C) in the ADF. This represents about 53% of the total ADF workforce of 74, 834 (uniformed and APS). They are volunteers who bring with them civilian skills and experience and gain new skills as part of their Reserve training.

Reservists can join as new recruits or transfer from the full-time Defence Force. They are motivated individuals who are prepared to take on the challenge of training and, through their dedication and time, show a strong commitment to Australia.

Defence Reservists make a commitment to train and serve in the defence and protection of Australia. Further information can be found at airforce.adfcareers.gov.au/air-force-reserve.



↓ RAAF Aviators with Australian Air Force Cadet personnel during a tour of the 2023 Avalon International Airshow.

PHOTO: CPL David Cotton

COULD YOU BE A CADET?

Join the cadets and you'll be offered a taste of life in the Air Force that's like no other.

Joining the Australian Air Force Cadets (AAFC) provides an amazing opportunity to experience Air Force life.

As a cadet, you'll be offered inspiring and challenging military-like experiences plus learn valuable life and work skills that may open up new possibilities, opportunities and career options.

You can be a cadet if you're aged between 13 and 17 and most squadrons meet weekly (during school terms) for about three hours in an evening. Training is also conducted on some weekends during the year, and camps and specialist courses are held during most school holidays.

As part of the camps, teenagers swap civilian clothes for RAAF uniform. The General Service Training Camp gives cadets from No.3 Wing, which includes New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, the experience of working on base in the Air Force. You get to see different sections, ask questions of pilots, engineers and other staff, and experience life in barrack accommodation where you mix with other cadets from No.3 Wing.

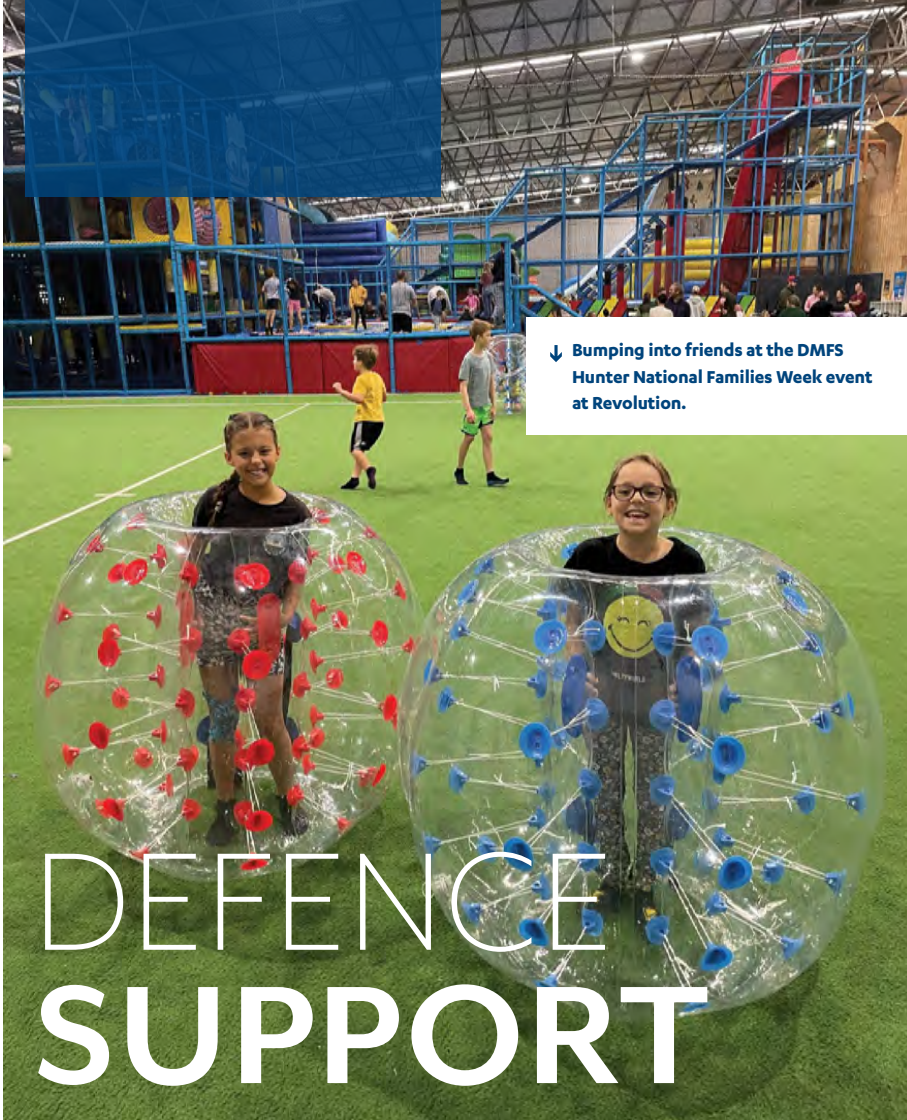
Becoming a Cadet also means you can try challenging and amazing activities that are partly paid for by the Australian Government through the AAFC. You will gain team-building skills,

develop leadership and survival skills, make new friends, have fun, experience challenges, learn to take responsibility and take part in physical education activities. You'll also learn about aviation through flying, gliding, aerospace studies, communications and navigation skills, air traffic control, aeromodelling, aircraft engineering, orienteering and map reading, safe weapons handling and first aid.

All new cadets are recruits and have the opportunity to be promoted through the ranks after they successfully complete each training stage. Cadets are then required to attend specific training courses for each rank above Leading Cadet. Cadets have the following promotion pattern:

- Cadet (CDT)
- Leading Cadet (LCDT)
- Cadet Corporal (CCPL)
- Cadet Sergeant (CSGT)
- Cadet Flight Sergeant (CFSGT)
- Cadet Warrant Officer (CWOFF)
- Cadet Under Officer (CUO).

If you are interested in joining the AAFC, contact your local Squadron via aafc.org.au. You will receive application forms and an overview of what is expected of you.



↓ **Bumping into friends at the DMFS Hunter National Families Week event at Revolution.**

DEFENCE SUPPORT

Defence offers a range of programs and services to help Australian Defence Force members and their families in the Williamstown area make the most of the opportunities and challenges of military life.

DEFENCE OFFERS A RANGE of programs and services to help ADF members and their families in the Williamstown area make the most of the opportunities and challenges of military life. Defence families make a significant contribution to the wellbeing of our ADF members and the success of their missions. In support of our ADF families, Defence Member and Family Support (DMFS) has a wide range of information and support for families to help them navigate military life.

DMFS delivers national programs and services to ADF families across Australia. There's support available at every stage, from the support for new recruits and their families adjusting to Defence life to partners and children managing the challenges of military life, to the time when a member transitions from permanent service. Support available from DMFS includes

assistance for partners' employment, help with finding childcare, deployment support, assistance for dependants with special needs, social worker support, relocation, support for community groups, help for families during crisis and emergency, and education support for children.

DMFS also holds a number of information sessions and social events throughout the year for military families in the region.

For more information about the services and programs, visit the website defence.gov.au/members-families, contact the 24/7 Defence Member and Family Helpline on 1800 624 608 or email the Helpline for advice at memberandfamilyhelpline@defence.gov.au.

YOUR LOCAL DMFS TEAM

The local DMFS team is made up of military and civilian staff, undertaking a variety of roles including military support, social work,

family liaison and transition support. The team provides a range of services to families across the region, including:

- support in times of crisis
- deployment and absence support
- mobility and relocation support
- professional counselling for personal, relationship and family problems
- information sessions, social or support groups
- local education advice and assistance
- special needs recognition and review
- partner employment assistance
- finding childcare.

Make sure you don't miss out on the virtual and face-to-face events DMFS hosts to build and maintain connection with other Defence families in the area. Go to DMFS's Eventbrite page where you can register for free tickets to events. You can also see what local events are on by visiting the events calendar on the website defence.gov.au/members-families. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and keep up-to-date with the latest DMFS news and events.

WHO CAN YOU MEET AT THE LOCAL OFFICE?

- **Defence social workers** are qualified professionals who are knowledgeable about the ADF and the military lifestyle.
- **Family liaison officers** have extensive knowledge of the region and can help families connect with local community groups and support services. They are also proactive in organising a range of information sessions and social events.
- **Education liaison officers** provide information and support to families around children's education and schools in the area.
- **Military Support officers** are uniformed members who provide advice, assistance and practical support in relation to military matters.

DMFS PROGRAMS & SERVICES

24-HOUR SUPPORT

If you need support, help, or advice at any time, contact the Defence Member and Family Helpline on 1800 624 608. The Helpline operates 24-hours a day, seven days a week and is staffed by qualified human services professionals, including social workers and psychologists.

PARTNER EMPLOYMENT

The Partner Employment Assistance Program provides funding for initiatives to assist ADF partners with employment when they are relocated on posting, or if their ADF member is medically transitioning, and for some reregistration costs. Partners have the flexibility of opting to receive services from Defence's

professional employment services provider or a provider of their choice.

DEPENDANTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Families who have dependants with special needs can get information and practical assistance to reduce the impact of relocation.

SUPPORT DURING DEPLOYMENT AND TIME APART

DMFS provides a range of services, practical assistance and products to help inform and prepare ADF members and families for every stage of deployment. Support includes advice

↓ **ADF families got up close with the animals at the DMFS Welcome to the Hunter region event held at Oakvale Farm.**



and referral to local support services, access to resilience programs, assistance in emergencies and crisis, and connection to community groups. Families can also opt in to receive regular deployment support calls by registering with the Defence Member and Family Helpline on 1800 624 608.

CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

DMFS has dedicated Education Liaison Officers to provide advice to families, and funds Defence School Mentors to support Defence children through changing schools and times of parental absence.

ACCESS TO CHILDCARE

DMFS maintains a network of childcare centres around Australia, with priority placement for ADF families. Families who are facing difficulties accessing childcare, such as when they move to a new area or change their work or care arrangements, can also access an individual case management service to help them find registered childcare services in their local community.

EMERGENCY AND CRISIS SUPPORT

DMFS provides a range of practical and emotional support programs for families facing emergency or crisis, including assistance in time of illness, injury, domestic crisis or bereavement. Members and their families can access 24-hour support, social work and assessment, or referral from the all-hours Defence Member and Family Helpline.

TRANSITION TO CIVILIAN LIFE

Joint Transition Authority delivers support to members and their families transitioning to Reserves Service or separating from the ADF. There is a range of support programs to assist ADF members and their families when they transition to civilian life, enabled by a transition coach. The coach helps to build a personalised

package of support based on the circumstances and post-transition goals of the member and their family. The coach remains with the member and their family for up to two years post transition. For more information, please email transition.wlm@defence.gov.au.

SUPPORT FOR RESERVISTS

The families of Reserve members can access a broad range of support services when the Reservist is on continuous full-time service or away on deployment or exercise.

PARENTS

DMFS offers information and support services for the parents of ADF members to help them understand and manage the challenging aspects of having a son or daughter in the services.

CONNECTION WITH COMMUNITY

Defence families are strongest when they are connected with their local communities. DMFS provides a number of support and information services to help families connect with and contribute to their community.

CONTACT DMFS

The Defence Member and Family Helpline is your first point of call for support, information and connection with your local community. It is staffed by qualified human services professionals, including social workers and psychologists, who can assist you 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Phone 1800 624 608

Email memberandfamilyhelpline@defence.gov.au

Website defence.gov.au/members-families



MAILING LIST

Scan the QR code to join the DMFS Hunter mailing list and keep up-to-date with information.

↓ **ADF members posted to RAAF Williamtown enjoying an ice-cream at DMFS Hunter's 'Get the Scoop' event.**



Australian Government
Defence

Welcome to the Hunter

Defence Member and Family Support

ADF members and their families are invited to join us at the Hunter Welcome Event.
Hunter Valley Wildlife Park, Nulkaba
22 February 2025
Visit eventbrite www.eventbrite.com.au for updates, or email DMFS.Hunter@defence.gov.au for more information.

Defending Australia and its National Interests
www.defence.gov.au



RAAF WILLIAMTOWN
AVIATION HERITAGE CENTRE

AVIATION HERITAGE CENTER



↑ RAAF WLM main gate 1988 with gate guardians.

The Williamtown Aviation Heritage Centre (AHC), operated on behalf of Air Force by Fighterworld Inc, is part of Air Force's History and Heritage Branch, and is the public face of RAAF Base Williamtown.



THE GOAL OF THE AHC IS TO SHOWCASE THE HISTORY OF THE AIR FORCE, the history of military aviation in the Hunter/New England region, the evolving role of RAAF

Base Williamtown as the headquarters of Air Combat Group and Surveillance and Response Group and the location of many other RAAF and ADF units, and the special relationship between the base and the local community.

Williamtown AHC began as Fighter World, which itself had its origins in the original RAAF Williamtown Base Museum. Moves began for an aircraft museum at the base in 1966 with the first aircraft, a CAC Boomerang, donated by the Blacktown Squadron of the Air League. The Fighter World display started in the early 1980s with a wartime hut and the aircraft that were on open display at the front gate – the gate guardians consisting of an Avon Sabre, Gloster Meteor and a De Havilland Vampire.

The aircraft were painstakingly restored by squadrons that have proud histories of operations at RAAF Williamtown. The Sabre A94-951 was sponsored by 3 Squadron and is

Painted in 3 Squadron colours. The Meteor A77-875 was operated by 77 Squadron in Korea and painted in the original colours of that aircraft. This aircraft was also part of 75SQN's first all jet aerobatic team named the Meteorites, formed at Williamtown in 1955.

