



**Royal Australian Air Force Air Power Conference**  
*Opening Address*  
**- Chief of Air Force: Air Marshal Geoff Brown, AO -**  
*Wednesday 12 March 2014*

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On behalf of the Royal Australian Air Force, welcome to the 2014 Air Power Conference.

I appreciate the effort many of you have made to attend the conference and particularly thank those who have travelled from overseas. Hosting this event has been made possible by the generous support provided by our sponsors and I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge them.

Our principal sponsor this year, as they have been for the previous four conferences, is BOEING. In addition to generously supporting our conferences, they continue to be a major partner with Air Force in developing, supplying and supporting Australian Air Power.

We have also received generous support from our major sponsors; Rolls-Royce, L3 and Qantas. I must also thank Defence Health and Defence Bank for their ongoing support.

The first Australian Air Force Air Power Conference was held in Canberra in March, 1991, on the topic; Smaller but Larger: Conventional Air Power into the 21st Century. Since then, our Air Power Conferences have grown in to regionally and internationally respected forums that discuss a number of important and relevant air power themes.

Our conferences attract a diverse audience from a very broad set of backgrounds. There are Chiefs of Service, or their Senior Representatives, from 22 countries attending this conference. We are proud to have attracted such a strong international guest list; one which represents our partners, allies and friends. I'm delighted to say that we have over 1000 attendees at this year's Air Power Conference.

The Air Power Conference provides unique opportunities to improve and widen air power understanding and development. The value gained from this conference has continued to represent a very sound investment.

This year marks the centenary of the first military aviation flight in Australia. On the 1st of March 1914, Lt Eric Harrison took flight in a Bristol Boxkite at Point Cook. Given such a historic milestone, it is appropriate that this conference focuses on the impacts, achievements, issues and characteristics of air power in conflict over the past 100 years. Studying and debating history enables us to understand the past, which in turn helps us to shape the present and the future. Our focus as described in our conference material is 100 Years Of Military Aviation. Our speakers have been asked to examine the use of air power in a variety of conflicts from the First World War.

We are fortunate this year to have a number of leading experts to address the impact of air power in conflict since its inception. Air power has developed enormously since 1914. Yet despite this, air power today still provides our nation and our joint commanders with four enduring roles: strike, air mobility, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance and control of the air.

As we review and debate 100 years of military aviation, we must consider what it means for us in the contemporary setting and also into the future. Knowing our past and understanding our present is important. It provides the basis for planning; for ensuring we provide the right people and equipment to deliver the effects required by our Government and nation into the future. The acquisition of cutting edge capabilities, such as the F-35, Growler, P8, Triton and C27J, matched with the professional mastery of our people and quality training,

will ensure we deliver the outcomes required by Government.

On the theme of knowing our past and understanding our present, one of the most important and enduring initiatives in our Air Force history has been the development and renewal of our air power doctrine. The 1st edition of the Air Power Manual was produced in 1990 as a result of the leadership and vision of AIRMSHL Ray Funnell, who is with us today. In the two and half decades since, the Air Power Manual has been updated regularly; the most recent edition being released in 2007.

The Air Power Manual is a forward-looking document. It elaborates on our national security context and acknowledges our past achievements and the lessons we have learnt. It projects our vision of how Australian air power will be generated, employed and sustained in the years ahead.

It is our capstone doctrine statement. It is the basis of our understanding of professional mastery and is essential reading for all Air Force members.

The 2nd edition companion manual, the Australian Experience of Air Power, provides an insight into the origins and development of Australia's air power doctrine. It with great pride that today I release the 6th Edition of the Air Power Manual and the 2nd Edition of its companion manual, the Australian Experience of Air Power.

Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for attending the Australian Air Force, 2014 Air Power Conference, and I know that the next two days will be enjoyable and rewarding. I now invite our Keynote Speaker, The Hon Dr Brendon Nelson, Director of the Australian War Memorial and former Minister for Defence and Australian Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg, the EU and NATO, to deliver the keynote address.