



UNITS OF THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE

A CONCISE HISTORY



VOLUME 8

TRAINING UNITS

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UNITS OF THE ROYAL
AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE
A CONCISE HISTORY

VOLUME 8
TRAINING UNITS

Compiled by the RAAF Historical Section

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Cover photograph: Trainee personnel working on an Armstrong Sidley Cheetah engine from an Avro Anson aircraft, Richmond, NSW, circa 1942

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INTRODUCTION

In November 1992 it was proposed that, as part of the RAAF 75th Anniversary celebrations to be held in 1996, a complete history of each unit of the RAAF should be prepared. The concept was to produce a concise history of each unit which would also serve as a basic reference for further research, and the realisation of that concept has resulted in a unique work. Other air forces have produced a history of all operational units, but no other air force has attempted to give a concise history of every unit which was an integral part of its organisation. An early decision was to produce 10 'generic' volumes, each pertinent to a given function of the Royal Australian Air Force. Every effort has been made to remain true to this concept, although it is conceded that some arbitrary decisions have been made as to which volume a unit would best fit into.

After much discussion, a standard format was established for each volume and requests circulated for volunteers to research and write the histories. Each history was to be based on the relevant Unit History Record and every care taken to ensure factual accuracy within a strict word limit. Only information up to November 1994 was to be included.

Over 110 volunteers, drawn from within the Service, ex-service organisations and interested civilians, forwarded pieces to the RAAF Historical Section, which undertook the collation of the manuscripts, final checking and liaison with the publishers. Except for editing for consistency of style the histories remain largely as they were written.

The Royal Australian Air Force has always prided itself on the quality of its training. The number and variety of training units described in Volume 8 are evidence of the importance the RAAF places on training personnel in all aspects of its operations and manpower development—from cooks, logisticians and officer candidates to technicians and pilots. Just as the Empire Air Training Scheme during World War II ensured aerial superiority for the Allies in our days of greatest need, current training units ensure that RAAF personnel today are prepared for any task which they may be called upon to perform.

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1 AIR NAVIGATION SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 1 November 1940 —formed at Parkes, NSW
9 December 1943 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

1 Air Navigation School was formed at Parkes, New South Wales, by Squadron Leader D.E.G. Walker on 1 November 1940. By the end of the month, the unit had 10 Anson aircraft on strength. On 21 November No. 1 (O) air observers' course had commenced, with the students graduating on 17 December 1940.

Activity at the School followed a routine which was not marred by untoward events. However, there were occasions when accidents did take place. On 21 December 1940, Pilot Officer J.I. Newman force-landed an Anson aircraft at Condobolin, New South Wales. The aircraft was returned to Clyde Engineering Company for repairs. Newman was not so fortunate a month later. On 28 January 1941 he was the pilot of Anson A4-5, which was undertaking an ambulance mission to Sydney when it crashed near Glenbrook, New South Wales, with the loss of all aboard. The other members of the crew were Flying Officer H.T. Skillman, Aircraftman I.C.R. Tysoe, Squadron Leader J.M. Rainbow (the doctor) and the patient, Pilot Officer B.M. Sawyer.

On 26 July 1941, a Gipsy Moth flown by Flight Lieutenant Armstrong was involved in a ground collision with a Tiger Moth from 2 Wireless Air Gunners School, damaging the mainplane of the former. An Anson, flown by Sergeant E.G.S. Sellar, crash-landed near Junee, New South Wales, on 29 January 1942, after the three observers and the wireless/telegraphist had landed by parachute.

During December 1942, the strength of the unit stood at 217 members (including 59 trainees) and 18 Anson aircraft.

1 Air Navigation School was disbanded on 9 December 1943.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- 1 November 1940 —Squadron Leader D.E.G. Walker
25 September 1941 —Squadron Leader J.M. Whyte
18 September 1942 —Squadron Leader F.A. Wittscheibe

2 AIR NAVIGATION SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 1 July 1941 | —raised at Mount Gambier, SA |
| 19 September 1941 | —moved to Nhill, Vic. |
| 8 June 1942 | —97 (Reserve) Squadron formed from unit personnel |
| 9 December 1943 | —School disbanded |

NARRATIVE

2 Air Navigation School was formed at Mount Gambier, South Australia, on 1 July 1941. Wing Commander A.G. Carr assumed command of the School on 8 July, and five of the Anson aircraft with which the School was to be equipped arrived on the 12th.

The first course of trainees (44 aircrew members from 2 Bombing and Gunnery School, Port Pirie) commenced training on 28 July. All, save one (who failed due to illness), graduated.

On 15 September, Flight Lieutenants P.B. Jelbart and W.B. Marsh and Flying Officer E.H. Edge led 50 personnel by road to Nhill, Victoria. All the personnel and aircraft of the School had moved to Nhill by 19 September 1941, to enable the first course to be conducted at the new base (12 (O) course) to commence training on the 22nd. This course graduated on 16 November, with each trainee averaging 31 hours 15 minutes flying time.

1 Operational Training Unit was raised at Nhill on 8 December 1941, and shared the base with 2 Air Navigation School until moving to Sale on 15 February 1942. The School was to expand its activities when, on 8 June 1942, it was notified that 97 (Reserve) Squadron was to be formed from unit personnel, and have 18 Anson aircraft on its strength. Only two entries in the School's Unit History Record relate to the activity of 97 Squadron. On 16 September 1942 six aircraft and 71 officers and men were attached to 2 Air Observers School at Mount Gambier, and on 16 November 10 aircraft were attached to Laverton and Mallacoota.

Commencing on 18 September 1943, six pilots from Australian National Airlines, Guinea Airlines and McRoberston and Miller Airlines participated in the astro-navigation course at the School.

Flying incidents were not common. On 9 July 1942, an Anson flown by Pilot Officer R.K. Filsell was reported missing, but located during the next day. Leading Aircraftman D.D. Thompson suffered a foot injury when another Anson force-landed four miles from the airstrip on 9 September, and Flying Officer L.A. Flynn and his crew were killed on 25 September 1943 when the Anson in which they were flying crashed.

After graduating 2002 trainees, 2 Air Navigation School was disbanded on 9 December 1943.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

8 July 1941	—Wing Commander A.G. Carr
23 February 1942	—Wing Commander D.E.G. Walker
12 May 1942	—Wing Commander F. Headlam
29 July 1943	—Wing Commander J.M. Whyte

1 AIR OBSERVERS SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| 15 April 1940 | —unit raised at Cootamundra, NSW |
| 9 December 1943 | —reformed at Evans Head, NSW |
| 15 August 1945 | —School disbanded |

NARRATIVE

1 Air Observers School was formed at Cootamundra, New South Wales, on 15 April 1940, and the first course of 70 air observer trainees arrived on 29 April 1940. Squadron Leader A.M. Murdock, the first Commanding Officer, assumed command on 22 April, to find his unit quartered in the Cootamundra showgrounds, waiting the completion of new buildings at the airport, until 5 July.

The first Anson aircraft arrived on 25 June 1940, and there were several fatal accidents in which this type of aircraft was involved whilst serving with 1 Air Observers School. On 11 February 1942, Flight Sergeant H.C.W. Smith and crew were killed in an Anson accident and on 13 April Sergeant B.E. Walker and his crew were killed when their Anson crashed near Gunning, New South Wales. Two other crashes resulted in fatalities. On 11 November 1940, Pilot Officer J.F. Hearne and members of the crew were killed when a Dragon crashed near Cootamundra, and a DH-89 crash on 26 June 1941 was the cause of Flying Officer W.W. Adrian dying of injuries in the station sick quarters.

Aircraft of interest visited Cootamundra. On 12 March 1942, a Hawker Hurricane from the Central Flying School visited, and six Spitfires visited on 4 September.

Personnel of the unit were involved when 73 (Reserve) Squadron was formed at Cootamundra on 1 July 1942. By December 1942, the strength of the unit had grown to 88 officers, 765 airmen and 313 trainees.

On 9 December 1943, the unit was reformed at Evans Head, New South Wales. The unit, during its period at Evans Head, operated Anson, Battle, Ventura, Gannet, Tiger Moth and Fox Moth aircraft, and there were losses of aircraft and crews. Flying Officer B. Strike-McClelland's Anson disintegrated in the air on 7 March 1944; Flight Lieutenant P.A. Brackel crashed near Knockron Post Office on 21 May 1944; and Flight Sergeant I.J.B. Noble and his crew were killed near Glenn Innes, New

South Wales, when their Anson crashed and burned on 11 September 1944.

On 26 July 1944, a Royal Air Force Armament and Navigation Training Mission commenced a three-day visit to the unit, and an RAF Lancaster arrived to demonstrate the latest navigation and radar equipment on 23 November 1944.

1 Air Observers School ceased to function on 1 June 1945, and was disbanded on 15 August 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

22 April 1940	—Squadron Leader A.M. Murdoch
26 May 1941	—Squadron Leader H.T. Hammond
May 1942	—Squadron Leader P.G. Graham
9 December 1943	—Wing Commander I.C.C. Thomson
October 1944	—Group Captain J.M. Whyte
January 1945	—Squadron Leader J. Hickey

2 AIR OBSERVERS SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 6 February 1941 | —formed at Mount Gambier, SA |
| 1 January 1946 | —School closed and Care and Maintenance Unit opened |
| 29 May 1947 | —Mount Gambier Care and Maintenance Unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

Squadron Leader R.H. Shaw (RAF) was the commander of 2 Air Observers School when it was formed at Mount Gambier, South Australia, on 6 February 1941. On 25 February, the first of the Anson aircraft allocated to the unit arrived. These were followed, on the following day, by a DH-84 Dragon, thus enabling the first intake of trainees to commence training on 8 March 1941. This group graduated on 28 May 1941, and it was during this month that the School undertook recruit training in addition to its aircrew training task.

During May, 8 Battle aircraft arrived from Laverton, and remained at Mount Gambier pending the formation of 2 Bombing and Gunnery School. With the formation of this unit at Port Pirie, South Australia, the aircraft departed from Mount Gambier on 28 June 1941. This was not the only distraction from training. On 30 March 1942, 73 Reserve Squadron was formed at 2 Air Observers School, and a detachment of 67 Squadron arrived, for operational duties to seaward, on 17 September 1943.

There were other distractions—on 29 March 1943 the Officers' Mess ante room and the front of the dining room were gutted by fire, with the kitchen badly damaged. On 2 August 1942, a ground party, which included 50 trainees and seven aircraft, proceeded on attachment to Nhill, Victoria, to take advantage of the weather at that base and thus enable spare aircraft to be utilised to help make up the shortfall of 2600 aircraft training hours. Another disruption was the commencement of work on the main runway on 1 May 1944, which entailed the aircraft operating from landing grounds mown from near the construction site.

Training brought accidents, and fatalities. On 12 July 1941 Flight Lieutenant G.K. Peacock and his crew were killed in an aircraft collision; Sergeant G.D. Abbott was killed in an aircraft accident at Port McDonnell;

Flight Sergeant J.H. MacLellan and crew were reported missing whilst on a training flight to seaward on 15 February 1944 and, on 16 November 1944, the crew of another Anson baled out near Casterton, Victoria.

There were breaks from training routine. An aircraft of the unit took off at dawn on 5 September 1943 to investigate reports of explosions off Beachport and on 29 January 1944 seven aircraft undertook an abortive search in the same area for a suspected submarine.

During the months of November and December 1944, aircraft from 2 Air Observers School flew bushfire patrols, and the unit closed on 1 January 1946. On the same date, Care and Maintenance Unit, Mount Gambier, came into existence. This unit was responsible for the storage of aircraft, and was initially commanded by Flight Lieutenant G.W. Elkins. The unit was disbanded on 29 May 1947.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

25 February 1941	—Squadron Leader R.H. Shaw (RAF)
2 June 1942	—Wing Commander H.T. Hammond
19 April 1943	—Wing Commander I.S. Podger
20 July 1943	—Wing Commander F. Headlam
10 December 1943	—Wing Commander P.A. Wittscheibe
17 January 1945	—Group Captain D.E.G. Walker
27 July 1945	—Wing Commander C. Steele

3 AIR OBSERVERS SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 9 December 1943 —converted from 2 Bombing and Gunnery School
31 January 1946 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

The unit was established at Port Pirie in South Australia, converted from 2 Bombing and Gunnery School, on 9 December 1943. It provided training of aircrew in navigation and bombing skills, as well as running conversion courses for navigators who had been trained on other aircraft. Training was carried out in Ansons and Fairey Battles. The unit also had a number of WAAAF stationed there.

Entertainment was in the form of pay night dances and sports such as football, tennis, basketball, soccer and badminton. The unit was visited by the Governor of South Australia on 2 March 1945, and on 7 May 1945 HRH The Duke of Gloucester arrived. Many personnel met him during his brief stay.

Early in August 1945, 29 Ansons were transferred to stored reserve, consequently reducing the number of aircraft for training. With the announcement of the end of the war with Japan, victory was celebrated in both the *Officers' and Sergeants' Messes* in typical Air Force manner. Personnel at the School also combined with the citizens' committee of Port Pirie in an endeavour to make the VJ day celebration worthy of the occasion. There was a march the next day in the main street of Port Pirie and about 900 members of all ranks, both RAAF and WAAAF, paraded.

Disbandment of the unit was finally completed on 31 January 1946 with all personnel either posted or discharged.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- 9 December 1943 —Wing Commander F. Headlam
27 September 1944 —Wing Commander W.G. Leer
7 June 1945 —Wing Commander H.F. Boston
28 October 1945 —Wing Commander J. Jewell
7 January 1946 —Squadron Leader A.H. Cottee

1 BOMBING AND GUNNERY SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 26 August 1940 —established at Evans Head, NSW
8 December 1943 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

Evans Head, 34 miles from Lismore, on the north coast of New South Wales, was the site decided upon for a bombing and gunnery school on 20 March 1940. The airfield, with a maximum length of 1300 yards in a north-west/south-east direction, was the destination of a convoy consisting of the advance party from Richmond to establish 1 Bombing and Gunnery School.

The School was raised under the command of Wing Commander V.E. Hancock on 26 August 1940, and the first of the unit's aircraft, a Fairey Battle, arrived on 7 September 1940; the first gunners to undergo instruction arrived on 15 September.

The School was to train wireless operator/air gunners in air-to-ground and air-to-air gunnery techniques, firing on airborne drogues towed by a Battle, and in bombing techniques. These activities were not without hazard.

Flying Officer Wright and Pilot Officer Norris were killed when two Fairey Battles collided and crashed into the sea off Terrigal on 16 January 1941, and Pilot Officer Allen and Leading Aircraftmen Powell and Pope were killed in another accident two days later. Their aircraft crashed near the southern range, where dense scrub hampered the search for the aircraft and the recovery of the bodies until the next day. There was also one instance, which indicates the dangers of live firing, on 17 May 1942, when a trainee engaged in a gunnery detail fired a number of rounds through the port wing and tailplane of a Battle being flown by Sergeant J.H. Mulcahy. It was not Mulcahy's most fortunate few days; two days later he was forced to belly-land his aircraft on a beach after an engine failure—not an uncommon occurrence when flying the Battle.

Although the School was a training unit, the chance of enemy naval activities along the east coast of Australia did cause some alarm to the

trainees. During the afternoon of 13 January 1941, a pilot undertaking a bombing exercise reported sighting a submarine. As the aircraft dropped down to 3000 feet, the submarine submerged. Squadron Leader Wright and the pilot who first sighted the submarine undertook a square search, to no avail, before 10 aircraft searched between Ballina and Yamba later in the afternoon. Next day Wing Commander Hancock searched the same vicinity, and sighted an oil slick, leading eastward. The School was blacked out for two nights as a precaution and the blackout was again instituted on the night of 3 June 1941, after suspicious lights had been sighted at sea.

During March 1943, the School had a total of 1647 personnel, 83 Fairey Battles, four Ryan Trainers and a Moth Minor, on strength.

1 Bombing and Gunnery School was disbanded at Evans Head on 8 December 1943.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

26 August 1940	—Wing Commander V.E. Hancock
21 November 1940	—Squadron Leader J.H. Wright
8 January 1941	—Wing Commander J. Glasscock
26 March 1943	—Group Captain G.W. Boucher

2 BOMBING AND GUNNERY SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 15 June 1941 —established at Port Pirie, SA
9 December 1943 —disbanded on change-over to 3 Air
Observers School

NARRATIVE

2 Bombing and Gunnery School was established in June 1941 under the Empire Air Training Scheme at Port Pirie, north of Adelaide, South Australia. The function of the unit was to provide bombing and gunnery training for pilots, air observers and air gunners, in accordance with the RAF standard syllabus. The period of training for each category was different, with pilots training for two weeks, air observers for eight weeks and air gunners for four weeks. By the end of 1943, the School had trained nearly 3500 personnel, the vast majority being wireless air gunners.

2 Bombing and Gunnery School commenced functioning under the command of Wing Commander R.F.M. Dalton on 15 June 1941, with the first of the unit aircraft, Fairey Battles, arriving on 1 July 1941. The first recruits, some continuing instruction from 2 Air Observers School, Mount Gambier, started training at the School on 1 July 1941. The courses conducted by 2 Bombing and Gunnery School were for aircrew trainees and wireless telephone operators, observers, and air gunners.

The air gunners were trained in Avro Ansons, firing upon drogues dragged along behind Fairey Battle aeroplanes (although sometimes not far enough behind for the Fairey Battle pilots). The Fairey Battle flew along at 90mph whilst the Anson pilot swept back and forth under the drogue to simulate the curve of attack of a fighter aircraft attacking the Anson.

One exercise involved a trainee firing 300 rounds of colour tipped bullets at the drogue under the watchful eye of the gunnery instructor. The drogue was then winched back most of the way into the Battle where it was then released to fall into a cleared area, collected by members of the WAAAF in the Armament Section, and the holes counted up to give

a score. As live ammunition was used, accidents were bound to occur, but it was the aircraft themselves that were to cause the majority of incidents at Port Pirie, claiming some 20 lives.

The aircraft used by the School included the Fairey Battle and Avro Anson, though a number of Wirraway, Ryan, Gypsy Moth and Tiger Moth aircraft were also allotted to the unit.

Because of the nature of the flights—with more than just the pilot in the cockpit—any aircraft accident that did occur left more people injured or killed than would have been the case had the pilot been solo. In one incident on 27 August 1943, six people were killed in an aircraft accident 10 miles west of the aerodrome at Port Pirie.

By the end of 1943, personnel at the School were preparing to be posted. But instead of being disbanded, the unit was converted to 3 Air Observers School on 9 December 1943 (along with 3 Bombing and Gunnery School, which was converted to Air Gunnery School), and continued until January 1946, conducting courses in staff navigation, navigation, and fighter pilot navigation.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

15 June 1941	—Wing Commander R.F.M. Dalton
21 January 1942	—Wing Commander A.G. Carr
21 June 1942	—Squadron Leader B.C. Waddy
7 September 1942	—Wing Commander A.M. Charlesworth
31 August 1943	—Group Captain C. Eaton
9 December 1943	—Wing Commander F. Headlam

3 BOMBING AND GUNNERY SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 12 January 1942 —formed at West Sale, Vic.
9 December 1943 —became Air Gunnery School

NARRATIVE

The advance party for the formation of 3 Bombing and Gunnery School arrived at West Sale, five miles west of Sale, Victoria, on 30 December 1941 and consisted of one officer, Flight Lieutenant Jackson, and one airman. They arrived to what was basically a runway and nothing else. In 12 days the unit was formed under the command of 1 (Training) Group. Group Captain Summers arrived on 14 January 1942 to take up his posting as the unit's Commanding Officer.

When the School began, West Sale was in the midst of construction, with no water supply except for water tanks, a few buildings, and with the main work in hand involving organisation and the supply of equipment. No sanitary arrangements existed at the time, and a 'pan service' had to be arranged to meet the unit's growing requirements. During the unit's first weeks at West Sale, various inspections were carried out by the Department of Interior and Army Co-ordination in respect of rationing, sanitation and buildings, with much attention being paid to aerodrome defence.

The School was formed to carry out the function of completing the training of air gunners with a course of instruction in gunnery, and to train air observers in bombing and gunnery. The unit's first aircraft, a Fairey Battle, arrived on 2 February 1942 from 1 Aircraft Park. Training commenced on 8 March 1942 with 43 trainees arriving from Mount Gambier.

Even before the start of training at the School, a group of Americans were fortunate that the unit was operational. On 13 February 1942, 14 Americans and their Kittyhawk aircraft were forced to land at West Sale after becoming lost while travelling from the north down to Laverton. After bedding down for the night and refuelling, they were off again the next morning.

The first fatality at the School occurred in the first week of training when Sergeant Giddings dived into Glen Maggie Weir near Muddra on 14 March 1942. This accident followed an emergency landing at the aerodrome the day before by Sergeant Giddings due to engine trouble. The aircraft were to cause the same difficulties for 3 Bombing and Gunnery School as for the other two bombing and gunnery schools. The casualty rate could actually have been a lot worse than it was. Normally in an aircraft accident, both the pilot and crew (or trainees) would have been killed. But on several occasions the crew were able to escape death either because the pilot sacrificed himself in trying to land the aircraft, or because the trainees were able to parachute out of the aircraft. On those occasions a number of injuries were sustained by the surviving aircrew and trainees.

3 Bombing and Gunnery School continued to operate fairly smoothly until 9 December 1943 when it became Air Gunnery School. The strength of aircraft for the unit at this time was: Fairey Battle—67, Avro Anson—24, Airspeed Oxford—33, Ryan—5, and Moth Minor—1.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

14 January 1942	—Group Captain Summers
26 January 1942	—Wing Commander Dalton
12 December 1943	—Group Captain G.V. Bouchier

1 ELEMENTARY FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 6 November 1939 | —2 Flying Training School formed at Melbourne, Vic. |
| 13 December 1939 | —moved to Parafield, SA |
| 29 May 1944 | —moved to Tamworth, NSW |
| 12 December 1944 | —School disbanded |

NARRATIVE

2 Flying Training School was formed at Melbourne on 6 November 1939 and, during the month, was instructed to move to Parafield, South Australia, when the necessary facilities had been completed to house the unit at that site. An advance party departed, under the command of Flying Officer J.F. Lawson, on 4 December 1939, arriving at Parafield two days later. Flying Officer A.N. Hick led the main body, which reached the unit on 13 December.

On 16 December, the unit received its first Gipsy Moth aircraft and on 2 January 1940 the name of the unit was changed to 1 Elementary Flying Training School. The first course of one officer and 22 cadets commenced training on 8 January 1940. By the end of 1942, 81 air cadets and 1043 Empire Air Training Scheme students had passed through the portals of 1 Elementary Flying Training School and at the end of 1943 the total figure had risen to 1628.

Training was not without fatalities. On 19 March 1940, Flying Officer C. Cox and Air Cadet R.C. Brown were killed in an aircraft accident.

The unit remained at Parafield until March 1944, when it was transferred to Tamworth, New South Wales. Flying Officer Brooker led the advance party from Parafield on 17 May. The main body departed from Parafield during the period 23 to 24 May. On 25 May, 25 aircraft, led by Squadron Leader A.J. O'Donnell departed from Parafield, landing at Tamworth two days later. Flight Lieutenant J.G. Groudace arrived at Tamworth with an additional 30 aircraft on 28 May.

Training at Tamworth was marred by a fatal accident where Leading Aircraftman D.F. Mathis, a student pilot, was killed when his Tiger Moth crashed and exploded 18 miles south of Tamworth on 10 September 1944.

When 1 Elementary Flying Training School disbanded on 12 December 1944, 81 air cadets, seven officers, two warrant officers and 1900 Empire Air Training Scheme trainees had passed through the School.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

6 November 1939	—Squadron Leader F.J.B. Wight
25 November 1940	—Wing Commander R.S. Brown
4 May 1942	—Wing Commander Kilby
3 July 1942	—Squadron Leader R. Williams
7 December 1942	—Squadron Leader W.D. Wedgwood
7 June 1943	—Wing Commander H. Plumridge
30 May 1944	—Wing Commander C.E. Martin

2 ELEMENTARY FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 6 November 1939 —formed as 3 Elementary Flying Training School, at Archerfield, Qld
- 2 January 1940 —title changed to 2 Elementary Flying Training School
- 31 March 1942 —last entry in Unit History Record

NARRATIVE

2 Elementary Flying Training School was formed at Archerfield on 6 November 1942. Originally numbered '3', the unit was renumbered to '2' on 2 January 1940.

Fifteen Tiger Moth aircraft arrived from Richmond on 5 January 1940, and were housed and operated from the civilian hangar, pending the construction of Bellman hangars. The flying strength of the unit was complemented by the addition of impressed Gipsy and Tiger Moth aircraft from civilian sources such as the Royal Queensland Aero Club. The latter organisation also supplied flying instructors.

In January 1940, the strength of the School consisted of 20 officers, 134 airmen, 50 officers under instruction and two civilian instructors. The latter taught theory of flight, navigation and cypher and controlled the unit technical library.

With the intensity of training and the standard of the pilots undertaking courses, there were constant aircraft incidents, none of which resulted in fatalities. Heavy landings were the most common incidents.

As a segment of their training, pupils flew training exercises to Dalby and Coolangatta, returning to Archerfield.

At the time of the last entry in the Unit History Record, 806 Empire Air Training Scheme pupils had passed through the unit, of which 610 successfully graduated to Service Flying Training Schools.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- 6 November 1939 —Flight Lieutenant T.C. Curnow
- 10 June 1940 —Flight Lieutenant J.H. Wright
- 21 November 1941 —Wing Commander G.C. Matthews

3 ELEMENTARY FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

2 January 1940	—formed at Essendon, Vic.
1 May 1942	—School disbanded

NARRATIVE

3 Elementary Flying Training School was established at Essendon, Victoria, on 2 January 1940, to provide elementary flying training to pilots who had been selected and enlisted under the Empire Air Training Scheme. Initially, there was a strong civilian element, with flying training being undertaken by civilian companies, under the supervision and control of the Commanding Officer of 3 Elementary Flying Training School, Squadron Leader E.R. King.

The aircraft used for training included DH-60 Gipsy Moth and DH-84 Tiger Moth, which were operated by Australian National Airlines, the Royal Victorian Aero Club, Victorian and Interstate Airways and C.D. Pratt.

On 8 January 1940, 16 air cadets arrived for eight weeks training. This course was completed on 4 March 1940, without damaging any aircraft after 800 hours of flying training. This may be explained by the fact that many of the cadets had up to 80 hours flying time before commencing training; only one started *ab initio*. The second course commenced on 5 February 1940.

On 15 March 1940 the School received its first aircraft, Gipsy Moth A7-44, which was delivered from Point Cook. This marked the decline of the civilian influence on flying training for, by the end of July 1940, the civilian involvement had all but ceased. The training aircraft that had been formerly utilised were impressed into RAAF service.

The first Empire Air Training course commenced during May 1940, and the second on 25 July. A segment of the training involved cross-country flights to destinations like Ballarat and Bacchus Marsh, as well as the normal ground training. Training continued without delay, even though the damage of four aircraft by a 'willy willy' on 13 December 1940 was a slight setback. To facilitate ground training, a Link trainer was

established in the trainer hut on 17 February 1941. One of the instructors at the School was Flying Officer C.C. Fenton, OBE, a legendary bush pilot from the Northern Territory and one of the original flying doctors.

Basic flying training resulted in many aircraft incidents, where trainee pilots made hard landings and forced landings, luckily without any fatalities occurring. Leading Aircraftman J.W. Gribble's experience on 23 May 1941 was not of the 'normal' variety. Whilst on a flight from Melbourne to Ballarat, via Cressy, Gribble became lost. After landing in a field near Sunbury for direction, he took off, only to find himself lost again. With darkness gathering, Gribble parachuted from his aircraft, which crashed near Research. His misdemeanour resulted in the forfeiture of £2 from his ordinary pay.

During August, the School commenced operating the new Wackett Trainer. This aircraft was plagued with problems, and required numerous modifications, the installation of which interrupted training. As late as November 1941, defect reports were still being raised on the aircraft.

On 20 April 1942, personnel and equipment began to be posted away from Essendon. All the flying instructors and aircrew trainees, along with the Wackett Trainers, moved to 11 Elementary Flying Training School at Benalla. Other members of the staff were posted to various units throughout Australia, and 3 Elementary Flying Training School was officially disbanded on 1 May 1942.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

2 January 1940	—Squadron Leader E.R. King
18 December 1940	—Squadron Leader E.W. Leggatt
1 July 1941	—Squadron Leader I.O. Gaze
23 January 1942	—Flight Lieutenant C.H. Vautin

4 ELEMENTARY FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

2 January 1940	—raised at Mascot, NSW
24 April 1942	—School disbanded

NARRATIVE

Squadron Leader A.W.L. Ellis, MC was the first commander of 4 Elementary Flying Training School, which was raised at Kingsford Smith Airfield, Mascot, New South Wales, on 2 January 1940. The headquarters was established in the clubhouse of the Royal Aero Club of New South Wales, and other civilian facilities were allocated for use by the School. For example, the Department of Civil Aviation casualty room was taken over as the Station Sick Quarters and a lecture room utilised the space of Airflite (Pty) Ltd No. 2 hangar. So sparse was the barrack accommodation that cadets were billeted at the Brighton-Le-Sands Hotel, at their own expense.

Training commenced on 8 April 1940, when 24 cadets reported for instruction. Training was undertaken by a combination of service and civilian organisations. Four flights, all under the control of the unit Commanding Officer, were established: 'A' Flight (Royal Aero Club of New South Wales), 'B' Flight (Kingsford Smith Air Services Pty Ltd), 'C' Flight (Airflite (Pty) Ltd) and 'D' Flight (Newcastle Aero Club). These civilian organisations were contracted to train pilots at an hourly rate of £2.12.6 (\$5.25). To undertake this training, the instructors were absorbed into the RAAF as commissioned officers to instruct on Gipsy Moth and Tiger Moth aircraft.

Among the pilots who passed through 4 Elementary Flying Training School was Group Captain C.R. Caldwell, the highest scoring fighter pilot of the RAAF in World War II.

Accidents were common during training, with forced landings and at least one air-to-air collision being recorded. The only fatality was that of Pilot Officer L. Bayliss, who fell from a Tiger Moth while doing a slow roll over Randwick on 18 November 1940.

The source of a trophy—the 'Fledgling Trophy'—which was competed for in early 1940, is obscure. It has been asserted that one of the

cadets, on a visit to New York, had acquired the trophy from a New York fire truck. The handsome trophy was presented to the Commanding Officer, and competed for by the flights of the School until, on the arrival of American forces in Sydney, it was considered prudent to lock it away in the safe of the Commanding Officer, Squadron Leader Roger Nichol. The Royal Australian Air Force Association (Western Australian Division) had the trophy in their custody in 1987.

In March 1940, the unit strength stood at five officers, 46 air cadets, 26 airmen and two civilians. In August of the same year, there were seven officers, 100 airmen and 23 'impressed' aircraft on strength, but by January 1941 the School had commenced to scale down its activities and was officially disbanded on 24 April 1942.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

2 January 1940	—Squadron Leader A.W.L. Ellis
7 June 1941	—Flight Lieutenant R.S. Nichol

5 ELEMENTARY FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

30 June 1940	—formed at Narromine, NSW
30 June 1944	—last entry in Unit History Record

NARRATIVE

5 Elementary Flying Training School was formed at Narromine, New South Wales, on 30 June 1940, under the command of Squadron Leader T.C. Curnow. Before the unit was officially raised, 20 Tiger Moth aircraft were received from Laverton on 24 June, followed by 46 students, who arrived on the 27th.

At the end of July, the strength of the unit stood at 346, including 94 pupils. Facilities at the unit were rudimentary. Living conditions were 'bleak and depressing', with the cold weather producing a heavy incidence of influenza. Heavy dust in summer was a problem, insinuating itself into the unlined huts, and the incidence of conjunctivitis and gastroenteritis became apparent in January 1941.

At the end of July 1940, only one Bellman hangar was erected, although three were required to protect the aircraft from the elements. Flying training was consistently delayed by strong winds and rain; on 24 July a Tiger Moth was severely damaged by a 'willy willy'. The lack of basic facilities, such as a petrol tanker, made aircraft maintenance difficult.

Elementary flying training units suffered many aircraft incidents, but few resulted in loss of life. On 3 August 1940, Flying Officer H.F. Smales and Aircraftman 1 A. Alderson were killed in a Tiger Moth accident, as was Flying Officer G. Hubbard on 3 December 1940. A unique fatality was that of Leading Aircraftman K.J. Eager, who was killed when the verandah of the Federal Hotel, Narromine, collapsed on 11 November 1940. There were 32 other servicemen injured in the incident.

By June 1944, 48 courses had been completed at 5 Elementary Flying Training School, with 2850 of the 3734 trainees successfully graduating. On 26 June 1944, 11 Tiger Moth aircraft were flown to 5 Aircraft Depot, Wagga Wagga, and another 11 to Mascot. Trainees were posted to other

elementary flying training schools to complete their training. The last entry in the 5 Elementary Flying Training School Unit History Record is for the month of June 1944.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

24 June 1940	—Squadron Leader T.C. Curnow
21 December 1940	—Squadron Leader E.R. King
21 June 1941	—Squadron Leader T.L. Baillieu
19 February 1943	—Squadron Leader S.F. Spooner
10 April 1944	—Wing Commander K.R. Parsons

6 ELEMENTARY FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

22 August 1940	—raised at Tamworth, NSW
March 1942	—last entry in Unit History Record

NARRATIVE

There are few details recorded of the activities of 6 Elementary Flying Training School. On 14 August 1940, Flying Officer T.R. Dickson and two airmen arrived by station wagon at Tamworth, where they were joined by the remainder of an advance party during the following day. Squadron Leader I.C.C. Thomson took command on 18 August, and 6 Elementary Flying Training School was officially formed on 22 August 1940.

The unit personnel were housed at the Tamworth Race Club building but, by the end of September, most of the unit facilities were habitable, although there were no hangars available for the aircraft.

On 19 September 1940, the School became operational, when 36 trainees were posted in for training. The first student of 6 Elementary Flying Training School to fly solo was Leading Aircraftman R.G. Spencer. The only fatality recorded at Tamworth is that of Leading Aircraftman W.M. Aspinall, who was flying solo when his Tiger Moth crashed and he died in the resulting fire. The first course, of which both men were members, graduated on 13 November 1940.

The Unit History Record notes visits and postings to and from the unit, and there is no hint that the unit was to disband in the record for March 1942. The unit strength consisted of 10 officers and 255 other ranks at this stage, and on 5 March 1942, 25 trainees are recorded as being posted in to commence their training. However, March is the final month for which records of 6 Elementary Flying Training School were maintained.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

18 August 1940	—Squadron Leader I.C.C. Thomson
19 May 1941	—Squadron Leader J.I. Adams
March 1942	—Squadron Leader D.R. Williams

7 ELEMENTARY FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

29 August 1940	—raised at Western Junction, Tas.
July 1941	—relief landing ground at Nile completed
31 August 1945	—School disbanded

NARRATIVE

Western Junction, the airport at Launceston, Tasmania, was the site at which 7 Elementary Flying Training School was established on 29 August 1940, under the command of Squadron Leader G.K.K. Buscombe. Pilot Officer W.A. Hall had led the advance party of 21 airmen to Western Junction on 22 August, and was followed by Flying Officer R.H. Waters and 60 airmen on the 29th. Work was still being undertaken on buildings and other facilities, and the men were billeted in Launceston.

It was not until 11 September 1940 that the first 11 Tiger Moth aircraft arrived, allowing the first course of trainee pilots to commence flying training on the 20th. A satellite field at Nile, seven and a half miles south of Western Junction, was completed. By the end of October 1944, 1801 trainees had passed through 7 Elementary Flying Training School, and the aircraft strength stood at approximately 60 Tiger Moths.

There were accidents and incidents, an example of which was when, on 24 February 1941, Leading Aircraftman G.F.S. Brown force-landed at Ross. The Commanding Officer and Flying Officer J. Ingles suffered the indignity of hitting a stump and overturning when landing to give assistance. Sergeant J.E. Scascighini and Leading Aircraftman P.G. Taylor hit the top of a tree whilst low flying on 27 April 1941.

The base was regularly visited by Airspeed Oxford aircraft from 1 Operational Training Unit at Bairnsdale, as well as 67 Squadron Ansons on anti-submarine patrols over Bass Strait and environs.

Men and machines from 8 Elementary Flying Training School participated in displays and parades. On 31 October 1941, members marched through Launceston and, on 24 November 1942, a formation of 12 aircraft flew over Hobart to support the Austerity War Loan. In addition 28 officers and 330 airmen marched through the city. Another

345 personnel marched in Launceston on 21 April 1944 to support the Victory Loan, and Section Officer J. Young and a party of 15 WAAAF participated in the ceremonial parade in Hobart to farewell Lady Gowrie, on 1 June 1944. Another example of the School's links with the community was the performance of the 'Tiger Follies' at Launceston, Hobart and Longford, all proceeds of which were donated to charity and the School Welfare Fund.

During December 1944, training was suspended at Western Junction, but it was not until 28 March 1945 that flying ceased, and the aircraft were prepared for storage. 7 Elementary Flying Training School was disbanded on 31 August 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

29 August 1940	—Squadron Leader G.K.K. Buscombe
9 May 1941	—Squadron Leader C.C. Hayward
22 March 1942	—Squadron Leader C.DeC. Matulich
5 May 1942	—Wing Commander G.C. Matthews
13 November 1943	—Wing Commander E.V. Lansell
9 January 1945	—Flying Officer F.A. Saville

8 ELEMENTARY FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 19 September 1940 —formed at Narrandera, NSW
16 June 1945 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

8 Elementary Flying Training School was raised at Narrandera, New South Wales on 19 September 1940, operating from the 331 acres of the municipal airport and 70 acres of adjoining crown land. The advance party arrived on the same day, consisting of Pilot Officers R.A. O'Donnell and A.M. Campbell, with 37 airmen.