During 2023, Meteor 875 was moved to RAAF Wagga AHC and was replaced by A77-851 'Halestorm', a historically significant aircraft for RAAF Williamtown. On 27 March 1953, SGT George Hale, flying his 77SQN Meteor aircraft in Korea, engaged and successfully shot down a MiG 15 fighter aircraft in the last air-to-air engagement of the Korean War and to this date by a RAAF aircraft. 'Halestorm' has been restored and is now on display at the AHC.

The Vampire A79-1 is a tribute to 26 Squadron whose technicians rescued it from severe deterioration related to its time spent sitting in the open and it remains one of the very few intact aircraft of its type. It was also the first Vampire built in Australia.

The AHC is continually expanding the collection of Air Force aircraft and artefacts. In March 2020, the AHC took delivery of PC-9A(F)



↑ Three Gloster Meteor F.8s (A77-882, 875 and 870) of the Meteorites aerobatic team from No.78 Fighter Wing, RAAF Williamtown c 1957.



↑ CAC Boomerang of 2 Operational Training Unit, 1943.

from 4SQN A23-020. That aircraft completed the 4SQN display from Sopwith Camel to Winjeel to PC-9, showing the history from 4SQN Australian Flying Corps of 1916 to the 4SQN of today.

Other aircraft in the collection include single and dual seat Mirage IIIs, a Macchi, an F-111 and PC-9, as well as other non-RAAF aircraft and replicas including Spitfire (operated by 452 and 453 Squadrons during World War II). A3-3 was the first Mirage built in Australia and A3-102 is the famous 'Daphne the Dual'. These aircraft are on permanent loan from the RAAF Museum, Point Cook and their superb condition is a testament to the skills of the men and women of 481 Wing who maintained them during their service life.

Acquired in 2022 was A21-023 Worimi Hornet, which entered RAAF service on 8 February 1988. In February 2015 the aboriginal artwork on this aircraft was unveiled at the Avalon Airshow, demonstrating Air Force's commitment to Indigenous men and women who have served and continue to serve in the Australian Defence Force. The livery was designed by the Balarinji design agency and the aircraft features the pilot markings of the late Warrant Officer Len Waters, Air Force's first known Aboriginal fighter pilot.

The Williamstown AHC is operated by Fighterworld Inc, under an agreement signed in 2014 for Fighterworld Inc's continued management of the Air Force aircraft collection held at the AHC, under the governance and direction of Reserve staff from History and Heritage Branch – Air Force.

The Newcastle community, local RSLs,

Port Stephens Council and local businesses contributed significant resources to the development of the original premises for Fighterworld, which celebrated its 30th anniversary in February 2021 at a joint event celebrating the 80th anniversary of RAAF Williamstown.

There are plans within Air Force for extensive redevelopment of the facilities in coming years to enable the proper storage and display of the aircraft collection.

The AHC supports numerous RAAF associations and will continue to maintain these strong historical regional links.

The volunteers at the AHC are the lifeblood of the organisation. They provide assistance and advice to restore and preserve our collection, research and catalogue historical artefacts, maintain and improve the facilities and inform and educate the many visitors. Without the volunteers, much of the work including the restoration of the 'Raymond Terrace Sabre', the construction of the 4SQN AFC Sopwith Camel replica and the restoration of the Spitfire replicas, could not have been achieved.

The Williamstown AHC is part of the network of Air Force Heritage Centres across Australia. Centres are at RAAF Bases at Townsville, Amberley and Wagga, with plans for a centre at RAAF Richmond and a heritage park at RAAF Woomera. Centres tell a unique story relevant to their base.

If you need help in managing or preserving your squadron artefacts, or in marking an



important squadron event, please contact the AHC via the Manager of the AHC (admin@fighterworld.com.au) or WGCCDR Linda New, the AF Liaison Officer and Collection Manager for the WLM AHC (Linda.New@defence.gov.au).

The AHC is an excellent training and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and maths) facility showcasing the history of developments in aircraft, armament and other technologies such as radar. Come and talk to one of our volunteers today about joining the team and learning more about the history of your trade.



↑ CAC Avon Sabre A94-951.



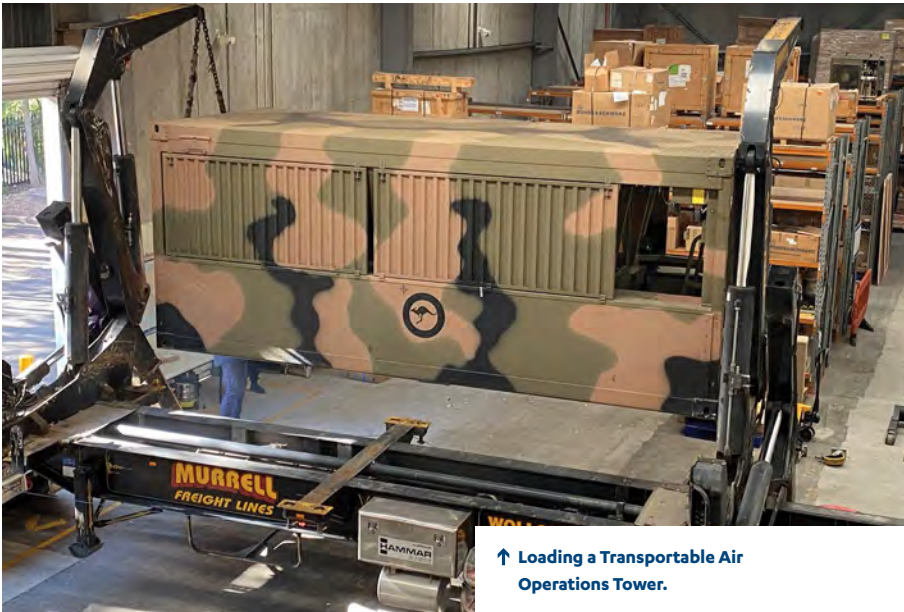
↑ A21-023 Worimi Hornet.



↑ The 4SQN Sopwith Camel.

INDUSTRY PARTNERS

The squadrons at Williamtown rely on the support of industry partners, including aircraft maintenance and essential services to operate the airfield infrastructure.



↑ Loading a Transportable Air Operations Tower.

ROHDE & SCHWARZ

Rohde & Schwarz Australia is a subsidiary of a German company founded in 1933 as a small radio frequency test and measurement company. It now develops and manufactures electronic goods for Defence, industry, infrastructure operators and government customers. Rohde & Schwarz is also among the global technology leaders in integrated secure communications solutions, including air traffic control and military communications, spectrum monitoring, UAV/drone detection, cybersecurity and network technology.

The company employs more than 12,000 people including 100 Australians in Sydney, Brisbane, Canberra, Adelaide, Melbourne and Williamtown.

Three Transportable Air Operations Towers (TAOTs) delivered and maintained by Rohde & Schwarz provide the RAAF with a deployable Air Traffic Control capability to support remote military operations and provide aid to the community. A tower (pictured above) was deployed to RAAF Curtin during Exercise Talisman Sabre 23. The Rohde & Schwarz team works closely with the Surveillance and Control Systems Program Office at RAAF Williamtown, and is performing major mid-life upgrades to the TAOTs, which are

based at RAAF Amberley unless deployed. Rohde & Schwarz is proud to continue its support to the RAAF and No.44 Wing into the future. To find out more, go to rohde-schwarz.com/au.

BOEING

Boeing Defence Australia has operated at Williamtown for more than 20 years in support of critical aircraft and systems. BDA employees support the Wakulda air battlespace management system and Wedgetail in-service support, which covers sustainment, engineering and maintenance. boeing.com.au

ROLLS-ROYCE

Rolls-Royce has powered the Australian Defence Forces for the past 100 years. The relationship began when the first Rolls-Royce powered aircraft entered service with the Royal Australian Navy in 1920 and the RAAF in 1921. This was the Fairey IIIID, featuring an Eagle 8 engine.

Throughout the past century, Rolls-Royce has continued to deliver innovative and technological expertise across all Defence sectors within the Commonwealth of Australia. A Rolls-Royce Adour engine powers the Hawk Mk 127 used for lead-in

fighter training at No.76 Squadron. The engine is supported on-site by Rolls-Royce Field Service Representatives embedded with the squadron.

Rolls-Royce is proud to be a long-term partner of the ADF, committed to strengthening military capability to support the security and stability of the Commonwealth of Australia.

CAE AUSTRALIA

Since 2017, CAE Australia has sustained critical instructional, operational, engineering, and maintenance support on the RAAF Lead-In Fighter training program, including two Hawk 127 Full Mission Simulators (FMS) at RAAF Base Williamtown and one Hawk 127 FMS at RAAF Base Pearce. Classroom and simulated training ensures Hawk aircrew train in a safe, immersive and high-fidelity environment, experiencing the effects and complexities of individual and collective training. The RAAF Williamtown Hawk 127 FMS completed over 10,000 training events in the first five years of operation. CAE Australia has provided ab-initio and advanced training for ADF personnel for over 29 years, from entry-level training devices and courseware to the networking of advanced full-mission simulators operating in a joint environment. cae.com.

NORTHROP GRUMMAN

Working alongside RAAF, Northrop Grumman Australia delivers long-term aviation maintenance support for its KC-30A Multi-Role Tanker Transport, C-27J Spartan and Special Purpose Aircraft fleets and provide sustainment services at its Electronic Sustainment Centre. NGA also contributes to security of RAAF Base Williamtown through maintenance and training support for the Expeditionary Tactical Automated Security System. This mobile security system is utilised as a force multiplier for RAAF SECFOR units to protect Ground and Air Assets, on base and in the field. northropgrumman.com/Australia

LOCKHEED MARTIN

Lockheed Martin has designed, built and now sustains Australia's fleet of F-35 Lightning II Joint Strike Fighters in partnership with the Australian Department of Defence and industry team. It has established its largest F-35 sustainment footprint outside the USA at Williamtown, providing a range of technical, logistics, training and information support services directly to the RAAF and leading a local industry partnership to support Australian and regional F-35s. It is also actively engaged in the support of the RAAF PC-21 Forward Air Control capability operated by No.4 Squadron, the RAAF Tactical Air Defence Radar System operated by No.41 Wing and is at the forefront of developing the world-leading RAAF air battle management capability under Project Air 6500.



It's a new dawn for TAOT

We're now completing mid-life upgrades to the Transportable Air Operations Towers, having delivered the capability more than 10 years ago as prime systems integrator.

These upgrades ensure the RAAF has the latest technology to support deployed operations in defence of Australia for years to come.

PROTECTED. CONNECTED. TRUSTED.

ROHDE & SCHWARZ

Make ideas real



← Newcastle Airport International Terminal, viewed from landside.

NEW INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL LANDING 2025

Newcastle Airport is a rapidly developing international gateway for NSW.

NEWCASTLE AIRPORT is undergoing a \$250 million redevelopment of its terminal, runway and surrounds, with \$121 million in Federal Government funding, repositioning the Hunter Region both domestically and internationally. The state-of-the-art terminal will support international flights and freight services, transitioning the Hunter into a global player. The redevelopment is set to generate 4,400 jobs and \$12.7 billion in economic activity over the next 20 years.

Newcastle Airport is the gateway to the largest regional economy in the country. In 2023, it serviced approximately 1.25 million passengers, with numbers growing each year post-pandemic. The airport currently contributes more than \$1.16 billion to the regional economy each year and already supports more than 5,600 jobs. In May 2021, the government committed \$66 million to upgrade the airfield the airport accesses from RAAF Base Williamtown. The upgrade to Code E status allows wide-bodied, long-haul aircraft to fly in and out, opening up the region to the world.

GREEN GATEWAY TO NSW

In 2024, through the purchase of Australian Carbon Credit Units from the Tasman Environmental Markets in combination with its established Power Purchase Agreement with Flowpower for 100 percent renewable energy, Newcastle Airport achieved its goal to reach net zero emissions (Scope 1 & 2) by 2030 six years early. It is the second airport in Australia to achieve Level 4 status in the Airport Carbon Accreditation Program, and its terminal expansion is targeting the 5-Star Green Star accreditation, which if achieved, will make it one of the greenest in Australia.

In 2025, as part of the completion of the international terminal expansion, a new electrical substation will be switched on, engaging 1,236 solar panels built into the roofing structure of the airport's Premium Covered car park. The 710kW system will produce over a million kilowatts of power each year, providing more than 30 percent of the airport's energy needs and propelling Newcastle Airport's long-term sustainability goals.

FLY THE NEW WAY

In partnership with six leading airlines, Newcastle Airport offers direct flights to 11 domestic destinations, including Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide, Canberra and Cairns, and connects onwards with over 65 destinations worldwide, with over 250 flights a week. For more information on flights, and to book parking, see newcastleairport.com.au.

AEROSPACE PRECINCT

Williamtown is fast fulfilling its potential as a world-class aerospace, Defence and innovation hub. At its core is Astra Aerolab, which fosters industry growth and collaboration between the ADF, Defence Primes, SMEs and other industries. Adjacent to Newcastle Airport and RAAF Base Williamtown, the 124ha development precinct is designed to enhance Australia's ability to deliver world-class sustainment and manufacturing capability to the Defence sector, and will supply enough land for Williamtown's forecast for Defence and business growth over the next 10-15 years.

Stages 2-5 subdivision works are now complete, and construction of two current DA-approved office and industrial buildings is set to begin in 2025 with completion the following year. Designed to



↑ International arrivals hall.



↑ Astra Aerolab commercial office building.



↑ Astra Aerolab office and light industrial building.

increase workforce engagement and productivity, the amenities and spaces will be filled with natural light. The approved office building is targeting a five-star Green Building rating assessment by the Green Building Council Australia. Stage 1 leasing is now open. Learn more at astraerolab.com.au.

IMAGES: artists' renderings, courtesy Newcastle Airport.

