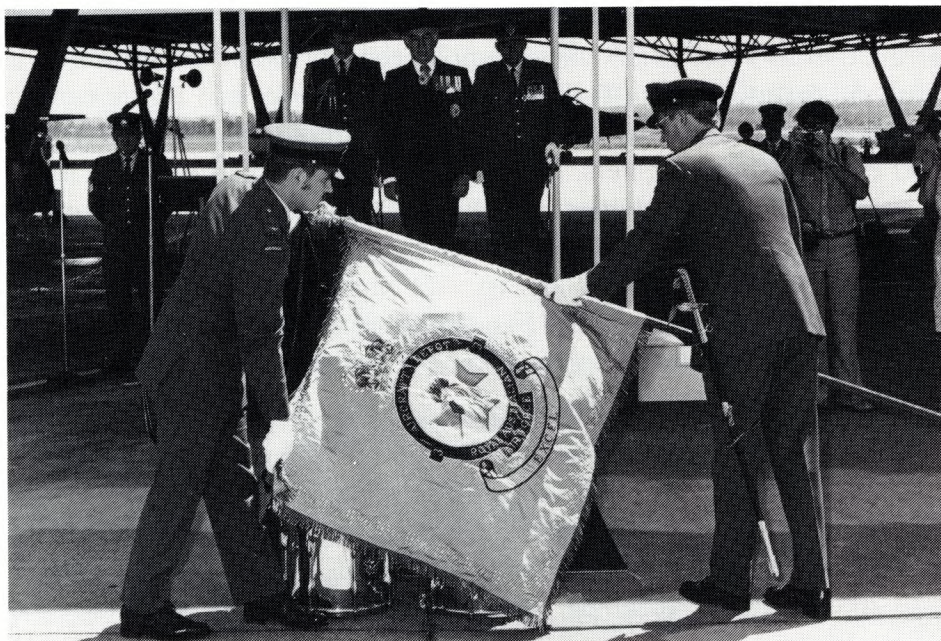


In October 1991 the Depot employed 25 officers, 659 airmen and 30 civilians. Additionally, a staff of 73 Contract Field Maintenance employees worked at the Depot. In addition to the overhaul and maintenance of F-111C Aircraft, accessories and components, the Depot also repaired and manufactured components for other aircraft types such as Hercules, Orion, Caribou and F/A-18 Hornet fighters. In 1990 the Depot resumed R4 servicing of Iroquois aircraft in support of Army activities. Additional Depot functions included the overhaul, repair and maintenance of all types of motor vehicles, fire trucks, and ground support equipment, together with machine shop, general engineering, woodworking and surface finishing work. The Depot also provided basic trade training for all RAAF Surface Finishers, and training of Non-Destructive Inspection Technicians for the Army, Navy and Air Force.

During the final years of No 3 Aircraft Depot progress was made in enhancing manufacturing planning and control through the implementation of Manufacturing Resource Planning (MRPII) techniques, supported by the Depot Control and Reporting (DECOR) computing system. The Depot also embraced RAAFQ practices, producing a number of productivity gains, the most notable of which was the reduction of F-111C R5 servicing TMS from 40 weeks to 20. For this achievement the Depot received a Defence Productivity Award in 1990.

From all of this No 3 Aircraft Depot has an outstanding record of technical support to operational squadrons during the 50 years of its existence. In war and in peace this versatile engineering unit serviced and overhauled more than 30 types of aircraft. The Depot excelled in its tasks and made a significant contribution to the operational effectiveness of the RAAF. Its record appropriately matches its motto, "EXCEL".

## *No 3 Aircraft Depot Queen's Colour*



***Presentation of the Queen's Colour to  
No 3 Aircraft Depot – 26 March 1980.***

## *Commanding Officers of No 3 Aircraft Depot*

16 March	1942	SQNLDR	W.H.	Nicholson
18 June	1942	GPCAPT	G.E.	Douglas
15 November	1945	WGCDR	E.V.	Millett
25 February	1946	GPCAPT	G.E.	Douglas
01 December	1947	WGCDR	W.I.	Matson, MBE
13 December	1948	SQNLDR	F.	Stiller, MBE
14 March	1949	WGCDR	J.A.	Campbell, OBE
23 July	1952	WGCDR	J.	Hearnden
28 May	1957	WGCDR	F.M.	Timms
31 October	1960	GPCAPT	E.L.	Chapman
20 May	1962	WGCDR	J.E.	Jackson
18 June	1962	GPCAPT	C.R.	Taylor, CBE
24 July	1962	GPCAPT	E.L.	Chapman
14 December	1964	GPCAPT	G.F.	Ell
05 December	1966	GPCAPT	J.A.	Rowland, DFC,AFC
03 February	1969	GPCAPT	L.S.	Compton, OBE
04 January	1971	GPCAPT	K.W.	Fraser
25 January	1971	WGCDR	R.A.	Cook
01 July	1971	GPCAPT	K.W.	Fraser
30 December	1972	WGCDR	R.A.	Cook
04 July	1973	GPCAPT	G.C.	Monkley
07 August	1976	GPCAPT	N.R.	Wade, MBE
19 December	1977	GPCAPT	D.C.	Mazlin, AM
15 January	1981	GPCAPT	D.A.E.	Tidd, MBE
11 January	1983	GPCAPT	M.J.	McDougal
16 August	1985	GPCAPT	M.J.	Brennan
14 January	1988	GPCAPT	N.P.	Middleton
09 January	1990	GPCAPT	C.A.	Tyler