When the first Commanding Officer, Flying Officer G.F. Hughes, MC, AFC, arrived to take command on 19 September, the accommodation consisted of a small number of sleeping huts, and no facilities existed at the airfield. However, 60 trainees arrived from 1 and 2 Initial Training Squadrons on 19 September to commence training, although it was not until 14 November 1940 that flying times were fully utilised. The base developed, with the addition of relief landing grounds, and the strength of the unit increased to 36 officers and 433 airmen by the end of November.

The development of the unit was retarded by cyclone damage on 6 December 1940. Hail and rain struck the unit during mid-afternoon and within minutes, 22 Tiger Moth aircraft had been wrecked. Those which were not destroyed were unserviceable. Telephone communications with the Narrandera township ceased due to the cables becoming saturated, and contact was only maintained with the town by motor vehicle.

The first course graduated from 8 Elementary Flying Training School on 10 December 1940, and this was followed by the second course graduation on 7 January 1941. This marked a pattern of training which continued until the School closed in December 1944.

Trainee pilots had their share of forced landings and accidents, and training was disrupted by the elements on at least one occasion. During 17 February 1943, a severe dust storm, which lasted 20 minutes, struck the unit, causing superficial damage to buildings, in particular the station sick quarters. Two WAAAF members were slightly hurt, but no School

aircraft were damaged, although a visiting Beaufort was blown to the eastern boundary of the airfield by the force of the wind.

Tragedy struck on 9 March 1943, when four members were killed in an aircraft accident.

During October 1944, an Anson aircraft was issued to the unit for ground instructional purposes. At the end of December 1944, there were 83 Tiger Moths on charge, but instructions had been received that, although the unit would retain its name, it would function as a care and maintenance unit, specifically tasked to store aircraft, before disbanding on 16 June 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

19 April 1940	—Flying Officer G.F. Hughes
24 January 1942	—Squadron Leader I.D. Gaze
3 April 1942	—Wing Commander K. Ranger
6 December 1942	—Squadron Leader G.A. Beaumont
4 April 1944	—Wing Commander I.R.D. Masters
31 May 1944	—Wing Commander E.A. Beaumont
23 November 1944	—Wing Commander C.E. Martin

9 ELEMENTARY FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 11 December 1940 —formed at Cunderdin, WA
1 June 1945 —ceased to function

NARRATIVE

9 Elementary Flying Training School (9EFTS) was formed in late 1940 at Cunderdin, a small town south of Perth. During World War II the unit averaged 50 aircraft, with 40 officers and 550 airmen providing instruction and support for the flying training.

During the operation of 9EFTS many men were trained as pilots and aircrew, providing a significant contribution to the defence of Australia. There was only one fatality during the course of the School's operation. There were, however, many crashes, most of which required minor repairs to both aircraft and crew. The unit history is full of reference to aircraft being sent off to Perth for repair.

For the duration of the War, the base itself was used as a staging depot for aircraft flying between Perth and the eastern States, providing fuel and rest for the aircraft and crew.

Problems were experienced in the early days of operation at the base with damage to the runways being caused by the skid shoes of the Tiger Moth training aircraft. A modified shoe was made for the aircraft using the airfield. Wear and tear to the runway was not helped by the efforts of the trainee pilots learning to take off and land.

Eyewitness accounts of 'herds' of Tiger Moths hopping down the runways may be the reason for the adoption of 9EFTS by a kangaroo named Elizabeth and her trusty side-kick, Spot the fox terrier. These two companions would faithfully arrive each morning for parade, taking up their place of honour at the bottom of the flagpole, remaining at attention for role call, displaying a proper regard for the ceremony. There they would remain until it was time to lead the marching troops from the headquarters building to the tarmac.

When the parade was dismissed Elizabeth and Spot would make their way to their next important appointment—morning tea in the orderly room. At 0955 precisely the two animals would present themselves for

their daily ration of biscuit. Elizabeth also had a secret vice: she was addicted to Minties, a vice which was pandered to by the orderly room staff.

9EFTS also played host to United States servicemen during the War. Australians are well known for their ability to use just about everything given half a chance. Some of the aircraft that arrived at Cunderdin arrived in large pine packing cases of outstanding quality which, with careful dismantling, could be used for many purposes including excellent huts when reassembled. Unfortunately the Americans were too keen to get to their aircraft to wait for the Aussies to gently prise the crates apart and tore them apart with chains and tractors, much to the disgust of the other onlookers.

With the end of the War not far off, December 1944 was a particularly trying time for the School. This was clearly shown when all aircrew personnel were posted from the unit 'with such dramatic suddenness that some forty odd instructors were denied the privilege of consuming their share of the accumulated stock in the officers' mess bar'. It should be noted however, that they did make a good attempt to decrease the stock levels and were in a state of 'anaesthesia' when they departed.

The final salute to the unit was made in the Unit History Record on 30 June 1945, written by Squadron Leader Wilson:

This is the final history sheet of No. 9 E.F.T.S. It must be with a feeling of sadness that we write 'finis' to a Unit that has been as successful and happy as this. However, it is a sure sign of the speedily approaching successful conclusion of this War, when we are able to cease training of Air Crew.

Farewell No. 9 E.F.T.S., and may you be ever remembered with happiness.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

11 December 1940	—Squadron Leader C.H. Simpson
15 April 1941	—Squadron Leader N. Brearley
16 August 1941	—Wing Commander S.G. Brearley
20 April 1943	—Wing Commander H.F. Boston
2 January 1945	—Squadron Leader J.B. Wilson

10 ELEMENTARY FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 1 May 1941 | —formed at Temora, NSW |
| 1 March 1946 | —re-named Care and Maintenance Unit,
Temora |
| 24 June 1947 | —unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

10 Elementary Flying Training School was raised on 322 acres of land near Temora, New South Wales, on 1 May 1941. Ten days later the first of the School's Tiger Moth aircraft were ferried from RAAF Base Richmond. The first pilot trainees were posted in on 28 May 1941 and by 30 September the unit had 129 airmen under training. To service the trainees, the strength of the School was 37 officers and 372 airmen; at its peak in May and June 1943, the School was training 342 pupils. To undertake this training, the School had a total of 97 Tiger Moth aircraft on strength in August 1944.

During March 1942, with the closure of 12 Elementary Flying Training School at Lowood, the staff increased by eight officers and 63 airmen. Aircraft numbers increased with 23 Tiger Moths being transferred from Lowood. Additional staff were gained due to the disbandment of 4 Elementary Flying Training School at Mascot on 18 April 1942.

The base also provided facilities for the training of Air Training Corps members, and was the home for a sizeable contingent of WAAAF members, who were accommodated in a hostel in Temora.

During June 1944 a flight grading plan was devised, where students were graded before the commencement of their flying training. However, in August 1944 the British Air Ministry requested that the flow of RAAF aircrew overseas cease and the number of trainees were reduced to meet Australian-only requirements. On 14 May 1945 course No. 60 ceased training before the due pass-out date of 28 May, and members of the course were posted for ground training. Elementary flying training had ceased and a holding pool was formed. Members of that pool flew 2208 hours during May.

Up to May 1945, a total of 2527 students had undergone the full elementary flying training course and, on 8 August 1945, instructions were received to the effect that action was to be taken to prepare all the School aircraft for storage. This task was completed by the end of August and, on 1 March 1946, Care and Maintenance Unit, Temora, came into being. This unit, formed from the nucleus of 10 Elementary Flying Training School, was charged with the maintenance of the aircraft and the site at which they were stored.

The Department of Civil Aviation accepted responsibility for the care and maintenance of Temora aerodrome on 31 July 1946. After surplus Air Force holdings were disposed of at auction, a civilian caretaker, Mr L.G. Derrick, was appointed to supervise remaining RAAF interests at the aerodrome. Care and Maintenance Unit, Temora, was officially disbanded on 30 June 1947.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 May 1941	—Squadron Leader C.H. Simpson
10 December 1941	—Wing Commander D.H. MacIntyre
7 August 1942	—Wing Commander H.R. Harding
18 May 1944	—Wing Commander L.R.W. Masters
17 October 1945	—Flight Lieutenant R.J. Turner

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11 ELEMENTARY FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 26 June 1941 —officially opened at Benalla, Vic.
28 February 1946 —became Care and Maintenance Unit,
Benalla
15 October 1948 —all aircraft transferred to Care and
Maintenance Unit, Tocumwal

NARRATIVE

11 Elementary Flying Training School was officially opened at Benalla, Victoria, on 26 June 1941. The only buildings available for the 12 officers and 104 airmen who manned the unit were the barracks and equipment stores, and the hangars were not completed until November–December 1941.

The first Tiger Moth aircraft were ferried to Benalla from Richmond on 11 July 1941. Despite the difficulties—tents were erected near the runway to enable lectures to be given—operations commenced on 24 July and Leading Aircraftman F. Masson was the first trainee to fly solo on 30 July 1941. Training hours were restricted by heavy rain and poor visibility. In September, 265 personnel, under the command of Flight Lieutenant C.H. Fry, were detached to Essendon to continue training, as the Benalla airstrip was unserviceable. The detachment returned to Benalla on 24 November 1942.

With the advent of war with Japan in December 1942, shelter trenches were dug and blackout precautions taken.

During January 1942, the unit was allotted Wackett Trainers to replace their Tiger Moth aircraft. However, the aircraft were withdrawn to 7 Aircraft Depot for modification commencing in February 1943, and were replaced by Tiger Moth aircraft. In May 1945, the unit had an establishment for 80 of these aircraft.

In addition to normal training, facilities at Benalla were utilised for recruit drill training during March 1942. In April, 32 members of the United States Army Air Corps successfully completed four weeks flying the Wackett Trainer. On 26 July 1944 an Ansett Airways Auto-Gyro

landed to refuel, and the pilot 'gave personnel an exhibition of hovering and Auto-Gyro performance'. Captain Chow of the Chinese Air Force visited the unit to study aircrew training on 22 January 1945.

By May 1945, elementary flying training had practically ceased. In fact, only 10 Netherlands East Indies trainees flew during June 1945, and flying training ceased completely in the following month. 2953 trainees had passed through 11 Elementary Flying Training School.

On 28 February 1946 the Care and Maintenance Unit, Benalla was raised, under the command of Flight Lieutenant C.R. Gibson, followed by Flight Lieutenant A. Harker and Squadron Leader A.H. Cottee. Mustang aircraft were stored at the site, before being transferred to Care and Maintenance Unit, Tocumwal, on 15 October 1948.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

26 June 1941	—Squadron Leader I.C.C. Thomson
1 December 1941	—Wing Commander W.R. Garrett
25 March 1942	—Squadron Leader C.C. Hayward
8 July 1942	—Wing Commander H.H. Kilby
2 November 1944	—Wing Commander E.R. Griffith

12 ELEMENTARY FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

16 October 1941	—raised at Bundaberg, Qld
29 December 1941	—moved to Lowood, Qld
18 April 1942	—School disbanded

NARRATIVE

12 Elementary Flying Training School was raised on 16 October 1941, based at Bundaberg, Queensland. The advance party arrived at Bundaberg on 9 October 1941, led by Flight Lieutenant G.S. Moffatt and the unit was to have a strength of 29 officers, three warrant officers and 518 other ranks. Aircraft strength was to total 54 Tiger Moths.

When the first flying instructors arrived on 3 November 1941, they departed for 2 Aircraft Depot, Richmond, to ferry the first Tiger Moth aircraft to the unit. The first 12 arrived on 7 November, followed by another 12 on 12 November 1941—the day that the first 60 trainees arrived. Training commenced on 14 November, but was hampered by heavy rain on 22 November which rendered the airstrip unserviceable.

More aircraft were ferried from 2 Aircraft Depot before the equipment officer, Flight Lieutenant W.B. Phillips, led an advance party of 54 airmen to Lowood on 29 December 1941. The main party, under the command of Flight Lieutenant R.A. Hendy, followed by special train on 8 January 1942. On the same day 28 aircraft flew to Lowood. By the end of February 1942 the 55 Tiger Moths had completed 2727 flights.

Training continued with one calamity on 11 March 1942, when cyclonic winds struck the unit and nine aircraft were severely damaged.

During March the arrival of United States Army Air Corps (USAAC) units in Australia called for re-arrangements of air base allocations, and Lowood was assigned to the USAAC for its use. Consequently, the aircraft, staff and trainees of 12 Elementary Flying Training School were dispersed to similar units at Narrandera and Temora, New South Wales.

12 Elementary Flying Training School disbanded on 18 April 1942.

COMMANDING OFFICER

16 October 1941	—Squadron Leader K. Ranger
-----------------	----------------------------

1 ENGINEERING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 March 1940 | —formed at Ascot Vale |
| 4 March 1946 | —became RAAF Ground Training School |

NARRATIVE

1 Engineering School was formed on 1 March 1940 at a most unlikely venue for the RAAF—the Melbourne showgrounds at Ascot Vale—and later overflowed into Flemington racecourse. The School grew quickly and by December, 205 courses had commenced, with 2600 personnel on course, and 700 airmen and airwomen and 40 officers on staff.

Training on Wirraways commenced in March 1941 and included RNZAF personnel. Courses started in April included those for cooks, drivers and intelligence officers. A milestone was reached in September when the total number of personnel completing training passed 10 000.

December 1941 brought the reality of war closer. The Unit History Record for 8 December records: 'Declaration of War—Japan commenced hostilities against United States of America and Great Britain'. Air raid precautions and defence works were put into effect. RAAF Station Ascot Vale was formed in February 1942 to allow the School to concentrate on instructional duties.

There were an increasing number of airwomen under training, especially as wireless telegraphists. This resulted in female officers being posted in during March and by September there were 500 airwomen under training.

By August 1942, 20 000 trainees had graduated, and in December 270 WAAAF telegraphists took part in a passing-out parade.

1943 was not a year of significant events for the School, just a constantly heavy training workload. New courses commenced, including electrical instrument, instrument maker and fabric worker, reflecting the difficulty of recruiting personnel in specialist trades.

Training for naval personnel on Allison engines commenced, as well as for WAAAFs as trainee flight mechanics. 1943 finished on a high note with over 12 000 tradesmen and women completing courses.

Co-operation with allies was evident in the commencement of diesel mechanics courses for United States Army personnel in January 1944,

and basic fitters courses for Netherlands East Indies (NEI) personnel in April. The first WAAAF flight mechanics graduated in April and two more courses commenced, a pattern which continued all year.

The difficulties in obtaining trainees with the required ability were evident in comments made throughout the year in the Unit History Record. However, most trainees completed their courses with extra time and assistance and by November, 50 000 trainees had graduated from the School.

The first half of 1945 found the School in a continuing heavy workload, not helped by the high failure rate on some courses, the lack of textbooks and even a shortage of parts to repair bicycles.

August was an eventful month, with the commencement of Japanese linguist courses, previously provided by 3 School of Technical Training, quickly followed by the surrender of Japan. The impact was sudden; by the end of September only three courses, plus some for NEI forces, were being carried out.

From November on, the mass discharge of staff started and disposal of the School's assets began. Most of these assets were prepared for movement to Forest Hill near Wagga Wagga, where the School was reformed as a lodger unit of 5 Aircraft Depot, as the RAAF Ground Training School, on 4 March 1946.

The School could look back on the considerable achievement of training 58 695 personnel and its tradition continues on at Wagga Wagga to this day.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 March 1940	—Wing Commander E.G. Knox-Knight
8 March 1940	—Wing Commander J.P.I. McCauley
October 1940	—Group Captain J.H. Summers
6 January 1942	—Wing Commander D.H. Brown
24 February 1942	—Squadron Leader W.P. Spinks (RAF)
May 1942	—Group Captain C. Eaton
15 April 1943	—Wing Commander A.D. Carey
November 1943	—Wing Commander W.P. Spinks (RAF)
1 March 1944	—Wing Commander E.L. Chapman
21 June 1944	—Wing Commander W.P. Spinks (RAF)
14 January 1946	—Squadron Leader H.T. Roper

1 FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

Cogito Ergo Sum (I Think Therefore I Am)



CHRONOLOGY

6 February 1934	—raised at Point Cook, Vic.
1940	—School disbanded
March 1946	—formed from 5 Service Flying Training School, Uranquinty, NSW
30 June 1947	—transferred, in name only, to Point Cook
30 March 1952	—re-named Applied Flying Training School
28 May 1958	—commenced operations at Pearce, WA
December 1968	—disbanded and reformed as 2 Flying Training School

NARRATIVE

1 Flying Training School was established at Point Cook, Victoria, on 6 February 1934, and consisted of Training Squadron, Fighter Squadron and Seaplane Squadron. The unit operated Wapiti, Bulldog and Southampton aircraft. The Seaplane Squadron was active until June 1939, and the Fighter Squadron records end on 18 December 1935.

Training Squadron operated Gipsy Moth aircraft as well as the Wapiti, and these were joined by Avro Cadet trainers during April 1936. On 10 January 1938 aerodrome defence training was commenced, including Lewis and Vickers gun courses. During March 1939, Link trainer courses commenced.

On 19 July 1939, the Cadet Wing at 1 Flying Training School was disbanded to form Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced Training Squadrons. During October, navigation, reconnaissance, and instructors courses commenced. The School was disbanded in 1940.

During March 1946, 5 Service Flying Training School ceased to operate at Uranquinty, New South Wales, and 1 Flying Training School was formed from existing staff and equipment. The flying strength comprised 55 Wirraway, two Tiger Moth, and one Anson aircraft. By November, the unit was, in effect, a care and maintenance unit.

On 30 June 1947 the School was transferred, in name only, to Point Cook, and the Flying Training School was formed under the command of Wing Commander C.F. Read. The first flying course commenced on 23 February 1948, and graduated on 26 August 1949. Air traffic control training commenced before the School was re-named Applied Flying Training School on 30 March 1952.

The Applied Flying Training School operated from Point Cook until 28 May 1958, when it commenced operations from Pearce, Western Australia.

On 26 October 1951, 1 Basic Flying Training School was raised at Uranquinty, and transferred to Point Cook on 19 December 1958. On 31 December 1968, this unit was closed and became 1 Flying Training School on 1 January 1969. 1 Flying Training School was finally disbanded on 31 January 1993.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

November 1935	—Wing Commander H.F. De La Rue
10 January 1938	—Wing Commander F.W.F. Lucas
28 February 1946	—Group Captain D.T. Forsyth
2 September 1946	—Wing Commander C.F. Read
14 December 1946	—Flight Lieutenant J.T. Sinclair
3 March 1947	—Flight Lieutenant C.E. Wakeham
29 May 1947	—Flight Lieutenant R.C. Davie
23 November 1947	—Wing Commander C.F. Read
15 September 1949	—Squadron Leader G.A. Cooper
22 August 1951	—Squadron Leader P.G. Metzler
7 December 1951	—Wing Commander I.J. Roberts
21 February 1952	—Wing Commander R.H. Thompson
2 November 1953	—Wing Commander W.J. Guthrie
8 March 1954	—Wing Commander H.C. Plenty
4 February 1957	—Wing Commander W.M. Coombes
March 1960	—Wing Commander K.G. Brinsley
20 August 1962	—Wing Commander T.W. Murphy
February 1966	—Wing Commander W. Stickley
January 1968	—Wing Commander B.H. Collings

2 FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

Seek the Heights



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 30 March 1952 | —title changed from 1 Flying Training School to 1 Applied Flying Training School |
| 1 May 1958 | —detachment sent to Pearce |
| 28 May 1958 | —operations commenced at Pearce |
| 1 January 1969 | —title changed from 1AFTS to 2FTS |
| November 1994 | —based at Pearce, WA |

NARRATIVE

When the decision was made to replace the veteran Wirraway with the Vampire Mk 35, a more suitable airfield with longer runways was needed. Pearce was chosen as the new base for 1 Applied Flying Training School (1AFTS). On 27 May 1958, 1AFTS ceased to operate at Point Cook, and commenced operations at Pearce on the following day, remaining under the command of Wing Commander W.M. Coombes.

On 7 May 1958 the first eight Vampires left East Sale to be ferried to Pearce, arriving on 9 May 1958. By the end of that month, the unit at Pearce consisted of 10 officers and 60 men, with eight Vampire aircraft. A further four aircraft arrived in June and two in July, so by the end of that month, the 14 students of the first course conducted at Pearce (No. 31 course) had all reached solo stage on the Vampire.

In spite of the usual 'teething problems', 1AFTS made satisfactory progress in its new locality. On 4 December 1958, all 14 members of the inaugural course graduated as planned—the first 'jet-age' graduates of the RAAF. Early technical problems and work on the runways led to

some lost flying time by No. 32 course, but on 15 April 1959, all 14 members of that course, too, graduated from the new jet-applied phase. 1AFTS could now be considered 'up and running' at its new home at Pearce and in its new role.

There were many other activities concerning the unit in addition to flying training. Chief among these was the responsibility for search and rescue (SAR) operations and associated tasks. The Dakota aircraft used for that purpose took part in several search operations and flood relief sorties in aid of civil authorities.

During those early years at Pearce, graduating courses were reviewed on parade by many a famous 'old boy'. Among these were Air Marshal Sir Richard Williams, KBE, CB, DSO; Air Marshal Sir Valston Hancock, KBE, CB, DFC; Air Vice Marshal A.L. Walters, CB, CBE, AFC; Air Vice Marshal C.D. Candy, CBE; Air Commodore W.J. Garing, CBE, DFC; and Air Commodore M.O. Watson, OBE. However, a highlight of the time must surely have been the graduation of No. 44 course on 30 November 1962, when the reviewing officer was HRH Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh, KG, KT, GBE.

In November 1964, expenditure was approved for the purchase of 75 aircraft to be used for all-through jet training. Many types were considered and in September 1965 it was confirmed that the RAAF would purchase the Macchi MB-326H to replace the Winjeel and the Vampire. After 10 years in service as the advanced trainer, the Vampire Mk 35 began to manifest its fatigue in various systems and component failures. In such a climate, the arrival of the first new Macchi jet trainers on 8 May 1968 was a gala occasion.

The first course to train completely on Macchis, except for preliminary flight assessment in Winjeels, started on 31 March 1968 and graduated in September 1969. It was expected that most of the training would be done on the Macchi as an all-through jet course, but the system was only partially successful.

Like most, if not all, new aircraft, the Macchi presented its own special problems of both scheduled and unscheduled maintenance in its first few months in service. So much so that the Commanding Officer of the day wrote in his final report as CO 1AFTS in December 1968 '... though Macchi aircraft have been available, it has only been through great effort and perseverance by the staff that this has been achieved. It is anticipated that the maintenance of Macchi aircraft will not be as trouble free as was the Vampire.'

On 1 January 1969, 1AFTS began operations as 2 Flying Training School, with Vampire and Macchi trainers, a Dakota for search and rescue (SAR) duties, and an Iroquois helicopter for immediate rescue. The 'all-through jet training' concept lasted only until 1971. Vampire aircraft were phased out of service in June 1969, making additional servicing teams available for work on Macchis. Thereafter, their serviceability increased dramatically although the reliability of the Macchi remained in question. However, in the first year of all-Macchi operations, 97 students graduated from four courses, as scheduled, without loss of planned flying time.

June 1989 saw the first of 46 Pilatus PC-9 arrive, with No. 151 course beginning flying the turboprop trainer soon after. The Macchi continued flying with 2FTS alongside the PC-9 until the last Macchi departed in September 1991. With the closure of 1FTS at Point Cook and the subsequent disposal of the CT-4 piston trainer, all-through PC-9 flying training began with No. 163 course, in June 1992.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 Applied Flying Training School

February 1957	—Wing Commander W.M. Coombes
February 1960	—Wing Commander K.G. Brinsley
September 1962	—Wing Commander T.W. Murphy
September 1965	—Wing Commander W. Stickley
January 1968	—Wing Commander B.H. Collings

2 Flying Training School

January 1969	—Wing Commander B.H. Collings
November 1970	—Wing Commander K.H. Foster
February 1973	—Wing Commander R.M. Greenwood
January 1975	—Wing Commander S.H. Whisker
January 1977	—Wing Commander K.N. Pyke
January 1979	—Wing Commander M.J. Cavenagh
February 1981	—Wing Commander A.A. Page
January 1983	—Wing Commander R.J. Connor
January 1985	—Wing Commander P.F. Hay
July 1987	—Wing Commander R.J. Wood
January 1990	—Wing Commander G.S. Rowe
January 1992	—Wing Commander J.R. Woodman

1 INITIAL FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 28 November 1951 —formed at Archerfield, Qld as 1 Initial Training School
- 26 May 1952 —re-named 1 Initial Flying Training School
- 22 November 1954 —amalgamated with 1 Basic Flying Training School at Uranquinty, NSW

NARRATIVE

1 Flying Training School was formed at Archerfield, Queensland under the command of Wing Commander W.N. Lampe, who assumed the appointment on 28 November 1951.

The first Tiger Moth aircraft were delivered to the School from 3 Aircraft Depot on 4 January 1952, two days before the first course (No. 8) arrived for training. This course graduated on 27 March 1952 and would have logged most of the 1000 hours flown by aircraft of the School, as recorded on 15 March. Part of the training for aircrew trainees was a visit to the Evans Deakin and Company Limited shipyards.

On 26 May 1952, the School was re-named 1 Initial Flying Training School and Air Training Corps cadets gained air experience in School aircraft. In addition, National Service trainees used the unit facilities, and later courses included trainee pilots from the Royal Australian Navy.

Between 16 and 19 August 1952, six Tiger Moths from the School participated in a recruiting tour in the Kingaroy-Bundaberg region. For the period 5-8 April 1954, aircraft exercised with the 9th Infantry Battalion, simulating bombing and strafing attacks on the troops.

During November 1954, the decision was made to combine the School with 1 Basic Flying Training School at Uranquinty, New South Wales. On 24 January 1955, the base facilities were handed over to 23 Squadron, and 1 Initial Flying Training School ceased to exist.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- 28 November 1951 —Wing Commander W.N. Lampe
- 19 March 1953 —Squadron Leader V.F.W. Sullivan

1 INITIAL TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 12 April 1940 | —advance party arrived at Somers, Vic. |
| 13 October 1945 | —School disbanded |

NARRATIVE

Early in 1940, seven and a half acres of property of the Trustee, Lord Somer's Camp, and 85 acres of land opposite the main gate (the property of Mr T. Luxton) were acquired under the National Security Act to enable an initial training school to expand to a planned strength of 600 aircrew trainees. On 12 April 1940, an advance party arrived at Somers and commenced to prepare the site for the first students, who arrived on the 29th.

Facilities at the camp were far from ideal. Water had to be transported from Bittern, and the cold and windy weather made the building of suitable accommodation at the new camp a necessity.

Trainees were tutored in subjects which included maths, navigation, law and administration, signals, medical, physical training, science, armament, gas defence and hygiene. Link trainer familiarisation commenced during June 1940, and the training was extended when the first Women's Australian Auxiliary Air Force (WAAAF) recruits commenced training on 8 July 1942. The final WAAAF recruit course graduated from Somers in February 1943. Additional WAAAF training commenced with the first stewardess course in August 1942.

Somers was an isolated unit, and great pains were taken with welfare. Concert parties were organised and, on 1 July 1941, the Women's Auxiliary from Somers township introduced a canteen service for the members of the unit. To boost morale, the *Somers Sun* was produced early in 1941, and members from the unit participated in sporting competitions, playing rugby union, tennis and cricket.

By September 1941, the strength of the unit stood at 35 officers and 266 airmen, with 914 trainees. At the end of November, there were 1273 personnel (including 953 trainees) stationed at Somers.

Aircrew training ceased during June 1945, and there was a general exodus of personnel from Somers. By the end of July a large percentage of the equipment had been returned to store, and personnel numbers had

reduced; it was considered that the cinema would have to close due to lack of patronage. On 6 August, 1 Initial Training School ceased to function. At the end of August, personnel from Radio Development and Installation Unit, Croydon, New South Wales, arrived at Somers, and the final disbandment of 1 Initial Training School was scheduled for 13 October 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

26 April 1940	—Flight Lieutenant T.W. White
4 September 1941	—Squadron Leader C.A. Brewster
25 May 1942	—Wing Commander N. Mulroney
19 November 1943	—Wing Commander H.H. Kilby
24 January 1945	—Wing Commander H.F. Boston

2 INITIAL TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

27 May 1940	—raised at Lindfield, NSW
June 1945	—School disbanded

NARRATIVE

2 Initial Training School was opened at Lindfield, New South Wales, on 27 May 1940, under the command of Flight Lieutenant D.H. MacIntyre, with a strength of 17 airmen.

Italy declared war on 11 June 1940, and this resulted in a 400 per cent increase in guards at the unit and the issue of extra rifles from Richmond.

231 aircrew trainees arrived on 22 June 1940, and graduated on 19 July. Thus commenced a pattern of training which was to continue until the unit disbanded during June 1945.

At 1 August 1941, the strength of 1 Initial Training School was 41 officers, 294 ground staff and 896 trainees; by 1 January 1942, it had varied to 37 officers, 94 ground staff and 1491 trainees, possibly reflecting the fact that hostilities with Japan had commenced on 8 December 1941.

Extra courses, which included ship and aircraft recognition, lecture technique and staff navigator, commenced during May 1942. The first of the courses, a ship and aircraft recognition, included students from the WAAAF, Army and United States Services. To assist with training, two unserviceable Gipsy Moth aircraft (A7-114 and A7-117) were allocated to the unit during May 1943.

On 11 June 1945, 537 aircrew students were posted from the School, and the unit was disbanded during the month.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

27 May 1940	—Flight Lieutenant D.H. MacIntyre
10 December 1941	—Squadron Leader C.H. Simpson
August 1942	—Wing Commander D.H. MacIntyre
2 January 1945	—Wing Commander G. Bills-Thompson

3 INITIAL TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 16 December 1940 —formed at Sandgate, Qld (physically at Amberley)
- 18 April 1941 —moved to Sandgate
- 23 July 1942 —commenced move to Kingaroy, Qld
- 1 June 1945 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

3 Initial Training School was to be located at Sandgate, Queensland when it was raised on 16 December 1940. However, as there were no facilities available at the Sandgate site, the unit was based at Amberley, where 28 huts were made available to enable the first intake of 217 aircrew trainees to commence their eight weeks training.

On 18 April 1941 the School moved from Amberley to Sandgate. To cope with the number of new trainees, additional education officers and drill instructors were required. By 16 December 1941, after one year of operation, 1511 students had graduated from 3 Initial Training School.

On 23 July 1942, the School commenced its move to Kingaroy, where it was to remain for the rest of the War. During November, aircraft and ship recognition instructors courses were commenced, and the unit also hosted Air Training Corps camps, which took place during December–January, July and September. Cadets were tutored in navigation, star recognition, musketry, drill and aircraft recognition. During the first of these camps, which commenced on 31 December 1942, 15 Wackett Trainers flew from Maryborough to demonstrate two-way radio telephone systems to the cadets.

Tragedy hit the unit on 21 January 1943. Whilst on leave in Brisbane, Aircraftwoman D.M. Ward and Aircraftman Paynter were killed in an accident.

On 13 May 1943, in co-operation with 5 Squadron (which was also based at Kingaroy), a mock bombing and gas attack was staged on the base, which proved useful to base defence planners. There were also visiting aircraft of various types, such as Lockheed Lightning fighters and B-26 Marauder medium bombers, which added interest for staff and students.

During February 1943, 1010 students were on the strength of 1 Initial Training School. Numbers remained static until September 1944, when trainee postings to the School decreased; in October there were none.

On 8 December 1944, the School was notified of the cessation of training and the impending disbandment of the unit. This did not prevent the Air Training Corps from undertaking a camp for 221 cadets from 27 December 1944 to 4 January 1945. The actual disbandment of the unit was not completed until 1 June 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

16 December 1940	—Flight Lieutenant V.L. Dowling
1 November 1941	—Wing Commander H.A. Rigby
30 March 1942	—Squadron Leader J.A. Adam
4 December 1942	—Squadron Leader J.R. Gordon

4 INITIAL TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 4 November 1940 —formed at Mount Brecken, Victor Harbour,
SA
- 3 December 1944 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

On 4 November 1940, 4 Initial Training School was formed at Mount Brecken, Victor Harbour, South Australia, after the advance party, under the command of Pilot Officer A.T. Luke, had arrived on 28 October.

Squadron Leader H.H. Kilby assumed command, and the first 34 aircrew trainees were posted in to the unit on 11 November 1940. This course graduated on 3 January 1941.

Training was initially constrained by the lack of facilities. Work commenced on the erection of buildings on 2 December 1940. On 6 January 1941, a marquee was erected for trainees, clearly identifying the need for extra housing.

In January 1942, anti-aircraft and ground defence practice was instigated, and was continued through to March 1942.

On 7 May 1942, Wing Commander D.A. Connelly assumed command of the unit, and the first Women's Australian Auxiliary Air Force (WAAAF) recruit training course commenced during the same month. When training of WAAAF recruits ceased, 2604 recruits had graduated.

Bushfires threatened the camp at Victor Harbour township on 27 January 1943, but were extinguished with assistance from the staff and pupils of 4 Initial Training School.

The establishment strength of the School on disbandment was 48 officers (including four WAAAF) and 225 (including 110 WAAAF) other ranks, with a strength of 400 trainee aircrew and 250 WAAAF recruits per month.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- 4 November 1940 —Squadron Leader H.H. Kilby
- 7 May 1942 —Wing Commander D.A. Connelly

5 INITIAL TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 21 October 1940 | —formed at Pearce, WA |
| 14 March 1942 | —advance party moved to Clontarf Orphanage |
| 20 January 1945 | —School disbanded |

NARRATIVE

5 Initial Training School was established at Pearce, Western Australia, on 21 October 1940, with a strength of three officers and 18 airmen, under the command of Squadron Leader N. Brearley. The unit suffered from a lack of telephones, training rooms, film projector and aircrew category selection procedures. By August, new classrooms had been provided.

On 14 September 1941 the largest intake to date was posted in—161 trainees from Adelaide and Perth, plus 16 trainees from within the Service. During November, training in air frames was undertaken within sight of the tarmac, and normal hangar activity found useful for instructional purposes. Operational activity at Pearce was, overall, a distraction to students, and it was considered that any warlike operations from the base would result in the curtailing of training by the School.

On 27 February 1942 approval was given for the School to move to the Clontarf Orphanage, and an advance party travelled to the site on the 14th to prepare for the movement of staff and students. There were many problems with accommodation and essential services at Clontarf. Much of the corrective work was undertaken by students and staff, and a visit by Wing Commander Grayton-Brown from the Directorate of Medical Services on 30 April 1942 resulted in suggestions for improvements.

Settling in was not the only problem. On three occasions (31 May, 10 June and 24 June 1942) air raid warnings were issued, but the 'all clear' was quickly given.

Squadron Leader J.W. Darling commenced three-day expeditions in which practical experience in map reading, grid reference systems, travel by magnetic compass, weather observation and star recognition could be given. The first course of four officers, one non-commissioned officer and 27 trainees commenced on 15 September 1942.

Facilities at Clontarf were improved. On 31 January 1943 a new hospital was commenced. Early in March, 10 sleeping huts and two lecture huts were received. The maintenance of the building was proving a problem; during June 1943, repairs to the roof of the main building commenced.

During July, discussions took place regarding the return of the building to the Catholic Church, and alternative sites for 5 Initial Training School were sought. However, on 27 November, Headquarters Western Area notified the School that training would cease on 2 December 1944, and that the School would be disbanded and not reformed. Prefabricated huts were dismantled and moved to 77 Operational Base Unit at Carnarvon. Beds, tables, forms, blankets, palliasses, barracks and messing gear were stored under lock and key for possible sale to the Clontarf Orphanage, and the unit was disbanded on 20 January 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

21 October 1940	—Squadron Leader N. Brearley
10 April 1941	—Squadron Leader A.R. Brown
31 December 1942	—Squadron Leader J.W. Darling

6 INITIAL TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 16 July 1943 | —established at RAAF Bradfield Park, NSW |
| 8 December 1944 | —School disbanded |

NARRATIVE

6 Initial Training School was formed at RAAF Station Bradfield Park on 16 July 1943, under the command of Squadron Leader I.O. Gaze. On 16 August, Squadron Leader S.I. Winter-Irving assumed command of the unit, which had a strength at 31 July of 23 officers, 36 airmen, four WAAAF and 614 trainees.

On 3 August 1943 the only fatality recorded at 6 Initial Training School occurred. Aircraftman II S.E. Lees was fatally injured in a bus accident on the base.

The number of trainees decreased during 1944. In July, after a year of operation, the trainee strength was 376, and during October 1944, trainee aircrew were being posted as far afield as Evans Head, Cressy, Uranquinty, Deniliquin, Rathmines, Narrandera and Williamstown to undertake photographic, clerical and equipment duties whilst waiting for a decision on the future of aircrew training. The strength of the School decreased to 10 officers, 35 airmen, 21 WAAAF and 125 trainees at the end of November 1944.

6 Initial Training School was disbanded on 8 December 1944.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| 16 July 1943 | —Squadron Leader I.O. Gaze |
| 16 August 1943 | —Squadron Leader S.I. Winter-Irving |

1 NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- 23 November 1953 —formed as a lodger unit of Base Squadron
Amberley
1 July 1957 —Unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

1 National Service Training Unit was formed to establishment on 23 November 1953 as a lodger unit of Base Squadron Amberley. It comprised 12 officers and 44 airmen. The Unit provided across the board RAAF training for personnel fulfilling their National Service obligations. The first Commanding Officer was Squadron Leader T.G. Janes.

On 11 November 1953 the Regional Director of Labour and National Service, Brisbane, and his staff, assisted by Squadron Leader Janes and specialist officers, carried out selections for intakes of National Service trainees for Queensland. Selections were also made for Victoria and New South Wales. On 4 January 1954, the first batch of 277 trainees marched in for training, which lasted for 77 days. Subsequent groups marched in—a grand total of 19 intakes throughout the operation of the Unit.