UPLIFTING OPPORTUNITY

Every aspect of Astra Aerolab is designed to uplift performance.

With outstanding integration of technology and lifestyle, co-located with RAAF Base Williamtown and Newcastle Airport, this is a unique opportunity to join the world's leading defence, aerospace and innovation precinct.

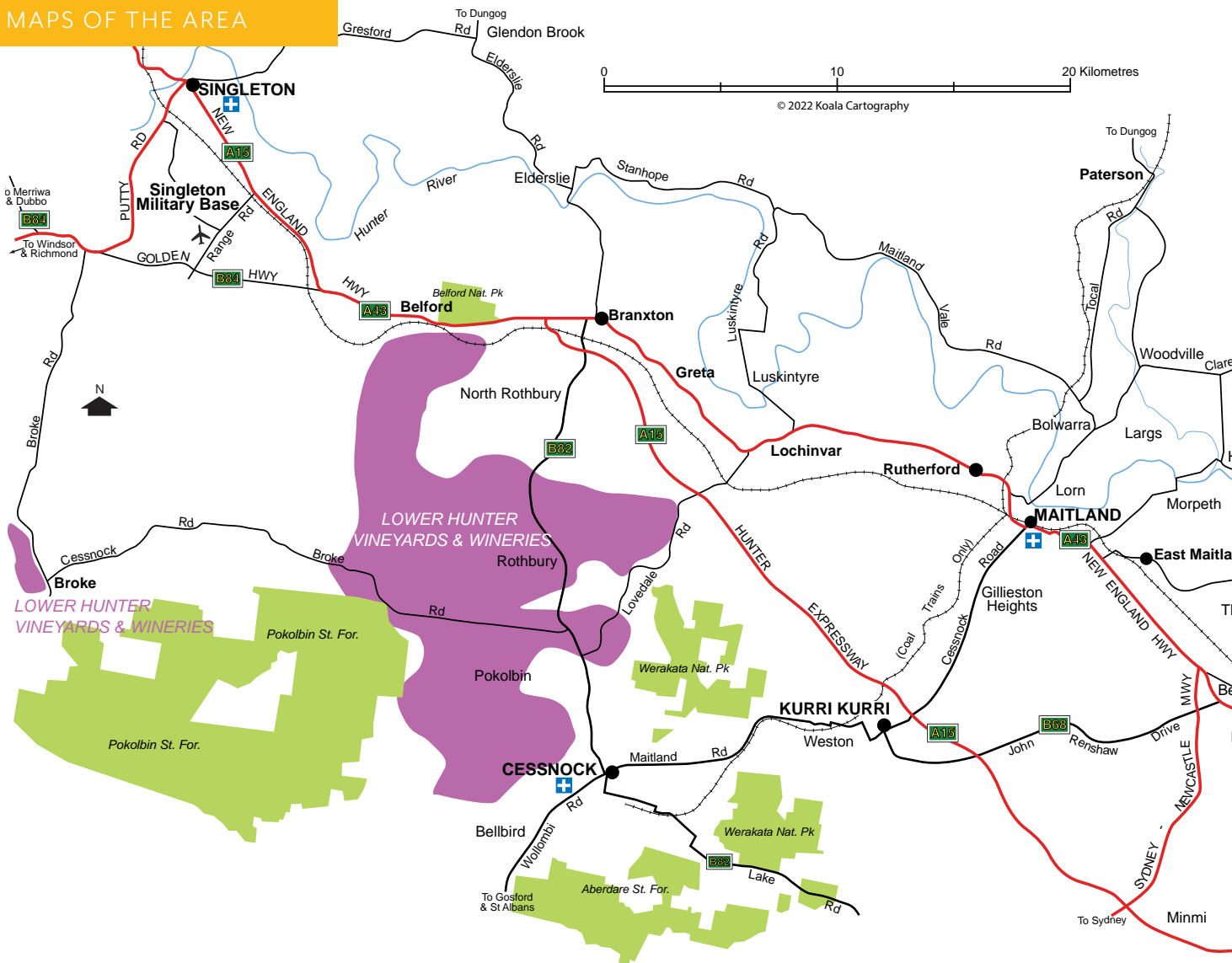
Leasing opportunities now available.

Enquiries:
+61 423 016 745
enquiries@newcastleairport.com.au

Newcastle Airport,
RAAF Base Williamtown, NSW, Australia
astraerolab.com.au



MAPS OF THE AREA



THE HUNTER

New South Wales, Australia



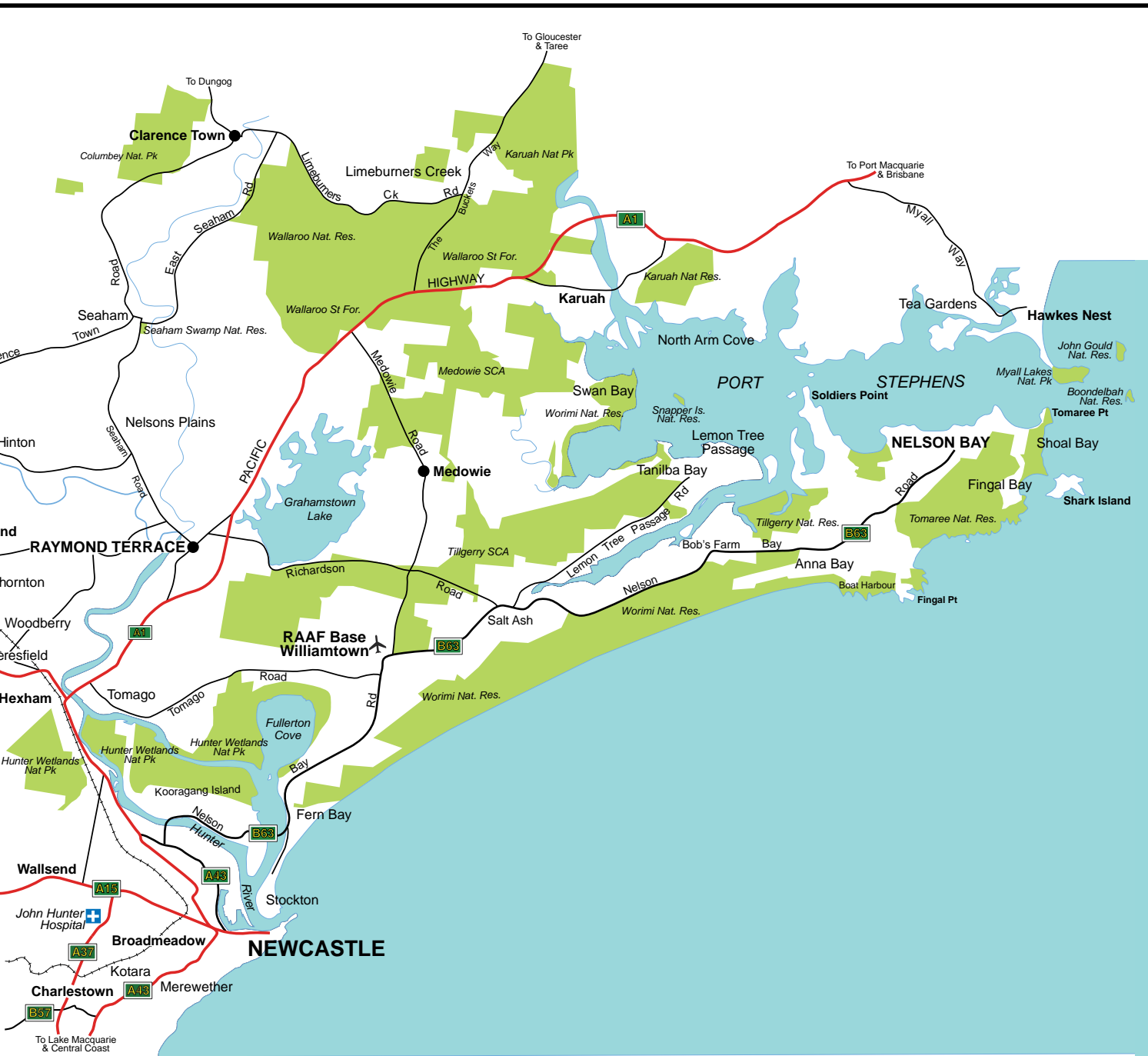

MARINA
ICE CREAMERY

THE MARINA ICE CREAMERY is Australia's top independent ice-cream retailer and has served the people of Port Stephens and its visitors for 30 years.

Located on the waterfront at the d'Albora Marina, we source only Australian-made products to offer over 50 flavours of the finest gourmet-quality ice cream, gelato and sorbet.

Delicious pancakes, waffles & great coffee too.

Open 7 Days - 02 4984 1788 - d'Albora Marina, Nelson Bay - marinaicecream.com.au



NAB Defence Force Home Loans

Proudly serving those who serve

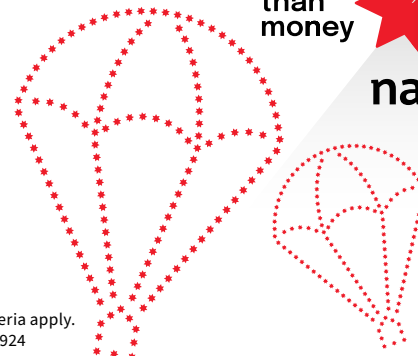
Let's talk

Graeme Warner
0412 891 551
graeme.j.warner@nab.com.au

more than money

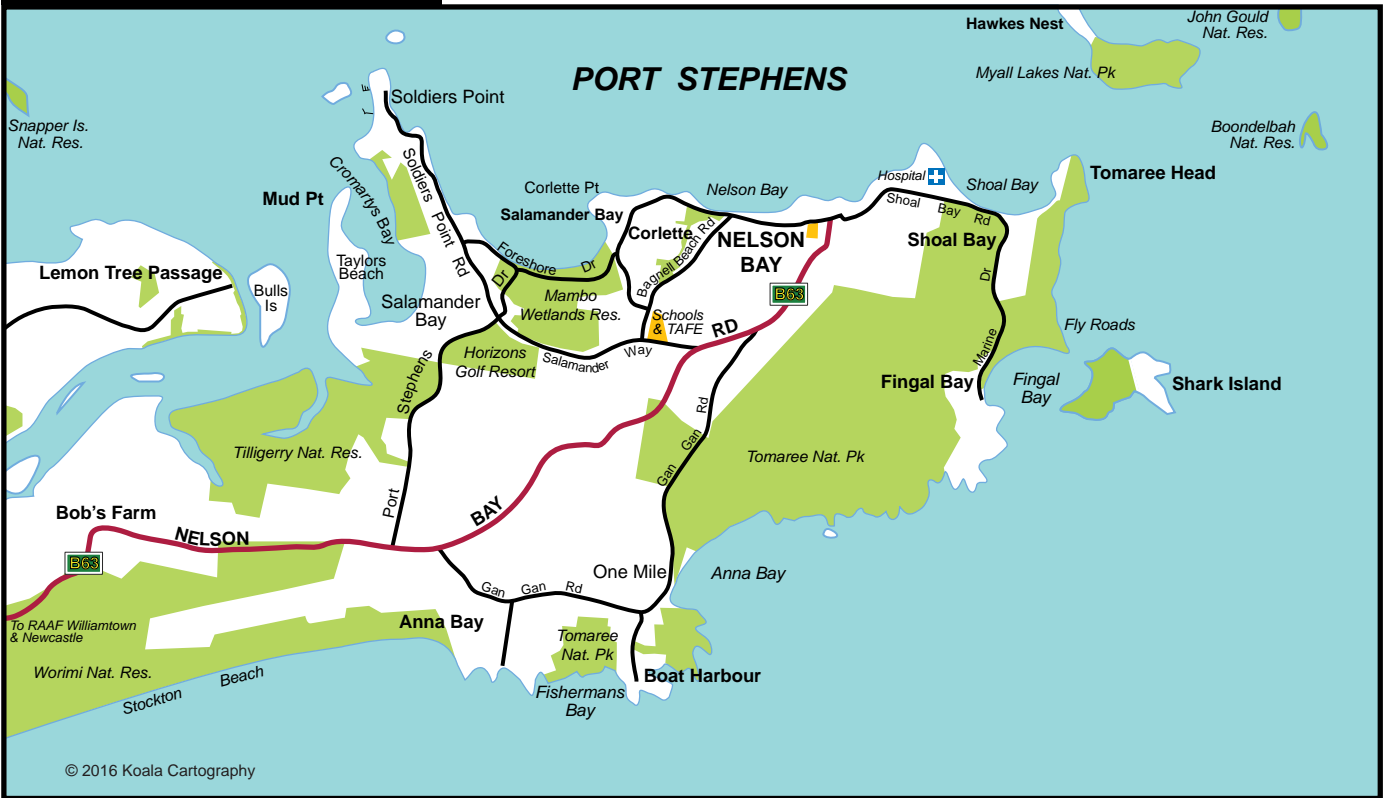


nab



Only available to eligible Defence Force members. Terms, conditions, fees, charges and eligibility and lending criteria apply.
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PORT STEPHENS