## *List of Aircraft Repaired, Overhauled or Assembled by No 3 Aircraft Depot*

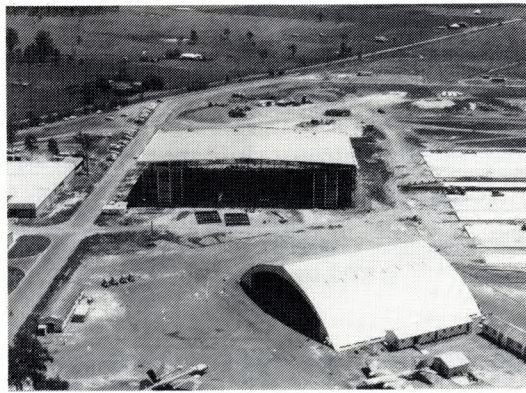
A17 –	DH Tiger Moth	A27 –	Vultee Vengeance
A53 –	Bell Airacobra	A56 –	Republic Lancer
A20 –	CAC Wirraway	A28 –	Douglas Boston
A46 –	CAC Boomerang	A4 –	Arvo Anson
A58 –	Supermarine Spitfire	A72 –	Consolidated Liberator
A29 –	Curtiss Kittyhawk	A47 –	North American Mitchell
A8 –	Bristol Beaufighter	A73 –	Arvo Lincoln
A55 –	Lockhead Lightning	A52 –	DH98 Mosquito
A68 –	North American Mustang	F4E –	McDonnell Douglas Phantom
A94 –	CAC Sabre	A84 –	GAF Canberra
A65 –	Douglas Dakota	A1 –	Bell Sioux
A59 –	Lockhead Ventura	A2 –	Bell Iroquois
A16 –	Lockhead Hudson	A15 –	Boeing Chinook
B26 –	Martin Marauder	A8 –	General Dynamics F-111C



*A8 General Dynamics F-111C*



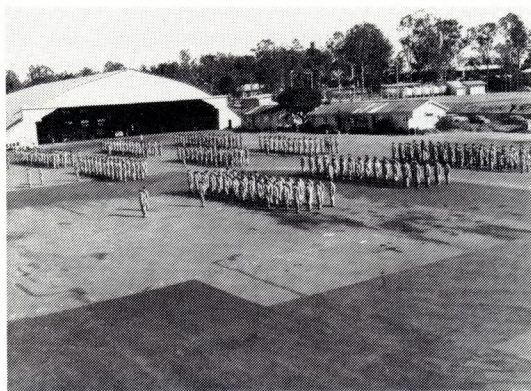
*RAAF Amberley Aerial Shot - 1942*



*482 SQN Hangar Construction - 1968*



*3AD Hangar Under Construction - 1978*



*3AD 30th Anniversary Parade - 1972*



*Opening of 3AD Hangar - 1978*

## *No 482 Maintenance Squadron – A Brief History*

No 482 Squadron originated at RAAF Base Laverton, Victoria with the formation of No 4 Repair and Salvage Unit on 18 May 1942. By August 1942 the Unit comprised 120 officers and airmen and was relocated to Werribee, Victoria. In October 1942 the Unit was transferred to Pell Field (south of Darwin), the move being completed on 18 November 1942.

During 1943 and 1944 No 4 Repair and Salvage unit performed a wide variety of tasks including aircraft maintenance, salvage and recovery, and repaired motor transport, support equipment and radar equipment. Facilities for both aircraft maintenance and camp protection were progressively upgraded during this period.

On 1 January 1945 the Unit was renamed No 4 Repair and Servicing Unit, and in May 1945 was transferred from Pell Field to Winnellie in the Northern Territory. At 0830 hours on 15 August 1945 at Winnellie the official announcement of the cessation of hostilities was received.