Besides their training, personnel were involved in various parades for special events including Anzac Day guards. During the Queen's first visit to Australia in March 1954, a special guard of 20 was provided from the Unit. A drill competition (Telegraph Cup) was held between intakes, and the drill of the squads was of a very high standard.

In July 1954 training was hampered by an outbreak of viral influenza. There were hospitalisations of around 60 per day.

With the cessation of National Service, the Unit was disbanded in July 1957, under an order received from Headquarters Training Command. All equipment was returned to Base Squadron Amberley and the staff posted out.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- 23 January 1953 —Squadron Leader T.G. Janes
6 December 1954 —Squadron Leader Bracken-Ridge
7 January 1957 —Squadron Leader G. Hughes

2 NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 16 May 1956 | —established, attached to RAAF Base
Richmond, NSW |
| 7 July 1957 | —Unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

On 16 May 1956, 2 National Service Training Unit was established as part of RAAF Base Richmond under the auspices of Headquarters Training Command. It provided general training and also aircrew training for selected applicants, the latter being carried out at Bankstown. The first intake of recruits marched in on 20 May 1956.

The first Commanding Officer was Squadron Leader S. Bradford. The biggest problems with the Unit were always staff deficiencies, but morale was high, and the workload was carried across the intakes.

As part of general training, regular bivouac training was conducted at Port Stephens. Sport was also a big part of Unit life.

The Unit disbanded in July 1957.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- | | |
|--------------|------------------------------|
| 14 June 1956 | —Squadron Leader S. Bradford |
| 4 April 1957 | —Squadron Leader R.J. Rankin |



2 Air Observers School, Mount Gambier



2 Air Observers School maintenance hangar, June 1945



1 Air Observers School, Cootamundra, NSW, circa 1941



Damage to hangar and aircraft, Evans Head, 9 April 1945



Above and below: Combat Survival Training School—typical training exercises





A7 Operational Training Unit Liberator



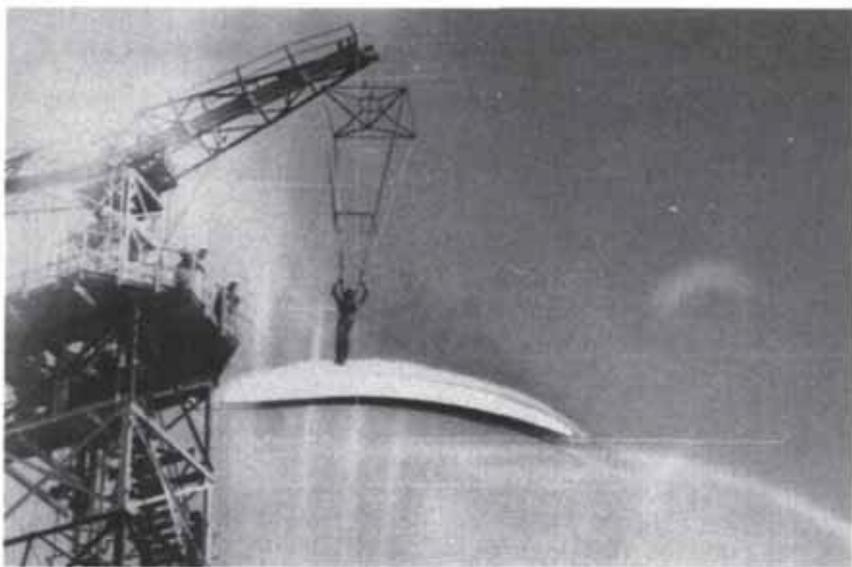
RAAF Base Parkes



5 Operational Training Unit Sabres taxi out at Williamtown, 25 March 1970



*Air Vice Marshal Murdoch inspects National Service trainees at Amberley,
28 August 1955*



Parachute training tower



Recruit Training Course 5194 passing out parade



1 Recruit Training Unit drill team, 1989



CT-4 trainers at 1 Flying Training School, Point Cook

3 NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING UNIT

Strength Through Knowledge



CHRONOLOGY

- 30 November 1953 —formed in Canberra, ACT under the command of Headquarters Training Command
- 30 June 1957 —Unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

On 30 November 1953, 3 National Service Training Unit was formed at Base Squadron Fairbairn, for the ongoing training of National Service personnel in ground gunner training. On 4 January 1954, 105 trainees arrived to commence their course. These intakes were to continue throughout the Unit's operation.

Sport played a very important role at the Unit—rugby union, boxing and cricket particularly. The trainees also provided guards of honour at the Australian War Memorial for Anzac Day and for visiting dignitaries on arrival at Fairbairn. During their training, trainees went on bivouacs at Tharwa and Majura Range, to enhance the classroom theory.

On 30 June 1957, on a directive from Headquarters Training Command, the Unit was disbanded. National Service was ceased, staff were posted out and all records were forwarded on to Headquarters Training Command.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- 21 December 1953 —Squadron Leader J. Paterson
- 3 June 1956 —Flight Lieutenant M.W. Anderson

4 NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- 1 March 1956 —formed at RAAF Base Wagga Wagga,
NSW as 4 National Service Training
Squadron
- 24 April 1956 —re-named 4 National Service Training Unit
- 1 July 1957 —Unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

On 1 March 1956, 4 National Service Training Squadron, as it was then named, was formed at RAAF Base Wagga Wagga, under the direct command of the Officer Commanding, RAAF School of Technical Training. The first intake of 211 personnel came from New South Wales and Queensland, and they were put on technical trade courses. The first Commanding Officer was Squadron Leader J.G.M. McLachlan.

On 24 April, the Training Squadron was re-named 4 National Service Training Unit, in line with all similar units.

Apart from their studies, the trainees were involved in various sports. They also performed voluntary work at the Home of Compassion old people's home, which was part of the Calvary Hospital in Wagga Wagga. This provided many elderly people with companionship, and the services of the trainees were much appreciated by the hospital.

On 24 June an instruction was received from Headquarters Training Command to disband the Unit due to a government policy change on National Service. All equipment was returned to stores, and files sent to the Department of Air. All staff were posted, and the Unit disbanded on 1 July 1957.

COMMANDING OFFICER

- 1 March 1956 —Squadron Leader J.G.M. McLachlan

5 NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- 11 November 1953 —formed at Laverton, Vic.
27 June 1957 —Unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

5 National Service Training Unit was formed at RAAF Base Laverton on 11 November 1953, under the auspices of Air Officer Commanding, Headquarters Training Command. The training courses provided for the trainees included drill instructors and medical orderlies. The trainees came from all over Australia. The initial intake was 400 personnel. The first Commanding Officer was Squadron Leader A.L. McKeown.

Field camps were part of the training, and the trainees were often used for guard of honour duties. Unit dances were held on a regular basis to provide entertainment. Frequent fund raising was organised for the Children's Hospital in Melbourne. The Unit also produced a magazine called *Natio*. In October 1956 there was a serious outbreak of rubella (German measles). The whole Unit was placed under quarantine away from the permanent air force personnel.

On an order from Headquarters Training Command, due to a government policy change on National Service, the Unit was disbanded on 27 June 1957. All staff were posted and files sent to Headquarters Training Command.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- 16 November 1953 —Squadron Leader A.L. McKeown
13 January 1954 —Squadron Leader J.J. Lynch
9 July 1956 —Squadron Leader D.C. Harvey

6 NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- 14 December 1953 —formed at Point Cook, Vic.
1 July 1957 —Unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

6 National Service Training Unit was formed on 14 December 1953 at RAAF Point Cook, under the command of Air Officer Commanding, Headquarters Training Command. RAAF Point Cook was responsible for the provision of all base services.

The function of the Unit was to give National Service trainees a basic service training, and to inspire them with the ideals of personal discipline and loyalty. It also was to provide radio training for selected National Servicemen who possessed basic or specialist qualifications.

285 trainees from all over Australia marched in. The first Commanding Officer was Flight Lieutenant J.N.R. Bell.

On 1 February 1954, 60 of the trainees were picked to begin training for an escort wing as part of the planned Trooping of the Colour parade for the Queen's visit in March 1954. New intakes marched in on a regular basis. In March 1955, 12 members of 16 intake were granted deferment to allow a return to university until January 1956.

There were always football teams from each intake and regular revue nights raised funds for the local Spastic Centre. No. 17 intake presented one called 'Dial M for Mirth', which contained 23 musical items.

On 24 May 1957, an order from Headquarters Training Command requested that the Unit disband on 1 July 1957, due to a government policy change on National Service. Staff were subsequently posted and all files were sent to Headquarters Training Command.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- 21 December 1953 —Flight Lieutenant J.N.R. Bell
9 July 1955 —Flight Lieutenant B.F. Field

7 NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING UNIT

De L'Audace (Be Bold)



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 December 1953 | —established at RAAF Pearce, WA |
| 1 July 1957 | —Unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

7 National Service Training Unit was established at RAAF Pearce on 1 December 1953. The Unit provided initial training for National Service trainees, which also included flying training for selected personnel. The first intake of 175 trainees marched in on 4 January 1954. This was followed by subsequent intakes. The first Commanding Officer was Squadron Leader E.A. Whiting.

In March 1954 the Unit provided a number of trainees to be used as part of a guard of honour for the Queen's visit to Western Australia. The Unit was involved in sport which included a very strong swimming team. The members held regular dances and fund-raising events.

In August 1956 the whole Unit was involved in the search for a missing child in the Pearce area. She was later found drowned much to the distress of all concerned.

The Unit disbanded in July 1957.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 December 1953 | —Squadron Leader E.A. Whiting |
| 2 June 1956 | —Squadron Leader J. Paterson |

1 OPERATIONAL CONVERSION UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

12 January 1959	—formed at RAAF Amberley, Qld
9 June 1971	—Unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

1 Operational Conversion Unit was established on 12 January 1959 at RAAF Base Amberley, to undertake the conversion and operational training of the bomber element of the RAAF. The Unit was initially equipped with three B Mk. 20 and three T4 Canberra aircraft.

The first of 36 conversion courses, comprised of Squadron Leader L. Britt, Flight Lieutenants P.W. Kennedy, F.J.L. Dowling and N.F. Herfort, Flying Officers B.H. Prince, T.H. Thorpe and A.J. Pinches and Pilot Officer F.A. Murphy, graduated on 30 April 1959. Training consisted of cross-country and night navigation, bombing, and simulated operational exercises. On 17 November, a 'round Australia' exercise was organised to give students experience in techniques employed by 81 Wing.

Crews from 1 Operational Conversion Unit were also employed in non-training roles. On 26 October 1959, Squadron Leader Dollisson made a maximum speed low-level attack on HMAS *Melbourne*. Later, from 18 to 19 July 1961, Flight Lieutenants Downey and Thompson flew two sorties a day to enable radar calibration to be undertaken on HMAS *Parramatta*, and another detail was flown for the same reason on 3 July 1968.

Other operational roles undertaken by the Unit occurred between 12 and 14 July 1961, when A84-218 was flown to Cocos Island to undertake photographic tasks. 'Lone Ranger' exercises were flown to Butterworth and New Zealand, and Unit Canberras participated in exercises in Papua New Guinea ('Boy Scout' 20-28 May 1968) and air-defence exercises such as 'High Jupiter' in June 1968. Of interest is the commencement of 'Combat Skyspot' exercises on 28 August 1968, in conjunction with 30 Squadron radar. Another valuable exercise, to gain realistic training in a Vietnamese operational environment, was 'Strait Kris'. This Army exercise was held at Shoalwater Bay, Queensland, between 27 September and 9 October 1969.

The Unit was detached from Amberley on two occasions. From 9 July to 2 August 1962, the Unit operated from RAAF Richmond whilst the runway at Amberley was being refurbished. From 15 October to 9 November 1962, a detachment operated out of RAAF Base Townsville.

On 16 February 1965, A84-206 crashed after an overshoot at Amberley. The crew, Pilot Officer K.G. Kluska and Flight Lieutenant S. Kerker, were both killed and the aircraft was destroyed. Another fatal accident took place on 23 March 1970, when A84-265 crashed and Flying Officers H.J. Badower and J.G.M. Siffer were both killed.

1 Operational Training Unit, under the temporary command of Squadron Leader G. Dyke, was disbanded on 9 June 1971, and all personnel posted to 2 Squadron.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

12 January 1959	—Squadron Leader B.F.M. Rachinger
25 May 1959	—Squadron Leader J.T. Dollisson
28 December 1960	—Squadron Leader H.W. Thwaites
21 January 1963	—Squadron Leader W. Stickley
6 January 1964	—Squadron Leader G.C. Turnidge
16 December 1965	—Squadron Leader J.N. Parker
13 December 1969	—Wing Commander J.R. Boast
12 January 1970	—Squadron Leader F.J.L. Downing
25 January 1971	—Wing Commander T.H. Thorpe

2 OPERATIONAL CONVERSION UNIT

Juventus Non Sine Pinnis (The Young Shall Have Wings)



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 6 April 1942 | —2(F) Operational Training Unit (2OTU) formed at Port Pirie, SA |
| May 1942 | —moved to Mildura, NSW |
| March 1943 | —Spitfire section of the Unit lodged at Williamtown, NSW |
| March 1947 | —2OTU disbanded |
| 1 March 1952 | —2OTU reformed at Williamtown |
| 1 September 1958 | —re-named 2 Operational Conversion Unit |
| November 1994 | —based at Williamtown, NSW |

NARRATIVE

2(F) Operational Training Unit (2OTU) was formed at Port Pirie, South Australia, on 6 April 1942 and operated initially with Wirraway and Fairey Battle aircraft. During May 1942 the Unit moved to Mildura and soon acquired a wide variety of aircraft including Kittyhawk, Vultee Vengeance, Avro Anson, Boomerang, Spitfire and Oxford.

In March 1943, the Unit became associated with Williamtown, New South Wales, when the Spitfire section became a lodger unit. In August 1943, the Unit was at its peak of activity with 5168 flying hours being recorded. An average of over 100 aircraft remained on strength during the next two years. In 1945 the Spitfire aircraft

departed the Unit and the first Mustangs began to arrive, gradually displacing the Kittyhawks.

Training ceased during October 1945 and, at the graduation of the last course, 1247 pilots had been trained by 2OTU over 104 000 flying hours and at a cost of 45 lives lost in accidents. 2OTU was officially disbanded on 25 March 1947.

2OTU was reformed at Williamstown on 1 March 1952 to supply trained fighter pilots for the Korean War. Training began with Wirraways, Mustangs and the relatively new Vampire jet. Vampire courses continued until September 1958. In March 1952, 2OTU assumed the responsibility for all flying training within 78 Wing.

In October 1953, the Mustangs were ferried out, leaving only Wirraways and Vampires in the Unit. The first fighter combat instructor course began in April 1954, as did the first senior officer conversion and refresher course on jet fighters. In November 1954, a Sabre Trials Flight was introduced at 2OTU and Sabre courses were commenced on 1 January 1955.

On 1 September 1958, the Unit was re-named 2 Operational Conversion Unit (2OCU). The first Mirage III fighter aircraft arrived at Williamstown in March 1964 and with their arrival the role of 2OCU was expanded to include advanced pilot training on this type of aircraft. The first Mirage course commenced in September 1964.

The first Macchi aircraft allocated to 2OCU arrived at Williamstown in October 1969, gradually replacing the Vampire aircraft as the interim advanced trainer between 'wings' graduation and Sabre conversion.

The reformation of No. 5 Operational Training Unit on 1 April 1970 made 2OCU responsible only for Mirage conversion and operational training. In July 1971, Macchi advanced training responsibilities reverted to 2OCU. From September 1971 to December 1984, 2OCU conducted Macchi/Mirage courses and fighter combat instructor (FCI) courses.

In January 1985, 2OCU temporarily became a non-flying unit after having conducted 45 conversion courses on the Mirage. During May 1985, the first two (two-seater) Hornets built to Australian specifications, in company with two KC10 Extender tankers, made a 15.2 hour non-stop flight from Lemoore, California to Williamstown.

After much labour spent on preparation of training manuals, the first Hornet conversion course began in August 1985. The regular biannual 'High Sierra' exercise program for Hornet conversion students began at Townsville in August 1986.

In July 1987, 20CU was again given the responsibility for Macchi training until January 1989 when it passed to the reformed 76 Squadron at Williamstown.

Staff air-to-air refuelling training with the RAAF Boeing 707 tanker commenced in July 1991 and, later, conversion training included air-to-air refuelling as part of the curriculum.

Today, the basic role of 20CU is to train Hornet pilots and to conduct FCI courses. The FCI course is designed as a post-graduate fighter course and graduates are fully qualified as Hornet instructors. Other roles of 20CU include the conduct of Hornet refresher courses and maintaining and developing F/A-18 air-to-air and air-to-surface tactics and techniques.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

27 April 1942	—Wing Commander P. Jeffrey
20 August 1943	—Group Captain W.R. Garrett
5 July 1944	—Group Captain W.S. Arthur
27 November 1944	—Group Captain P. Jeffrey
1 March 1952	—Wing Commander P.G. Ottiwill
21 May 1953	—Wing Commander R.C. Creswell
27 March 1956	—Squadron Leader A. Hodges
13 January 1958	—Wing Commander J.W. Hubble
5 August 1959	—Wing Commander N.P. McNamara
9 January 1961	—Wing Commander C.D. Murphy
2 January 1962	—Wing Commander I.S. Parker
30 October 1963	—Wing Commander F.W. Barnes
July 1965	—Wing Commander A. Hodges
September 1968	—Squadron Leader R.E. Trebilco
4 November 1969	—Wing Commander B.J. Reynolds
May 1970	—Wing Commander W.G. Richardson
June 1971	—Wing Commander K.J. Tuckwell
April 1974	—Wing Commander H.F. Freeman
June 1976	—Wing Commander G.W. Neil
November 1977	—Wing Commander R.A. Waterfield
February 1980	—Wing Commander T.R. Richardson
17 June 1982	—Wing Commander M.B. Nixon
September 1984	—Wing Commander B.A. Robinson
6 July 1987	—Wing Commander R.A. Clark
December 1990	—Wing Commander K.F. Clarke
February 1993	—Wing Commander H.N. Burlinson

1 OPERATIONAL TRAINING UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- 8 December 1941 —formed at Nhill, Vic.
- 20 April 1943 —moved to East Sale, Vic.
- December 1945 —last Unit History Record entry

NARRATIVE

1 Operational Training Unit (1OTU) was formed on 8 December 1941, and commenced at RAAF Nhill as a temporary location. The Unit's role was to provide advanced operational flying and instruction, and operational training began at Nhill on 22 December.

It was estimated that accommodation facilities at East Sale would be unavailable until 1 October, so a decision was made to locate 1OTU temporarily at Bairnsdale, and on 14 June 1942 the Unit began moving. By July, 1630 servicemen and women manned the Unit, and after all the existing quarters, recreational buildings and 88 tents were filled to capacity at Bairnsdale aerodrome, 320 airmen were still left without a bed to sleep on. As an interim measure, the RAAF rented the Victory Guest House, and the Vic, Club, Orient, Albion and Main Hotels in Bairnsdale.

On 10 December 1942, 1OTU Detached Flight was formed to be detached for an indefinite period to North Eastern Area for the purpose of transporting troops, arms and equipment to the forward battle areas in Papua. This flight was made up of 15 Hudson aircraft and crews, together with maintenance personnel—a total of 108 personnel.

On 20 April 1943, 1OTU commenced its move across East Gippsland to the emergent East Sale station. During the ensuing three days, transport section co-ordinated the immense exercise which involved 110 tenders that made 535 trips along the Princes Highway clocking up 50 000 miles. The Unit's transfer involved the transportation of 2411 personnel and 128 aircraft and was achieved without incident.

The move to East Sale did not hinder the flying program and training resumed in earnest the following day. After only 36 hours at the RAAF's newest station, the courses had already logged more than 200 flying hours. 1OTU had a fleet of 25 Hudsons, 55 Beauforts, 35 Oxfords, 14 Fairey Battles, and one Tiger Moth, and trained pilots, air observers and wireless operator/air gunners for multi-engine squadrons. The first part

of each course embraced preliminary training and a six-week conversion to the Hudson and Beaufort aircraft. While pilots were undergoing the conversion courses, air observers and wireless operator/air gunners received instruction in the Oxford and Anson aircraft. The sorties tested bombing and gunnery, shipping recognition and reconnaissance, navigation and searchlight evasion among other operational tasks.

The first accident at East Sale occurred when Beaufort A9-304 crashed into Bass Strait near King Island on 28 April 1943. The subsequent loss of life became a portent of incidents to follow.

Accounting for the establishment of about 130 aircraft, the Directorate of Training estimated the Unit might total 2000 hours monthly with an intensive night flying program. This expected rate of effort taxed the endurance of the aircrews and maintenance personnel and a mobile canteen fitted with thermos equipment offered a welcome catering service to their nightly training program, serving suppers until 10 p.m. Due to the demands imposed by the Empire Air Training Scheme, IOTU worked virtually 24 hours a day.

Edward Gough Whitlam, formerly of Knox Grammar School and future Prime Minister of Australia, came to East Sale and undertook the inaugural Hudson training course at the new station. Since operations started at Bairnsdale, the Unit had experienced 47 Beaufort accidents and a fear of Beauforts was spreading among trainee aircrews.

IOTU opened to the public on 16 October 1943, for a rare wartime inspection of East Sale. Group Captain Garing made this gesture to encourage investment in the fourth liberty loan.

The Commanding Officer of IOTU created aviation history on 19 January 1944 when, in an Australian record, he made a 5000-foot high landing in a Tiger Moth to rescue a seriously injured stockman on Mount Wellington.

Just after this, IOTU was put on alert to fight grass fires in the district. On 21 January, 80 volunteers from East Sale backed the Stratford Bush Fire Brigade in burning fire breaks to shield two houses, and they temporarily blocked an approaching fire. On 6 February at midnight, the Unit sent 150 men to protect the Willow Grove State Ash Forest near Moe.

There was no respite for IOTU as a fire which ignited in the Yallourn open-cut brown coal mine spread for half a mile. The Unit deployed 270 men to the mine to assist in containing the blaze which cut electricity supplies and blacked out several Melbourne suburbs, delaying train services in the city.

The reading and writing rooms at East Sale opened during April 1944, with a library of 2000 books for Unit personnel to read and fire places in both rooms to provide warmth during the bleak winter. The recreation hut regularly staged Thursday night dances to the musical accompaniment of the Unit orchestra. At the beginning of 1945, a milk bar opened in the recreation room.

IOTU tasked operational patrols to safeguard the shipping lanes, and in April 1944 four Beaufort aircraft from the Unit deployed to Mount Gambier to provide a two-day escort patrol for the Dutch transport ship *Van Ruys*. Southern Area commanded IOTU and alerted Beaufort aircraft from the Unit to hunt a German submarine which shelled the Greek motor boat *Illosis* on 9 December.

The infusion of a Beaufort conversion unit at East Sale produced a series of record operating figures in August 1944 for IOTU. During the month, the Unit flew 2479 flights totalling 3868 hours with a fleet of 132 aircraft which taught 221 pupils. The Unit had also now completed over 100 000 flying hours in total.

When Beaufort A9-143 crashed on Waddy Island about 3.5 miles south-east of Paynesville, it was the fifth aircraft accident for IOTU in July 1945. The final aircraft accident to befall a crew of IOTU killed three members of the station's last Beaufort transport course on 27 August. In about three and a half years, IOTU had suffered 147 aircraft accidents in southern Australia and New Guinea which left 131 aircrew dead or presumed missing during the Unit's intense program of training exercises and operational missions.

The last entry in the Unit History Record is dated December 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

8 December 1941	—Wing Commander A.I.G. Carr
11 May 1942	—Wing Commander C.D. Candy
August 1943	—Group Captain W.H. Garing
February 1944	—Wing Commander J.B. Ryland
December 1944	—Wing Commander G.D. Nicoll
6 April 1945	—Group Captain G.C. Hartnell
August 1945	—Group Captain K.R. Parsons

3 OPERATIONAL TRAINING UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- 1 March 1940 —raised at Rathmines, NSW, as Seaplane Training Flight
- 28 December 1942 —3 Operational Training Unit formed
- 1 February 1946 —re-named Crew Training Unit (Flying Boat)
- 1 April 1946 —name changed to Crew Conversion Unit (Flying Boat)
- 18 April 1946 —absorbed 113 Air-Sea Rescue Flight
- 30 April 1946 —last entry in Unit History Record

NARRATIVE

The Seaplane Training Flight was formed at Rathmines, New South Wales, on 1 March 1940. Equipped with two Seagull aircraft, the Unit trained pilots and crew in seaplane techniques before postings to 9, 10 and 11 Squadrons. Some pilots also served on the cruisers of the Royal Australian Navy.

On 5 February 1941 the Unit was allotted its first Catalina aircraft, A24-1, and Flying Officer G.U. Allen was posted to the Unit to instruct the Catalina conversion course.

The first wartime operational sortie flown by members of the Seaplane Training Flight took place on 4 January 1942, when Squadron Leader P.B. Chapman and crew flew the air-to-surface-vessel (ASV) radar equipped A24-28 on a 20-hour flight to seaward. Squadron Leader Allen was involved in the testing of an offensive weapon for the Catalina during the period 2-4 February, undertaking torpedo dropping trials. During the next month, Allen was involved with the inspection of the Lake Boga site, near Swan Hill, Victoria, which was selected as a major flying boat repair unit.

On 28 December 1942, Seaplane Training Flight was formed into 3 Operational Training Unit.

In addition to its major training role, 3 Operational Training Unit flew anti-submarine patrols, as well as mercy missions to Lord Howe Island.

68 On 15 April 1943, two Catalina aircraft flew to the island and returned to

Rose Bay, Sydney, with the passengers from a Tasman Empire Air Lines flying boat which had been forced down at Lord Howe Island.

There was only one reported contact with the enemy. On 1 May 1943, a Catalina was on an anti-submarine patrol to cover the USS *Bagely* and another vessel when a submarine was sighted. The Catalina attacked through machine gun fire, and dropped three depth charges. There was no reported damage to either protagonist. May was also a tragic month for, on the 24th, A24-29 crashed whilst landing in a heavy swell at Port Stephens and Flight Lieutenant B.H. Higgins, DFC and 11 personnel from No. 11 Catalina conversion course were killed.

May also saw the loss of the Unit's Kingfisher aircraft (which had been carried on strength since 27 April 1942) when they were absorbed by the newly-formed 107 Squadron.

At the end of December 1943, the equipment of 3 Operational Training Unit comprised 12 Catalina, two Seagull and a Douglas Dolphin aircraft. But it was point of entry for aircraft being ferried from the United States and many Catalina, Dornier, Mariner and Sunderland flying boats passed through Rathmines.

The Unit was re-named Crew Training Unit (Flying Boat) on 1 February 1946, and it was during this month that manpower dropped markedly—100 airmen were posted. On 1 April 1946 the name of the Unit was again changed to Crew Conversion Unit (Flying Boat) and, on 18 April, the Unit was ordered to absorb 113 Air-Sea Rescue Flight. This had been undertaken when a hailstorm occurred on 23 April, severely damaging all but two of the Unit's aircraft.

The last entry in the Unit History Record is dated 30 April 1946.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 March 1940	—Squadron Leader D.A. Connelly
10 November 1941	—Squadron Leader G.U. Allen
28 December 1942	—Wing Commander J.A. Cohen
29 August 1943	—Wing Commander H.M. Birch
15 December 1944	—Wing Commander G.R. Thurston
26 November 1945	—Squadron Leader R.H.S. Grey

4 OPERATIONAL TRAINING UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 October 1942 | —raised at Williamtown, NSW |
| 30 April 1944 | —Unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

4 Operational Training Unit was raised at Williamtown, New South Wales, on 1 October 1942 to prepare crews to operate the Vultee Vengeance dive bomber on active service.

Six pilots and wireless operator/air gunners arrived from 12 Squadron on 28 October 1942 to undergo No. 2 Vengeance conversion course, which was completed on 25 November 1942. At the end of October, the strength of the Unit stood at seven Vengeance dive bombers, but this was augmented on 2 January 1943 with the delivery of the Unit's first Wirraway aircraft. Training commenced in the Wirraway, before the students progressed to the more capable Vengeance.

Training at 4 Operational Training Unit was marred by a spate of fatal accidents which involved both Wirraway and Vengeance aircraft. Sergeants F.J. Callaghan and E.A. Thuel were killed when the Wirraway in which they were flying crashed near the base on 3 March 1943. On 4 August 1943 Sergeants L.P. Gilbert and A.K. Fleay were killed when their Vengeance aircraft crashed near Goulburn, New South Wales. On 14 September Vengeance A27-31 exploded spectacularly in mid-air during a dive bombing exercise and Sergeant J.H. Robertson and Flight Sergeant D. Sinclair were both killed.

On 14 October Flying Officer D.G. Southwell made a belly landing after his aircraft had a hydraulic failure, which prevented the bomb bay doors from being closed. He had to jettison two 250-lb bombs and requested that his rear gunner bale out before he landed successfully.

Squadron Leader R.E. Bell assumed temporary command of the Unit on 1 December 1943, and he retained this appointment until 27 April 1944, when it was assumed by Flight Lieutenant R. Tuel-Wilkinson. The Unit was disbanded on 30 April 1944.

COMMANDING OFFICER

- | | | |
|----|----------------|---------------------------|
| 70 | 5 October 1942 | —Wing Commander E.G. Fyfe |
|----|----------------|---------------------------|

5 OPERATIONAL TRAINING UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

26 October 1942	—formed at Wagga Wagga, NSW
20 October 1943	—moved to Tocumwal, NSW
July 1944	—moved to Williamtown, NSW
1 February 1946	—became a crew conversion unit
7 July 1947	—Unit disbanded
1 April 1970	—reformed at Williamtown
31 July 1971	—Unit ceased to exist

NARRATIVE

5 Operational Training Unit was formed at Wagga Wagga, New South Wales, on 26 October 1942, and training began on 2 November 1942 with seven aircraft—five Beaufighters and two Beauforts. The first training course comprised 12 crews, whose training was completed by 12 December 1942. By the end of the year, there were 170 personnel and 16 aircraft at the Unit.

By June 1943, Unit personnel totalled 387, of whom 17 were WAAAF. There were 20 Beaufighter/Beaufort aircraft, four DH-84s and one Moth Minor. No. 8 Beaufighter Course was in training, and the first Oxford aircraft arrived in August.

The Unit moved to Tocumwal, New South Wales, on 20 October 1943, and No. 10 Beaufighter and No. 3 Boston courses completed training there on 26 October 1943. The first Mosquito aircraft was received on 13 November 1943, but the build-up began slowly—at April 1944, of 63 aircraft, only five were Mosquitos. The regular inflow/outflow of students being crewed as pilots or navigators was accompanied by a stream of conversion courses for experienced aircrew. This demand was backed up by an ever increasing and more sophisticated technical maintenance set-up.

A detachment of 177 personnel moved to Williamtown in May 1944, followed by the remainder of the Unit in July. Flying hours rose to 1500 per month, with 100 to 200 of these being night flying, much of it cross-country.

August 1944 saw a flurry of activities—a media invasion to publicise Australian-built Mosquitos, a new photo reconnaissance course, and

even Bob Hope visited. Base development, including runways, continued, and in October, the strength of personnel exceeded 1000; it would peak at 1700 in May 1945.

The loss of four aircraft and crews in three days in November 1944 was indicative of the hazards of realistic training. On a brighter note, the first Unit ball was held at the Empire Palais Newcastle, on 22 December 1944.

Thirty crews were in training at January 1945. Aircraft strength was 75, of which Mosquitos numbered 28. On Victory in the Pacific Day, the Unit held a thanksgiving service, marched through Newcastle, and generally had a ball that night at Williamtown.

Training continued, but the wind down from a war footing was fairly rapid, with crews on course being given the option of continuing or being released from service. On 30 November 1945, the last two Beaufighters were ferried to 5 Aircraft Depot.

With effect from 1 February 1946, 5OTU became a crew conversion unit, and Mustang and Wirraway aircraft were taken on strength in September. Strength of personnel at the Unit in February 1947 was 98, and aircraft 28. From May 1947, preparations were made for disbandment, which finally occurred on 7 July 1947.

5OTU was reformed at Williamtown on 1 April 1970 with responsibility for Sabre aircraft conversion and operational training preparatory to Mirage conversion. To recognise its historic significance, a flypast and dining-in night were held on 25 March 1970. In all, 49 aircraft from 2 Operational Conversion Unit (2OCU) took part, and guests of honour that night included two wartime commanders of 5OTU—Wing Commander B.F. Rose, DFC (Ret) and Group Captain B.R. Walker, DSO (Ret).

Maintenance personnel were allotted to both the Instructional Flight and Operations Flight, to enable the purely operational force to be independent of the training establishment, which allowed for nine pilots in training. On day one, Instructional Flight began with air-to-ground gunnery and Operations Flight wasted no time and flew 461 sorties in the first month. Students included pilots who had served with 9 Squadron in Vietnam. Training included tactics with Mirage aircraft from 2OCU and with 76 Squadron.

The Unit regularly participated in joint service exercises and often flew flypasts over cities and, on occasions, RAAF bases. Vampires, their

use in decline since September 1970, were mothballed by April 1971. This left 5OTU with 40 Sabre and eight Macchi aircraft.

By 31 July 1971, its purpose served, 5OTU ceased to exist, but not without some notable flypasts and activities which attracted television and print media attention.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

26 October 1942	—Squadron Leader B.F. Rose
21 June 1943	—Wing Commander B.R. Walker
28 June 1944	—Wing Commander W.E. Townsend
11 June 1946	—Wing Commander A.D. Henderson
29 March 1947	—Wing Commander R.C. Cresswell
1 April 1970	—Wing Commander P.G. Larard
19 October 1970	—Wing Commander D.G. Stenhouse

6 OPERATIONAL TRAINING UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

5 June 1943	—raised at Nowra, NSW
14 September 1943	—completed move to Jervis Bay, NSW
4 March 1944	—completed move back to Nowra
31 March 1944	—ceased to function

NARRATIVE

6 Operational Training Unit was established on 5 June 1943 at RAAF Base Nowra, New South Wales, under the command of Wing Commander J.O.P. Dibbs, to train Beaufort aircrew and replacement aircrew in torpedo dropping tactics and techniques. The Unit was also to co-operate with the base torpedo unit at Nowra in trials.

The first flights were undertaken for the base torpedo unit when, on 5 June 1943, experimental work was undertaken with Mk XII and XIII torpedoes. These trials were conducted in or near Jervis Bay. Aircraft from the Unit were used to test air-to-surface (ASV) radar aerials and for night ASV familiarisation. Training was made as realistic as possible, with formation attacks on ships and convoys plying the east coast. The ship involved with torpedo training and testing was HMAS *Burra-Bra*.

In September 1943, the Unit had a strength of 570 officers and men. On 8 September, the decision was made to move the Unit to Jervis Bay. The headquarters and orderly room opened on 14 September but, accommodation being limited, it was only possible to deploy 75 maintenance personnel to Jervis Bay, ensuring that only daily servicing could be undertaken at Jervis Bay. Major servicing was still undertaken at Nowra. The Unit was also restricted by inadequacies in the airfield; the north-south runway was not available until 28 December 1943.

On 4 March 1944, 6 Operational Training Unit returned to Nowra; the Unit's strength was 308 officers and men.

The Unit was ordered to cease to function on 31 March 1944.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

5 June 1943	—Wing Commander J.O.P. Dibbs
1 December 1943	—Flight Lieutenant J.P. Ryan

7 OPERATIONAL TRAINING UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- 15 February 1944 —raised at Tocumwal, NSW
30 November 1945 —Unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

7 Operational Training Unit was raised at Tocumwal, New South Wales, on 15 February 1944, under the temporary command of Squadron Leader A. Hubbard. With a total strength of 473 personnel, the Unit aimed to provide operational training for B-24 Liberator crews.

The first two Liberator aircraft arrived at Tocumwal on 21 February 1944, to be followed by another on 18 March, two more on 13 April, and two delivered on 30 April. At the end of April 1944, the aircraft strength of 7 Operational Training Unit stood at eight Liberators, one Vultee Vengeance and an Oxford.

No. 1 Liberator course was completed on 2 June 1944, and nine days later the second commenced. At this time a new schedule for aircrew training was issued, which provided for an intake of 18 crews to commence training in September 1944, 27 crews to commence in October 1944, and an intake of 27 crews every four weeks thereafter. To meet the demands of this plan, No. 3 Liberator Course was designed to convert selected pilots as flying instructors to train the expected 648 trainees who would be under training at Tocumwal at any one time. At the end of 1944, No. 8 course comprised 23 crews.

Training continued despite the fact that, on 7 September 1944, five Liberators were found to have had the bulk of the aircraft wiring cut. A 12-day investigation failed to identify the perpetrator of this sabotage. A short circuit, which came to light when the bomb bay doors of a Liberator were being tested on 2 October, resulted in the loss of two bombers in a subsequent hangar fire. Another loss occurred on 11 January 1945, when Pilot Officer R.G. Robertson crashed A72-8 on take-off and, on 19 January, A72-123 landed on one wheel. Although the aircraft was written off, the crew was uninjured.

In June 1945, there were 1660 personnel on strength at 7 Operational Training Unit, and 54 Liberators, 11 Vultee Vengeance, one Oxford and five Kittyhawk aircraft made up the flying strength of the Unit.

After pre-emptive Armistice celebrations on 10 August 1945 (which were successfully diverted by the base commander, Group Captain H.R. Harding, from the town back to the base), the Unit celebrated the actual victory on 15 August 1945. However, work did not cease; 187 personnel were under training and, on 24 August, orders were received that 15 Liberators were to be converted to transports to be used to assist with the return of prisoners of war to Australia.