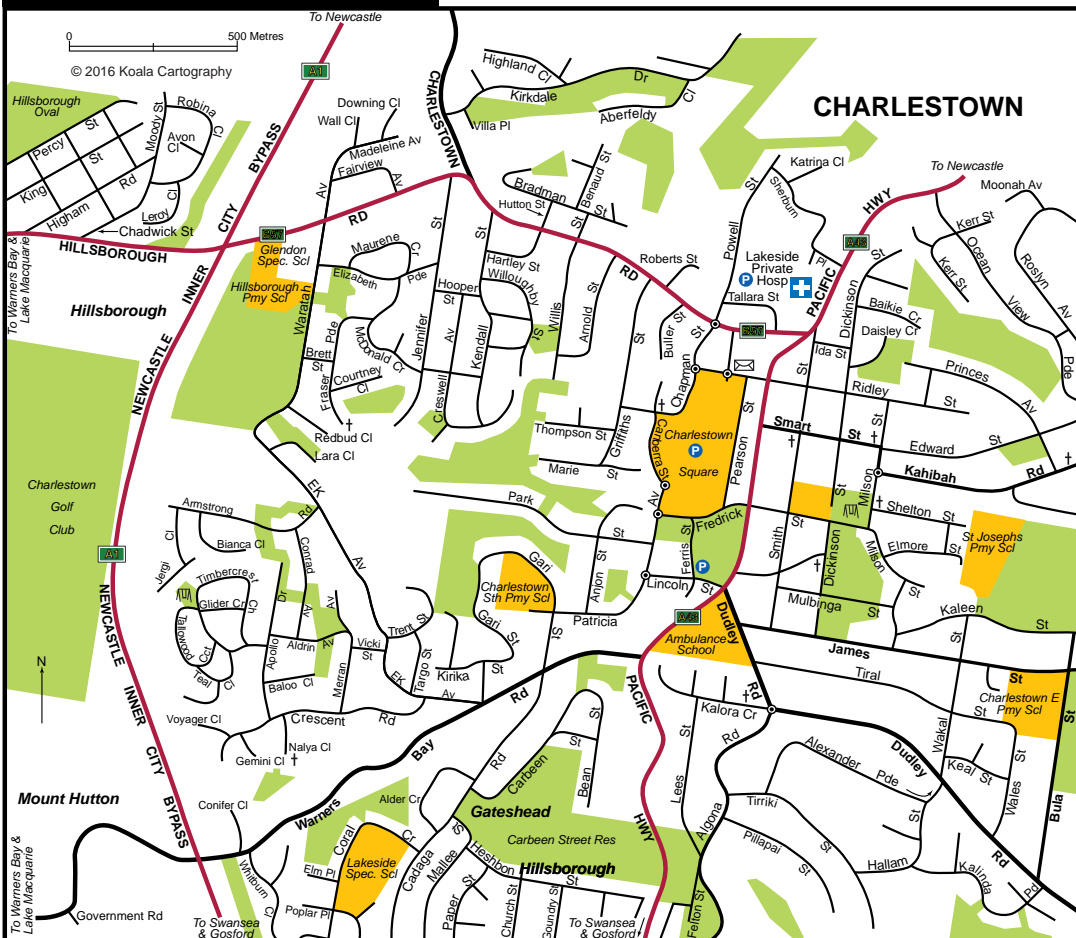
MEDOWIE



EAST MAITLAND



CHARLESTOWN



LOCAL SERVICES

PHOTO: Destination NSW

To help you and your family settle into the region, here's a quick services guide.

RAAF BASE WILLIAMTOWN is in the Port Stephens region, about 30km north of Newcastle and 180km north of Sydney. Many Williamtown personnel live in the Port Stephens Council area.

Surrounding local government areas include: City of Newcastle 02 4974 2000,

newcastle.nsw.gov.au

Maitland City Council 02 4934 9700,

maitland.nsw.gov.au

Dungog Shire Council 02 4995 7777,

dungog.nsw.gov.au

Midcoast Council 02 7955 7777,

midcoast.nsw.gov.au.

PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL

Administration offices: 116 Adelaide Street, Raymond Terrace, open 8.30am-5pm Monday

to Friday. Call 02 4988 0255 (including after-hours emergency), portstephens.nsw.gov.au.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Trains run from Sydney and the Central Coast, and from Maitland and the Hunter region, to the Newcastle Interchange. From there a light rail runs to Newcastle Beach, stopping at Queens Wharf for the Stockton ferry. Newcastle has a good public bus network. See transportnsw.info/regions/newcastle-hunter for maps and timetables.

Various bus lines operate throughout the region. The Newcastle Transport website (newcastletransport.info) has information on Newcastle buses and ferries, while Hunter Valley Buses (cdcbus.com.au) and Port Stephens Coaches (pscoaches.com.au) cover the regional areas.

AIRPORT

Newcastle Airport shares a runway with Williamtown RAAF. It is serviced by Jetstar, Virgin Australia, Qantas, Link Airways, FlyPelican and Eastern Air Services, with direct flights to Adelaide, Ballina, Brisbane, Cairns, Canberra, Cobar, Gold Coast, Lord Howe Island, Melbourne, Narrabri and Sydney. The airport is serviced by two bus companies. For timetables and information see cdcbus.com.au and pscoaches.com.au, or download the Tripview app. Parking is available at the airport from \$9/hour or \$60/day.

For flights and other airport information, see newcastleairport.com.au.

To learn more about the airport and its expansion plans, see page 28.



 <p>MONDAY - FRIDAY 6AM-4PM SATURDAY & SUNDAY 8AM-4PM</p> <p>49 MEDOWIE RD, WILLIAMTOWN (located next to fighter world)</p> <p>PRE ORDER ON 4965 0992</p> <p>CONTACT US AT: fighterbeanscafe@gmail.com media #fighterbeanscafe</p>	 	<h2>FIGHTER BEANS CAFE & CENTRAL BEANS CAFÉ</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grab & Go Menu All Day Breakfast Outdoor Undercover Seating Conference Room Available Gluten Free Menu Aircraft Viewing Area In House Made Foods 	 	 <p>MONDAY - FRIDAY 6AM-3PM</p> <p>BUILDING E, 1.01 TECHNOLOGY PLACE, WILLIAMTOWN (Next To Central Health Alliance)</p> <p>PRE ORDER ON 4989 5191</p> <p>CATERING ENQUIRES: centralbeanscafe@gmail.com #centralbeanscafe</p>
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LIBRARIES

Port Stephens Council libraries provide free lending and information assistance. A wide selection of books, magazines, newspapers, audio books and music is available. Computer access, internet and wi-fi are also available free of charge, in addition to printing, photocopying, scanning and charge stations for phones and devices. A mobile printing service allows you to upload documents from your computer, tablet or smartphone to be printed at the Raymond Terrace or Tomaree Library.

- **Raymond Terrace Library**, 18A Sturgeon Street. 02 4988 0111.
- **Tilligerry Community Library**, 46 Meredith Avenue, Lemon Tree Passage. 02 4982 3477.
- **Tomaree Library & Community Centre**, 7 Community Close, Salamander Bay. 02 4988 0670.
- **Mobile library** with 10,000 items on board, the mobile library visits 13 locations throughout our region. 02 4988 0111.
- **Seed library** – ‘borrow’ and grow, then harvest and share.
- **eLibrary** – library members can access a large collection of ebooks, audiobooks, magazines, news, music and movies. You can view the eLibrary with the Newcastle Libraries app (android and Apple devices).

portstephens.nsw.gov.au/services/library

COMMUNITY CENTRES & HALLS

Council provides community centres and halls, mostly run by volunteers, that are available for hire. For more information go to portstephens.nsw.gov.au and search 'hiring a hall'.

SWIMMING POOLS

- **Lakeside Leisure Centre**, 8 Leisure Way, Raymond Terrace. 02 4987 2039, lakesidelc.com.au
- **Tilligerry Aquatic Centre**, 1195 Lemon Tree Passage Road, Mallabula. 02 4982 4730, tilligerryac.com.au
- **Tomaree Aquatic Centre**, 3 Aquatic Close, Salamander Bay. 02 4981 2848, tomareeac.com.au

DOG OFF-LEASH AREAS

Port Stephens has a number of parks where dogs may be exercised off-lead. portstephens.nsw.gov.au/services/dog-parks

UTILITIES

You will need to arrange your own utilities such as electricity, gas, pay TV, internet services or telephone. You should contact your local service providers, or you may like to take advantage of the free Fast Connect service, which will arrange for the disconnection and reconnection of utilities on your behalf, see fastconnect.net.au.



PHOTO: Destination NSW

FLOOD, FIRE & EMERGENCY

In the event of a life-threatening emergency call 000 to connect to Police, Fire and Ambulance. For assistance or information for:

- floods or storms call 132 500, ses.nsw.gov.au
- Bush fire information line 1800 679 737, rfs.nsw.gov.au

HOSPITALS & HEALTHCARE

Newcastle has public and private hospitals. The largest public hospital is the John Hunter. Port Stephens has Tomaree Community Hospital and Maitland also has a public and private hospital. The Hunter New England Health website (hnehealth.nsw.gov.au) has information on public healthcare services in the region.

To find a GP, hospital or other health service near you, visit the government-funded Health Direct website (healthdirect.gov.au) which also offers approved health information and advice.

SHOPPING

The region around Williamstown is well serviced with supermarkets, shopping centres and retail stores. Newcastle offers all the city amenities, while Raymond Terrace, East Maitland and Charlestown also offer a good range of stores and services. Nearest to RAAF Williamstown Base, Medowie has a variety of shops and services along Ferodale Road, including Coles and Woolworths. Also nearby, **Foodworks Salt Ash** at the corner of Richardson and Nelson Bay Roads, is open 24 hours, seven days a week (foodworks.com.au).

Here is a quick guide to some of the larger shopping centres in the area.

- **Charlestown Square**, 30 Pearson Street, Charlestown. Aldi, Coles, Woolworths, Dan Murphy's, Liquorland, Myer, Target, Big W, Priceline, retail stores, banks, services, food outlets and cinema. charlestownsquare.com.au
- **MarketPlace Raymond Terrace**, Library Lane, Raymond Terrace. Woolworths, Big W, cafes, retail stores and services. marketplacerraymondterrace.com.au
- **Marketown**, 23 Steel Street, Newcastle West. Coles, Woolworths, Dan Murphy's, Liquorland, Officeworks, Big W, retail stores, cafes, banks and services. marketown.com.au
- **Salamander Bay Square**, 2 Town Centre Circuit, Salamander Bay. Coles, Woolworths, BWS, Liquorland, Kmart, retail stores, banks, services, food outlets. salamanderbaysquare.com.au
- **Stockland Green Hills Shopping Centre**, Molly Morgan Drive, East Maitland. Coles, Woolworths, BWS, Dan Murphy's, David Jones, Kmart, TK Maxx, Big W, Priceline, retail stores, banks, services, food outlets and cinema. stockland.com.au/shopping-centres
- **Thornton Shopping Centre**, Corner Taylor Avenue and Thomas Coke Drive, Thornton. Coles, retail stores and services. thorntonshoppingcentre.com.au
- **Westfield Kotara**, Corner Park Avenue and Northcott Drive, Kotara. Coles, Woolworths, BWS, David Jones, Kmart, Target, retail stores, banks, food outlets and cinema. westfield.com.au/kotara

DEFENCE FAMILIES OF AUSTRALIA



DEFENCE FAMILIES OF AUSTRALIA (DFA) is the official ADF families advisory body to the

Minister for Defence Personnel and Chief of the Defence Force (CDF).

DFA advocates for ongoing improvement in policy and practical support as they relate to defence families.

Through advocacy and by providing advice to key decision-makers, DFA aims to reduce the height and frequency of hurdles faced by military families, prepare families to overcome them, and where possible, remove hurdles completely.

DFA is working to address and advocate for change across a number of areas including communication with families, flexible housing, education, family stability and family employment.

DFA's advocacy goals are developed in collaboration with Defence branches and stakeholders, including the Defence Member and Family Support branch, Defence's Recruitment and Retention (R2) team, Defence Housing Australia, the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chief of the Defence Force, and many others.



Follow DFA on social media for advocacy updates through the bi-annual Advocacy Map, and sign up to the newsletter at dfa.org.au.

COMMUNITY GROUPS

ANY DEFENCE FAMILY that has moved to a new location will understand how important it is to establish a strong support network. Having a group of friends and experienced Defence families to talk with can help ease the stress of relocating the family. We are lucky at RAAF Base Williamtown to have a wide variety of support groups eager to welcome new members.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Williamtown Defence Family Group Inc. is a volunteer-run group that delivers projects and events to help Defence members and their families connect and integrate into the Williamtown community. Email wlm.dfgroup@gmail.com; Facebook 'Williamtown Defence Family Group'.

Australian Military Wives Choir Newcastle welcomes all women with a connection to a currently serving ADF member including wives, partners, girlfriends, mothers, daughters, sisters and female ADF members. Connect with others in a fun and supportive environment. No experience is necessary and no auditions are required. Email coordinator.newcastle@amwchoir.com.

Hunter Region Botanic Gardens offers Hunter Defence Families free entry to the gardens including activities or workshops. To find out more, email events@huntergardens.org.au or visit the groups facebook page 'Hunter Region Botanic Gardens'.

BUDDIES GROUPS

Buddies are volunteer Defence partners willing to support others in their local area by

administering a social media page and planning social activities to assist with linking families into their community. The network allows families to meet, form friendships, offer support and share local knowledge.

Defence Families in the Bay is a group for Defence families who reside on the Tomaree Peninsula, Port Stephens. Facebook 'Defence Families in the Bay'.

Terrace Buddies is open to all Defence families, predominantly from Medowie, Raymond Terrace and Williamtown. Facebook 'Terrace Buddies - Williamtown, Medowie & Raymond Terrace'.

Defence Families Maitland is an informal group of Defence families in the Maitland area. Facebook 'Defence Families Maitland'.

Newcastle Buddies for families who reside in the Newcastle area. Facebook 'Newcastle Buddies - for Defence partners & families in Newcastle NSW'.

Mid Hunter Defence Buddies is an informal group of Defence families located in the mid-Hunter region including Branxton, Greta, North Rothbury, Huntlee, Lochinvar and Cessnock. Facebook 'Mid Hunter Defence Buddies'.