The Unit was progressively recovered to Parkes, New South Wales, during late 1945 and early 1946, and on 10 May 1946 No 4 Repair and Servicing Unit completed another move, to RAAF Base Amberley, Queensland. The Unit then became No 482 (Maintenance) Squadron, a component of No 82 (Bomber) Wing initially comprising Nos 12, 21 and 23 Squadrons flying Liberator aircraft.

In the decade of the 1950s, as part of No 82 Wing, No 482 (Maintenance) Squadron provided maintenance support as the wing converted from Lincoln to Canberra aircraft. During this period the maintenance and manufacturing facilities of the Squadron were on several occasions utilised to produce aircraft and sundry equipment necessary for flood relief operations in Queensland and northern New South Wales.

Throughout 1967 and 1968 the maintenance responsibilities for Canberra aircraft were transferred to the operating squadrons as facilities and manpower were prepared for the F-111C, and nearly 100 officers and airmen were trained in the USA on all levels of F-111C maintenance.

Following the decision to lease Phantom F4E aircraft as an interim replacement for the F-111C, the Squadron commenced training and preparation for the F4E in early 1970. On 14 September 1970 the first F4E aircraft arrived and the Squadron performed operating and intermediate level maintenance until the F4Es were progressively returned to the USA between late 1972 and mid 1973.

On 1 June 1973 the first six F-111C aircraft were delivered to No 482 Squadron from the USA and the Unit complement of 25 officers and 621 airmen commenced maintenance support operations. The remaining 18 F-111C were delivered progressively during 1973 and by January 1974 No 482 Squadron was again providing a full range of operating and intermediate level maintenance activities. Since acquisition of the F-111C, No 482 Squadron has provided maintenance support for F-111C operations by Nos 1 and 6 Squadrons through Australia and for exercises based in Malaysia, New Zealand, Hawaii and mainland USA.

Unit activities included intermediate level maintenance of all F-111C aircraft systems and components, maintenance of the F-111C Mission Simulator, total repair of F-111C avionics systems including test equipment, maintenance of armament systems, and engineering development of modifications and system reliability improvements. In addition, the Squadron maintains a wide range of Airfield Technical Equipment, Ground Support Equipment and Motor Transport, provides a range of specialist services at RAAF Base Amberley and maintains avionics equipment for Nos 9, 12 and 35 Squadrons.

No 482 Squadron was awarded the Governor-General's Banner recognising 40 years of service to the RAAF and the nation on 19 October 1981. The Banner was presented on 17 March 1983. During its 50 years the Unit made a significant contribution to the operational effectiveness of the Royal Australian Air Force, fulfilling the Squadron motto, "TRENCHANT".

*No 482 Maintenance Squadron  
Governor-General's Banner*



*Presentation of the Governor-General's Banner to  
No 482 Maintenance Squadron – 17 March 1983.*

## *Commanding Officers of No 482 Maintenance Squadron*

01 June	1942	A/FLTLT	G.T.	Relf
07 October	1942	A/SQNLDR	W.A.	Bradley, OBE
03 January	1944	SQNLDR	W.J.	Symons
28 April	1945	SQNLDR	J.E.	Jackson
14 December	1948	WGCDR	W.I.	Matson, MBE
03 January	1957	WGCDR	J.E.	Jackson
30 March	1961	WGCDR	C.W.	Butcher, MBE
03 December	1962	WGCDR	D.L.	Drysdale, MBE
06 January	1965	WGCDR	I.	McKeir
02 September	1966	SQNLDR	A.F.	Javas (T/CO)
25 July	1968	GPCAPT	J.	Hughes
03 January	1973	GPCAPT	E.J.	Whitehead
16 December	1975	GPCAPT	I.T.	Sutherland
19 December	1977	GPCAPT	N.R.	Wade, MBE
04 January	1979	GPCAPT	W.M.	Collins
14 January	1981	GPCAPT	J.N.	Spencer
27 May	1983	GPCAPT	N.E.	Cooper
16 June	1985	WGCDR	D.B.	Chandler (T/CO)
16 January	1986	GPCAPT	P.D.C.	Watson
04 March	1988	WGCDR	D.A.	Hesketh
05 July	1988	GPCAPT	K.R.	Webber
11 November	1991	GPCAPT	R.T.	Holsken

## *List of Aircraft Repaired or Serviced by No 482 Maintenance Squadron*

A27 – Vultee Vengeance  
A8 – Bristol Beaufighter  
A16 – Lockheed Hudson  
A20 – CAC Wirraway  
A17 – DH Tiger Moths  
A33 – Dragon Rapide  
A59 – Lockheed Ventura  
A9 – Beaufort