7 Operational Training Unit disbanded on 30 November 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

July 1944	—Wing Commander A.L. Hubbard
30 October 1944	—Group Captain A.A. Barlow
1 August 1945	—Group Captain D.W. Kingwell

8 OPERATIONAL TRAINING UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 25 June 1944 | —raised at Narromine, NSW |
| 25 September 1944 | —main body completed move to Parkes, NSW |
| 13 March 1946 | —Unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

8 Operational Training Unit was formed at Narromine, New South Wales, on 25 June 1944, under the command of Group Captain W.R. Garrett, AFC. The first of 57 Wirraway aircraft with which the Unit was initially equipped arrived on 5 July 1944, and the full strength was reached at the end of the month.

Training commenced with the arrival of students to participate in No. 34 fighter operational training course on 24 July 1944. This course was made up of 36 students undertaking the operational training course, 34 the tactical reconnaissance course and 17 undertaking the Spitfire refresher course. The final course, No. 45, commenced on 4 August 1945.

During this period, the Unit moved from Narromine to Parkes, New South Wales. The main body, consisting of 10 officers and 237 airmen and WAAAF, all under the command of Flight Lieutenant R.H. Close, arrived at Parkes on 25 September 1944.

On 19 November 1944, 36 Wirraway aircraft were ferried to 2 Operational Training Unit, Mildura, and 20 Boomerang and 16 Spitfire aircraft flown from that unit to Parkes. The strength of 8 Operational Training Unit at the end of November was 14 Wirraway, 16 Spitfire, 20 Boomerang and one Oxford aircraft.

The Unit also was visited by many different aircraft types, including Beaufort, Beaufighter, Anson, Mitchell and Dakota. One of the most interesting was the Lancaster, flown by Squadron Leader P.S. Isaacson, DFC, AFC, DFM, with Captain R. Cutler as a passenger, which visited Parkes on 25 November 1944 to enable the crew to attend a second victory loan rally in the town.

A feature of the fatal accidents which involved 8 Operational Training Unit trainees and staff was the number of air-to-air collisions. On 20 September 1944, two Wirraways, flown by Flying Officer J.A. Walton

and Sergeant A.R. Collins, collided whilst formation flying, and both pilots were killed. Flying Officer J.P. Killalea baled out after a collision between his Wirraway and that flown by Pilot Officer A. Watkins, 17 miles south of Parkes. Watkins landed his aircraft safely, but was not so fortunate on 7 December when his Boomerang collided with that flown by Flying Officer H.J. Kidd. The two pilots had been undertaking section combat exercises when they collided. Kidd was thrown out of his aircraft and parachuted to safety. Watkins was seen to exit his burning aircraft, but his parachute did not deploy. Another fatal collision between Boomerangs occurred on 29 May 1945, when Pilot Officers C.N. Weatherson and W.E. Foster were killed when their aircraft collided whilst the pilots were engaged in a reconnaissance exercise.

The anniversary of the WAAAF was celebrated with a wing parade on 15 March 1945, which was followed by a formal dinner and dance to mark the occasion.

During July 1945, a Wirraway dropped supplies to 'C' Company, 19th Australian Infantry Training Battalion near Bathurst, and this exercise was followed up with an air support exercise with 'A' Company of the same battalion on the 5th. Boomerangs, fitted with live ammunition, strafed ahead of the troops, and a Wirraway demonstrated smoke laying.

Seven days after the Armistice, the final fatal accident occurred. Flight Lieutenant L.K. Harris landed immediately after take-off, and his Kittyhawk ran off the end of the airstrip. After hitting a stump the aircraft caught fire and Harris was fatally injured.

During September posting decimated the strength of 8 Operational Training Unit, and it was disbanded on 13 March 1946.

COMMANDING OFFICER

25 June 1944

—Group Captain W.R. Garrett

1 RADIO SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 4 August 1941 | —formed at RAAF Station Richmond, NSW |
| November 1944 | —moved to Maryborough, Qld |
| 26 November 1945 | —School disbanded |

NARRATIVE

The Radio School was formed on 4 August 1941 at RAAF Station Richmond, New South Wales, to train officers and airmen in the duties and techniques of radio location—known later as radar. The School was later re-named as Radar School, Richmond. The School was located at No. 5 Hangar, Richmond, and the strength on formation was one pilot officer, one sergeant and one acting corporal as instructional staff.

At formation, the School was attached to Headquarters, RAAF Station Richmond. By 8 August 1941 the School came under the command of 2 Training Group. The temporary Commanding Officer was Flying Officer M.A. Brown.

The first course for radio mechanics began on 29 July 1941 with 24 airmen under instruction; the first radio location officers course began on 4 August 1941 with six officers under instruction. On 5 January 1942, 23 airmen arrived from 3 School of Technical Training to undergo No. 1 Radio Operators Course. There were also American personnel in attendance at the School. Other courses run by the school included radar operators, radar mechanics 'air' and 'ground', controllers, aircrew special radar, radar special 'air' and 'ground', filter, radar familiarisation, radar refresher, air-to-surface radar and bombing leaders radar courses.

On 1 November 1944 all training ceased until 11 November, when the school reopened at Maryborough.

Radar School disbanded on 26 November 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 January 1942 | —Squadron Leader N.E. Mitchell (RAF) |
| 3 June 1942 | —Squadron Leader R.L. Kerdel |
| 21 October 1942 | —Flight Lieutenant R.G. Lamb |
| 15 January 1944 | —Squadron Leader J.F. Cramer-Roberts |

1 RECRUIT DEPOT

CHRONOLOGY

1 March 1935	—Recruit and Technical Training Section established at 1 Aircraft Depot, Laverton, Vic.
April 1936	—Recruit Training Section formed
September 1936	—re-named Recruit Training Squadron
2 March 1940	—re-named 1 Recruit Depot
19 September 1941	—moved to Ascot Vale, Vic.
12 February 1942	—moved to Shepparton, Vic.
31 May 1945	—Depot disbanded

NARRATIVE

Flight Lieutenant C. Eaton was responsible for the establishment of the Recruit and Technical Training Section at 1 Aircraft Depot, Laverton, Victoria, on 1 March 1935. The school was to train technical trainees, and was organised into three sections giving training in drill and physical training, trade training (metal riggers and fitter aero) and a reserve pool. Trade training for other musterings was given 'on-the-job', when the men were not required to undergo drill. Wireless telegraphy and armament training were separate, becoming a part of the Depot Headquarters Squadron during June 1935.

On 20 April 1936, Station Headquarters Laverton was formed, and both training sections were combined to form the Recruit Training Section. In addition to drill, training was given in wireless telegraphy, air gunnery and armament. During August 1936, the section was re-organised into four flights: 'A' wireless telegraphy, 'B' trade training, 'C' drill and 'D' personnel awaiting courses or posting. The scope of training was enlarged. Service police refresher and initial training was combined and instituted during November, and training for physical education and drill instructors commenced in December. Early in 1937, photographic and carpenter rigger training was instituted.

The section became known as 'Recruit Training Squadron' during September 1936, and assumed control of the Communications and Survey Flight on 3 May 1937. The latter's duties included communication duties, photographic survey, practice flying and instruction flying for the

Recruit Training Squadron. The survey function was the most important, with aircraft from the unit participating in the survey of northern Australia and flights over Mount Gambier and Kapunda, South Australia, as well as co-operating with the Army Survey Corps at Scone, New South Wales.

The initial equipment of the flight comprised single examples of Anson, Rapide, Demon, Gipsy Moth and two Tugan Gannet aircraft. This unit remained with Recruit Training Squadron until October 1939, when the unit split into separate survey and communications flights.

The unit was re-organised as 'Training Depot' during October 1937. Comprised of headquarters, armament, engineering, wireless schools and the Communications and Survey Flight, the organisation remained intact until mobilisation on 3 September 1939. A personnel transit centre was formed under the command of Flying Officer A.S. Fletcher. 1 School of Technical Training and the engineering school became separate units, after having been formed as sub-units of Training Depot, during February and March 1940, respectively.

The unit became 1 Recruit Depot on 2 March 1940, and moved to Ascot Vale, Victoria, on 19 September 1941. This was followed by its final move, to Shepparton, Victoria, which was completed on 12 February 1942. From that date until the unit ceased to function, servicemen were trained, in addition to normal recruit training, as drill instructors, guards instructional, aerodrome defence instructors, air defence officers and warrant officers (disciplinary).

Between March 1940 and when the last entry was made in the Unit History Record on 31 May 1945, 42 376 servicemen had graduated from 1 Recruit Depot.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

June 1935	—Flight Lieutenant H.W. Berry
1 September 1936	—Squadron Leader F.J.B. Wight
July 1938	—Squadron Leader E.G. Knox-Knight
2 March 1940	—Flight Lieutenant A.D. Carey
4 April 1941	—Flight Lieutenant G.C. Matthews
1 February 1942	—Wing Commander F.A. Sewell
1 April 1942	—Wing Commander F.C. MacKillop

2 RECRUIT DEPOT

CHRONOLOGY

8 January 1940	—formed at Richmond, NSW
16 September 1941	—commenced move to Williamtown, NSW
3 February 1942	—moved to Bradfield Park, NSW
4 February 1943	—moved to Tocumwal, NSW
16 February 1944	—moved to Cootamundra, NSW
13 September 1945	—ceased to exist
March 1946	—became Care and Maintenance Unit Cootamundra
25 October 1946	—Depot disbanded

NARRATIVE

On 8 January 1940, 2 Recruit Depot was formed at RAAF Station Richmond, after merging with the Personnel Transit Centre. Two days later, 34 airmen arrived and five drill courses, consisting of one non-commissioned officer and 25 airmen, commenced. The unit also accepted aircrew trainees and, on 19 August 1940, 16 non-commissioned officers began a warrant officers (disciplinary) course.

Other courses conducted at the unit included a service police course, and drill instructors course. Anti-gas training was included in the recruits course schedule.

During the period 16 to 22 September 1941, the unit moved to RAAF Williamtown, then re-located again on 3 February 1942 to Bradfield Park. The total number of recruits passing through the Depot for the period 1 July 1941 to 30 June 1942 was 7220.

On 9 September 1942 the WAAAF section came under the control of 2 Recruit Depot, and WAAAF training was also the responsibility of the unit. In this month, there were 460 WAAAF officers and airwomen at the unit, in addition to 657 RAAF officers and airmen.

2 Recruit Depot moved to Tocumwal on 4 February 1943, then on to Cootamundra on 16 February 1944, where it would remain until disbandment. Air Training Corps units conducted weekend training at the Cootamundra site.

82 On 5 August 1944, on notification of the breakout at Cowra of several hundred Japanese prisoners, precautionary measures were taken,

including the issue of live ammunition to guards. Cross-country exercises between 2 Recruit Depot Cootamundra and Wyalong were undertaken for three days from 13 August 1944 by 36 Wirraway aircraft based in Deniliquin.

2 Recruit Depot provided a flare path, obstruction lights and a rotating light at the request of 5 Service Flying Training School on 16 October, to assist two aircraft lost as a result of bad weather.

During March 1945, a physical training team from Group Headquarters gave a demonstration on the horizontal bars to a packed gymnasium. WAAAF birthday celebrations were held, with a parade and march past, followed by dinner in the Officers' Mess, with officers and sergeants waiting on tables.

It was announced on 23 March 1945 that no more recruits were to be trained at 1 and 6 Recruit Depots, and that all recruit training for the eastern States would now be undertaken by 2 Recruit Depot.

3000 sheep arrived at the Depot on 29 July to eat the grass on the aerodrome. They were tended all day by a shepherd, and taken off the aerodrome at night. The duty pilot had a runner, and the shepherd was subject to the duty pilot's directions.

By the end of August, while the standard of training was being maintained, the numbers of recruits at the Depot were dwindling. The last rookie squadron finished training at the beginning of September, and on 12 September the last formal parade was held, followed by passing out parades. The following day, 2 Recruit Depot ceased to exist as a unit, all training ceased and postings commenced. By January 1946, the unit was in the process of pre-disbandment activities, and became Care and Maintenance Unit Cootamundra in March 1946. This unit completed final disbandment on 25 October 1946.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

8 January 1940	—Flight Lieutenant D.R. Williams
21 September 1941	—Squadron Leader J.A. Adam
18 March 1942	—Squadron Leader G.H. Hooper
30 April 1942	—Squadron Leader D.R. Williams
8 July 1942	—Squadron Leader R.V. Gove
8 November 1942	—Squadron Leader S.J. Gardiner
24 September 1945	—Flight Lieutenant N.C. Vickers

3 RECRUIT DEPOT

CHRONOLOGY

1 July 1940	—formed at RAAF Amberley, Qld
31 March 1942	—moved to Maryborough, Qld
2 June 1943	—last entry in Unit History Record

NARRATIVE

3 Recruit Depot was formed at RAAF Station Amberley, Queensland, on 1 July 1940 with Flight Lieutenant J.A. Adam as the Commanding Officer. The Depot's function was to run recruit drill courses.

On 31 March 1942, the Depot moved to Maryborough, Queensland. The last entry in the Unit History Record is dated 2 June 1943.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 July 1940	—Flight Lieutenant J.A. Adam
1 June 1941	—Flight Lieutenant K. Gardiner

4 RECRUIT DEPOT

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 March 1940 | —formed at Pearce, WA |
| 10 July 1942 | —moved to Busselton, WA |
| 30 September 1945 | —last entry in Unit History Record |

NARRATIVE

4 Recruit Depot was formed at Pearce, Western Australia, on 1 March 1940 under the command of Flying Officer V.R. Abbott. The function of the Depot was to run recruit drill courses.

On 10 July 1942 the Depot moved to Busselton, Western Australia. On 1 July 1943 the Depot had an operational base detachment functioning to service, maintain and refuel aircraft that went on patrol in the area.

The last entry in the Unit History Record was made on 30 September 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 March 1940 | —Flying Officer V.R. Abbott |
| 18 December 1940 | —Flying Officer R.C. Graham |
| 7 July 1941 | —Flight Lieutenant C.E. Tobin |
| 10 October 1941 | —Flight Lieutenant Hawkins |
| 16 December 1942 | —Flight Lieutenant A.V. McCann |
| 1 January 1944 | —Squadron Leader F.J. Tilley |

5 RECRUIT DEPOT

CHRONOLOGY

- 23 March 1942 —formed at 1 Training Group, Melbourne, Vic.
24 March 1942 —advance party to Balmoral, Vic.
30 September 1944 —last entry in Unit History Record

NARRATIVE

5 Recruit Depot was raised at Headquarters, 1 Training Group, under the temporary command of Flight Lieutenant G. Whatmore, on 23 March 1942. On the following day, three officers and 22 other ranks departed by rail for Balmoral, Victoria. The site was in the Grampian Ranges, on the southern side of Rocklands Reservoir, near Hamilton.

At the end of March, the unit strength was five officers and 30 other ranks. On 3 April 1942, 226 recruits arrived from 1 Recruiting Centre. Next day, the unit strength was nine officers and 307 other ranks.

Recruit training was varied on at least two occasions. The local Volunteer Defence Force 'attacked' the unit on 6 December 1942, and aircraft from the Armament School, Hamilton, made mock attacks on personnel and installations on 17 May 1943, giving staff and trainees the opportunity to practise air raid dispersal procedures. A year later, on 17 May 1944, the unit was issued with two Bren guns and a Vickers machine gun, enabling recruits to be trained in their use.

When the last entry was made in the Unit History Record on 30 September 1944, a total of 9031 recruits had graduated from the unit.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- 6 April 1942 —Squadron Leader I.O. Gaze
1 June 1942 —Squadron Leader R.G. Francis
7 December 1942 —Squadron Leader I.O. Gaze

6 RECRUIT DEPOT

CHRONOLOGY

24 August 1942	—formed at Amberley, Qld
1 December 1942	—moved to Sandgate, Qld
15 November 1944	—moved to Maryborough, Qld
19 June 1945	—Depot disbanded

NARRATIVE

6 Recruit Depot was formed at Amberley, Queensland, on 24 August 1942, with an establishment of 250 airmen under training, and 63 staff. Squadron Leader J.R. Gordon was the Commanding Officer. On 1 December 1942 the Depot moved to Sandgate, Queensland.

The function of the Depot was to provide recruit training consisting of training at the Depot and a bivouac in nearby bush country. The training consisted of foot drill, rifle and bayonet drill, physical training and swimming; lectures on aircraft recognition, gas, sanitation, hygiene, discipline; and a wide range of administrative matters. The bivouac training was to provide living conditions similar to those at an advanced base. This consisted of bayonet fighting, bushcraft, night exercises, unarmed defence, swimming, and attack involving obstacle courses and methods of assault under as near as possible battle front conditions.

On 15 November 1944 the Depot moved to Maryborough, Queensland. The Depot disbanded on 19 June 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

24 August 1942	—Squadron Leader J.R. Gordon
9 December 1942	—Squadron Leader J.A. Adam
23 February 1944	—Squadron Leader C.H. MacKinnon
30 May 1944	—Squadron Leader F.V. Bassett

1 RECRUIT TRAINING UNIT

Across the Threshold



CHRONOLOGY

2 August 1954	—raised at Richmond, NSW
June 1958	—moved to Rathmines, NSW
December 1960	—moved to Wagga Wagga, NSW
1964	—moved to Edinburgh, SA
November 1994	—based at Edinburgh, SA

NARRATIVE

1 Recruit Training Unit (IRTU) was first formed as a unit of the Royal Australian Air Force at Richmond, New South Wales, on 2 August 1954, under the command of Squadron Leader T.G. Janes. The prescribed function of the Unit was to transform civilians into airmen and airwomen to meet the needs of the RAAF. IRTU was re-located to Rathmines, New South Wales, in June of 1958, and again to Wagga Wagga, New South Wales, in December 1960. A further move occurred in 1964, this time to Edinburgh, South Australia.

While at Wagga Wagga, IRTU recruit courses 604–608 formed a royal guard of honour, with Queen's Colours, for His Majesty The King of Thailand in 1962. This was the first time that a guard of honour was mounted in Australia for a visit by a foreign reigning monarch.

WRAAF Training Flight (WRAAF TRG FLT) was re-located from Point Cook, Victoria, to Edinburgh in 1965. Although members of IRTU, women continued to receive segregated training. WRAAF TRG FLT moved from IRTU in January 1976 to Tottenham, Victoria, as Women's Training Unit (WTU) and then, six months later, was re-located to

Laverton. WTU was disbanded at RAAF Laverton in 1981 and female recruit training returned to IRTU. Integrated training commenced in 1986.

Her Majesty the Queen approved the IRTU badge and motto in 1975. The badge depicts the two-headed god 'Janus', the god of gateways and protector of all beginnings, surmounting the words 'Across the Threshold', a motto considered appropriate to the function of IRTU. That same year, recruit courses 1298, 1299, and 1300 provided a 100-strong guard of honour for the opening of the South Australian House of Parliament.

A guard of honour was provided by IRTU for the State entry by the Governor of South Australia, Sir Mark Oliphant, KBE, to the 1976 Adelaide Cup. That year also saw the conversion to classrooms of Edinburgh's building 101. The plan was to use building 101 as a IRTU training facility for a period of five to nine years.

As the result of restructuring, non-airfield defence guards were trained as general service instructors (GSIs)—instructing recruits in drill, service administration and like subjects. Although at first members were chosen for GSI duty by the Directorate of Personnel Airmen, within a few years GSIs were selected from volunteers. The employment of GSIs at IRTU commenced during 1986.

On 11 November 1988, the recruits' tavern was re-named the 'Middleton Club' in remembrance of Flight Sergeant Rawdon Hume Middleton, VC. His Excellency The Honourable Bill Hayden, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, presented the Unit with a Governor-General's banner in 1989 in recognition of IRTU's 25-year contribution to the high standards of efficiency and loyalty within the RAAF.

The Minister for Defence Science and Personnel (Mr Bilney) visited IRTU on 29 January 1992, to welcome the first intake of RAAF Ready Reserves. Later that year, IRTU conducted its first Airmen Education Training Scheme corporal promotion course. Towards the end of the year, a communication tower was re-erected at Edinburgh by 1 Aircraft Depot riggers for use by recruits in their adventure training exercise.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

2 August 1954	—Squadron Leader T.G. Janes
July 1958	—Squadron Leader F.W. Hitchens

18 January 1960	—Squadron Leader L.J. Williams
16 January 1961	—Squadron Leader J.W. Patterson
12 April 1965	—Squadron Leader H.B. Miller
9 June 1967	—Squadron Leader J.I. Brough
20 June 1969	—Squadron Leader L.W. Meacham
22 May 1973	—Squadron Leader H.E. Wiles
9 January 1975	—Squadron Leader G.W. Foskett
6 January 1978	—Squadron Leader G.N. Hombsch
July 1980	—Squadron Leader B.J. Lawler
10 January 1983	—Squadron Leader J.F. Littlewood
20 July 1983	—Wing Commander N.M. Goodall
February 1986	—Wing Commander R.J. Gibson
11 January 1988	—Wing Commander K.B. Merrigan
11 December 1989	—Wing Commander R.J. Phillips
11 January 1994	—Wing Commander M.J. Rzechowicz

1 SCHOOL OF TECHNICAL TRAINING

CHRONOLOGY

- 17 December 1939 —raised as a sub-unit of Training Depot in Melbourne, Vic.
- 29 January 1940 —re-named 1 School of Technical Training
- 17 March 1941 —commenced move to Exhibition Building, Carlton, Vic.
- 22 December 1945 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

On 17 December 1939, the Training Centre Barracks was formed at the old Melbourne Junior Technical School, Latrobe Street, West Melbourne as a sub-unit of the Training Depot. At this stage the staff consisted of 18 personnel, with 10 cooks under training and 97 technical trainees waiting to commence No. 1 fitters course.

Facilities were inadequate, with verandahs being used for both messing and sleeping. However, conditions were improved; for example, on 29 May a canteen was opened.

On 29 January 1940 the unit was named 1 School of Technical Training, and commenced training in many disciplines. Courses included those for training W/T operators, electricians, instrument makers, instrument repairers, fitters, cooks, X-ray technicians, welders, mess stewards, and also a course to train personnel in high frequency direction finding. Later, courses in teleprinter maintenance, PMG maintenance, Bristol gun turrets, wireless mechanics and meteorological charting were added. Training was undertaken at the Brunswick Technical College, Amalgamated Wireless (Australia) School, Footscray Technical College and Emily McPherson School of Domestic Economy.

On 17 March 1941, an advance party travelled to the Exhibition Building in Carlton, where they were joined by the main body of the School on 22 March. A detachment remained at West Melbourne until the facilities occupied by them were transferred to WAAAF trainees on 18 October 1941.

On 29 August 1945, the cessation of training for course members who had not completed more than 50 per cent of their training was

announced. At the end of October 1945, 21 324 trainees had graduated from 1 School of Technical Training, and 2323 had failed to meet the required standard.

1 Personnel Depot moved in to the Exhibition Building at the end of October 1945, and the School was disbanded on 22 December 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

17 December 1939	—Flight Lieutenant W.L. Pittendrigh
19 February 1940	—Flight Lieutenant R.G. Francis
25 May 1942	—Squadron Leader I.R. Gaze
5 December 1942	—Squadron Leader R.G. Francis

2 SCHOOL OF TECHNICAL TRAINING

CHRONOLOGY

- 18 December 1939 —established as 2 Civil Training Centre at RAAF Canberra, ACT
- 5 February 1940 —re-named 2 School of Technical Training
- 1 July 1940 —moved to barracks constructed at Canberra Technical College, Kingston, ACT
- 16 November 1945 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

This unit was originally formed on 18 December 1939 as 2 Civil Training Centre under the command of the Commanding Officer, 8 Squadron, to provide technical trade training to meet the requirements of the Empire Air Training Scheme. The command arrangement was varied when Flight Lieutenant D.H. McIntyre assumed command of the unit on 8 January 1940, with Flying Officer J.M. Sandonnini, DFC as the unit Adjutant and Flying Officer Cook as the Administrative Officer. Among the first airmen to arrive at the unit were a corporal storeman, a corporal drill instructor, and three aircraftmen—one clerk and two labourers.

Facilities for the School were erected near the north-eastern boundary of the Canberra base, and the first 100 trainees received fitting and turning instruction under arrangements agreed with the principal of the Canberra Technical College.

The first 60 trainees were posted to the unit on 19 December 1939, to be followed by 51 more on 20 February 1940. The unit was organised to handle up to 316 trainees at this time.

On 1 July 1940, 2 School of Technical Training moved to new barracks constructed at the Canberra Technical College, Kingston, Australian Capital Territory, where it remained until disbandment on 16 November 1945. At the time of the move, the strength of the unit was two officers, 33 barracks staff and 222 trainees.

Lectures on elementary electricity and internal combustion commenced on 27 April as part of the training syllabus. Courses conducted at the School were fitter II(A) (airframe), fitter II(E) (engines),

flight rigger, instrument maker, instrument repairer, fitter armament, armourer, fitter driver motor transport, electrician, turner, and motor boat crew. Drill instructor courses commenced on 25 February 1941, when 16 trainees were posted in to undertake training. In the period December 1939–July 1945, 578 courses were conducted and 3921 trainees passed through the School.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

8 January 1940	—Flight Lieutenant D.H. McIntyre
26 April 1940	—Flight Lieutenant J.M. Sandonnini, DFC
27 October 1940	—Flight Lieutenant W.J. Deane
1 December 1941	—Flight Lieutenant J.P. Campbell
25 July 1942	—Squadron Leader G.D. Wainwright
26 November 1943	—Squadron Leader S.K.F. Humphrey
28 August 1944	—Squadron Leader J.P. Campbell

3 SCHOOL OF TECHNICAL TRAINING

CHRONOLOGY

- 26 February 1940 —formed at Ultimo, NSW
31 October 1945 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

On 26 February 1940, 3 School of Technical Training was established at the corner of Jones and Thomas Streets, Ultimo, New South Wales, under the command of Flight Lieutenant D.H. MacIntyre.

The first course of trainee fitters (No. 7), comprising 75 students, commenced on 4 March 1940 and completed training on 8 May. This was the precursor to 25 971 students who were trained at 3 School of Technical Training.

The facilities at the site were being improved as the numbers of students increased. New dormitories, ablution blocks, kitchens and other facilities were built. In addition, hotels such as the Oceanic, Westminster, Coogee Bay and Aster were all taken over as dormitories.

The peak number of personnel at the School was 3261 in January 1943.

In addition to the normal technical trade courses, 3 School of Technical Training offered courses in such diverse subjects as fitter, motor boat, clerk pay, vulcaniser, self sealing fuel tank repair, electrical equipment overhaul, propeller courses, WAAAF handicraft, aluminium, carpenter motor body builder and Japanese linguist.

3 School of Technical Training was disbanded on 31 October 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- 26 February 1940 —Flight Lieutenant D.H. MacIntyre
July 1942 —Squadron Leader W.E. Gardner

4 SCHOOL OF TECHNICAL TRAINING

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 April 1940 | —formed at Headquarters Southern Area |
| 5 October 1945 | —training ceased |

NARRATIVE

4 School of Technical Training was formed at Headquarters Southern Area on 1 April 1940, and moved to the Exhibition Building, North Terrace, Adelaide.

The establishment of the unit was five officers, 68 airmen and 500 trainees. However, the strength of the School on 30 April 1940 was three officers, 34 airmen and 290 trainees; by June 1942, the total strength was 1273. The facilities at the Exhibition Building were inadequate for this number of personnel. On 1 September 1942, the Implement Company Building was taken over for the advanced electrician course. On 7 and 8 October, the Dunlop Building and St Marks College were occupied by airmen and WAAAF respectively. This action enabled accommodation tents located on the Exhibition Building oval to be evacuated.

Courses were offered at the School for riggers, service police, welders, storekeepers, trainee technicians, cook, mess steward, recruit drill, fitter armourer, fitter IIA, dental orderly and dental technician.

During September 1942, there was an epidemic of measles, mumps and influenza. There was a daily average of 103 patients in hospital and four cases of meningitis (two fatal), were recorded. During October, the same sickness rate prevailed, but in November the daily average was down to 78 patients. In December 1943, the cases reported included scarlet fever, pharyngitis, and tonsillitis, reflecting the age of the trainees.

On 26 August 1945, a service was held to give thanks for the victory in the Pacific, and training ceased at 4 School of Technical Training on 5 October 1945; 21 913 trainees had passed through the School.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 April 1940 | —Flying Officer G.E. Randall |
| 24 March 1941 | —Squadron Leader H.F. Taylor |
| May 1942 | —Squadron Leader J.A. Broadbent |

5 SCHOOL OF TECHNICAL TRAINING

CHRONOLOGY

- 31 July 1940 —raised at Mount Bay Road, Perth, WA
27 September 1945 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

On 31 July 1940 a detachment from 5 School of Technical Training, Pearce, Western Australia, took over, from the Commonwealth Works Department, a site and buildings in Mount Bay Road.

On 1 August 1940 the first 76 trainees attended the Technical School, which was administered by 5 Embarkation Depot staff—the Commanding Officer of 5 School of Technical Training was also the commander of the embarkation depot, and officers from the unit undertook escort duties for drafts posted overseas.

On 16 November 1941, courses undertaken at the School were of 16 weeks duration, with only two courses being run at any one time. The students training included technical instruction by civilian experts at Perth Technical College.

On 23 July 1944, a party of WAAAFs were given flight experience in a 35 Squadron aircraft. This activity was repeated for the female members of the School on later dates.

On 23 August 1945, all basic trainee fitter courses ceased, as did the connection with the Perth Technical College. The unit was disbanded on 27 September 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- 31 July 1940 —Flight Lieutenant A.R. Brown
4 April 1941 —Squadron Leader H.F. Clayton-Daubney
27 October 1941 —Flight Lieutenant G.M. Pennefather
December 1942 —Squadron Leader H.A. White
13 August 1944 —Squadron Leader R.S. Nicholl

6 AND 7 SCHOOLS OF TECHNICAL TRAINING

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 1 August 1940 | —6 School of Technical Training formed in Hobart, Tas. |
| 29 November 1941 | —School disbanded |
| 27 June 1942 | —7 School of Technical Training formed at Geelong, Vic. |
| 14 February 1945 | —completed move to North Shore, Vic. |
| 24 September 1945 | —School disbanded |

NARRATIVE

6 School of Technical Training occupied the YMCA building, corner of Livingston and Argyle Streets, Hobart, Tasmania when it was raised on 1 August 1940. The building was used as headquarters, messing and sleeping accommodation for the School, which was designed to run basic training for 50 technical trainees.

Training commenced on 5 August, with 30 students being trained at the Hobart Technical College.

The School was disbanded on 29 November 1941.

7 School of Technical Training established its Headquarters in the Victoria Hotel, Malop Street, Geelong, on 27 June 1942. This building was also used for staff accommodation and as the officers' and sergeants' mess. Dormitories for trainees were found at the Albert Coffee Palace and Ashby Hall.

Training at the Gordon School of Technology commenced on 3 July 1942 and by the end of the month the strength of the unit stood at 62 staff and 320 trainees.

The first intake of six WAAAF trainees arrived on 23 November 1942.

On 21 January 1945, it was proposed that the School move from Geelong to the site at North Shore, Victoria, to take over the camp site previously occupied by personnel from 1 Aircraft Park. The Albert Coffee Palace was passed back to the District Works Board on 20 January, and the move of the School completed on 14 February 1945.

During July, a Royal Navy Corsair landed at the airfield and a series of successful trials of a belly tank manufactured by the Ford Motor Company was undertaken.

Next month, with only one training course current, the contract to transport students to the technical college was cancelled, and the School was disbanded on 24 September 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

6 School of Technical Training

1 August 1940 —Flying Officer J.F. Campbell

24 November 1941 —Flying Officer J.J. Fagan

7 School of Technical Training

27 June 1942 —Flight Lieutenant D.E. Staveley

25 December 1942 —Squadron Leader F.L. Rothe

1 October 1944 —Squadron Leader R.G. Matheson

22 March 1945 —Squadron Leader J.W. Darling

1 SERVICE FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 1 May 1940 —formed from 1 Flying Training School at Point Cook, Vic.
15 September 1944 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

1 Service Flying Training School (1SFTS) was formed at Point Cook, Victoria, in May 1940 from 1 Flying Training School. The function of the School was to provide intermediate and advanced flying training for RAAF personnel as pilots, air observers and wireless air gunners, under the Empire Air Training Scheme. The School consisted initially of 1118 personnel, who were to be involved in the training of some 150 pilots, using the advanced syllabus.

When the School was re-named as 1SFTS, a total of 52 aircraft were on strength, the types being: Anson 5, Wapiti 12, Demon 7, Tiger Moth 1, and Avro Trainer 27. By July 1941, there were 105 aircraft on strength. A variety of aircraft were used for training by 1SFTS, including Wirraway, Oxford, Gipsy Moth, DH-89, and Douglas DC-3. Eventually, however, Oxford and Wirraway aircraft were used almost exclusively for training purposes, in accordance with Air Board policy of September 1941.

Several courses were under training in May 1940, the main ones being Nos 27, 28 and 29 intermediate flying training courses. These courses were behind schedule because of adverse weather and aircraft unserviceability. Due to these delays, flying time was reduced to 36 hours per pupil instead of 50 hours, as was initially envisaged. However, a grand total of 905 hours were flown during the month, and by January 1941, the average hours flown per month had increased to 1821. In the latter part of 1943, when training reached its peak, the hours then flown fluctuated between 3500 and 8350 per month.

By September 1941 the personnel establishment consisted of 300 trainees under instruction, with the overall establishment being 100 officers and 2320 airmen. In July 1943, 1944 pupils had passed through the School and just prior to the closing down of 1SFTS, 2691 pupils had been successfully trained.

The School was finally disbanded on 15 September 1944. During its four-year existence, the high standard and rate of training maintained by ISFTS greatly assisted the flying training efforts of the RAAF throughout World War II.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

4 December 1939	—Group Captain J.H. Summers
21 October 1940	—Group Captain J.P.J. McCauley
7 July 1941	—Wing Commander E.R. King
8 October 1941	—Wing Commander W.G. Rae
20 May 1942	—Squadron Leader H.J.F. Le Good
March 1943	—Wing Commander A.A. Barlow
19 October 1943	—Wing Commander C.F. Read

2 SERVICE FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

1 July 1940	—formed at Forrest Hill, NSW
7 September 1940	—Advanced Training Squadron instituted
24 February 1941	—Intermediate Training Squadron formed
10 March 1941	—Maintenance Squadron formed
3 April 1942	—last of instructional and maintenance staff transferred

NARRATIVE

2 Service Flying Training School (2SFTS) was formed at Forrest Hill near Wagga Wagga, New South Wales on 1 July 1940, under the command of Group Captain F.R.W. Scherger, AFC. The School opened for training with 42 Empire Air Training Scheme trainees on No. 1 (Anson) Course.

Flying began under primitive conditions on 29 July 1940, with road making and building construction as an accompaniment. The second month of training was marred by the crash of an Anson, killing an instructor and his pupil. At the end of the month, No. 2 course arrived for Wirraway training.

Training proceeded at a brisk pace, and by September 1940 it was necessary to divide the school into Initial and Advanced Squadrons. Arrangements were made for the last two weeks of the training course to be spent at 1 Bombing and Gunnery School, Evans Head.

An air collision between two Ansons, which made the front page of newspapers worldwide, marked the end of the month. The two second pilots parachuted to safety while the pilot of the lower Anson, who was slightly injured, struggled to escape. Meanwhile, the pilot of the upper aircraft found that the engines of the lower aircraft provided him with enough power to turn the composite away from its heading for the nearby township of Brocklesby and, when the pilot of the lower Anson parachuted, to attempt a wheels-up landing in which he was successful.

In February 1941 an Intermediate Squadron became necessary. Trainees who succeeded in passing through this Squadron received their wings before entering Advanced Training Squadron. 9 course was typical

of those passing out before Japan entered the War—47 trainees passed out, 15 as officers and 32 as sergeants. Thirty pilots were sent to the RAF and 13 retained in the RAAF.

May 1941 saw the School's minor accident rate reach a high of 14. (Minor accidents totalled 74 during the life of the School.) Major accidents involved four Ansons and 11 Wirraways, causing the deaths of three instructors and four trainees. Light relief was provided by the trainee who, after being given an aerobatics demonstration, ended the lesson by baling out.

Between February and the end of July 1941 the Ansons were removed from the base, following the Air Board's decision to separate single-engine and twin-engine aircraft training. The number of Wirraways peaked at 96. Japanese victories at this time meant that defence preparations took a high priority; blacking-out, sandbagging and the digging of slit trenches and gun pits occupied every spare moment while the flying instructors were engaged in working up the two reserve squadrons formed from their midst.

January 1942 witnessed the arrival of the WAAAF on the station. By the end of February, they numbered one officer and 67 airwomen.

17 course was the last to complete its training wholly at 2SFTS. A letter from Air Board gave orders that divided the aircraft, the instructional and maintenance staff, and the junior courses between 5 Service Flying Training School, Uranquinty and 7 Service Flying Training School, Deniliquin. During its existence, 2SFTS had an intake of approximately 608 trainees, of whom approximately 559 graduated as pilots. 5 Aircraft Depot was formed at the base on 23 March 1942 and the last of the 2SFTS personnel left on 3 April 1942.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 July 1940	—Group Captain F.R.W. Scherger
20 September 1941	—Wing Commander T. Primrose
31 October 1941	—Group Captain C. Eaton
19 March 1942	—Wing Commander Seekamp

3 SERVICE FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 21 September 1940 —formed at Amberley, Qld
10 April 1942 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

3 Service Flying Training School (3SFTS) was established at Amberley, Queensland in September 1940 as part of the Empire Air Training Scheme. The first course, No. 8, commenced flying Wirraways from the grass airfield on 19 November 1940. Torrential rain soon made it apparent that 'all weather' runways were essential and their construction began almost immediately. To ensure continuity of training, Wirraways often flew from Archerfield and Maryborough. A new working day of 0530-1830 hours was introduced to offset the weather, and aircraft maintenance was to be carried out in shifts throughout the night.

