

UNITS OF THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE

A CONCISE HISTORY



VOLUME 6
LOGISTICS UNITS

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UNITS OF THE ROYAL
AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE
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LOGISTICS UNITS

Compiled by the RAAF Historical Section

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Cover photograph: 3 Stores Depot, Brisbane, 1944. The rail siding used by the Transportation and Movements Office and the US Liaison Office is in the foreground.

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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.

Volume 6, Logistics Units, demonstrates the importance of efficient logistic support to the successful operation of the Air Force. It tells the story of those dedicated and professional airmen and airwomen who, sometimes under enemy fire, supplied the personal and operational necessities to enable the Air Force to meet its obligations both in war and in peace.

ILLUSTRATIONS

All photographs appearing in this volume are RAAF official photographs unless otherwise identified.

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21 AIR STORES PARK

CHRONOLOGY

6 November 1944	—formed at Randwick, NSW
February 1945	—advance party moved to Biak
April 1945	—advance party moved to Morotai
4 May 1945	—transport of unit stores to Glebe Island
4 June 1945	—embarked for Labuan
11 June 1945	—landed at Labuan
24 November 1945	—unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

21 Air Stores Park was formed at Randwick Racecourse, Alexandria, Sydney on 6 November 1944. The unit's camp was makeshift, as they found they had to vacate their offices and sleeping quarters on 17 November 1944 for a race meeting, and were not able to move back in until the next day. This continued on for subsequent race days until the unit finally left Randwick.

As 21 Air Stores Park was to provide supply support for 62 Airfield Construction Wing, it concentrated on holding stocks of transport and works plant spares. Several huts were erected in Bourke Road, Mascot to store the equipment, and the unit personnel then spent the next months building up their stocks and completing their organisation and training. The unit was hampered by lack of direction, as the Commanding Officer noted in December 1944 that:

It is felt that the unit suffers from a complete absence of anything on paper to definitely set out its function. Up to the present time, no policy has been established to show clearly just what is expected of the unit. Whilst verbally it has been indicated that 21 Air Stores Park will be a unit under 62 Works Wing and will be responsible for five Airfield Construction Squadrons, no advice has been received from higher authority to set out clearly the exact responsibilities of the unit, as to its stores holding policy, the number of units to service and for how long, or an establishment upon which equipment could be demanded.

During January 1945 the unit had only received 600 tons of stock while its 'sister' unit, 23 Air Stores Park, had received 1800 tons. A visit by the Commanding Officer to RAAF Headquarters ascertained that the

hold-up in supplying stock had been caused by the formation of a new Wing which had been given first and overall priority. However, from 1 February 1945, RAAF Headquarters had decided to give priority to 21 Air Stores Park.

By the end of February, the unit had received a total of 1100 shipping tons, a considerable improvement over the previous month's total. It was now considered that the unit would be adequately equipped prior to embarkation, subject to satisfactory response to hastening action for outstanding demands.

During February 1945 a detachment comprising three airmen moved to Biak Island to prepare for the arrival of the remainder of the unit. This advance party moved to Morotai with the rest of the Wing early in April 1945, with the detachment becoming operational there on 9 April.

Preparations continued for the overseas move. More stock continued to arrive, several hundred tons arriving during March.

One of the unusual tasks undertaken by the unit during this period to prepare for sailing overseas was to teach all non-swimmers to swim. Swimming lessons were conducted over February and March by officers from the Royal Life Saving Society, and it was pleasing to report that the non-swimmers could swim by the end of this period.

On 4 May 1945, the transport began of all unit stocks to Glebe Island Number 2 Wharf for shipping north. The personnel departed by train for Brisbane on 9 May 1945 and next day embarked on the USS *Sea Ray*, together with 6 Airfield Construction Squadron, leaving on 12 May 1945 for Morotai Island, via Biak.

The unit personnel arrived at Morotai on 22 May 1945. However, they only remained there temporarily as they left Morotai on 4 June 1945 aboard Landing Ship Tank 942 as part of the assault convoy heading for Labuan. On 11 June, the day after the assault, the unit disembarked. Temporary arrangements were made to spend the night ashore at the 4 Airfield Construction Squadron camp site. The Commanding Officer wrote in his June report:

The personnel, practically all of whom are serving their first tour in an operational area, behaved well under active service conditions, considering they were brought straight from the south and were landed with the assault convoy on D-day.

2 For the first few days after landing they shared the camp facilities with 4 Airfield Construction Squadron while they were occupied with

setting up their own stores buildings, accommodation and messing areas. The unit's stocks and equipment arrived from Australia aboard the Liberty ship *SS Robert C. Grier*, accompanied by one officer and four airmen. The ship commenced to discharge its cargo on 15 June 1945 and during this time the men were working up to 16 hours a day.

By the end of July 1945, they had built 120 metres of vehicular roads, erected 12 stores, one orderly room, one kitchen, a mess and one transport building. In addition, some 500 metres of deep drains were dug to drain the flat swampy ground where the unit was situated. Notwithstanding the work involved in setting up, many hundreds of issues were made to their customer units. By the end of July, all stores were in their respective building sites, with the exception of 'C' and 'I' groups, which were expected to be housed by 5 August.

However, just as the unit began to get its buildings and storehouses established, the War ended. After early advice that the unit would be returning to Australia, it was eventually decided to disband the unit 'in situ'.

Accordingly, 21 Air Stores Park was disbanded at Labuan Island on 24 November 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

14 November 1944 —Squadron Leader R.A. O'Donnell
4 December 1944 —Squadron Leader F.M.C. Aria

22 AIR STORES PARK

CHRONOLOGY

- 7 August 1944 —formed at Sattler, NT
15 March 1945 —arrived at Morotai
30 November 1945 —unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

22 Air Stores Park was formed at Sattler Airstrip on 7 August 1944 by taking over Detachment 'A' of 28 Air Stores Park, to provide supply support for 10 Operational Group.

Being a mobile unit, tents were used for accommodation and to store equipment. In order to provide some security for stock, wire netting was erected around the stores tents.

By 31 August 1944, approximately one-third of each group was segregated, packed, weighed and measured ready for immediate forward movement.

A separate equipment orderly room was established on 9 October 1944, as distinct from the Headquarters administration orderly room.

The disadvantage of operating from tents became very evident on 31 October 1944 when, at midday, a severe rain storm struck the camp. Tents, buildings and trees were blown down, and unit personnel had to work all afternoon in heavy rain re-erecting tents and endeavouring to protect stock from damage.

In October 1944, 22 Air Stores Park was advised that it would soon be re-locating 'north'. On 8 November, the unit commenced packing up its stock, and on the 30th each member was issued with emergency rations due to the closure of the messes.

The advance party left on 16 January 1945. Stocks, such as Kittyhawk belly tanks, were then forwarded to Vesty's Bond Store building for on-forwarding to the new location. It was not until 15 February 1945 that the camp at Sattler airfield was finally vacated and closed down, and the unit sailed on 14 March 1945 in the ship *Carlos Carillo* for Morotai Island.

The rear party disembarked at Morotai on 15 March 1945. Their new camp site was an improvement over Sattler, having a permanent mess building with wire mesh enclosed kitchen and storeroom already erected.

There was also a building for the headquarters with separate offices for the Commanding Officer, adjutant and equipment officer.

No stores buildings had yet been constructed, requiring the unit personnel to build their own. Another problem was the muddy ground, and 26 loads of crushed coral were delivered to the site by 14 Airfield Construction Squadron trucks to stabilise the ground.

While the unit personnel were busy organising themselves, their jeep was stolen on 6 April 1945. It was eventually recovered nearby by the Service Police, four days later and minus its hood and windscreen.

By 28 April 1945, the unit was responsible for the supply support of no less than 28 separate units in the area. There was a considerable problem with undermanning, which continued until the end of the War.

Owing to the ever-increasing supply support demands being made upon the unit, the possibility of reforming 22 Air Stores Park into a stores unit was considered on 2 July 1945. A new site was selected in which to locate this stores unit, but work to commence building was deferred awaiting a definite date to be given for the reformation. By 31 July 1945, it was confirmed that the newly formed 15 Stores Unit would soon be transferred from Australia and on arrival at Morotai would absorb 22 Air Stores Park. However, the War finished before this could take place.

On Morotai, 22 Air Stores Park was one of the RAAF units which was at the front line. The Allies only occupied a small enclave at Pitoe at the very southern tip of Morotai Island. 22 Air Stores Park's camp site was only a little over 1.5 kilometres from the defensive perimeter.

Despite the Allies only occupying the southern tip of Morotai, they had established a major base there. The airstrip was large enough to operate B-24 Liberator aircraft. To support the RAAF operations, no less than four air stores parks were based at Morotai at one stage.

Corporal Fred Myles joined 22 Air Stores Park on 31 July 1945 at Morotai, and has some vivid memories of what it was like at Morotai. The Japanese regularly infiltrated the area during the night to steal food and attack the unwary and would even join the audience watching the open air movies, occasionally attacking and even killing some in the darkness. No member of 22 Air Stores Park was ever attacked.

Wartime rations were very sparse, mostly the traditional tins of 'bully beef'. Every opportunity was taken to supplement rations. Sometimes fresh fish was on the menu, caught using hand grenades or gelignite.

On one occasion a wild pig wandered into the camp area, was spotted by the Commanding Officer who called out to everyone to 'catch that

bloody pig!’ This was managed after a hilarious chase in and around the tents, and it was fattened up on mess scraps before being butchered for fresh pork.

The search for food nearly caused a major disaster. Fred Myles and several others decided to take a tractor out into the bush to look for paw paws and bananas. During their search they left the track and blundered straight into a mine field. To escape, the tractor was carefully reversed back along the way it came.

Life at Morotai did have brighter moments. Being in the tropics and right on the beach, there was plenty of swimming. The Park also had a pet monkey called Yogi. Yogi had a habit of perching in trees at night and leaping upon the back and wrapping its arms around the neck of the unwary walking by. As the Japanese also did the same thing, with different motives, Yogi caused abject terror to more than one person.

One morning Yogi entered the Commanding Officer’s tent while he was shaving, grabbed a tube of toothpaste and ran off with it. The whole camp roared with laughter at the sight of the Commanding Officer wearing only a towel chasing the monkey around the area, while the monkey squirted toothpaste everywhere.

22 Air Stores Park was possibly the only equipment unit to witness the formal surrender of the Second Japanese Army to General Sir Thomas Blamey, Commander-in-Chief, Australian Military Forces at Morotai on 9 September 1945.

One of the last supply duties 22 Air Stores Park was involved in was equipping released prisoners of war with uniforms and other kit from 12 September 1945. Disbandment commenced on 16 October 1945. The unit ceased ‘trading’ on 31 October 1945, and disbandment was completed on 30 November 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

7 August 1944	—Flight Lieutenant C. Jeacle
10 July 1945	—Squadron Leader A.T. Turley
13 October 1945	—Squadron Leader C. Scobell

23 AIR STORES PARK

CHRONOLOGY

1 April 1943	—formed at Townsville, Qld
27 October 1943	—became detachment of 13 Stores Depot
6 November 1944	—reformed at Randwick, NSW
7 February 1945	—arrived at Morotai
16 July 1945	—arrived at Balikpapan
7 January 1946	—unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

23 Air Stores Park was formed at Townsville, Queensland, on 1 April 1943 before moving to Thursday Island, where it was disbanded on 27 October and reformed as a detachment of 13 Stores Depot.

23 Air Stores Park's mission was to support 75 Wing units located at Higgins Field airstrip. Although located on a tropical island, the unit experienced severe problems with the supply of fresh water. During July 1944 all personnel were rationed to 5 gallons (23 litres) a day.

After only a short spell of idyllic life on Thursday Island, the unit was ordered to return to Camden, New South Wales for re-equipping. On 18 September 1944, all personnel were transported by barge to Cape York, where they left by air for Townsville and thence to Sydney.

After arriving at Sydney on 28 September 1944, the unit was sent to Randwick Racecourse. After being re-equipped, the unit's new mission was to support 61 Airfield Construction Wing units in the field. One of the major drawbacks of occupying Randwick Racecourse was that the unit had to vacate the course for each meeting.

At the beginning of November 1944, all personnel for the new 21 Air Stores Park unit began arriving at Randwick. 21 Air Stores Park was officially formed on 6 November 1944; in the meantime, personnel posted to that unit were administered by 23 Air Stores Park.

The unit departed Sydney on 22 January 1945 on the *Carlos Carillo*, together with 1 Airfield Construction Squadron and one of 61 Airfield Construction Wing's units which they were to support. There was only room on board for 250 tons of supplies and 1200 tons had to be left behind to be sent on later.

Arriving at Morotai on 7 February 1945, all personnel, unit equipment and stock were unloaded into landing craft for transport to the beach.

The unloading of equipment and stock was marred by the ship's cranes breaking down regularly, resulting in a considerable amount of equipment being lost overboard or damaged.

After arriving on shore, the unit had to borrow messing gear in order to provide meals for its personnel. Tents were erected, a well sunk, coral paths and roads laid. Buildings were erected, using unit labour, and once these were up the task of sorting and storing the stock began. The airfield construction squadrons provided some assistance with construction, making shelves, fences and gravel floored huts. The rear party and bulk of the unit's stock arrived on 14 March 1945 aboard the ship *John Sedgewick*.

Because 21 Air Stores Park had not arrived, 23 Air Stores Park was required to provide support to 62 Airfield Construction Wing as well as 61 Airfield Construction Wing. The unit was also called upon to support a total of 60 units in the area and several Australian Imperial Forces and Royal Australian Navy units.

Loading of equipment and stores onto the *Horace Lurton* was completed on 7 July. Personnel and vehicles were then loaded onto Landing Ship Tanks (LST) and arrived at Balikpapan on 16 July 1945.

After unloading the LSTs, the advance party began preparing the unit site some 14 kilometres from Balikpapan while awaiting the arrival of the *Horace Lurton*. The *Horace Lurton* arrived on 24 July 1945 and, by 31 July, most of the stores buildings had been erected ready for stock. There was considerable delay in clearing equipment and stock from the dock due to bad roads and shortage of trucks. Final deliveries of equipment to the site were not completed until 10 August 1945.

On 1 October 1945 the unit was advised that it was being considered to remain at Balikpapan to act as a stores holding unit. Accordingly, an extra large building was erected to store all of the expected unit returns. The job of being the area stores holding unit was delegated to 24 Air Stores Park, leaving the way clear for 23 to disband.

With the last stocks being cleared on 30 November 1945, either going to Netherland Indies Civil Administration (NICA) sales or 24 Air Stores Park for return to Australia, 23 Air Stores Park was disbanded at Balikpapan on 7 January 1946.

COMMANDING OFFICER

24 AIR STORES PARK

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 October 1944 | —formed at Amberley, Qld |
| 12 November 1944 | —arrived at Fenton, NT |
| 30 June 1945 | —arrived at Morotai |
| 16 July 1945 | —arrived at Balikpapan |
| 7 January 1946 | —unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

24 Air Stores Park was formed at RAAF Amberley on 1 October 1944, and for the next three weeks the unit was occupied with receiving and building up its stocks and equipment, completing this task on 21 October 1944.

On 25 October 1944, the unit was advised that it was to be re-located to Fenton Airfield in the Northern Territory, where it was to provide support to 82 (Heavy Bomber) Wing, which was then having its squadrons equipped with B-24 Liberator bombers.

After all stores were loaded onto a train at the Bundamba railway siding, two trainloads of unit stocks left for Mt Isa on 27 October. This was followed by unit personnel on a troop train on the 28th, arriving at Mt Isa on 2 November.

After being quartered in an Army camp at Mt Isa for four days, they left by truck convoy for Fenton over 4–5 November. The advance party arrived at Fenton on 7 November, followed by the main party over 10–12 November, the trip from Amberley taking 15 days.

The first task was to unload the trains at the Fountain Head rail siding. Over the next weeks, their own buildings were erected on the unit site, located some 6 kilometres from the operational area. The airmen's mess and recreation room were opened on 22 November 1944, the same day that a thrice-weekly routine equipment run to 9 Stores Depot at RAAF Gorrie commenced.

By 6 March 1945, the camp area was almost complete. Over the next months, the unit set about consolidating the camp into a permanent one; tennis courts were laid and vegetable gardens established. The unit also took an active part in sporting competitions with other units in the

locality. Recreation included swimming and picnic trips to places like the Douglas River.

At the beginning of June, the unit was warned to prepare for a transfer north. All stores were packed up and personnel and equipment moved to 42 Mile camp on 9 July, then to Darwin where they embarked on the *Cleveland Forbes* on 17 June 1945.

The ship arrived at Morotai on 30 June 1945. Once ashore the men were accommodated in an Army staging camp while they underwent intensive ground defence training. They sailed on 11 July for Balikpapan, arriving on 16 July 1945. It was not until 25 July that the personnel were able to disembark from the ship, and during this time there were two air raid alerts. There was a further air raid alert on 26 July 1945.

After erecting their tents in a temporary camp, the unit personnel commenced building their permanent camp area. Erection of the stores buildings began on 31 July, and clearing of their equipment from the wharf and the central dump was completed over 3–12 August. 6 Airfield Construction Squadron also erected a number of buildings for 24 Air Stores Park, completing these on 14 August 1945.

On 20 August, transfer of technical equipment into the main stores buildings was completed, and two smaller buildings were erected using unit labour. The groups were officially opened for trading on 21 August.

On 18 October, 24 Air Stores Park was advised that it would be the area stores holding unit for Balikpapan to oversee the return and disposal of all equipment from RAAF units in the area.

After clearing all stock by either disposal or return to Australia, 24 Air Stores Park was disbanded at Balikpapan on 7 January 1946.

COMMANDING OFFICER

1 October 1944

—Squadron Leader M. Williams

25 AIR STORES PARK

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 16 November 1943 | —formed as 25 Stores Unit at Richmond, NSW |
| 1 January 1944 | —re-named 25 Air Stores Park |
| 2 January 1944 | —moved to Yerongpilly, Qld |
| 11 February 1944 | —arrived at Lae, Papua New Guinea |
| 12 July 1944 | —arrived Noemfoor |
| 12 December 1944 | —advance party arrived at Morotai |
| 27 June 1945 | —landed at Labuan |
| 19 November 1945 | —unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

25 Air Stores Park was formed at Richmond on 16 November 1943, originally as 25 Stores Unit. Its mission was to carry all equipment to support operational squadrons, and a repair and salvage unit.

The unit was re-named 25 Air Stores Park on 1 January 1944, moving to Yerongpilly in Brisbane on the next day. After final training and equipping, the unit's advance party left in the Liberty ship *Robert Stuart* on 23 January 1944, followed by the main party in the *Edward D. Baker* on 28 January 1944.

Arriving at Lae on 11 February, the unit personnel disembarked and proceeded inland to the Nadzab Airfield area, where they established their camp and stores site. After unpacking, sorting and checking, the first issues were made on 25 February 1944.

When 21, 23 and 24 Squadrons returned to the mainland to re-equip with B-24 Liberators in April–May, they dumped all of their surplus and unwanted equipment onto 25 Air Stores Park. This equipment was mainly Vultee Vengeance aircraft spares, and created a considerable workload for the unit.

Early in May 1944, 25 Air Stores Park was supposed to have a detachment formed at Noemfoor. The unit's first knowledge of this occurred when it began receiving correspondence and issue advice for equipment being despatched to the new detachment. The unit was officially notified at the end of May. It seems that some personnel and equipment had been assembled at Townsville at that time with the

intention of forming a 25 Air Stores Park detachment. This detachment actually became 29 Air Stores Park.

On 1 June 1944 the unit was ordered to prepare for a move to another area. Packing was completed on 9 June, and on 13 June the unit embarked on the US Liberty ship *Franklin K. Lane*, sailing in convoy on 15 June for Noemfoor Island. At Tuam between 1 and 8 July, they transferred into another Liberty ship, the *George Bean*, before continuing the voyage to Noemfoor.

On arrival at Noemfoor, all equipment was unloaded and placed in an equipment pool on the beach. A temporary camp was made there which, as expected, was most primitive—the only shelter available was under tarpaulins, vehicles or anything that could be found. Things were made more difficult by the rain, night air raids, and being in close proximity to the ammunition and fuel dumps.

After two days, the Commanding Officer, Squadron Leader P. Molony, Flight Lieutenant George Lane and 20 men went to the site allocated to the unit, about 6 kilometres over the very bad Namba Road. After clearing an area and pitching their tents, it was discovered that the site was outside the defensive perimeter. They were effectively camped behind enemy lines. Fortunately, there were American machine gun emplacements nearby for protection. The next morning the party very quickly withdrew from this site and another area was promptly requested.

On 20 July 1944 another site was allocated, this one being only two miles from the beach and closer to other RAAF units. The new site was much better located, as orders were then given that all stores were to be off the beach within two days. This represented over 3000 cases to be manhandled, and the new Park site was still just jungle. A bulldozer was allotted two days later, and within 48 hours had cleared an area sufficient to establish the stores site.

Despite the early difficulties in obtaining fresh water, on 3 August heavy rains caused serious flooding. This was followed by more flooding a few weeks later, particularly around and through the bootmaker's and tailor's shops. To ease the flooding, on 18 August all ranks (including officers) were issued with gumboots, picks and shovels to dig drains.

Between 1 and 8 September 1944 the first consignment of Kittyhawk spares was received. The first transport spares were received the next day and on 10 September 50 new motor vehicles for re-distribution by 10 Operational Group.

On 20 September the unit was advised to prepare for a new move. By 28 September, stocks were reduced to 60 days holdings to ensure mobility. By 16 October the unit bootmaker's section was repairing footwear for approximately 4000 personnel in the area, with some 120 pairs of boots being repaired each week.

25 Air Stores Park became responsible for the support of all units located at Noemfoor, and 78 Wing at Morotai on 1 December 1944. On the same day surplus and redundant stocks were packed and issued to the 1st Tactical RAAF Bulk Store for on-forwarding to Biak.

On 12 December 1944 the advance party of the Park left by air for Morotai but it was not until 2 April 1945 that the first stocks left for Morotai. The unit personnel left on the same day and by 25 April the unit was fully operational.

On 8 April, the same day as the unit arrived, the ship *Clarence Roberts* commenced unloading stock from Australia to support the unit's new role at Morotai. On 16 June 1945 the unit commenced its move to Labuan Island. Leaving Morotai over 18 to 22 June 1945, 25 Air Stores Park personnel arrived at Labuan on 27 June, where they waded ashore from Landing Ship Tanks. The orderly room at Labuan commenced operation on 4 July, with the rest of the unit becoming fully functional on 14 July.

In his report on the 'Oboe 6' participation by 25 Air Stores Park, the Commanding Officer advised that the movement of equipment and personnel was 'effected with little confusion'. The only complication was caused at the last moment, when 25 Air Stores Park was notified that it was to organise the transport of 300 Kittyhawk and 200 Spitfire belly tanks, originally to have been moved by 22 Air Stores Park. This meant the rear party personnel had to work overnight from 2200 on 24 June to 0730 next morning, using torches to locate serviceable tanks correctly crated for transport.

At the end of the War, the unit began the arrangements to disband. Surplus stock was transferred to 30 Air Stores Park, and after the camp site was cleaned up and personnel posted back to Australia, 25 Air Stores Park disbanded at Labuan on 19 November 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

17 November 1943	—Squadron Leader J.B. King
20 March 1944	—Squadron Leader P. Molony
22 May 1945	—Squadron Leader I.D. Macinnis

26 AIR STORES PARK

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 1 June 1944 | —formed at Goodenough Island, Papua New Guinea |
| 6 November 1944 | —advance party departed for Tadj |
| 21 January 1946 | —unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

26 Air Stores Park was formed at Goodenough Island on 1 June 1944 by taking over the stock and personnel of 16 Stores Unit. The Commanding Officer of 16 Stores Unit at the time was Squadron Leader Frank Rust, who thus became the first Commanding Officer of 26 Air Stores Park. 26 Air Stores Park supported 8 Squadron, 100 Squadron, 26 Repair and Salvage Unit and 4 Replenishing Centre Detachment, among others.

On 24 June the unit was warned of a move to Noemfoor. This was cancelled on 15 July 1944. Instead, it was decided that the unit would relocate to Tadj.

Being in an operational area, the unit had to provide security for the various storage areas, first when 7 Transport and Movements Office moved, then later when 26 Repair and Salvage Unit departed from the area.

The advance party—the adjutant and 10 airmen—finally left Goodenough Island for Tadj by air on 6 November 1944. On arrival they cleared a site and established preliminary facilities, mainly for messing, plus a water supply, ablution facilities, drainage and latrines. However, lack of building materials, labour and tentage delayed the erection of quarters and stores buildings until the main party and supplies arrived.

The remainder of the personnel and equipment departed aboard the US Liberty ship *Simon Benson* on 17 November, arriving off Tadj on 1 December 1944. They disembarked immediately on arrival and were accommodated at 37 Operational Base Unit for the first three days until their own quarters were completed. It was not until 31 December 1944 that unloading of the ship could commence. The Army and US Forces worked continuous shifts and unloading was finally completed on 11 January 1945.

During the month of December all unit musterings were engaged in the task of erecting buildings. After taking a short break over Christmas, work resumed on 12 January 1945 and was still in progress by the 31st. The unit was 20 per cent operational by 18 January, increasing to 75 per cent by the end of January. 26 Air Stores Park became fully operational at Tadji on 24 February 1945.

The unit's history sheets record very little detail of its activities during the remainder of the War. What is known is that the general conditions at Tadji were harsh, there being a shortage of tents and no buildings provided for storage. Heavy rain fell frequently, making roads impassable. A particularly heavy storm over 21-22 January caused severe floods which washed out bridges and drowned a number of Australian Army troops quartered nearby. Despite these conditions, 71 Wing's squadrons flew many missions from Tadji on operations against the Japanese until the end of the War, and these seem to have been ably supported by 26 Air Stores Park.

Tadji was right on the beach. A surf life saving club to protect swimmers was formed early in 1945 from 71 Wing units, and just as the War finished a sailing club began, using locally built 'VJ' type boats.

At the War's end, support activity was gradually reduced as the various squadrons began returning to Australia and life became easier. The Commanding Officer's report accompanying the December 1945 monthly history report mentions that the unit stood down for the main Christmas and New Year holidays. Fresh rations received from Canteens Services were supplemented by a wild pig trapped by unit personnel, so that ample fare was available for the festive season.

That same report advised that this was the last monthly history report to be submitted as the unit was to disband in the field as from 14 January 1946.

26 Air Stores Park was officially disbanded at Tadji on 21 January.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 June 1944	—Squadron Leader F. Rust
15 March 1945	—Squadron Leader A.E. Knight

27 AIR STORES PARK

CHRONOLOGY

1 March 1944	—formed at Kiriwina Island
16 March 1944	—arrived at Los Negros
24 August 1944	—arrived at Noemfoor
27 February 1945	—arrived at Morotai
7 May 1945	—disembarked at Tarakan
15 December 1945	—unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

27 Air Stores Park was formed on 1 March 1944 at Kiriwina Island. The first Commanding Officer was Flight Lieutenant F.N. Beitzel and the unit's mission was to support 73 Wing's operations.

27 Air Stores Park was to leave on the Liberty ship *Marcus Daly*, and all personnel were required to assist with loading the ship. The ship left for Milne Bay on 6 March 1944, arriving there next day, and personnel were quartered at various units while the ship was unloaded and reloaded. Arriving at Los Negros on 16 March, they loaded into Landing Ship Tanks at Seadler Harbour for the trip across to Hyane Harbour.

They came ashore in very high temperatures, and their camp site was in a coconut plantation which had been virtually destroyed by previous Allied bombing and shelling. The first nights were spent in the open on stretchers under ground sheets and mosquito nets, among the fallen trees.

On 21 March unloading of tents and camp equipment began, followed by the unit's stocks.

On 23 March, 27 Air Stores Park had to provide 15 men from its advance party to help unload the ship. This reduced its own strength to only six airmen, which made setting up and unpacking very difficult. Unloading was finally completed on 26 March 1944.

By 26 March the building site had been cleared ready for the erection of buildings. On 9 April the mess building was completed and the first meals served. Next day the first stores tent opened. Erection of two stores buildings commenced on 12 April. On 15 April 1944 advice was received that all future construction was to cease and on 17 May the move to Noemfoor was confirmed. The unit had become fully operational on 25 April 1944.

Loading commenced on 11 August into the US Liberty ship *Vitus Bering*, and an officer and two airmen were detailed to sail with the ship.

En route to Noemfoor, the ship stopped at a small bay off Wakde Island, where the unit's main replenishment stocks were transferred into the *Robert S. Bean*. The *Robert S. Bean* then joined the *Vitus Bering* for the voyage onto Noemfoor, arriving at Noemfoor on 24 August.

While the advance party was unloading at Noemfoor, the main party was still at Los Negros. It was not until September that C-47s were arranged to transport the bulk of the members to Noemfoor, with the first flight on 11 September, and the second the next day.

By 30 September 1944, the unit was 30 per cent operational, but the unit strength of only 61 personnel was totally inadequate. A large party of armed Japanese was reported to be foraging for food in the area, requiring more guards to be posted and thus increasing the manning problem. 27 Air Stores Park became fully operational on 2 October 1944.

In November 1944 the unit supported nearly 30 separate units.

On 20 December 1944, 27 Air Stores Park was declared the Command Air Stores Park, responsible for the supply of all RAAF units at Morotai and the Philippines. To carry out this new role, it was decided that 27 Air Stores Park would re-locate to Morotai and the advance party left Noemfoor by C-47 on 12 November 1944. Initial stores were then ferried to Morotai by C-47 until, on 23 December, enough stores and personnel were at Morotai to form Detachment 'A'.

The Morotai detachment became operational on 3 January 1945 and on 9 February was redesignated the unit headquarters, while the Noemfoor element became the rear party.

After dismantling the Noemfoor camp, the rear party departed by air for Morotai on 19 February and the remaining stores and vehicles arrived at Morotai on 27 February.

The stay at Morotai was only short. Major stores and equipment were loaded on SS *Nebraska* between 3 April and 12 April, the unit ceased operations on 15 April, and on 4 May all personnel embarked on HMS *Manoora* for Tarakan Island.

The unit disembarked at Tarakan Bay on 7 May. During the first 24 hours ashore the unit came under small arms fire and mortar attack, causing personnel to hurriedly evacuate the houses they had taken over. Personnel from the unit also had to man strongposts around their perimeter throughout the night to prevent infiltration.

By 14 May the area had been secured sufficiently to allow personnel to be taken off manning the strongposts. The storehouse was also completed in time for the first shipment of stock, which arrived on 20 May.

There was a Japanese air raid on the area on 26 May and other raids on the nights of 28 and 30 May, but the bombs dropped caused no damage. In addition Japanese aircraft flew over the area on the nights of 9 and 10 June.

Despite these difficulties, 27 Air Stores Park was declared fully operational on 28 May 1945. The first deliveries of freight at Tarakan arrived aboard the ship *Star Knott* on 19 June 1945.

While some records indicate that 27 Air Stores Park disbanded on 5 November 1945, the 1st Tactical Air Force history sheets show 15 December as the disbandment date. 27 Air Stores Park was apparently still active as at 31 January 1946, when an accountant officer was left behind by 77 Wing to oversee the final disbandment.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 March 1944	—Flight Lieutenant F.N. Beitzel
20 December 1944	—Squadron Leader G.W. Pizzey

28 AIR STORES PARK

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 9 February 1944 | —formed at Winnellie, NT |
| 30 June 1944 | —moved to Darwin Civil Airport |
| 16 March 1945 | —advance party arrived at Jacquinot Bay,
New Britain |
| 14 July 1945 | —arrived at Balikpapan |
| 5 November 1945 | —unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

28 Air Stores Park was formed at Winnellie on 9 February 1944. The bulk of the unit personnel were posted from the strength of 9 Supply Depot, remaining there while the unit's stores were packed and prepared for despatch to Winnellie. On 16 February, the unit took over stores buildings at Winnellie which had been erected by 3 Mobile Works Squadron.