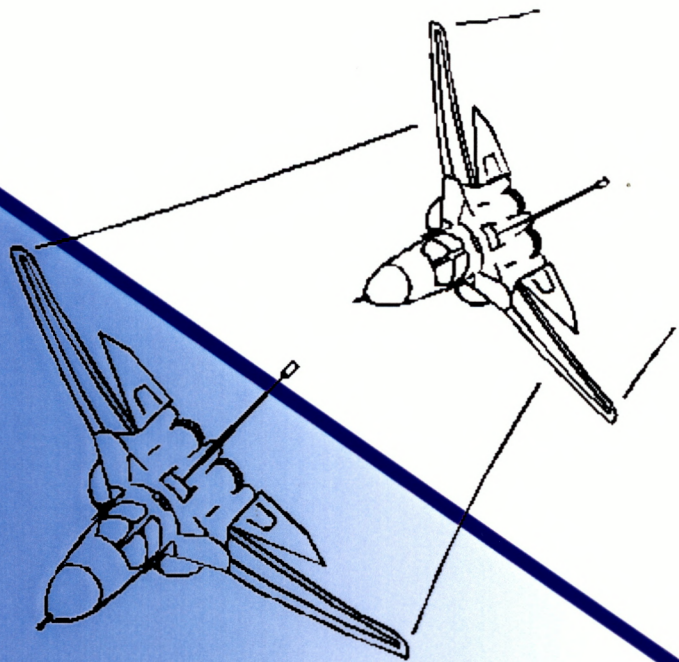
A29 – Curtiss Kittyhawk  
A47 – North American Mitchell  
A72 – Consolidated Liberator  
A73 – Lincoln  
A84 – Canberra  
F4E – McDonnell Douglas Phantom  
A8 – F-111C



*“ A73 Avro Lincoln ”*



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# 1993

NEWS PAPER CUTTINGS AND  
ARTICLES OF INTEREST for  
the year 1993

**AN SRLMSQN PERSPECTIVE**

## 20 YEARS F111 IN AUSTRALIA



STRIKE

Wednesday 2 June 1993

# F111 - The early days

**BORN** out of controversy – once described as a lemon and a costly mistake – the F111 has evolved to become the most potent tactical strike aircraft of the Western world.

The facts are that although the F111 is an expensive weapons system – beset with early problems with its engines and advanced airframe – it delivered exactly what the United States Air Force wanted in the 1960s: a supersonic aircraft that would deliver bombs accurately on targets deep in enemy territory, flying very fast and under enemy radar at night and in all weathers – a formidable task that was beyond the capability of the strike aircraft of the day, the F-105 Thunderchief.

### Politics and Corporate Competition

From June 1960 when USAF Specific Operational Requirement 183 was issued for a 'tactical strike fighter' to the F111's first flight in December 1964, the aircraft was at the centre of political squabbling and controversy. The then Secretary of Defence, Robert McNamara had decided that one billion dollars could be saved if one aircraft met the needs of both the USAF for a strike

fighter along with the US Navy's requirement for a fleet air defence fighter. But it was a dream beyond the reach of technology and inter-Service unity. The USAF wanted a supersonic tactical 'bomber' but the Navy wanted a subsonic aircraft to launch its long-range Eagle missile.

Requests for proposals went out to industry in October 1961. Six bids were returned within two months, but all six were rejected. General Dynamics/Grumman and Boeing were selected as likely contenders for the contract.

Against the advice of the military, Secretary McNamara awarded the contract to General Dynamics/Grumman. That Vice President Lyndon Johnson was from Texas raised cries of partisan politics, and the whole affair degenerated into political infighting.

Clouded by political hyperbole were the facts. Boeing had designed their TFX around an engine that probably would not have flown before



▲ The F111 in its element: bombed up, operating alone at night on a long range strike mission employing the Paveway weapons system to deliver bombs on target with pinpoint accuracy.

1967. The airframe design was extremely radical and the designs for the USAF and USN variants had less than 50 per cent commonality of parts. Secretary McNamara regarded the Boeing designs as two separated aircraft and rejected its proposal in favour of General Dynamics/Grumman.

From the US Navy viewpoint, the F111 was just too heavy to operate successfully at

sea from all but the newest carriers. Millions of dollars spent on weight reduction programs were wasted, and seven years later the US Congress refused to fund the FB-111 any further. The Navy breathed a sigh of relief and went on to develop the highly successful F-14 Tomcat, using the engines developed for the F111.

CONTINUED  
next page



▲ A final check of a 1 Squadron F111 by FLTLT Mark Johnson and PLTOFF Kev McGrath before flying across the Pacific for Exercise Red Flag in the United States.