The runways and overrun areas were completed by 31 August 1941, and 13 Bellman hangars by 1 October 1941. A decline in the number of taxiing accidents followed.

Commencing in December 1941, construction was concentrated on protecting the base and the region from air attack. By February 1942 this work was completed, and two reserve squadrons had been formed and worked up to a satisfactory standard. December also saw the arrival of 988 US Air Corps personnel whose task was to assemble Curtiss P-40E and Douglas Dauntless A-24 aircraft.

On 29 March 1942, orders were received to close 3SFTS. 18 and 19 courses, instructional and maintenance staff and most of the aircraft were to be divided between 1 Service Flying Training School, Point Cook, and 6 Service Flying Training School, Mallala. 30 March marked the graduation of 17 course, the last of 10 courses to be trained at 3SFTS. By 10 April 1942 all transfers had been completed.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- 29 October 1940 —Wing Commander R.H. Simms
14 April 1941 —Group Captain Lachal
March 1942 —Wing Commander F.J.B. Wight

4 SERVICE FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 10 February 1941 —formed at Geraldton, WA
24 November 1941 —aircraft involved in search for survivors from HMAS *Sydney*
February 1943 —68 and 69 Reserve Squadrons disbanded
May 1945 —disbandment completed

NARRATIVE

4 Service Flying Training School (4SFTS) was formed at Geraldton, Western Australia in February 1941, as part of the Empire Air Training Scheme. The function of the School was to provide intermediate and advanced flying training for RAAF personnel who had completed their elementary flying training at both Perth and Cunderdin.

The base at Geraldton was still under construction when flying commenced at the School on 10 March 1941, yet aside from the lack of ground facilities, problems were encountered with the number and serviceability of aircraft. 4SFTS obtained all of their Anson aircraft from other units, who happily disposed of their oldest air frames. Along with these ageing machines came the need for a large number of spares, which were not to be easily gained at the time, thereby limiting flying in the early days of the School.

Every 28 days an intake of 60 or so pupils arrived at the School from Cunderdin, spending approximately four months at the School before 50 or so would graduate. The course was broken into an intermediate and an advanced course, each of eight weeks duration.

As with most Service flying training schools, a primary concern was the accident rate, which caused a loss of flying hours, aircraft and, at times, airmen. The Commanding Officer of 4SFTS was therefore most keen to reduce the accident rate at his School, and he achieved this initially by imposing harsh penalties on student misadventure, and by ensuring that all pilots—both student and instructor—were fully debriefed on any flying mishaps that occurred. The average number of hours without an accident was 1469 for students, whereas the instructors

had a best year of one accident in 33 898 hours—a fine achievement. In fact the School had existed for 22 months before a flying fatality occurred.

Due to the Japanese entry into the War, and subsequent enemy attacks on north-western Australia, reserve squadrons were formed in all twin-engine training units—including 4SFTS—as a precautionary measure. These aircraft were deemed reserve by name change only, and apart from occasional searches to sea, they were never called for active duty.

Flying training continued throughout 1943, although by the end of the year the number of operational sorties was minimal. Throughout 1944 flying was further reduced and a number of attached flights were withdrawn from the base. From January 1945, the total disbandment of the unit was commenced, and was completed in May 1945. With over 1000 trainees successfully passing through the School, and an enviable flying safety record, 4SFTS had fulfilled its role in the training of RAAF pilots for utilisation in Australia's Pacific battles.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

10 March 1941	—Wing Commander P.G. Heffernan
3 February 1942	—Wing Commander J.R. Fleming
14 October 1942	—Group Captain N. Brearley
1 March 1944	—Wing Commander D.R. Chapman

5 SERVICE FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| October 1941 | —formed at Uranquinty, NSW |
| February 1946 | —1 Flying Training School formed from
5 Service Flying Training School |

NARRATIVE

5 Service Flying Training School (5SFTS) formed at Uranquinty, New South Wales, in October 1941, to play an important role in the Empire Air Training Scheme. The School was part of 2 Training Group, and consisted initially of 792 personnel, who were to be involved in the training of some 200 pilots, using a basic flying training syllabus.

Flying training at 5SFTS started in February, with a total of 28 Wirraway aircraft. As was to be expected at a basic flying training unit, a large number of student accidents occurred during the first few months of operational flying. The first fatal accident at the School occurred on 7 April 1942, due to unauthorised diving at ground gunnery targets.

The unit continued to grow, and flying operations proceeded without major interruptions throughout 1942. Eleven officers and 42 sergeants successfully graduated from course 26 in the first week of January 1943.

Throughout 1943, aircraft numbers and hence training activity increased, until in early 1944 the School had 128 Wirraway aircraft, 2 DH-84s, 1 Wackett trainer, and 2 Moth Minors, and was flying approximately 6000 hours per month. No. 44 course graduated in July of 1944, continuing the rate of graduation of almost one course every month.

Due to the increased flying rate, training accidents continued to occur on a fairly regular basis, yet fortunately over the period from December 1944 to January 1945, no flying accidents were reported, due perhaps to the reduced concentration of activity over this time.

The amount of flying at the School rapidly decreased throughout 1945, along with a general winding down of the base and its facilities. By November of that year the aircraft were being prepared for long-term storage.

In February of 1946, 1 Flying Training School (1FTS) was formed from the personnel and equipment of 5 Service Flying Training School. This unit functioned more as a care and maintenance unit for those aircraft previously placed in storage, rather than a flying school, and very little flying was actually carried out.

1FTS was transferred to Point Cook on 31 August 1947. Care and Maintenance Unit (CMU) Uranquinty was formed, and was responsible for the maintenance of the aircraft held in storage on the unit. An auction was held on the unit in November 1948, which resulted in the disposal of most of the equipment. Care and Maintenance Unit Uranquinty, the derivative of 5SFTS, was disbanded on 10 December 1948.

5SFTS provided initial flying training for hundreds of RAAF aircrew over a very intensive four-year period, providing them with the ability to competently proceed onto more advanced RAAF aircrew courses. 5SFTS and its subsequent derivatives, 1FTS, CMU, and 1 Basic Flying Training School made up an integral part of the Uranquinty community throughout their 18-year association with the region, and played a major role in the history of flying training within the RAAF.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

20 October 1941	—Group Captain U.E. Ewart
20 May 1942	—Group Captain L.V. Lachal
21 August 1942	—Group Captain M.O. Watson
21 April 1943	—Group Captain E.G. Knox-Knight
30 June 1943	—Group Captain A.L. Walters
July 1943	—Wing Commander T.C. Curnow
May 1945	—Wing Commander W.F. Allshorn
18 October 1945	—Group Captain H.M. Birch
2 January 1946	—Wing Commander I.F. Rose

6 SERVICE FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 25 August 1941 —raised at Mallala, SA
1 January 1946 —ceased to function and became Care and Maintenance Unit, Mallala

NARRATIVE

On 25 August 1941, 6 Service Flying Training School was established at Mallala, South Australia. The Commanding Officer, Wing Commander N. Brearley, assumed command on 1 September 1941.

Operations were delayed due to the unserviceability of the airfield after heavy rain. Throughout its period of operations, rain, fog and strong winds regularly delayed or curtailed flying operations.

The first three Anson aircraft allocated to the unit arrived at Parafield on 10 September. Another six arrived on 12 September, and the nine aircraft flew to the now serviceable airfield at Mallala on 19 September 1941.

Flying training commenced on 23 September 1941, and 2178 trainees graduated from the School before training ceased in September 1945. The School also provided aircrew for 70 (Reserve) Squadron and undertook Army Co-operation/searchlight practice flights over Adelaide, meteorological flights and photographic reconnaissance sorties.

There were a number of fatal accidents involving aircrew from the School. On 14 October 1941, two Anson aircraft collided south of the base, resulting in the deaths of Pilot Officer Somerville, Sergeant Blacker and Leading Aircraftmen Maslen and Hutchins. Leading Aircraftman Checchi was fatally injured when another Anson crashed at Hoyleton, South Australia on 13 May 1942, and Leading Aircraftman Young did not survive an Anson crash at Eden Valley on 1 July 1943. The final fatality occurred on 27 March 1944, when an Oxford aircraft crashed near Dublin, claiming the life of Leading Aircraftman Wickes.

During January–February 1945, a Hudson aircraft from the Survey Flight was based at Mallala, undertaking survey flights over Streaky Bay, Port Augusta and Adelaide. The School also established a reserve Anson

pool of 50 aircraft in January 1945, a sure sign that the training effort of the School was diminishing. On 13 October 1945, Flight Lieutenant Bowden and an advance guard from the Survey Flight arrived, to be followed by the main party on 22 October 1945.

The unit ceased to function on 1 January 1946, and became Care and Maintenance Unit, Mallala.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 September 1941	—Wing Commander N. Brearley
23 February 1942	—Wing Commander W.R. Garrett
16 August 1943	—Wing Commander A.A. Barlow
26 October 1944	—Wing Commander E.A. Beaumont
8 November 1945	—Wing Commander W.G. Leer

7 SERVICE FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 30 June 1941 | —formed at Deniliquin, NSW |
| 16 December 1944 | —re-named Advanced Flying and Refresher Unit |
| 1 May 1946 | —Unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

7 Service Flying Training School (7SFTS) was formed at Deniliquin, New South Wales, on 30 June 1941, and the first two Wirraways arrived from Canberra on 5 July. On 28 July 1941 the first course of 50 trainees arrived, and flying instruction commenced on this date. At this stage construction of the School was still continuing.

The unit came under the command of Southern Area and its function was to provide intermediate and advanced training for pilots. The normal course was of 16 weeks duration, divided equally between intermediate and advanced training.

Due to the nature of the function of the unit, several accidents occurred over the years, including various aircraft crashes due to mechanical and pilot error; forced landings due to lack of fuel; collisions with ground structures; and mid-air collisions which resulted in personnel being injured or killed.

On 29 August 1944, course No. 50 commenced, with the number of pupils having passed out since formation being 2206. On 16 December 1944 the unit was re-named as the Advanced Flying and Refresher Unit and on 1 May 1946 disbanded.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| 28 June 1941 | —Wing Commander Campbell |
| October 1942 | —Group Captain J. Waters |
| May 1945 | —Group Captain P.C. Graham |
| 1 July 1945 | —Wing Commander I.R.D. Masters |
| October 1945 | —Squadron Leader B. Todd |
| January 1946 | —Flight Lieutenant R.B. McPherson |
| March 1946 | —Squadron Leader E.S. Edwards |

8 SERVICE FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 14 December 1941 —formed at Bundaberg, Qld
25 July 1945 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

8 Service Flying Training School (8SFTS) formed at Bundaberg, Queensland, on 14 December 1941, to play an important role in the Empire Air Training Scheme. The School was part of 2 Training Group, and consisted of 1393 personnel, who were to be involved in the training of some 200 pilots, using an advanced flying training syllabus.

Monthly intakes were set at 50 pupils, to be divided into two classes (intermediate and advanced), each of eight weeks duration, giving a total of 16 weeks training to each intake.

Wing Commander I.C.C. Thomson was appointed as the first Commanding Officer of 8SFTS on 13 December 1941 and at the 31 December, the unit strength was 341.

In early January 1942, 8SFTS took over the base at Bundaberg, with the transfer of 12 Elementary Flying Training School to Lowood. The School also received its first 27 Anson aircraft at this time—aircraft seconded from numerous other RAAF units.

In early February 1942, 8SFTS was placed in a state of readiness due to the success of naval activity of the Japanese within the region. Normal routine was resumed on 5 February. Later in the month, 8SFTS personnel were involved in a large amount of rescue work due to the flooding of the local river, which unfortunately resulted in the drowning of Aircraftman F.W. Tippett during a particularly dangerous rescue—the first death experienced by the unit.

The first course graduated in March of 1942—a month with 2607 flying hours, and also the month of the first aircraft casualty. Heavy rain often hampered operations throughout the early months of the year, and the School was consistently damaging at least two aircraft each month—a legacy of their training role.

During July, the School received 23 additional Ansons, building aircraft strength up to 87 and allowing a greater flying rate to be achieved.

As at the end of September 1942, 143 personnel had completed their flying training at 8SFTS, with the total intake for pilot training being 347.

The new year opened with a spate of aircraft accidents yet, fortunately, no aircrew were lost. Operations continued without excessive interruptions, although incidents still tended to mar each month's flying program. After a minor administrative re-organisation in October, the flying training continued without incident, with courses being completed and new courses arriving each month.

With the sustained flying program, the usual run of collisions of aircraft whilst taxiing; forced landing in cane fields; and overshooting the runway, thereby causing damage to the long suffering fence, continued.

A reduction in RAAF flying effort at Bundaberg enabled a civilian company, Aircraft Pty Ltd, to utilise the aerodrome on its runs between Brisbane and Rockhampton, commencing in October 1944. In November, a detachment of six Ansons participated in Army co-operation exercises with the 1st Australian Corps at Mareeba. This attachment lasted till March 1945, involving an effort of 1192 flying hours.

The period of reduced flying activity culminated in December 1944, when personnel presently under training were posted to 6 Service Flying Training School at Mallala, South Australia to complete their training. All flying training ceased at this time. On 13 December 1944 the graduation parade for the last course to graduate (No. 48 (P) Course) was held, ending 8SFTS's contribution to the RAAF pilot training program and thus to the Australian air war effort in the Pacific region.

Throughout early 1945, all activity at the base continued to decrease, while tasks were initiated to prepare for the hand over of the base to the Netherlands East Indies Air Force. Throughout June, 8SFTS was gradually phased out of the Bundaberg picture until finally, on 25 July 1945, 8SFTS ceased to exist.

The unit's close association with Bundaberg continues today in the RAAF section of the Bundaberg district cemetery, where lie so many 8SFTS personnel who lost their lives whilst serving in the area.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| 13 December 1941 | —Wing Commander I.C.C. Thomson |
| 20 April 1942 | —Wing Commander F.J.B. Wight |
| 29 December 1943 | —Group Captain R.F.M. Dalton |

1 SIGNALS SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 1 August 1940 —first record of School at Point Cook, Vic.
20 November 1945 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

1 Signals School, as at 1 August 1940, consisted of seven officers, 35 instructors, seven administrative staff, four aircraft maintenance personnel and 110 trainees, all under the command of Flight Lieutenant D.J. MacPherson. The School was based at Point Cook, Victoria, and operated DH-86B Dragon and Dragon Rapide aircraft.

Air training in these aircraft commenced during August 1940, with each trainee averaging 1 hour 25 minutes flying time during the month. DC-2 aircraft arrived in February 1940 and at the end of 1945 the School operated two Anson aircraft.

Training included tuition as W/T operators, clerk signals, telegraphist, wireless mechanic, wireless electrical mechanic, electricians, electrical fitters, cypher assistant, cypher officers and, for the US Army Air Corps, radio mechanics and radio operators. The latter, under the command of Captain Van Benschoten, commenced training on 24 May 1942.

During April 1943, a site was prepared and a building erected to house the equipment to be used by trainees in very high frequency, high frequency and medium frequency direction finding apparatus.

At the end of January 1943, the School recorded its peak number of trainees, with 1027 on strength.

Not all of 1 Signal School activities were at the threshold of high technology. On 1 July 1941, a pigeon loft was erected, and it was expected that 10 birds would be trained by the end of the year. On 25 November, 12 birds were released from Essendon, and all arrived back at Point Cook. The loft was temporarily taken over by the Australian Military Forces on 1 April 1942, but trials continued. During July, birds were successfully released from aircraft 50 miles from Point Cook. On 15 October, birds were released from 130 miles out over Bass Strait; two birds flew back to the loft in six hours. With this success, the loft and birds were handed over to 3 Headquarters Section (Carrier Pigeon), Victorian Lines of Communications Area.

1 Signals School was disbanded at Point Cook on 20 November 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 August 1940	—Flight Lieutenant D.J. MacPherson
September 1940	—Squadron Leader A.G. Richmond
December 1941	—Squadron Leader W.J. Deane
July 1942	—Flight Lieutenant R.D. Austin
21 October 1942	—Squadron Leader G. Finley

1 WAAAF TRAINING DEPOT

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 6 May 1941 | —established at Malvern, Vic. |
| 1 January 1942 | —transferred to Geelong Grammar School,
Corio |
| 31 January 1942 | —returned to Malvern |
| 24 March 1942 | —transferred to St Catherine's School,
Toorak |
| 22 January 1943 | —moved to Preston |
| 19 October 1945 | —Depot disbanded |

NARRATIVE

1 WAAAF Training Depot was established at Mayfield Avenue, Malvern, Victoria, on 6 May 1941. It was known at first as WAAAF Training Depot and, on commencement of operation, was staffed by three officers, one nursing sister and 78 aircraftwomen. They were responsible for training WAAAFs as teleprinter operators and in aircraft recognition as well as physical and recreational training.

To allow for more accommodation, the Depot moved to St Catherine's School, Toorak on 24 March 1942. Numbers of training courses increased. The women were often involved in sports meetings held at the Methodist Ladies College and played against teams from Victoria Barracks, mostly successfully.

In January 1943, the Depot was moved again, this time to Preston, where a physical and recreational wing was formed. They also had staff operating from 'Larundel', which was converted to a mental hospital for service personnel. Whilst there they held art shows, including paintings by local artists, and on one occasion a display of Chinese art treasures arranged by the Australia/China Co-Operation Society. The WAAAFs, as well as doing their training, were also involved in the war effort. They marched through the streets of Melbourne to help launch a prisoner-of-war appeal; assisted in the sales of liberty bonds; and in the making of 250 knitted toys for children in war-torn Britain, which they arranged to display before sending. The Depot was often visited by journalists from the local papers and also war correspondents who took photos of the women in training to boost morale and encourage recruitment.

With the ending of the war in the Pacific on 15 August 1945, the Depot celebrated with a glass of ale and a cake which had been made a couple of years in advance for such a celebration. A dance was held the following week, which proved most enjoyable. On 19 October 1945 the Depot was disbanded, and 'Larundel' handed over to a medical training unit. A total of 9854 women were trained at the Depot in the years of its operation.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

10 March 1941	—Assistant Section Officer C.E.M. Risson
2 July 1941	—Section Officer M.E. Rawlins
17 November 1941	—Section Officer M. Blackwood
23 March 1942	—Flight Officer M.E. Rawlins
20 July 1942	—Flight Officer P. de G. Burnard
17 January 1944	—Squadron Officer D. Hawthorn
10 September 1944	—Wing Officer M. Blackwood
16 January 1945	—Squadron Officer M. Seavers
15 September 1945	—Flight Officer M.B. Wray

2 WAAAF TRAINING DEPOT

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| 13 February 1942 | —formed at Robertson, NSW |
| 7 March 1942 | —moved to Bradfield Park, NSW |
| 18 February 1943 | —Depot disbanded |

NARRATIVE

2 WAAAF Training Depot was formed at Robertson, New South Wales, on 13 February 1942. It was formed for the purpose of recruit drill training of airwomen enrolled for WAAAF service and had an establishment of seven officers and 53 other ranks.

Soon after formation, the Depot moved to 2 Embarkation Depot, Bradfield Park as a lodger unit, and training continued. On the first anniversary of the opening of the Depot, a signal was received to advise that the unit was to close and be incorporated into 5 WAAAF Depot, Bradfield Park.

On 18 February 1943 the unit disbanded.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| 13 February 1942 | —Flight Officer E. Stark |
| 1 September 1942 | —Flight Officer M. Seavers |



1 Signals School staff pose in front of the DC-2 flying classroom



1 WAAAF Training Depot, Malvern, 1941



1 Radio School apprentices display at the Exhibition Building, Melbourne, 2 August 1976



Engineering apprentices at Wagga, 7 May 1962



General engineering training at Wagga, 13 September 1990



1964 apprentices receiving instruction in sword drill from Warrant Officer Dutton prior to their graduation parade



*'Freedom of the City of Camberwell' conferred on RAAF Frognall,
22 September 1984*



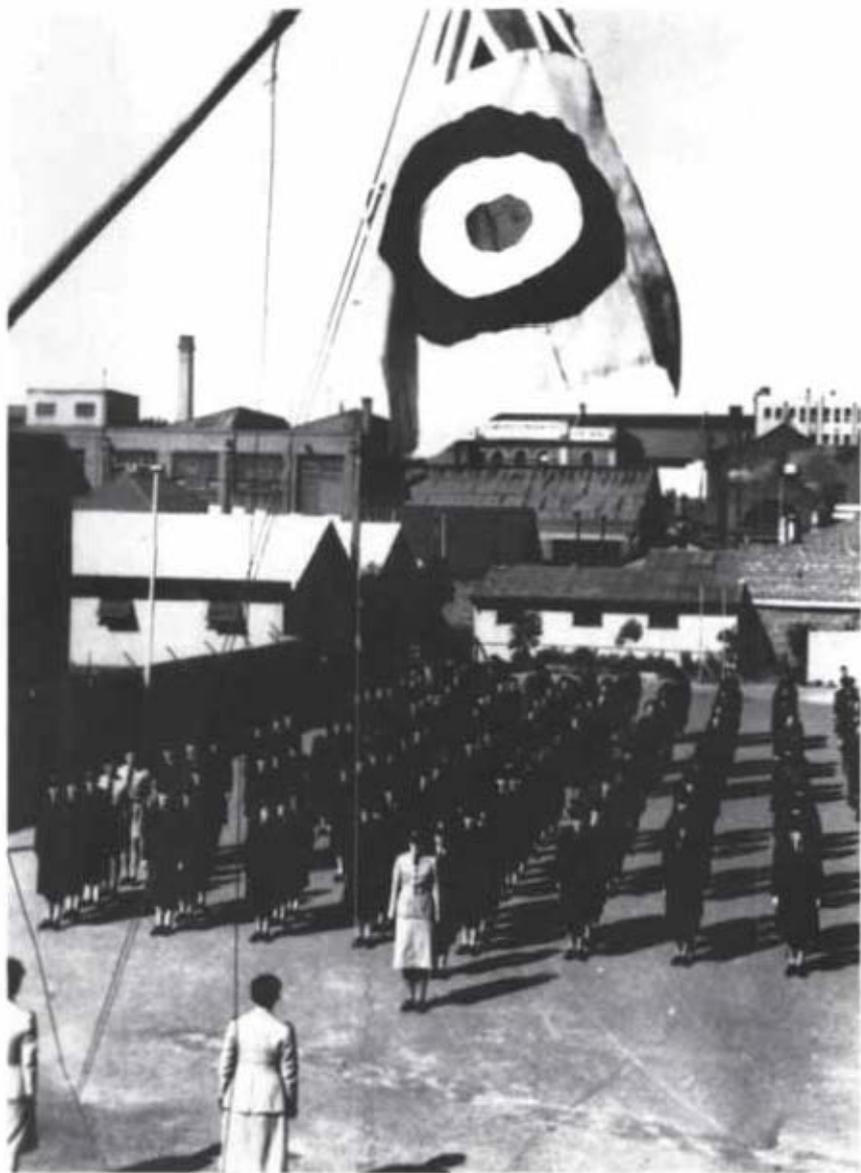
A well-dressed fireman of the 1960s, RAAF Security and Fire School



Folding parachutes, 2 Air Observers School, June 1945



Parachute Issue Section, 2 Air Observers School, 1945



Morning parade, WAAAF Training Section, 1 School of Technical Training, November 1941

3 WAAAF TRAINING DEPOT

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| 24 April 1942 | —formed at Karrinyup, WA |
| 24 March 1945 | —Depot disbanded |

NARRATIVE

3 WAAAF Training Depot was formed at Karrinyup, Western Australia with an establishment of four officers, 40 airwomen and 100 trainees. The unit was responsible for ongoing recruit training including drill, signal clerk and mess steward training. The trainees were also given lectures in aircraft recognition and the importance of secrecy and security.

The unit was involved in liberty loan and recruiting drive marches when they were held in Perth. Regular dances were held and personnel from 77 Squadron were asked as guests. In May 1943, as the war in the Pacific progressed, members of the Voluntary Defence Corps (VDC) and Australian Military Forces (AMF) patrolled the grounds of the unit. On 14 June 1943 journalists and photographers from *The Australian Women's Weekly* visited to gather material for an article on service personnel serving in 'the west'.

The Depot was keen to contribute to the war effort and £710 (\$1420) was raised amongst staff and recruits for the second victory loan drive. There was also a salvage collection in May 1944, which proved highly successful. The unit entertained 40 children from the Parkerville Children's Home on 1 December 1944, taking them to the beach and presenting them with felt toys made by the airwomen during their leisure hours. Photographs were taken by local press representatives.

The Depot was disbanded on 24 March 1945 after a directive was received from Western Area Headquarters. A total of 1417 airwomen were trained during its time of operation.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- | | |
|----------------|------------------------------|
| 22 April 1942 | —Flight Officer A.P. Bromley |
| 19 July 1943 | —Section Officer M.H. Pearse |
| 1 October 1944 | —Flight Officer J.B. Carter |

5 WAAAF TRAINING DEPOT

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| 4 February 1942 | —formed at Bradfield Park, NSW |
| 30 July 1944 | —moved to Penrith, NSW |
| 6 November 1945 | —Depot disbanded |

NARRATIVE

5 WAAAF Training Depot was established as a recruit training centre at Bradfield Park, New South Wales, on 4 February 1942 with an establishment of six officers, 17 other ranks and 243 recruits.

The female recruits were busy with training and inter-service sport. They were also involved in liberty loan marches through the streets of Sydney and Penrith. The airwomen also attended war-related screenings of newsreels.

A strict standard of training was adhered to, but by October 1942 it had become apparent that the recruits were not up to scratch and it was decided to introduce a revised training program. This commenced on 18 November 1942.

In December 1942 the kitchen at the Depot closed due to lack of staff. The women then had to use the kitchen facilities at 4 Station Headquarters.

On 28 January 1943 the then Governor-General of Australia, Lord Gowrie, and Lady Gowrie visited the Depot. All members were on parade for this important occasion.

Extreme overcrowding in the barracks, caused by an increase of recruit intakes, meant that the Depot was moved to Penrith in July 1944.

In March 1945 a leading aircraftman, pretending to be a fighter pilot back from New Guinea, asked could he visit. The medical officer, being suspicious of him, handed him over to the service police.

With the end of the war in the Pacific, the Depot was disbanded on 6 November 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| 4 February 1942 | —Flight Officer J. Opie |
| 28 August 1942 | —Squadron Officer Y.E. Rentoul |
| 26 January 1945 | —Squadron Officer A.P. Bromley |

1 WIRELESS AIR GUNNERS SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 22 April 1940 —formed at Ballarat, Vic.
21 January 1946 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

1 Wireless Air Gunners School was raised at Ballarat, Victoria, to train wireless operator air gunners, using the standard Royal Air Force syllabus, under the Empire Air Training Scheme. Operations commenced on 29 April 1940, but it was not until October that the School received its first aircraft—two chartered Ansons from Point Cook and two from Cootamundra.

At the end of 1940, the overall strength of the unit was 772 personnel. During January 1941, two Douglas DC-2 aircraft were received. In March, another DC-2 was brought on strength, and these aircraft were joined by a Tiger Moth in May and seven Wackett Trainers in October.

The School expanded to 'double' size on 8 January 1942, operating as such from 5 February. To accomplish the required training, the strength of the unit increased at the end of March to 43 officers, 1238 airmen, five civilian instructors and seven civilian labourers. The aircraft on strength at this time were two Douglas DC-2s and 51 Wackett Trainers. As at the end of December 1943, 3836 wireless air gunners had been trained, and the training fleet consisted of an Anson, 33 Wackett Trainers and five DH-84 Dragon aircraft.

Warrant Officer A.W. Howard and Corporal Bolton were killed when their Wackett Trainer crashed on 20 February 1944.

On 23 October 1944, Wing Commander W.J. Guthrie assumed command of the School, replacing Group Captain C.O. Fairbairn. Fairbairn had served with the Royal Flying Corps/Royal Air Force during World War I, and had been awarded the Air Force Cross. He transferred to the RAAF Reserve before taking up his appointment as Commanding Officer of 1 Wireless Air Gunners School and, at the time of his departure, was probably the longest serving Empire Air Training Scheme unit commander.

By the end of November 1944, 3 Wireless Air Gunners School had been absorbed and, at the end of December 1944, the unit was training radar and wireless operator (air) trainees. At this stage, a total of 5025 trainees had passed through the School.

The unit training varied in 1945. In January, a Radar Training Wing was established, with the first training course being completed in February. The Radar Wing absorbed the Radar School from Maryborough, Queensland, during September 1945. Basic training for wireless operator (air) ceased on 31 May 1945, after 3500 trainees had graduated from the School. It was intended to make the unit an aircrew pool for this mustering and, to give effect to this decision, 400 aircrew were posted in.

On 16 July 1945, a pre-operational training unit gunnery section was established, using 0.303 inch and 0.50 inch Browning guns and a Bristol turret and power unit, to train wireless operators (air) in these duties before posting to 7 Operational Training Unit.

No. 1 Wireless Operator (Air) Refresher Course commenced on 2 February 1945, and 646 trainees undertook this course. 746 radar trainees also passed through the School.

Teams from the School participated in the local sporting competition—the unit Australian football team lost the grand final of the Ballarat League to Golden Point on 6 November 1945.

The base was also visited by some interesting aircraft; a Superfortress named 'Waltzing Matilda', captained by Major Simeral, United States Army Air Force, visited to support the 4th victory loan on 16 November 1945.

Wing Commander Guthrie commanded both 1 Wireless Air Gunners School and the Air and Ground Radio School which was established on 1 November 1945. It became the responsibility of Squadron Leader W.A. Radley to wind up the former, which was disbanded on 21 January 1946.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

22 April 1940	—Wing Commander C.O. Fairbairn
23 October 1944	—Wing Commander W.J. Guthrie

2 WIRELESS AIR GUNNERS SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 9 January 1941 —formed at Parkes, NSW
12 February 1944 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

Flying Officers J.R. Horan and K.A. Taylor, Pilot Officer B.C. Wall and 21 airmen reported to the RAAF base at Parkes on 9 January 1941 as the advance party to establish 2 Wireless Air Gunners School. At the end of the month, the unit had grown to eight officers and 38 airmen. Eighty trainees were posted in to commence training in February. As at 31 December 1941, unit strength comprised 16 officers, 234 airmen, three civilian instructors and 416 trainees. A year later, the strength of the unit totalled 907.

During June 1941, three Douglas DC-2 aircraft arrived, and three Tiger Moth aircraft were delivered during July.

The DC-2 aircraft were used for other than training purposes. On 18 January 1943, A30-7 and A30-8 were flown to Darwin for operations to the north. The former aircraft returned on 31 January. Flying Officer N.W. Webster, Sergeants L.M. Van Praag and E. Picker and Corporal F.C.J. Mason were the crew of A30-8, which was lost to enemy action. On 1 February, A30-13 flew from Richmond to Darwin on freighting duties.

A30-7 was lost on 15 June 1942, when it crashed during a take-off and landing exercise. All the crew (Flight Lieutenant N.C.P. Blight, Sergeant W.C. Arthur, Pilot Officer C.R.N. Lewis and Flying Officer H.R.I. Cox) were killed. Wackett Trainer aircraft were also involved in fatal accidents. Pilot Officer W.S. Stubbs and Leading Aircraftman G.C. Grey died on 25 June 1942; Pilot Officer T.A. Bishop crashed at Peak Hill on 21 August 1943; and Flight Sergeant C.J. Walford and Sergeant A.J. Stratton died in an aircraft accident on 4 January 1944.

On 5 January 1944, the aircraft of the unit commenced dispersal to 1 Wireless Air Gunners School, Ballarat; 3 Wireless Air Gunners School at Maryborough; and Archerfield, Queensland. The unit vehicles

transferred to 1 Service Flying Training School and 3 Wireless Air Gunners School, before the unit disbanded on 12 February 1944.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 16 January 1941 | —Squadron Leader J.G. Cardale (RAF) |
| 20 September 1941 | —Squadron Leader N.W. Simmons |
| 18 January 1943 | —Flight Lieutenant J.E. Reynolds |

3 WIRELESS AIR GUNNERS SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 18 September 1941 —formed at Maryborough, Qld
6 December 1944 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

3 Wireless Air Gunners School was raised at Maryborough, Queensland, under the temporary command of Flight Lieutenant K.A. Taylor, with a strength of three officers, 23 airmen and a civilian instructor.

Wing Commander J.G. Cardale (RAF) assumed command of the unit on 22 September 1941, in time to oversee the arrival of the first training course (No. 19), which arrived on 15 October. Members of this course graduated on 29 April 1942, and the total strength of the unit had risen to 888 by the end of the year.

During May 1942 the first Wackett Trainers arrived, and these were supplemented with Dragon aircraft in August 1943.

Added responsibilities were accepted by unit staff when RAAF Base Maryborough was closed on 17 July 1943, with all sections coming under the control of 3 Wireless Air Gunners School.

At the end of December 1943, the unit strength was 36 officers and 395 other ranks, three WAAAF officers and 75 airwomen, plus 540 trainees. Aircraft on strength totalled 46—three Dragons and 43 Wackett Trainers.

Training was not without incident. Flying Officer J.F. Colthrup was killed in a Tiger Moth accident on 21 February 1942, and Flying Officer C.S. Cornall died after the engine of the Wackett Trainer in which he was flying failed on take-off on 13 January 1944.

On 24 August 1944, a signal was received regarding the reduction of training and subsequent transfer to 1 Wireless Air Gunners School at Ballarat. Thirty-five Wackett Trainer aircraft were ferried to Narromine on 25 September—one force landed at Western Creek en route. The strength of the unit at this stage was 42 officers, two nursing sisters, two part-time chaplains, 422 airmen, two WAAAF officers, 94 airwomen and 228 trainees. By the end of October, this had fallen to 11 officers, two chaplains, 53 airmen and 32 airwomen.

The unit was officially disbanded on 6 December 1944.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

22 September 1941	—Wing Commander J.G. Cardale (RAF)
23 June 1942	—Squadron Leader A.V. Dupen
1 July 1942	—Squadron Leader W.J. Deane
July 1943	—Wing Commander D.A. Connelly
18 August 1944	—Wing Commander W.J. Guthrie

ADULT TRAINEE SQUADRON APPRENTICE AND JUNIOR TRAINEE SQUADRON

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 1 March 1956 | —formed at Wagga Wagga, NSW |
| November 1960 | —last entry in Apprentice and Junior Trainee Squadron Unit History Record |
| December 1960 | —last entry in Adult Trainee Squadron Unit History Record |

NARRATIVE

The Adult Trainee Squadron and Apprentice and Junior Trainee Squadron were formed at RAAF Forest Hill, Wagga Wagga, New South Wales, on 1 March 1956, under the command of Squadron Leaders F.H. King and R.W. Davy, DFC, respectively. The Squadrons, although separate units, were under the direct command of the Officer Commanding, RAAF School of Technical Training.

The first Adult Trainee Squadron courses (Nos 146 and 147 Trainee Fitters) commenced during the month and, at the end of March, there were 244 trainees under instruction. The courses offered included trainee fitter, mechanical transport mechanic, clerk equipment, cook, engine, air frame, instrument and armament mechanic, and electrical serviceman. Later, courses such as explosives examiner, steward and fabric worker were added.

The Apprentice and Junior Trainee Squadron trained 450 apprentices and 45 junior trainees annually. Initially, there were disciplinary and housing problems, exacerbated by the lack of staff—at the end of May 1956 the strength of the Squadron was three officers, one warrant officer, one sergeant, three corporals and one aircraftwoman to administer 400 apprentices and junior trainees.

Many of the students attending courses at Adult Trainee School were of an age where wives and families lived in localities distant from Wagga Wagga. As a result, many trainees travelled to the major cities by motor vehicle. Consequently, there were many motor vehicle accidents recorded involving members of the unit. On 11 June 1956, three airmen

were drowned in the Yass River when their vehicle crashed through Pierce's Creek Bridge, near the town of Yass, New South Wales. Another fatal accident occurred on 27 August 1957, near Young, New South Wales, and other accidents were recorded on 19 September and 26 October 1958.

The apprentices and junior trainees participated in hockey, basketball, rugby union, badminton, fencing, baseball and athletic competitions, both inter-service and local. On 20 November 1956 Junior Apprentices R.E. Strauch and R.N.C. Brown and Airman Apprentice R.W. Bancks carried the Olympic torch between Junee and Wagga Wagga.

Special arrangements were made for members of the unit to take advantage of a five day 'stand-down' which commenced on 27 September 1956, when Australian National Airlines were diverted to Forest Hill to convey members to Sydney/Brisbane, Melbourne/Adelaide (and points beyond). When the unit commenced training in January 1957, 1956 graduates of the Apprentice and Junior Trainee Squadron were posted in to prepare themselves for the Royal Melbourne Technical College Diploma of Engineering examination, due to be held in February 1957. To gain practical experience, apprentices visited bases such as East Sale, Rathmines and 2 Central Reserve, Albury, in addition to visiting industrial complexes in Sydney.

On 16 February 1960 the first apprentices from the Royal New Zealand Air Force arrived to undertake their training with the Apprentice and Junior Trainee Squadron.

The last entry in the Apprentice and Junior Trainee Squadron Unit History Record was made during November 1960; that for the Adult Trainee Squadron on December 1960. For the period March 1956 to December 1960, 15 691 students passed through Adult Trainee Squadron, with the average monthly student strength being 320.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

Adult Trainee Squadron

1 March 1956 —Squadron Leader F.H. King
17 June 1958 —Squadron Leader L.F. Jones

Apprentice and Junior Trainee Squadron

1 March 1956 —Squadron Leader R.W. Davy
27 January 1958 —Squadron Leader C.S. Eckert
22 April 1959 —Squadron Leader A. Wraith

AIR ARMAMENT SCHOOL

Doceo ut Pugnent (I Teach, That They May Fight)



CHRONOLOGY

- January 1946 —officially raised at RAAF Base East Sale, Vic.
15 June 1959 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

The disbandment of Air Gunnery School at RAAF West Sale on 27 November 1945 brought a close to the school in name only, as a nucleus detachment mobilised to RAAF Station East Sale and became the Air Armament School. The School attained official status in January 1946, combining the roles of the Air Gunnery School, Central Gunnery School, and Air Armament and Gas School.