Shortly after formation 28 Air Stores Park took over 9 Stores Depot Detachment 'B', which was then located at 1 Medical Receiving Station at Darwin. 28 Air Stores Park then assumed responsibility for supplying expendable items to all Darwin units as far south as Pine Creek.

Preparations proceeded well with the readying of the storehouses to receive the main stocks from 9 Stores Depot, and on 23 March 1944 the first road convoy arrived. A second convoy arrived on 30 March.

While the unit was being established, Detachment 'A' was stationed at Coomalie airstrip to act as the unit headquarters. This detachment moved to Winnellie on 29 March 1944 and 28 Air Stores Park officially opened for business at Winnellie on 1 April.

On 13 May 1944, advice was received to establish a detachment at Sattler Airfield. The advance party left Winnellie on 16 May, followed by the main party on 19 May, with Detachment 'A' becoming operational at Sattler on 22 May.

The formation of Detachment 'B' at Batchelor was to support the medium bomber squadrons and it became fully operational on 3 June 1944.

On 1 June 1944, the unit had been advised to vacate Winnellie, enabling 9 Stores Depot to move into the site, and to re-locate locally in

the Darwin area. A site adjacent to 7 Repair and Servicing Unit at the northern end of the Darwin Civil Airfield was chosen on 7 June.

28 Air Stores Park vacated Winnellie on 30 June 1944, after 26 members travelled to Sattler to join Detachment 'A'.

During July 1944, the unit set about consolidating the camp site at the Darwin Civil Airport.

The unit moved to Pell airstrip on 16 August 1944. Work immediately commenced on turning the site into a stores park area. Prefabricated buildings were erected, and a portable hangar constructed. To provide relief from the setting up work, regular swimming trips and picnics were organised to the Adelaide and Daly Rivers.

On 24 February 1945, Flying Officer K.L. Paltridge and Leading Aircraftman T.W. Ingram flew with the advance party from 79 Wing to Jacquinot Bay, New Britain. Unit equipment was loaded aboard the *William J. Stewart* on 6 March. Squadron Leader K.M. Horler and 16 others boarded the X2709 and arrived at Jacquinot Bay on 16 March. The main body of the unit arrived on the SS *Bontikoe* on 9 May.

By 30 April 1945 two equipment store buildings were completed. Drinking water was limited. Water had to be carted, and it was rationed out at one bucket per person for a shower each night. In the morning a single mug of water was used for shaving, a sponge wash, and cleaning teeth.

On 21 April 28 Air Stores Park's main party left Darwin on the SS *Bontikoe*, arriving at Jacquinot Bay on 9 May 1945. Next day the unit was advised that it would move to Balikpapan and on 24 May loading of all equipment onto the *William H. Seward* began. The ship sailed on 26 May with the advance party of 28 Air Stores Park and other elements of 79 Wing, arriving at Morotai on 26 June 1945.

Two days after the unit's equipment left, a Royal New Zealand Air Force Corsair Wing took over the empty store houses and camp on a walk-out, walk-in basis.

The main party embarked on the *Joe Fellows* on 10 June, caught up with the *William H. Seward* at Morotai, and sailed in the same convoy to Balikpapan. They arrived on 14 July 1945, although the unit was not able to disembark for six days.

By 23 July the unit had commenced erecting its camp facilities alongside the beach, beginning with the messes and administration buildings.

On 24 July Japanese aircraft bombed the Manggar airstrip only 6 kilometres away from the camp site.

On 25 July, a group of Japanese soldiers attempted to destroy the water installation which supplied drinking water to the unit, but all eight were killed by members of the RAAF Defence Unit.

Later that day there was a Japanese air raid against the harbour. Despite these attacks, the unit continued with the erection of the main stores building, the airmen's mess and kitchen being completed on 30 July 1945.

On 13 September the unit was informed that it was to receive all rifles from all RAAF units in the area. Accordingly, a secure building to store all arms was completed on 27 September.

Over the period 2-7 October the last issues were made and on 8 October 28 Air Stores Park ceased operations and the unit disbanded on 5 November 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

9 February 1944	—Squadron Leader J.C. Clifford
April 1944	—Squadron Leader N. Buchanan
25 August 1944	—Flight Lieutenant L.A. Coleman
20 January 1945	—Squadron Leader K.M. Horler

29 AIR STORES PARK

CHRONOLOGY

26 May 1944	—formed at Aitkenvale, Qld
2 November 1944	—advance party arrived at Noemfoor
24 April 1945	—arrived at Tarakan
22 November 1945	—unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

29 Air Stores Park was formed at Aitkenvale on 26 May 1944, with its mission to support 81 Wing in field operations.

The unit's personnel were accommodated at Aitkenvale but during the first month after formation the unit had no buildings, offices or transport of its own. On 30 May, arrangements were made to use part of 6 Transport and Movements Office's receipts and despatch section building, located near the Malanda Milk railway siding at Garbutt, to store equipment on arrival.

By 27 June, two large sheds at the Garbutt railway siding were taken over. All stores from 6 Transport and Movements Office were then moved into the new buildings on 1 July.

On 25 July the Commanding Officer's Dodge weapon carrier was stolen from outside the Transient Mess by two airmen. The service police managed to track the vehicle down within an hour, whereupon the two occupants abandoned the vehicle while it was still moving. While damage to the vehicle was slight, the Commanding Officer was lent a replacement weapon carrier from 14 Repair and Salvage Unit, and the two airmen got 30 days detention.

The unit once again outgrew its storage capacity, and on 29 July moved into a larger shed at the same location.

Building up unit stocks continued, and on 8 August the kitchen and medical huts were completed.

The RAAF Canteen took over the largest of the sheds for its own goods on 14 August, forcing all of 29 Air Stores Park's vehicles and more equipment to be stored out in the open. A large tent was erected at the Garbutt siding 10 days later in an attempt to provide some shelter for the transport section.



1 Stores Depot



'R' Group, 11 Stores Depot, Townsville, circa 1950



Outdoor storage area—2 Stores Depot, May 1944



2 Stores Depot Officers Mess



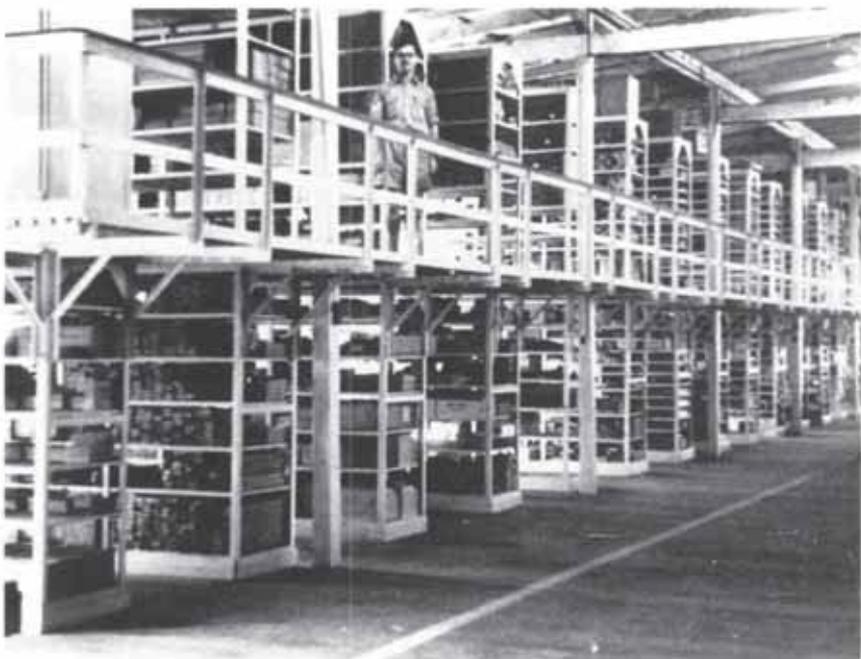
'Martins Corner'—2 Stores Depot headquarters, May 1944



2 Stores Depot WAAF swimming team display their trophy, 1943



2 Stores Depot band



Flight Sergeant Dwyer looks out over the aircraft engine storage area, 2 Stores Depot, circa 1943



Receipt and issue of aircraft components, No. 10 site ('B' Group), 6 Stores Depot, 1944



3 Stores Depot—the original Victoria Park building



Stock control office, 3 Stores Depot, 1940s



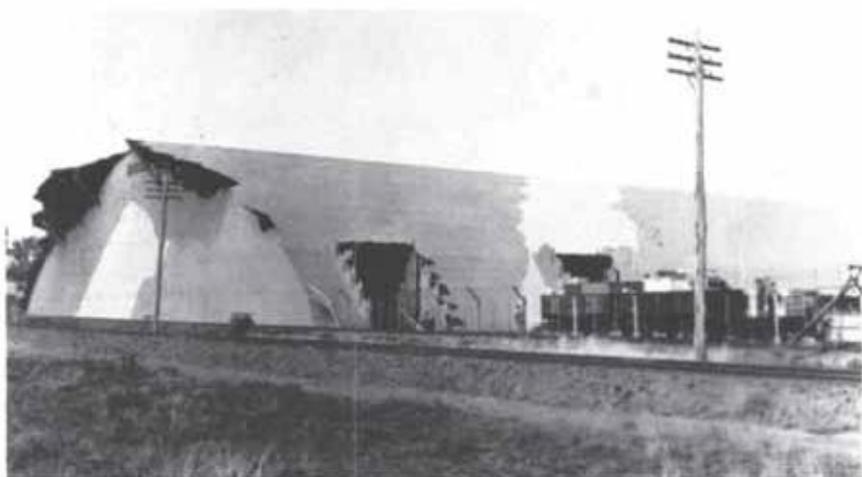
3 Stores Depot Officers Mess at Hamilton



3 Stores Depot headquarters, 1945



A typical bootmakers shop



A typical igloo hangar during the war years, 6 Stores Depot, Dubbo. Note the camouflage pattern and 'broken' edges to disguise the doorways and roofline



An aerial view of 6 Stores Depot, 1940s

The Mono Fruit Preserving Company building in Bayswater Avenue was taken over on 21 August 1944 to relieve the storage difficulties at the railway siding. However, because this building was about 8 kilometres from Garbutt, special guard arrangements had to be made.

The unit was granted permission by the Townsville City Council to erect six tents on Magnetic Island for a recreation camp. This camp was located at Arcadia, right on Alma Beach.

A small advance party comprising Flight Lieutenant B.A.J. Larkin and four other ranks arrived at Noemfoor by air on 2 November 1944 to establish the advance party detachment there. Their first task was to locate, house and check equipment that had been forwarded direct to the island. By 30 November 1944 they were able to commence issues of equipment in short supply to the island's various units.

Leading Aircraftman W. Tatters was one of the members of the advance party, and recalls that the aircraft landed on part of the airstrip that was in American hands and they were unceremoniously dumped on the airstrip and left to fend for themselves. There was continuous rocket and gunfire passing overhead from ships off shore.

The advance party was taken in by United States Navy 'Seabees' and allocated a camp area near the end of the bomber strip to establish the unit's storehouses and camp.

There were many 'red' alerts, with anti-aircraft guns located nearby firing on the Japanese planes. Eventually a 20-kilometre defensive perimeter was established which provided a measure of security.

Back in Australia, it was proposed that 29 Air Stores Park would become self-sufficient and establish its own camp area. On 17 November 1944, the move commenced to the ex-20 Medical Receiving Station site at nearby Fulham Road.

On 10 March 1945, the unit embarked on the *Carlos Carrillo*, just in time for the ship to meet up with a cyclone in the Coral Sea. A bulldozer and mobile cooker broke loose in the hold and began to batter against the side of the ship with every roll. The ship stopped at Biak to join up with a convoy and escorts, and arrived at Morotai on 25 March.

On 14 April the unit suspended operations and began preparing for a move, with the advance party sailing aboard the *Westralia* for Tarakan. On arrival at Tarakan, there was a delay of several days before the advance party could disembark from the ship, as Japanese troops still occupied various sites allotted to 78 Wing units.

The main party, stock, and vehicles left Morotai in convoy on 20 April, arriving at Tarakan on 24 April. The shore was being shelled by the escorting corvettes, and American Lockheed Lightnings strafed and dropped napalm on enemy positions. The Japanese were firing back from heavily defended positions.

Landing was along ships pontoons, although it took a long time before the unit's trucks were able to be brought ashore. Camp was established a little over 1.5 kilometres inland, with the stores depot in some buildings that had been bombed and strafed.

By 13 May 1945, the unit was 10 per cent operational. During the day, all musterings worked at normal duties, establishing the camp, and at night were called upon to man security guard posts. All unit members were trained in the use of Bren light machine guns and Thompson sub-machine guns.

There were also several Japanese air raids, but these caused little damage. Apart from bombers, reconnaissance float planes regularly flew overhead (mainly at night) to make their presence felt and to keep the Allies on their toes.

There was an artillery emplacement—25 pounders and 3.7 inch guns—behind the camp, which fired almost continuously during the night to harass the enemy. Japanese artillery fired back from caves in the hills until return fire got too close. Bombing by American B-24 Liberators and strafing and napalm strikes by Lockheed Lightning fighters on the Japanese-occupied Margy Ridge was clearly visible to those in the 29 Air Stores Park camp site.

On 10 August 1945, an unknown person fired several pistol flares in the air and one of these landed on the roof of a storehouse, setting it alight. Despite having the fire under control fairly quickly, an estimated £4500 (\$9000) worth of stock was destroyed.

The unit ceased to function on 5 October. Personnel and stock were absorbed into 27 Air Stores Park, and 29 Air Stores Park was formally disbanded at Tarakan on 22 November 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICER

26 May 1944

—Flight Lieutenant A.T. Anderson

30 AIR STORES PARK

CHRONOLOGY

22 January 1945	—formed at Kingaroy, Qld
22 May 1945	—arrived at Morotai
12 June 1945	—arrived at Labuan
14 January 1946	—unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

30 Air Stores Park was formed at RAAF Kingaroy in Queensland on 22 January 1945. Its mission was to provide in-field support to 86 Wing's Mosquito and Beaufighter squadrons to be deployed to the South-West Pacific Area.

After the build-up of the unit strength and stores over the next several months, the unit's advance party left Kingaroy on 1 May to board the US Liberty ship *Simon Bamberger*. The remaining unit members loaded the equipment and vehicles onto rail trucks at the Tablinga rail head, after which they left by train for Brisbane on 9 May. They were temporarily billeted at the Ascot racecourse, then embarked on the United States Navy ship *Sea Ray*, leaving for a 'destination unknown' on 11 May 1945.

The main party sailed via Biak to Morotai, arriving there on 22 May. They remained there until 5 June, when they embarked on a Landing Craft (Medium) and sailed in convoy to Labuan Island, arriving at Labuan on 12 June 1945. The advance party eventually disembarked on 16 June, followed by the main party on the 17th, and moved into a temporary camp. While they were still aboard the Landing Craft (Medium), the ships at anchor were attacked by three Japanese aircraft on 14 June, one aircraft being shot down.

The unit worked 24-hour shifts unloading the ships, and while one shift party was working on the beach at 0430 hours on 21 June the area was attacked by over 100 Japanese troops. The attack lasted for three hours, with many Japanese killed. There were also several Allied casualties from this encounter, although fortunately none from 30 Air Stores Park. Later, on 16 July, enemy activity was reported at the camp site but there were no RAAF casualties.

A report by Group Captain J.M. Whyte, Commanding Officer of 86 (Attack) Wing, summarising the Wing's participation in the Labuan

landings, stated that all of the Wing's units underwent great difficulties in unloading the ships *Simon Bamberger* and *Creal*. There was little organisation or planning by those running the landing operations.

On 15 July the unit moved from the temporary camp into its permanent site at Labuan. This new site had two buildings in good order—one large and one small—which were put to good use for stores, rations, canteen, messes and administration section. By 17 July, tents had been erected, kitchens, showers and messes were all operating, and the stores buildings were erected. The officers' mess was officially opened on 27 July, followed by the stores buildings next day, allowing general issues to begin.

Although the War finished on 15 August, equipment work continued on. On 29 August an urgent demand was received from a unit for 2000 drab shirts; these were packed and delivered to a waiting aircraft one and a half hours after receiving the demand.

During September additional buildings were erected to store all of the Defence and other equipment being returned from the squadrons and other units of 86 Wing. On 26 September, 30 Air Stores Park was advised that it was to take over all of the surplus Defence equipment for Labuan. This equipment was conditioned, repaired where possible, and packed by 30 Air Stores Park.

The absorption of 32 Air Stores Park began on 15 October, allowing that unit to disband on 20 October 1945.

By November, issues were limited to essential items only. Additional prefabricated buildings were erected to store all of the returned stock from local disbanding units. Arrangements were made for the sales of all 'P' and some 'I' and 'Q' groups to the British Borneo Civil Administration Unit, rather than return this stock to Australia.

On 5 November, 30 Air Stores Park was designated the stores holding unit for all RAAF units at Labuan. Units located at Labuan at that time were 2 Airfield Defence Squadron, 457 Squadron, 1 Air Support Unit, 5 Medical Receiving Station and 16 Air Observation Post Flight.

Loading of stock to be returned to Australia began on 12 November, onto the RAAF's own ship *Wanaka*, and was completed on 14 November.

On 24 November the unit took over all of 21 Air Stores Park's stock (comprising mostly 'C' group plant and equipment spares). 30 Air Stores Park commenced disposing of vehicles having no further use, or unrepairable, by dumping them at sea. Later, on 7 December, the stocks were taken over from 4 Radio Installation and Maintenance Unit. 'G' and

'Y' groups were kept open for issues, while the remaining groups were packed for return to Australia.

On 10 December 1945 control of 30 Air Stores Park was transferred from 86 Wing to Headquarters 1 Tactical Air Force.

All surplus refrigerators were purchased by the Royal Air Force and taken to Singapore. English Mosquito aircraft spares were also delivered to the RAF site at Labuan on 15 December. Of interest, the Royal Air Force also had 80 Air Stores Park in the area. It is probable, but not recorded in the diary, that the refrigerators were issued to that unit.

On 30 December the ship *River Clarence* was loaded with almost all stores, vehicles and plant for return to Australia—leaving only 60 cases of equipment ex-21 Air Stores Park for further shipping. These last cases were shipped over the next two weeks. Nearly all of the stock returned to Australia from 30 Air Stores Park ended up in storage at RAAF Narromine, with 6 Stores Depot eventually arranging the final disposal.

With the last of the unit's stores cleared by sales, disposal, destruction or return to Australia, the area was cleaned up and 30 Air Stores Park was disbanded at Labuan on 14 January 1946.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 3 September 1945 | —Squadron Leader A.R. Hallenstein |
| 23 October 1945 | —Squadron Leader R.D. Cooper |

31 AIR STORES PARK

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 11 March 1945 | —formed at Amberley, Qld |
| 13 September 1945 | —move to Darwin completed |
| 23 November 1945 | —unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

31 Air Stores Park was formed at Amberley on 11 March 1945. In actual fact RAAF Headquarters message O342 of 20 February 1945 advised the formation date to be 1 March, however, formation was delayed until the first officer, Flying Officer S.J.F. Taylor, arrived on posting on 12 March. It was intended that 31 Air Stores Park move to Long Airfield in the Northern Territory to provide support to 85 (Heavy Bomber) Wing, operating B-24 Liberators.

Shortly after formation the unit obtained the use of a United States Army Air Force 'igloo' hangar located about 5 kilometres from Amberley on the Rosewood Road. Although shared with Wing Headquarters and 85 Operational Base Unit, the hangar was ideal, being approximately 60 metres by 30 metres, with a concrete floor, electric power and telephone.

By 16 April 1945, the unit was 95 per cent manned, but had only 28 per cent of its stock requirements. Unfortunately most of the missing stock was B-24 Liberator spares, which were essential to carry out the unit's mission.

On 25 April the unit was warned to prepare for a move to the Darwin area, and the advance party left on 18 May.

Although the stock holdings at the end of May were only 58 per cent of the assessed holdings, 60 tons of equipment were despatched under escort on 2 June, via rail, to Mt Isa for onward movement to Darwin. This was followed by the first contingent leaving for Darwin on 5 June.

The trip from Brisbane to Darwin was a five-day train trip via Townsville to Mt Isa, a four-day Army truck trip to Larrimah, then another day's train trip to Darwin—a total of about 10 days, providing all the connections were made and there were no delays.

However, the main element still remained at Amberley for several months more, despite repeated requests for information on when it

would be moved. A conference was held on 25 July to plan the move of all 85 Wing's units (including 31 Air Stores Park) to Darwin. It was then confirmed on 6 August that the move would take place, but before it could actually begin, the War finished on 15 August 1945. Despite this, it was decided to continue with the move to Darwin.

All equipment and unit records were transported to the Brisbane wharves on 18 August by Army trucks for 6 Transport and Movements Office to arrange shipping to Darwin. The unit's vehicles were also driven to the wharves at the same time.

After all had been sent to the wharves, the main party departed Brisbane by rail on 1 September for Darwin, going via Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Alice Springs, then Army truck convoy to Larrimah, from there to Darwin by train. The rear party eventually arrived in Darwin on 13 September to complete the unit's move. The unit moved into the former United States 4th Air Depot camp located 10 kilometres from Darwin on the south of the Stuart Highway (approximately where the light aviation area and freight terminals are at the Darwin Airport today).

On arrival in Darwin the unit was advised that it was to function as the equipment collection centre for the receipt of stock and equipment from disbanding units in the area. Effectively, 31 Air Stores Park was disbanded shortly after arrival at Darwin by being absorbed into 9 Stores Depot as a detachment, although some of the unit was required to attend to 31 Air Stores Park's administration, including unloading and processing the unit's equipment, which arrived from Brisbane on the ship *Staggen* at this time.

31 Air Stores Park was officially disbanded at Darwin on 23 November 1945 with remaining personnel being absorbed into 9 Stores Depot.

COMMANDING OFFICER

13 March 1945

—Squadron Leader J.W. Grace

32 AIR STORES PARK

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 6 January 1945 | —formed at Ransford, Vic. |
| 12 June 1945 | —arrived at Labuan |
| 21 October 1945 | —unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

32 Air Stores Park was formed at 1 Personnel Depot, Ransford, Melbourne on 6 January 1945. Storage space for the unit's stores and equipment was allocated in a 'wool' shed at the Dynon Road rail siding.

On 19 March 1945, the unit headquarters moved into its own building at 16 Goodwood Street, Richmond, while the personnel remained at Ransford. On 28 March the unit was advised to be ready to move from Melbourne to Morotai to join 83 Wing.

Airmen were attached to Wonga Park for 'hardening' courses. Approximately 75 per cent of the equipment originally demanded had been received and the unit was ready to move, if required.

On 3 May 1945, 32 Air Stores Park left Melbourne on a special train for Sydney, together with 330 tons of general stores and 15 vehicles.

On arrival in Sydney on 6 May they were billeted at Randwick Racecourse. The next day all stores and equipment were unloaded from the rail trucks and taken to the Glebe Island goods yard for shipping overseas. After the unloading and transfer were completed, the unit's personnel left Sydney by train on 9 May for Brisbane.

Arriving in Brisbane on 10 May, personnel were loaded aboard the ships *Sea Ray* (leaving on 22 May) and *Robert C. Grier* (leaving on 3 June) for the voyage north.

Their first port of call was Morotai on 22 May, where they were billeted ashore at the 83 Wing camp site. On 5 June all personnel sailed together for Labuan Island in a Landing Ship Tank.

Arriving at Labuan on 12 June 1945, personnel were surprised to find their Landing Ship Tank heading for the beach in the second wave of landing craft immediately after the first assault wave had hit the beach.

The site allocated by 83 Wing Headquarters was found to be too small for the unit's requirements, as well as still being virgin bush, so a

temporary camp was set up. A more suitable site was then allocated, but that had been occupied by an Army unit which took its time moving.

The next task was to unload the ship which arrived direct from Sydney on 25 June 1945 carrying all the unit's stores and equipment. To assist in this work and enable the unit to open for issues as soon as possible, a considerable number of personnel were attached from other Wing units. Equipment unloaded from the Liberty ship was transferred to five separate dumps and 32 Air Stores Park took some time to locate and collect its own equipment from other units.

The headquarters section was opened on 5 July, moving to the permanent camp site on 10 July, where unpacking of the unit's stock began on 27 July 1945.

32 Air Store Park was notified that it was to cease functioning on 15 October, when all stores and equipment were to be transferred to 30 Air Stores Park.

Disbandment was completed on 21 October 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICER

6 January 1945

—Squadron Leader I.R. Syme

1 CENTRAL AMMUNITION DEPOT

Power for Action



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1 April 1942 | —formed as 1 Central Reserve at Marrangaroo with sub-depots at Moorebank and Glenbrook, NSW |
| 12 November 1956 | —moved to Kingswood and Marrangaroo became Detachment 'A' |
| 1958 | —Detachment 'A' closed |
| 1 October 1967 | —re-named 1 Central Ammunition Depot (1CAMD) |
| April 1993 | —Bogan Gate reactivated as Detachment 'A' |
| November 1994 | —based at Kingswood, NSW |

NARRATIVE

1 Central Ammunition Depot (1CAMD) commenced life as 1 Central Reserve at Marrangaroo on 1 April 1942. The unit's primary role was the storage and supply of munitions for the RAAF.

The first barracks and messing facilities came into use in June 1942. This was a great morale booster as accommodation was mainly under canvas, and a temperature of -4°C was recorded on 22 June. The establishment of the unit at this time was six officers and 121 airmen.

In August 1942 Picton Railway Tunnel became a storage area for 1 Central Reserve—4 Sub-Depot. By November 1942 the establishment of 1 Central Reserve had risen to 11 officers and 232 other ranks and total munitions stored were 2828 tons, made up of 820 tons received and 1308 tons despatched.

As the War continued and stocks built up, a number of added storage sites were selected, with Marrangaroo as the controlling headquarters. The sites under Marrangaroo's control were Glenbrook, Clarence Tunnel, Kowguran, Albury, Mt Druitt and Kingswood.

In 1943 a War Dog Training School was established at Marrangaroo. This school trained both dogs and handlers and remained at Marrangaroo until transferred to Mt Druitt in 1944.

With the cessation of hostilities, 1 Central Reserve ceased to issue munitions, and the total manning dropped dramatically. During the peacetime phase of 1 Central Reserve, wartime munitions were either 'safe stored' or destroyed.

The outbreak of the Korean War once again activated 1 Central Reserve into issuing munitions to 77 Squadron in Japan and Korea. During this time, a total strength of one officer and 28 airmen managed to operate Marrangaroo and all the sub-depots, successfully moving munitions in support of the war. In 1951 Marrangaroo became the processing centre for National Servicemen. After hostilities had ceased, the Picton and Bowral sub-depots were closed, and in 1956 1 Central Reserve was transferred to Kingswood (Orchard Hills).

The RAAF had first begun using Kingswood for explosive storage early in 1945 in order to avoid the double handling of explosives on consignment to and from Sydney and for local storage, whilst awaiting on-forwarding to the north-west and New Guinea. Alongside the RAAF, there were contingents of the Royal Navy and the Royal Australian Navy who also used the area to store wartime munitions.

On 12 November 1956, the headquarters of 1 Central Reserve moved from Marrangaroo to Kingswood, and Marrangaroo became Detachment 'A'. Kingswood over the next few years was developed by the construction of permanent living quarters and messes. The main headquarters building was completed and occupied on 15 January 1960.

During the next few years, the unit supplied ammunition to 2 Squadron in Vietnam. One of the unit's added functions was to supply explosive experts to supervise the demolition of World War II munitions and bombs throughout Australia.

On 1 October 1967, 1 Central Reserve was re-named 1 Central Ammunition Depot. This unit has since evolved into a centre for expertise on the handling and storage of explosive ordnance and continues to supply trained personnel to monitor the safe storage of munitions and as a training centre for engineering officers and armourers in the various

aspects of explosive control and maintenance. In more recent years, the unit supplied munitions to the Allied forces during the Gulf crisis providing, amongst other things, 200 laser guidance systems.

In April 1993, history repeated itself with the opening of Bogan Gate as Detachment 'A' of 1 Central Ammunition Depot. During 1993, the unit worked long and hard removing excess ordnance from Kingswood (Orchard Hills) to Bogan Gate, for long-term storage.

1 Central Ammunition Depot, Orchard Hills, continues to train servicemen in explosives maintenance and storage, and to provide the main storage area for wartime munitions in Australia.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 April 1942	—Squadron Leader G.S. Anderson
29 March 1943	—Flight Lieutenant J.F. Hynds
4 August 1943	—Squadron Leader J.W. Munro
13 April 1945	—Flight Lieutenant A.L. Brownlee
20 December 1945	—Squadron Leader J.F. Hynds
3 October 1949	—Squadron Leader P.B. Jelbart
28 September 1951	—Squadron Leader F.J. Moran
13 December 1954	—Squadron Leader J.G. Townsend
28 January 1958	—Wing Commander A.M. Stewart
15 January 1960	—Wing Commander N.P. Engel
21 January 1962	—Wing Commander R.J. Hunt
22 September 1966	—Squadron Leader C.P. Northey
3 May 1967	—Wing Commander K. Therkelsen
14 January 1970	—Wing Commander R.A. Greentree
4 February 1974	—Wing Commander J.A. Turton
16 January 1976	—Wing Commander B.J. Murphy
27 September 1977	—Wing Commander R.A. Wakeford
17 April 1980	—Wing Commander N. Alexander
5 January 1982	—Wing Commander N.J. Russell
5 January 1984	—Wing Commander R.J. Sonsie
6 March 1986	—Wing Commander L.J. Armstrong
21 June 1988	—Squadron Leader W.J. Lewis
29 August 1988	—Wing Commander E.E. Moore
10 February 1992	—Wing Commander R.I. McDonald

2 CENTRAL RESERVE

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 19 January 1942 | —formed at Albury, NSW |
| 30 September 1944 | —unit disbanded |
| 16 April 1946 | —post-war reformation at Bacchus Marsh,
Vic. |
| 30 June 1961 | —unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

The unit was formed on 19 January 1942 at Albury, New South Wales. The first eight members of the advance party for the new unit had left Melbourne at 0900 hours on 7 January 1942, led by Flying Officer L. Mallen. Arriving in Albury at 2115 hours that evening they spent the night at Ryan's Hotel in the city. The next morning they were joined by a warrant officer and six airmen who had arrived from other areas on posting. The advance party then moved to the unit's site where arrangements were made for power and telephone connections. At the time the buildings were still under construction and on 15 January 1942 a delegation from Headquarters arrived to inspect progress. The original manning establishment was 41 personnel, increased to 70 in October 1942.

The first explosives stocks arrived on 24 January 1942 from 1 Ammunition Depot, Laverton. Although expected to arrive at 0720 hours on that day, the train did not arrive at Wodonga until 1000 hours. Further consignments of explosives were received ex-1 Ammunition Depot on 28 and 29 January and 3 February. More stores arrived from the Army Central Ammunition Depot (which was also situated in the area).