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# the early days

(cont)

In retrospect, the F111 was a victim of bad press and trying to be all things to all people. Even so, compared with the development of other high technology supersonic aircraft the F111's safety record was very good.

## First Flights and Engine Trouble

The first F111A made its maiden flight on December 21, 1964 -- sixteen days ahead of schedule. But it was the aircraft's second flight in January 1965 that gave the first hint of the troubles ahead when, in some areas of the operating envelope, the General Electric TF-30 engines exhibited severe compressor stalls.

The TF-30 engines were the first after-burning turbofan engines which enabled the F111 to fly long distances at medium speed with low

specific fuel consumption. A succession of modifications to rectify the compressor stalls tripled the cost of the engines.

**Ironically, General Dynamics bore the brunt of bad publicity over the F111 even though the cost of its airframe actually went down while the cost of the Government supplied engines escalated.**

But the F111 airframe was to have its turn in the headlines. Airframe evaluation detected cracks in the wing carry-through box and the F111 was grounded while modifications strengthened the assembly.

Australia's 24 F111s were manufactured in 1968 but were not delivered until the modifications were completed. The first six F111s for Australia made the trans-Pacific ferry five years later.

Public pressures on the US Government over the war in Vietnam led to a decision to deploy six F-111As to South East Asia in 1968 for operation over North Vietnam. Unfortunately due to the lack of operational and maintenance testing and hence knowledge of the aircraft, three of the aircraft were lost, only one to combat damage.

More problems with the swing wing attachment points arose in December 1969 when a wing came off an F111 after it pulled up from a low-level bombing run. Another multimillion dollar modification program rectified a flaw in the lower plate of the wing pivot fitting.

Inspections of some 250 aircraft identified three aircraft with similar flaws. These aircraft would surely have



▲ Arrival day... The first three of the new fleet of RAAF F111s, pictured over Moreton Bay on the 1 June 1973 delivery flight.

crashed without the inspection and rectification program.

A later deployment to the Vietnam theatre when the system had matured proved the capability of the F-111. The aircraft had the highest survivability record of any US aircraft used in the war. The loss rate over nearly 3 years was 0.3%.

## One of the Best Aircraft Ever Built

Despite major problems in the early development of the F111, the test program proved it to be one of the best aircraft built for the USAF. Every major performance and maintenance requirement was either met or exceeded.

From the outset, the F111's armament was an impressive array of conventional and nuclear weapons, including missiles and rockets. A 20mm Vulcan cannon could be carried internally in the fuselage weapons bay. External explosive stores are carried on wing pylons which pivot as the wings sweep back and forth.

The F111 pioneered some of the most sophisticated avionics for a combat aircraft of that era. Terrain Following Radar enabled the aircraft to operate effectively low-level in weather and at night, and its inertial navigation system enabled tactical approach to the target and escape back to base. Automatic radar

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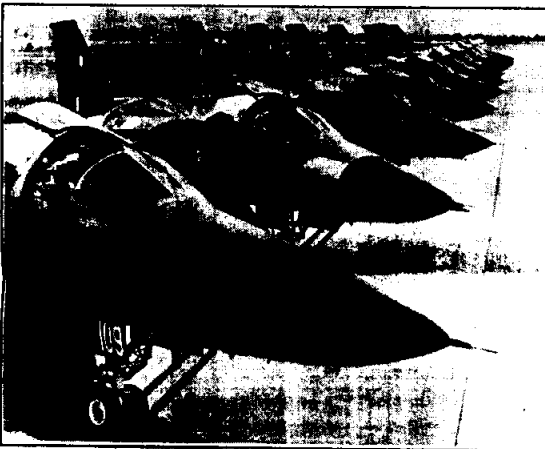
◀ Crew members from the second ferry flight of six F111s from the United States to Amberley on July 27, 1973.

bombing and a sophisticated weapons control system and self contained electronic warfare detection and jamming equipment added to the overall capability of this deadly war-bird.

Sitting on the tarmac at Fort Worth in Texas for five years, the RAAF's F111 became the butt of criticism and satirical comment from all quarters. Cartoonists such as Rigby had a 'field day' lampooning the problems which beset the newest aircraft selected by the RAAF.

More than 20 years later, the F111 has earned the respect of commanders and aircrews alike for its unique capabilities -- capabilities that warrant an extension of service through to the Year 2010 and beyond.

□ John Armstrong



▲ A powerful lineup at Amberley... F111s from Nos 1 and 6 Squadrons.

