

A welcome home ceremony for our 10th and final C-27J Spartan has demonstrated the talents of Air Force's battlefield airlifter.

A Spartan mission demonstration during the ceremony at RAAF Base Richmond on April 18 involved a No. 35 Squadron crew delivering troops and cargo by Parachute, and landing on a grass airstrip.



A static display of three additional Spartans — including the most recent arrival, A34-010 — showcased the aircraft's different mission configurations, including aero-medical evacuation.

Defence Minister Senator Marise Payne related how impressed she was by 35SQN and the Spartan during her address to the ceremony. "Everything that can be said about this fabulous aircraft has been ably demonstrated by those who are here today," Senator Payne said. "Our transport aircraft are often called upon to travel great distances, and to operate in rugged conditions both within Australia and across the region. "We can now meet any air mobility challenge." The next milestone for the Spartan will come in early 2019 when 35SQN relocates to RAAF Base Amberley. "The relocation to Amberley will allow 35SQN to work from facilities purpose-built for the Spartan, and to be more responsive when deploying across Australia and into the Asia-Pacific", Senator Payne said.

Present at the welcome ceremony were family members of 35Sqn personnel who were able to appreciate first-hand the capability their loved ones had delivered. With the Spartan expected to take 35SQN into remote and distant environments, Senator Payne thanked family members for their support. "I know so very well that the men

and women of the ADF rely on you enormously to do the jobs that they do here, all around Australia, and ultimately all around the world,” Senator Payne said.

“When you’re able to be here in support of an event like today, I’m sure it makes a profound difference in your family.” DCAF AVM Gavin Turnhull said the delivery of the 10th aircraft was an important moment. “It marks the point at which the organisation begins to mature,” AVM Turnhull said “This is not the end of the delivery, but the beginning of the development path over the next 20 or 30 years.” The Spartan flying demonstration on April 18 showcased the aircraft’s ability to land, operate and park on areas that would be unsuitable for continued use by larger transports. “This aircraft will significantly improve our flexibility,” AVM Turnhull said. “Whether we’re responding to a natural disaster, or operating in a peacekeeping mission or warlike operation, we seldom have the luxury of choosing where we’re going to operate the aircraft.

Such environments demand a versatile aircraft and that’s exactly what we purchased.



Eamon Hamilton