By 9 March 1942, all buildings in the Safe and Danger areas had been completed, with the exception of Building Number 1 (laboratory). An interesting event occurred on 2 July 1942 when a Beaufort aircraft flown by Flight Lieutenant Ryan landed at the Albury aerodrome due to bad weather and mechanical trouble. Flight Lieutenant Ryan requested assistance from 2 Central Reserve as the only RAAF unit in the area, and several of the unit fitters/driver motor transport successfully carried out repairs to the aircraft allowing the Beaufort to fly out on 8 July 1942 for Laverton. This may have been the only time that a Central Reserve carried out aircraft maintenance.

Although nearly all buildings were completed by mid-1942, accommodation remained scarce. Most personnel were billeted in huts, although the guards were in tents. To provide much needed living quarters, four portable huts were received on 4 September 1942 for guards sleeping quarters. Approval to construct additional explosives storehouses and domestic support buildings (boiler house etc.) was given. Officer and sergeants' messes accommodation was also altered in conjunction with the increase in unit strength from 41 to 70.

2 Central Reserve was disbanded on 30 September 1944. There was apparently little warning as the last history sheet ending August 1944 makes no mention of impending disbandment. 4 Maintenance Group Headquarters history records that 7 Replenishing Centre, 8 Replenishing Centre and 2 Central Reserve were all notified on 14 July 1944 to cease functioning from 31 July with the view of disbandment. However, it was noted that due to the large quantity of explosives stocks held at 2 Central Reserve, the unit 'should perhaps be transferred to 5 Maintenance Group Headquarters [rather than disband]'.

In fact, 2 Central Reserve was absorbed into 1 Central Reserve as 5 Sub-Depot in mid-September 1944. 1 Central Reserve managed the site until 2 Central Reserve reformed and moved back to Albury.

2 Central Reserve was reformed on 16 April 1946 at Bacchus Marsh, Victoria, by taking over 1 Replenishing Centre located there. 2 Central Reserve's headquarters then moved back to Albury on 23 April 1946 and took over the unit from the 1 Central Reserve detachment.

On 1 June 1951 the site was handed over to 1 Stores Depot, who used the buildings for storage.

During 1951, planning commenced for the introduction of National Service trainees at 2 Central Reserve. Apart from requiring increased accommodation, the introduction of the planned 26 National Service trainees, two instructors and six staff more than doubled the unit's strength (at that time being only 20). After completing all arrangements, the first 13 National Service trainees (to form the 1st Flight) arrived on 30 July 1951. Following medical, kitting etc., these National Service trainees commenced their Air Force training on 21 August 1951. A second flight of 11 National Service trainees arrived on 10 December 1951.

The first flight of National Service trainees left 2 Central Reserve on 17 January 1952 for Laverton, where they took part in the combined graduation parade on 18 January. On 21 January, these first trainees completed their training and were transferred to the RAAF Reserve.

The unit formed a detachment at Snake Creek, Northern Territory, during 1953. 2 Central Reserve took over the former 6 Central Reserve site at Nokanning, Western Australia, from Base Squadron Pearce on 16 October 1954 as Detachment 'A', 2 Central Reserve.

Training of police dogs was introduced to 2 Central Reserve during 1955. 2 Central Reserve had basketball, water polo, cricket and football teams that took part in local competitions. In addition, they also competed in various sports against both local and Army units.

2 Central Reserve was officially disbanded at midnight 30 June 1961. Mr John Vernon Williamson was appointed as resident caretaker from 3 July 1961 to assume responsibility for the property pending disposal.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

19 January 1942	—Flight Lieutenant Anderson
3 March 1942	—Flying Officer L. Mallen
5 January 1944	—Flight Lieutenant J.W. Munro
18 August 1944	—Flight Lieutenant J.V. Humphreys
22 August 1946	—Flying Officer A.J. Byrne
16 December 1946	—Squadron Leader L.A. Coleman
25 August 1947	—Flight Lieutenant A.J. Byrne
2 November 1951	—Flight Lieutenant T.G. Wood
8 October 1954	—Squadron Leader R. Dutton
29 April 1958	—Squadron Leader R.A.J. White

3 CENTRAL RESERVE

CHRONOLOGY

- 18 August 1943 —formed at Kowguran, Qld
15 August 1944 —unit disbanded, becoming a detachment of
2 Central Reserve
1 March 1948 —reformed at Helidon, Qld
26 November 1954 —unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

Approval to construct an Area Explosives Reserve at Kowguran, near Miles in Queensland was given in September 1942. This unit was to have an establishment of three officers, four sergeants and above and 61 corporals and below. The estimated cost of constructing the buildings and facilities was £39 590 (\$79 180).

3 Central Reserve was subsequently formed at Kowguran on 18 August 1943 to Establishment Table M.132 as advised by RAAF Headquarters signal O/76 of 29 July 1943. The first Commanding Officer was Flight Lieutenant A.L. Brownlee.

The unit had more than the usual difficulties in establishing itself due to the remoteness and low priority for works. Rations were to be obtained locally from the town of Miles, and an entitlement of 3/- (30 cents) per day per member was allowed to purchase food locally. This was organised on 19 August. Word was received by the unit on 3 September 1943 that a new telephone line was to be strung from Miles to provide communications with the outside world. Three days later on 6 September the first furniture arrived, although this only consisted of chairs and a few tables.

On 29 September the unit's power supply was completed and the lights were turned on for the first time that night.

The first stocks of explosives arrived at the railway siding on 3 October 1943 and were off-loaded and placed into the stores buildings immediately.

With the onset of summer, the inadequacies of the flat roofed type of buildings rapidly became apparent. The Commanding Officer's report for November 1943 reported temperatures of '110°F indoors and 106°F (43°C and 41°C respectively) in the shade!' The officers' and sergeants'

messes were registering the highest temperatures, apparently owing to their locations. The problem continued, although during January 1944 some steps were taken to reduce temperatures by lining the worst affected buildings.

During May 1944, the local Volunteer Defence Corps offered to train unit personnel in jungle warfare. This offer was accepted, as although 3 Central Reserve was a static unit, other RAAF units were 'going in' to action with the Army (and in some instances—before) to the north. This training only entailed a few hours each week, so no disruption to normal routine was involved.

The unit enjoyed the support and hospitality of the local townspeople and farmers in the area. The owner of the adjacent property 'Gululmundi', Mr S. Newbery, offered the unit members the use of the tennis courts on his property. The courts were generally in good condition, but required rolling, so the unit members manufactured their own roller, completing it on 27 June 1944. Previously (on 13 March 1944), two 'semi-wild' pigs were donated to the unit for fattening, and these were followed by a number of turkeys.

5 Maintenance Group Headquarters Operations Order No. 3/44, dated 3 August 1944, was received instructing 3 Central Reserve to disband on 15 August. It was originally proposed to attach members of 3 Central Reserve to 2 Replenishing Centre to assist in the handling of stocks. However, 2 Replenishing Centre advised on 31 July that they were not required.

During the first part of August most stocks were sent to Helidon, allowing the unit to be disbanded at Kowguran on 15 August 1944. The site, with remaining explosives stocks, then became a detachment of 2 Central Reserve. With the subsequent disbandment of 2 Central Reserve in mid-September 1944, the Kowguran detachment was absorbed into 1 Central Reserve on 4 September 1944 as 6 Sub-Depot.

3 Central Reserve was reformed again on 1 March 1948 by taking over 2 Replenishing Centre at Helidon shortly after it re-located back there from Darra. At the time of takeover a small detachment was still at Darra, however this was closed down on 30 April 1948 and all remaining personnel transferred to Helidon.

Three 500-lb MC bombs stored in the open in the Danger area exploded on 22 October 1948. This was caused by high winds blowing a spark from outside the Danger area into grass where the bombs were lying. Following this mishap, arrangements began on 24 January 1949 to

transfer all 500-lb MC bombs to Kowguran into permanent underground storage. Two 12-ton railway wagons were supplied by the Railways Department each week until all of the bombs were moved. Transfer began on 14 March 1949 and movement of all bombs to Kowguran was completed one month later on 14 April.

The Commanding Officer and Flying Officer J.W. Keene left Helidon on 4 July 1953 for Charters Towers where they formed 3 Central Reserve Detachment 'B' on 9 July as part of Operation 'Detour'. Flying Officer Keene remained at Charters Towers as Officer in Command of the detachment until the operation was completed on 24 April 1954, when Detachment 'B' was disbanded and all personnel returned to Helidon. Next, 3 Central Reserve Detachment 'D' was formed at Snake Creek, Northern Territory, on 2 June 1954, again as part of Operation 'Detour'.

3 Central Reserve received advice regarding the impending disbandment of the unit on 1 October 1954. On 8 October, 3 Central Reserve became 7 Stores Depot Detachment 'A', Kowguran became 7 Stores Depot Detachment 'B', while 3 Central Reserve Detachment 'D' at Snake Creek in the Northern Territory was handed over to 2 Central Reserve to complete the project. (It was then re-named 2 Central Reserve Detachment 'A' Nokanning, Western Australia.)

3 Central Reserve was officially disbanded on 26 November 1954.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

18 August 1943	—Flight Lieutenant A.L. Brownlee
9 October 1943	—Flight Lieutenant E.H. Goodger
1 March 1948	—Flight Lieutenant R. Dutton

4 CENTRAL RESERVE

CHRONOLOGY

- 1 September 1944 —formed at Milne Bay, Papua New Guinea
- 15 October 1944 —advance party moved to Alexishafen
- 10 April 1946 —unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

4 Central Reserve was formed at Milne Bay on 1 September 1944. The unit was to be re-located to Alexishafen, and in preparation for the move all buildings that could be spared were pulled down ready for transporting.

The camp site at Alexishafen was at 'Mililat' Plantation. The advance party of two officers and 37 men left Milne Bay on 15 October 1944. After their arrival at Madang the lack of motor transport hampered their operations and setting up. Also, at that time the camp was still occupied by the headquarters of the 5th Division.

Loading of 17 barges to convey the men and equipment to Alexishafen commenced on 27 November and the convoy left on 30 November carrying 220 tons of general equipment, including 22 vehicles. The barges arrived at Alexishafen on 6 December 1944, where they beached opposite 4 Central Reserve's camp site, thus making unloading easier, as all stock and equipment had to be transported only 200 metres.

With the impending move of the Army from Alexishafen it became imperative that the unit provide its own water supply. An experimental well yielded good water on 12 December, and by 15 December the well was delivering 1800 litres per hour, ample for the airmen's and sergeants' showers, kitchens and ablutions.

The sergeants' mess was constructed at the water's edge using the prefabricated huts brought from Milne Bay. On 30 December 1944 the whole camp was left in the control of 4 Central Reserve and the planter's house became their officers' mess and quarters. Later on, a tank stand was constructed with a pump drawing water for the mess from a well dug pre-war by the plantation owner.

During this period the Alexishafen unit was non-operational. However, the detachment at Tadjji (formed when the main party left

Milne Bay) supported the attacks against the Japanese by squadrons operating from the airstrip.

One aspect of operations by explosives units not generally known today is that captured Japanese bombs and fuses were recovered, modified and then 'returned' back to the Japanese by Beaufort aircraft. 4 Central Reserve operated a Bomb Recovery Squad which toured all captured areas, such as But, Cape Dom and Wewak, locating, making safe and transporting captured bombs to Tadjj and Alexishafen. During May 1945, some 1850 fuses and over 2000 bombs had been recovered.

The unit's explosives officers made two valuable contributions to the war effort. First, the fusing of 20-lb frag bombs was modified by taking off the tail fuse and screwing the frag into 250-lb incendiary bombs. This caused a much greater scattering of the incendiary pellets and was used very successfully by 6 and 100 Squadrons. Secondly, reconnaissance flares were filled with aluminium powder taken from sea markers. These were timed to burst at a regulated height in the vicinity of Japanese radar stations, where they filled the air with fine aluminium powder, thus interfering with the radar signals. They were used effectively during several landing assaults.

During April 1945, a bulldozer was provided to clear roads in the area, but this was withdrawn before much work was completed. Fortunately, the unit's own grader arrived from Milne Bay shortly afterwards and took over road making. Some bush timber was sawn during the month, allowing the completion of further barracks and explosives buildings over the next few months.

4 Central Reserve's first explosives stocks for the main Alexishafen unit arrived aboard the ship *SS Suva* on 5 May 1945. On 22 June the first shipment of prefabricated iron huts for explosives storage arrived, enabling the temporary 'bush huts' to be replaced. One week later, 567 50-kg and 74 100-kg Japanese bombs were delivered to Tadjj for 'return' back to the Japanese.

At the end of the War, the unit strength was three officers, two warrant officers, two flight sergeants, six sergeants and 89 airmen, total 102.

During August 1945, the plantation resumed operations again, producing copra at the rate of 30 tons a month. With the plantation operating commercially, the future of 4 Central Reserve at the site was in doubt.

Even though the War had finished, work continued for the unit. On 25 August the RAAF's own ship *Wanaka* arrived at Madang carrying explosives stocks for the unit. Later, on 17 September, a non-commissioned officer and four airmen left on attachment to 40 Operational Base Unit at Lae to carry out explosives inspection duties.

Time was also available for more sport and recreation, and personnel from 4 Central Reserve actively participated in the local cricket competitions. Over the next few months, matches were played against the Northern Command Workshops, ANGAU, Northern Command and local Navy units, as well as inter-section unit games.

At the end of 1945, a decision was made to move 4 Central Reserve from Alexishafen to Lae. The transfer began on 23 December 1945. Loading of 110 tons aboard 06-15 was completed on 24 December, and the ship sailed on 4 January 1946. The Commanding Officer left by air for Lae on 2 January to select a suitable camp site in preparation for the move of the unit to Lae.

Tragedy struck on 9 January 1946, when Leading Aircraftman Frank J. Dumont was killed when a box of 10 detonators exploded. Five others were injured.

Drowning of unserviceable ammunition began on 18 February and, to assist in this task, 20 airmen were obtained from 42 Operational Base Unit. All five- and eight-second delay detonators were destroyed on 16 March, all parafragmentation bombs on the 22nd, followed by all semi-armour piercing Mark III 250-lb and 500-lb bombs on 29 March.

4 Central Reserve was never to move to Lae, being disbanded on 10 April 1946.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

6 December 1944	—Flight Lieutenant T.S. Duff
1 June 1945	—Flight Lieutenant C.G. Cooke
November 1945	—Flight Lieutenant A.A. Gillis

5 CENTRAL RESERVE

CHRONOLOGY

- 10 October 1944 —formed at Francis Bay, NT
14 December 1945 —unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

5 Central Reserve was formed at Francis Bay, Darwin, in October 1944. The first Commanding Officer was Squadron Leader J.F. Hynds; later two officers, Pilot Officer E.C. Stephenson and Flight Lieutenant F. McFarlane, were posted in on 20 and 27 October respectively.

During that first month, approximately 600 tons of explosives were received. To store these stocks, 56 bomb dumps were cleared of timber and scrub, and heavy bush timber laid in position as dunnage.

In early November 1944 a further 2000 tons of various explosives stores were received from southern units and the USA Reserve, Darwin, to build up the unit's stocks. Ten explosives buildings were erected, using bush timber (that is, cut-down saplings), during November and by the end of that month a further 26 bomb dumps had been cleared and another four explosives storehouse buildings erected.

Mr Frith, Chief Engineer of the Allied Works Council, visited the unit on 28 November 1944 in connection with the construction of the roads in the Explosives Area. He stated that the explosives reserve was particularly well drained, and he considered it to be one of the best sites in the vicinity of Darwin.

In December 1944 construction of a Receipts and Sorting Platform began. This was 30 metres long by 6.7 metres wide and was made from bush timber, galvanised iron and 500 old drums covered with sand and gravel. This was completed during January 1945.

One of the problems in the Northern Territory was the voracious termite, and an inspection was carried out on 1 January 1945 of all buildings in preparation for the 'extermination of white ants'. Another difficulty in the region was the high grass growth and work commenced on 21 February 1945 to clear the long grass from around all buildings and stores. Grass clearing continued through to April, when controlled burning off was carried out.

Also during January the 5 Replenishing Centre Detachment 'A' Chemical Warfare Section, located at the '88 Mile', was handed over to

5 Central Reserve, being designated 5 Central Reserve Detachment 'A'. An inspection was carried out on 5 February to re-locate the detachment from its location. An area was eventually settled on at the '14 Mile Site', with the final takeover arrangements completed on 7 May 1945.

When 5 Replenishing Centre moved to Morotai Island, the whole of that unit's stock was transferred by road from Batchelor to 5 Central Reserve. This task took 12 days to complete.

On 12 June 1945, following the movement of all 82 Wing units from Fenton overseas, arrangements were made to take over all of 18 Replenishing Centre's stocks. Over 900 tons were transferred, with the last stocks moved in August.

During August, 5 Central Reserve took over the previous United States Mines Magazine at the '5 Mile'. All RAAF mines stored at Francis Bay (some 1372 tons) were then transferred into this semi-underground magazine. At the end of the War, the unit's strength was four officers and 117 airmen.

A Flight Lieutenant Tyler from 5 Divisional Works Office visited the unit on 31 August 1945 to discuss the taking over of the Francis Bay property for permanent post-war use. Francis Bay was used by the RAAF up to 1992, only being closed when a new explosives facility was opened up within the RAAF airfield boundaries.

During September 1945, 5 Central Reserve took over the duties and responsibilities of 9 Replenishing Centre. On taking over, 9 Replenishing Centre's explosives and fuel areas were found to be very untidy and dangerous. In fact, the Commanding Officer's report states that 'the fuel area had no fire fighting appliances of any description'. Considerable effort was required to correct the situation and a bulldozer had to be borrowed to clear rubbish and undergrowth and make firebreaks.

Advice was received during November 1945 that all chemical warfare stocks were to be destroyed, and a specially trained team under the command of Squadron Leader Jeffers was to carry out this work.

On 5 December 1945 North-Western Area directed that 5 Central Reserve was to be disbanded by being absorbed into 9 Stores Depot as that depot's explosives section. This was completed on 14 December 1945, when 5 Central Reserve was formally disbanded.

COMMANDING OFFICER

10 October 1944

—Squadron Leader J.F. Hynds

6 CENTRAL RESERVE

CHRONOLOGY

7 March 1944	—formed at Subiaco, WA
16 March 1944	—advance party to Nokanning, WA
31 January 1945	—commenced operations at Muresk, WA
12 August 1946	—unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

Authority to construct 6 Central Reserve at Nokanning was given in June 1942. The stores were to be 'of semi-underground concrete type, proof against bomb blast, splinters, and front gun attack'. 6 Central Reserve was formed in nucleus at 5 Embarkation Depot, Subiaco (Perth) on 7 March 1944. Flying Officer T.S. Duff was posted to command.

The advance party left 5 Embarkation Depot for Nokanning on 16 March 1944 and by 27 March the unit was considered to be operational. Initial stocks were transferred from 6 Replenishing Centre. 450 tons of explosives stocks arrived at the Nokanning rail siding on 4 May and to assist in the unloading and transfer into the unit's storehouses, four trucks and drivers were borrowed from 4 Transport and Movements Office. Unloading was completed on 7 May, although it was hampered by heavy rain making roads in the Danger area almost impassable. More stocks were received from 1 Central Reserve on 4 June, and unloading was completed on 9 June.

The first issue was 4410 4-lb bombs leaving by rail for Gorrie. On 5 July 1944, 30 500-lb bombs, complete with bases, tails and fuses were issued to 25 Squadron.

A rather disturbing incident occurred on the morning of 3 September 1944 when the cook, Corporal Gorringer, discovered a live hand grenade placed in the furnace under a copper in the airmen's mess kitchen. Whether the pin had been removed or the grenade intended to be set off by the fire, is not known. On 21 September two service police members escorted a member of the unit from Perth to assist in investigations into the 'attempted sabotage'. On 13 October 1944 the person responsible was identified and was escorted back to the unit for further investigations.

46 A recommendation was made in September 1944 that 6 Central Reserve could be downgraded to a detachment of either 6 Replenishing

Centre or 10 Stores Depot. In fact, the Commanding Officer was advised at the November 1944 Commanding Officers Conference that the opposite was to happen.

During January 1945, the unit was advised by Headquarters Western Area that it was to re-locate to Muresk and take over 6 Replenishing Centre. On 31 January, 6 Central Reserve commenced operations at Muresk. A small detachment left behind at Nokanning became part of 10 Stores Depot.

On 27 June 1945 Flight Sergeant Harvey, in company with a RAAF padre, landed his Tiger Moth and became bogged on Northam Racecourse. Harvey was accommodated overnight in the sergeants' mess before returning to his unit and guards were posted over the aircraft to ensure its security.

On 6 July 1945, two members strayed from the 'straight and narrow' whilst in Northam, taking possession of an Army truck without permission and crashing it into a civilian vehicle, injuring four civilians.

The months following the end of the War were routine. During May 1946, personnel were engaged in transferring explosives from Nokanning to Woodmans Point for dumping at sea. This was followed in June by moving explosives from Muresk to Woodmans Point.

On 12 August 1946, instructions were received that 6 Central Reserve was to be disbanded by incorporating it into 10 Stores Depot.

Nokanning continued to be used by the RAAF to store explosives until the early 1960s, first as a detachment of 10 Stores Depot, then a detachment of Base Squadron Pearce, becoming a detachment of 2 Central Reserve, Albury, on 16 October 1954 before reverting to a Base Squadron Pearce detachment on 17 November 1955. The final closure of the site is not known, although a report to Headquarters Support Command on 26 April 1960 mentioned that the '[Base Squadron] Detachment [A] was to be reduced to a caretaker basis in the near future'.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

7 March 1944	—Flying Officer T.S. Duff
10 September 1944	—Flight Lieutenant E.H. Goodger
22 December 1944	—Flying Officer L.O.J. Eynon
31 January 1945	—Flight Lieutenant R.B. Brown
12 July 1945	—Flying Officer H. Cooper

1 REPLENISHING CENTRE

CHRONOLOGY

8 June 1942	—formed at Bacchus Marsh, Vic.
15 April 1946	—unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

1 Replenishing Centre became a separate unit from 1 Aircraft Depot, Laverton, on 8 June 1942. Its mission was to replenish units of Southern Command with bombs, pyrotechnics and ammunition. The unit, located 5.5 kilometres from Bacchus Marsh, consisted of two officers and 29 airmen and occupied 21 buildings.

On 1 February 1943 an Avro Anson, on a night training flight from the General Reconnaissance School at Cressy, crash-landed in a nearby paddock and the crew were accommodated in the various messes at the unit. On 26 March the unit accommodated members investigating the crash of a 79 Squadron Spitfire 19 kilometres south-west of Bacchus Marsh.

During April 1944, members of the unit commenced the unusual task of rendering captured Japanese ordnance safe. This task continued through May, and although not recorded, it is believed that the explosives were used for comparison and experimentation. Additional workload was placed on the unit when 7 and 8 Replenishing Centres closed during the second half of 1944, and the stock from these units transferred to 1 Replenishing Centre.

Life at Bacchus Marsh could be harsh, even if the diet of the troops was augmented by mushrooms, which grew in abundance in the surrounding paddocks, and the rabbits from the same source. In the latter half of 1944, there were severe water restrictions, with water having to be transported from the standpipe at Bacchus Marsh. Restrictions remained in force until January 1945, when the unit was drenched by 40mm of rain in an hour. This caused damage to the gravel roads and seepage into some of the explosives storehouses.

However, drought conditions returned in March. Water from Pykes Creek was stopped due to a blockage in the supply mains, and the Army camp at nearby Darley was forced to transport water from Melbourne. 1 Central Reserve sunk a new well to provide water to supplement the

unit's water supply and, although hard, the water was satisfactory for washing.

At the end of the War, the unit comprised one officer and 36 other ranks, and, although the issue of explosives decreased, receipts into the unit increased due to the disbandment of other units. On 27 March 1946, advice was received that the unit was to cease to function. 1 Replenishing Centre was disbanded on 15 April 1946 and became 2 Central Reserve detachment. 2 Central Reserve was reformed at Bacchus Marsh before moving back to Albury, New South Wales.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

8 July 1942	—Flying Officer C. Collicot
21 August 1945	—Flying Officer T.G. Wood

2 REPLENISHING CENTRE

CHRONOLOGY

15 April 1942	—raised at Helidon, Qld
8 November 1945	—moved to Darra, Qld
2 April 1947	—moved back to Helidon
1 March 1948	—unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

2 Replenishing Centre was raised on 15 April 1942 at Helidon, Queensland, under the administration of Station Headquarters Archerfield. The first convoy of explosives stores arrived on 5 June 1942, which was followed by another 26 truck loads during the following day.

Accommodation was in short supply, with the men having to sleep in bomb storehouse number 23. It was not until 14 July 1942 that two airmen's sleeping quarters, one officers' and sergeants' sleeping hut, messes and a recreation hall were ready for occupation. On 30 June 1943, three semi-underground storehouses and a new guard house were completed, and by 13 October 1943 the strength of the unit had risen to 82, which included additional personnel to man special detachments at the US Naval Mines Depot at Mount Coot-tha.

2 Replenishing Centre remained busy. In preparation for the formation of 10 Central Reserve, the unit took delivery of 975 500-lb bombs, 325 250-lb bombs and 2 508 000 rounds of .30-inch ammunition from the US Army Ordnance Depot at Darra. This was then issued to 10 Central Reserve from 11 January 1944. With the disbandment of 3 Central Reserve on 3 August 1944, personnel and stock from that unit were transferred to Helidon, where the personnel waited posting to other units. The transfer involved the handling of over 205 tons of stores.

Problems were faced with road access into the unit; the road surface deteriorated to such an extent that the unit was compelled to undertake the maintenance from its own resources, in order to prevent the breakage of motor vehicle springs. Another problem was related to beds—instructions had been received in October 1944 that 60 iron beds were to be transferred to 6 Aircraft Depot at Oakey, even though they were still in use. The men of 2 Replenishing Centre fashioned beds from old aircraft cases to replace the iron beds.

During September 1944, stocks of bombs from the United Kingdom were stored in specially erected galvanised iron sheds.

During 13 November 1944 a grass fire broke out on a neighbouring property, and members of the unit were sent to assist in controlling it. More fires broke out next day. One was brought under control close to the unit, mainly because accumulated undergrowth had been removed by a controlled burn-off during the previous month. On the 17th, as a result of a wind change, fire threatened the northern part of the unit and adjacent civilian property. This threat was overcome by the combined efforts of the staff of 2 Replenishing Centre and the civilian property owners.

Having survived trial by fire, the unit faced storm and tempest when, on 30 November, storms caused flooding of low level areas of the unit and washed away a section of the security fence. On 7 January 1945, wind blew the roof of the transport section off, trees were uprooted and the telephone link to Helidon cut for 36 hours.

On 18 October 1945, after an inspection of the US Army Ordnance Depot at Darra, 16 kilometres from Brisbane, it was decided to take over this area. The move was completed by 8 November 1945. At this stage the unit strength stood at 126—the unit had, in comparison to most other RAAF units during this period, increased in strength. Facilities for the men were not as salubrious as those at Helidon, with the men living initially under canvas until igloo huts and amenities were provided.

A grass fire, which was not a danger to the unit, broke out on 12 January 1946. It was allowed to burn itself out, but the press reported that a 'multitude of fire fighters battled a blazing inferno, while bombs and ammunition exploded everywhere'.

By 22 February 1946 the strength of 2 Replenishing Centre had decreased to 42, and the activities of the unit were curtailed in March due to the lack of manpower.

The only exception was the maintenance of rocket motors and the moving of redundant items from Helidon to Darra before dumping them at sea. During June, 5000 tons of explosives were received from disbanded overseas units. These had been shipped aboard the *River Murrumbidgee*, and placed in field storage at the Kowguran detachment.

In November 1946, .50-inch ammunition, rocket motors and all other stock were transferred back to Helidon. The buildings and facilities at Helidon were progressively upgraded, with all the RAAF personnel moving to the site by April 1947.

All unserviceable stock at Darra and Helidon was disposed of by dumping at sea and this task, plus the transfer of stock from Darra to Helidon, was completed by the end of January 1948. On 24 February 1948, work commenced on the laying of concrete slabs for 12 prefabricated huts, and 2 Replenishing Centre ceased to exist on 1 March 1948, being reformed as 3 Central Reserve.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

15 April 1942	—Flight Lieutenant P.L. Nase
8 March 1943	—Flying Officer H.B. Freeman
20 September 1944	—Flying Officer H.A. Pilgrim
21 November 1944	—Flight Lieutenant A.H. Burnard
15 March 1947	—Flying Officer R. Dutton

3 REPLENISHING CENTRE

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 17 July 1942 | —unit raised at Townsville, Qld |
| 6 January 1943 | —completed move to Charters Towers, Qld |
| 24 October 1945 | —unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

3 Replenishing Centre was formed at Townsville on 17 July 1942. The unit headquarters occupied a house at 4 Park Lane, Hyde Park, Townsville.

On 23 September 1942 the unit's advance party left for Charters Towers to establish their permanent unit. However, it was not until 6 January 1943 that the remainder of the unit moved to Charters Towers.

During the first two years the unit's history reporting was very poor, almost the only entries being the allocation in or out of its vehicles. The first entry of note, during June 1944, referred to a disused sentry box being moved to the highest point on the hilly area in order to improve security. This enabled a clear view over the whole area. During the same month it was reported that the vegetable gardens were producing good tomatoes and lettuces for the messes.

During August 1944 orders were received to prepare for the receipt of complete stocks from 14 Replenishing Centre, 29 and 34 Operational Base Units. New shelters were built and existing magazines were 're-shuffled' so as to make the best of storage space. Stocks from those three units arrived during September.

Apart from fortnightly dances (the unit even regularly staged formal balls, the first on 30 August 1944), the unit took an active part in sports competitions, including those with Army units in the area. During November a swimming pool was opened at the camp, although not having the benefit of filtration equipment, it required refilling by the local council every two weeks. Personnel built a shower and sun-house near the pool, using their own resources.

Water for the camp was supplied from the town reservoir, which was pumped from the Burdekin River. During December 1944, flooding of the Burdekin meant that water coming out of the taps resembled 'wet brown mud'. There were insufficient facilities for catching rain water, so the unit had to borrow a water purifying tanker to purify the water supply.

3 Replenishing Centre provided transport and messing to the members of the Wireless/Transmitter Station at Charters Towers during January 1945 when that unit was disbanded. This support was also extended to members of the Radio Installation Maintenance Unit detachment who had undertaken the removal of the transmitting station to the vacated W/T Headquarters.

As a result of the W/T Station disbandment, 3 Replenishing Centre took over the High Frequency Direction Finding (H/F D/F) Station and the Transmitting Station. To support this new role, five wireless operator mechanics and four wireless maintenance mechanics were posted to the unit strength. (An added bonus to this takeover was that a 100-cubic-foot electric refrigerator was also taken over. This was moved into the mess after slight structural alterations had been made to fit it in.)

6 Transport and Movements Office Bomb Transshipment Depot at Cluden was taken over on 21 March 1945. The site was then operated as a detachment of 3 Replenishing Centre.

During July 1945 informal advice was given by the Director of Equipment at RAAF Headquarters that the unit was to be reduced to a detachment for the storage of obsolete explosives, stocks and components.

At the end of the War, the unit strength was two officers, five sergeants, 14 corporals and 78 airmen.

A fire broke out down an old mine shaft on 4 September 1945, but was soon under control. Nevertheless, for the first hour or so after the fire was reported, all airmen worked at a considerable pace to shift several stacks of 500-lb bombs away in record time.

Formal advice was received on 14 October 1945 that the unit was to disband, effective 20 October 1945. All serviceable stock was to be transported to 13 Aircraft Repair Depot at Breddan.