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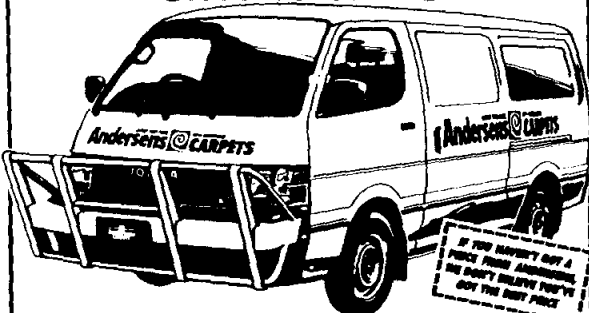
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14



STRIKE

Wednesday 2 June 1993

# F111S for

THE purchase of 24 F111s for the RAAF to replace the venerable Canberra Bomber took ten years to complete, and cost overruns tripled the original cost estimate -- but the wait was worth it.

When the first six F111s flew into Amberley in June 1973, Australia finally had a strike aircraft that was at the forefront of military technology. The F111 has served Australia well for two decades and it's

good for another 20 years.

In October 1963 the Australian Government placed an order with General Dynamics, Fort Worth Division to build 24 aircraft at an estimated cost of \$112 million. The F111 would not only replace the Canberra but also provide a quantum increase in strike capability for the RAAF.

### □ A New Role

The aging Canberra, which entered RAAF service in 1954, was essentially a World War II bomber that had served

the RAAF with distinction, but it was an old aircraft with old technology. The Canberra performed well and saw active service in Vietnam -- dropping 'iron' bombs with good accuracy -- but it did not have the avionics, weapons systems and survivability required of a modern strike aircraft.

Air Staff Requirement 36 called for an aircraft to attack enemy targets by day and at night with high explosive ordnance. It would have a photographic reconnaissance capability along with radar and electronic

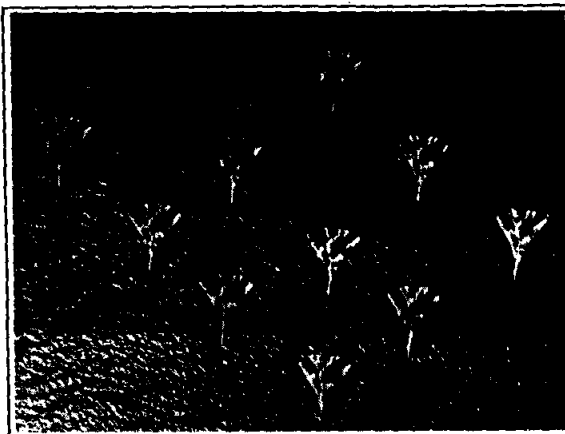
countermeasures and be able to fly at low level in all-weather. Overland distances in Australia required the aircraft have extended range without dependence on air-refuelling nor staging bases.

Contenders for the job included the Mirage IV, the BAC TSR-2, the A-5 Vigilante, the McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom and the General Dynamics TFX. A surprise recommendation from an evaluation team sent overseas was the A-5 Vigilante.

The Vigilante was a large, twin engine supersonic bomber/reconnaissance aircraft developed for the US Navy, but it quickly lost ground to the General Dynamics bid in government-level negotiations. A contract to buy the F111 was let through the US Department of Defense under a Memorandum of Understanding which laid down conditions of sale to a foreign country (Australia).

### □ Costs and Delays

The 1963 MOU required that Australia pay an average cost of production and development



▲ An F111 and three Hornet fighters flypast over the Brisbane River at South Brisbane during the official opening of EXPO 88.



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per aircraft based on a 1,500 aircraft production run. This 'flyaway' cost was estimated at \$3.8 million per aircraft.

Development costs associated with the F111C variant began a cost escalation that saw the overall cost of the programme rise from \$US124 million in late 1963 to \$US237 million in April 1967.

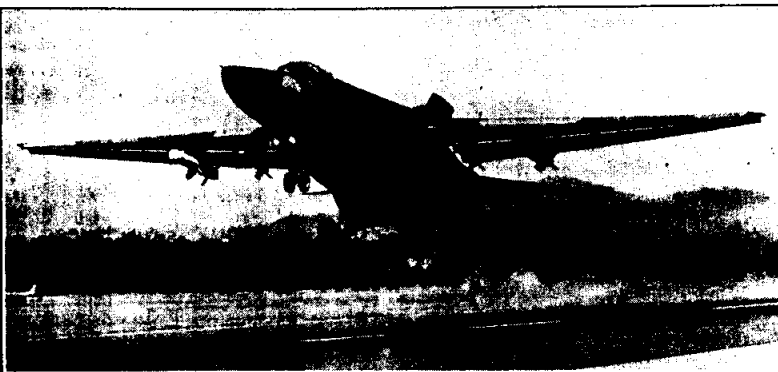
In July 1968 the first RAAF F111C had its maiden test flight and handover to the

Australian Government was planned for September. On September 4 the Defence Minister Allen Fairhall accepted delivery of the F111, but its problems were not yet over.