Defence Families Central Coast is a network of Defence families providing support, companionship and a sense of belonging to the Defence Community. Facebook 'Defence Families Central Coast'.



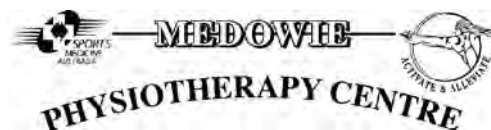
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(02) 4981 8400 | 777 Medowie Road Medowie, NSW 2318





HEALTH MATTERS

There are a number of services to help manage your family's health in a new posting.

ADF MEMBER HEALTH

Defence provides essential healthcare to all ADF members, on and off base, including medical and dental, mental health, ambulance transport and hospitalisation. ADF members do not need a Medicare card.

WILLIAMTOWN HEALTH CENTRE

Medical Reception 02 4078 5048

See page 15 for opening hours.

24-HOUR HEALTH SUPPORT

ADF members needing urgent medical treatment when away from base should call 1800 IM SICK (1800 467 425). The IM SICK line is a toll-free, all-hours service for ADF personnel to discuss health concerns over the phone and receive immediate advice on where they need to go to receive appropriate treatment. The service is provided by BUPA under the ADF Health Services Contract.

RECOGNISED DEPENDENTS

Members need to make arrangements for the health care of their families, but note that financial assistance is available (see under: DEFENCE FAMILY HEALTH CARE).

FINDING A GP

To find a GP in your locality, a good place to start is the 'find a health service' tool on the Australian Government's Health Direct website,

healthdirect.gov.au/australian-health-services, which allows you to filter out GPs who don't bulk bill. GPs who don't bulk bill will charge you for the visit. You can claim the 'schedule fee' from Medicare, but it will probably be less than the GP's account, leaving a residual cost. Many doctors now offer a service called HICAPS that allows you to claim your Medicare rebate when you pay at the doctor's surgery. Joining a Buddies Group (see page 37) to connect with others in your area is also good way to glean advice on local GPs and medical centres.

DEFENCE FAMILY HEALTH CARE

The National ADF Family Health Program will reimburse dependants of ADF members for out-of-pocket expenses for all GP visits. Specialist services will also be reimbursed, up to a total allocation of \$800 per dependent which can be shared between dependents. For more information visit adffamilyhealth.com or phone 02 6266 3547.

PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE

Medicare makes adequate provision to cover all Australian citizens for their essential health needs. However, Medicare doesn't cover many 'extras' such as ambulance services, most dental services, spectacles, contact lenses, hearing aids and cosmetic surgery.

You may choose to take out private health insurance to provide your family with a wider range of options and more comprehensive

cover. Health insurance policies can be either hospital or general treatment (extras) or a combination of both. Your decision to purchase private insurance is a personal one and will be based on a number of factors:

- The advantages of having more choices, for instance the ability to choose your surgeon/obstetrician/specialist and the hospital you prefer from the private health insurer's agreed providers
- The probability of obtaining treatment faster than you might do on a public hospital waiting list
- Your desire to be covered for the extras
- The cost of private health cover for different options that are offered by the numerous providers in the health-insurance market.

With respect to the cost, you will also need to consider the tax implications of the Medicare Levy surcharge, which (as distinct from the Medicare Levy) is an additional tax imposed on those with a taxable income above a certain threshold who do not have a prescribed level of private health insurance.

The cost of your private health insurance policy will also be influenced by your age when you commence your policy. Once you turn 31, a Lifetime Health Cover (LHC) loading of two percent is added to your hospital cover premium for every year you're without hospital cover, e.g. if you delay until age 40, your LHC would be 20 percent. Note that permanent ADF members are considered to have had private hospital cover while serving.

This article is published as general education and should not be taken as professional advice.

SOME USEFUL WEBSITE

Health insurance

- acc.gov.au/consumers/health-home-travel/private-health-insurance
- PrivateHealth.gov.au
- choice.com.au/money/insurance/health

Medicare Levy

- Go to the Australian Tax Office website, ato.gov.au, and search 'Medicare Levy'.
- For more, go to help.airtax.com.au and search 'Medicare and Medicare Levy exemption for ADF members'.

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HOUSING

MOVING HOUSE CAN be both an exciting and daunting prospect – some big decisions need to be made, the most important one being where you are going to live. Children’s education, distance to work for both the member and spouse/ partner, health care, lifestyle preferences and the amenity of available housing are all factors to be considered.

SERVICE RESIDENCES

Unless you own a suitable home in your new posting locality, your first port of call is Defence Housing Australia (DHA). DHA provides housing and related services for Australian Defence Force members and their families through its portfolio of service residences (SR). DHA’s portfolio comprises modern houses, townhouses and apartments in selected locations. The majority are off-base, integrated throughout the local community and in reasonably close proximity to Defence bases and establishments, amenities and services. DHA maintains the currency of its portfolio by upgrading existing properties, sourcing new properties through a variety of construction activities, acquiring properties through traditional real estate markets and directly sourcing and leasing properties from private owners. You are eligible for a SR if you fit into any of these groups:

- You have a spouse, recognised interdependent partner or children who live with you (Accompanied Resident Family)
- You are a member with unaccompanied resident

family and your dependants need housing (Unaccompanied Resident Family)

- You have Recognised Other Persons who normally live with you.

More detailed information on entitlements can be found in the Pay and Conditions Manual, Chapter 7, [pay-conditions.defence.gov.au/pacman/chapter-7](https://www.defence.gov.au/pacman/chapter-7), and/or on DHA’s website [dha.gov.au](https://www.dha.gov.au).

SINGLES

DHA also holds some apartments suitable for single members – called Members Choice accommodation. The process for accessing Members Choice or private rental under Rent Allowance (RA) is the same as for families accessing SR, outlined below.

FINDING A SERVICE RESIDENCE

As soon as you know you require a Service Residence, call DHA on 139 342 to obtain a username and password to access Online Services, a unique online tool that will allow you to select your new home. Online Services will show you:

- Homes within your entitlement
- Interior and exterior photos of the homes
- Property details for each home
- A floor plan
- A map showing the location of the home and nearby facilities.

Once you have researched your options, you can reserve a home on Online Services. Note that, whether you are an Accompanied Resident Family or a single, if you own a home in your current

posting location which is suitable for you to live in, you will not be eligible for a SR or RA.

PRIVATE RENTAL

If DHA cannot provide you with a suitable SR, you may be eligible for RA. While DHA will manage your RA application, it is up to you to find a suitable rental property. Rental properties in the region can be sourced from local real estate agencies or on any of the following commercial websites:

- [realestate.com.au/rent](https://www.realestate.com.au/rent)
- [domain.com.au/rent](https://www.domain.com.au/rent)
- [rent.com.au](https://www.rent.com.au)
- [view.com.au/for-rent](https://www.view.com.au/for-rent).

BUYING A HOUSE

You may feel it’s time to enter the housing market or wish to sell your home in your losing locality and purchase in the gaining locality. Assistance for home purchase may be available through:

- The Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme pays a monthly subsidy on a member’s home loan interest. The scheme is administered by the Department of Veterans’ Affairs, for details see [dhoas.gov.au](https://www.dhoas.gov.au).
- The Home Purchase or Sale Expenses Allowance reimburses reasonable buying and selling costs. For details see the Pay and Conditions Manual, [pay-conditions.defence.gov.au/pacman/chapter-7/part-3](https://www.defence.gov.au/pacman/chapter-7/part-3).

Note that a decision to purchase your own home in your new locality does not need to be made before you proceed on posting, you can decide at any time during your posting. However, if you are in RA accommodation, you will need to consider the penalties in your lease for early termination.

MORE INFORMATION

For information on all accommodation options, application forms and to access Online Services, visit DHA’s website, [dha.gov.au](https://www.dha.gov.au).

At times, finding the right housing solution can be challenging. The Directorate of Relocations and Housing is responsible for the provision and delivery of quality housing and related services to ADF members under national contracts and in accordance with Defence Policy. If you require additional support please email DRH.DRHM@defence.gov.au with your enquiry and your local Defence Relocation Manager will be in touch. See 'Relocations and Housing Team', page 16.

POSTING CONNECT

PostingConnect provides direct access to posting services, including Toll and DHA, and is accessible from any device. It allows members and their families to navigate the many aspects of a posting within one application. See [defence.gov.au/postingconnect](https://www.defence.gov.au/postingconnect) for more information.

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EARLY LEARNING

Choosing the right childcare and early learning service will depend on your family's needs and the environment with which you and your child will feel most comfortable.

A **S WELL AS PROVIDING CARE,** childcare and early-learning services provide an opportunity for your child to develop social, emotional and learning skills. Approved childcare services are required to meet high national standards to ensure children are safe and are given opportunities for learning and development on a regular basis. These services are given National Quality Standard (NQS) quality ratings to help families choose the best service for their child and family. When deciding on the type of care that is best for your child, you may want to ask:

- How many hours of care do I need?
- Do I want my child cared for in a home environment or in a centre?
- What kind of qualifications and experience do the staff members have?
- Does the service offer a preschool program?
- What learning and play opportunities do I want my child to have?
- What kind of routine will my child have?
- Do I want the service to provide lunch?
- What is the carer-to-child ratio?
- Has the service been NQS rated?
- What ages of children are cared for?
- Can I claim the Child Care Subsidy?

LONG DAY CARE

Long day care is also referred to as centre-based care and is generally provided in a building or part of a building that has been created specifically to be used as a childcare centre.

Centres usually operate between 7.30am and 6pm and also offer professional care for children aged from six weeks to six years. Children are usually grouped in rooms according

to age and developmental stage. Childcare is usually available for all day or part of the day. Some centres offer morning or afternoon sessions. Many centres offer meals throughout the day and most have an early education component to their program.

Centres are run by private companies, local councils, community organisations, individuals, non-profit organisations or by employers for their staff. The majority are approved childcare services, which means families using the service may be eligible for the Child Care Subsidy. Approved services must also show they are meeting certain quality standards. startingblocks.gov.au

FAMILY DAY CARE

Family Day Care services delivers flexible home-based education and care for children aged six weeks to 12 years via a network of family day care educators. An educator may provide care in their home for the maximum number of children, including their own children, in accordance with the national law and the national regulations.

These services can provide flexible care, including all-day, part-time, casual, overnight, before and after school, and care during school holidays. The majority of family day-care services are approved childcare services. This means families using the service may be eligible for the Child Care Subsidy. nswfdc.org.au

PRESCHOOL

Preschools generally provide early education and care for children aged between three and six years, although some may be licensed to take children from two years of age. Some preschools offer half-day sessions, with children attending either five mornings or five afternoons



per week. Others provide full-day attendance for two, three or five days a week.

The preschool program is designed to stimulate children's thinking, communicating, investigating, exploring and problem-solving skills. The program includes play-based activities that help children learn how to interact positively with other children. It also supports the development of early language, literacy and numeracy skills.

Many preschools operate from 9am to 3pm and the majority only operate in line with public school terms and close during school holidays.

School-based preschools provide educational programs for children one year prior to enrolment in kindergarten. A child may be eligible for enrolment in preschool from the beginning of the school year if they turn four years on or before 31 July that year. Applications for the next year are taken from Term 2 of the current school year. education.nsw.gov.au; service.nsw.gov.au/find-ecce-providers

IN-HOME CARE

In-home care is similar to family day care, but the professional carer looks after the child in their home. It is not widely available, but is suitable for families who have no access to other childcare services and/or whose circumstances mean that an



whose parents work irregular or unpredictable hours, such as shift workers. With this type of care, you only pay for the hours you use. careforkids.com.au/occasional-care

WAITING LISTS

There may be situations where there are no vacancies at the childcare or early learning service you wish to use and some services have waiting lists. Where demand for childcare is high, all approved services with the exception of occasional care must adhere to Priority of Access Guidelines (available at dss.gov.au) to ensure there is a fair childcare system.

The system ensures that, where there are vacancies or a waiting list for childcare services, places are allocated to families with the greatest need for childcare. The guidelines only apply to Child Care Subsidy-approved childcare services with the exception of occasional care.

Every approved service, with the exception of occasional care, has to abide by the guidelines and tell you about them when you enrol your child.

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

The Australian Government provides families with financial assistance to help them cover the costs of approved childcare, under the Child Care Subsidy. The Child Care Subsidy is income tested and is usually paid directly to approved child care services to reduce the fees that eligible families pay. You can apply for the Child Care Subsidy online or in person through Centrelink. To apply online, visit the Services Australia website, servicesaustralia.gov.au/child-care-subsidy.

LOCAL CARE

Backed by Port Stephens Council, Thrive Kids offers a range of childcare options across the Hunter region, including family day care, out of school hours and vacation care, plus a government-funded mobile preschool that travels around the Port Stephens region. portstephens.nsw.gov.au/live/thrive-kids

existing childcare service cannot meet their needs and to whom one or more of the following applies:

- the child has, or lives with another child who has, an illness or disability
- the child's guardian (or guardian's partner) has an illness or disability that affects their ability to care for the child
- the guardian (or guardian's partner) works hours when no other approved childcare service is available

- the guardian is caring for three or more children who have not yet started school. australianhomechildcare.com.au

OCCASIONAL CARE

This service is suitable for families who would like someone to look after their children occasionally, for example when they have a medical or other appointment. Most occasional care centres have flexible operating hours and can cater for children



SCHOOLING

There's a lot to learn about how primary schools and high schools function – especially as different states have different arrangements in place. Here's some information about New South Wales.