However, the disbandment was deferred pending further advice. Although Administration Instruction Number 34 was received on 22 October, setting out the full disbandment procedures and instructions, verbal advice from the senior equipment staff officers was that disbandment was not to proceed. This was confirmed by a postagram on 24 October 1945. Despite this, 3 Replenishing Centre disbanded on 10 November 1945 by being absorbed into 8 Stores Depot as Detachment 'C', Charters Towers.

The Cluden detachment had been disbanded on 9 November 1945. All remaining equipment had been either issued to other units or returned to 3 Replenishing Centre at Charters Towers.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

17 July 1942	—Squadron Leader J.E. Annells
6 July 1943	—Flying Officer R.B. Brown
November 1943	—Flight Lieutenant J.T. Teague
7 July 1945	—Flight Lieutenant J.V. Humphreys
10 December 1945	—Flight Lieutenant J.F. Pugh

4 REPLENISHING CENTRE

CHRONOLOGY

17 August 1942	—established at Port Moresby, New Guinea
8 June 1943	—moved to Waigani
26 November 1943	—moved to Gili Gili, Milne Bay
1 September 1944	—disbanded and reformed as 4 Central Reserve

NARRATIVE

4 Replenishing Centre was formed at Station Headquarters, Port Moresby, on 17 August 1942. At the time of its formation, the unit strength was two corporal storekeepers and four general hands. The first officer posted in was Flying Officer J.W. Munro, who arrived from 6 Replenishing Centre (Western Australia) via Station Headquarters, Port Moresby, on 15 September to take command of the unit.

At the time the unit was formed, no specific area had been assigned to house it. Bombs, ammunition and associated stores were dispersed at the Hanubado cemetery, the golf link storehouse area, the Rorona airstrip and at the '4½ Mile' area, plus various other points between Port Moresby township and the '13 Mile'. On 27 November 1942 the unit was directed to remove all bombs from the Hanubado cemetery and re-locate them to the '4½ Mile' area, which was then established as the main dump.

The unit headquarters re-located to a temporary site at Milne Bay (believed to be at Waigani) on 8 June 1943. A new site for the unit at the 6 Mobile Works Squadron camp site was selected on 22 September 1943. However, the unit eventually, on 26 November 1943, re-located into a camp at Gili Gili previously vacated by 100 Squadron.

Part of the unit remained at Port Moresby and this became 4 Replenishing Sub-Centre. Another replenishing sub-centre was formed at Goodenough Island on 19 June 1943, followed by one on Kiriwina Island on 11 August 1943.

The November 1943 history report commented that work on establishing the new replenishing sub-centre at Goodenough Island 'was going along satisfactory'. Roads were laid down in the Danger area, the mess (floor) had been cemented and the camp made comfortable.

However, conditions were still very bad. At Kiriwina, some friction had evidently developed between the Americans and the officer commanding the replenishing sub-centre, and this was holding up road works.

At Milne Bay on the morning of 6 December 1943 it was discovered that a Bofors steel shell case being used as a secure container had been stolen. As well as containing secret and confidential matter, and approximately £100 (\$200) in cash, there were also 20 packets of razor blades locked up for security. Obviously, at the time and place razor blades had considerable value to warrant being locked up.

By January 1944 prefabricated huts had arrived at Milne Bay to replace unserviceable tents, and so provided a welcome improvement in living conditions.

During January 1944, the Port Moresby Replenishing Sub-Centre was closed down. Remaining explosives stocks were transferred to 43 Operational Base Unit for management.

Disaster was narrowly averted on 21 February 1944 when fire broke out in one of the Milne Bay Danger area store houses. The building contained 749 100-lb smoke bombs, and quick action by the members of the unit managed to save 687 bombs. However, seven airmen required treatment for minor phosphorus burns. (It seems that these bombs were prone to break down of their own volition, causing fires. In fact, more bombs caught fire during March.) More detail of this fire is contained in a report for 11 Group Headquarters, as follows:

The bombs were stored under a flat galvanised iron roof about 5 yards [5 metres] from a creek. At 1000 hours a Warrant Officer G. Foster noticed a fire among the bombs, and all available men, including cooks, clerks and messmen, were used to isolate the fire which was too extensive to extinguish. The men formed a chain and passed out as many bombs as they could.

The heat was intense and the flat iron roof did not allow the dense smoke to get away, with the result that the men were working practically in darkness. So great was the volume of smoke that it blacked out entirely the Gurney Strip and seven transport aircraft had to be diverted to Goodenough Island. Frequent changes of wind did not help matters and those bombs that were on fire frequently exploded and scattered phosphorous over a radius of 30 yards [30 metres]. Seven of the men suffered phosphorous burns.

Some of the bomb crates were burning as they were carried to safety. The fire was later put out with soda acid extinguishers. The work took about two to three hours in which 687 of the bombs were saved. The fire in the dump burned for about ten days (afterwards).

Commendation of the work of the men who were subjected to considerable risk was received from Northern Command.

Unfortunately, after all the risk to life taken to save the bombs, it was subsequently found necessary to destroy the whole lot as they were not considered safe. It took 14 days to complete the destruction.

A detachment comprising Flying Officer J. Moir and 25 airmen left Milne Bay to establish a new replenishing sub-centre at Manus Island. This was officially formed on 17 March 1944, with a new camp site located, camp buildings erected and bomb bays in the process of formation. Stocks of bombs and small arms ammunition were then moved from the beach to the new camp site. The replenishing sub-centre was declared operational from 5 April 1944.

During April 1944, both replenishing sub-centres at Goodenough and Kiriwina Islands were warned to prepare for a move. The Goodenough centre was to accompany 8 and 100 Squadrons, while the Kiriwina centre was to go with 22 and 30 Squadrons.

Over 27 to 30 April 1944 heavy rains at Milne Bay caused extensive flooding of the approach to the Danger area. Much boxed equipment, including smoke curtain installations, was washed away. Fortunately, the smoke equipment was recovered, and put back into stock after servicing.

In July 1944 the unit was advised that it was to be disbanded by being reformed into 4 Central Reserve. In preparation, surplus stocks were segregated for subsequent issue to 10 Replenishing Centre, and other stocks were issued to Noemfoor. Other stock was set aside for the establishment of 41, 43, 45 and 46 Operational Base Units. The Commanding Officer together with the senior equipment staff officer and the command armament officer went to the Madang area to select the camp site for the new Central Reserve. Eventually, a site at Alexishafen (about 32 kilometres west of Madang) was chosen.

4 Replenishing Centre disbanded on 1 September 1944 at Milne Bay by being reformed into 4 Central Reserve, which then was re-located at Alexishafen.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

15 September 1942 —Flying Officer J.W. Munro

27 October 1943 —Squadron Leader A.L.A. Brownlee

5 REPLENISHING CENTRE

CHRONOLOGY

22 June 1942	—raised at Batchelor, NT
15 July 1942	—moved to Katherine, NT
20 August 1943	—completed move to Green Ant Creek, NT
1 March 1944	—completed move to Batchelor
8 May 1945	—completed move to Morotai
23 November 1945	—unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

5 Replenishing Centre was formed on 22 June 1942, at Batchelor, Northern Territory, pending a move to Katherine when a camp site could be selected and set up there. It had a strength of 25 members.

The unit's mission was to manage fuel and oil for both the RAAF and US forces in the area, and explosives stocks for the RAAF. It was to distribute stocks of aviation fuel and oil to landing grounds between (but not including) Adelaide River and Birdum.

The first recorded duty was when a sergeant and 19 men left Batchelor for Pine Creek on 26 June 1942 to receive and stack drums of aviation spirit. This was followed by another party of a sergeant and 10 men going to Brocks Creek on 29 June.

On 6 July 1942 six 3-ton trucks and 10 American servicemen were attached from the US 733rd Quartermaster Truck Company for duty in handling the fuel and oil for American units. They remained at 5 Replenishing Centre until 11 September.

5 Replenishing Centre moved to Katherine on 15 July 1942, and temporarily camped in the Army staging area. The unit establishment was also increased to 151 members. On 17 July personnel moved into the Katherine School site and began preparing this for their permanent camp.

The first recorded handling of explosives occurred on 6 August 1942 when the Birdum detachment shipped bombs from Larrimah to Darwin, Hughes and Adelaide River. During the month of August, most work performed by the unit was handling fuel at Katherine; however, parties operating from Birdum and Daly Waters handled both fuel and explosives. Fuel was stored at the Katherine Aerodrome, Katherine Reserve area and Manbulloo.

During September 1942, personnel not on detachments were engaged in construction of a new mess hut, showers etc. By 3 September, two flights were actively engaged in this activity and one flight began laying water pipes in the camp area on 7 September.

Also on this day, new sites for petrol storage were cleared at Manbulloo, by burning off. Ten airmen had to remain at Manbulloo until early next morning to watch the fires. Two flights of men were sent from Katherine to Manbulloo in the afternoon of 8 September to fight fires, and remained there until 2300 hours.

A party of 24 men left Katherine for Fenton on 26 October 1942 to 'lay down' petrol stocks and stack bombs ready for the arrival of US forces. This was completed on 22 November, with the US services then in occupation of the airfield.

On 15 November the unit moved from the Katherine School grounds to Tindal. The unit headquarters was at Tindal, with a detachment of the unit located at Larrimah, where it took over the control of the Reserve Bomb Dump from 55 Operational Base Unit on 1 January 1943. A detachment of 30 men, under the charge of a sergeant, was maintained at Larrimah.

The Commanding Officer attended a conference on 29 July 1943 regarding the proposed move of the unit to Green Ant Creek. This site was taken over on 4 August 1943 by an advance party of 24 men led by Flying Officer H.A. Pilgrim.

A bushfire encircled the Tindal camp site on 9 August, but the fires were stopped by fire breaks. Eventually the unit headquarters was moved to Green Ant Creek on 20 August 1943.

On 13 August a first alert had been sounded, lasting for three hours before the 'all clear'. There was another alert on 21 August, and on 7 September a yellow alert was called. Enemy aircraft were over the camp on 16 and 19 September, with the final overflight occurring on 12 November 1943.

The unit completed a move to Batchelor on 1 March 1944. The move resulted in a heavy workload during April, the men working 12-hour shifts to handle large quantities of fuel required at the bases at Fenton and Long. It was also during April that a Chemical Warfare Section was raised.

On 20 November 1944 the unit re-located to higher ground at Batchelor in preparation for the wet season and in time to negate the 'running' of Burrell's Creek. In early February 1945 the unit began to

clear all stock to 9 and 18 Replenishing Centres and to 5 Central Reserve, prior to the unit's move to the Pacific area. Preparations commenced on 4 April and on the 19th five members, with the unit equipment, sailed on the *Helena Majeske* for Morotai. The main body of 83 unit members flew by Dakota from Darwin to Morotai on 22 April, arriving on the 24th. On arrival, they were billeted with 10 Replenishing Centre until the unit equipment arrived on 8 May 1945. Personnel of 5 Replenishing Centre took over the responsibilities of 10 Replenishing Centre, which participated in the Labuan landing.

On 6 May 1945, an air raid alert had sounded. There was another on 22 June and the last was sounded on 18 July.

Although the Armistice was announced on 15 August 1945, it was not until 19–20 August that the members of the unit were able to take the two-day stand-down granted to all units.

The destruction of unserviceable explosives commenced during 22–24 August, by dumping at sea. To assist with this task, the unit obtained the services of four DUKWs and a barge on 6 September. Dumping of condemned explosives at sea commenced on the 10th. On the same day, members were flown back to Australia at the end of their tour, or for discharge. One member, a Leading Aircraftman Stewart, was accepted as a volunteer to join the British Commonwealth Occupation Force in Japan.

By the end of September the unit was able to go onto reduced activity, and the winding down was completed, with 5 Replenishing Centre disbanding on 23 November 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

22 June 1942	—Flying Officer D.P. Hart
2 September 1942	—Flight Lieutenant Seobelle
13 February 1943	—Flight Lieutenant J.W. Coulter
February 1944	—Flight Lieutenant E.G. Ohlsen
24 July 1944	—Flight Lieutenant N.H. Berling
20 December 1944	—Flight Lieutenant J.R. Ellis
26 March 1945	—Flight Lieutenant F. McFarlane

6 REPLENISHING CENTRE

CHRONOLOGY

23 August 1941	—established at Pearce, WA
June 1942	—operational at Muresk
30 January 1945	—unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

6 Replenishing Centre was raised at Pearce, Western Australia, on 23 August 1941, but records are sparse regarding the first activities of the unit. It is recorded that the unit was active at Muresk in June 1942, with the first recorded Commanding Officer being Flying Officer W. Grandison, who took the appointment on 8 November 1942.

Ten airmen were injured when the vehicle in which they were travelling overturned in heavy rain in a recreation run between Muresk and Northam. Five of the least injured were released from 118 Australian General Hospital on 10 July 1942.

On 13 August 1942, a US Navy member checked the serial numbers of all Thomson sub-machine guns held at the Centre. Seven days later the US Navy collected various Thomson sub-machine guns and ammunition. Next day they were replaced by Browning automatic rifles, although there is no record of this weapon having been used by the RAAF.

Sergeants Brady and Harris, Corporals McNeil and Imison, and Leading Aircraftman Wallis were commended for their efforts in recovering the victims from an Anson aircraft, which crashed at Mokine on 9 October 1942.

Activity at Muresk was marked by 'incidents'. On 21 October 1942, five flares were observed in a northerly direction from the base (the Army was on exercise); on 11 December a guard reported signal cartridges being fired in the direction of Spring Hill (Army exercises at the Northam Army Camp). On 23 December there was a report of a shooting party firing in to the Danger area. They moved away promptly when accosted by a senior non-commissioned officer. On the night of 13 June 1943, five men were detailed to patrol outside Number 10 magazine after persons had been heard in the vicinity; the intruders were two civilians trapping rabbits. The most embarrassing 'incident' was

when the guard on duty fired warning shots over the heads of cattle grazing close to the fence, who had not reacted to his challenge.

During the early hours of 14 March 1943, a severe windstorm blew down seven tents and demolished three temporary ammunition storage sheds, and a tree branch fell on the roof of the officers' and sergeants' mess. Power lines were brought to earth and a water tank blowing through the unit knocked down the perimeter fence.

A fire on 30 April 1943 threatened a stack of bomb tails stored under tarpaulins on the north side of the unit. 168 tails and 169 containers were destroyed before the fire was brought under control.

Three tenders and drivers from the unit participated in a search for a missing navigator, who had baled out from a Vultee Vengeance on 10 September 1944. The search, centred 11 kilometres south of Southern Cross, was abandoned on the night of the 16th, and the party returned to 6 Replenishing Centre.

Two fire tenders from the unit assisted in putting out a grassfire that broke out to the north of the unit, near Mr R. McMillan's homestead, on 27 October 1944. During 25 November, other fire fighters from the unit aided the Australian Army 7th Supply Depot to put out a bushfire that was threatening several farms at Mokine. Later that day, a fire broke out on a property adjoining 6 Replenishing Centre, but was quickly extinguished by the fire fighting team from the unit.

The unit had stored US Navy stores. After these had been inspected on 20 November 1944, the stock was taken over by the RAAF.

During December 1944 and January 1945, several fires broke out along the railway line between Muresk and Spencers Brook. A fire at the Clark property at Spencers Brook was extinguished on 2 December 1944, and the men from the Army 7th Supply Depot were assisted in fighting a fire at the latter location on 17 January 1945.

6 Replenishing Centre was advised by Headquarters Western Area of its disbandment and the re-location of 6 Central Reserve from Nokanning to take over the site. All files and records were subsequently handed over to Flying Officer L.O.J. Eynon from 6 Central Reserve on 30 January 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

8 November 1942	—Flying Officer W. Grandison
9 July 1943	—Flying Officer A.E. Armstrong
17 August 1944	—Flight Lieutenant R.B. Brown

7 REPLENISHING CENTRE

CHRONOLOGY

19 January 1943	—raised at Port Pirie, SA
27 January 1943	—moved to Gladstone, SA
August 1944	—unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

7 Replenishing Centre was formed at RAAF Base Port Pirie on 19 January 1943, and was attached to 2 Bombing and Gunnery School before it moved to its permanent location at Gladstone, South Australia, on 27 January 1943.

Under the command of Flying Officer A.L. Brownlee, they shared accommodation at Gladstone with an Army unit who vacated several huts for the Air Force unit.

The eight personnel from the nearby 28 Inland Aircraft Fuel Depot were attached to 7 Replenishing Centre for administrative purposes, and personnel posted to the newly formed 31 Inland Aircraft Fuel Depot, Crystal Brook, passed through the unit on 5 June.

By 22 February 1943 work had progressed to the stage that 7 Replenishing Centre was able to accept stocks of explosives, and the first consignment arrived on 7 March 1943. By the end of March one million rounds of .303-inch ammunition, bombs, depth charges and .5-inch and .303-inch armour piercing ammunition had been stored in storehouses 1 and 4.

Although the Army facilities at Gladstone had been taken over by the Air Force as a 'going concern', electrical power was not connected to certain buildings until 24 March 1943, when a switchboard was connected in the guard house. Sharing with the Army had benefits, such as the co-operation of both Services in the provision of film nights and inter-service competitions of a cerebral and physical nature.

On 19 April 1943, helmets and gas respirators were issued to unit members.

On 27 April, the Commanding Officer collected four tons of salvage from the Army Salvage Tender Board in Adelaide. Items collected included timber, shovels, boiler coppers, piping and building material.

The cold weather of April also gave impetus to the erection of sleeping and other quarters for the men. In the interim, an Army recreation hut was converted to accommodate ten airmen, and the sick quarters, transport shed, equipment store and orderly room each slept two airmen.

On 19 May, signal equipment was installed, enabling a landline to begin operation on the 28th. The Signal Section subsequently closed down on 11 June 1944.

During February 1944, a storage reservoir was completed to supply water to the Danger area, but was of little use until fire fighting hoses were supplied late in March.

In anticipation of the disbandment of the unit, wardrobes were returned to store during the first four months of 1944. To overcome this loss, members built wooden wardrobes for their clothes from scrap timber.

7 Replenishing Centre was disbanded in August 1944, when it was absorbed by 1 Replenishing Centre at Bacchus Marsh, Victoria.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

19 January 1943	—Flying Officer A.L. Brownlee
8 July 1943	—Flying Officer H.A. Town
8 October 1943	—Flying Officer A.J. Byrne
20 May 1944	—Flying Officer F. McFarlane

8 REPLENISHING CENTRE

CHRONOLOGY

1 February 1943	—formed at Laverton, Vic.
3 February 1943	—arrived at Redate, Tas.
31 July 1944	—unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

The advance party of 8 Replenishing Centre left Laverton on 1 February 1943 aboard the SS *Nairana* bound for Tasmania, where they arrived on 3 February.

Flying Officer J.F. Pugh, the Commanding Officer, supervised the occupation of buildings at Redate, Tasmania. This site was north-east of Hobart, near the Advanced Operational Base at Cambridge Airfield. By 12 February 1943 facilities were available for the storage of explosives, the first 130 tons of which arrived from Melbourne on the SS *Ngatuka*. The ship completed unloading on 23 February, and all explosives were placed into store at 8 Replenishing Centre.

8 Replenishing Centre provided transport for visiting 67 Squadron crews, and on 7–8 October provided a guard for a visiting Lancaster during the Hobart leg of its tour of Australia on a War Bonds fund-raising drive.

Transport was always a problem. The unit was only eight miles from Hobart, but the small numbers on strength did not justify transport being arranged through the welfare organisation.

On 22 March 1943, the unit was appointed the official Volunteer Air Observers Corp centre for spotting aircraft.

During May 1944, the Commanding Officer reported that living conditions were very comfortable, while messing staff served rations supplied from Army sources 'equal to those procurable in many high class hotels under wartime conditions'. Rations were supplemented by produce from the unit garden which naturally 'creates a great improvement to the food supplied, which is of good quality'. A special grant of £10 (\$20) from Canteen Services was made and it was proposed to keep pigs to use the kitchen swill.

66 Although the May report stated that the conditions were 'very comfortable', that was while the weather remained mild. The report for

July 1944 mentioned that exceptionally cold weather made itself felt, particularly due to a lack of hot showers. However it was noted that, following approval from 4 Maintenance Group Headquarters, a contract was placed to install a boiler for heating water for showers.

As the unit was in a rear area, activities were mostly routine. On 18 July 1944 a signal was received which advised that the unit was to cease functioning on 31 July 1944. All stores, except 500- and 250-lb bombs, were to be transferred to 1 Central Reserve, Bacchus Marsh, Victoria.

The disbandment was unforeseen, as in July 1944 the Commanding Officer reported that arrangements were well in hand for the formation of a composite Officers' and Sergeants' Mess, which would be open to all service members in southern Tasmania.

The unit ceased to function on 31 July 1944.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 February 1943	—Flying Officer J.F. Pugh
30 April 1943	—Pilot Officer G.H. Hall
23 June 1944	—Flying Officer H.A. Pilgrim

9 REPLENISHING CENTRE

CHRONOLOGY

22 June 1942	—formed at Batchelor, NT
16 July 1942	—moved to Pell, NT
3 November 1943	—commenced move to '10 Mile'
August 1945	—last entry in Unit History Record

NARRATIVE

9 Replenishing Centre was established at Batchelor, Northern Territory, on 22 June 1942, to supply stocks of explosives stores to landing grounds situated between Adelaide River and Darwin. Mobile sections were organised to move from place to place within that area.

On 16 July 1942, the unit moved to Pell Airstrip and, on the same day, two vehicles were received from the disbanded Station Headquarters at Batchelor. During July, petrol and bomb stocks were laid down at Darwin, Strauss, Hughes, Livingstone, Batchelor, Pell and Adelaide River. On 26 July a corporal and six airmen travelled to Wyndham aboard the *Patricia Cam* to organise stocks at Drysdale.

9 Replenishing Centre had shared Pell with 12 Squadron until that unit moved. However, on 7 October 1942, the Centre was allotted a new site 1.5 kilometres from the airstrip, and personnel assisted 1 Mobile Works Squadron with the construction of the new camp, completing it on 27 October. It was intended to share the camp with 4 Repair and Salvage Unit and a shortage of tents was overcome by the issue of eight US-type tents. 4 Repair and Salvage Unit personnel shared the messing facilities of 9 Replenishing Unit until their own were completed on 10 November.

Pell was raided by the Japanese during the early hours of 24 October 1942, the sound of exploding bombs giving the first warning of the raid. The first bomb hit eight miles north of the camp and others hit to the east of the airstrip. After the 'all clear' was sounded, an immediate inspection of the bomb dump areas and the guards was undertaken; it was discovered that one bomb had exploded harmlessly 800 metres to the east.

More raids occurred during the nights of 23, 24, 26 and 27 November. Another raid took place on 30 June 1943, when numerous aircraft were heard and a parachute sighted falling to the ground. The latter was

investigated, but any result not recorded. 'Daisy cutters' were dropped in the Pell area early in the morning of 21 August 1943, and three incendiary bombs fell over the Darwin road. There were a further six air raids, the last on 15 September 1943, when anti-aircraft fire could be seen in the area of the Fenton Airfield.

On 23 November 1942 the unit commenced the collection of empty oxygen cylinders, and exchange for full ones, from bases between Batchelor and Strauss. No other replenishing centre is known to have managed oxygen in addition to fuel and explosives.

The unit was responsible for fuel and bomb dumps at Coomalie, Drysdale, Fenton, Wyndham, Bathurst Island, Melville Bay, Millingimbi, Noonamah, Groote Eylandt and the '17 Mile', as well as Batchelor and other local units. Once a daily routine was established, work commenced on a new equipment store and a hut was erected for office accommodation.

On 1 November 1943 an advance party of a corporal and two airmen left for the '10 Mile' to take over a camp site in preparation for the relocation of 9 Replenishing Centre. On 3 November the first convoy left Pell, with the forward echelon leaving on the 4th, and the main body on 6 November. By 8 November tents were being erected at the new '10 Mile' site. Construction work commenced on unit buildings and facilities such as the equipment store, four 450-litre tanks (for gas decontamination), tennis court, and access roads.

Two airmen were killed and another later died of his injuries as a result of an accident at the '38 Mile' whilst travelling to a concert. The men were interred at the Adelaide River War Cemetery.

The advance party from 5 Central Reserve arrived at the '10 Mile' on 27 September 1944, remaining as a lodger unit with 9 Replenishing Centre until able to move to its own unit.

A detachment of eight members from the Mines Maintenance Section, in company with the US Navy Mines Assembly Depot One, left by sea en route for the Philippines. These were followed by three more airmen on 4 May 1945. Little detail is known of their activities, other than that a 'portion of the Island detachment' returned to the Centre during July 1945, but some continued laying operations.

At the end of the War, 9 Replenishing Centre comprised four officers, two warrant officers, one flight sergeant, 12 sergeants, 212 corporals and 98 aircraftmen.

No record was made of the actual date of the disbandment of the unit. The last Unit History Record held is for August 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

7 July 1942	—Pilot Officer Maunder
4 September 1942	—Flying Officer D.P. Hart
21 March 1943	—Flying Officer C.G. Corke
12 January 1944	—Flight Lieutenant F.G. Unmack
6 December 1944	—Flight Lieutenant N.H. Berling
24 March 1945	—Flight Lieutenant J.R. Ellis
25 May 1945	—Flying Officer R.L. Hertzberg

10 REPLENISHING CENTRE

CHRONOLOGY

- 24 November 1943 —formed at Amberley, Qld
- 28 January 1944 —moved to Nadzab, New Guinea
- 3 August 1944 —advance party arrived at Noemfoor
- 20 February 1945 —headquarters established at Morotai
- 1 May 1945 —participated in Tarakan landing
- 24 May 1945 —move to Labuan
- 22 November 1945 —unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

10 Replenishing Centre was established at Amberley, Queensland, on 24 November 1943. Flying Officer H. Cooper led his men and their equipment to board a ship at Pikemba on 17 January 1944. The unit disembarked at Lae, New Guinea, on 28 January 1944, before proceeding to a camp site at Nadzab.

The unit was 50 per cent operational by 1 February, and supplying the needs of 21, 23, 24, 75 and 78 Squadrons at Nadzab by 10 February; 80 Squadron was added early in March. During May 1944 the unit supplied the needs of the Beauforts of 8 and 100 Squadrons, before preparing for a move to a more advanced area of operations.

A 14-man detachment, under charge of Corporals Cunningham and Cormack, left by sea for Cape Gloucester, New Britain, where they took over the responsibility of supplying fuel and oil from 22 Repair and Salvage Unit. Sergeant Tucker flew to Cape Gloucester to take charge of the detachment, which operated from 10 March to 20 June 1944. During this period it issued 548 000 lbs of bombs, 990 160 rounds of ammunition and 84 000 gallons of AVGAS.

Two officers and eight airmen travelled by air to Aitape five days after the landings there. A camp site was established, and the detachment fully operational by 6 March. The detachment took over all the squadron bomb dumps on 17 May 1944, and issued 3 281 600 lbs of bombs, 1 025 000 rounds of ammunition and 168 720 gallons of AVGAS. This detachment supported 8 and 100 Squadrons until handing over all stocks to a detachment from 4 Central Reserve on 31 October, and joining the main unit at Noemfoor.

On 1 June 1944, an officer and 25 airmen were posted to 10 Replenishing Centre, for duty at its Townsville detachment. Four personnel departed from Nadzab for Townsville on 21 June 1944 and by the end of July the detachment was being trained in unarmed defence and jungle warfare. By August, the detachment was waiting to be moved as part of 81 Wing. This detachment finally reunited with the main body at Morotai on 24 March 1945.

On 19 June 1944 the 4 Replenishing Centre (Admiralties) detachment at Kiriwina was transferred to 10 Replenishing Centre. This detachment combined with the Cape Gloucester and Aitape detachments and an advance party from Nadzab, at Noemfoor. By 4 August the unit became fully operational, supplying both US and Australian aircraft operating from the airstrip at Kamiri.

During August the unit took over the responsibility for all aircraft refuelling at Kamiri, using 35 tankers, until 47 Operational Base Unit accepted the responsibility on 16 October 1944.

During the night of 21 September 1944 two emaciated Japanese penetrated the camp in search of food. They were sighted but evaded capture. During the following night, another Japanese was fired on by a picket and, on the 23rd, a single Japanese crossed the camp, despite the effort of the picket to apprehend him.

During 13 November, the Commanding Officer and an advance party departed by air for Morotai. The Morotai detachment was operational on 20 February 1945. The last of the unit's stocks of stores were loaded aboard the *Minnie-M-Fisk* on 11 February and, at the end of February, only 10 personnel remained at Noemfoor.

Unloading of the main stocks from the ships commenced on 2 March 1945. Bombs were stored in a coral pit between the fighter and bomber strips, and the unit was employed until early April with the unloading and storage of ordnance.

Personnel detached to participate in the Tarakan landing departed from Morotai on 23 April, with the main body arriving at Tarakan on 1 May. A temporary camp was established on the beach; not an easy task as the ground was found to be very marshy. The detachment was considered operational on 12 May, the enemy sniper and artillery fire which had caused 'considerable discomfort' gradually becoming quieter.

On 24 May 1945 the Commanding Officer and 25 personnel loaded Landing Ship Tank 1035 in preparation for a move from Tarakan to Labuan, where a temporary camp site was established on 12 June.

Explosives were unloaded during the period 13–14 June, and the stores placed in a temporary area, as heavy fighting was still taking place in the area assigned to 10 Replenishing Centre. A Japanese aircraft, flying directly over the unit camp site, was shot down by anti-aircraft fire at this time. From 15–16 June the unit improved the temporary site and cleared the explosives area while a survey of the permanent site was undertaken. Unfortunately, US aircraft that were attacking a pocket of Japanese in the vicinity accidentally bombed the men. Although they were shaken, there were no casualties.

On the night of 20 June, Japanese troops infiltrated to the rear of the unit's camp, where they were engaged by Australian troops. The ensuing fight lasted all the night and into late morning, with the Japanese suffering casualties. Next night, a Japanese soldier was shot only 50 metres from the unit lines.

On 22 May 1945, 21 members under the command of Flying Officer Bancroft departed from Morotai for Tawitawi, one of the southern islands in the Philippine Archipelago. There they supported 22 Squadron who were, in turn, supporting the Tarakan landing.

The rear party at Morotai departed for Labuan on 21 June 1945, arriving there on the 29th. A detachment remained at Tarakan until the end of the War and, with the neutralisation of Labuan, the main body occupied its new camp site along Macarthur Road during the period 7–10 July 1945.

At the end of the War the strength of the unit stood at 97 personnel, and the removal of all Japanese explosives commenced on 25 August 1945. These were dumped at sea. Work proceeded in loading shipping with materiel for return to 2 Replenishing Centre at Helidon.

The Tarakan detachment disbanded on 18 November 1945, and was followed by 10 Replenishing Centre Headquarters on 22 November. All serviceable stock of stores was returned to Australia, and three armourers were posted to 9 Transport and Movements Office to assist in the movement of explosives stores back to Australia.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

24 November 1943	—Flying Officer H. Cooper
27 March 1944	—Flight Lieutenant V.V. Roland
16 February 1945	—Flight Lieutenant E.H. Goodger
13 September 1945	—Squadron Leader J.W. Munro

15 REPLENISHING CENTRE

CHRONOLOGY

28 April 1943	—established at Edmonton, Qld
31 August 1944	—unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

Under the command of Pilot Officer A.H. Burnard, 15 Replenishing Centre was established at Edmonton, Queensland, on 28 April 1943. The unit took over explosives stocks held by 25 Operational Base Unit, which were stored on a property owned by Mr R.J. Cowie at Sawmill Pocket Road, Edmonton.