Stores and equipment were transferred to the Air Armament School and in February, six officers arrived to prepare for the School's first course in May. The School's staff received advice on armament instruction from a five-man delegation from the Empire Air Armament School who visited East Sale on 22 May to lecture on armament equipment and training in the Royal Air Force. During the School's next decade of training, staff primarily taught aircrew to use airborne armament systems, while collating a comprehensive reference library on contemporary weaponry.

The first pilot gunnery instructors course, which commenced 26 October 1946, was hindered by the scarcity of facilities and equipment. Several air gunnery ranges were near East Sale, but the School commanded just three Mustang aircraft.

In 1947 the Air Armament School added a gunnery leaders and ammunition and explosives course.

On 27 May 1948, the Empire Air Armament School representatives returned to East Sale and discussed armament issues with their RAAF counterparts.

In August, Air Armament School graduated its initial aircraft recognition instructors course, and also maintained a section which researched and instructed on the use of nuclear and guided weapons.

The School had appreciably developed an armament program, but, with only 24 staff on strength, there were difficulties in properly managing the armament ranges at Dutson, Licola and Letts Beach. This low staff level continued for several years and, by 1952, a serious shortfall of single-engine pilots compelled the School to rely upon the Central Flying School.

In early 1949, RAAF Command authorised specialist instructional staff to attend at 82 Wing, RAAF Amberley, Pearce and Richmond to give briefs on information amassed by the School and to listen to each unit's suggestions and problems. In June 1956, the Air Armament School introduced a fighter combat instructor course which taught air combat tactics to fighter pilots.

On 15 June 1959, Air Armament School disbanded. Base Squadron East Sale assumed responsibility for the manning of nearby bombing and gunnery ranges, with the School of Air Navigation conducting the ground training phases to the bombing section within the basic navigator course, and the recognition instructors course, in addition to the ground and air training stages of the weapons officer course. The weapons phase of the senior officers jet familiarisation course came under the control of Central Flying School.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

May 1946	—Wing Commander J.H. Glasscock
2 December 1946	—Wing Commander E.J. Slater
19 May 1950	—Squadron Leader G.T. Miles
1 June 1953	—Wing Commander N.F. Lamb
23 January 1956	—Squadron Leader R.W. Saunders
29 January 1957	—Wing Commander R.D. Albrecht

AIR GUNNERY SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 9 December 1943 —3 Bombing and Gunnery School disbanded to reform as Air Gunnery School at West Sale, Vic.
- 31 December 1945 —School ceased to function

NARRATIVE

Air Gunnery School's task was to train wireless air gunners and other RAAF personnel in air gunnery. The unit began with the aircraft from 3 Bombing and Gunnery School, including the Avro Anson, Ryan Trainer and Fairey Battle aircraft. The unit's first Commanding Officer, Group Captain G.V. Boucher, arrived on posting on 12 December 1943.

The unit's first major event occurred when extensive bushfires in mid-February 1944 required the assistance of unit personnel to contain the fires in the local communities. Sixty men were kept on stand-by to fight the fire at Yallourn open-cut mine, but were never called upon.

Problems with ageing aircraft continued at the School, as Corporal C.B. Keys was killed on 18 May 1944 in Ryan A50-12, which crashed due to a structural defect. Another crash involving a drogue-carrying Fairey Battle aircraft caused the death of its pilot on 16 August 1944, whilst the drogue operator successfully parachuted to safety.

The School closed for Christmas on 22 December when a special train was arranged to take personnel to Melbourne, returning on Boxing Day. An official visit in January the following year was made by Captain Chow of the Chinese Air Force, to inspect the training of the unit.

On 9 November 1945 ground training at the School ceased as the Ground Training Squadron was closed down, followed by the formation on 28 November of the Care and Maintenance (Aircraft) Section. On 31 December 1945, Air Gunnery School ceased to function and the unit reverted to care and maintenance under 4 (Maintenance) Group.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- 9 December 1943 —Group Captain G.V. Boucher
- 16 August 1945 —Group Captain D.E.G. Walker

AIRCREW OFFICERS AND NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 12 August 1944 | —established at Watsonia, Vic. |
| 7 April 1945 | —Medical Air Evacuation Transport Unit
formed within the School |
| 30 September 1945 | —School disbanded |

NARRATIVE

The Aircrew Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers School was formed at Watsonia, Victoria, on 12 August 1944. The purpose of the School was to provide training in aircrew responsibilities, and 365 trainees made up the initial intake. The first Commanding Officer was Squadron Leader W.R. Wood.

By the end of November 1944, 500 officers and 186 airmen had completed courses. Trainees were very active in sporting activities and a commanding officer's trophy was in the offering for winning teams. As well as sport, regular social evenings were held.

As part of the training, a tropical hardening course was introduced in February 1945. This was essential for aircrew who were being posted to the Pacific Islands and areas in northern Australia. On 7 April 1945, a Medical Air Evacuation Transport Unit was formed as part of the School.

At the end of hostilities in the Pacific, the unit was disbanded on 30 September 1945. The pre-fabricated huts were dismantled with a view to being used as accommodation for returned prisoners of war during their convalescence. At the time of disbandment a total of 2455 personnel had passed through the School.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| 21 August 1944 | —Squadron Leader W.R. Wood |
| 14 December 1944 | —Wing Commander M. Swan |
| 8 August 1945 | —Squadron Leader O.S. Thynne |
| 27 August 1945 | —Flight Lieutenant R. Bissett |

AIRMAN AIRCREW FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL

Prepare and Develop



CHRONOLOGY

- 4 July 1983 —raised at Edinburgh, SA
- 11 December 1992 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

During June 1983, the Chief of the Air Staff directed that senior non-commissioned officer aircrew be trained to man stations aboard Orion maritime patrol aircraft, thus instigating the Airman Aircrew Scheme, whereby all airmen aircrew would commence their operational flying careers as senior non-commissioned officers.

On 4 July 1983, Squadron Leader B.D. Warner established the Airman Aircrew Flying Training School at RAAF Base Edinburgh, and training of No. 1 Airman Aircrew Course, which consisted of 10 airborne electronic analysts (AEA) and three flight engineer trainees, commenced on 25 July. The School's responsibilities included senior non-commissioned military training, basic aircrew training and basic training for AEAs. To meet these aims, the course included leadership training, dinghy drills, demonstrations of survival equipment and pyrotechnics, in addition to academic studies. Students also attended survival training at RAAF Base Townsville.

The inaugural graduation parade was reviewed by Air Vice Marshal E.A. Radford, Chief of Air Force—Personnel, on 26 July 1984. At this parade six AEAs graduated, promoted to the rank of sergeant and posted to 292 Squadron to undergo conversion training to the Orion aircraft.

The scope of the training undertaken by the staff of the Airman Aircrew Flying Training School expanded. In June 1985 loadmaster basic courses were commenced, and students from the Army were included on these courses during 1988. Nor was course membership a wholly masculine domain. Non-Commissioned Officer Cadet K.L. Morris was the first laboratory assistant and female trainee at the School, and completed No. 2/87 (9) Sergeant Aircrew Basic Course during September 1987.

Training techniques were always developing, with the introduction (after many teething problems) of a basic acoustic trainer in 1986, and constant liaison with Training Command staff related to the curriculum taught. Between 29 April and 20 May 1985, Squadron Leader Warner visited similar training establishments in the United Kingdom, in particular 6FTS RAF Finningley, to discuss training problems and techniques. The unit also personally advised prospective AEAs on requirements and arranged for interested parties to visit the unit. Officers were also involved with the selection of candidates at recruiting centres.

In an effort to give training realism, Flying Officer P. Gibbs and four students boarded HMS *Otway* on 18 May 'to allow students to experience submarine operations' during a cruise from Port Adelaide to Fremantle, where the submarine arrived on 26 May.

The final course, No. 2/94 (18) AEA Basic Course, graduated on 13 November 1992, and was reviewed by the Deputy Chief of the Air Staff, Air Vice Marshal T.W. O'Brien, AO.

On 11 December 1992 a closure ball was held in the Airmen's Mess at Edinburgh, with 200 guests attending the wake to mark the disbandment of the unit on that day.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

4 July 1983	—Squadron Leader B.D. Warner
13 January 1986	—Squadron Leader N.A. Shelton
4 January 1988	—Squadron Leader K.R. Stephens
6 January 1992	—Squadron Leader M.R. Ryan

ARMAMENT TRAINING STATION

CHRONOLOGY

24 July 1939	—established at Laverton, Vic.
31 July 1939	—moved to Cressy, Vic.
20 April 1942	—Station disbanded

NARRATIVE

The Armament Training Station was raised at Laverton, Victoria, on 24 July 1939, under the command of Flying Officer R.S. Dennis. The role of the unit was to provide air firing and bombing facilities to enable units to carry out an independent assessment of their armament efficiency.

On 31 July 1939, the unit moved to Cressy, Victoria, with a strength of two officers and 24 airmen. The unit was to be equipped with a Hawker Demon for drogue towing and an Avro Trainer for communication duties. Another Demon was added to the unit strength a month later.

Flight Lieutenant A.R. Tindal (who was to be the first RAAF casualty on the Australian mainland, during the Darwin raids of 19 February 1942) assumed command on 6 January 1940.

The first course to pass through the Armament Training Station was No. 6 Air Observers Course, which commenced on 10 November 1939, having been delayed by inclement weather. This course was completed on 20 November, and 2 Squadron was the first to pass through the facilities at Cressy. This squadron was followed by 6 (14 January 1940), 3 (5 February 1940), and then 21 and 22 Squadrons. The squadrons utilised their own aircraft—Demons, Ansons or Wirraways.

In addition to normal armament training, the unit was involved with weapons trials. On 19 November 1940 high explosives bomb tests were conducted under the supervision of Wing Commander Bouchier of Air Force Headquarters.

Only one fatal accident is recorded which involved aircraft training at Cressy. On 10 May 1940, Pilot Officers A.L. May and A.V. Hilder were killed in a Wirraway accident during air-to-air firing over Lake Corangamite.

The unit was disbanded on 20 April 1942.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

24 July 1939	—Flying Officer R.S. Dennis
6 January 1940	—Flight Lieutenant A.R. Tindal
3 September 1940	—Squadron Leader E.V. Lansell
31 March 1941	—Squadron Leader K.R. Parsons

CENTRAL FLYING SCHOOL

Qui Docet Discit (He Who Teaches Learns Himself)



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 7 March 1913 | —formation of the Central Flying School at Point Cook, Vic., announced |
| 31 December 1919 | —School disbanded |
| 29 April 1940 | —reformed at Point Cook |
| 14 May 1940 | —moved to Camden, NSW |
| 21 April 1942 | —moved to Tamworth, NSW |
| 18 January 1944 | —moved to Parkes, NSW |
| 18 September 1944 | —moved to Point Cook |
| 18 November 1947 | —moved to East Sale, Vic. |
| November 1994 | —based at East Sale, Vic. |

NARRATIVE

The Federal Government formally announced the formation of the Central Flying School at Point Cook, Victoria, on 7 March 1913. The inaugural pilots course started on 17 August 1914 and included four students who would form a Victorian Flight of the Australian Flying Corps. A further 11 courses were held between 1914 and 1918, training 152 pilots. Central Flying School was disbanded on 31 December 1919.

Central Flying School was reformed on 29 April 1940. The School lodged at Point Cook briefly until re-locating to RAAF Station Camden on 14 May. On 28 March 1942, the School vacated Camden and moved to Tamworth, New South Wales, completing the move on 21 April.

At Tamworth the School operated Anson, Wirraway and Oxford aircraft; the airfield's unsuitability for these aircraft led to a move to RAAF Station Parkes on 18 January 1944. In August it was resolved that

the School could effectively use the resources at Point Cook. The main party left Parkes and arrived in Melbourne on 19 September.

During the War the School had trained 3600 instructors.

Central Flying School transferred to East Sale between November and December 1947. On 26 November, seven Tiger Moths, three Oxfords, a Lincoln and a Dakota were ferried from Point Cook to East Sale. Two days later, nine Wirraways, a Mustang and a Dakota flew to East Sale.

Central Flying School started the jet instructors course on the dual Vampire in May 1953. In March the following year, the School added an advanced flying training course under the control of the Jet Training Trials Flight. In January 1957, the School expanded its instructional role. On 12 March it commenced its first air traffic control course.

The move to conduct 'all through' jet training for the RAAF directly affected the School. On 27 February 1965 the Commanding Officer, Wing Commander Tom Meldrum, accompanied an eight-man delegation overseas. This delegation chose the Italian Macchi 326 as a suitable replacement for both the Winjeel and the Vampire. In 1967 Central Flying School started its first 'all through' jet flying instructors course in preparation for the introduction of the Macchi.

The introduction of the Dakota provided Central Flying School with a twin-engine instructional role and in 1974 the first five pilots of the Papua New Guinea Defence Force were trained on these aircraft.

The arrival of CT-4 Airtrainers at East Sale on 30 August 1975 marked the end of the Winjeel era. Winjeels had been recalled to Central Flying School on several occasions due to a change of role for the School and when there were delays in the delivery of the CT-4 Airtrainers. The Winjeel first flew from the base in late 1956.

Throughout the late 1970s and 1980s, Central Flying School conducted Macchi and CT-4 flying instructor courses.

On 28 September 1978, Sir Zelman Cowen presented the Queen's Colour to Central Flying School in recognition of the unit's past achievements.

On 16 March 1980, three Dakotas flew for the last time from Central Flying School; these aircraft were being phased out of the RAAF.

Central Flying School farewelled the CT-4 Airtrainer on 10 December 1991 with an eight-aircraft flypast over Stratford, Maffra, Sale and the base. These aircraft were replaced by the PC-9.

Currently, aside from the flying instructors course, Central Flying School conducts flying refresher courses, tests instrument rating

examiners throughout the RAAF and assesses Air Force flying instructors. Through the flying instructional and examining roles, the School is responsible for the maintenance of pure flying standards in the RAAF. Several thousand personnel have passed through the School as students or staff since its formation in 1913 and, in 80 years, the School has operated almost 50 different types of aircraft.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

29 April 1940	—Wing Commander E.C. Bates (RAF)
31 July 1941	—Wing Commander D. Eayrs
February 1944	—Group Captain R. Dupont
12 February 1945	—Wing Commander N. Ford
November 1945	—Group Captain R.B. Burrage
26 July 1946	—Wing Commander I.F. Rose
22 June 1948	—Wing Commander J. Dowling
5 June 1951	—Squadron Leader A.J. Picknett
5 August 1952	—Wing Commander C.F. Read
17 May 1954	—Wing Commander J.E.S. Dennett
5 March 1956	—Wing Commander R.H. Thompson
September 1957	—Wing Commander V.F.W. Sullivan
1 May 1959	—Wing Commander I.S. Parker
15 January 1962	—Wing Commander H.C. Plenty
15 January 1964	—Wing Commander T.J.T. Meldrum
30 March 1967	—Wing Commander J.S. Wilson
4 January 1971	—Wing Commander E.D. Plenty
29 January 1974	—Wing Commander A. Barnes
May 1976	—Wing Commander R.K. Page
January 1978	—Wing Commander R.S. Cooper
April 1980	—Wing Commander R.L. Biddell
11 January 1981	—Wing Commander W.R. Byron
January 1984	—Wing Commander T.P. Body
July 1986	—Wing Commander B. Espeland
January 1989	—Wing Commander J.A. Simmonds
January 1990	—Wing Commander J.D. Smith
June 1992	—Wing Commander S.R. Ford

CENTRAL GUNNERY SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

5 June 1942	—raised at Sale, Vic.
13 July 1942	—completed move to Williamstown, NSW
12 November 1942	—moved to Mildura, Vic.
23 July 1943	—move to Cressy, Vic. completed
January 1946	—Care and Maintenance Unit, Cressy, established
19 July 1946	—Care and Maintenance Unit, Cressy, disbanded

NARRATIVE

Central Gunnery School was raised, under the command of Flight Lieutenant R.E. Lewis (RAF), on 5 June 1942, at Sale, Victoria.

The first aircraft, three Beauforts, were allotted to the unit on 7 July 1942, six days before the School completed a move to Williamstown, New South Wales. On the 19th, five officers and five airmen wireless operator air gunners arrived to commence No. 1 Gunnery Leaders Course, which was completed on 29 August 1942.

Three United States aircraft were allocated to the unit on 5 August—a B-17E Fortress (#12635), a B-26 Marauder (#01549) and an A-20A (#0082). The Fortress remained at the unit until 29 August, but there is no record of the subsequent movement of the Marauder or A-20. Also during August, two Brewster Buffalo and two Fairey Battle aircraft were allocated to Central Gunnery School.

On 12 November 1942, the Central Gunnery School moved to Mildura, Victoria. The strength of the unit in December was recorded at eight officers and 104 airmen, and an Anson aircraft was added to the unit.

The School completed its final move to Cressy, Victoria, on 23 July 1943. Training continued, with sighting instructor's courses and air gunners sighting courses being added to those already being undertaken.

On 14 January 1944, the aerodrome was threatened by bushfires, and training was curtailed to enable all personnel to assist local farmers with fire fighting, saving livestock and destroying stock burnt by the fires.

As the School ran down—the strength dropped from 86 at 1 November 1945 to 57 at the end of the month—Spitfires which the School had operated were delivered to Forest Hill, Wagga Wagga for storage. Beaufort and Wirraway aircraft were delivered to Tocumwal, to suffer the same fate. In January 1946, the unit was re-named Care and Maintenance Unit, Cressy, under the command of Flying Officer T.V. Geddes.

On 19 July 1946, Care and Maintenance Unit, Cressy, was handed over to a civilian caretaker, Mr E.H. Berry, and was officially disbanded.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

5 June 1942	—Flight Lieutenant R.E. Lewis (RAF)
6 December 1943	—Squadron Leader P. Kingsley-Strack
1 October 1944	—Wing Commander R.E.S. Polkinghorne

COMBAT SURVIVAL TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 1955 | —first combat survival course run at Canungra |
| 27 August 1960 | —first course (No. 15) run by Combat Survival School (CSS) for all aircrew members |
| July 1979 | —moved to RAAF Townsville |
| 2 February 1987 | —re-established as a school, becoming the Combat Survival Training School (CSTS) |
| 1989 | —moved into permanent home |
| 1 October 1990 | —ownership transferred to Headquarters Training Command |
| November 1994 | —based at Townsville, Qld |

NARRATIVE

Following the Korean War, it was decided that a resistance course for aircrew needed to be established. Accordingly, the first combat survival courses were held at the Army's jungle training centre, Canungra, from 1955. The then Department of Air was responsible for the conduct of RAAF combat survival courses at Canungra. The courses were run by a staff of five instructors, with each of the three services represented. Up to three courses per year were conducted, with a student population of 15 on each course. The courses were to train selected aircrew members to be unit combat survival officers, responsible for combat survival training within their units. In practice this approach was only partially successful.

Various proposals were put forward to create a combat survival school (CSS). The original proposal was to create a joint service school; however, Army and Navy were indifferent to the concept and so Air Force proceeded alone. The proposal was that all aircrew would be posted to the school to undergo combat survival training on completion of their flying training and before taking up postings to flying units.

Early in 1956, Headquarters Home Command was delegated the responsibility for the promotion and conduct of combat survival throughout the RAAF, and the post of command combat survival officer

(CCSO) was established. Subsequent to the establishment of this post, about four courses per year were conducted at Canungra. Commencing on 27 August 1960, No. 15 Combat Survival Course was the first of a continuing series of RAAF combat survival courses made available to aircrew other than just those destined to be unit combat survival officers. The new courses were of 14 days duration and each comprised a maximum of 30 students. Courses were conducted at Canungra by the CCSO, a general duties squadron leader. Students on the courses comprised all aircrew categories, the output of graduating basic aircrew training courses, and members nominated by the Navy and Army.

In 1967, responsibility for conducting combat survival courses was delegated by Headquarters Operational Command to Base Squadron Amberley, and the number of courses per year increased to seven with a student population of 30. Practical phases of the course, which included evasion and survival, were conducted in the Numinbah Valley. The CCSO retained responsibility for the course and continued to be chief instructor of courses. The Army ceased attending courses; however, the Navy continued to provide up to 10 students per course and one instructor.

Air Force categories and musterings required to complete combat survival training, other than aircrew, now included ground defence officers, airfield defence guards, intelligence officers, and physical training instructors. From 1968 the maximum course population was increased to 45 to help clear the growing backlog of personnel waiting for placement on course. A successful bid was made in 1969 to establish a permanent chief instructor position at Amberley.

Over subsequent years that Combat Survival Training Flight (CSTF), or 'comsurv' as it has always been known, operated at Amberley, logistic difficulties started to emerge. The flight had no permanent home; courses were conducted from a base gymnasium that was earmarked for demolition and there was no other identifiable alternative location on base to conduct courses. Additionally, the relatively small area of the Numinbah Valley used for practical phases was becoming 'worn' and urban encroachment was increasing.

Due to the increasing difficulties of operating at Amberley, an alternative location for CSTF was sought, preferably a venue near the coast to enable practical sea survival to be included in the course, with large rainforest areas available for evasion/survival phases. Locations considered included RAAF Bases Darwin, Townsville and Williamtown.

In July 1979, CSTF moved to join Base Squadron Townsville under the direction of the Chief Instructor (CI), Flight Lieutenant Ken Thackeray, and the CCSO, Squadron Leader Brian Kavanah.

At Townsville, CSTF was accommodated in the old 10 Squadron headquarters building and the first course, No. 151, commenced on 2 September 1979. Initially the combat survival course retained a similar program to that used before the move to Townsville; however, from course No. 156 a sea/sea coast phase was added. The course duration remained at 14 days and the flight ran nine courses per year. A significant event at this time was that certain staff incumbents were now being sent to the United States to complete United States Air Force survival courses. This experience added considerably to the professionalism of the RAAF combat survival course.

In 1983, CSTF moved into the former safety equipment section of 10 Squadron. In the same year, CSTF introduced an arid survival phase into the combat survival course and, accordingly, the course duration was increased to 21 days with a commensurate reduction in the number of courses per year to seven.

With the growth of CSTF, the work load on the CI was increasing until in June 1984 a commanding officer post was established. Further developments occurred on 2 February 1987 when *comsurv* once again became a school and thus became the Combat Survival Training School (CSTS). CSTS was still in need of a permanent home when in 1989 the School's need was the saviour of the old base hospital, earmarked for demolition. The building was *refurbished* and became the first permanent home of CSTS. Ownership of CSTS was transferred to Headquarters Training Command on 1 October 1990, to become an independent unit of RAAF Base Townsville and the smallest unit in Training Command.

Today, CSTS is a well-regarded professional school that continues to grow and develop, providing valuable training to a wide cross section of personnel from all three services.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

June 1984	—Squadron Leader T. Kovacs
January 1988	—Squadron Leader G. Mengersen
January 1989	—Squadron Leader H. Hilderbrandt
13 January 1992	—Squadron Leader G.P. Nordling

DEFENCE INTERNATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE

CHRONOLOGY

- 10 June 1981 —detachment of School of Languages at RAAF Base Laverton, Vic.
- 29 November 1982 —Defence Co-operation Language School established
- February 1990 —name changed to Defence International Training Centre
- November 1994 —based at Laverton, Vic.

NARRATIVE

On 10 June 1981, a detachment of the School of Languages, Point Cook, was established at RAAF Base Laverton, under the command of Major A.J. Gilbert, to train members of Asian defence forces. Each course was to have 30 students who would receive four weeks tuition on an Australian familiarisation course before specialising in their areas of expertise.

The school suffered from a severe lack of teaching and administrative facilities—it was said that there was 'one instructor per square metre'—and this problem was not wholly remedied until the school moved to new accommodation during February 1982. Accommodation was not the only problem which had to be overcome. For example, from 18 August 1982, meals for Moslems could be supplied by arranging for the ritual slaughter of meat.

A shortage of military instructors, noted during July 1983, was overcome by the employment of civilian consultants. Again, in December 1985, five casual instructors were employed due to the high workload at the school.

Cultural exchange is a constant theme at the Centre. Staff have attended national cross-cultural training at Flinders and Monash Universities, and trainees are given some grounding in the Australian way of life. Students have been escorted to a working farm near Ballarat, a Beating of the Retreat at RAAF Williams and the Royal Melbourne Show, to assist them to understand Australian culture. In the same spirit, the Australians attend Asian cultural activities; for example, the Thai Loy

Krathong Festival was hosted by the unit on 16 November 1986, with 'leave boats' being launched in the Werribee River as part of the celebration.

The school has expanded its teaching, and is innovative in its approach to training. During September 1981, 11 Thai English teachers from the Royal Thailand Defence Force participated in a pilot English teaching development course and, during July 1987, staff members travelled to Thailand to introduce a specialist phase into the Thai Language School. Wing Commander Rasmussen visited Indonesia in 1985 to assist with the introduction of initial English language training. During 1988, a language laboratory was established at Port Dixon, Malaysia.

On 25 February 1989, Flying Officer N. Edgerton travelled to Lae to undertake course briefings on the Papua New Guinea apprentice bridging course. She remained in Lae until 23 March, when she was replaced by Mr S. Williams, who, in turn, returned to Australia on 24 April.

During April 1991, the first student from Bangladesh attended the school.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

January 1983	—Wing Commander B. O'Connell
December 1983	—Wing Commander P.R.N. Rasmussen
July 1987	—Lieutenant Colonel A. Jordan
December 1990	—Wing Commander J.P.C. Kenyon

ENGINEER CADET SQUADRON

Eager



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 1 October 1962 | —formed at Frognall, Vic. |
| December 1976 | —name changed to Engineer Cadet Squadron |
| March 1986 | —last Commanding Officer's report |

NARRATIVE

The Diploma Cadet Squadron, previously known as School of Radio Detachment 'A', was formed at Frognall, Victoria, on 1 October 1962, initially commanded by Squadron Leader E.R. Anscombe. In February, there were 40 technical cadets on the strength of the school.

Trainees undertook academic training at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and later at the Swinburne College of Technology and the Caulfield Institute of Technology. To give practical experience, cadets visited RAAF bases at Edinburgh, Amberley and Williamstown, and units such as the Aircraft Research and Development Unit. To gain further experience, visits were arranged to civilian organisations, including General Motors Holden, H.J. Heinz and Company, Shell Oil Company, Australian Paper Manufacturers, Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation and Trans Australia Air Lines.

To develop character and initiative, cadets participated in sport, including rugby union, hockey, tennis, sailing, cricket, squash, rowing, pistol shooting, Australian football, water polo, athletics and swimming. Adventure training—for example, canoe trips on the Goulburn River—and car trials, were well attended.

Cadets were successful academically as well. Air Cadets H.H. Detjen, G.A. Twine and C.J. Knowles won the Sir Ernest Fiske prize, one of two awards for the most outstanding communications engineering students, for the academic years 1962, 1963 and 1964 respectively.

During February 1971, the business course was undertaken at 7 Stores Depot, Toowoomba, where Diploma Cadet Squadron Detachment 'A' was established, and, later, the Engineer Cadet Squadron Detachment 'A' was established at Pearce, Western Australia.

In July 1971, the cadet accommodation at Frognall was completed, enabling individual cadets to have single rooms. Five years later, on 1 December 1976, the Diploma Cadet Squadron assumed the responsibility of Frognall from Melbourne Telecommunications Unit, which was disbanded. Also during December, the unit was re-named Engineer Cadet Squadron.

The last record of this Squadron was the March 1986 Commanding Officer's report.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 October 1962	—Squadron Leader E.R. Anscombe
11 December 1962	—Squadron Leader S.H. Jenkins
21 December 1964	—Wing Commander N.R. Carr
8 December 1967	—Wing Commander A.F. Stewart
9 January 1970	—Wing Commander R.C. Rowell
27 January 1972	—Wing Commander B.F. Pollett
9 January 1974	—Wing Commander F.J. Wrigley
15 December 1975	—Wing Commander G.B. Rickert
19 December 1977	—Wing Commander K.R. Wilkins
14 July 1980	—Wing Commander W.N. Hall
20 December 1982	—Wing Commander G.N. Chandler

EQUIPMENT TRAINING SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 30 November 1942 —formed at Laverton, Vic.
29 April 1944 —moved to Ascot Vale and became a section
of 1 Engineering School

NARRATIVE

The Equipment Training School, formerly a section of 1 Aircraft Depot, was established at Laverton, Victoria, on 30 November 1942 'to conduct training for trainee officers and selected airmen and airwomen in equipment and stores procedures, equipment administration, stores accounting etc'. The first Commanding Officer, Flight Lieutenant K.M. Horler, was posted from 1 Aircraft Depot on the same day.

When created, the School took up residence in Block 31 at Laverton, and had 223 trainees on strength. 260 trainees graduated during December 1942, bringing the total number of graduates from the School and its precursor to 559.

During the period January 1943 to April 1944, the School had, on average, 100 students under training and graduated 106 trainees each month. On 29 April 1944, the School moved to Ascot Vale, where it ceased to function as a separate unit, becoming a section of 1 Engineering School. In the meantime, a total of 2067 personnel had graduated from the Equipment Training School.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- 30 November 1942 —Flight Lieutenant K.M. Horler
17 February 1944 —Squadron Leader L.J. Dunwoodie

GENERAL RECONNAISSANCE SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

29 April 1940	—formed at Point Cook, Vic.
1 July 1940	—moved to Laverton, Vic.
21 May 1942	—completed move to Cressy, Vic.
22 April 1943	—commenced move to Bairnsdale, Vic.
31 January 1946	—re-named School of Air Navigation at East Sale, Vic.

NARRATIVE

General Reconnaissance School was formed at Point Cook on 29 April 1940, and moved to the RAAF base at Laverton on 1 July. The unit was to train pilots in general reconnaissance duties and officers in specialist navigation duties; at the time the unit was raised, there were four navigation instructors courses being run.

During September 1940, Anson aircraft from the School escorted Tiger Moth aircraft across Bass Strait to Western Junction, Launceston, Tasmania. After the sinking of the *SS Cambridge* on 8 November, aircraft searched for mines in the vicinity of Cape Otway and Wilson's Promontory. Next month, the School combined exercises with operations under the control of Area Combined Headquarters in Melbourne, as well as undertaking many photographic missions to check the camouflage of facilities.

During December, aircraft from the General Reconnaissance School flew anti-submarine and shipping searches.

In January 1941, the School was divided into an Instructional Squadron and a Flying Squadron, each of four flights, before commencing a move to Cressy on 20 April 1942. General Reconnaissance School aircraft flew from Cressy until 22 April 1943, when the unit made its final move to Bairnsdale, Victoria. At the end of October 1945, 2753 students had graduated from the School.

On 5 January 1946 notification was received that the School would move to Sale, and be re-named the School of Air Navigation.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

29 April 1940	—Flight Lieutenant R.H. Cox
20 May 1940	—Flight Lieutenant A.D. Charlton
7 April 1941	—Squadron Leader D.W. Kingwell
12 November 1941	—Squadron Leader J.W. McGilvray
13 January 1942	—Squadron Leader J.D. Nicol
20 April 1942	—Wing Commander D.E.G. Walker
24 March 1943	—Wing Commander D.W. Kingwell
17 March 1944	—Wing Commander R.F. Green
2 October 1944	—Wing Commander A.S. Hayes
20 September 1945	—Squadron Leader D.C. Beaton

HEAVY BOMBER CREW CONVERSION UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| February 1946 | —formed and arrived at RAAF East Sale,
Vic. |
| 27 August 1947 | —Unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

The new year of 1946 ushered in a new Commanding Officer and two infant units to RAAF Station East Sale. In February, a nucleus party of the disestablished Air Gunnery School arrived from RAAF Station West Sale to found the Air Armament School and the incoming Commanding Officer of East Sale, Group Captain Deryck Kingwell, welcomed that detachment and a vanguard contingent of the Crew Conversion Unit (Heavy Bomber).

The Crew Conversion Unit had emerged from the remnants of 7 Operational Training Unit and cleared out of RAAF Station Tocumwal to instruct heavy bomber crews at East Sale. This development was part of a RAAF-wide reformation of training for the post-war Air Force. The waning requirement for training had prompted an integration of existing training schools and their subsequent merger into a minimum number of training units.

On 15 February, a Liberator landed at East Sale from Tocumwal conveying some of the Unit's personnel and they immediately began to prepare facilities for the maintenance wing and offices for the headquarters section. The Commanding Officer of the Crew Conversion Unit, Wing Commander William Brill, came to East Sale three days later to inspect the complex, and near the end of February several aircraft ferried the remaining Unit personnel and stores to East Gippsland.

The urgency with which the Unit embarked to East Sale was perhaps unnecessary, as the staff waited until October to collect a Lincoln from 1 Aircraft Depot, RAAF Laverton. The acquisition of Lincoln A73-5 was also no insurance that the Unit would increase its workload as there were insufficient maintenance personnel to service the aeroplane. Because of this problem, Wing Commander Brill sent a small ground crew to

Tocumwal to arrange a maintenance service for the second Lincoln assigned to the Unit.

In December, Air Armament School requested 25 Liberator flying hours for dual circuits and landings toward fighter affiliation periods on its pilot gunnery instructors course and the task was given to the Crew Conversion Unit. The Unit also flew regular bushfire patrols over East Gippsland during summer as 1 Operational Training Unit had discontinued these sorties upon its disbandment. To support the Victorian Forestry Commission, a Lincoln from the Unit flew nine bushfire patrols and reported 44 fires during February 1947.

The instructional staff were also engaged in understanding and installing the Lincoln training equipment. Flight Lieutenant Rex Whitburn started a Lincoln conversion, with Group Captain Kingwell later joining him on course. Both pilots completed their night conversion in the left and right hand seats by April.

On 5 May, two crews arrived from 82 Wing, RAAF Amberley, on attachment for a Lincoln conversion course, but this training commitment only partly compensated for the indecisive administrative direction given to the Crew Conversion Unit. There were no airmen posted to the Unit, and this forced the chief ground instructor to abandon his primary duties temporarily and attempt to install some of the training apparatus. In the Unit History Record, Wing Commander Brill wrote of the Unit's predicament: 'Although this unit is to be the Heavy Bomber Training Unit of the RAAF, we still lack a policy on which type of aircraft will be used and moreover, what types of equipment will be installed in the aircraft to be used. This makes the setting up of any training aids doubly difficult.'

The Unit's future became clear in July when the RAAF authorised its disbandment by the first day of August. Before then, No. 3 Lincoln Conversion Course graduated at the end of July and staff were gradually posted out of the Unit. On 27 August 1947, the Crew Conversion Unit (Heavy Bomber) ceased to exist in the post-war Air Force, formally heralding the end of the era of big bombers.

COMMANDING OFFICER

February 1946

—Wing Commander W.L. Brill

HEAVY BOMBER REPLACEMENT TRAINING UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1 September 1944 | —formed at Strathpine, Qld |
| 16 September 1944 | —advance party moved to Nadzab, New Guinea |
| 5 January 1945 | —moved to Darwin, NT |
| 21 February 1945 | —Unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

The Heavy Bomber Replacement Training Unit was formed on 1 September 1944, at Strathpine, Queensland, under the temporary command of Pilot Officer D.R. Cossins, the Unit adjutant, who arrived on 9 September. The role of the Unit was to liaise with the Far Eastern Air Force Combat Replacement Training Centre at Nadzab, New Guinea. This entailed the training of up to 22 B-24 crews per month on B-24 Liberators by instructors provided by the United States Army Air Force.

An advance party consisting of three cooks, four cook's assistants, and two stewards, left Strathpine for Nadzab on 16 September in order to establish the domestic arrangements of the camp site for the arrival of the remainder of the Unit.

Squadron Leader F.R. Mason, the station administrative officer, arrived in Strathpine on 17 September, while the Unit Commanding Officer, Wing Commander J.E. Handbury, arrived on the 18th, before heading to Nadzab on 20 September to make final arrangements and to familiarise himself with the layout of the camp site.

From 29 September, airmen from the Unit were sent to Sandgate to be tropically kitted out, while the whole Unit was expected to be in Nadzab by the end of October, ready for the intake of No. 8 B-24 Course on 7 November. The Unit strength at this time was 69 personnel.

Heavy Bomber Replacement Training Unit was responsible for the training, on heavy bombers, of pilots (with and without previous experience on the B-24), navigators, bombardiers, flight engineers, gunners and wireless operators.

Pilots with previous experience on the B-24 received approximately 37 hours training, consisting of ferry missions, formation practice, gunnery, instrument flying, and bombing missions. The primary task for these pilots was to gain experience in the varied operating conditions, and to consolidate their ability to co-operate effectively as a crew.

Approximately 70 hours of flying time were allocated to captains who had had no previous experience on the B-24. They were converted to the aircraft, and trained in the various facets required for operational effectiveness. Second pilots unfortunately did not receive any training in take-offs and landings at Nadzab, and hence it was the relevant captain's responsibility to ensure their second pilots were trained in these important aspects.

Navigators received substantial amounts of excellent ground training whilst at Nadzab. They also gained valuable practical experience on numerous ferry and bombing missions throughout their conversion time on the B-24.

Bombardiers once again received excellent ground training in their relevant field, and they also gained valuable practical experience using practice bombs on the local range. Most bombardiers dropped an average of 35 1000-lb bombs on active targets throughout their training, with quite satisfactory results. As the training at Nadzab developed, it was hoped to provide greater amounts of practice bombing before the bombardiers were required to perform in an operational role.