A crash of the eleventh F111 carrying an Australian navigator, FLTLT Neil Pollock, delayed delivery of Australia's F111s pending modifications to the wing carry-through box. Discovery of a fatigue crack caused the

delays.

In December 1969 the then Defence Minister, Malcolm Frazer asked the USAF to reactivate the RAAF's 24 stored aircraft but again fate played its hand. A fifteenth F111 crashed after it shed a wing -- and the entire fleet was grounded for seven months. The expensive modification programme that followed meant that Australia would not see its F111s for another few years.



The F111Cs were stripped of their wings and avionics and cocooned at Carswell Air Force Base opposite the General Dynamics plant in Fort Worth.

Aircrew and ground crew training ceased and preparations at Amberley were also put on hold. The original plan to have two F111 squadrons in service one year earlier gave the media cartoonists and satirists a wealth of material to lampoon Australia's military 'folly'.

During the long wait for the F111 arrangements were made to lease 24 F-4E Phantom aircraft to 'fill in' for the F111. In October 1970 the aircraft were delivered to 82 Wing. The final five

F-4s were returned to the US in June 1973.

## Final Delivery

By December 1971 the Australian Government had decided that the modifications to the F111 had 'ironed out' the problems and work began to reassemble the aircraft for delivery -- finally.

On June 1, 1973 the first six F111Cs arrived at Amberley after a delivery flight from Nellis AFB in Nevada -- where the crews had undergone conversion training -- via McClellan AFB in California, Hickham AFB in Hawaii and Pago Pago in American Samoa. Leading the first delivery flight was Group Captain Jake Newham,

later to become Air Marshal Newham, Chief of the Air Staff. By the end of 1973 the other 18 F111s had arrived at Amberley and a new era in RAAF air power had begun.

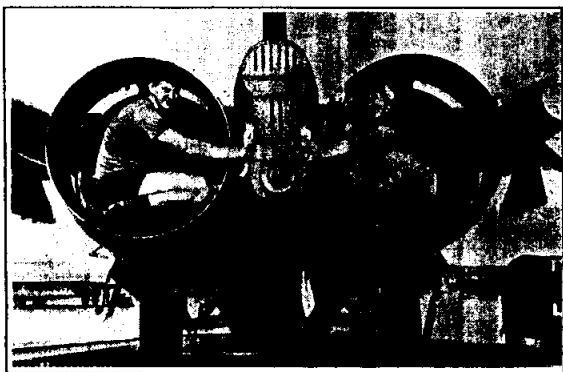
Changes to the fleet included modification of four F111s to the photographic reconnaissance role in 1979/80 and the acquisition of four attrition aircraft in 1982. In its 20 years of flying operations, six F111s have crashed.

Unlike the Canberra's service, the F111 has incorporated updates in

line with its USAF counterparts. Improvements to weapons and avionics systems have produced an aircraft that is vastly superior to its original form -- and it keeps on improving.

Incorporation of the Pavetack weapons system, the Avionics Update Programme and associated improvements means that Australia has a strike/reconnaissance fleet that is at the leading edge of military technology now and into the 21st Century.

♦ ♦ ♦



Old style 'spit and polish' treatment for the F111 applied by LAC John Duncombe and LAC Anthony Keen.

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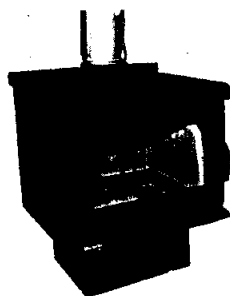
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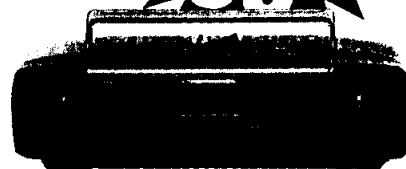


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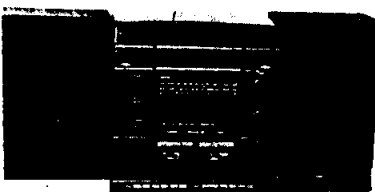


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18



■ STRIKE ■

Wednesday 2 June 1993

# The future of

by Air Commodore David Rogers, Commander, Strike Reconnaissance Group

As we celebrate the first 20 years of operations of the F111 in the Royal Australian Air Force, it is timely to reflect what challenges we have faced over that time and the challenges that we face in the future.

Since the aircraft were first manufactured in 1968 and subsequently delivered to the RAAF in 1973, many changes have been put in place. With the improvements in technology over the last twenty years we have modified the F111 in several areas including reconnaissance, terrain following radar and the installation of the Pave Tack in the late 80s.