Only temporary facilities were erected at Edmonton, as it was planned to move the unit to another area where semi-underground storage would be provided. During May, a site at White Rocks, 10 kilometres from Cairns, was inspected by the Commanding Officer of 15 Replenishing Centre. This proposed site was dropped in September, and another located at Yatee by Flying Officer Sheppard of 3 District Works Office. The new site had suitable tree cover and semi-underground storage conditions. However, the Yatee project was cancelled during January 1944.

During June 1943 a vehicle from the unit was involved in a collision with one operated by the US Army, and during July the water supply from a neighbouring farm house was cut, which meant that water had to be carried by a US Army water tender from a running stream 1.5 kilometres distant. In December, the use of water had to be severely rationed, but plans were presented to obtain water from a waterfall 2 kilometres distant, and the necessary estimate for the work was prepared for submission to 3 District Works Office.

In May, a site previously occupied by a US Army Ordnance Depot Ammunition Disposal Area, which was 5 kilometres closer to the railway siding, was vacated. It was recommended that the permanent buildings required by 15 Replenishing Centre be erected on the site, but this suggestion was not approved.

On 11 July 1944 it was confirmed that the unit was to continue on a temporary basis, and only works which were considered essential for the efficiency of the unit would be undertaken. On 31 July, in accordance

with this direction, concrete floors were laid in the prefabricated huts used for the storage of fuses and ammunition. Unit labour was used to erect temporary wood and iron buildings during the latter days of July.

During 23 August 1944, the unit began the total despatch of all 'J' Group stores to 3 Replenishing Centre. Three days later other stock was despatched to 18 Replenishing Centre and, on the 28th, a consignment of 250-lb bombs was set aside for issue to 10 Replenishing Centre.

On 31 August the unit ceased to function as a replenishing centre.

COMMANDING OFFICER

28 April 1943

—Pilot Officer A.H. Burnard

17 REPLENISHING CENTRE

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| 3 February 1943 | —raised at Bowral, NSW |
| 1 December 1945 | —unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

17 Replenishing Centre was established at Bowral, New South Wales, on 3 February 1943, and its purpose was to serve the explosives requirements of units located in that State. By the end of the month, 774 tons of explosives stocks had been transferred from Picton, and a disused railway tunnel was the main storage area allocated to the new unit. The camp site was owned by the Sydney City Mission, who offered the farm outhouses for the accommodation of the men.

Natural phenomena caused problems for the members of 17 Replenishing Centre. During May 1943, 16 days of continuous rain resulted in the storage tunnel being flooded to a depth of 38 centimetres, fortunately without damage to the stock held there. Fires were also a hazard. During 28 February 1944, members of the unit combined with the local fire brigade to control a fire which was burning 11 kilometres from Bowral, and a small fire broke out on 18 March at 'Hopewood'—where a WAAAF training unit was established—which required the assistance of unit members to control.

During the summer of 1944–45 a number of bushfires broke out which affected the unit. On 17 November six fires were raging in the vicinity of the unit, and calls for help resulted in a party of 12 airmen assisting with the fighting of a fire in the Joadga district. Another 12 men were held on standby after a call for assistance from the Bowral Police. Nine men responded to another call from the Bowral Police to assist with the fighting of a fire at Wombeyan Caves Road on 3 December, and a party was despatched to Fitzroy Road on 30 December. They were recalled due to a serious fire condition at the camp. As the fire raced toward the camp, the storage tunnel was sealed and hoses run out to meet the threat. Two mobile tankers and 15 civilians arrived to fight the flames. Fortunately, a wind change gave the opportunity for a fire break to be burnt from Bowral to the Hume Highway.

The fire which most threatened the unit broke out during the morning of 1 January 1945. Having burnt to within 50 metres of the firebreaks near the incendiary store, the fire was extinguished, with the assistance of the Mittagong Fire Brigade.

Members of the unit were also prevailed upon to mount guard on various service aircraft which landed at Mittagong airstrip. The first was a Stinson Reliant, which force-landed with engine trouble on 29 July 1943, and remained until 12 August. On 14 September 1944 an Airspeed Oxford force-landed, and on 26 November a Tiger Moth crash-landed north of Mittagong. From time to time Wackett Trainer, Oxford, Wirraway, Anson, Dragon, Dakota, Walrus and even a US P-47 Thunderbolt aircraft landed at Mittagong airstrip and were guarded by members of 18 Replenishing Centre.

The physical security of the unit received a boost on 10 January 1944 when 'Paddy' and 'Barney'—a Kelpie/Alsatian cross and Alsatian, respectively—arrived for duty.

The Sydney City Mission facilities were improved by the RAAF and, during November 1944, the members of the unit commenced a project to manufacture toys for the children of the Mission Home, which was adjacent to the camp. Toys were manufactured and presented to the children as a Christmas treat at a special parade on 20 December, at which a Christmas tree had been erected. The ties with the children were further cemented when they were taken on a picnic on Anzac Day 1945.

On 26 June 1945, 17 Replenishing Centre received complaints regarding an aircraft low flying over Bowral and were advised that the aircraft was a Royal Navy Grumman Avenger, flying out of Nowra, New South Wales.

The unit's pyrotechnic display on the summit of Mount Gibraltar contributed to the local Victory in the Pacific celebrations.

At the end of the War, the strength of the unit was 38 officers and men, and the unit disbanded on 1 December 1945. Six airmen remained as caretakers, maintaining the remaining explosives in the tunnel, and became a detachment of 1 Central Reserve when that unit took over the control of the site and its contents.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

6 February 1943	—Flying Officer E.H. Goodger
August 1943	—Flying Officer J.T. Teague
31 August 1944	—Flight Lieutenant K.M. Gollan

18 REPLENISHING CENTRE

CHRONOLOGY

10 August 1943	—established at Larrimah, NT
9 October 1944	—move to Fenton commenced
1 July 1945	—arrived at Morotai
25 July 1945	—detachment landed at Balikpapan
24 November 1945	—unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

18 Replenishing Centre was formed by taking over a detachment of 5 Replenishing Centre, which was located 5 kilometres north of Larrimah, Northern Territory, on 10 August 1943. The unit was to be responsible for the supply of aviation fuel, oil, explosives and ammunition to squadrons operating in the region.

Buildings were erected using unit labour and, by the end of December, the facilities had been completed and camouflaged. Also, in line with other similar units, the garden was producing lettuce, tomatoes, peas and beans to supplement normal rations. At the end of January 1944, a limited capacity electricity supply had been installed. The supply of water at the camp site was a constant problem due to the pump breaking down. During August the pump and bore were condemned, but it was impossible to sink a new bore, so the unit had to persevere with the old.

On 9 October 1944, Flying Officer E.H. Sedgwick and 10 men departed as an advance party, bound for the unit's new camp at Fenton. Equipment departed by road from Larrimah for Fenton on 17 October, and the dismantling of the former camp commenced. By 10 November, only 10 men remained at Larrimah, and 18 Replenishing Centre's move to Fenton was completed next day.

The unit was to supply the requirements of the 82 Wing Liberator aircraft based at Fenton and Long. With their large fuel and bomb load, providing the necessary oil and ordnance for these bombers created an immense workload on 18 Replenishing Centre. At the end of 1944 a pipeline was laid from the railhead to Fenton, with the pumping of fuel through the line commencing on 21 December. This line was temporarily damaged by a 24 Squadron truck on 16 January 1945, but was quickly repaired by the insertion of several new sections. A bulk petrol-issuing

point was established at Long, and both outlets issued 434 508 gallons (1 975 273 litres) of fuel to 23 and 24 Squadrons at Fenton and Long during April 1945.

During May 1945, bushfires threatened the camp, but were stopped by firebreaks.

On 17 June 1945 the unit departed from Darwin on the *Cleveland Forbes*, arriving at Balikpapan on 16 July. On 4 July Flying Officer G.H. Hall and 29 airmen embarked on HMAS *Kanimbla* with a detachment of 5 Replenishing Centre, bound for Balikpapan, where they joined the remainder of the unit, landing on 25 July.

On the 29th, 18 Replenishing Centre moved to its allocated site at the Manggar Road bomb dump, which was found to be totally unsuitable. 1 Tactical Air Force allocated a new site to 18 Replenishing Centre, but this did not have any road access. To overcome this problem, the beach was used in lieu until the road was partially completed on 26 August—but only after problems with the provision of tip trucks, which had been delayed by more 'urgent' work.

On 7 August 1945, the unit took over the bulk fuel tanks at Sepinang from the Army, and commenced operations from there on a 24-hour basis.

Before a decision could be made regarding the ultimate disbandment of 18 Replenishing Centre, a decision had to be made regarding the disposal of aviation fuel and bombs. Serviceable stores were to be returned to Australia, and unserviceable items dumped at sea. To assist with the latter task, 18 Replenishing Centre employed 20 Japanese prisoners of war.

18 Replenishing Centre completed disbandment procedures on 24 November 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

30 August 1943	—Pilot Officer F.G. Unmack
3 January 1944	—Flying Officer L.L. Randell
3 July 1944	—Flight Lieutenant E.G. Ohlsen
16 October 1944	—Flying Officer J.V. Humphreys
21 February 1945	—Flight Lieutenant J.R. Ellis
26 March 1945	—Flight Lieutenant F.A. Niblock

19 REPLENISHING CENTRE

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 30 October 1943 | —established at Marrangarro, NSW |
| 14 March 1944 | —advance party moved to Talmoi, Qld |
| 19 February 1946 | —disbanded at Townsville, Qld |

NARRATIVE

19 Replenishing Centre was formed at Marrangarro on 30 October 1943. On 3 November the Commanding Officer left to inspect a site for the unit in North-Western Area. The site allocated was Talmoi, located on the Flinders Highway and the Townsville–Mount Isa railway in Central Queensland, near the small town of Maxwelton.

The impending move north required considerable organisation, as the unit stored chemical weapons. It was not until 6 March that the advance party, consisting of the Commanding Officer and six men, departed from Lithgow, New South Wales for Talmoi.

Settling in to the new base was hampered by fires. On 13 August 1944, all personnel were called to assist with the extinguishing of a large grassfire on Maxwelton Downs Station, and two more fires broke out in the early evening of 29 August—one at Majuba Station and the other close to the unit.

Members of the unit built a swimming pool in their own time. Completed on 23 September, the 23-metre pool was filled from a bore drain, diverted to provide a continuous flow through the pool.

Twelve general hands were attached to the unit for a week, commencing 1 September, to help unload the train and stack the Chemical Warfare stores which arrived from Lithgow. The train consisted of 33 trucks, which were unloaded by 5 September. Four more rail trucks arrived next day. At the end of the exercise, 2550 250-lb bombs of dangerous chemicals were stored at Talmoi.

On 5 October an electrical power unit arrived and electrical power was supplied to the camp on 11 October, enabling the whole barracks area to be lit. This greatly bolstered the morale of the unit.

On 2 October 1944, volunteers were sought to submit themselves to exposure to 'blister' gas. Nineteen men from the unit applied, but it is not known how many were accepted. However, on 24 January 1946 Leading

Aircraftman F.K. Kibble was presented with a card for good service for 'volunteering to and submitting himself to exposure to blister gas at Proserpine'. On 22 October 1944, 14 armourers from 10 Replenishing Centre and six from 1 Central Reserve left on attachment to the Chemical Research Unit at Bowen for three weeks.

Following the Richmond Picnic Races of 22 October 1944, members of the unit attended the Debutante Ball, where approximately 300 people watched nine debutantes being presented to the unit's Commanding Officer. The unit celebrated its first birthday when it entertained the RAAF welfare ladies from Richmond at a dance held in the recreation hut at Talmoi.

Twenty drums of 'Y3' left under escort for the Australian Field Experimental Station at Bowen on 26 November. This shipment was followed by special shipments to the Chemical Research Unit, Bowen, on 10 January 1945. Another shipment of 20 'smoke cloud installation 500-lb' bombs charged with 'Y3' followed on 15 January 1945.

31 January saw a 'toughening up' course introduced in the unit, which remained in force until March. The course comprised rifle drill, bayonet practice, field signals, communications, guard duties, reconnaissance by day and night and snap shooting and target practice.

The extreme daily temperatures monitored during January 1945, up to 46°C, meant that the maintenance of weapons had to be undertaken at night. In February, two shifts commenced carrying out maintenance, with day and night shifts alternating every week. Technical work of this nature was completed during April, thus enabling normal routine to be followed thereafter.

Two surveyors visited the unit on 4 May 1945 to carry out a survey of the unit, which was completed on 15 May. On the 17th, firebreaks were burned along lines advised by the surveyors.

Official notification of the intention to disband the unit was received on 24 May 1945. Four days later Flight Sergeant Eden left for Breddan to examine the site where it was proposed to store all stocks from 19 Replenishing Centre. He returned with the advice that the Breddan site was quite unsuitable for operational stock.

To demonstrate the unit's appreciation of the hospitality given by the people of Richmond, a dinner and dance was given in their honour on 27 June 1945.

At the end of the War, the strength of 19 Replenishing Centre comprised one officer and 43 other ranks.

With the end of the War, the whole issue of the disposal of chemical weapons had to be re-examined. During November six airmen were attached to 3 Central Reserve, where a successful experiment was carried out to destroy 'Y' by fire. Flight Lieutenants P.F. Trompf and W.M. Myers arrived from Melbourne on 9 December to supervise the disposal of chemical weapons by fire. The first drums were destroyed by fire on 12 December 1945, the last on the 20th. Eight further 'burns' took place commencing on 9 January 1946, completing the destruction of chemical weapons containing 'Y' agent. On 15 January the first release of phosgene took place, and on the 18th, the last—all the phosgene gas on the base was then destroyed. The final task was completed on 23 January, when all the residue was heaped together and ignited.

The next few days were spent cleaning the unit area, which was handed over to civilian caretakers on 9 February. The remaining members entrained for Townsville, and the unit was officially disbanded at that city on 19 February 1946.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

30 October 1943	—Flying Officer W.M. Myers
8 November 1945	—Flying Officer C.K. Moginie

1 STORES DEPOT

Sufficiency Creates Efficiency



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 16 October 1939 | —formed as 1 Equipment Depot, RAAF Sandridge at Fishermens Bend, Vic. |
| 1 May 1940 | —re-named 1 Stores Depot, RAAF Sandridge |
| 2 July 1945 | —advance party raised the RAAF Ensign at the Tottenham site |
| 25 June 1993 | —unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

The unit was formed at Fishermens Bend on 16 October 1939 as 1 Equipment Depot (1ED), RAAF Sandridge, with Squadron Leader J.F.S. Murray appointed Officer-in-Charge of the Fishermens Bend site. The Depot was located in the Port Melbourne docklands area.

The first receipt of stock and personnel came from 1 Aircraft Depot (1AD), RAAF Laverton. 1 Equipment Depot initially was responsible for the receipt, storage and issue of clothing, barracks stores and equipment in several group classes, together with publications from 1 Aircraft Depot. The Depot became a separate unit on 18 December 1939, and in the following May was re-named 1 Stores Depot (1SD), RAAF Sandridge.

At the height of the War, 1 Stores Depot controlled 47 sites in Victoria. This aspect became a concern to the Department of Air hierarchy. Consideration was given by the War Cabinet to acquire suitable land in the Melbourne suburbs of Sunbury, Yarraville or Braybrook for the building of another stores depot. The unit was to be known as 5 Stores Depot and would aim to meet the growing demands by the RAAF on the supply system.

A Requisition for Property was signed on 21 August 1943 and the Tottenham site, located in the Braybrook area, was acquired from the Victorian Government Railways for £33 650 (\$67 300). In the following June, the Minister for Air, Mr A.S. Drakeford, recommended to the War Cabinet the allocation of £332 150 (\$664 300) for the construction of facilities on the site. Building commenced in July 1944; however, by War's end only 75 per cent of the work had been completed. On 2 July 1945, the RAAF Ensign was raised at the Tottenham site for the first time. The advance party of one officer and 10 airmen marked the start of an association with the local community that would last 48 years.

Over the next few years, the Fishermens Bend site was closed and services re-located to the Depot's 'new home', some 8 miles away in the western suburbs, under the command of Group Captain C.C. Probert. During the post-war period, a great strain was placed on the limited staff of 240, who had to contend with handling stores associated with demobilisation of war servicemen, and the receipting of equipment from as far away as Japan. The Depot manning level was a far cry from the 1030 on strength during the height of its wartime operations—when three shifts were being rostered. On average, 1 Stores Depot maintained a manning of 550 service and civilian personnel over the years, reducing to approximately 100 at the time of closure.

During early 1962, consideration was given to re-locating 1 Stores Depot to RAAF Base Laverton. This situation remained unclear until April when the Air Officer Commanding Support Command confirmed that the Depot would remain at its present site indefinitely.

In August of the same year the RAAF Police Dog Training Centre was formally established at 1 Stores Depot. This facility was the forerunner to those operated by the Victorian Police Force and Corrections Department. The same section also played a crucial role in the establishment of the Papua New Guinea Police Dog Squad.

The Depot prided itself on the various types of supply, National Service, Police Dog, WRAAF, tailor, RAAF quality and selected Defence training that were conducted on site since its formation. In the latter years of unit operations the Supply Training School was responsible for supply officer and several airman training courses. The school re-located to RAAF Base Wagga in December 1992 and was incorporated into the RAAF School of Clerical and Supply Training (RAAFSCST). Thus ended a link with training at the Depot that had lasted since the 1940s when the first supply officer course was conducted.

1 Stores Depot became the specialist stock holding depot for a number of items, including hoses, bearings, stationery and clothing. The advent of the computer age in the early 1980s meant an upgrade in stores handling which greatly assisted Depot personnel in ensuring that stock was properly located in the various warehouses, and issues effected in a timely manner.

With the advent of 1989 so dawned the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the Depot. A time capsule was unveiled at the unit by the Commanding Officer, Group Captain C.A. Makin; the Depot's right of exercising its Freedom of Entry to the City of Sunshine was performed in November; and several other Depot social activities were held. Prior to Depot closure the time capsule was re-positioned to outside the RAAFSCST facility, and will be opened on 16 October 2039.

In 1991 1 Stores Depot Drill Team was formed, presenting parades in several country towns which had enjoyed links with the RAAF over the years. The drill team performed in either World War I Australian Flying Corps or current uniforms and, together with favourable comment, revived memories wherever they exhibited.

The last few years of Depot operations saw several awards being won by the unit. In 1990, the Depot was honoured with the Hawker Siddeley Trophy, and in the following year won the Director of Catering Services Trophy. Two years later, 1 Stores Depot became the first Defence establishment to win an award (High Commendation) in the Australian Quality Awards, which recognised the successful introduction of Total Quality Management practices into the Depot operations. These, along with several Tidy Town, Defence Productivity and sporting awards reflect proudly on the efforts of all who have been associated with 1 Stores Depot.

A Ministerial announcement was made in June 1991 to close the entire Depot on 25 June 1993. Under the command of Group Captain C.M. Smith personnel effectively achieved this task. Six closure functions were held between April and May 1993, commencing with a closure dining-in night. Other functions included a Freedom of Entry to the City of Sunshine parade, where the Depot was honoured with parading the Queen's Colour for only the third time; a closure parade where the first Commanding Officer of 1 Stores Depot was present; and an all ranks ball for 600 people. At this final function, a painting depicting various aspects of 1 Stores Depot was unveiled. The painting, now part of the RAAF Art Collection, is on permanent loan to RAAFSCST. Similar to the advance

party in 1945, a working party of five personnel under the command of Flight Lieutenant C.T. Clarke remained until early August 1993 to finalise any outstanding matters related to the disbandment of 1 Stores Depot.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

October 1939	—Wing Commander J.F.S. Murray
July 1940	—Group Captain T.R. Marsden
August 1942	—Group Captain J.F.S. Murray
August 1946	—Group Captain C.C. Probert
August 1950	—Group Captain W.D. Mason
April 1951	—Group Captain I. Yeaman
April 1953	—Group Captain J.F. Lawson
February 1955	—Group Captain J. Martin
July 1956	—Group Captain E.A. Jackson
July 1958	—Wing Commander D.R. McKendry
October 1960	—Group Captain G.P.S. Thomas
December 1962	—Group Captain I. Yeaman
September 1963	—Group Captain G.K. Graham
December 1965	—Group Captain D.H. Boucher
December 1969	—Group Captain A.G. Simpson
January 1971	—Wing Commander J.W. Fearn
June 1971	—Group Captain K.T. Casey
March 1974	—Group Captain K.A.J. Rogers
May 1976	—Group Captain C.J. Fagan
January 1980	—Group Captain A.L. Furniss
January 1981	—Group Captain T. Holyoake
February 1983	—Group Captain B.J. Noonan
February 1985	—Group Captain P.G. Newton
December 1986	—Group Captain A.J.M. Spooner
January 1988	—Group Captain C.A. Makin
January 1990	—Group Captain C.M. Smith



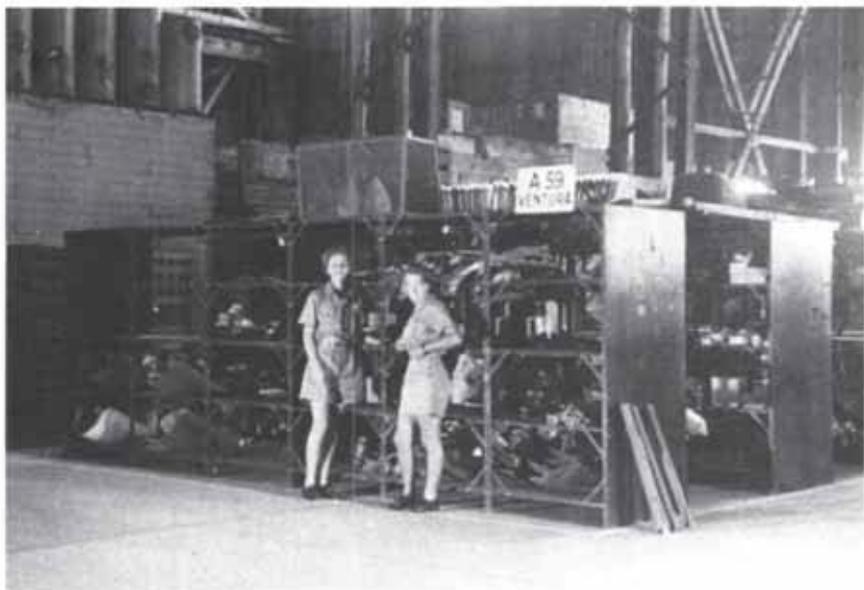
Guard dog graduation parade, 7 Stores Depot



7 Stores Depot storage building



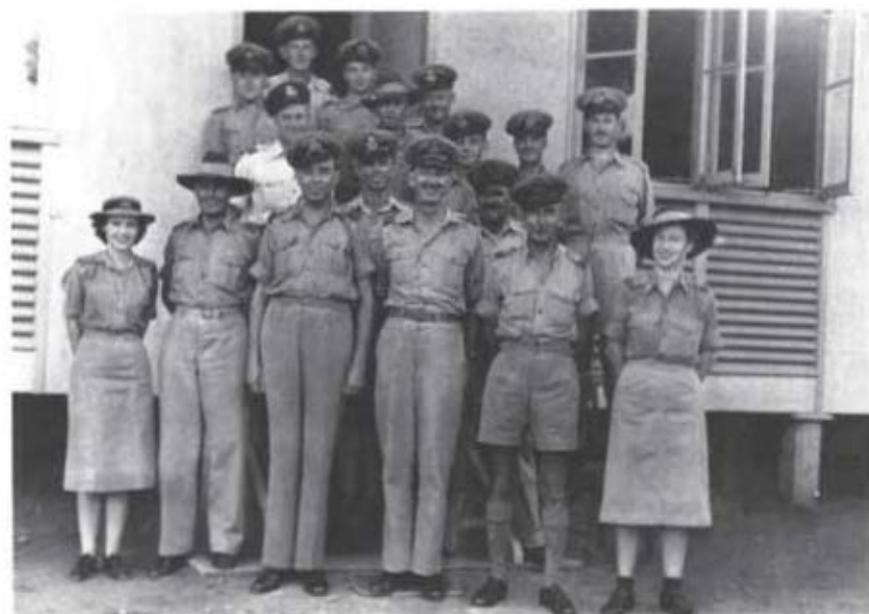
An aerial view of 8 Stores Depot, Macrossan



WAAAF personnel pose in front of the Ventura spares storage area, 8 Stores Depot, circa 1945



8 Stores Depot carpenters shop



8 Stores Depot headquarters staff with Squadron Leader K.E. MacKenzie (centre front)



10 Stores Depot explosives storehouse at Nokanning



8 Stores Depot personnel manufacture aircraft mainplane shipping crates



*Aerial view
of 10 Stores
Depot,
Merredin,
September
1949*



DUKW transport in an idyllic setting—29 Air Stores Park at Morotai



Leading Aircraftmen G. Samuels, W. Egan and G. Sutton prepare to guard 29 Air Stores Park, Tarakan



Aircraft 'graveyard' near 22 Air Stores Park, Morotai



22 Air Stores Park personnel at Morotai



A typical wartime stores complex, Port Moresby



A modern heavy lift forklift

2 STORES DEPOT

Fruges In Tempore Fundo
(We Deliver the Goods When Required)



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 29 July 1940 | —formed at Waterloo, NSW |
| 3 June 1946 | —moved to Regents Park, NSW |
| 9 November 1953 | —6 Stores Depot disbanded and absorbed into 2 Stores Depot, Detachment 'D', Dubbo |
| July 1975 | —construction of Warehouse 40 commenced |
| 12 September 1977 | —Chester Hill accommodation completed |
| 1994 | —Depot disbanded |

NARRATIVE

2 Stores Depot was formed at Waterloo on 29 July 1940, when six buildings in Elizabeth Street were taken over from Borthwick's Paint and Varnish Factory.

During the early part of 1944, instructions were issued to disguise RAAF buildings to look like commercial firms; the name 'Martin's Corner' was painted on the front of 2 Stores Depot's headquarters building in honour of Wing Commander Jack Martin, the Commanding Officer.

During 2-5 November 1944, a team visited the Depot to ascertain requirements for the introduction of accounting machines, and the first 48 National Cash Register 'book-keeping' machines, for distribution to all stores depots, arrived on 8 July 1945.

An additional task during December 1944 was to provide supply support to both the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm and Royal Air Force

elements in the area, both of which were beginning a build-up of forces in Australia.

Forklift training began in March 1945, and was carried out by the Department of Supply and Shipping, as the RAAF did not yet possess the capability to train their own operators. 2 Stores Depot received its first three forklifts on loan from the Department of Supply and Shipping during April 1945.

At the end of the War, the Depot strength was 21 officers, 321 airmen, three WAAAF officers and 122 airwomen. There were also supernumeraries: 30 radar operators, 14 recorders and 16 aircrew, giving a total unit strength of 527 personnel.

On 22 May 1946, the former US Army Subsistence Depot site and buildings at Regents Park were handed over to the RAAF. The first of 696 vehicle loads of stock left Waterloo for Regents Park on 3 June 1946. The Depot headquarters was established at Regents Park on 1 August 1946.

Regents Park comprised 13 fibro clad Liberty sheds—so called because each one could hold the contents of a wartime 'Liberty' ship. 2 Stores Depot's domestic accommodation was first established at RAAF Bankstown before moving to Chester Hill on 12 September 1977.

Following the end of the War, the major part of the Depot's work was collecting and disposing of surplus equipment and stock. However, this changed at the end of 1948 when it was tasked with supplying, preparing and packing the initial supplies and stores for the build-up of RAAF Momote (one of the most important bases established outside Australia in the late 1940s).

Early in 1949, to overcome a shortage of storage space, approval was given to transfer a number of Bellman hangars from former RAAF bases to Regents Park. On 8 February 1949 a party left to dismantle five hangars at RAAF Temora. Eight more hangars were also brought back from RAAF Uranquinty. Another party went to RAAF Evans Head to dismantle more Bellman hangars.

The Depot suffered a severe blow on 12 October 1949 when a fire totally destroyed the headquarters building, despite the efforts of fire brigade units from Auburn, Bankstown, Liverpool, Parramatta and Stanmore, who attended to assist the RAAF firemen.

Construction of the replacement headquarters building finally began on 20 July 1953, but it was not until 30 April 1954 that the headquarters was able to move into its new building.

Being a 'split' unit, with the working area at Regents Park and the domestic area at RAAF Bankstown, there was difficulty in providing the living-in members with their midday meal. In order to overcome the problem, a feasibility study was conducted, resulting in a field kitchen being set up at Regents Parks on 16 April 1951 to supply three-course midday meals.

The first 43 National Service trainees arrived on 30 July 1951 to begin their RAAF training. 2 Stores Depot continued to train National Service trainees until 11 March 1954.

During October 1951, 2 Stores Depot was tasked with transporting 20 Mustang aircraft from the naval wharf at Rydalmere to storage at Regents Park. The absence of specific direction about where the Mustangs were to go resulted in 2 Stores Depot personnel having to guard them at Rydalmere for three weeks.

2 Stores Depot provided help on 7 May 1952, when 10 people were killed in a train accident at the Berala station. An ambulance and medical orderly were despatched, as well as oxyacetylene equipment and operator, for rescue work. In addition, the Depot medical officer, although only part-time, attended and provided medical aid to the victims.

Further assistance was given to the civil community on 26 November 1953 when Depot firemen and fire-fighting trucks were called out to assist in fighting a fire in the Dussek Brothers paint factory in Clapham Road. It was mainly due to the efforts of the RAAF firemen that a cottage adjacent to the burning factory was saved from destruction.

During the major floods in February 1956, about 250 members from RAAF Richmond were attached to the Depot while the roads and railway were cut off and the water supply was restored to the base. About a further 100 civilians flooded out of their homes were also accommodated in the Bankstown quarters between 10 and 12 February.

Early in 1959, the introduction of the American/British/Canadian Supply Classification (ABCSC) identification system into the RAAF caused a considerable workload for the Depot. As well as RAAF identified items, there were also USAF and USN identification numbers used by the RAAF.

The first Seatainer to arrive at a RAAF unit was received at Regents Park on 30 June 1967. At that time the concept of using shipping containers was revolutionary, and as such the unpacking of it was witnessed by representatives from the RAN, RAAF Movement Control

and the WILH-Wilhenson Shipping Company. The 20-foot container held 430 individual packages and cases, and these were emptied out in approximately 50 minutes.

On 25 October 1971, a preliminary survey was made of cabling requirements for the introduction of the main mini-computer system. The first mini-computer, printers and auxiliary equipment arrived at the Depot in March 1975.

Following the devastation of Darwin by Cyclone *Tracy* on Christmas Eve 1974, 2 Stores Depot responded immediately to provide emergency relief. Despite the Depot being on stand-down at the time, personnel reported for work to volunteer their services. Those that were accepted for work formed a Darwin Disaster Activity group, and a group of Depot personnel worked through the first crucial days and nights, in liaison with civil organisations, to get urgently needed equipment, food and supplies ready for transportation to the stricken city. In addition to this work, RAAF Depot and civilian personnel raised \$1366.88 by collection for the relief funds.

The City of Bankstown granted 2 Stores Depot the 'Freedom of the City' on 14 August 1981.

On 26 August 1987, the Depot was presented with the Governor-General's Banner by the then Governor-General, the Right Honourable Sir Ninian Stephen.

Planning for Warehouse 40 began in April 1972 when a Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works recommended the construction of a modern warehouse at Regents Park. Construction commenced in July 1975, when one-third of Warehouse 5 and all of Building 109 were demolished to make room. Warehouse 40 was such an advance in material storage and handling that keen interest in it was shown by civil industry.