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Primary school in New South Wales follows a curriculum based on stages of learning. Each stage is approximately equivalent to two school years. For each learning stage there are skills, knowledge and levels of understanding that each student should develop.

FINDING A SCHOOL

Each NSW public school has a defined local enrolment area. This means your child is designated to a particular school based on the permanent residential address of the primary caregiver. Every public school reserves enough places within their school for students in their local enrolment area. Non-local applications may be considered by the school's enrolment panel, according to the department's policy and subject to selection criteria such as availability of appropriate staff and classroom accommodation. Contact the school to find

out about their out-of-area selection criteria. See schoolfinder.education.nsw.gov.au to find local schools and for information on enrolment.

STARTING SCHOOL

Starting school is an important step. Children develop at different rates and learn skills in different ways. It is the school's task to respond to the needs, learning styles and rates of progress of individual students. Specialist advice and support is available to parents/caregivers of children with disabilities to help them access educational services. Talk to the school as early as possible about these services.

ORIENTATION DAY

Most schools have orientation days towards the end of the previous year to welcome children to kindergarten. Many schools also have transition to kindergarten programs over several weeks in the second part of the year.

KINDERGARTEN TO YEAR 6

Children may enter kindergarten at the beginning of the school year in NSW government schools if they turn five on or before 31 July in that year. By law, all children must start school by their sixth birthday. Kindergarten to Year 6 focuses on the key learning areas of English, mathematics, science and technology, human society, personal development, health and physical education, and creative arts.

OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE

Outside school hours care (OSHC) centres provide care for primary school-aged children before and after school (7.30am to 9am and 3pm to 6pm), during school holidays and on pupil-free days. OSHC is also referred to as out-of-school hours care in some states or territories.

Vacation care is a type of OSHC that includes indoor and outdoor activities. The centres are sometimes run by the same organisation that runs before- and after-school care.

Centres are usually located on primary school sites in the school hall and/or in a childcare centre, community facility or OSHC centre near the primary school. Many centres offer a snack as well as the Active After-school Communities exercise program.

The majority of OSHC centres are approved childcare services. This means families using the service may be eligible for the Child Care Subsidy. Approved services must also show that they are meeting certain quality standards.

HIGH SCHOOL

NSW students enter high school in Year 7. Once you have determined which high school you would like your child to attend, the next step is to complete an expression of interest for placement in Year 7 form. If your child is already attending Year 6 in a public primary school, you will receive this form towards the end of Term 1.

SCHOOL LEAVING AGE

Students must complete Year 10 (or its equivalent) then remain in approved education or training or a combination of education and paid work until the age of 17.

SENIOR YEARS

Students in Year 10 choose the subjects they wish to study for the Higher School Certificate (HSC). There is a lot to consider and support is provided by your school to help students make informed decisions about their future. The school's career adviser is available to guide and support each student's subject choices in line with individual career and transition





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Why you have made the best decision to send your child to Irrawang High School.

- Defence School Mentor
- A broad, balanced and relevant curriculum
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- A strong sports culture with vast opportunities for students to excel, and many recess/lunchtime sporting competitions
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- Laptop computer pods in all Key Learning Areas
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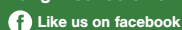
Located 15 minutes from RAAF Base Williamtown

Ph: (02) 4987 4687

Mount Hall Rd Raymond Terrace NSW 2324

E: irrawang-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au

W: irrawang-h.schools.nsw.gov.au



planning. Sound advice for young people and their parents/carers about choosing school subjects is available at the My Future website myfuture.edu.au.

STARTING YEAR 11

Students begin to prepare for their HSC in Year 11 so it's important to get settled into a good study routine at the beginning of the year. Study requirements will increase markedly in Year 11 and more so in Year 12.

There are two types of HSC courses: Board-developed courses, which are set and examined externally and can contribute to the calculation of a Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR), and Board-endorsed courses, which are developed by schools, TAFE or universities and count towards the HSC, but do not count towards the student's ATAR.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) Framework courses give specific competencies that are valuable in the workplace. VET courses give students work-related skills in a variety of industry and can count towards the HSC if students sit the HSC exam. Students will receive a nationally recognised qualification when they successfully complete their course. Some VET courses are studied at school while others can be studied at TAFE.

YEAR 12

Students and their families can find the HSC year stressful. For study tips and information on preparing for and completing the HSC, see studentonline.nesa.nsw.edu.au.

The most obvious forms of support parents can offer are the practical, physical things:

- Provide a good place to study. Ideally it should be quiet, a comfortable temperature, with good ventilation, good lighting, adequate desk or table space and free from distractions

such as TV, noise, telephone, conversations and little brothers and sisters.

- Provide good, balanced meals. Encourage sensible levels of sleep and some form of regular exercise. Encourage moderation in late-night parties and alcohol consumption.

Of equal, or perhaps greater importance, are the things you can do to provide a positive and understanding emotional environment:

- Be supportive and encouraging. If you have doubts, keep them to yourself.
- Highlight strengths and successes.
- Encourage your child not to dwell on failures.

Appreciate that most students will be experiencing quite a high level of stress, frequently without any obvious indicators. Many fear they might let their family down or will not be able to match the performance of siblings or relatives. There are also many pressures other than exams. Many students experience a sense of impending departure: leaving home, leaving lifelong friends, the prospect of starting university. Appreciate that it is normal for people under pressure to become super-sensitive and explosive from time to time. Family members are usually the first targets. Try not to overreact to such outbursts.

Encourage a reasonable balance between work and leisure. Planned leisure periods are an essential component of a good study program. An occasional total escape for a few days may also be excellent therapy for a student who is feeling excessively stressed.

It is important to encourage and allow your child to be as independent as you can possibly stand. The more independent he or she can be in meeting the demands of Year 12, the better prepared he or she will be to succeed at a tertiary level or in the workforce.

SCHOOL DATES FOR 2025

This information is relevant to NSW state schools. Independent and Catholic term dates can vary so check with the relevant school.

PERIOD	START	FINISH
Term 1	Friday 31 January	Friday 11 April
School Holidays	Monday 14 April	Thursday 24 April
Term 2	Monday 28 April	Friday 4 July
School Holidays	Monday 7 July	Friday 18 July
Term 3	Monday 21 July	Friday 26 September
School Holidays	Monday 29 September	Friday 10 October
Term 4	Monday 13 October	Friday 19 December
School Holidays	Monday 22 December	Monday 26 January 2026



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SUPPORT FOR DEFENCE STUDENTS

If you're keen to minimise any disruption to your child's education as a result of your family's relocation, talk to Defence Member and Family Support.

DEFENCE MEMBER AND FAMILY SUPPORT

(DMFS) provides information, resources and programs to help with the transition between schools and education systems when ADF members and their families move, and provides support for the unique needs of Defence children.

ADF EQUIP

The ADF Equip Program is designed to help children manage the challenges associated with Defence life. The program supports children to learn appropriate strategies to help them manage the challenge of parental absence and relocation related to service. It includes facilitated sessions tailored to age group and is open to children aged between five and 18 years.

EDUCATION LIAISON OFFICERS

Education liaison officers are experienced staff who help Defence families as they move around the country, providing information, advice, referral and specialised assistance. They are located in each state and territory and have extensive knowledge about the local schools and education systems as well as the challenges faced by Defence children. The assistance provided includes:

- Informing families about local schools and education systems
- Linking families with special education providers, resources or support agencies according to their children's individual needs (including special needs students)
- Working with schools to ensure a supportive education environment and to raise awareness of issues facing Defence children
- Informing families about Defence support services available, such as financial assistance under the Education Assistance Scheme.

DEFENCE SCHOOL MENTORS

DMFS's school mentor program provides support to the children of ADF members, particularly when moving in and out of a school on posting or when a parent is absent from

home. Under the program, mentors in primary and secondary schools support Defence students transitioning from school to school and during times of parental absence. Mentors help schools, families and children to develop strategies to successfully integrate into the school and community.

Their role also includes:

- Coordinating appropriate welcome and farewell activities
- Smoothing the transition between different schools and different education systems (including minimising the impact of relocation on learning outcomes)
- Monitoring the social, emotional and academic wellbeing of Defence students
- Helping students develop self-confidence, self-reliance and resilience
- Referring students to services or school community programs that meet their needs.

To find out which schools in your area are currently funded under the program, go to www.defence.gov.au/adf-members-families/family-programs-services/support-for-children/defence-school-mentor-program

CHILDCARE

DMFS maintains a network of childcare centres around Australia and has a range of programs to support the availability of childcare services

to Defence families, who might face difficulties accessing childcare. That includes access to an individual case management service to help them find registered childcare services in their local community.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR FAMILIES

Defence families can access a range of financial support to help minimise the disruption to schooling caused by posting and relocations. The support available includes:

- Tutoring assistance
- Boarding school allowance
- Tertiary accommodation
- Students with special needs
- Reimbursement of a lost scholarship
- Reunion travel.

The aim is to provide students with educational stability or short-term assistance to help overcome any immediate difficulties with education or emotional wellbeing as a result of relocation.

CONTACT DMFS

For more information about these services, contact the 24/7 Defence Member and Family Helpline on 1800 624 608, visit defence.gov.au/members-families or email memberandfamilyhelpline@defence.gov.au.



↑ Defence School Mentors organise events such as movie nights.



THE VETERAN COMMUNITY

↑ Personnel from No.453 Squadron with a Supermarine Spitfire Mk XVI from No.100 Squadron at RAAF Base Williamtown. (Image has been digitally manipulated – 453SQN sign added to ATC tower.)

PHOTO: LAC Kurt Lewis

There is wide range of support available to veterans of all ages.

A **S THE EMPLOYER** of the Australian military enterprise, the Federal Government has, over time, established a number of agencies and functions to provide post-service support and welfare to military personnel, primarily through the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA).

THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION NSW

The NSW Division of the Air Force Association (AFA NSW) has a robust working relationship with DVA. Together with NSW RSL, other high-profile ex-service organisations (ESOs) and agencies, we provide essential supplementary engagement with those government services and work assiduously to promote veteran support and concerns.

Serving veterans are encouraged to engage with their aligned ESO and exploit that network to promote and debate conditions of service and post-service support and welfare. In other words, serving RAAF members are encouraged to participate with, and adopt, the Air Force Association as your equivalent to a workplace

union. AFA NSW has one serving members on its State Council and two serving members on the State Council Support Team.

Membership of AFA NSW provides personal and material benefits derived through:

- Welfare, face-to-face counselling and advocacy support
- Providing assistance to navigate government processes to access DVA support
- Assisting families during times of hardship
- Creating and sponsoring awards and trophies for personal or unit excellence
- Commemorations
- Social functions.

Enabling activities

To maximise our effectiveness, AFA NSW promotes strong working relationships with all ESOs in NSW, particularly the RSL, the Premier's Department, DVA, NSW Ex-Service Organisation Round Table members and local councils. We also keep our members conversant with changes within government and DVA, and local issues that have an effect on their wellbeing.


Regular communication is maintained with our members through our quarterly newsletter

(SITREP), social media sites and our high-quality aviation magazine, *Wings* (see wingsmagazine.org) which is published by our own publishing company, RAAFANSW Publications Pty Ltd, the same company that publishes this Welcome guide. For further information visit raafapublications.org.au or raafansw.org.au.

Current AFA NSW projects under development include:

- Provision of transition coaching to civilian employment for serving members
- Supporting and providing Assistance Dog placement programs
- Financial support for RAAF students through a scholarship program
- Development of a Crisis Centre with major partner RSL NSW, other NSW ESOs and Veteran Centres for 24/7 veteran support
- Providing bursaries and educational support for veterans' children where required.

NSW branches

AFA NSW comprises a number of dispersed branches, some based on geographic location, others based on squadron or historical aircraft affiliation. There are also satellite organisations, such as Bomber Command Association in Australia, 

formed to retain a camaraderie and solemn remembrance of those who served in respective wartime operations. Those satellite organisations do not aim to function as ESOs, but through the bond of Air Force men and women derive some strength and presence from the AFA.

Until recently, the veteran community was bounded by those military personnel who had served on active operations. Today it encompasses all military personnel, serving and post-service regardless of active operational experience. The family has grown and, while not yet fully acknowledged, has the strength of numbers and the capacity to influence policy direction and implementation.

Contact AFA NSW

If you are in need help or know of someone needing support, contact your local branch listed on the AFA NSW website (raafansw.org.au) or call the NSW President on 0418 261 528.

If you wish to become an Advocate please call the President, who would be happy to discuss and provide assistance in the process to enrol and qualify. For AFA NSW membership enquiries and support, contact the Secretary, Karim Anwar JP, at secretary@raafansw.org.au, phone 0401 154 154, or refer to the website.

HOW THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION BEGAN

More than 100 years ago, members of the Australian flying Corp held a dinner in Melbourne with Sir Ross Macpherson Smith and crew to celebrate their magnificent achievements, in particular, the Great Air Race triumph. That dinner spawned an association to foster and sustain the friendship and comradeship among airmen forged during the war and to establish a support network for veterans of the Air arm. The Australian Flying Corps and Royal Australian Air Force Association was born.

Over time the Association grew and established Divisions in each state and the ACT. The name of the organisation also changed with time, first to Royal Australian Air force Association and now simply, Air force Association. Officially, the NSW Division has retained the Australian Flying Corps and Royal Australian Air Force Association (NSW Division) title but is now commonly referred to as AFA NSW (formerly RAAFA NSW). Air Force Association is now one of the more substantial Ex Service Organisations in Australia and strives to promote the wellbeing and welfare of both serving and post-service Air Force veterans and their families.