The role of flight engineer on the B-24 was fulfilled by members recruited from the ranks as fitter IIs—most of whom had considerable past experience—and experienced no great problems in acquiring the knowledge necessary for their role in the crew.

It was evident that the gunners put through the Unit were perhaps the most inexperienced crew members needing to be converted to the B-24. In the early few months of operation, the ground training installations for gunnery practice—such as turrets and the practice firing range—were not complete, and hence such practice was inadequate. No air-to-air gunnery was completed during the course, yet strafing was practised on the completion of bombing missions, along with some air-to-sea gunnery, and some fighter affiliation.

The wireless operators who were to serve on the B-24 experienced no difficulty in converting to the aircraft, as most had considerable previous experience on general wireless operation.

Aside from their ground-based and air-orientated exercises, all crew were given the chance to hone their skills on actual bombing missions, which proved to be the most effective form of crew training.

Formation flying was also practised on these sorties, which usually involved dropping 1000-lb bombs on local targets, usually gun emplacements. It was envisaged that as the training system developed, missions to targets further afield such as Rabaul would be incorporated into the training program. A typical number of active sorties flown by a course was 45.

At the time of its official disbandment in February 1945, the Heavy Bomber Replacement Training Unit had converted a large number of previously inexperienced aircrews to the B-24. These crews were to go on and operate most successfully in the South Pacific arena in the bombing and harassment of vital enemy targets.

The Unit moved to Darwin on 5 January 1945, and was disbanded on 21 February.

COMMANDING OFFICER

18 September 1944 —Wing Commander J.E. Handbury

INSTRUCTIONAL SQUADRON

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 March 1956 | —formed at Wagga Wagga, NSW |
| November 1960 | —last entry in Unit History Record |

NARRATIVE

Instructional Squadron was formed as an independent unit within the RAAF School of Technical Training, Wagga Wagga. The main function of the Squadron was to provide instructional staff and all accommodation and training facilities necessary for the technical and educational training of engineering apprentices, adult and National Service trainees. Other functions of the Squadron included the provision of servicing requirements in respect of all visiting RAAF aircraft.

University squadrons came to Instructional Squadron from all over Australia for their two-week annual camp. There were also visits by vocational guidance officers from various parts of the State, who were conducted through all trade training sections. This was to enable them to go back and speak to school leavers about what opportunities were provided as far as trades in the RAAF were concerned.

In August 1956, there was a visit by His Excellency the then Governor, Sir John Northcott. In November 1956 Warrant Officer J.A. Negus from catering was attached to Headquarters Training Command for duties at the Olympic Village in Melbourne for the 1956 Olympic Games. In 1957 talks were held on technical training for National Service trainees. Trainee adult courses were commenced late in 1956. Annual visits were made by cadets from the RAAF College before their graduation. On 24 October 1960 a visit was made by a two-man establishment committee from the then Department of Air, who spent several days on the unit in order to examine establishment strength factors in relation to proposed staff re-organisation within the Squadron.

The last Unit History Record entry was made in November 1960.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 March 1956 | —Wing Commander W. Lewis |
| 13 January 1958 | —Wing Commander W.V. Greenham |

LINCOLN CONVERSION FLIGHT

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| 11 July 1955 | —formed at Amberley, Qld |
| 26 March 1956 | —Flight disbanded |

NARRATIVE

The unit was formed at RAAF Amberley on 11 July 1955 as part of No. 82 (B) Wing. The Wing's squadrons had converted over from Lincolns to Canberras in 1954–55 and a new squadron formed from the remaining Lincolns to become the Lincoln Conversion Flight, and to be the training unit for the Lincoln's operational role. The Flight started training immediately, and in its first week of operation flew almost 50 hours including formation checks, Army co-operation flights, navigation exercises, ferry flights, gunnery and bombing exercises, and fighter familiarisation with 23 Squadron Mustangs.

August 1955 found the unit involved in a variety of tasks, including ferry flights for 3 Aircraft Depot to Tengah, a photographic reconnaissance exercise to Lake Eyre and demonstration flights for an 'at home' visitors week. Search and rescue training was put into use on 13 August in the Nambour area, when the MV *Maronia* was found during the exercise. The Brisbane Show was provided with demonstration flights over the showground on 14, 16 and 17 August.

In September 1955 the Flight carried out various tasks including supply drops to land survival parties at Canungra, low level navigation exercises, Army searchlight co-operation flights, bombing exercises and fighter affiliation tasks as well as Air Force Week demonstrations.

The unit had a quieter time in October 1955 with tasks mainly being bombing exercises at Evans Head and ferry trips to Laverton and Williamtown. On 14 and 25 October, the unit provided transport for National Service trainees to 6 (B) Squadron on detachment at Darwin, as part of Operation 'Comax Eagle'.

Activities were similar in November, including another ferry flight to Darwin. Wing Commander K.V. Robertson, AFC arrived to undergo operational training prior to taking command of 1 (B) Squadron at Tengah. The Flight came to the rescue of a Canberra that had landed at

Alice Springs with its wheels up, when Sergeant Spring flew a servicing crew to the scene on 30 November.

The Flight did little flying in December, with stores drops at Canungra and Wiangaree State Forest occupying most of its time. 1956 found the training program bearing fruit. Warrant Officer Middlemiss was appointed to a short-term commission. He departed from Eagle Farm aerodrome in a chartered Skymaster on 15 January, in the company of Wing Commander Robertson and both of their crews, on posting to Malaya. Sergeant Day and his crew had preceded them in a 3 Aircraft Depot aircraft on 5 January.

In January the Flight was involved in a regular event for Amberley-based units—flood relief work. Two aircraft carried out flood reconnaissance and supply dropping tasks around Goondiwindi on 22 and 24 January.

Two major events occupied the Flight during February 1956. The first was a continuance of the flood relief work, with drops being carried out on 11 and 20–22 February. The second was extensive search and rescue tasks in support of the search for a civil Wackett Trainer lost in the Lismore area on 4 February. The wreckage was located on 16 February and Flight Lieutenant Martin flew over the scene to guide ground parties in and to take photographs.

The Unit was disbanded on 26 March 1956.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

11 July 1955

—Squadron Leader L. Britt

August 1955

—Squadron Leader J.S. Wilson

MEDICAL TRAINING UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

15 July 1943	—formed at Laverton, Vic.
12 August 1943	—moved to 'Larundel', Preston, Vic.
2 November 1945	—final passing-out parade held
18 January 1946	—Unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

The Medical Training Unit was formed at Laverton, Victoria, on 15 July 1943, with 12 medical officers for instruction and 96 airmen/airwomen under training. The Unit moved to 'Larundel' at Preston on 12 August 1943.

Courses undertaken at the Unit included those for the instruction of hygiene inspectors, medical officers, medical orderlies, nursing orderlies, RAAF nurses and clerk medical assistants.

On 26 June 1945, newsreel films were taken of No. 4 MAETU course under instruction in dinghy drill at the city baths. Photographs of the Unit were also taken on 8 October for inclusion in the official war history records.

Courses continued, with lectures being given on the preparation and cooking of dehydrated foods, tropical medicine and hygiene, aviation medicine, industrial hygiene and chemical warfare. News of the Japanese surrender on 15 August caused all lectures for the day to be cancelled.

The final passing-out parade was held at the Unit on 2 November 1945, before the commencement of disbandment on 15 November. The Honourable Mr W. Barry, State Minister for Health and Housing, whilst on a visit to the Unit, expressed his satisfaction with the excellent condition of the buildings after three years occupation by the RAAF and WAAAF.

Medical Training Unit was disbanded on 18 January 1946.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

15 July 1943	—Squadron Leader W.F.H. Crick
21 October 1943	—Squadron Leader J.K. Gabriel
1 March 1945	—Squadron Leader H.R. Worth

OFFICERS' TRAINING SCHOOL

Accept Responsibility



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 12 April 1950 | —formed at Rathmines, NSW |
| 6 January 1961 | —re-located to Point Cook, Vic. |
| November 1994 | —based within RAAF College, Point Cook, Vic. |

NARRATIVE

The Officers' Training School (OTS) was formed at RAAF Station Rathmines, New South Wales, on 12 April 1950 under the command of Squadron Leader P.J. McMahon, with the first course commencing on 26 April 1950. The School consisted of three sections: Base Flight, No. 2 National Service Training Wing and Officers' Training Flight.

On 15 May 1956 OTS was re-organised such that each flight, though retaining its previous function, became a separate unit. Base Flight became Base Squadron Rathmines, No. 2 National Service Training Wing became No. 2 National Training Unit and Officers' Training Flight became Officers' Training Squadron.

The newly created unit was to conduct: the initial administrative training of direct entrance officers and officers commissioned from the ranks; the advanced administrative training of permanent Air Force officers; and the administrative training of senior non-commissioned officers.

With some modification, the same definition of function is relevant today.

With the closure of RAAF Station Rathmines at the end of 1960, dictated primarily by economic measures, the unit was re-located to

Point Cook, by which stage over 1000 officers then serving had been trained.

The first officers' initial training course to be conducted at Point Cook, No. 312, commenced on 27 February 1961.

The officers' initial training course was replaced by the junior officers' initial course and the junior officer executive course in early 1981. It is estimated that, to date, 5000 officers have successfully completed these courses.

In addition to the induction of newly commissioned officers, the School has conducted, and continues to conduct, warrant officer (disciplinary) courses, commanding officer courses, commanding officer law courses, active reserve junior officer initial courses and specialist administration courses.

OTS presently operates as a school within the RAAF College, which came into existence on 1 January 1986; the head of OTS was re-titled 'Director, Officers' Training School'.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

12 April 1950	—Squadron Leader P.J. McMahon
14 January 1951	—Wing Commander H.A. Conaghan
December 1953	—Wing Commander W.L. Brill
24 May 1956	—Squadron Leader F.K. Carrick
23 January 1959	—Squadron Leader S.W. Trewin
11 January 1961	—Wing Commander D.E. Mosely
18 December 1963	—Wing Commander W.J. Guthrie
21 March 1967	—Wing Commander T.S. Fairbairn
8 April 1969	—Wing Commander K.A. Martin
13 August 1969	—Wing Commander J.R. MacNeil
6 December 1971	—Wing Commander I.R. Gordon
23 July 1973	—Wing Commander N.F. Ashworth
12 January 1976	—Wing Commander A.J. Pappin
16 January 1978	—Wing Commander T.A. Morton
30 July 1978	—Wing Commander F.W. Heuke
4 December 1979	—Wing Commander F.A. Thoms
December 1982	—Wing Commander M.J. Rawlinson
2 January 1985	—Wing Commander D.J. Schubert
15 January 1991	—Group Captain P.W. Growder
13 January 1992	—Group Captain A.W. Gilbert

PARATROOP TRAINING UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- 3 November 1942 —formed at Laverton, Vic.
- 16 November 1942 —moved to Tocumwal, NSW
- 12 April 1943 —moved to Richmond, NSW
- 21 December 1945 —Unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

The Paratroop Training Unit was formed at Laverton, Victoria, on 3 November 1942, and moved to Tocumwal by train on 16 November 1942.

In late November it received 50 statichutes and in mid-December Paratroop Course No. 1 commenced. Dummy dropping and cine-photography from an accompanying Wirraway commenced later that month.

In February 1943 the first parachute jumps were conducted using single (non-training) type parachutes.

April 1943 saw the Unit's move to Richmond where it remained until its disbandment in December 1945.

In May 1943 permission was granted by the Metropolitan Drainage and Sewerage Board to use Cataract Reservoir for day and night parachute drops. In the same month consideration was given to the construction of a parachute drying room, as three fatal accidents had recently occurred in the vicinity of Cairns because some American parachutes had failed to open due to dampness. A drying silo was completed in early 1944.

In August that year 1st Parachute Battalion and Mobile Parachute Training Unit were formed and were attached to Paratroop Training Unit for training and operational exercises. In November 1943, No. 1 Jumpmaster's Course commenced.

The Unit was also entrusted with training Army personnel. Training exercises included jungle jumps undertaken at the Jungle Warfare School at Canungra; dummy drops; day, night and water drops; supply dropping; reconnaissance work and experimental work. During the three years the Unit operated, 19 782 live drops, 3130 dummy drops and 3622 supply drops were made. Only one statichute failed to open and the injury rate for live drops was 0.83 per cent.

The Unit was not without casualties. In February 1943, Private E.F. Johnson's parachute fouled the tailplane of the aircraft and jammed. The parachutist was released over water at Mulwala Dam and drowned. Later that year Lance Corporal A.C. Aslan drowned in the Nepean River during exercises, Captain C.W. Dossetor lost his life in Cataract Reservoir after releasing himself from the statichute and Private F.J. McVeigh, 1st Australian Parachute Battalion, was killed at Wallacia during an operational training exercise, when his statichute failed. In March 1945, a further accidental drowning occurred when Private C.D. Brown alighted in a river during a parachute drop.

Following the cessation of hostilities in August 1945, paratroop training activities came to an end and Army personnel undergoing training returned to their units. The Unit ceased to function with a view to disbandment on 15 October 1945, and completely disbanded on 21 December 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

3 November 1942	—Wing Commander C.P. Glasscock
6 April 1943	—Wing Commander W.H. Wetton
1 April 1944	—Wing Commander A.C. Rawlinson
23 April 1945	—Wing Commander C.J. Sharpe
13 August 1945	—Squadron Leader M. Charlton

RAAF ELEMENT AUSTRALIAN JOINT ANTI-SUBMARINE SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 1 September 1952 —RAAF element established Nowra, NSW
12 January 1986 —School disbanded and re-named
Australian Joint Maritime Warfare Centre
(AJMWC)
November 1994 —based at Nowra, NSW

NARRATIVE

The RAAF became involved in the Australian Joint Anti-Submarine School in September 1952. The School was established to give training in maritime warfare and the RAAF's involvement was training in submarine tracking from the air, at that stage using Lincoln and Neptune aircraft, and the firing of airborne torpedoes. The first Director or Commanding Officer was Wing Commander R.N. Daikin. There was an establishment of three officers and 10 airmen.

Participants were sent from RAAF Staff College as well as nominated personnel and included Reserve as well as regular officers. The School ran for 34 years and saw many changes in marine warfare. It was disbanded on 12 January 1986 and was formally re-named on 13 January 1986 the Australian Joint Maritime Warfare Centre.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- 1 September 1952 —Wing Commander R.N. Daikin
17 May 1954 —Wing Commander D. Vernon
7 March 1956 —Wing Commander J. Dowling
11 December 1956 —Wing Commander W.H. Talberg
27 January 1959 —Wing Commander P.J. McMahon
19 January 1962 —Wing Commander C.E. Wakeham
11 January 1965 —Wing Commander T.L. Bourke
29 May 1967 —Wing Commander P.R. Martin
8 May 1970 —Wing Commander C.J. Prior

13 December 1971	—Wing Commander J.R. Young
18 February 1974	—Wing Commander D.L. Dunstan
13 January 1975	—Wing Commander W.R. Holland
11 January 1977	—Wing Commander G.L. Hartig
17 December 1979	—Wing Commander P.R.F. Garrett
5 December 1982	—Wing Commander R.J. Laing
12 June 1985	—Wing Commander K.B. Merrigan

RAAF RADIO APPRENTICE SCHOOL

Prepare to Serve



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 8 December 1947 | —raised at Frognall, Canterbury, Vic. |
| 12 December 1960 | —headquarters moved to Laverton, Vic. |
| 27 February 1961 | —incorporated into School of Radio |

NARRATIVE

The RAAF Radio Apprentice School was formed as a lodger unit at Melbourne Telecommunications Unit, Frognall, Canterbury, Victoria, on 8 December 1947, with a strength of one officer, Flight Lieutenant W.D. Sullivan, the Commanding Officer.

During January the staff of the School were posted in, and the first radio apprentice course commenced on 1 February 1948. The apprentices trained, in part, at the Melbourne Technical College, and there were problems with training rates, which were found to be too fast for the boys to assimilate information. Later, the apprentices trained at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, where they trained toward their fellowship and associate diploma courses.

Given the age of the boys, non-school activity emphasised character building and team sports. Apprentices participated in rugby union, cricket, Australian football and hockey competitions, as well as gaining life saving certificates up to bronze medallion standard. To this was added bushwalking, and the responsibility of regular visits to the Hampton Orthopaedic Childrens' Hospital, where the apprentices handed out sweets and conversation, showed films, and even impersonated Santa

Claus. To further add to the interests of the apprentices, Radio Station VK3APP was run by the student body.

There was also a problem of childhood disease. The possibility of a measles epidemic caused the medical officer to close the camp from 17 September until 3 October 1956.

On 12 December 1960, the unit headquarters commenced operations from RAAF Laverton, with those remaining at Froggnall being known as Detachment 'A'. The last entry in the Unit History Record is dated 27 February 1961, after which apprentice training was included as a function of the RAAF School of Radio at Laverton.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

18 December 1947	—Flight Lieutenant W.D. Sullivan
28 September 1950	—Flight Lieutenant J.N. Marr
23 July 1954	—Squadron Leader R.A. Moore
22 May 1956	—Squadron Leader S.A. Ritchie
25 February 1960	—Squadron Leader R.J. Birks

RAAF SCHOOL OF CLERICAL AND SUPPLY TRAINING

Training For Support



CHRONOLOGY

- 1 June 1985 —formed at RAAF Base Wagga Wagga, NSW
- December 1992 —absorbed responsibility for Supply Training School
- November 1994 —based at Wagga Wagga, NSW

NARRATIVE

The Clerical and Supply Trades Squadron of the RAAF School of Technical Training was formed as the RAAF School of Clerical and Supply Training on 1 June 1985. The School was made up of three flights: catering, clerical and supply training. In December 1992, the School absorbed the responsibility of the Supply Training School of 2 Stores Depot due to the planned closure of that unit in June 1993. To reflect this responsibility, the organisation was varied to: supply, catering, and administrative and clerical training flights, and an educational support services section.

Courses offered at the School, former and current, include training for physical training instructors, motor transport fitters, basic stewards, basic cooks, defence force recruiters, catering officers, dental administrators, driver firemen, driver motor transport operators, supply clerks, dental assistants, administrative clerks, mess supervisors and ground safety officers.

A feature of training is the exchange of personnel with overseas services. On 27 June 1985, Sergeant N. Thompson undertook a three-month exchange at RNZAF Auckland, and his place was taken by Sergeant A.R. Carter of the RNZAF. During August 1985, Sergeants S.G. Doyle and S. Svetec travelled to the United Kingdom for Exercise 'Air Wave 85', and were replaced by Sergeants M.L. Lloyd and D.L. Stephens of the Royal Air Force. The latter returned to England on 5 December 1985. This exercise was repeated in July 1989.

In June 1993, a supply management familiarisation course was run for members of the Royal Malaysian Air Force, and members of the Papua New Guinea Defence Force.

The School has participated in district activities, such as the Albury trade fair. It has also been involved in service commemoration; for example, on 28 August 1986, Warrant Officer R. Dick and Flight Sergeant N. Cuthbert drove to Richmond to deliver an anniversary cake to commemorate the 20th year of 37 Squadron having operated the C-130E aircraft.

Between 16 and 20 October 1988, the unit provided breakfast for 330 participants in the Commonwealth Bank cycle classic, and this was repeated in 1989.

From 14 to 21 October 1991, members of the unit participated in a charity bike ride from Edinburgh to Wagga Wagga, in aid of Camp Quality. This ride was repeated on 24 August 1992, when the ride was from Townsville to Wagga Wagga. The latter ride raised \$10 000 for Camp Quality.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 June 1985	—Squadron Leader R.L. Bunney
December 1986	—Squadron Leader P.V. Brereton
June 1987	—Squadron Leader D.J. Andrewartha
4 January 1990	—Squadron Leader C.F. Styles
18 December 1992	—Wing Commander M.C. Spittle

RAAF SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES

Festina Lente (Make Haste Slowly)



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 31 July 1944 | —first Japanese language course commenced in Sydney, NSW |
| 4 December 1944 | —became joint service |
| 2 August 1945 | —operations moved to Ascot Vale, Vic. |
| 28 February 1946 | —all operations moved to Point Cook, Vic. |
| 28 October 1948 | —closed temporarily |
| 15 May 1950 | —re-established at Point Cook |
| 1 February 1993 | —re-named Australian Defence Force School of Languages |
| November 1994 | —based at Point Cook, Vic. |

NARRATIVE

In March 1944 RAAF Command, Brisbane, proposed the establishment of a language school to meet an anticipated need for 400 linguists over the following three years, in the South-West Pacific area of operation.

RAAF Headquarters in Melbourne decided that the School of Languages would be set up, but in Sydney. It would be under the control of RAAF 3 School of Technical Training, and its purpose would be the provision of training in the Japanese written and spoken language. Courses would be of around 44 weeks with daytime study at Sydney University. Evening study, of a more practical and military nature, was to be undertaken at the Coogee Bay Hotel where students were to live. The first course, of 32 airmen, commenced studying on Monday 31 July 1944.

Following discussions between senior levels in the Departments of Army and Air, it was agreed that the School would become a joint service operation, but remain under the control of the RAAF. The original intention was to alternate between courses for RAAF and Army students. Part of the agreement was that four Army instructors would be provided. On Monday 4 December 1944, the second course commenced with 49 Army personnel.

The School was to operate at its Sydney location for just a year, with an ever-growing student population. Up to the time the School moved to Melbourne on 2 August 1945, six courses had commenced and only one had concluded. When the move was made it involved over 100 students, representing five courses, each at a different level of advancement.

The School settled into the Ascot Vale Showgrounds/Flemington Racecourse area under control of the RAAF 1 Engineering School, but spent only a short time there, from August 1945 to February 1946. On 28 February there came the final move to RAAF Base Point Cook, Victoria, which was to be the permanent home of the RAAF School of Languages.

The last of the courses commenced in Sydney were completed on 3 May 1946 and the School concentrated its efforts on developing linguists for service with the British Commonwealth Occupation Force in Japan. These courses were conducted over a shorter duration in Australia, with advanced training carried out at a special school in Kure, Japan. In October 1948, it was decided that there was no longer a need to provide linguists for service in Japan. In a little over four years of operation, the School had conducted 11 courses in Japanese, producing almost 200 linguists.

On 28 October 1948, the founding Commanding Officer, and Chief Instructor, now Squadron Leader Waidrowski, terminated this operation and the School went into temporary closure.

The School was reformed on Monday 15 May 1950 under the command of Flight Lieutenant A.J. Garrick and arrangements had been made for the posting of Captain D.J. Neville to the Army component of the School's establishment, to become the first senior instructor in the Russian language.

The Russian course commenced on 30 October 1950 and was followed a little over three months later by the Chinese course, on 6 February 1951. Both had a mix of RAAF and Army students. The 1950s saw the introduction of Indonesian, followed by Vietnamese, French, Japanese

and Thai in the 1960s, Burmese, Arabic and German in the 1980s and Khmer in 1990.

The number of linguists required has dictated the number of courses to be conducted, and some have been offered infrequently. Between 1980 and 1991, two courses were run for Arabic and four each for Burmese and German, producing a total of 14 linguists. At the other end of the scale, there can be demands which are both high and constant. Chinese has been conducted every year since 1951 with 41 courses producing 318 linguists. Indonesian, since 1957, has had 37 courses for 358 linguists.

In January 1979, the Army Language Training Wing was transferred to Point Cook from Kapooka in New South Wales and amalgamated with the School of Languages. This had the effect of adding classes in Pidgin (neo-Melanesian) and a colloquial Indonesian-Malay.

The School of Languages has developed numerous techniques in language training. Perhaps the most significant is the instantaneous response language laboratory, first installed at Point Cook in 1963.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1944	—Flying Officer M. Waidrowski
1950	—Flight Lieutenant A.J. Garrick
8 January 1968	—Wing Commander G.S. Zantuck
19 October 1970	—Wing Commander S.B. Lang
January 1979	—Wing Commander B. O'Connell
11 January 1983	—Wing Commander J.S. Smith
10 January 1984	—Wing Commander P.R.M. Rasmussen
3 July 1987	—Lieutenant Colonel A. Jordan
1988	—Wing Commander B.R. Stringer
1990	—Wing Commander D.F. McArdle
28 January 1993	—Wing Commander G.P. Ison

RAAF SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING TECHNOLOGY

Through Training to Success



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 1 June 1985 | —formed at Wagga Wagga, NSW |
| December 1990 | —Supervision and Management Flight
disbanded |
| November 1994 | —based at Wagga Wagga, NSW |

NARRATIVE

The RAAF School of Management and Training Technology existed previously at RAAF Wagga Wagga as the Management and Instructional Methods Squadron (MIMS) of the RAAF School of Technical Training (RAAFSTT), becoming a separate unit and school on 1 June 1985. Royal assent for the unit badge was received in February 1990.

The School was established with two flights: Technical Training Flight (TTF) and Supervision and Management Training Flight (SMTF).

SMTF, which conducted the sergeant supervision and management (SGTSUPMAN) course, moved to facilities at Charles Sturt University because of a lack of facilities on the base, while TTF continued providing post-graduate courses in instructional technique, training design, training administration and training management at Wagga Wagga base.

A review of non-commissioned officer (NCO) training in the RAAF led to the disbanding of SMTF in December 1990, and the creation of the Airmen Education and Training Scheme/Training Development and Implementation Team (AETS/TDIT) as part of Headquarters Training

Command—Support Unit. The team developed corporal, sergeant and warrant officer promotion courses.

In January 1992 the AETS/TDIT was disbanded and its members were posted into the newly formed Airman Command and Studies Flight (ACSF) of RAAF SMTT. At the same time the School moved into a new building at Wagga Wagga and is now composed of two flights: Training Technology Flight (TTECH) and ACSF.

TTECH is still involved with post-graduate 'train the trainer' courses for RAAF personnel and members of the Army and Navy and defence personnel from a number of countries through the Defence Co-operation Program.

The focus on NCO training at RAAF SMTT is likely to continue with the possible development of a 'RAAF NCO Academy' being the ultimate outcome. As the Services work closer together on training matters, it is also possible that the School will take on greater responsibilities for training trainers for the three Services with a long-term goal of becoming the Australian Defence Force's centre of excellence for ground training.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

25 June 1985	—Squadron Leader M.D. Leahy
2 February 1987	—Squadron Leader P.J. O'Brien
5 September 1988	—Squadron Leader A.J.E. House
13 November 1990	—Squadron Leader G.C. Wood
21 January 1991	—Lieutenant J. Zeiher, RAN
11 April 1991	—Wing Commander G.A. Tooth
13 January 1992	—Wing Commander K.C. Given

RAAF SECURITY AND FIRE SCHOOL

CHRONOLOGY

- 23 November 1982 —formed as Defence and Security Training School at Amberley, Qld
- 1 January 1987 —re-named RAAF Security and Fire School
- November 1994 —based at Amberley, Qld

NARRATIVE

The Defence and Security Training School was formed at RAAF Amberley on 23 November 1982, integrating ground defence, and fire and security guard training. The School consisted of three flights—administrative, ground defence training and police training. Security guard training was undertaken at 7 Stores Depot, Toowoomba (Detachment 'A') and fire fighting at Point Cook, Victoria (Detachment 'B'). These detachments remained in place until 1 January 1987, when fire and police dog training was transferred to Amberley from Point Cook and Toowoomba, respectively.

Courses undertaken at the School included security guard basic, emergency control officer, air defence guard basic, police basic, fire protection supervisor, police dog basic, fire fighting basic, fire truck operation, counter intelligence, police investigation, air defence guard section leader and dog drug detection.

On 1 January 1987, the School was re-named the RAAF Security and Fire School.

A ground defence officer basic training course was conducted under the auspices of the Defence Co-operation Program for two Thai and four Malaysian students, and this course was completed on 18 June 1987.

During July 1987, the Mount Stuart complex was used by ground defence officers basic course members for live firing practice, and to enable tactical exercises related to the defence of remote airfields to be undertaken. Members of the unit have been active in the annual 'Pitch Black' exercises and the Commanding Officer, Squadron Leader Rienks, attended Exercise 'High Sierra', which was conducted by American forces in the United States, from 26 March 1990.

On 14 January 1990, naval personnel were posted to the School as part of the introduction of tri-service fire fighting training. The tri-service orientation of the School is epitomised by the strength of the School, which, in September 1993, comprised six officers, four warrant officers, 46 airmen and one civilian member of the Air Force and nine Navy/Army personnel on staff.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

23 November 1982	—Squadron Leader G.A. Broadhead
18 December 1984	—Squadron Leader C.A. Nelson
February 1989	—Squadron Leader P.W. Rienks
18 December 1990	—Squadron Leader R.F. Cooper
July 1992	—Squadron Leader D.J. Green

RAAF STAFF COLLEGE

Sapientia Virtute Praevalet (Wisdom Prevails Over Strength)



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 28 September 1943 | —No. 1 War Staff Course commenced at RAAF Staff School, Mount Martha, Vic. |
| 15 February 1949 | —RAAF Staff College established at Albert Park, Melbourne |
| 13 June 1949 | —No. 1 Staff Course commenced, Point Cook |
| 12 December 1960 | —moved to RAAF Fairbairn, ACT |
| November 1994 | —based at Fairbairn, ACT |

NARRATIVE

Before 1939, members of the RAAF received their staff studies training at the RAF Staff College in Great Britain. The rapid expansion of the RAAF during World War II and the need to provide training in the Pacific rather than the European theatre of operations resulted in the establishment of the RAAF Staff School at Mount Martha, Victoria. Eight war staff courses were completed there before the rapid demobilisation following the War resulted in the closure of the school.

On 15 February 1949, the RAAF Staff College (RAAFSC) was formed at Albert Park Barracks in Melbourne. On 1 June 1949, it moved to RAAF Point Cook, where it shared facilities with RAAF College until its own buildings were completed. On 13 June 1949, 14 students arrived at the RAAF Staff College to commence No. 1 Staff Course. The initial course was 22 weeks long and contained lectures, visits, course discussions and assignments on such topics as service writing, industry, overseas military forces and strategy. No. 2 Staff Course began on 9 January 1950; this

course saw the first foreign student, from the RNZAF, take part. The first non-Air Force student, from the Australian Regular Army, attended No. 6 course, and Army officers thereafter became frequent students on the staff course.

On 12 December 1960, RAAF Staff College moved to its permanent home at RAAF Canberra (now Fairbairn). The first course to graduate from the College in Canberra was No. 15 Staff Course. In November 1963, the E.L. Heymanson prize for the best essay of the year was presented for the first time; this prize has continued to be the major award for which RAAFSC students compete.

Originally, the College ran only the staff course, but in 1968 the External Studies School was established within the College to run the officer extension tutorial course, an external studies course which became a prerequisite for attendance at the staff course. Then, in 1980, the Basic Staff School was also established within the College; this ran the basic staff course for officers of flight lieutenant level. In 1987, both of these schools were transferred to the RAAF College at Point Cook.

Command and staff course is a one-year course designed to prepare selected officers for command and staff appointments in the ranks of wing commander and group captain: the course complement is usually 48 officers. In addition to RAAF officers, the course is attended by personnel from many defence forces in South-East Asia, the South-West Pacific, the Middle East, United Kingdom, Canada and the United States of America. Senior officers from the Australian Army, Navy and public service also attend the course.

In 1992 the Chief of the Air Staff became concerned that new commanding officers were not being adequately prepared for their role, particularly as considerable fiscal responsibility was being devolved to them. RAAFSC was tasked with designing and running a RAAF commanding officer's course, and the first of these was run in November 1992.

COMMANDANTS

February 1949	—Air Commodore U.E. Ewart
September 1951	—Air Commodore A. Earle (RAF)
December 1953	—Air Commodore T. Parcelle (RAF)
December 1955	—Air Commodore W. Garing
April 1960	—Group Captain D. Colquhoun

November 1960	—Group Captain R. Dalkin
December 1961	—Group Captain W. Bolitho
December 1964	—Group Captain A. Garrison
January 1967	—Group Captain I. Parker
September 1967	—Group Captain J. Jordan
January 1968	—Group Captain D. Hurditch
May 1968	—Group Captain D. Colquhoun
March 1970	—Group Captain P. Raw
December 1972	—Group Captain H. Pickering
December 1974	—Group Captain J. Gibbons
December 1977	—Group Captain J. Chesterfield
December 1980	—Group Captain R. Bradford
May 1982	—Group Captain R. Tayles
January 1985	—Group Captain D. Bowden
January 1987	—Group Captain N. Montgomery
February 1989	—Group Captain J. Huet
August 1991	—Group Captain B.J. Espeland
January 1994	—Group Captain D.J. Schubert

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE COLLEGE

True



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1 August 1947 | —formed Point Cook, Vic. |
| 1 January 1961 | —RAAF College reconstituted as RAAF Academy |
| 1 January 1986 | —RAAF College reformed Point Cook |
| 20 January 1986 | —official disbandment of the RAAF Academy |
| 1 September 1991 | —major restructuring of RAAF College |
| November 1994 | —based at Point Cook, Vic. |

NARRATIVE

Prior to World War II, the only avenue for a permanent officer commission in the Royal Australian Air Force was through the Royal Australian Naval College (Jervis Bay) or through the Royal Military College (Duntroon). By the late 1920s strong arguments were surfacing for the RAAF to establish a college of its own for the training of RAAF officers. These arguments were temporarily put to rest in 1930, when the Air Board concluded that the Air Force's needs for permanent officers could be met by commissioning graduates from No. 1 Flying Training School, instead of forming an Air Force college.

The issue of a RAAF college was not to surface again until 1945, during post-war planning for the future direction of the Air Force. The Air Force identified a need for Air Force specific trained people and recommended that the training take place from an early age. A proposal

was put forward to meet this need by establishing a RAAF college to foster a 'RAAF Esprit de Corps'. The proposal was supported by the Air Board this time and the two-year planning stage for the formation of the college commenced.

The Royal Australian Air Force College (RAAFCOL) formed as a unit on 1 August 1947, under the temporary command of Wing Commander A.D. Swan. Air Commodore V.E. Hancock took over as RAAF College's first Commandant on 15 September 1947. On 23 February 1948, the members of the first College course (No. 1 Course) marched in. The RAAF College was formally opened by the Chief of Air Staff, Air Vice Marshal G. Jones, on 25 February 1948.

Cadets entering the RAAF College undertook a four-year course that balanced flying training with academic study in the science field. Cadets were exposed to military studies and participated in a number of camps, tours and exercises designed to foster good officer qualities. Sport was greatly encouraged, as were social and cultural activities.

With the rapid development of military aviation in the 1950s and the introduction of guided weapons, senior RAAF officers felt that General Duties (GD) officer training needed to change to enable future officers to comprehend this new generation of aviation technology. It was felt that cadets should receive a very broad and advanced education, primarily in the science field. A four-year review was conducted on the standards and requirements for the RAAF College to meet this new training aim. The review resulted in the RAAF College being reconstituted as the Royal Australian Air Force Academy on 1 January 1961. The RAAF Academy was affiliated with the University of Melbourne.

The change to the RAAF Academy meant that cadets were required to complete the three years of academic study prior to commencing flying training in their fourth year. This form of training became entrenched with the establishment of the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) on 1 January 1986, signalling the end of the RAAF Academy which was officially disbanded on 20 January 1986.

Before ADFA was established the Air Force had identified a requirement for the continued Air Force specific training of RAAF officers and direct entry officer cadets. A recommendation was made that the RAAF College be formed at Point Cook from the basic staff course and external studies elements of the RAAF Staff College (RAAFSC), amalgamated with the Officers Training School (OTS). The RAAF College came into existence on 1 January 1986 with an organisational structure

that differs greatly from its present structure. By September 1991, after some sweeping changes to its initial structure, the RAAF College has been organised into two schools, two squadrons and training development staff, with a group captain as Commandant.

COMMANDANTS

RAAF College

1947	—Wing Commander A.D. Swan
1947–49	—Air Commodore V.E. Hancock
1949–52	—Group Captain M.O. Watson
1952–53	—Air Commodore A.M. Murdoch
1953–55	—Air Commodore E.G. Knox-Knight
1955–57	—Group Captain R.N. Dalkin
1957–61	—Group Captain D.W. Colquhoun

RAAF Academy

1961–66	—Air Commodore K.R.J. Parsons
1966–68	—Air Commodore C.F. Read
1968–69	—Air Commodore J.F. Lush
1969–70	—Group Captain J.M. Sutherland
1970–72	—Air Commodore D.W. Colquhoun
1972–77	—Air Commodore E.W. Tonkin
1977–79	—Air Commodore J.A. Whitehead
1979–81	—Air Commodore P.J. Reed
1982–83	—Air Commodore A.R. Reed
1984–86	—Air Commodore R.J. Walsh

RAAF College

1986–89	—Group Captain M.E. McDonald
1989	—Wing Commander R.J. Connor
1989–91	—Group Captain M.J. Rawlinson
1991–92	—Group Captain P.W. Growder
1992–93	—Group Captain A.W. Gilbert
1994–	—Group Captain P.R.M. Rasmussen

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SCHOOL OF ADMINISTRATION

CHRONOLOGY

9 August 1940	—formed at RAAF Laverton, Vic.
27 December 1941	—moved to Ascot Vale, Vic.
21 February 1942	—moved to Trinity College, Carlton, Vic.
3 December 1944	—move to Victor Harbour, SA, completed
30 November 1945	—facilities transferred to 5 Medical Rehabilitation Unit

NARRATIVE

The School of Administration was established at RAAF Base Laverton on 9 August 1940. The unit trained prospective officers from the RAAF and (later) WAAAFs of the Administrative and Special Duties Branch, and the first course (No. 6) graduated 47 officers on 13 September 1940.

On 27 December 1941 the School moved to Ascot Vale, where it remained until 21 February 1942, when its headquarters took up accommodation at Trinity College, Melbourne University, Carlton. Until accommodation was available at Trinity, Ormond, Queens and Newman Colleges, the students lodged at Ascot Vale and commuted daily for training at the university.