Discussions first began on 20 May 1969 to formally develop Chester Hill as the Depot barracks area. Once the Chester Hill project was initiated, routine maintenance on the buildings at RAAF Bankstown came to a halt. However, it was to be a further three years before Chester Hill was finally occupied by the RAAF.

On 12 September 1977, the Chester Hill complex was completed and officially handed over to 2 Stores Depot. Following the hand-over, transfer of all facilities from RAAF Bankstown began. Movement of personnel was completed on 18 October 1977, and of equipment on 26 October.

The personnel of 2 Stores Depot were informed of the decision to close the Depot in four years time at a special parade held on 15 June 1990.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

29 July 1940	—Group Captain R. Christie
1 June 1942	—Wing Commander W.D. Mason
4 October 1943	—Wing Commander J. Martin
1 May 1944	—Wing Commander R.H. Rule
29 January 1945	—Wing Commander J.B. King
22 July 1946	—Wing Commander C.N. Blake
12 November 1948	—Wing Commander I. Yeaman
27 May 1949	—Wing Commander K.E. Campbell
14 May 1951	—Wing Commander A.S. Woodgate
16 November 1951	—Group Captain C.G. Cleary
28 October 1954	—Group Captain D.L. Swifte
21 July 1958	—Group Captain W.J. Stutchbury
21 June 1960	—Group Captain W.D. Mason
13 March 1961	—Group Captain L.J.K. Holten
8 February 1963	—Group Captain H.T. Morgan
22 June 1965	—Group Captain T.J. Andrade
8 August 1967	—Group Captain J. Mann
27 May 1970	—Group Captain E.M. Carroll
16 July 1973	—Group Captain S.R. White
12 September 1974	—Group Captain W.R. Wade
February 1976	—Group Captain E.J. Freeman
February 1978	—Group Captain R.R.Y. Candy
9 January 1980	—Group Captain L.J. Tindal
13 February 1982	—Group Captain M.F. Linden
17 January 1984	—Group Captain P.B. Roughan
18 September 1986	—Group Captain J.R. Dickson
9 January 1987	—Group Captain G.K. Pollard
7 June 1989	—Group Captain A.R. Renfree
29 January 1990	—Group Captain M.C. Coles
2 July 1991	—Group Captain D.C. Payne

3 STORES DEPOT

CHRONOLOGY

- 2 June 1941 —formed in Brisbane, Qld
24 September 1948 —disbanded at Cannon Hill, Qld

NARRATIVE

3 Stores Depot (3SD) was formed in Brisbane with Squadron Leader I.G. Watkins as the first Commanding Officer. It was originally intended that the Depot occupy the Brisbane Showgrounds. Instead, the Depot's chief equipment officer, Squadron Leader J. Martin, surveyed the Brisbane City Council Electricity Supply building, near the corner of Gregory Terrace and Victoria Street, to ascertain its suitability for use as a stores depot. Having found the building suitable, the advance party arrived on 22 May. The Commanding Officer arrived next day and, on 2 June 1941, 3 Stores Depot opened with five officers and 94 airmen. The interior of the building was divided into different areas by erecting wire netting, prior to the arrival of the Depot's first stocks on 17 June. Living-in accommodation was in two large private houses in Gregory Terrace—the WAAAF personnel housed in 'Wybenie' and the airmen in 'Grangehill'.

On 10 September 1941 a 1500 square metre building in Wellsby Street at New Farm was taken over from Austral Motors. Because this was insufficient to meet the growing storage requirements, a 6.8 hectare building site located at Eagle Farm was taken over in January 1942 for construction of additional stores and office accommodation.

Early in 1942, 3 Stores Depot was tasked with carrying out a survey of inland areas in order to find a suitable site for another stores depot. The bombing of Townsville and the shelling of Newcastle and Sydney had made it imperative to locate depots away from the coast. The Commanding Officer and Squadron Leader Martin travelled to Gatton, Toowoomba, Oakey and Dalby and a site at Drayton (Toowoomba) was recommended, resulting in the establishment of 7 Stores Depot at the site.

Two years after its formation, it was decided that 3 Stores Depot specialise in non-technical items only. Accordingly, technical groups were transferred to 7 Stores Depot.

During 1943, 3 Stores Depot managed the RAAF nursing staff and patient admissions and discharges from 112 Australian General Hospital

and 126 Australian Special Hospital. This continued until 1944, when the Brisbane Medical Unit was formed to take over the responsibility.

In May 1944, two new buildings were constructed at Victoria Park and two other buildings constructed by the Wool Committee at Hedley Park were taken over on 21 June 1944. At the same time a property at Breakfast Creek—'Hamilton'—was taken over from an Army anti-aircraft company for use as the Officer's Mess. 3 Stores Depot's Motor Transport Repair Section was formed at Lang Park in August 1944 by transferring it from 3 Aircraft Depot. The Depot continued to expand and, toward the end of January 1945, the headquarters moved in to the John McGrath building in Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley. By this time a round trip to all the various elements of the Depot required a journey of more than 50 kilometres.

At the end of the War, 3 Stores Depot took over a former US motor pool site at Eagle Farm, and this was followed by taking over the US heavy earthmoving and machinery storage site at Cannon Hill and three 'igloo' hangars at Breakfast Creek.

Early in 1946 it was decided to develop the Cannon Hill site as a central depot area and for domestic accommodation, even as the wind down of 3 Stores Depot began to take effect. Work commenced on upgrading the barracks quarters at Cannon Hill on 4 December 1946, and these were occupied on 26 February 1947. Outlying elements of 3 Stores Depot were vacated, but there was some problem with 'squatters' forcing their way into the remote sites and at various times they occupied the Victoria Park camp area, Number 1 site at Cannon Hill and Number 4 site at Eagle Farm. Victoria Park was vacated on 17 June 1947.

Toward the end of 1947 preparations for the disbandment of 3 Stores Depot began with the issue of all stock holdings to 7 Stores Depot. 3 Stores Depot was officially disbanded on 24 September 1948.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

2 June 1941	—Squadron Leader I.G. Watkins
1 November 1944	—Wing Commander L.J.K. Holten
16 October 1945	—Wing Commander G.S. Anderson
1 February 1946	—Squadron Leader F.H. Tuckwell
6 September 1946	—Wing Commander I. Yeaman
7 July 1947	—Flight Lieutenant S. Gotto

4 STORES DEPOT

CHRONOLOGY

- 19 January 1942 —advance party assembled at military drill hall, East Perth, WA
- 17 March 1942 —moved into Maylands site
- 19 November 1945 —unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

Following the outbreak of War in 1939 the RAAF strength in Western Australia began to increase, accelerating with the Japanese threat to the north-west. To support the operational build-up, two stores depots were to be formed in Western Australia, one of these being 4 Stores Depot (4SD), which was to be the area specialist depot for non-technical equipment.

The advance party to form 4 Stores Depot assembled at a military drill hall in Lord Street, East Perth, on 19 January 1942. Flight Lieutenant (later Squadron Leader) I.D. MacInnes was the Officer-in-Charge of the advance party, and the first Commanding Officer was Wing Commander C.V.N. Hart.

While proposed sites at both Narrogin and Merredin were inspected, the 4 Stores Depot nucleus remained in the Lord Street drill hall for several weeks until evicted at a moments notice, then moved into another drill hall in East Perth. The unit was again evicted from this hall shortly afterwards, but fortunately by this time the new depot site had been organised.

Eventually, the Depot was located in the McKay Massey Harris building in Whatley Crescent, Maylands (an eastern Perth suburb). This was taken over on 17 March 1942, but there were initial problems as only about half (some 3000 square metres) of the total building area was available for the RAAF. The remainder was used by the original building owners to store their tractors.

After overcoming considerable initial difficulty in adapting the building for administrative accommodation, the Depot headquarters staff all moved to Maylands. Another part of the Depot, comprising workshops and messes, was later located in Caledonian Avenue, Maylands.

An advance party of 21 members, with Flight Lieutenant P.B. Jelbart as Officer-in-Charge and Flying Officer M. Thomson, were posted from 4 Stores Depot on 1 January 1943 to form 10 Stores Depot at Merredin.

Like other stores depots during the war years, 4 Stores Depot initially occupied several remote sites around Perth, such as the Kauri Timber Company building at 10th Avenue, Maylands and one in Wright Street for clothing. Ongoing alteration to the Massey Harris building eventually enabled some of these remote sites to be vacated, and stock brought into the Maylands building on 30 September 1943. Some of the Depot's bulk storage was actually at 10 Stores Depot at Merredin as 4 Stores Depot was short of storage space.

The Kauri Timber Company building was cleared and handed over to 4 Central Recovery Depot (4CRD), which formed an advance party there on 13 April 1944 as Detachment 'C', 4 Central Recovery Depot.

Other construction carried out at the Maylands site was a new administration block, completed on 8 December 1943. It was also planned to construct two Bellman hangars on site for increased storage; later this proposal was amended to two 'woolshed' type buildings. However, neither of these were ever built.

4 Stores Depot had no domestic accommodation on the Depot, with airmen generally living out—either at home for those coming from Perth or in private accommodation. However, because the Depot strength never exceeded 241, its personnel were able to be accommodated locally with a minimum of difficulty. Later a large private building, called the 'Gables', was taken over to accommodate the WAAAF.

There was one incident involving fraud over the supply of cleaning rags. Cleaning rags were all supplied from the eastern States, and payment was made based on the weight delivered to the railway station. At the time, the receipts section staff were having considerable difficulty in reconciling the weight of the bales received with the weight recorded on acceptance at the eastern States railway station. The bales received in Perth were always much lighter. First investigations were based on the premise that cleaning rags were being stolen en route. It was only when one of the bales caught fire from spontaneous combustion that an explanation was found. The supplier had worked out that it could increase the weight of each bale by wetting the rags before delivery to the railway station. The train journey from Victoria would normally take several weeks, and this would be sufficient for the bales to dry out.

4 Stores Depot was handicapped regarding the service it could provide, as Western Australia did not have much local industry at the time. Virtually all manufactured goods had to come from the eastern States, with the attendant transportation delays of that time.

Near the end of the War, 4 Stores Depot formed the Central Footwear Repair Section to effect shoe and boot repairs for all of the Perth units, including those as far away as Busselton and Geraldton.

During May, ten 7.6m x 7.6m huts were acquired and erected in the Depot domestic area compound to alleviate chronic storage problems. The first two huts were completed in June 1945.

Immediately following the end of the War, it was decided that most of 4 Stores Depot's stocks would be transferred to Merredin. Remaining stock was transferred to 14 Stores Unit in Adelaide, and this was completed on 30 September 1945.

4 Stores Depot was disbanded on 19 November 1945, becoming the first depot to disband at the end of the War.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

19 January 1942	—Wing Commander C.V.N. Hart
20 May 1943	—Squadron Leader L.J.T. Walton
7 January 1944	—Squadron Leader A.D. MacFarlane
5 March 1945	—Squadron Leader P. McDougall
18 September 1945	—Flight Lieutenant F.A. Malloch

6 STORES DEPOT

CHRONOLOGY

- 1 December 1942 —formed as a nucleus at Waterloo, NSW
- 4 December 1942 —moved to Dubbo, NSW
- 9 November 1953 —Depot disbanded and reformed into
2 Stores Depot, Detachment 'D', Dubbo

NARRATIVE

6 Stores Depot was formed in nucleus at 2 Stores Depot, Waterloo, Sydney, on 1 December 1942, with its advance party personnel moving to Dubbo by train on 4 December 1942.

The 45-hectare (110-acre) 6 Stores Depot site was located on the south-eastern side of the township of Dubbo. Five igloo hangars, some Bellman hangars, a 'Rabual' design storehouse, plus other smaller buildings were constructed on the Depot site.

Shortly after its formation, it was decided that 6 Stores Depot would relieve some of the storage difficulties at 2 Stores Depot. Accordingly, 'H' group was transferred to 6 Stores Depot on 2 August 1943, followed by 'I' group on 16 August. By the end of August, 6 Stores Depot was also holding Anson, Wirraway, Moth, Seagull, Wackett, DH-84, Ryan, Catalina, Vengeance, Ventura and Hudson aircraft spares.

During its wartime life, the Depot was chronically short of manpower to carry out its mission, and considerable overtime was necessary to overcome manning deficiencies. To supplement the normal base strength, technical and aircrew trainees were attached to 6 Stores Depot to assist in general duties while they were waiting to commence their various courses at other nearby RAAF bases.

In the second half of 1944, the large igloo hangars had skylights installed to allow more natural light inside to improve working conditions. (Skylights were not installed during construction because of blackout requirements.) Also in July 1944, a railway siding was built leading into the Depot grounds (actually passing through the end of two igloo hangars), and two Bellman hangars were erected for additional storage. Finally, toward the end of that year, overhead gantry cranes were installed in the igloo hangars.

While not having the largest manning, 6 Stores Depot was the largest stores depot at the end of the War in terms of size and stock held. Despite the workload this imposed, the post-war strength was further reduced to the point where operations of the Depot were severely curtailed.

6 Stores Depot was the RAAF specialist depot for aircraft instruments, electrical, radio and radar holdings ('G' and 'Y' groups) and it was this type of equipment which caused the major problems. Much of this equipment was either English or American in origin, and was not identified in the RAAF vocabulary of stores. These spares had been returned from the various RAAF radar stations around Australia, disbanded squadrons which had operated American aircraft, and even from the RAF 300 Transport Group which operated from Tocumwal. Lack of specialised knowledge about these spares prevented them from being identified and processed for retention or disposal.

The first disposal sale of surplus RAAF stock was held on 18 March 1947, with disposal of the prefabricated huts following on 26 May. Other sales followed until the last unwanted equipment was disposed of.

In February 1949, work started on establishing a Mobilisation Store at 2 and 3 Sites, with the receipt of 'Q' group and 'L6' group/section stocks. By October 1950, large numbers of weapons were also received for storage. Technical stocks were cleared by issuing to other stores depots—'H' group items were issued to 2 Stores Depot and 'N35' and 'N36' stocks to 1 Stores Depot.

At the beginning of 1951, a Dubbo Country Flight of 22 Squadron was formed. 6 Stores Depot was tasked with providing accommodation and support for the local flight trainees and staff, as well as detachments of 22 Squadron visiting on their camps. The first pilots training course commenced on 25 August 1951, using Tiger Moth aircraft flying from Dubbo Airport.

Also in 1951, 6 Stores Depot became the first stores depot to successfully complete a post-war stocktake. With the exception of 'G' and 'Y' groups, an accuracy of 90–95 per cent was obtained, which was immediately challenged by the audit staff. However, recounts by the challengers confirmed the results, much to the satisfaction of the Depot staff and management.

Except for immediately after the War, surplus stock for disposal sale was packed and issued to a central site in Sydney. However, from 1952 it was decided to hold sales in situ at Dubbo. These were most successful,

and considering that little packing and transport was required, were economical as well.

During the life of 6 Stores Depot, RAAF personnel contributed greatly to the social and business activities of Dubbo. RAAF members were encouraged to join sporting and service clubs, church groups and cultural activities. In those early days, Dubbo did not have a town hall or suitable place to hold functions, and the various RAAF messes arranged many functions to which the local people were invited. Various Dubbo organisations frequently approached the Depot to borrow tentage, tables, seating and such for functions. The Depot also provided equipment for the annual two-week Legacy camp for about 80 children from the Sydney city suburbs.

6 Stores Depot was disbanded on 9 November 1953 by reforming into 2 Stores Depot, Detachment 'D', Dubbo. The main RAAF presence in Dubbo came to an end in 1992 when 2 Stores Depot, Detachment 'D', was disbanded along with the closure of the last three remaining stores depots. The site was retained as a tri-service storage facility, and it is expected that the RAAF will continue to have some manning input along with Navy and Army, although it is probable that most of the staff will be civilians.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 December 1942	—Wing Commander D.A.J. Creal
25 September 1943	—Wing Commander P.M. Rickard
25 June 1946	—Wing Commander C.N. Blake
24 July 1946	—Squadron Leader B.W. Rourke
12 September 1950	—Squadron Leader A.T. McHutchison
27 March 1953	—Squadron Leader S.E. Dale
27 April 1953	—Squadron Leader G.P. Lane

7 STORES DEPOT

I Believe In Service



CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1 January 1943 | —formed at North Drayton, Qld |
| 15 September 1948 | —Port Detachment, Brisbane, formed |
| 9 October 1954 | —Detachment 'A', Helidon, and Detachment 'B', Kowguran, formed |
| 17 December 1993 | —Depot disbanded |

NARRATIVE

7 Stores Depot was officially formed in nucleus at 3 Stores Depot, on 1 January 1943, as a separate unit with five officers and 79 other ranks. However, it was another four months before the airmen's barracks huts were finally completed allowing the airmen to move into them on 12 April. The officers' and WAAAF's huts were completed next, on 26 April 1943.

The living quarters had been laid out in accordance with what was called the 'village' plan to blend in with the surrounding town. To make the huts and buildings look like suburban buildings, allotments were marked out by fence posts with the external boundaries similarly treated.

For camouflage reasons, the stores buildings and domestic accommodation were designed to appear as an extension of the town. Further camouflage effects were achieved by adding extensions to the 'igloo' hangars to give the ends a wavy outline to simulate the edge of a lake. Although not considered to be a serious measure at the time, anecdotal evidence in the 1960s revealed that the ruse had actually worked. This story was told to Wing Commander Rod Brittain by his father, and is repeated here:

My father worked for the Western Transport company in Toowoomba. This company was part of the Great Western Company, and was the local agent for Mazda cars. During the 1960s, an executive from the Japanese parent company Koyo Kogo visited the Toowoomba agency, and during a break produced his own map marked with ornamental lakes, which he asked his hosts to take him to see. However, no one knew of any lakes in the Toowoomba area, and when the Japanese visitor's map was compared with a town map it was calculated that the 'lakes' were supposedly situated where 7 Stores Depot was.

After being taken to 7 Stores Depot and seeing the igloo hangars, which he had thought were lakes when seen from the air, the visitor revealed that the map was made from information obtained when he flew a Japanese reconnaissance aircraft over Toowoomba during the war.

According to Wing Commander Brittain's father, the Japanese visitor's response to finding out how they had been tricked was: 'If I had known that they were storehouses then, I might have dropped a few bombs'.

During the latter part of 1944, considerable garden planting was undertaken in the barracks area. This gardening effort was helped by regular rainfalls over the next few months. The interest in establishing and improving the Depot's gardens continued, and in later years the Depot competed in the industrial section of Toowoomba's garden competitions, winning on at least one occasion and achieving places in others.

From late 1944, B-24 Liberator spares began to arrive at 7 Stores Depot, creating additional workload for the staff. By December 1944 the amount of stock being received had grown to such an extent that it required three shifts working 24 hours a day to open and unpack boxes and identify items.

During the period immediately after the War, 7 Stores Depot, like all other stores depots, began the huge task of processing surplus items for disposal. For the first six months, not only was equipment received from disbanded units, but spares in transit at the time of the War's end continued to arrive. These spares included B-24 Liberator aircraft and Mustang spares. B-24 spares were stored wherever possible at Toowoomba, while the Mustang spares were stored in Warehouse 16 at Breakfast Creek, Brisbane.

7 Stores Depot held its first open day for the public on 24 May 1948. Several warehouse sites and buildings were opened for inspection; a fire-fighting exercise was staged; war dogs and their handlers put on a

demonstration; safety equipment (parachutes, dinghies etc.) displayed; and radio and communications equipment was shown operating. In addition, three Mosquitos and one Mustang aircraft from Amberley staged a 30-minute flying exhibition over the Depot.

One of the first acknowledgments of the contributions that 7 Stores Depot had made to the local community at Toowoomba occurred on 19 November 1960, when the Depot took an active part in the celebrations to mark the city's centenary. Apart from Depot personnel attending functions as official guests, a RAAF fire truck and a Mustang aircraft on a low-loader trailer formed floats in the parade through the streets.

The years 1961 and 1962 were particularly busy for the Depot. One of the first major projects was the receipt of P2V-7 Neptune spares from the US, which occurred at the same time as the disposal of all Lincoln aircraft and Merlin engine spares commenced. Another task was the conversion from RAAF identification numbers to NATO Stock Numbers (called American/British/Canadian Supply Classification, or ABCSC). Finally, in August 1962, a decision was made to transfer all Canberra spares from 1 Stores Depot to 7 Stores Depot. These began to arrive during September, and the transfer was completed by April 1963.

In January 1969, the Police Dog Training School was transferred from 1 Stores Depot to Toowoomba. Police Dog Training School training courses conducted at Toowoomba ranged from basic security guard courses to advanced security guard courses, scout dog courses and security guard re-teaming courses. Initially, training was restricted to RAAF personnel, but was later expanded to include members from other services and organisations. These included Naval Police, prison warders, Australian Federal Police and Army. The Police Dog Training School eventually re-located to RAAF Amberley during August 1986.

7 Stores Depot was granted the 'Freedom of the City' by the City of Toowoomba on 8 May 1971, in recognition of the service and support that the Depot had contributed to the local community. After being presented with a scroll recording this event at the Godsall Oval, Depot personnel exercised their new right and marched through the streets of Toowoomba for the first time.

During August 1989, 7 Stores Depot was the only depot to be actively involved with rear area activities as part of the 'Kangaroo 89' exercise conducted in the Northern Territory. The Depot went onto alert status on 31 July and, over the period 1-18 August, 'enemy Kamarian' infiltrators and supporters carried out a number of exercises. These ranged from

delivering a simulated bomb to the front gate to hijacking a truck on a scheduled run away from the Depot, carrying out reconnaissance penetrations, and on one occasion attempting to lay a bomb at one of the buildings. There was even a pro-Kamarian demonstration at the main entrance which prevented entry and exit to the Depot.

During April 1990, serious flooding occurred in western Queensland, and the Depot was again called upon for assistance. 7 Stores Depot and 1 Operational Support Unit provided an escorting convoy for flood relief workers on 26 April. In addition, the gym on the Depot was made available for a relief goods collection centre and RAAF personnel worked long hours, together with Red Cross and Salvation Army members, packing goods.

On 19 June 1990, the official announcement was made of the government decision that all RAAF stores depots were to be closed down. As such, 7 Stores Depot was disbanded on 17 December 1993.

In addition to the depot at Toowoomba, 7 Stores Depot had three detachments: Port Detachment, Brisbane; Detachment 'A', Helidon; and Detachment 'B', Kowguran. The Port Detachment was formed from the residual 3 Stores Depot at Cannon Hill and the 5 Transport and Movements Office. Detachments 'A' and 'B' were formed from 3 Central Reserve at the Helidon and Kowguran sites. The Port Detachment was disbanded on 17 July 1958 and Detachment 'A' was disbanded on 30 June 1960. All remaining RAAF equipment and the caretaker of Detachment 'B' were withdrawn from the Kowguran site on 20 March 1957.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 January 1943	—Wing Commander I.J. Watkins
9 December 1943	—Wing Commander G.S. Anderson
9 November 1944	—Wing Commander A.G. Atwill
21 August 1945	—Wing Commander I. Yeaman
November 1948	—Flight Lieutenant J. Mann
February 1950	—Squadron Leader J.R.W. McLean
6 November 1951	—Wing Commander G.P. O'Loughlin
18 January 1954	—Wing Commander M.L. MacInnes
7 August 1956	—Wing Commander J. Martin
24 June 1958	—Wing Commander G.K. Graham
8 June 1959	—Wing Commander K.E. Campbell
5 August 1963	—Wing Commander B.L. Cleary

18 January 1965	—Wing Commander J. Martin
June 1967	—Wing Commander R.Y. Candy
12 December 1969	—Wing Commander E.J. Freeman
12 January 1973	—Wing Commander P.A.G. Bloom
11 February 1975	—Wing Commander K. O'Brien
21 January 1977	—Wing Commander J. Dunne
8 January 1980	—Wing Commander A.G. Harper
8 January 1982	—Wing Commander E.S. Alcock
April 1984	—Wing Commander M.S. Bray
10 June 1986	—Wing Commander R.L. Longland
28 June 1988	—Wing Commander R.A. Brittain
January 1991	—Wing Commander B.S. Bishop
October 1992	—Wing Commander J.B. Langley

8 STORES DEPOT

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| 10 August 1943 | —formed at Townsville, Qld |
| 28–29 May 1944 | —moved to Macrossan, Qld |
| 28 February 1949 | —Depot disbanded |

NARRATIVE

8 Stores Depot was originally to form in nucleus as a separate unit on 15 July 1943. However, as there were no personnel available at that time to man the new unit, the formation was put back. Accordingly, 8 Stores Depot was formed at Townsville on 10 August 1943.

The Depot was initially to be a lodger unit of 13 Stores Unit at Townsville. However, an organisation memorandum directed that 8 Stores Depot was to absorb the storage facilities (including buildings under construction) and staff of 13 Stores Unit on 20 September 1943. (13 Stores Unit was to be disbanded, with its Thursday Island Detachment becoming 23 Air Stores Park.) The first Commanding Officer was Squadron Leader Kenneth A. MacKenzie.

8 Stores Depot remained in Townsville while a decision was made as to where it should be located. Original planning was for 8 Stores Depot to occupy a site at Hughenden, but because other units originally planned for that site were re-located elsewhere, this suggestion was dropped. Next, it was thought that 8 Stores Depot would remain in Townsville and occupy four new igloo hangars under construction there, enabling the existing scattered buildings to be vacated. Finally, over 28–29 May 1944, the Depot re-located to RAAF Macrossan airfield (23 kilometres north-east of Charters Towers, on the Flinders Highway and east of the Burdekin River), leaving a detachment behind in Townsville.

Some expansion of the Townsville detachment continued, with additional railway reserve land being taken over at the end of May 1944, several new buildings constructed and a railway siding laid into the expanded site. This allowed all of the remote elements to be centralised into the one site.

The main 8 Stores Depot area was located on the northern side of the Macrossan airstrip. Two large wartime style igloo hangars, two Bellman hangars and three large storehouses were on site and a railway spur line

was laid into the Depot. Domestic accommodation was established a short distance away to the west of the Depot site.

Being what was considered a permanent RAAF base, Macrossan was well laid out and organised. Also being a stores depot, it was very busy, but had a very dedicated team to handle this.

In common with most 'permanent' wartime units (as opposed to mobile squadrons and such), 8 Stores Depot also established vegetable gardens to supplement rations. However, the Depot went better than that and also raised chickens and established a piggery in a remote corner of the area. As well as supplying fresh meat rations for the RAAF, pork was also sold at 1/- per pound to earn funds for the unit welfare. In addition to supplementing rations, there was also a steady supply of suckling pigs for supper when the Friday night dances were held.

Despite the fact that the airstrip was built for 10 Repair and Salvage Unit, initially 8 Stores Depot was responsible for actually maintaining the base airstrip—even though it was a non-flying unit. This must surely be a first for any stores depot. Fortunately, 84 Squadron was re-located to Macrossan on 22 June 1944, relieving 8 Stores Depot of this responsibility. At various times during its existence, the Depot shared the base with 10 Repair and Salvage Unit, 84 Squadron and 86 Squadron.

During August 1944, electric cranes were installed in the large igloo hangars for material handling. Also, to prepare the warehouses for storage, some 300 Army personnel from the local 5AARD were attached to 8 Stores Depot on 31 August 1944. They assembled 2600 steel racks for the storage of equipment, and it is believed that 8 Stores Depot was the first stores depot to be provided with modern steel storage shelving.

On 15 August, censorship of private mail for all servicemen located below latitude 20 degrees south ceased. As Macrossan was located just below this latitude, private mail was exempt from being censored, although personnel serving at Townsville still had to submit their mail for censorship as that unit was 64 kilometres north of latitude 20 degrees.

At the end of the War, the Depot strength was 17 officers and 252 other ranks. This remained static for several months, until civilian staff began to replace the service personnel. By the time the Depot was disbanded, it had 103 civilians working there and only 29 RAAF personnel.

11 Stores Depot at Townsville was disbanded and re-named 8 Stores Depot Detachment 'B' on 22 December 1945. By the end of December, 'Q', 'L' and 'W' groups had also been transferred from Townsville to

Macrossan. Later, on 10 January 1946, 3 Replenishing Centre at Charters Towers was taken over and re-named 8 Stores Depot Detachment 'C', 'J' group storage area.

The first National accounting machines were installed in the Depot on 16 January 1946, taking over the labour intensive task of recording stock movements and balances on handwritten tally sheets.

For some time after the War ended, the Depot was still involved in maintaining all the stock assets, and building and base improvements continued. On 31 January 1946, an improved pumping installation was brought on line to pump water from the Burdekin River to the Depot.

However, preparations towards disbandment began when holdings and issuing functions ceased on 20 April 1946 to enable the Depot to concentrate on disposal activities.

One of the RAAF's worst non-flying accidents occurred on the afternoon of 16 September 1948, when a semitrailer being used as a bus to transport living-out members and civilian staff to and from Charters Towers crashed over the Burdekin River bridge while on the way home, killing 13 civilian employees.

8 Stores Depot disbanded on 28 February 1949. The remaining unit personnel, stock assets and buildings became 10(GR) Squadron Detachment 'C', while 8 Stores Depot's 'J' group site at Charters Towers became 10 Squadron Detachment 'A'. The Detachment 'A' Charters Towers explosives storage area continued to be used by RAAF Townsville until 9 June 1960, when it was listed for disposal.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

10 August 1943	—Squadron Leader K.A. MacKenzie
13 December 1945	—Squadron Leader F. Rust
12 December 1947	—Squadron Leader J.W. Taylor

9 STORES DEPOT

CHRONOLOGY

10 August 1942	—formed at Daly Waters, NT
21 October 1942	—moved to Gorrie, NT
7 October 1944	—transferred to Winnellie, NT
1 July 1949	—Depot disbanded

NARRATIVE

9 Stores Depot was formed at Daly Waters in the Northern Territory on 10 August 1942 by taking over the stocks and personnel of the North-Western Area Stores Pool. On formation, the Depot was to be responsible for supplying 21 individual units (plus eight more in the process of formation) throughout the Northern Territory.

The North-Western Area Stores Pool was not an official unit but was only of a temporary nature. For convenience it was administered by 1 Repair and Salvage Unit, but functioned separately from that unit to manage the large quantity of stores required to support the build-up of the RAAF in the area. When the main body of 1 Repair and Salvage Unit re-located to Manbulloo (west of Katherine), the Stores Pool was left behind at Daly Waters to continue carrying out the supply function until it was finally incorporated into 9 Stores Depot on 23 September 1942.

When 9 Stores Depot was formed the planned location of the Depot was changed from Tennant Creek to Birdum. A dismantled Bellman hangar held at Daly Waters was to be taken to Birdum and erected to give, together with 'stores tents', the nucleus of covered storage space for the Depot. This was again changed and beginning 21 October 1942 the Depot commenced to move north to RAAF Gorrie.

The RAAF itself built the Depot site. Camp roads were made, prefabricated metal framed 'Comet' huts built, a bore sunk to provide water, and a new headquarters building was constructed.

A railway siding to serve the Depot was completed on 30 September 1943. The Depot area was laid out in a way similar to a forward area operational base, rather than everything being neatly lined up. All roads were curved, and the warehouse buildings were offset. This was in case of an air attack—a straight line bombing or strafing run would only hit one or two buildings.

As much of the bush and trees as possible were left standing, which meant that the Depot was integrated into the bush—not for environmental reasons, but for camouflage. Because of this there was considerable wildlife in the Depot.

Being a new Depot, and in a remote area, there was considerable difficulty in obtaining staffing and equipment stocks. In addition, there was an initial shortage of huts for storage, resulting in equipment being left out in the rain to deteriorate.