PHOTO: LAC Chris Tsakisis

↑ Aviators from No.22 Squadron during the Anzac Day 2024 parade in Sydney.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) services include:

- financial support
- healthcare
- rehabilitation
- mental-health care
- help returning to civilian life
- commemoration and recognition
- homecare assistance
- help with housing
- historical information.

DVA continues to transform, changing the way it operates, putting the needs and wellbeing of veterans at the heart of everything it does. The program of work underway is building a better client experience, making it faster and easier for veterans and their families to get the treatment and support they need, when they need it.

Connect with DVA online

Through DVA's online portal, MyService, you can update your personal and contact details, submit claims and view your veteran profile. To register visit dva.gov.au/myservice.

Mental health support

DVA has a strong focus on mental-health treatment. Under a program called Non-Liability Health Care, DVA funds treatment for all mental-health conditions, whether related to service or not, for those with at least one day of continuous full-time service in the ADF, as well as eligible Reservists. Search for 'Non-Liability Health Care'

at dva.gov.au. In addition, mental-health support including free and confidential counselling 24/7 is offered through Open Arms (see right).

Finding employment after the ADF

For ADF personnel transitioning back into civilian life, there is an information page for veterans on the government's Workforce Australia website (workforceaustralia.gov.au) to help translate service training and skills to the civilian workforce. There is also an optional 'Defence Force experience desirable' flag for vacancies listed on the jobactive website, helping veterans connect with employers.

The Veteran Employment Program improves support for veterans moving to civilian employment and helps Australian organisations create work environments to attract and bring out the best in their veteran employees. see veteranemployment.gov.au.



Legacy supports the families of former

ADF personnel. Its mission is simple – ensuring partners and children of veterans who gave their lives or health in service to our nation can fully realise their potential.

Newcastle Legacy assists about 48,000 widows, widowers, children and dependants with a disability. Legacy is a voluntary organisation supported by veterans, servicemen and women, and volunteers drawn from all walks of life. To find out more about Legacy and volunteering opportunities around Newcastle, visit legacy.com.au/newcastle.



OPEN ARMS

Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling (Open Arms) provides free and confidential counselling and support services for

Australian veterans and their families.

As with other community-based mental-health services, Open Arms' clients experience depression, anxiety, substance-use challenges, workplace struggles, relationship concerns and parenting and family issues. The difference with Open Arms is that its staff members have specialist training in the military experience. And, while they support families experiencing the routine daily challenges, they also understand the unique stressors military and veteran families experience relating to the posting cycle, training exercises, deployments, partner employment and more.

A unique service offered by Open Arms is its Community and Peer Program, which connects veterans and family members with peers who have served in the ADF – or had family members who have served – and have had the experience of accessing mental-health services for their own wellbeing. Peers work with veterans, family supports, community agencies and mental-health clinicians to complement other services.

There are six Open Arms offices in NSW – the closest to RAAF Base Williamtown is in Newcastle – and a network of professional providers across metropolitan and regional areas.

Contact Open Arms

If you or someone you know wants someone to talk to, even just for a chat, Open Arms is available 24/7 by calling 1800 011 046. The service is free and confidential and there is always a team member who understands the military experience available to answer your call. openarms.gov.au



WOUNDED HEROES

Wounded Heroes Australia is a national charity providing 24/7 crisis support for current serving ADF members, veterans and their families. They assist those in financial crisis, who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness. Without government funding for crisis funds, they rely solely on public and corporate donations to provide this support.

In 2022, Wounded Heroes supported 2,442 veterans and their families in crisis. In 2023, this number increased to 2,910. In 2024, they have seen crisis calls increase from approximately six per day to 15 per day.

The Royal Commission into Veteran Suicide reported that one serving or ex-serving ADF member has suicide-related contact with emergency services every four hours across Australia. Additionally, on average, there are three deaths by suicide among serving or ex-serving defence members every fortnight across Australia. Wounded Heroes Australia spends \$40,000 a

month on Crisis Calls and is determined to reduce the high rates of Defence and veteran suicide.

For more information see woundedheroes.org.au. For crisis support, call 1300 532 112.

INVICTUS AUSTRALIA

Invictus Australia offers veterans opportunities to get active in competitive or social sports. It connects veterans and their families with individual and team sport, one-off competitive events, camps and competitions, such as the Invictus Games. It provides pathways to coaching and mentoring training and access to financial assistance for those who need it.

In the Hunter/Newcastle region, Invictus has partnered with a number of sporting groups to offer free come-and-try events. The activities are generally free to veterans, serving members and their families. For more information: invictusaustralia.org; Facebook 'Invictus Australia - Northern NSW Community'.

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TIME OUT

From beautiful beaches and national parks to fine wine, dining and culture, there's plenty to enjoy around Williamstown.



↑ Scenic views over Shoal Bay Beach, Zenith Beach, Wreck Beach and Box Beach in Port Stephens from Tomaree Head Summit.



↑ Dolphins swimming in Shoal Bay.

PORT STEPHENS

WITH 26 GOLDEN BEACHES, a vast blue bay and many beautiful inlets, Port Stephens is idyllic. Its magnificent bay is twice the size of Sydney Harbour, the monumental sand dunes are the largest in the Southern Hemisphere, and the area has more sightings of humpback whales than anywhere else on the east coast. It is also home to some 150 bottlenose dolphins, a seal colony on Broughton Island and sea-sponge gardens at the famous Fly Point dive site. On top of that, it has a great food scene with fresh seafood including hand-shucked oysters, craft beer and local wine.

several great family beaches, as well as surfing beaches such as Zenith, Wreck and Box Beach.

FINGAL BAY

Surrounded by the Tomaree National Park, Fingal Bay village has a magnificent patrolled beach. It is popular with surfers and is quite protected by the headland in the southern corner. There is good fishing off the beach, spit and headlands. It is also a good spot for whale watching during the annual migration north in June and July, and south from September to November.

WORIMI CONSERVATION LANDS

The Stockton Sand Dunes form the largest sand dune system in Australia, covering 4,200ha. The ever-changing dunes climb up to 40m and are flanked by a 32km long beach. The Worimi Conservation Lands also include more than 1,800ha of lush forest and wetlands. You can get your heart racing with a quad-bike tour, try sandboarding or buy a beach vehicle permit and test your four-wheel-driving skills on the sand. worimiconservationlands.com

TOMAREE NATIONAL PARK

Covering a 20km strip of rocky coastline between Shoal Bay and Anna Bay, 2,400ha Tomaree National Park has a number of well-maintained walking tracks offering stunning views of the bush and the Pacific Ocean. nationalparks.nsw.gov.au

NELSON BAY

The main resort area of Port Stephens, Nelson Bay is an attractive town offering freshly caught seafood, waterside dining, shops, cafes, restaurants and a wide range of water activities. Relax on beautiful stretches of beach, go diving or snorkelling at Fly Point Aquatic Reserve, swim with the area's friendly dolphins, and enjoy sailing, kayaking, parasailing, jet-skiing and ferry rides. You'll also find plenty of tours departing from Nelson Bay that offer dolphin and whale-watching cruises and kayak trips.

SHOAL BAY

With shops and restaurants along the waterfront, a white sandy bay and calm turquoise water, Shoal Bay is another popular holiday destination. It is a good base for a fishing trip and the area has



↑ A family enjoying sandboarding at Stockton Sand Dunes.

PHOTOS: Destination NSW









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CYCLEWAYS

Port Stephens is great for cyclists, from serious mountain bikers through to families who enjoy a safe and scenic bike ride. There is approximately 50km of shared cycleways throughout the area and you can choose from 2km, 8km and 12km routes for riding and walking.

Designated cycleways provide safe cycling around the peninsula, from Salamander Bay to Fingal Bay, with some spectacular water views as you pass from Bagnalls Beach to Dutchies Beach to Nelson Bay. There's some shaded riding through bush and reserves from Shoal Bay to Fingal Bay and plenty of parks, playgrounds and cafes along the way. portstephens.nsw.gov.au/community

WALKS

Tomaree Coastal Walk: 27km. Starting at Tomaree Head, with unparalleled views of Port Stephens, the multi-day walk hugs the coastline of the national park, across rock ledges, along secluded beaches and through angophora forests via boardwalks and easy-to-navigate walking tracks. It can be done in short sections.

Tomaree Head Summit: 2.2km return.

An invigorating walk to the summit offers panoramic views over Port Stephens, up and down the coast and to Broughton, Cabbage Tree and Boondelbah Islands. The summit was the site of the longest-serving radar in WWII.

Mariners Walk Heritage Trail: 3.3km one way. Commemorating the history of Port Stephens' mariners with interpretative displays and signs along the foreshore of Soldiers Point and Salamander Bay, the trail involves some beach walking and bush pathways.

Tanilba Bay Boardwalk: 3.5km one way. A beautiful foreshore walking track from Caswell Reserve to the Tanilba Sailing Club.

Native Flora Gardens, Nelson Bay: 1km. The gardens feature Inative plants, bird life and a number of Aboriginal canoe trees. Formerly the site of HMAS Assault from 1942 to 1945.

Fort Tomaree, Shoal Bay: 2.5km return.

A paved track around the lower slopes of Tomaree Head to WWII gun emplacements, built in 1941.

Wreck Beach, Shoal Bay: 2km return. An easy walk through lush coastal Angophora forest leads onto a small sandy cove.

One Mile Beach, One Mile: 3km return.

Backed by sand dunes and bushland, the beach is a good spot for swimming and surfing.

Big Rocky, Fingal Bay: 2.8km return. A sandy track leads to a rocky headland, ideal at low tide.

portstephens.org.au/trails

SPORTS

There is an extensive array of sporting activities within the area. To find a local team or club, see sport.nsw.gov.au/find-a-sport.

GOLF COURSES

Golfers are spoilt for choice in Port Stephens and surrounding regions. Pacific Dunes at Medowie (pacificdunes.com.au) combines two distinct nine-hole loops to create a spectacular 18-hole championship course, which features in *Australian Golf Digest's* top 100 Australian courses, as does Newcastle Golf Club at Fern Bay (newcastlegolfclub.com.au) and the Vintage, Hunter Valley (chateuelan.com.au/golf-course-hunter-valley). Nelson Bay Golf Club (nelsonbaygolf.com), on the edge of Tomaree National Park, is a 27-hole championship course, featuring an abundance of wildlife. Horizons Golf Resort (horizons.com.au) in Salamander Bay offers a popular 18-hole course. Tanilba Bay Golf Club (tilligerryrslsports.com.au/play) has an easy-walking 18 hole par 72 course.



↑ TOP: Stand up paddleboarding in Shoal Bay.
ABOVE: Sahara Trails Horse Riding, Anna Bay.

horizons.com.au), on the edge of Tomaree National Park, is a 27-hole championship course, featuring an abundance of wildlife. Horizons Golf Resort (horizons.com.au) in Salamander Bay offers a popular 18-hole course. Tanilba Bay Golf Club (tilligerryrslsports.com.au/play) has an easy-walking 18 hole par 72 course.

MORE INFORMATION:

Port Stephens Visitor Information Centre, 60 Victoria Parade, Nelson Bay. portstephens.org.au

↓ Zenith Beach, Port Stephens.





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NEWCASTLE

PERCHED BETWEEN A busy working harbour and beautiful beaches, Newcastle is a vibrant, cosmopolitan city with a rich maritime history, and plenty of arts culture, cool bars and acclaimed restaurants.

BEACHES

Enjoy fantastic waves and white sandy beaches on the spectacular Newcastle coastline. There are surf beaches, protected ocean pools, such as the art deco Newcastle Ocean Baths, and parks with picnic tables and barbecues adjacent to a number of beaches, including Dixon Park Beach and Nobbys Beach. Nobbys, Bar and Merewether beaches are patrolled year round.

A great coastal walk, the Bathers Way links beaches from Nobbys to Merewether and connects to the popular Newcastle Memorial Walk. Merewether Beach is one of Australia's National Surfing Reserves and home to the international Newcastle Pro, part of the annual Surfest (surfest.com).

OCEAN BATHS

Newcastle is famed for its ocean baths. Newcastle Ocean Baths (30 Shortland Esplanade) was opened in 1922 and is undergoing a major renovation. Merewether Ocean Baths (3a Ocean St) opened in 1935 and includes a sandy family-friendly shallow pool, and a 100m-wide main swimming pool. The Bogey Hole ocean pool is one of Newcastle's most iconic landmarks. Hand-cut into the rock by convicts in 1819, it was designed for Major James Morisset, the longest-serving Commandant of Newcastle, and was originally called the Commandant's Baths.

DINING

The emerging food scene is evident in the great restaurants, bars and cafes around the city. Sip cocktails at a harbourside restaurant or bar at Honeysuckle or head to Beaumont Street in Hamilton to dine at outdoor Mediterranean-style cafes. Darby Street in Cooks Hill is a bohemian strip with a collection of eclectic boutiques, bookshops and cafes just perfect for a late breakfast.

BREWERIES

To sample some local brews, often along with good food and music, Newcastle has plenty to offer, including: Modus Brewing, Merewether St, Merewether; Method Brewing, Maitland Rd, Islington; FogHorn Brewery, King St, Newcastle; Good Folk Brewing, Beaumont St, Hamilton; Thirsty Messiah, Lambton Rd, Broadmeadow; Shout Brewing Co, Clyde St, Islington; and The Rogue Scholar, Union St, Newcastle.

↑ [the Newcastle Memorial Walk.](#)

ENTERTAINMENT

Newcastle Entertainment Centre (nec.net.au) hosts international artists, events and concerts. McDonald Jones Stadium (mcdonaldjonesstadium.com), the home of the Newcastle Knights (rugby league) and Jets (soccer), is an international-class venue that stages a variety of entertainment and sporting events. Newcastle Racecourse (newcastle Racecourse.com.au) holds regular race days. Civic Theatre Newcastle (civictheatrenewcastle.com.au) hosts a range of musicals, dance, theatre, concerts and other events in the heritage-listed Civic Theatre and Playhouse.