The training curricula expanded in March 1943, with the addition of officers cypher courses. In May, unit commanders courses were offered, and the School also undertook Air Training Corps officers drill refresher courses, administrative officers refresher training and high altitude training.

On 12 November 1944 an advance party departed for Victor Harbour, South Australia, where the School took over the facilities of 4 Initial Training School. The move was completed on 3 December and the School remained at Victor Harbour until September, when it was, in turn, supplanted by 5 Medical Rehabilitation Unit.

On 7 September 1945, after graduating 4781 RAAF and 619 WAAAF officers, the School of Administration ceased to function and, on 30 November 1945, transferred all its buildings to 5 Medical Rehabilitation Unit.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

9 August 1940	—Squadron Leader E.G. Roberts
17 March 1941	—Flight Lieutenant J.A. Ritchie
21 April 1941	—Squadron Leader A.C. Grant
7 July 1941	—Squadron Leader F.C. MacKillop
23 February 1942	—Wing Commander F.A. Sewell
3 February 1943	—Squadron Leader C.A. Brewster

SCHOOL OF AIR NAVIGATION

Wisdom Through Diligence



CHRONOLOGY

5 February 1946

—raised at East Sale, Vic.

November 1994

—based at East Sale, Vic.

NARRATIVE

The School of Air Navigation was established at East Sale on 5 February 1946. Prior to its formation, navigators completed courses at an air observers school, a bombing and gunnery school, and an astro-navigation school. Late in 1944, all of these schools were integrated into air navigation schools, but following the disbandment of the General Reconnaissance School after World War II, the School of Air Navigation emerged as the only location for navigation training in the RAAF.

The School's role included the training of recruits in basic navigation, the provision of navigation refresher courses, the training of navigation instructors, and certain research and development in respect of navigation techniques and equipment.

During 1946, the staff were primarily involved in developing the training section of the School and preparing for the arrival of the first course. A welcome diversion came in November with a visit by the RAF Navigation Mission, commanded by Air Commodore N.H. Daith, OBE.

The first course run at the School of Air Navigation was 1 Specialist Navigation Course, which commenced on 3 February 1947 with 11 students. The course was completed on 7 November 1947, with eight members successfully qualifying as specialist navigators.

On 9 February 1948, the first advanced navigation course commenced. A refresher navigation course commenced on 22 March 1948, with five Anson aircraft being allotted to the School for the flying exercises involved in this training. The course was used to train non-commissioned officers with previous RAAF service who were re-entering the Service.

The running of basic navigation courses did not begin until 23 August 1948, when 15 students commenced studies, graduating 11 members on 26 August 1949.

Dakotas were first used by the School of Air Navigation in 1950, taking over the basic flying stage from the Anson aircraft.

The School of Air Navigation has undertaken many tasks far removed from basic navigator student training. In February 1951, Lincoln A73-2 was tasked to deliver urgently needed food and medical supplies to the Antarctic Division expedition stationed at Macquarie Island. The aircraft was fitted with two long-range fuel tanks for the 13-hour, 2800-mile (5600 kilometres) round flight. On the same day, a Dakota aircraft patrolled all sections of eastern Victoria spotting bushfires.

The Lincoln was phased out from the School in 1958.

The RAAF's first air electronics officer course began training in January 1965. In 1969, the School took over complete responsibility for this training, using HS748 aircraft. On 7 July 1969, 38 Navigator Course, composed entirely of Royal Australian Navy midshipmen, commenced training. These students completed the same course as the navigator students before graduating as observers and joining the Fleet Air Arm of the RAN. Navigator courses 39 to 43 comprised both RAAF and RAN students. In September 1972, 1 RAN Observer Course started training as a separate course, and participants graduated on 15 June 1973.

The Dakota remained in use for navigator training until 1969. The last course to be trained on the Dakota graduated on 30 January 1969, just two weeks after the first course to be trained on the new HS748 aircraft.

The final HS748 aircraft arrived from Britain on 7 August 1969.

The School of Air Navigation, following the tragedy of Cyclone 'Tracy' in December 1974, sent two HS748 aircraft to assist with the transporting of families out of Darwin. The crews departed on 28 December, returning on 31 December and 1 January. One HS748 also flew a half-ton of food and baby clothing collected in Traralgon, Victoria, to Laverton, where it was transferred to a Hercules bound for Darwin.

On 4 June 1990, Lieutenant A.J. (Mandy) Goodier, RAN, became the first female student to undertake basic training at the School of Air

Navigation. Officer Cadet Jocelyn Harvey became the RAAF's first female navigator when she graduated on 4 June 1992.

In keeping with the increasing technology of the RAAF's operational aircraft, the HS748 fleet undertook an upgrade to its navigational equipment with the installation of the Litton LTN92 Inertial Navigation System (INS) during 1991-92.

During 1990, the School of Air Navigation was instructed to produce a new basic navigation course, which came into effect in September 1991. During the same timeframe, the School undertook a major review of all its post-graduate training with a view to identifying and better meeting the customers' requirements. As a result, in 1992, the School commenced the weapons employment course, the airborne instructional technique course and a remodelled navigation instructor conversion course. The School of Air Navigation continues to fulfil its charter and conduct its valuable work to this day.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

15 October 1947	—Squadron Leader D.W. McCarthy
7 August 1950	—Squadron Leader A.R. Hodge
18 May 1953	—Wing Commander D.R. Sheppard
25 July 1955	—Wing Commander E.T. Pickerd
8 July 1957	—Wing Commander A.L. Greenhill
27 April 1959	—Wing Commander J.C. Jordan
24 July 1961	—Wing Commander J.A. Gibbins
4 September 1962	—Wing Commander J.C. Thorp
17 January 1966	—Wing Commander J.H.D. Blackwell
23 January 1967	—Wing Commander K.M. Staib
8 December 1969	—Wing Commander B.N. Tennant
13 December 1971	—Wing Commander R.E. Gillard
8 January 1973	—Wing Commander D.D.R. Marks
9 September 1974	—Wing Commander P.W. Kennedy
15 January 1976	—Wing Commander N.J. Montgomery
10 January 1978	—Wing Commander K.R. Blakers
January 1980	—Wing Commander J.G. Gazley
December 1982	—Wing Commander J.A. Bushell
February 1986	—Wing Commander G.L. Barlow
February 1988	—Wing Commander L.D. Noble
9 November 1990	—Wing Commander N.A. Gray
1993	—Wing Commander G. Bentley

SCHOOL OF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

For Greater Safety



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| August 1946 | —military air traffic control training commenced at RAAF Laverton |
| 11 May 1981 | —School of Air Traffic Control formed at RAAF East Sale |
| October 1987 | —re-located to new purpose-built complex |
| November 1994 | —based at East Sale, Vic. |

NARRATIVE

Military air traffic control training commenced at RAAF Laverton during August 1946. The following year, this training was transferred to 1 Advanced Flying Training School at RAAF Point Cook. On 21 December 1947, responsibility was transferred to Central Flying School. The need for an independent unit to train military air traffic controllers culminated, on 11 May 1981, in the formation of the School of Air Traffic Control at RAAF East Sale.

When the School opened in 1981, it was planned to undertake three or four courses a year, each of 18 weeks and 15 students, plus up to 12 radar controller courses of six weeks, with four students on each.

Staff levels increased slowly over the years until, in 1990-91 the establishment increased from 15 to 28, to accommodate increased courses brought about by a backlog of post-graduate training. The current staff of 25 includes air traffic control, education and training staff, qualified computer specialists, administrative personnel and exchange instructors

from the Australian Army, Royal Air Force and Royal Malaysian Air Force.

Since 1949, the RAAF has used a number of aids and methods to teach students the techniques of controlling aircraft visually in an aerodrome traffic zone. All suffered from the one basic handicap: at any time, only one student could receive practice. This led to the design of an air traffic control training system considered to be the first of its type in the world, known as the 'audio-visual trainer'.

On 16–17 October 1987, the School re-located to the new purpose-built complex. The RAAF air traffic control radar simulator was commissioned at the time of the opening of the new building.

Commissioned on 19 June 1992, the 'tower visual simulator' was developed by the Australian Government Aeronautical Research Laboratory and developed by Ferranti Computer Systems (Australia) Pty Limited. The School uses this computer graphics aerodrome control tower simulator for training skills in surface movement and tower control.

Two new courses were introduced in 1993. One was a refresher course for controllers returning to active controlling jobs, and the other was a trainer course, which will qualify controllers to act as training officers for their home bases.

School graduates have come from the three Services, civilian sources, and the air forces of Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand and Brunei.

To date, the School has graduated over 330 basic students, and many more from post-graduate courses. The School has established an international reputation as a centre of air traffic control excellence.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

11 May 1981	—Squadron Leader A.F. Chapman
4 January 1983	—Squadron Leader A.J. McPherson
5 December 1983	—Wing Commander G. Pickburn
6 October 1987	—Wing Commander R.T. McDonough
27 January 1992	—Wing Commander I.T. Batten

SCHOOL OF ARMY CO-OPERATION

CHRONOLOGY

- 24 December 1941 —formed at Canberra, ACT
31 August 1946 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

On 24 December 1941, the School of Army Co-operation was established at RAAF Base Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, and Wing Commander J.N.T. Stephenson, RAF, assumed command of the School on 23 January 1942.

Five pilots from 4 Squadron were members of the first course at the School, and 19 Army officers arrived at Canberra on 5 January 1942 to participate. The first course was completed on 10 February 1942. Courses were designed to give Army officers air experience, and to teach Army co-operation techniques to members of both Services. The staff consisted of both Air Force and Army officers, and even members of the forces of the United States—Captain Maxwell M. Kahn was attached from Headquarters, 5th Air Force, as an instructor on 26 October 1943. He followed Major S.A. Marshal, who had been a student on 5 Course, which he joined on 1 November 1942.

Students came from New Zealand, the first of which were Captain J.N. Thomson and Flying Officers G. Hunter and H.L. Street, who arrived on 1 June 1942.

Training was as realistic as possible. On 21 January 1943, the first 'field day' was held; one was undertaken by all subsequent courses. During the day, reconnaissance, direct support, supply dropping, and photography disciplines were exercised, and the Army co-operation field organisation of air liaison sections, divisional and brigade headquarters and complete air support control (Type B) staff were established. Pilots operated from difficult emergency airstrips, and the 18 (NEI) Squadron Mitchell bombers, when they shared the base at Canberra, added realism to the proceedings. Many exercises were undertaken with cadets from the Royal Military College at Duntroon; on 12 February 1944 an artillery shoot had to be curtailed as, after only three live shots, the students and staff had to combine to extinguish the resulting bushfire.

Air observation post courses commenced on 2 October 1944, designed to train artillery officers and selected pilots to direct artillery from the Auster aircraft.

The School operated Wirraway, Tiger Moth, Boomerang, Oxford and Kittyhawk aircraft. The former were involved in two fatal accidents. Pilot Officer F.W. Powell and Captain W.J. McCutcheon were killed when their aircraft crashed and burned whilst the two officers were flying on a map reading exercise near Bungendore, New South Wales. Squadron Leader D.K. Matthews and Flying Officer W.H. Sebastian died in a Wirraway accident near Merricumbene, New South Wales, on 19 September 1943.

The School of Army Co-operation ceased to function on 20 February 1946 and was finally disbanded on 31 August of the same year.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

23 January 1942	—Wing Commander J.N.T. Stephenson, RAF
June 1942	—Squadron Leader B.R. Pelly
21 May 1943	—Squadron Leader R.E. Allman
10 July 1945	—Wing Commander A.E. Cook

SCHOOL OF GENERAL SERVICE TRAINING

CHRONOLOGY

- 27 November 1946 —raised at RAAF Base Richmond, NSW
19 January 1949 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

On 27 November 1946, the School of General Service Training was established at RAAF Base Richmond to conduct a series of general service training courses for general duties officers up to the rank of squadron leader. The first commandant was Wing Commander K.R.J. Parsons, who was appointed on 20 December 1946.

The first of 11 general service training courses commenced on 6 January 1947, concluding on 14 February. The first courses comprised 30 students, but by early 1948 the individual course numbers had dwindled to 12. The students visited the Captain Cook Dockyards and Anti-Submarine School at HMAS *Rushcutter*, and later courses visited HMAS *Watson*. Presentations were given to students on diverse subjects including the organisation of the other services and their customs, Air Force law, RAAF transport, anti-submarine warfare, atomic energy, and catering in the RAAF.

On 4 February 1948 the first of two airman aircrew trainees courses commenced, with the 21 students graduating on 12 March 1948, and a general service training course commenced on 2 February 1949. This was completed on 22 April.

The School, which had an establishment for a staff of four officers and two other ranks, was disbanded on 19 January 1949.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- 20 December 1946 —Wing Commander K.R.J. Parsons
22 October 1948 —Wing Commander E.G. Fyfe

SCHOOL OF GROUND TRAINING

CHRONOLOGY

16 May 1956	—raised at Rathmines, NSW
16 January 1961	—School disbanded

NARRATIVE

The School of Ground Training was raised at Rathmines, New South Wales, on 16 May 1956, with Base Squadron Rathmines, Officers Training Squadron and 2 National Service Training Unit coming under the control of Headquarters, RAAF School of Ground Training.

The School undertook training in a diversity of courses, including moral leadership, physical training instructors, officers initial training, warrant officer and senior non-commissioned officer administrative and officers advanced administrative. In addition, Air Training Corps cadet pilot officers and basic courses were undertaken at Rathmines, as were Air Training Corps and university squadron annual camps. The training commitment was further expanded with the transfer of 1 Recruit Training Unit from Richmond during April 1958.

The lakeside facilities were used for relaxation and service use. The unit VJ sailing craft were a common sight, and the RAAF Antarctic Flight carried out float plane training at Lake Macquarie during November 1956 and October 1958. For several days of each month for three months, commencing 13 December 1956, Ansett Airlines Short Sandringham Flying Boats utilised the alighting area for 'touch and go' practice.

On 13 October 1960, the decision to close the base at Rathmines was announced. It was decided that the Officer Training School would move to Point Cook by the end of January 1961, and the School of Ground Training was disbanded on 16 January 1961.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

16 May 1956	—Wing Commander W.L. Brill
16 July 1956	—Wing Commander A.G.H. Wearne
29 January 1960	—Wing Commander J.E. Handbury

SCHOOL OF LAND/AIR WARFARE

United in Purpose



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 23 January 1947 | —School of Air Support raised at Laverton, Vic. |
| 1 March 1948 | —name changed to School of Land/Air Warfare |
| 17 November 1948 | —completed move to Williamtown, NSW |
| 18 August 1958 | —disbanded and Air Support Unit formed |
| 31 August 1975 | —Unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

The School of Air Support was raised at Laverton, Victoria, on 23 January 1947. The School was to give an understanding of techniques to be used and develop co-operation between the three Services.

The name of the School was changed to School of Land/Air Warfare on 1 March 1948, and the move of the unit to RAAF Williamtown commenced on 31 October, with the School being opened at that base on 17 November.

Training at the School included intermediate courses for captain/major level officers and senior air support courses (colonel or above equivalent). Later air portability/air dispatch, basic parachute, small scale amphibious raids, air movements and ground liaison officer courses were included in the curriculum. In addition, cadets from the Sydney University Squadron and National Service trainees passed through the unit.

The students and staff were drawn from the three Services and one of the original instructors, Colonel R. Pollard, later became Chief of the General Staff (1960–1963). An early Navy student was Lieutenant (later Admiral Sir) A. Synnod, Chief of the Defence Force Staff 1979–1982. The School was also bi-national, with the first New Zealand student, Commander L.P. Bourke RNZN, commencing training in 1950.

The wings of the School reflected its aims—including offensive air support, transport support, parachute training and air portability. Training was not only undertaken in Australia. On 19 June 1951, the Commandant and five members of the directing staff departed for Indo-China and Malaya, and, on 1 September, the Commandant and members of the air support wing proceeded to New Zealand on a three-week instructional tour.

On 17 February 1958 the School was disbanded and Air Support Unit raised. However, on 27 March, the decision was reversed, and the School functioned again as the School of Land/Air Warfare until 18 August, when it ceased to exist and the Air Support Unit was formed.

Air Support Unit trained students in basic parachutist skills, free fall parachute techniques and in water jumps. Additional courses undertaken included jumpmaster, air movements, air support, tactical air support, forward air controller, loadmaster, Army air photography reading, and ground liaison. Members of the directing staff also lectured to Army Staff College students at Queenscliff and the RAAF College, as well as conducting air/ground operations study periods at various Air Force and Army commands.

During the period of the unit's operations, members of the unit participated in major Army exercises, as well as contributing to SEATO exercises.

Students attended the unit from Malaysia, Thailand and New Zealand. British officers based in Malaysia and Hong Kong were also welcomed as students.

Air Support Unit was disbanded on 31 August 1975.

COMMANDANTS

April 1947	—Air Commodore A.M. Charlesworth
27 July 1949	—Group Captain W.H. Garing
21 June 1951	—Air Commodore E.G. Knox-Knight
4 December 1953	—Group Captain R.H. Davis

10 March 1955 —Air Commodore A.G. Adnams

4 March 1957 —Group Captain B.A. Eaton

Commanders, RAAF Component, Air Support Unit

18 August 1958 —Wing Commander C.R. Gallwey

22 January 1962 —Wing Commander J.E. Gerber

25 January 1971 —Wing Commander J.A. Paule

14 January 1974 —Wing Commander J.M. Chesterfield

SCHOOL OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Ex Luce Discimus (Learn From Light)



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 1941 | —first photographic unit began at Point Cook, Vic. |
| 1943 | —transferred to Canberra as part of a survey flight |
| October 1946 | —reactivated and transferred to East Sale |
| 2 April 1952 | —School of Photography formed from Photographic Flight, Headquarters East Sale |
| November 1994 | —based at East Sale, Vic. |

NARRATIVE

The RAAF's first photographic unit began as a flight originating from a wartime nucleus of photographic personnel at Point Cook, Victoria, in 1941. The flight later transferred to RAAF Canberra as part of a survey flight in 1943. The Photographic Flight was reactivated after a post-war lapse and transferred to RAAF East Sale in October 1946. Students were instructed in basic photography, chemistry, optics, processing and photographic equipment.

The School of Photography (PHOTS) was formed from the Photographic Flight, Headquarters East Sale on 2 April 1952. It was not until August of 1952 that the unit acquired a building which was deemed suitable for the School headquarters. This building was taken over during September and at the same time, to the delight of the staff, new equipment arrived at the School. This was also the time that the lawns

and shrubs, which required constant attention, were first planted and the gardens started. This 'extra duty' was to be later recognised during the graduation of 41 Basic Photo Course where all members were also presented with diplomas from the RAAF School of Agriculture.

Full-scale instruction of photography to officers, NCOs and airmen began in 1953 with three courses being held during the year.

New acquisitions for the year of 1955 were enlarging equipment, and another building for use as a chemical and glazing room.

Equipment shortages were apparent in mid-1960, when there was only enough stocks held for 12 of the 16 members on course. It was at this time that the first discussions were held for the proposed amalgamation of PHOTS and the Central Photographic Establishment (CPE). An instruments workshop was also established in 1960.

By mid-1964, outfitting of additional darkrooms at the School brought the number of training darkrooms to seven. No. 53 Airmen's Course was the first to use the new syllabus where practical work was introduced during the first week of training. By the end of 1965, the last of the equipment for a colour capability at the School was installed.

In July 1969, as part of the increased emphasis placed upon quality in aerial imagery, the School introduced a quality control course. Also in mid-year, aerial photo training shifted from the Dakota aircraft to the HS748 aircraft.

At the end of the decade, PHOTS consisted of seven buildings, all of wartime vintage. On 18 March 1970, after many years of discussions, plans for a new self-contained building to house the School were submitted for approval. Little did the submission originators know that it would be 19 years before they would be able to 'wet the new baby's head'.

Supplies of materials dwindled to a bare minimum in mid-1971, due to government financial restrictions. During this period, after pushing for materials, the School received an inquiry requesting reasons for demands. In reply, the Commanding Officer wrote 'no supplies; no training; end of story!'

In May 1975, the first of many basic photographic courses was held which included Navy personnel. May 1978 saw the first intake of female students. ACW Sue Robins, ACW Teena Snow and ACW Sue Flanagan became the first female photographers in the RAAF.

For the first time, foreign nationals took part in a course held at the School when two Philippine Air Force officers were trained in 1980.

All through the early 1980s, maintenance on the School was deferred more and more in the belief that the new School was not too far in the future. April 1985 saw the start of one of the largest courses to go through the School when 1/85 Basic Course began with a strength of 24 students.

The great event that everybody had been waiting for occurred in October 1986, when construction began on the new School of Photography. The move to the new School was effected in December 1988.

In March 1992, the School of Photography celebrated its 40th anniversary, with facilities being open to the public, and photographic displays and workshops being held.

Today, the School of Photography continues the fine work of training for photographic excellence. Course development, validation and task analysis of basic course subjects continue to take high priority at the School. The three Services and approved civilian students all benefit from the world class facilities and instructional staff at the School of Photography.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

2 April 1952	—Flight Lieutenant R.H. Campbell
2 May 1952	—Flight Lieutenant K.L. Porteous
June 1954	—Flight Lieutenant L.J. Connelly
20 August 1956	—Squadron Leader L.C. Lobb
4 May 1959	—Squadron Leader L.J. Connelly
1 February 1963	—Squadron Leader W.T. Riggs
21 February 1972	—Squadron Leader G.N. Crawfoot
14 January 1975	—Squadron Leader W.F. Murphy
6 February 1976	—Squadron Leader J. Whitton
14 January 1977	—Squadron Leader A.B. Chiles
16 July 1979	—Squadron Leader L.J. Cavanagh
21 May 1981	—Squadron Leader P.A. Kelley
14 January 1986	—Squadron Leader S.J. Clutterbuck
27 July 1988	—Squadron Leader G.C. Walton
January 1992	—Squadron Leader G.W. Edwards

SCHOOL OF RADIO

Readiness Through Training



CHRONOLOGY

- 1 November 1945 —Air and Ground Radio School formed at Ballarat, Vic.
- 1 December 1952 —re-named RAAF School of Radio
- 11 April 1961 —re-located to Laverton, Vic.
- 1 May 1961 —amalgamation of RAAF Radio Apprentice School, Frognall, into RAAF School of Radio as Apprentice Squadron
- 31 December 1993 —School disbanded

NARRATIVE

On 1 November 1945, Air and Ground Radio School was formed at Ballarat. However, radio or, as it was formerly called, signals training, had its origins in the very early years of the RAAF's history. Although some RAAF personnel had received signals training overseas, in 1928 it was decided to enlist 18 signals trainees to undertake a wireless operator course to be conducted at Point Cook. From this inauspicious beginning, Signals School was formed on 1 July 1935, and the first course, No. 1 Signals Course, commenced the same day. Radio training expanded during World War II, and a number of new schools were established. However, following the War, the decision was made to amalgamate radio training at Ballarat. The new School took over the functions of three existing schools: 1 Signals School at Point Cook, which was initially formed at Laverton in July 1935; Radar School at Maryborough, Queensland, initially formed at Richmond, New South Wales, in August

1941; and 1 Wireless Air Gunners School, formed at Ballarat, Victoria, in April 1940.

Although formed in 1945, the School did not commence training courses until February 1947. At this time, training included courses in telegraphy, signals, telephony and radio. On 1 December 1952, in recognition of the fact that radio, in its broadest sense, best epitomised RAAF communications, the School was re-named the RAAF School of Radio (RADS). The RADS crest was approved in 1959. The central motif depicts the nucleus of an atom surrounded by various electron orbits and symbolises the electronic nature of training at the School. The motto is 'Readiness Through Training'.

In 1950 it was decided to conduct further training for the wireless air gunner category, but it was also decided to change the name to 'signallers'. On graduation the signaller wore the 'S' brevet instead of the 'AG' brevet worn by wireless air gunners. Signaller training continued until 1964 when it was upgraded and replaced with the air electronics officer category. However, at the conclusion of No. 3 Air Electronics Officer Course in 1968, the RADS component of this training was transferred to the School of Air Navigation at East Sale. Since the first signals course in 1928, RAAF radio schools had trained aircrew members to operate aircraft radio and electronics systems. The transfer of air electronics officer training marked the final break in this tradition.

In the interests of efficiency and economy, a decision was made to relocate the School to Laverton, Victoria; the move commenced on 11 April 1961 and the unit was fully operational at its new location on 1 May 1961.

The RAAF Radio Apprentice School was formed at Froggnall, Victoria, on 15 December 1947 and, on 12 December 1960, was moved to Laverton. Members of the diploma courses remained at Froggnall as a detachment of the School, and in February 1961 these members became cadet officers and formed the nucleus of a new unit known as Diploma Cadet Squadron. On 1 May 1961, following RADS' re-location, the Apprentice School was incorporated as a squadron of RADS. The functions of Apprentice Squadron did not change from those which it had performed as the RAAF Radio Apprentice School and, until its closure in 1992, provided sound trade training for apprentices and developed in them those desirable qualities necessary for promotion to higher appointments as non-commissioned and commissioned officers.

On 3 December 1974, the School moved into a new purpose-built complex at Laverton where it continued to produce highly trained

operative and technical personnel. The School was presented with the Governor-General's banner on 29 April 1983. However, as a result of changes in the RAAF's training philosophy and organisation, the School of Radio disbanded on 31 December 1993.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 November 1945	—Wing Commander W.J. Guthrie
6 August 1947	—Wing Commander R. Kingsford-Smith
28 March 1949	—Wing Commander J.E. Reynolds
2 June 1952	—Wing Commander A.A.B. Slight
22 September 1954	—Wing Commander G.E. Prosser
1 March 1957	—Wing Commander W.T. Taylor
29 February 1960	—Wing Commander R.J. Fairbank
22 January 1962	—Wing Commander W.C. Blakely
4 July 1964	—Wing Commander E.R. Hall
28 June 1968	—Wing Commander R.K. Starkie
20 December 1971	—Wing Commander A.J. Benson
29 November 1973	—Wing Commander W.J. Thorn
15 April 1975	—Wing Commander F.J. Wrigley
17 January 1978	—Wing Commander J.E. Townsend
6 January 1980	—Wing Commander R.A. Bean
13 October 1981	—Wing Commander D.R. McCarthy
13 December 1984	—Wing Commander H.H. Bock
10 September 1986	—Wing Commander J.M. Dallimore
15 January 1990	—Wing Commander V.D. Robinson
16 January 1990	—Wing Commander E.W. Gidley

SCHOOL OF TECHNICAL TRAINING

Staunch



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| December 1939 | —1 School of Technical Training formed in Melbourne, Vic. |
| 22 December 1945 | —School disbanded |
| 4 March 1946 | —Ground Training School formed at RAAF Base Wagga Wagga, NSW |
| 1 May 1950 | —re-named RAAF Technical College |
| 1 December 1952 | —title of unit changed to RAAF School of Technical Training |
| November 1994 | —based at Wagga Wagga, NSW |

NARRATIVE

Technical training has existed since the beginning of the RAAF, though its form and the units it has fallen under are as diverse as the RAAF itself. Until 1927, aircraft maintenance was performed by selected tradesmen with their aircraft knowledge gained through on-the-job training.

From 1927 through the Great Depression no recruiting occurred and therefore no training. The first technical training facility was set up in 1935 to cope with the RAAF's expansion and advances in equipment and technology. At the end of December 1939, 1 School of Technical Training was formed in Melbourne. At the end of World War II hostilities, any course that was not at least half way to completion was cancelled, as the recruits were no longer required.

1 School of Technical Training was disbanded on 22 December 1945, having trained some 23 500 personnel. The existing personnel were transferred to 1 Engineering School. Training equipment was transferred to RAAF Base Wagga Wagga, the staff and equipment forming a new RAAF Ground Training School on 4 March 1946.

Forest Hill, 10 kilometres east of Wagga Wagga, New South Wales, was selected as the recommended site of the new flying training school to begin construction in 1940. The RAAF Ground Training School, when it formed in March 1946, took over the facilities utilised by 5 Aircraft Depot and prior to that 2 Service Flying Training School. The Ground Training School came under the command of Wing Commander E.L. Chapman. Because of overcrowding, a detachment was set up in Canberra on 30 October 1951.

The Ground Training School (GTS) at RAAF Base Wagga Wagga was re-named RAAF Technical College from 1 May 1950 to more accurately reflect the function for which it was responsible. This later changed to RAAF School of Technical Training (RAAFSTT) on 1 December 1952. This name supposedly gave a clearer picture of the unit's role; however, the new name was no closer to the actual training role as a number of non-technical training courses—such as initial training, administrative and clerical musters, and catering training—were conducted.

The range and duration of courses at the RAAF School of Technical Training has varied throughout the years. Amongst the first courses were apprentice courses in mechanical transport fitting, electrical fitting, instrument fitting and aircraft metal working. Training along these lines continued unchanged, apart from advances in technology, up until the 1980s. Graduates from this area of training were to meet the needs of more technical aircraft such as the F/A-18 Hornet and P-3C Orion.

RAAFSTT has been involved in the training of more than just the RAAF. Foreign and other service students have studied at RAAFSTT under various defence co-operation schemes with other countries and government departments and organisations. These have included Burmese, Indonesian, Papuan, Malaysian, Thai and New Zealand personnel along with the Australian Army, Navy, Federal Police and the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation.

Changes in the command structure of RAAFSTT have changed several times since 1952, the most significant occurring in 1985 when the command of different types of training by specialist officers was made available by splitting RAAFSTT into three separate schools. This change

saw the formation of the RAAF School of Clerical and Supply Training and the RAAF School of Management and Training Technology.

The role of RAAFSTT has become more specific, as its name implies, to the training of all technical trades, other than radio.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 March 1944	—Wing Commander E.L. Chapman
3 July 1944	—Wing Commander W.P. Spinks
14 January 1946	—Squadron Leader H.T. Roper
26 January 1946	—Squadron Leader J.W. Symons
3 February 1946	—Wing Commander E.L. Chapman
9 January 1950	—Group Captain J.W.C. Black
18 April 1952	—Group Captain H.H. Smith
6 May 1955	—Group Captain E.V. Millett
8 March 1960	—Group Captain A.T. Fay
3 January 1961	—Wing Commander W.V. Greenham
18 January 1962	—Wing Commander C.V. Smith
27 July 1964	—Wing Commander R. Noble
30 November 1967	—Wing Commander V.J. Fogarty
22 January 1968	—Group Captain L.G.A. Marshall
5 December 1969	—Group Captain N.P. Engel
3 July 1972	—Group Captain J.R. Anstee
24 January 1974	—Group Captain W.H. Smith
11 January 1978	—Group Captain J.R. Bartram
14 January 1980	—Group Captain A.W. Skimin
12 January 1981	—Group Captain R.A. Kee
20 January 1983	—Group Captain C.E. Bradford
June 1985	—Wing Commander T.J. Kelly
4 December 1987	—Wing Commander J.S. Rae
2 August 1990	—Wing Commander C.E. Ford
11 January 1994	—Wing Commander B. Duddington

SERVICE AIRCREW CAMP

CHRONOLOGY

- 31 January 1945 —formed at Barmera, SA
26 April 1945 —Camp disbanded

NARRATIVE

The Service Aircrew Camp was established at Barmera, South Australia, on 31 January 1945, under the command of Squadron Leader J.W. Bales. Headquarters was established at No. 9 Camp, Loveday, three miles from Barmera and, on 6 February 1945, a working party commenced the preparation of a tent camp at the Renmark showground. Three days later a detachment of three officers, one warrant officer and 176 other ranks moved in to the camp.

On 12 February 1945, grape picking commenced. Transport was supplied by the growers, with the airmen harvesting in the Barmera, Berri and Renmark areas. When harvesting ceased on 29 March 1945, members of the unit had expended over 93 000 man hours on the task.

Leading Aircraftman C.G. Pollock was run over by a bus in Barmera, and suffered two broken legs.

On 1 March 1945, 100 airmen were posted away for further training. However, the postings were cancelled and the men returned to the unit. As the shortfall in members had been taken by members of the Women's Australian Land Army, these servicemen could not be used harvesting grapes, and were placed on a strict training program at the camp.

Recreational activity included swimming in Lake Bonney, cricket, dances and concerts. On 8 March, the Mayor of Renmark hosted a ball in honour of the RAAF and Women's Australian Land Army.

The 'Grape Picking Unit' was disbanded on 26 April 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICER

- 31 January 1945 —Squadron Leader J.W. Bales

WORKS TRAINING UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- 18 November 1942 —formed at Ascot Vale, Vic.
2 August 1943 —moved to Woolloomanata, Vic.
25 January 1946 —Unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

The Works Training Unit was raised at Ascot Vale, Victoria, under the command of Squadron Leader G.D. Maunder, to train personnel in the use of machinery and in the techniques to be used by mobile works units (later known as airfield construction squadrons).

In the first four courses, a high standard was attained, with only four failures out of the 86 who undertook the course, and these were due to the absence of the students on sick leave.

During December 1942, 400 airmen were posted to the Unit, where they were accommodated at Royal Park, pending the formation of 6 Mobile Works Squadron. With the planned establishment of 7 and 8 Mobile Works Squadrons, a further 357 members reported to Works Training Unit: of these, 300 allocated to the latter two units were sent on embarkation leave, thus easing the barracks situation.

During January 1943, tractor driver (diesel), fitter (diesel) and motor grader operators courses were run, and also during January a building program was commenced by Unit members, resulting in the completion of the kitchen, barracks store and headquarters building in March.

Also during March 1943, training commenced with 11 Works Supply Unit and 30 members of the United States Army, beginning a new phase of operation—loading equipment destined for North Western Area—during April.

On 2 August 1943, the Unit transferred its headquarters to Woolloomanata. By 8 November all that remained at Ascot Vale was the receipt and despatch and the instructional sections, with a strength of two officers and 61 other ranks.

The school continued the training of plant operators and other specific trades required for the manning of airfield construction units until 29 September 1945, when it ceased to function as a training unit. The

equipment was disposed of and the Works Training Unit disbanded on 25 January 1946.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

18 November 1942	—Squadron Leader G.D. Maunder
5 July 1943	—Squadron Leader R.U. Hoddinott
August 1944	—Squadron Leader T.M. Scott
8 February 1945	—Flight Lieutenant P.G. Richens
June 1945	—Squadron Leader T.R. Nossiter
July 1945	—Squadron Leader A.D. Bouch

WRAAF TRAINING UNIT/ WOMEN'S TRAINING UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 12 January 1976 | —WRAAF Training Flight formed at Tottenham, Vic. |
| 10 January 1977 | —WRAAF Training Unit formed at Laverton, Vic. |
| 1 May 1977 | —WRAAF Training Unit re-named Women's Training Unit |
| 29 May 1981 | —Women's Training Unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

For many years the basic training of female recruits was conducted alongside, but quite separate from, the training of male recruits at 1 Recruit Training Unit (IRTU) in Edinburgh. However, in January 1976, the WRAAF Training Flight was re-located to 1 Stores Depot at Tottenham in Victoria, as the decision had been taken to separate the training of females from that of their male counterparts. In 1977, due to an intended increase in recruiting for WRAAF members, the flight was re-located to Laverton, where the support infrastructure was better able to cope with the expected dramatic increase in numbers.

On 10 January the flight was reformed as WRAAF Training Unit (WRAAFTU). Recruits were quartered two to a room and most settled in well. Some sought discharge almost immediately, but the policy of the day required them to remain until the end of the course and, by and large, most had changed their minds by then and continued in the WRAAF. Those who could not adapt and were desperately unhappy were discharged sooner.

On 17 January, 70 recruits arrived from Brisbane, Perth, Sydney, Tasmania, Adelaide and Melbourne; later five more arrived from Townsville making a total of 75 on Recruit Course 244. By 25 January WRAAFTU was in full swing, and hosted a visit from Colonel Kim Lin Kyu, the Republic of Korea military attache in Canberra, who inspected the Unit and discussed women's services.

The first WRAAFTU graduation parade held at Laverton on 23 February was reviewed by Group Officer D.D. Parsloe, AM, Director of WRAAF.

In addition to the basic female recruit training, WRAAFTU was also responsible for WRAAF administrative non-commissioned officer training; two courses were conducted during the period 1977–1981.

On 1 May 1977, after many years of negotiation, a new integration policy came into being and, from that date, all female members were part of the RAAF rather than the WRAAF. As a result of this the Unit was re-named Women's Training Unit (WTU).

On 20 June 1978, Corporal D. Anderson was posted to the RAAF School of Technical Training to undergo No. 13 Physical Training Instructors (PTI) Course. This was history in the making, as she was the first female PTI to be trained and eventually returned to Laverton to assist with the training of recruits.

By 1980 the female and male members of the RAAF were subject to the same service conditions and had almost the same opportunities in the RAAF. Ultimately, it was decided to combine the recruit training of both male and female recruits at Edinburgh. After some four and a half years and a lifetime of memories for 1695 recruits, Women's Training Unit was finally disbanded on 29 May 1981.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| 10 January 1977 | —Squadron Leader M.L. Baxter |
| 30 January 1979 | —Squadron Leader E. Breen |



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE 1921-1996

In November 1992 it was proposed that, as part of the RAAF 75th Anniversary celebrations to be held in 1996, a history of each unit of the RAAF should be prepared. Each history was to be based on the relevant Unit History Record and information up to November 1994 included. The concept was to produce a concise history of each unit which would also serve as a basic reference for further research, and the realisation of that concept has resulted in this unique work.

Volume 1: Introduction, Bases, Supporting Organisations

Volume 2: Fighter Units

Volume 3: Bomber Units

Volume 4: Maritime and Transport Units

Volume 5: Radar Units

Volume 6: Logistics Units

Volume 7: Maintenance Units

Volume 8: Training Units

Volume 9: Ancillary Units

Volume 10: Chiefs of the Air Staff, Aircraft, Bibliography



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