1 Stores Depot in Melbourne acted as the 'master' depot to provision bulk stocks to 9 Stores Depot. Later, RAAF Headquarters took over this responsibility, with 1 Stores Depot acting as onforwarding agents for equipment consigned to 9 Stores Depot.

As can be supposed, conditions were harsh at Gorrie, and this was not helped by a seven-day working week for everyone. To compensate, every 10 days six members were given leave to attend the rest camp at Berry Springs, south of Darwin. In addition, regular swimming trips were made up to the Roper River at Elsey Station and a rest centre was established there to provide a measure of comfort.

The Depot actively participated in cricket and tennis competitions with other nearby units. Concerts were regularly held for entertainment, and a unit 'orchestra' was even formed. With stringed and other instruments it provided a significant change to the normal 'drums and brass' military type of bands. This orchestra regularly visited other bases and units in the area to provide entertainment. A beer ration was provided at the rate of one bottle per man per week.

The importance attached to the correct storage of equipment in tropical areas was emphasised when Wing Commander Sargent, a member of 9 Stores Depot, was mentioned in despatches for his efforts in developing and introducing proper storage practices.

Attempts were made to grow vegetables at Gorrie. This was only partially successful due to the climate. One vegetable that did grow well there was tomatoes.

A detachment was later formed in Adelaide to arrange for the procurement and transportation of stock for the Depot. A forward Detachment 'B' was also formed in Darwin on 24 August 1943.

A setback to Depot operations occurred in March 1944, when 28 Air Stores Park was formed at RAAF Gorrie. Many of 9 Stores Depot's personnel were posted to the new unit, and one-third of all stock was transferred over to form the main part of the park. 28 Air Stores Park

personnel and stock then moved north to their own base area in Winnellie, Darwin.

By early 1944 the Japanese threat to the north had receded somewhat and it was decided to re-locate 9 Stores Depot to the Darwin suburb of Winnellie. The Depot headquarters was eventually transferred to Winnellie on 7 October 1944. Although situated only about 3 kilometres from RAAF Base Darwin, 9 Stores Depot operated as a separate unit, responsible for its own accommodation, messing and transport.

The Depot was reduced to a 'care and maintenance' basis from 14 May 1946, with a strength of just three officers and 45 other ranks. However, it still remained an independent unit and continued to provide its own messing, quarters and canteen.

After processing the disposal of all stocks returned from disbanding units in the area and transferring remaining stocks into the igloo hangars on RAAF Base Darwin, 9 Stores Depot was disbanded on 1 July 1949.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

10 August 1942	—Squadron Leader T.R. Dickson
1 January 1943	—Squadron Leader J.F. Lawson
1 September 1943	—Wing Commander D.R. Griffiths
14 April 1945	—Squadron Leader J.E. Annells
31 October 1945	—Squadron Leader E.G. Patten
4 December 1946	—Squadron Leader E.J.P. Dale
18 December 1947	—Squadron Leader L.J. Dunwoodie

10 STORES DEPOT

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 1 January 1943 | —formed at Maylands, WA |
| 9 February 1943 | —moved to Merredin, WA |
| 2 June 1951 | —Port Detachment (Perth) opened |
| 1 October 1952 | —became Detachment 'A' of Base Squadron Pearce |
| 1 February 1954 | —reformed as 10 Stores Depot |
| 1 October 1954 | —Depot disbanded |

NARRATIVE

10 Stores Depot was formed in nucleus at 4 Stores Depot, Maylands, on 1 January 1943. The first temporary Commanding Officer was Flight Lieutenant Paul B. Jelbart. The initial strength was two officers and 29 airmen. The temporary Commanding Officer and 10 orderly room personnel moved to Merredin on 9 February 1943, from which date 10 Stores Depot became a separate unit.

Merredin is situated about 260 kilometres east of Perth, on the Great Eastern Highway and the east-west rail line. The Depot was established on approximately 80 acres (32 hectares) adjoining the northern side of the town. The site was within easy distance of the town centre and, as particularly recalled by Leading Aircraftman Bob White, to both the Merredin Hotel and the Commercial Hotel opposite the railway station.

One of the first tasks given to the Depot was to provide security for the storage of aviation fuel in 200-litre (44-gallon) drums. These were scattered at selected points around the area for safety, but this also made them harder to guard. Flight Sergeant Jack Cockran remembers that the expansion and contraction of the petrol in the drums caused by temperature changes made loud 'boings' in the night. This made night duty somewhat unnerving, particularly when standing next to one in the dead of night.

Leading Aircraftman Cyril Johnson was one of the 4 Stores Depot volunteers in the first party to arrive at 10 Stores Depot. He watched the two igloo and two Bellman hangars being erected, and afterwards was employed in stacking all of the shelves with the stock. Personnel accommodation during this time was mainly in tents with some in local

farmhouses. It was more than six months before all of the buildings, hangars and barracks huts were completed, making the Depot a self-contained unit.

In the second half of 1944, 10 Stores Depot became involved in one of the RAAF's wartime mysteries. On 27 August, a 25 Squadron Vultee Vengeance A27-295, flying out from Pearce on a navigation exercise, crashed some 80 kilometres east of Narembeen. The pilot parachuted to safety and was found five days later, but the second crewman, Flight Sergeant King, disappeared. 10 Stores Depot provided staging support through its landing ground for aircraft joining the search, including six Tiger Moths on 5 September. On 15 September, 10 Stores Depot provided a search party of five airmen led by Pilot Officer McDonnell for the ground search. Despite locating the crashed aircraft several weeks after and mounting a further huge air and ground search over several weeks, the body of Flight Sergeant King was never found and remains missing to this day. A plaque was dedicated to Flight Sergeant King on 27 August 1988 at the crash site, and even today local farmers refer to a particular area as 'King's Field'.

In common with many 'permanent' wartime units, 10 Stores Depot established vegetable gardens on site and also raised turkeys. This venture was going well until a neighbouring farmer's sheep dog jumped the fence one night and killed three or four turkeys. The dog was caught 'in the act' and paid the supreme penalty for stock killing.

Like a lot of units situated at small towns, the Air Force members made a significant contribution to the area, and in return were accepted as part of the community. Many of the town's leading citizens were honorary members of the messes, generally outnumbering the RAAF members themselves. In addition, the RAAF members of the Depot took an active part in the local community, attending dances, pictures or social barbecues.

Personnel from the Depot also took part in civic affairs—for example, at the Merredin Jubilee celebrations in 1950 the RAAF provided a fireworks display at the town recreation park in the evening, and a Mustang aircraft from Pearce performed an aerobatic display over the town in the afternoon. Two members of 10 Stores Depot (the Commanding Officer, Squadron Leader Rae, and Flight Lieutenant Howley) were part of the committee responsible for organising all of the Jubilee celebrations.

Because of the distance from Perth, a Port Detachment was opened on 2 June 1951. This was situated in ANA House, Number 44 Saint Georges Terrace, Perth, where it proved invaluable in carrying out local purchases for the area. The detachment also carried out the Movements Section functions.

On 20 August 1951, 20 National Service trainees arrived, after completing their basic training at RAAF Pearce, to commence their service orientated training. After being given lectures about equipment administration and management, they were distributed throughout the Depot for 'on-the-job' training. Although each course was only at the Depot for just under six months, the trainees served during a period of critical manning, and they all made a valuable contribution to the running of the Depot.

One National Service trainee to begin his service career at 10 Stores Depot, Merredin, in the latter half of 1952 was Aircraftman Alan Reed. Aircraftman Reed then joined the permanent Air Force and went on to retire as Air Vice Marshal A.R. Reed.

10 Stores Depot ceased to function as a separate unit on 1 October 1952 when it became Detachment 'A' of Base Squadron Pearce, while the Port Detachment in Perth was absorbed into Base Squadron Pearce.

The unit was reformed again as 10 Stores Depot on 1 February 1954, but this was only for the purpose of clearing all stocks and closing the Merredin base down. During this phase, the messes remained closed, with members obtaining their meals from the Merredin Hotel in town, although the accommodation huts were still used for sleeping.

10 Stores Depot was finally disbanded eight months later on 28 September 1954, when the site was handed over to Headquarters Western Area, Pearce, to arrange the final disposal. Disbandment was promulgated as being 1 October 1954.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

10 March 1943	—Wing Commander C.V.N. Hart
January 1944	—Wing Commander L.J.T. Walton
20 October 1944	—Squadron Leader J.A. Roberts
24 March 1945	—Wing Commander S.E. Dale
15 April 1946	—Squadron Leader J. Rae
5 December 1951	—Squadron Leader F.K. Fletcher
February 1954	—Flight Lieutenant W.L. Murphy

11 STORES DEPOT

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| 1 October 1944 | —formed at Townsville, Qld |
| 14 January 1946 | —Depot disbanded |

NARRATIVE

Some preliminary planning for the formation of an 11 Stores Depot began late in 1942. However, as noted in a minute signed by Air Vice Marshall G. Jones on 24 October 1942: '11 Stores Depot, Riverton in South Australia was not required at present'. Instead, it was proposed that a stores holding unit be formed in Adelaide, resulting in the establishment of 14 Stores Unit.

By mid-1944 it had become apparent that the administration of 8 Stores Depot Detachment 'A' in Townsville by 8 Stores Depot located in Macrossan was not operating successfully because of the distance between the two. One solution considered was to reform Detachment 'A' into a separate stores unit, as stated in a minute signed on 4 August 1944 by the Air Member for Supply and Equipment, Air Commodore G. MacKinoly. Later discussions resulted in the proposed stores unit being elevated to a full stores depot, to be called 11 Stores Depot.

Accordingly, instructions were issued that 11 Stores Depot was to form at Townsville, absorbing the personnel and equipment from 8 Stores Depot Detachment 'A', on 20 September 1944. However, the 20 September date could not be met and the formation date was put back to 1 October. The first Commanding Officer was Squadron Leader Frank Wolff.

11 Stores Depot was located on approximately 22 acres of land on the southern side of Ingham Road (Bruce Highway) and the North Coast Railway. Three igloo hangars were provided, together with other stores buildings.

Unusually for a 'permanent' unit, dedicated barracks accommodation was not built as part of the project. Instead, the hired buildings scattered around Townsville (used first by 13 Stores Unit, then by 8 Stores Depot) continued to be used by 11 Stores Depot.

Shortly after its formation, it was decided that 11 Stores Depot would be the non-technical depot for the area. Therefore, 'K' and 'M' groups

were transferred from 8 Stores Depot, which had the effect of immediately overloading the Depot's available storage space.

On 1 May 1945, a new transport section building and ramp was completed, enabling the Transport Section from 8 Stores Depot to be transferred to Townsville. This avoided having to drive vehicles to and from Garbutt (the present RAAF Base Townsville site) for routine servicing and fuelling.

At the end of the War, the Depot strength was 14 officers and 189 other ranks.

Following the end of the War it was decided that 11 Stores Depot would be disbanded, and Organisation Memorandum 802 was issued on 6 September 1945 ordering that the transfer of all stocks from 11 Stores Depot to 8 Stores Depot to commence forthwith. The transfer of stock subsequently began with 'P' group on 15 October 1945. Some of 11 Stores Depot's buildings were to be used for disposals and collections, while the rest were to be disposed of by sales.

On 14 January 1946, 11 Stores Depot was disbanded by the stores element being reformed into Detachment 'B' of 8 Stores Depot, with the Movements Section absorbed into the 6 Transport and Movements Office in Townsville.

COMMANDING OFFICER

1 October 1944

—Squadron Leader F.O. Wolff

17 STORES DEPOT

CHRONOLOGY

- 15 April 1945 —formed at Finschhafen, Papua New Guinea
- 10 April 1946 —4 Central Reserve taken over by 17 Stores Depot
- 25 July 1947 —last entry in Unit History Record

NARRATIVE

17 Stores Depot was the only RAAF stores depot to be based overseas. It was formed at Finschhafen, Papua New Guinea, on 15 April 1945 by the re-naming of 17 Stores Unit, shortly after the last elements of the stores unit moved from Milne Bay. Wing Commander Desmond Chadwick became 17 Stores Depot's first Commanding Officer. As well as being the only stores depot to serve overseas it was also the last stores depot to be formed in the RAAF.

Originally the facilities provided were rather primitive. However, improvements were made by obtaining some furniture and several stoves abandoned by a vacating American unit. Cane cut from high up in trees was used to make up lounge chairs to furnish the messes.

At the end of August 1945, the Depot's strength was 291. As a 'permanent' unit, the Depot was initially responsible for all facilities and accommodation for the RAAF at Finschhafen. During January 1946, 100 Squadron and 12 Local Area Supply Unit arrived at the Depot site, where they became lodger units while awaiting construction of their own camps areas.

On 25 March 1946, 48 Operational Base Unit moved into the Finschhafen area and assumed responsibility from 17 Stores Depot for all domestic facilities for all RAAF personnel.

4 Central Reserve at Alexishafen was taken over by 17 Stores Depot on 10 April 1946, becoming 17 Stores Depot Detachment 'A'. As Alexishafen is about 280 kilometres north-west by air from Finschhafen, there was considerable difficulty involved in manning and administering this detachment.

For the first year after the end of the War it was thought that the RAAF would be maintaining permanent bases in Papua New Guinea and the South-West Pacific Area post-war. During this time, proposals were

considered to re-establish a stores depot/unit at RAAF Station Port Moresby.

Initially, buildings used by the former 15 Aircraft Repair Depot at Port Moresby, were considered, but of these only two were suitable for palletised storage (to make use of forklifts), while the five igloo hangars were open to the weather at both ends. In addition, these buildings were subject to flooding, sometimes to a depth of over a metre, and the ground was salt affected, which would cause deterioration of items stored.

The old 16 Support Unit buildings situated at Konedobu, Port Moresby, were examined and a conference was held to decide if these buildings were suitable. It was then proposed to reconstitute 17 Stores Depot there to provide support for the RAAF Station Port Moresby, an Air-Sea Rescue Flight, a Workshop Section and transient aircraft. In April 1947 it was advised that the proposal to form a stores depot/unit at Port Moresby had been abandoned in favour of establishing a central store at the RAAF Station Port Moresby. Disbandment of 17 Stores Depot was therefore to continue after the transfer to Port Moresby of stock to be retained and disposal of the remainder in situ. Approval to use one of the RAAF's own ships (06-14) to move stores and stock from Finschhafen to Port Moresby was given. In addition, advice was received that further investigations should be initiated regarding moving stocks using the 300-ton vessels of the Civil Administration at Port Moresby.

17 Stores Depot was disbanded on 25 July 1947 at Finschhafen. Pending final closure, the Finschhafen site became RAAF Port Moresby Detachment 'B', while the explosives area at Alexishafen became Detachment 'D'.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

15 April 1945	—Wing Commander D.P. Chadwick
22 October 1945	—Wing Commander D.L. Swifte
7 June 1946	—Flight Lieutenant A. Gillis

13 STORES UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 5 October 1942 | —formed as 3 Stores and Shipping Unit at Townsville, Qld |
| 20 February 1943 | —re-named as 13 Stores Unit |
| June 1943 | —detachment formed on Thursday Island |
| 20 September 1943 | —Unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

13 Stores Unit was originally formed as 3 Stores and Shipping Unit at Townsville on 5 October 1942, by taking over the Shipping and Stores Sections of the North-Eastern Area. Initial accommodation for the Unit was shared with the equipment section of Operational Base, Townsville.

The new Unit's primary mission was to service the semi-static units in the North-Eastern Area, thus relieving repair and salvage units of the responsibility of holding large quantities of domestic stores. On this basis, there was a total of 46 individual units based on 3 Stores and Shipping Unit for supply purposes. It was also to function as a Port Detachment and forwarding unit for units in New Guinea, in addition to those in Queensland.

It was renumbered and re-named 13 Stores Unit on 20 February 1943, with the Commanding Officer of 3 Stores and Shipping Unit, Squadron Leader A.G. Atwell, becoming the first Commanding Officer of the new Unit. On reformation into 13 Stores Unit, the movements and shipping elements of 3 Stores and Shipping Unit were reformed into 6 Transport and Movements Office.

On formation the Unit occupied numerous buildings and sheds around Townsville. At the beginning of 1943 approval was given to hire 22 acres of vacant land adjacent to the railway line to construct a permanent unit. According to a map dated 17 February 1943, this land was on the southern side of the railway line, across from Flinders Street West. Several stores buildings were shown as already being on the land, together with a proposed railway siding. At that time, part of the site was shared with 42 Radio Direction Finding Wing.

After hiring the land, planning for the construction of the camp and stores buildings began. It was estimated that this would cost £55 800

(\$111 600). In the interim, the Unit occupied some 25 hired buildings in the Townsville area—such as a cordial factory at West End, a tannery building at Aitkenvale (for 'K' group) and a storage building at 98 Pott Street. The officers' mess was located in a house at 121 Bundock Street, the sergeants' mess in Francis Street, while the airmen's mess was in the enclosed area under a Catholic church.

During June 1943 a detachment of 13 Stores Unit was formed at Thursday Island for the purpose of providing non-technical stores support for 75 Wing forward units stretching from Merauke to Higgins Field. This detachment took over 23 Air Stores Park on 27 October 1943.

Another detachment was also formed at Cairns.

13 Stores Unit at Townsville was disbanded and absorbed into 8 Stores Depot on 20 September 1943. (The personnel and stock of the Thursday Island detachment were re-located back to 23 Air Stores Park on 15 January 1944, while there does not appear to be any record of what became of the Cairns detachment.)

COMMANDING OFFICERS

7 October 1942	—Squadron Leader F.W. Ansell
22 January 1943	—Squadron Leader A.G. Atwell

14 STORES UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

21 May 1943	—formed at Fishermens Bend, Vic.
15 July 1943	—moved to Adelaide, SA
21 May 1948	—Unit disbanded

NARRATIVE

It was originally planned to establish a full stores depot in South Australia, with suggested sites for such a unit at Terrowie, Morgan, Eudunda, Nuriootpa, Truro, Angaston and Sedan. Tentatively numbered 5 Stores Depot, this was later changed to 11 Stores Depot, to be located at Riverton/Morgan. However, on 25 September 1942, it was decided not to form a full stores depot in South Australia but to establish 5 Stores Depot at Maryborough, Victoria, to provide direct support to the South Australian units. As this would mean a supply line of between 640 and 725 kilometres, it would be necessary to establish a stores holding unit in the Adelaide region. Such a unit was also intended to function as a port detachment, and was therefore to be named 4 Stores and Shipping Unit, with formation expected to be late in January 1943.

The shipping requirements were subsequently withdrawn, with the unit then to be known as 4 Stores Unit. Later the '4' was changed to '14' to maintain the stores depots numbering sequence. Accordingly, the nucleus of 14 Stores Unit was formed at 1 Stores Depot, Fishermens Bend on 21 May 1943. It remained as a lodger of 1 Stores Depot until leaving for Adelaide on 15 July 1943, taking with it 160 tons of stock in 12 railway trucks, two 3-ton trucks and one utility. It arrived in Adelaide on 18 July and its first Commanding Officer was Flying Officer Karl H. Huenerbein.

The Unit's mission was to provide support to 20 units in the Adelaide-South Australia region, ranging from the largest, 4 School of Technical Training, to the smallest, 6 Volunteer Air Observer Corps.

On arrival in Adelaide the Unit initially moved into part of the ground and first floors of the Lewis Parking Station, a former garage and factory building in Gawler Place, Adelaide. The headquarters occupied the Dalgety's Building at 102-114 Waymouth Street.

No living-in accommodation was provided, so personnel either lived at home or boarded in private accommodation. WAAAFs whose homes

were not in Adelaide were billeted in the YWCA hostel. 4 School of Technical Training provided medical and dental services and by August 1943, the Unit was more than 50 per cent operational. A Recovery and Disposals Section was formed at the end of 1943 and transferred to 5 Central Recovery Depot located at RAAF Mallala on 1 February 1944.

One major project that 14 Stores Unit engaged in was the procurement of much of the stores required to set up 9 Stores Depot at RAAF Gorrie in the Northern Territory.

Another unusual activity for a stores unit to carry out was the daily reporting of serviceable aircraft operated by Guinea Airways and Australian National Airlines. This function was taken over from 1 Elementary Flying Training School on 22 May 1944.

During the latter part of 1944 and 1945, a proposal was submitted to take over the six-storey Simpsons building in Gawler Place in Adelaide. The six stories plus basement would enable all of the Unit to be centralised into one building (except Thebarton and Parafield elements), together with canteen, change rooms and messes. However, although detailed drawings and submissions were made, with approval being favoured, the War ended and no further action was taken.

After the War, 14 Stores Unit began the process of clearing all stocks. An Equipment Collection and Disposals Centre was formed and two Bellman hangars were taken over at RAAF Parafield. Later in June 1946 the gymnasium, station headquarters building and igloo hangar at Parafield were also taken over. On 2 August 1946, 14 Stores Unit became a detachment of 1 Stores Depot, but retained its identity. The headquarters moved to RAAF Parafield on 10 September 1946.

During this time 14 Stores Unit still managed the canteen supplies for the Adelaide region, and also still provided clothing support for Mallala, Port Pirie and the Resident Air Force Officer at Parafield. In addition, 14 Stores Unit organised the personnel movements of the Long Range Weapon Research Unit at Woomera, which was being established.

Final disbandment of 14 Stores Unit was reported as 21 May 1948.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

21 May 1943	—Flying Officer K.H. Huenerbein
6 September 1943	—Squadron Leader J.A. Roberts
18 September 1944	—Squadron Leader L. Mallen
12 April 1946	—Squadron Leader J.A. Power

15 STORES UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 16 July 1945 | —formed at Oakey, Qld |
| 22 October 1945 | —Unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

15 Stores Unit was formed at RAAF Oakey, Queensland, on 16 July 1945 as a lodger unit of 6 Aircraft Depot. The first and only Commanding Officer was Flight Lieutenant Douglas C. Dyson. After equipping, it was intended to re-locate the Unit to Morotai Island as part of the new 11 Group, absorb 22 Air Stores Park and take over the main equipment functions for the area. However, before the Unit was properly supplied and manned, the War finished.

All further operations were suspended on 1 September 1945 on direction from 5 Maintenance Group Headquarters and all stock received to that time was returned to the issuing stores depot.

During the reduced activity period while awaiting official disbandment, all surplus personnel were loaned to 6 Aircraft Depot to assist that unit with its disbandment.

15 Stores Unit was not destined to see any active service, and it was disbanded at RAAF Oakey a mere three months after formation on 22 October 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICER

- | | |
|--------------|-------------------------------|
| 16 July 1945 | —Flight Lieutenant D.C. Dyson |
|--------------|-------------------------------|

16 STORES UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 12 January 1943 | —formed as 6 Stores and Shipping Unit at
Townsville, Qld |
| 19 March 1943 | —moved to Port Moresby, Papua New
Guinea |
| 24 March 1943 | —detachment formed at Milne Bay |
| 20 April 1943 | —re-named 16 Stores Unit |
| 21 December 1943 | —moved to Goodenough Island |
| December 1943 | —Detachment 'A' formed on Kiriwina Island |
| 1 June 1944 | —Unit disbanded |

NARRATIVE

First formed as 6 Stores and Shipping Unit, it was the second stores shipping unit to be formed. Signal Q976 of 19 December 1942 reported the proposed formation of this Unit, and also pointed out that storage buildings were not available at Port Moresby where it was intended to locate the Unit. Accordingly, personnel would have to be put under canvas as there was a long delay in the availability of buildings.

Despite problems with accommodation at Port Moresby, the Unit formed at Townsville as 6 Stores and Shipping Unit on 12 January 1943 and occupied an impressed house at Aitkenvale. Because no storage facilities were provided, the Unit had to build several temporary buildings of its own from timber and galvanised iron sheets next to the Aitkenvale house.

The advance party of 6 Stores and Shipping Unit arrived at Port Moresby on 30 January 1943, where they commenced functioning. The main party of the Unit followed on 19 March by one of the RAAF's own ships, the MV *Wanaka*, and was located at Konedobu. Shortly after arriving at Port Moresby, a separate detachment of 6 Stores and Shipping Unit was formed at Milne Bay on 24 March 1943 to provide supply support of non-technical items to 71 Wing. This detachment was operational by 1 April.

6 Stores and Shipping Unit was renumbered and re-named 16 Stores Unit on 20 April 1943 in accordance with the new establishment. The function of the Unit was to hold three months stock to service the

semi-static units in the New Guinea area. On 1 May 1943 the transport and movements elements of the Unit were absorbed into 7 Transport and Movements Office, leaving 16 Stores Unit to concentrate on the supply of stores.

On 30 June 1943 the Unit was instructed to divide all of its stocks and personnel between Port Moresby and the detachment at Milne Bay. The Milne Bay detachment was then absorbed into 17 Stores Unit, which had been formed there 10 days earlier.

A letter of 18 July 1943 from the Air Officer Commanding 9 Operational Group RAAF Papua recommended that 16 Stores Unit be reformed into two mobile self-contained detachments. This was not supported at first; however, another letter from the Air Officer Commanding reiterated that proposal, and also provided more detail. Specifically, a forward detachment was to be formed immediately and re-located to Kiriwina Island, with the remainder of the Unit to move to Goodenough Island. Further, it was proposed that these new detachments be responsible for 'D' (1A, 1B, 1C, 13 sections), 'F', 'G' (5A, 5E, 5F sections), 'I' (31B, 32A, 32B sections), 'L', 'M', 'P', 'Q', 'R' and 'W' groups. The newly formed 26 Repair and Salvage Unit was to manage 'A', 'B', 'C', 'E', 'H', 'K', 'N', 'O', 'T' and 'Y' groups.

The same letter proposed that 15 Aircraft Repair Depot was to take over the supply functions at Port Moresby. However, this was changed by a signal dated 14 October 1943—15 Aircraft Repair Depot was to hold only technical spares, with a central store to be formed at 45 Operational Base Unit to manage the non-technical stores.

This proposal was accepted and on 30 September 1943, 16 Stores Unit was made a mobile unit and was split into two detachments, with the headquarters and bulk of their stock going to Goodenough Island to provide supply support to 71 Wing. The advance party arrived at Goodenough Island on 16 November 1943, followed by the main party and headquarters on 21 December 1943, when they moved into a camp site vacated by 62 Works Wing. By 5 January 1944 the unit was 50 per cent operational with 'L', 'P', 'Q' and 'W' groups functioning. Delays in erecting stores buildings held up other groups. However, the Unit became 100 per cent operational by 18 January 1944.

Remaining personnel and stock went to Kiriwina Island to form 16 Stores Unit Detachment 'A' to support 73 Wing by taking over the stores functions from 26 Repair and Salvage Unit already located there. Advance stock from Port Moresby was despatched by a US Navy boat on

20 November 1943, with the first personnel departing on 23 November. This was followed by the remaining stock on 19 December and, with the exception of 'P' group stocks, the Kiriwina detachment was reported as being fully operational by 19 January 1944.

While the detachment at Kiriwina was still being established, several of its buildings were damaged by bombs during a Japanese air raid on the island on 20 December 1943. Fortunately, there were no recorded casualties or injuries among the Unit staff. This was possibly the first time that an equipment unit had been attacked by the Japanese.

16 Stores Unit Detachment 'A' at Kiriwina was reformed into 27 Air Stores Park on 28 February 1944. All personnel of the former detachment were posted to 27 Air Stores Park with effect 1 March 1944.

On 13 April 1944, the Unit at Goodenough was advised that it would be re-locating to a new site, and packing commenced on 17 April. However, 16 Stores Unit was disbanded on 1 June 1944 at Goodenough Island by being reformed into 26 Air Stores Park. (26 Air Stores Park then re-located to Tadjil airfield in the north-eastern half of Papua New Guinea on 17 November 1944, along with the other units of 71 Wing.)

COMMANDING OFFICERS

- 25 January 1943 —Squadron Leader F.W. Ansell
30 September 1943 —Squadron Leader F. Rust

17 STORES UNIT

CHRONOLOGY

- 20 June 1943 —formed at Milne Bay
- 1 April 1945 —headquarters moved to Finschhafen
- 15 April 1945 —Unit disbanded and reformed into 17 Stores Depot

NARRATIVE

17 Stores Unit was formed at Milne Bay on 20 June 1943, by taking over the stores and personnel of 16 Stores Unit, Milne Bay Detachment. However, Squadron Leader R.A. Spinney (the Unit's first Commanding Officer) did not arrive until 24 June.

A prerequisite for equipment (supply) officers posted to 17 Stores Unit was completion of a 'Beachmaster' course. This enabled them to take charge of amphibious landings, loading and unloading stores and equipment from landing craft.

On 1 July 1943 a temporary detachment was formed at Ginger Creek, Goodenough Island, to provide support for 71 Wing. This detachment lasted until 1 August.

On 25 April 1944, Detachment 'A' was formed to go to Nadzab. This detachment, comprising one officer and six airmen, was to be supplied with Kittyhawk spares to provide support for the squadrons operating that type of aircraft. The detachment was to be attached to 25 Air Stores Park at Tadjj.

The site chosen for the camp at Milne Bay was by Hagita River and torrential rain falling over 25–29 April caused this river to flood and break its banks. These floods then took virtually all of the Unit's stock, records and buildings out to sea. Building up stocks and repairing buildings took many months. One immediate effect that the flood and destruction of stocks had was that Detachment 'A' which was being formed to go to Nadzab was cancelled.

Cleaning up went on for some considerable time and, as late as 4 June 1944, 38 airmen were attached to help with the clean-up. These airmen finally completed the work on 30 June 1944.

Shortly after resuming normal operations, Squadron Leader Des Chadwick arrived on 30 September 1944 to take over command of the

Unit. His first task was to begin preparations for the Unit to move to Finschhafen. Accordingly, he visited Finschhafen on 11 October 1944 to inspect the new site. After getting the site cleared, Wing Commander Chadwick returned to Milne Bay where he visited 7 Transport and Movements Office to discuss arrangements for moving the Unit's stores and equipment to Finschhafen.

The first consignment, comprising mainly timber and roofing iron, left Milne Bay in the MV *Waimana* (016-12) on 3 November.

The advance party left Milne Bay on 28 October 1944 for Finschhafen. On arrival there they commenced building six 77m x 22m storehouses. Progress in developing the site for occupation was unfortunately very slow, as sawn timber was not forthcoming from Lae in sufficient quantities to keep pace with construction. Also, the works detachment there concentrated on erecting storehouses, and did not consider the messing and accommodation building aspects.

Consignments continued to be shipped to Finschhafen on a regular basis over the next six months, by which time more than half of the Unit's stores and equipment had been transferred.

On Sunday 28 January 1945, the Milne Bay site was again threatened by flooding, with the water level rising to within 30cm of the storehouses. However, by this time almost all stock had been cleared.

Rations were a problem in the South-West Pacific Area, particularly the absence of fresh food and fruit. When the Unit heard that there was plenty of fresh fruit, such as pineapples and mangoes, to be had on Normanby Island (about 100 kilometres north of Milne Bay) in exchange for some tins of bully beef, it didn't take much urging to organise a trip there. (At the time, there was a surplus of bully beef in the area, as the Americans didn't want it—they much preferred their chilli con carne.)

With the support of Wing Commander R.E. Hodges (the Commanding Officer of 33 Squadron), Wing Commander Chadwick organised the use of a run-down Navy boat for the day to visit Normanby Island, and a party of nine (including Wing Commander Hodges and four airmen from 33 Squadron) set off with a load of tinned bully beef ready to do barter. Wing Commander Chadwick recalls that this intended one-day trip provided his most vivid memories of his service career:

On the way to Normanby Island, the boat passed over a reef and it slowed down while some of the airmen attempted 'fishing'. This consisted of

dropping hand grenades over the stern, then circling back to pick up the stunned fish. Unfortunately, as soon as the fish rose to the surface, about eight or ten reef sharks lunged in and got the lot. Needless to say, there were no volunteers to dive in and beat the sharks to the fish!