FORT SCRATCHLEY

At the elaborate fort built in the 1880s, visitors can explore a number of historic buildings and installations. Guided tours of the site and its amazing tunnels are available. Nobbys Road, Newcastle. fortscratchley.org.au

NEWCASTLE ART GALLERY

Opened in 1977, Newcastle Art Gallery is Australia's first purpose-built modern regional gallery. The gallery has been closed since early 2022 for a \$40-million expansion project which will double its size. Building work is due to be completed at the end of 2024, with the gallery reopening in 2025. 1 Laman Street, Newcastle. nag.org.au

NEWCASTLE MUSEUM

Located in the historic Honeysuckle Railway workshops, the museum has three major permanent free exhibitions exploring the area's natural environment, early Indigenous life, history and major industries. Corner Workshop Way and Merewether Street, Newcastle. newcastlemuseum.com.au

TREETOPS ADVENTURE PARK

Challenges include 18 flying foxes and suspension bridges up to 15m above the forest floor. Open



↑ Aerial view of Newcastle Beach, Canoe Pool and Newcastle Baths.

PHOTOS: Destination NSW

daily. Blue Gum Hills Regional Park, Minmi Road, Minmi. treetops.com.au

BLACKBUTT RESERVE

With 10km of walking trails, wildlife exhibits, barbecues and playgrounds, the 182ha reserve is a great place for a family picnic. The restored rainforest provides habitat for some rare and vulnerable species. Carnley Avenue, Kotara. newcastle.nsw.gov.au/blackbutt-reserve

GLENROCK STATE CONSERVATION AREA

A short drive from the city, the conservation area is a popular mountain biking and hiking spot with trails, secluded beaches, waterfalls and the last surviving pocket of coastal rainforest in the region. Glenrock Lagoon, fed by Flaggly and Little Flaggly creeks, is a notable feature nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/visit-a-park/parks/glenrock-state-conservation-area



↑ Outdoor eating, Newcastle.

MORE INFORMATION:

Newcastle Visitor Information Centre, 430 Hunter St (former Civic Railway Station), Newcastle. visitnewcastle.com.au

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↓ Vineyards at Hope Estate, Pokolbin.



PHOTO: Destination NSW

THE HUNTER VALLEY

AUSTRALIA'S MOST-VISITED wine region is home to more than 150 top-class wineries, vineyards and cellar doors as well as superb restaurants, and it's only an hour's drive from Williamstown. Join a wine tasting tour or visit cellar doors directly. Concerts and events are often staged among the vineyards.

Visitors can hire bicycles and pedal to cellar doors around Pokolbin, Lovedale and Mount View. You can also sample local produce, enjoy a long lunch at one of the area's many restaurants, sip craft beer, relax with a spa day, tee off at championship golf courses, such as the Greg Norman-designed The Vintage, or get a bird's-eye view from a hot-air balloon.

The annual Hunter Valley Wine & Beer Festival offers tastings, gourmet food and entertainment (huntervalleywinefestival.com).

BRANXTON AND GRETA

At the northern end of Wine Country Drive, the townships of Branxton and Greta have retained their historical charm, with fine colonial architecture and friendly locals.

CESSNOCK

The gateway town to the Hunter Valley Wine Country, Cessnock is a country town offering services, shopping and dining. Explore the local Regional Art Gallery, attend a show at the Performing Arts Centre and walk one of Australia's longest main streets.

↓ [Hunter Valley Wildlife Park.](#)



PHOTOS: Destination NSW

LOVEDALE

Centrally located Lovedale is known for its boutique wineries and is home to several award-winning restaurants. There is also a range of activities on offer, from wine, olive and chocolate tastings to hot-air ballooning and horse riding. lovedalehunervalley.com.au

BROKE FORDWICH

Broke offers a relaxed vineyard experience set against the dramatic backdrop of the Yellow Rock escarpment. As well as wines, you'll find local produce such as jams, chutneys, cheese, olive oil, cured meats and confectionery. Broke also has a monthly village market, offering produce, crafts and local wines. brokefordwich.com.au

MOUNT VIEW

Nestled in the Brokenback Range bordering Pokolbin to the south, Mount View is one of the best-kept secrets of the Hunter Valley. It has famously distinct wines, iconic dining experiences and panoramic views.

POKOLBIN

Central Pokolbin is the hub of tourist activity with wineries, cheese, olives, chocolates, restaurants and accommodation. The picturesque country roads are home to some

of Australia's best-known wine labels. Take the Around Heritage food and wine trail for spectacular views (aroundhermitage.com.au), locally made produce and picnic hampers. parishofpokolbin.com.au

WOLLOMBI

Meander through the Wollombi Valley and explore colonial and convict heritage, indigenous sites, national parks, boutique wineries and unique shopping in the historic village. visitwollombi.com.au

SINGLETON

A historic country town northwest of Cessnock, Singleton is home to the Australian Army Infantry Museum and has an interesting heritage walk. There are plenty activities for nature lovers in nearby Yengo National Park and Lake St Clair. singleton.nsw.gov.au/Experience/Visit

MAITLAND

Built on the banks of the Hunter River, Maitland is one of the oldest regional centres in Australia. The riverside Levee links the city to the river with a mix of boutiques, cafes, restaurants and small bars. Visit the Maitland Regional Art Gallery (mrag.org.au) or head to the Hunter River for a paddle and a fish. Maitland Taste and Aroma Coffee and Chocolate



PHOTO: Destination NSW

↑ Chapman Valley Horse Riding, Howes Valley.

Festival is a new event earmarked for June 2025. maitlandevents.com.au; mymaitland.com.au

MORPETH

The former Hunter River port town on the outskirts of Maitland has retained its historic shop fronts, wharves and hitching posts along the main street, which is now home to cafes and produce stores.

PATERSON

The village includes mid-19th century historic sites and an old country pub, along with the historic Tocal Homestead and Patterson Rail Motor Museum. There are also good picnic spots by the Paterson River.

NEWCASTLE AIRPORT HUNTER PET

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CONTACT 02 4938 3710 169, Springvale Rd, Elderslie, enquiries@hunterpetmotel.com.au, hunterpetmotel.com.au

EDUCATION & CHILDCARE

CATHERINE MCAULEY CATHOLIC COLLEGE

The newest secondary school in the Hunter, Catherine McAuley Catholic College, Medowie is a learning faith community in the Mercy tradition. Commencing with Year 7 in 2021, the college will grow to support young people through to Year 12 by 2025. The college is equipped with modern facilities, however it's the relationships that build a genuine sense of belonging and culture of trust within the community. At the heart of this are the values: Hospitality, Compassion, Courage and Faith in Action, inspiring McAuley graduates to lead purposeful lives and contribute to a changing world.



CONTACT admin@medowiecmcc.catholic.edu.au

HUNTER VALLEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Nestled in the vibrant community of Mayfield, Newcastle, Hunter Christian School offers a nurturing environment from Prep to Year 12. HCS is a place where children grow academically, spiritually and socially. Dedicated teachers inspire students with real-world skills, equipping them for a meaningful life and future career opportunities. Every child is encouraged to discover their unique potential in a caring, faith-filled community. Book a tour and experience the HCS difference.



CONTACT 02 4967 2111, office@hunterchristian.nsw.edu.au, hunterchristian.nsw.edu.au

HUNTER VALLEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Hunter Valley Grammar School is the leading independent school in the Hunter/Newcastle region. We are an inclusive, non-selective, coeducational school, welcoming students from Pre-School to Year 12. Renowned for our commitment to excellence, we foster a strong sense of inclusion and belonging. HVGS is an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School, offering all four IB Programmes.



CONTACT 02 4934 2444 or www.hvgs.nsw.edu.au

IRRAWANG HIGH SCHOOL

Located in Raymond Terrace a short 15-minute drive from RAAF Base Williamstown, Irrawang High School attracts students primarily from Medowie and Raymond Terrace. Our school, with a dedicated Defence Transition Mentor, promotes excellence in academic, cultural and sporting performance and also provides a wide range of creative and performing arts opportunities.



CONTACT 02 4987 4687, irrawang-h.schools.nsw.gov.au, like us on facebook

ONE GIANT LEAP

One Giant Leap Australia Foundation has been established to advance education by providing opportunities for students and educators to develop and build their knowledge and understanding of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The continuation of studies in primary, secondary and tertiary education is encouraged by various activities, including providing education programs about space science, technology and exploration.



CONTACT 0412 326509, onegiantleapfoundation.com.au

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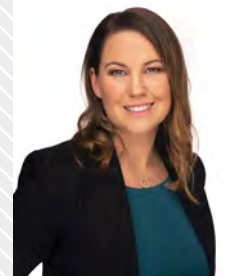
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CONTACT 1300 131 809, apsbenefitsgroup.com.au

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We bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the Medowie market. Our local knowledge has been developed through our experience living and working with the Medowie community over the past decade. With a combined real-estate background spanning over 40 years, Curtis & Blair can be relied upon to provide our customers with friendly, honest and accurate advice.



CONTACT 02 4982 8008, curtisandblair.com

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CONTACT 02 4014 6900, defencebank.com.au, williamtown@defencebank.com.au

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CONTACT 02 4982 8955, dowlingmedowie.com.au

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CONTACT Graeme Warner, 0412 891 551, Graeme.J.Warner@nab.com.au, nab.com.au/defence

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CONTACT 02 4981 8400, medowiephysiotherapy.com.au

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ADAM'S AUTO FIX



Does your vehicle need servicing or repair? Book it in at Adam's Auto Fix. With more than 20 years' experience in fleet and lease servicing and your local authorised Repco Service Centre, we're the trusted mechanics for Williamstown RAAF, Boeing, Ausgrid and the Worimi Land Council. Services include: safety checks; log book servicing, engine diagnostics; brake, suspension and exhaust repairs; tyre supply and fitting. Courtesy car available.

CONTACT 02 4981 8889, 1/19 Abundance Rd, Medowie.

MEDOWIE CAR CARE



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CONTACT 02 4982 9172, 26 Ferodale Road, Medowie, medowiecarcare.com.au

MARINA ICE CREAMERY

The Marina Ice Creamery is Australia's top independent ice-cream retailer and has served the people of Port Stephens and its visitors for more than 30 years. Located on the waterfront at the d'Albora Marina, we source only Australian-made products to offer over 50 flavours of the finest gourmet-quality ice cream, gelato and sorbet. Delicious pancakes, waffles and great coffee, too.



CONTACT 02 4984 1788, d'Albora Marina, Nelson Bay, marinaicecream.com.au

FIGHTER BEANS CAFÉ

On the grounds of Fighterworld, next to RAAF Williamstown, Fighter Beans offers in-house-made food with locally grown produce, from the famous Fight the Day brekky dish to our world-known Chicken Snitty Burger – part of a huge gluten-free range. Sip award-winning coffee while watching planes from a large outdoor viewing area. Catering is available.



CONTACT 4965 0992, fighterbeanscafe@gmail.com, #fighterbeanscafe, 49 Medowie Rd, Williamstown.

MEDOWIE PHARMACY

Medowie Pharmacy is open seven days for your convenience. It is locally family owned and operated and has served the Port Stephens community for the past 43 years, since 1982. Gavin and his team are committed to providing a high-quality range of services to enhance health and well-being.



CONTACT 02 4982 8564, Shop 17 Medowie Shopping Village, 37C Ferodale Road, Medowie, admin@medowiepharmacy.com.au

TOBOGGAN HILL PARK

Toboggan Hill Park is set amongst natural bushland off Salamander Way at Nelson Bay. It is Port Stephens' premier fun attraction and tobogganing is ideal for the whole family. Each toboggan is equipped with brakes so you control the speed of your descent – slow to thrilling pace! See website for more details, plus information on the park's many other activities.



CONTACT 02 4984 1022, toboggan@tobogganhillpark.com, tobogganhillpark.com, 16 Aquatic Close Nelson Bay 2315

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Located just 20 minutes' drive north of Newcastle, adjacent to the entrance to RAAF Base Williamtown, Fighter World is a totally 'hands-on' experience. Exhibited in two hangars, visitors can walk around, touch and look into the cockpits of Australia's most iconic aircraft. From the observation deck you can watch all the action of this busy Air Force base.



CONTACT 02 4965 1810, fighterworld.com.au, admin@fighterworld.com.au

NEWCASTLE AIRPORT

Newcastle Airport is the second international gateway into New South Wales and the second busiest airport in the state. Underpinned by its purpose – being the Airport the region deserves – Newcastle Airport is much more than a key piece of infrastructure. It delivers global connectivity to our region by providing access to major destinations in Australia and the world.



CONTACT newcastleairport.com.au

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CONTACT Huntingdale Place, Medowie, 02 4916 0500, pacificdunes.com.au

AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION NSW

The Air Force Association specialises in providing important services to ex and currently serving veterans and their families. We use our skilled volunteers to provide expert engagement with government, including Department of Veterans Affairs, and are able to generate the support available, resolve administrative hurdles and promote veteran concerns. Go to our (website raafansw.org.au) for the full range of veteran services we offer.



CONTACT Karim Anwar, Secretary RAAFANSW, secretary@raafansw.org.au

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The Air Force Association NSW is run by retired and serving veterans of the Royal Australian Air Force.

We are the voice for the RAAF Veteran and together we advocate for the support and welfare of RAAF personnel and their families with various government bodies. We **honour** and **preserve the history** and memory of those who served and we offer **camaraderie, mateship** and foster life-long connections within the RAAF family.



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