

Background

Oakey Base History

- 2.1 The Army Aviation Centre Oakey is located on the northern side of the township of Oakey, Queensland, and approximately 165km west of Brisbane. A location plan is at Appendix C.
- 2.2 Oakey airfield was a Second World War RAAF base, which was later developed for Army Aviation activities in 1967. The initial 1967 'temporary' facilities were partially upgraded in the early 1990s, however some facilities date from the Second World War, or are the result of limited works and ad hoc development since 1967.¹
- 2.3 Oakey airfield has since evolved as the primary Australian Army Aviation base and the Aviation Centre is responsible for all Army pilot, ground crewman, loadmaster and aircraft maintenance training. In addition, under a Defence Cooperation Agreement, it accommodates a helicopter training squadron of the Republic of Singapore Air Force. With the planned relocation of the Army component of the Australian Defence Force Helicopter School (ADF), and with the arrival of the new armed reconnaissance helicopter, it will become one of the busiest Defence airfields in Australia.²

1 Australia. Parliament. Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, *First Report of 1990*.

2 Submissions, p. 8.

Current Activities

- 2.4 The Army Aviation Centre accommodates the following organisations:
- Headquarters Army Aviation Support Group, which provides capability management functions for Army Aviation including technical control of operations and logistics;
 - the Army Aviation Training Centre, responsible for Army pilot initial and conversion training, ground crewmen, loadmaster and aircraft maintenance training;
 - the Aviation Support Group Workshop, which provides operational maintenance for training helicopters, used by the Aviation Training Centre.
 - the Army Aircraft Logistics Management Squadron which provides engineering and logistics management for Army aviation;
 - elements of the 1st Aviation Regiment, including HQ 1st Aviation Regiment, 171st Operational Support Squadron, 173rd Surveillance Squadron, and the bulk of the Technical and Administrative Support Squadron;
 - the Museum of Australian Army Flying;
 - a Republic of Singapore Air Force training squadron equipped with Super Puma helicopters; and
 - Defence Corporate Services, Darling Downs.³
- 2.5 Two satellite training areas, Wyoming and Brymaroo, have been developed over the years to increase the training capacity of the Oakey airfield. Oakey airfield is also an alternate airfield to the Toowoomba Airport, and has a small civil terminal to facilitate civil air operations.⁴
- 2.6 The Oakey Base has a permanent population of approximately 1300 people, comprising 760 military members, 130 Commonwealth public servants, 300 contract staff and 110 Singaporean Armed Forces personnel.⁵
- 2.7 See Appendix C for the current layout of the Army Aviation Centre.

3 Submissions, p. 6.

4 Submissions, p. 7.

5 Evidence, p. 2.