With fish off the menu, the boat continued sailing on to Normanby Island. However, the first village we arrived at did not have any fruit for trading, but they told us of another village a few kilometres along the coast which had plenty. By the time the boat arrived at the second village, the crew decided to refuel the tanks from eight 200 litre drums of petrol carried on board before we landed and started our trading negotiations. However, the boat's tank was leaking and some petrol went into the bilges causing the boat to catch fire when the engine was started.

Fortunately, everyone managed to get ashore, and while the boat was rendered unserviceable it did not sink. We were stranded on Normanby Island for four days before our radio call for help was picked up by an American Liberty ship off the Queensland coast and relayed to the authorities in the area and we were finally rescued.

Unfortunately, I hadn't got 'official' approval for the trip to Normanby Island and as well as coming back empty handed—no fish, no fruit and losing the boat—I had been technically AWL [absent without leave] and had a rather difficult time coming up with the right reasons as to why disciplinary action should not be taken against me!

(He obviously did come up with the right reasons, as no further action was taken over the incident. Indeed, he went on to command 17 Stores Depot.)

17 Stores Unit headquarters finally moved to Finschhafen on 1 April 1945. However, it was disbanded two weeks later on 15 April 1945 by being reformed into 17 Stores Depot.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

24 June 1943	—Squadron Leader R.A. Spinney
21 January 1944	—Squadron Leader D.G. Soane
30 September 1944	—Wing Commander D.P. Chadwick

AIR LIFT LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT SQUADRON

CHRONOLOGY

- 18 December 1992 —formed in Melbourne, Vic.
January 1993 —re-located to Richmond, NSW
November 1994 —based at Richmond, NSW

NARRATIVE

The Air Lift Logistics Management Unit was formed within Headquarters Logistics Command, Melbourne, in August 1992. In accordance with 'RAAF 2000' weapon system logistics management philosophy and Chief of Staff Directive 4/91, Air Lift Logistics Management Squadron was formed as a unit within 503 Wing with effect 18 December 1992 and was re-located to RAAF Richmond in January 1993.

The role of the Squadron is to provide integrated logistics support to Air Lift Group aircraft and the T56 engine.

During 1993, the Squadron's activities mainly concentrated on settling in, training and fulfilling the unit's role. In February 1994, as a result of 'Blue Print 2020', the unit's first chief engineer, Wing Commander G. Donaldson, was posted in. The following month the Repairable Item Process Management Section was formed to improve Repairable Item Management in 503 Wing workshops.

In August 1994, C-130 Hercules and B707 Airworthiness Boards were held.

COMMANDING OFFICER

- 18 December 1992 —Wing Commander K.G. McLeod

AIR MOVEMENTS TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT

Develop and Deliver



CHRONOLOGY

- 1 May 1962 —Air Movements Training Flight became a separate unit of 86 Wing at RAAF Richmond
- 1 October 1965 —AMTF disbanded and Air Movements Training and Development Unit formed
- November 1994 —based at Richmond, NSW

NARRATIVE

Following the introduction of the C-130 Hercules transport aircraft in the late 1950s, the RAAF recognised that new procedures must be developed to fully utilise the aircraft as a cargo carrier. Air Movements Training Flight (AMTF), originally a sub-unit of 38 Squadron at RAAF Richmond, was given the responsibility of developing new air movements procedures.

In May 1962, the flight was expanded and commenced functioning as a separate unit of 86 Transport Wing at Richmond in response to the pending introduction of the Caribou and Iroquois aircraft. The flight's first Commanding Officer was Squadron Leader P.V. Hamilton-Foster and, to enable the Army to keep up to date with any changes in air movements and delivery, an Army major and warrant officer were attached for liaison and instructional duties. In response to the RAAF's growing involvement in the field of air movements and delivery, AMTF was disbanded on 1 October 1965 and Air Movements Training and

Development Unit (AMTDU) was created, still based at Richmond. The new Unit was given the additional role of conducting flight trials to develop and improve aerial delivery techniques and procedures.

Australia's involvement in the Vietnam war and the introduction of the Chinook transport helicopter in the 1970s were significant factors in the expansion of AMTDU's activities. That helicopter's internal and external load capabilities considerably increased the RAAF's air transport potential. However, there were other factors which were responsible for the growth in the Unit's workload. The Australian Services were acquiring an increasing variety of equipment and vehicles, and AMTDU was tasked to conduct air portability and airdrop trials on these in the various transport aircraft. The project team also monitored innovations in overseas air movements systems and analysed these developments in local field tests. In addition to the upsurge in project work, the Unit responded to a need by the Services for more skilled personnel in the air movements field. As a consequence, more air movements, aerial delivery and air despatch courses were required. To cater for this increased demand, the Unit's personnel strength, from both Services, grew rapidly.

Because of its expertise in aerial transport and delivery, the Unit had been involved, from its earliest days, in assisting the civilian community whenever such skills were needed. In May 1963, AMTF volunteers assisted with the dropping of fodder as part of flood relief operations in the Grafton area. This involvement in civil assistance has continued through the years, with members of AMTDU taking part—in conjunction with the RAAF transport squadrons—in many flood, bushfire and drought relief operations. The Unit has also been employed to carry out some unusual projects to assist the Australian community. Some of these have included the dismantling and preparation of a huge crane for air transport to Norfolk Island; the recovery of an anchor from the four-masted sailing ship *G.W. Wolf* which had been wrecked near Flinders Island in the early 1800s; the delivery to, and retrieval from, Noumea of a crop duster aircraft used to combat dengue fever; the rigging and positioning of a tram body for use as an artificial reef off Moreton Bay; and the carriage from Cobar in New South Wales to Tindal in the Northern Territory of a Gipsy Moth—the first aircraft operated by the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Although primarily a RAAF unit, AMTDU is jointly manned with the Army who make up roughly half of its 50 staff. The Commanding Officer is a RAAF squadron leader, with an Army major as Officer

Commanding of the Army component and second in command of the Unit. AMTDU's main tasks are to carry out training in air movements and aerial delivery procedures for airland, airdrop and external lift, in addition to related developmental work. Additionally, the Unit's staff investigate airdrop malfunctions and provide personnel to supervise the carriage of loads not yet cleared by the Unit in both fixed wing and rotary wing aircraft. AMTDU also conducts around 30 air movement related courses for around 850 to 1000 students annually. The course participants are mainly from the RAAF, Army and Navy, but Defence personnel from Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, New Zealand and other countries have undergone training by the Unit, either at RAAF Richmond or at other bases. Project staff carry out about 35 to 40 technical projects a year, in addition to liaising with trials and development personnel at equivalent units in the United Kingdom and the United States of America. During their attachments to the Unit, USAF and US Army exchange personnel also lend their expertise to the Unit's activities.

AMTDU is currently divided into three flights which carry out the functions of development, training and support. Development Flight conducts projects on air portability, external helicopter loads, airdrop trials and air movements, and monitors overseas developments in the field. The conduct of the courses offered in all aspects of air movement, aerial delivery and air despatch is the responsibility of the Training Flight. Support Flight is responsible for such diverse functions as administration, aircraft life support, photography, transport, equipment supply and Q store, technical drawing, publications and library, and air despatch.

Although members of a unit whose main focus is air movements and delivery, AMTDU personnel come from a wide variety of trades and professions found in the RAAF and Army. Specialists employed at the Unit include pilots, loadmasters, air despatchers, photographers, engineers, a draughtsman, and a parachute rigger—as well as drivers, education assistants, orderly room clerks and other support staff. There is rarely a hint of inter-service rivalry—excepting good-natured banter at social occasions—and the Unit is a good example of the co-operation potential of the Australian Armed Services. Unit members go about their tasks in a professional manner and, being a small group, all staff are called upon when needed. Air despatchers, clerks, education assistants, and other personnel work side by side as ground staff on parachute and

load recovery during air drops and, on projects, training, exercises and displays, all Unit members are required to assist. AMTDU has always enjoyed an excellent esprit de corps, with good attendance at social functions such as 'welcomes and farewells', and is well represented in on-base sporting competitions, including volleyball and golf.

AMTDU today serves as the Australian Defence Force's central point of expertise in aerial delivery and transport matters. The Unit has resources, both in personnel and equipment, which give it a unique and invaluable capability for the future training of Defence personnel, and the continuing development of the Australian Defence Force's air movement capacities.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

November 1962	—Squadron Leader Hamilton-Foster
January 1967	—Squadron Leader Egle
April 1967	—Squadron Leader Hahn
January 1972	—Squadron Leader Rowley
January 1973	—Squadron Leader Marsh
January 1976	—Squadron Leader Dunn
October 1977	—Flight Lieutenant Frame
January 1978	—Squadron Leader McGregor
January 1980	—Squadron Leader Richards
April 1982	—Squadron Leader Mattes
June 1986	—Squadron Leader Borysewicz
December 1987	—Squadron Leader Murphy
February 1988	—Squadron Leader Taylor
April 1988	—Major Rogers
June 1988	—Squadron Leader Edwards
March 1989	—Squadron Leader Unicomb
December 1989	—Squadron Leader Burns
September 1992	—Squadron Leader Johnstone

ARMY AIRCRAFT LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT SQUADRON

CHRONOLOGY

- 10 August 1992 —formed at Headquarters Logistic Command, Melbourne, Vic.
- 1 December 1993 —became an independent unit, as distinct from an element with Headquarters Logistic Command
- 12 August 1993 —RAAF commendation awarded to Squadron for outstanding response to the deployment of Blackhawk helicopters to Cambodia
- 1 February 1994 —moved to Army Aviation Centre Oakey, Qld
- November 1994 —based at Oakey, Qld

NARRATIVE

On 10 August 1992, the Army Aircraft Logistics Management Squadron was formed as an element within Headquarters Logistic Command. The Squadron was formed from various elements within Headquarters Logistic Command units. The initial establishment consisted of 103 positions: 63 RAAF, 23 Army and 17 civilian. On establishment, the Squadron priorities were: to integrate the previously distinct elements into a single unit capable of providing improved levels of support to operational units, commercial enterprise and Headquarters Logistic Command elements; and to facilitate the effective re-location of the unit to the Army Aviation Centre Oakey.

The re-location from Melbourne to Oakey and integration into the Army Aviation Centre has proceeded smoothly. Since this time some of the major tasks undertaken by the Squadron have been the investigation of Blackhawk rigging anomalies; developing night vision cockpits for UH-1H and Kiowa aircraft; development of the Command and Control Console for the Blackhawk; spares assessment for Chinook; developing tactical voice network for the Army Aircraft Fleet; and training new personnel.

The Army Logistics Management Squadron is providing responsive logistics management support to its customers in the Australian Army Aviation Corps, Royal Australian Navy Fleet Air Arm, and the Royal Australian Air Force.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

10 August 1992 —Wing Commander D.P. North-Coombes
1 December 1993 —Wing Commander P.G. Best

INLAND AIRCRAFT FUEL DEPOTS

Early in 1939, at the direction of the Chief of the Air Staff, a RAAF committee investigated the requirements for aviation fuels and oils for operational and training purposes and recommended the erection of groups of storage tanks at certain inland locations, having regard to security from attack by seaborne aircraft.

War Cabinet Minute 1963 of 9 March 1942 approved the construction of installations for the bulk storage of 20 760 000 gallons (94 374 960 litres) of aircraft fuel at 19 new inland aircraft fuel depots, and extensions to existing depots. The total estimated cost of the 24 installations was £900 000 (\$1 800 000) and the funds were made available, to be shared between the RAAF and United States Army Air Corps in proportion to their respective storage requirements. The cost of building varied from £20 000 (\$40 000) at Port Pirie, South Australia, to £100 000 (\$200 000) at Tocumwal, New South Wales.

By October 1943, the Assistant Director-General Allied Works, Sydney, advised that the installations were nearing completion and by May 1944 there were 31 inland aircraft fuel depots throughout Australia. However, action was taken to close 17, thus releasing 83 servicemen for more productive service. There were, on average, five servicemen based at each inland aircraft fuel depot—a cook, equipment assistant and three guards.

Regular maintenance was undertaken by contract. This was continued in 1944; in the case of those closed down, the contracting oil company was asked to supply caretakers. Maintenance of the inland aircraft fuel depots continued until 1947, when individual disposal action was taken.

Inland aircraft fuel depots were located at Ballarat, Warragul, Violet Town and Yelta in Victoria; Cootamundra, Muswellbrook, Grafton, Tocumwal, Deniliquin, Lake Bathurst, Uranquinty, Parkes, Dubbo, Tamworth and Mona Vale in New South Wales; Toowoomba, Gayndah, Charters Towers, Yarraman, Roma, Cloncurry and Gladstone in Queensland; Northam, Narrogin, Merredin and Boulder in Western Australia; Solomon Town, Wolseley and Crystal Brook in South Australia; Alice Springs, Northern Territory; and an unidentified site in Tasmania.

MARITIME PATROL LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT SQUADRON

CHRONOLOGY

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 19 January 1993 | —formed Edinburgh, SA |
| November 1994 | —based at Edinburgh, SA |

NARRATIVE

The Squadron was formed at Edinburgh, South Australia, on 19 January 1993, as part of the Headquarters Logistic Command, Weapon System Logistics Management (WSLM) concept. This is not a new concept, its history can be traced to the Hargraves study of the early 1980s. That study was the basis of the creation of support groups, which centralised logistics functions at Headquarters Logistic Command (HQLC) in Melbourne. In mid-1990 the Weapon System Logistics Management concept was developed to integrate in to a single structure organisation of weapon system personnel. These were drawn from the functional organisations of engineering, maintenance, the support group and the capital projects organisation, and this organisation was subsequently devolved to each main customer group.

The Maritime Patrol Logistics Management Squadron's (MPLM SQN) mission is: 'to provide quality logistics support for Maritime Patrol Group'. Maritime Patrol Logistics Management Squadron is therefore the single logistics management point through which the operational customer is supported. The Commanding Officer has the control and responsibility for all weapon system logistics management issues and decisions, with responsibilities for:

- Orion/Dakota Engineering Processes—Requests For Deviation (RFD)/Requests For Waiver (RFW), Defects Reports, Modifications, Maintenance Engineering Authority, Configuration Management Plan development, developing Special Technical Instructions.
- Orion/Dakota Assessing, Procurement, Claim Processing.
- Orion/Dakota Annual Management Plan (AMP) development, Repairable Item pipeline management, Repairable Item replenishment.

- Orion/Dakota funding for replacement, repair and technical services, including bidding, impact statements, and commitment and expenditure of funds.
- In-service introduction of Orion/Dakota projects.
- Orion/Dakota Publications Management.
- Development of the logistics processes to support Maritime Patrol Group and Aircraft Research and Development Unit.

The Squadron is characterised by several specialist logistics management teams, each of approximately 10 people with a team leader at the squadron leader, junior officer, warrant officer or civilian equivalent level. Each system team offers the three main functional elements: engineering support, repairable item management and spares inventory management.

Establishing the priority, allocating resources, controlling analysis methods, as well as conducting the more significant analysis, is done centrally within the Maritime Patrol Logistics Management Squadron management group. The head of this group is the executive officer. The concepts of planning, evaluation and resource management are part of this group. The criteria by which Maritime Patrol Logistics Management Squadron are being assessed are centred around the following:

- better customer focus and service
- better resource management, and
- more satisfying jobs.

The primary focus for the Maritime Patrol Logistics Management Squadron is developing processes and practices which assist in meeting customers' expectations, with quantifiable outcomes that can be readily assessed by the customer. The development of these outcomes has centred on three key result areas, which are as follows:

- Timeliness (as related to Aircraft Availability)—'Delivery of acceptable logistics support at the right time in the right place as negotiated with the customer'.
- Sustainability—'Provision of logistic support as defined by Australian Defence Force policies on Life of Type (LOT) and preparedness'.
- Technical Airworthiness—'To ensure aircraft and equipment are fit for flight through design, construction and maintenance to approved standards acceptable to the RAAF'.

The Total Quality Management philosophy has been embraced to ensure enthusiasm and involvement of all staff. The framework for this

system is Australian Standard (AS) 3901, 'Quality system for design/development, production, installation and servicing'. Process development is the cornerstone of ensuring a sustainable quality management system, with documentation being the critical element ensuring both accountability and traceability.

The challenges before Maritime Patrol Logistics Management Squadron are to produce creditable measures of logistics support dictated by the operational customer, and to identify the minimum level of non-discretionary support needed to meet those requirements, and hence sustain and improve the availability of the appropriate weapon system.

COMMANDING OFFICER

January 1993

—Wing Commander R. Hopkins

MOVEMENT AND CONTROL OFFICES (MCO)

NARRATIVE

The Movement and Control Offices were established in the capital cities of the States of Australia, excluding Tasmania, during the 1960s and early 1970s. The purpose of such offices was to control the movement of personnel and freight (cargo) departing and arriving through the capital cities of Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth. Such movement activities were via rail, road, air and sea.

Due to the routine nature of the work carried out at the Offices, any notable events are few and far between. There were of course the normal VIP movements and occasionally there were events of historical importance. For example, in July 1967, at Sydney, the first container shipment to be handled by the RAAF was received. The container was constructed to international standard dimensions and arrived in Sydney from the United States on board the *Australian Isle* holding 366 packages of various sizes. The advantage of the container was in the saving in man hours, not needing to search the wharf area for individual packages.

Another interesting arrival at Sydney was on 5 December 1968 when a damaged Caribou aircraft, A4-152, arrived from South Vietnam. The aircraft was in a dismantled condition, arriving aboard HMAS *Sydney* for repair by Hawker De Havilland Pty Ltd at Bankstown Aerodrome. Some components were transported by road from the unloading point at Garden Island to Bankstown, although the dimensions of the front fuselage and centre section precluded this means of transport. Those sections were transported by lighter from Sydney Harbour to Botany Bay and thence via George's River to the northern side of Milperra Bridge adjacent to Bankstown Aerodrome. They were then unloaded on to the river bank by a P & H crane with a 70-foot jib and towed a distance of about 75 yards across Henry Lawson Drive into the aerodrome. This was the first occasion that an aircraft had been taken to sea by lighter in the course of transportation by surface means from the port of Sydney.

The Movement and Control Offices survived into the late 1970s and early 1980s, where the last recorded unit history appears.

Adelaide MCO

Chronology

3 November 1971 —first entry in Unit History Record Book

February 1979 —last entry in Unit History Record Book

Commanding Officers

3 November 1971 —Flight Lieutenant K.J. Tinlin

11 September 1972 —Flight Lieutenant W. Bambling

August 1976 —Flying Officer C. Leach

24 August 1978 —Flight Lieutenant B.S. Newell

Brisbane MCO

Chronology

1 December 1971 —first entry in Unit History Record Book

29 August 1979 —last entry in Unit History Record Book

Commanding Officers

1 December 1971 —Flight Lieutenant P.R. Muller

June 1972 —Flying Officer R.B. Tyrie

October 1972 —Flying Officer M.J. Crimston

24 September 1974 —Flying Officer C.D. Conran

20 December 1976 —Flight Lieutenant S.R. Cameron

Melbourne MCO

Chronology

1 December 1971 —first entry in Unit History Record Book

6 September 1979 —last entry in Unit History Record Book

Commanding Officers

1 December 1971 —Squadron Leader D.J.F. Howes

November 1973 —Squadron Leader J.M. Hyndes

December 1974 —Flight Lieutenant C.R. Clarke

2 May 1978 —Squadron Leader R.W. Lawrence

Perth MCO

Chronology

1 November 1971 —first entry in Unit History Record Book

31 August 1979 —last entry in Unit History Record Book

Commanding Officers

1 November 1971 —Flying Officer L.E. McGrath

August 1974 —Flight Lieutenant J. Van Heurck

February 1977 —Flight Lieutenant F.S. Maguire

9 January 1979 —Flight Lieutenant G.C.J. Turner

Sydney MCO

Chronology

19 January 1962 —first entry in Unit History Record Book

March 1980 —last entry in Unit History Record Book

Commanding Officers

19 January 1962 —Squadron Leader W.L. Owens

11 August 1965 —Flight Lieutenant E.G. Ferguson

9 December 1968 —Flight Lieutenant J. McLeod

29 January 1973 —Squadron Leader R.J. Ewin

27 December 1973 —Squadron Leader E. Konashenko

March 1976 —Squadron Leader R.J. Viney

March 1977 —Squadron Leader G.T. Stewart

March 1979 —Flight Lieutenant C.D. Windever

November 1979 —Squadron Leader G.T. Stewart

RAAF MOVEMENT CO-ORDINATION CENTRE

CHRONOLOGY

- 1 June 1970 —formed at RAAF Base Richmond, NSW
December 1992 —became part of Air Lift Co-ordination
Centre and ceased to be known as
Movement Co-ordination Centre

NARRATIVE

The RAAF Movement Co-ordination Centre was formed at RAAF Base Richmond, New South Wales, on 1 June 1970. The Centre's prime function was to co-ordinate the movement of all personnel and material allocated to the movement organisation for transport.

Initially, the RAAF Movement Co-ordination Centre was housed in Buildings 351 and 352—small World War II vintage timber and galvanised iron buildings that had been refurbished to accommodate the three equipment officers and 16 other ranks established for this new unit. Squadron Leader L.J. Tindal, who was CE05 at Headquarters Support Command, was attached to Richmond from 1 June to 24 July to be the Centre's first movement co-ordinator.

Until June 1970 there was no centralised RAAF movement control. Prior to that time the Load Co-ordination Section, a detachment of Headquarters Support Command based at Richmond, co-ordinated the loading and utilisation of RAAF transport aircraft and CE05 at Headquarters Support Command controlled the activities of the RAAF Movement Control Offices, which were sited in each of the Australian State capital cities. These offices arranged the movement of personnel and equipment by civilian means of transport.

The Movement Co-ordination Centre took over the duties of the Load Co-ordination Centre and CE05. The prime responsibilities of the new unit included:

- controlling activities of Movement Control Offices and co-ordinating activities of Air Movement Sections;
- co-ordinating the movement of RAAF personnel and cargo by air and surface means;

- liaising with civilian organisations to co-ordinate and expedite the movement of RAAF personnel and cargo;
- distributing to the movement organisation detailed procedures emanating from policy promulgated by Air Force Office;
- advising on training standards and determining air movement continuation training requirements;
- liaising with other Services on movement aspects affecting the RAAF;
- liaising with Headquarters Operation Command and RAAF transport squadrons in respect of special loadings, e.g. mobility exercises, carriage of Army equipment, movement of aircraft engines etc.; and
- allocating passenger and cargo loadings to RAAF transport aircraft.

The unit quickly accepted its assigned duties and an indication of the extent of its responsibilities can be gauged by the fact that in its first year of operations it co-ordinated the movement of 11 million pounds of cargo and 2500 passengers by RAAF Hercules aircraft and over 19 000 passengers by Qantas charter aircraft between Australia and South-East Asia. In that same year some 23 million pounds of equipment was transported into the RAAF's Bulk Stores Depots and about 25 million pounds of like equipment was transported from the depots to RAAF units.

On average, during its 22 years of existence, the Movement Co-ordination Centre co-ordinated the uplift of 3 million kilograms of cargo per month, the bulk of this by air and road. Passenger traffic generally averaged in excess of 20 000 per year, most of whom were moved by air transport. Throughout its existence the Centre was involved, in varying degrees, in co-ordinating the movement of cargo and/or personnel:

- on all RAAF scheduled flights within Australia and to/from Australian Defence Force units overseas;
- on all unscheduled or special flights (RAAF and civil) involved in support of Australian Defence Force units in Australia, South-East Asia and other overseas localities;
- to and from national disaster sites, e.g. Darwin when some 2 million pounds of cargo were moved in 86 special flights following Cyclone *Tracy* in December 1974; and
- between RAAF establishments by all means of transport.

In addition to those activities the Movement Co-ordination Centre was also involved in arranging the conveyance of Royalty, Governors-General, Prime Ministers, the Pope and the personnel and equipment (vehicles etc.) needed in support of such VIP movements.

The tasks undertaken by Movement Co-ordination Centre were varied and wide ranging, and an indication of the types of operations carried out can be gained from the following examples:

- the return to Australia of the Australian Defence Force personnel and equipment from South Vietnam when the Vietnam war ended;
- the return to Australia of the Australian Defence Force personnel and their families from Butterworth, Malaysia;
- the transportation of ground support equipment given to Indonesia with Sabre aircraft;
- the airlift of contingents of Australian peace-keeping troops to Namibia in 1989 and the support, by air, of those troops and Australian Defence Force personnel engaged prior, during and after the 'Gulf' hostilities;
- the airlift of a prize Murray Grey bull to China (a gift from the Australian Government);
- support for the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan;
- flood and famine disaster relief into Cambodia;
- airlift support for Australian Defence Force personnel in Sinai;
- air support for the Commonwealth Ceasefire Monitoring Force in Rhodesia; and
- airlift co-ordination of RAAF Hercules and Boeing 707 aircraft engaged in the movement of civilian passengers throughout Australia during the commercial airlines pilots strike in 1989.

During 1991 and 1992 there were several administrative and functional changes made in the RAAF movement field and this altered the Centre's responsibilities. Control of the Movement Control Offices was transferred from the Movement Co-ordination Centre and that Centre became even further integrated into the Air Lift Co-ordination Centre at Richmond.

Although some organisational changes were made in 1979, the Centre's role continued until 1992 when the operational aspects became more closely embodied in the overall air lift operations. The Movement Co-ordination Centre ceased operations in December 1992.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

1 June 1970	—Squadron Leader L.J. Tindal
25 July 1970	—Squadron Leader J.V. Mann
30 August 1971	—Wing Commander J.E. Nicholson
14 January 1974	—Wing Commander R.J. Ewin
10 September 1976	—Wing Commander L.J. Tindal
3 January 1980	—Wing Commander D. Foley
4 January 1984	—Wing Commander J. Halloren
18 December 1987	—Wing Commander D.W. Peak
16 January 1990	—Wing Commander W.J. Ryan
15 January 1992	—Wing Commander I. Jamieson

RAAF TRANSPORTATION AND MOVEMENTS OFFICES

NARRATIVE

RAAF Transportation and Movements Offices were established to move large volumes and numbers of RAAF goods, equipment and personnel by ship, rail and road during the War. They were set up in northern areas of Australia, New Guinea and surrounding islands. They also helped to supply American units when required. Most of the units disbanded early in 1946 except for the Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne offices which didn't close till late 1948 and 1949.

1 Transportation and Movements Office

Chronology

15 February 1941 —formed at Sydney, NSW

15 March 1949 —unit disbanded

Commanding Officers

15 February 1941 —Wing Commander E.C. Buttfield

1 July 1945 —Squadron Leader F. Gill

12 November 1945 —Squadron Leader C.R. Chaseling

23 January 1948 —Squadron Leader R.H. McLean

2 Transportation and Movements Office

Chronology

9 October 1942 —formed at Melbourne, Vic.

2 February 1949 —unit disbanded

Commanding Officers

9 October 1942 —Squadron Leader J.A. Gill

20 April 1944 —Flight Lieutenant J.J. Watson

3 Transportation and Movements Office

Chronology

20 April 1943 —formed at Adelaide, SA

30 June 1946 —unit disbanded

Commanding Officers

20 April 1943 —Squadron Leader R.G. Goodman

14 February 1944 —Squadron Leader K.P. O'Keefe

1 October 1945 —Squadron Leader A.L. Gregg

14 February 1946 —Flight Lieutenant A. Jamieson

4 Transportation and Movements Office

Chronology

26 April 1943 —formed at Perth, WA

9 August 1946 —unit disbanded

Commanding Officers

26 April 1943 —Squadron Leader S.J. Smith

26 April 1944 —Squadron Leader F.L. Gill

5 Transportation and Movements Office

Chronology

18 November 1942 —formed at Brisbane, Qld

28 September 1948 —unit disbanded

Commanding Officers

18 December 1942 —Flying Officer E.J. Dynon

24 February 1944 —Squadron Leader R.G. Goodman

30 September 1946 —Flight Lieutenant J.J. Wright

25 May 1947 —Squadron Leader J.B. Fitzgerald

29 July 1948 —Flight Lieutenant J.J. Williams

6 Transportation and Movements Office

Chronology

20 April 1943 —formed at Townsville, Qld

8 January 1946 —unit disbanded

Commanding Officers

20 April 1943 —Flight Lieutenant E.V. Wall

10 April 1944 —Flight Lieutenant G.H. Camens

20 December 1945 —Flight Lieutenant H.J. Lennon

7 Transportation and Movements Office

Chronology

3 June 1943 —formed at Milne Bay with detachments at Port Moresby, Lae, Goodenough Island, Hollandia and Tadj

26 April 1946 —unit disbanded

Commanding Officers

4 June 1943 —Squadron Leader T.S. Carlyon

2 June 1944 —Squadron Leader S.J. Smith

1 August 1945 —Wing Commander N. Fleet

8 Transportation and Movements Office

Chronology

- 1 April 1944 —formed at Winnellie, NT, with detachments at Batchelor, Alice Springs, Mt Isa and Gorrie
- 20 August 1946 —unit disbanded

Commanding Officers

- April 1944 —Squadron Leader A.L. Gregg
- 15 December 1944 —Squadron Leader D.W. Kirk
- 7 September 1945 —Flight Lieutenant G.N. Alpass
- June 1946 —Flight Lieutenant N.H. Bradley

9 Transportation and Movements Office

Chronology

- July 1944 —formed as Transport and Movement Office at Noemfoor Island
- 1 February 1945 —re-named 9 Transportation and Movements Office at Noemfoor Island, with detachments at Biak and Morotai Islands
- 31 March 1946 —unit disbanded

Commanding Officers

- 1 April 1944 —Squadron Leader A.L. Gregg
- 8 December 1944 —Squadron Leader D.W. Kirk
- 12 November 1945 —Flight Lieutenant G.N. Alpass

TACTICAL FIGHTER LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT SQUADRON

CHRONOLOGY

August 1992	—established at Melbourne, Vic.
January 1993	—re-located to Williamtown, NSW
November 1994	—based at Williamtown, NSW

NARRATIVE

Tactical Fighter Logistics Management Squadron was formed as a result of the introduction of the quality approach to management within the RAAF in 1990. A number of reviews were conducted which culminated in the creation of integrated groups to support specific aircraft types and their support equipment. These groups replaced separate functional organisations which were based in Melbourne and responsible for engineering, maintenance, supply support and capital projects. As a consequence of these reviews, Tactical Fighter Logistics Management Squadron was initially formed in Melbourne in August 1992 and re-located to RAAF Base Williamtown in January 1993.

Tactical Fighter Logistics Management Squadron was formed from Support Group 2, Hornet Engineering Section and Aircraft Engineering 6. When the Squadron was re-located to Williamtown, the Headquarters Logistics Command F/A-18 Project staff joined the Squadron, which supports the F/A-18 Hornet, Macchi and Winjeel aircraft.

The unit has 138 established positions. 131 positions are based at RAAF Base Williamtown, comprising 102 service positions and 29 Defence civilian positions. The remaining seven positions are service liaison staff based in the United States to provide logistics support for the RAAF F/A-18 aircraft. Additional support is provided to Tactical Fighter Logistics Management Squadron at Williamtown by two F/A-18 Field Service Representatives from McDonnell Douglas and General Electric in the United States, and a Directorate of Quality Assurance representative.

COMMANDING OFFICER

August 1992	—Wing Commander J. Longrigg
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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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