The latter development has seen the transformation of the aircraft from one which was only capable of delivering 'dumb' bombs to a highly capable weapons system employing today's precision guided munitions. The accuracy of the weapons delivered by the F111 today has improved tremendously: the order of magnitude has decreased from football fields to windows and doors.

This quantum leap in capability has enabled us over the last twenty years to change the way we utilize the aircraft in the defence of Australia. As we change the way we intend to use the aircraft in conflict, we have changed the way we train. The aircraft was

originally envisaged as the strategic weapon for Australia. Crews trained in the early days in the land strike, land interdiction and

the maritime strike roles but in the last two to three years by using the Pave Tack system and the smart approach to operations,

we now have roles for the F111 which were not considered practical in the 1970s and early 1980s. The F111 is a very good ex-



On the flight line at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada for Exercise Red Flag, aircrew of No 1 Squadron walk to their aircraft for a mission over the Nevada desert.

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# the F111

ample of the multi-role/multi-mission aircraft and of the flexibility and ubiquity of air power.

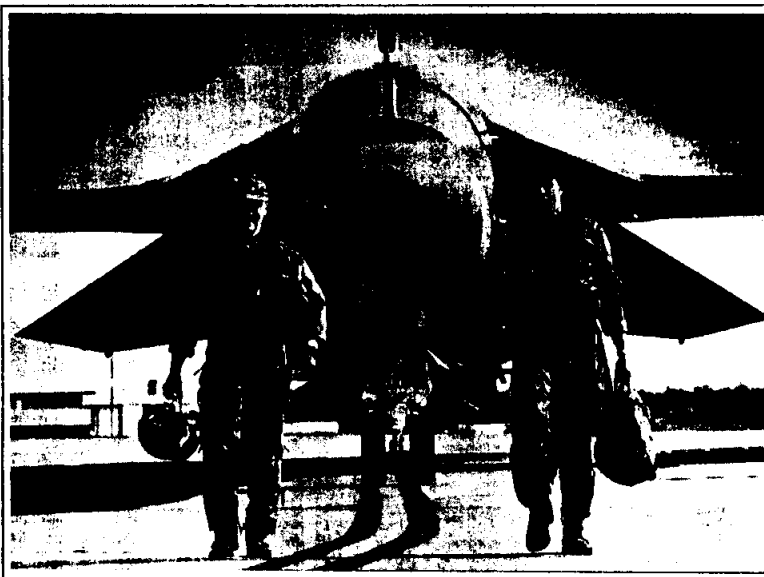
As we face the next 20 years, we are now on the threshold of an exciting new development with the avionics update programme and the possible delivery of the F111G aircraft in the coming six months.

The avionics update programme will not provide any greater capability for the F111; in essence it will replace all the old analogue flight controls and weapons computer equipment that are driven by wheels, shafts and

cogs, etc, with new solid state digital equipment. This will provide much improved reliability and maintainability which, most importantly, will enable us to reduce the cost of ownership over the remaining life of the aircraft. It will give us what we know colloquially as an "electric jet" similar to the F/A-18, with software-driven systems which will be capable of adapting to new weapons and future changes to the systems without the need to rewire or modify the aircraft as we are now required to do. The Government's Force Structure Review of

1991, also directed the Royal Australian Air Force to acquire a standoff weapon capability for the F111. Such weapons will provide greater accuracy over longer distances and also enable us to retain what we term the "man-in-the-loop". That is the control of the weapon will remain in the hands of the crew until impact thus minimizing collateral damage. Such techniques have implications under the Law of Armed Conflict and the dictates of the additional protocols of the Geneva Convention. These new standoff, precision-guided weapons will also improve the survivability and lessening the risks to both the aircrew and the Royal Australian Air Force's most valuable asset, the F111.

A small nation such as Australia must strive for a technological and qualitative edge in Defence and in my opinion these programmes are heading us in the right direction. The new F111G aircraft, which we may soon see at Amberley have been through an avionics update programme and are very similar in many ways to the future modified F111C. When we get the F111Gs, they will provide us with the ability to extend the life of type of our fleet past 2010 by enabling us to put



some current F111C models in storage and putting F111G models on the flight line. There will be no extra flying hours and the flying activity at Amberley will be the same.

So the future for the F111 looks very bright and the new roles that we now employ range from strategic strike and maritime strike to precision air support assisting the Army day and night, continuing our tactical and strategic reconnaissance tasks and also assisting the Tactical Fighter Group in the air control role. I would add that the combination of the F/A-18 and the F111 is probably the most potent combination of air power in our region giving Australia that qualitative and technological edge.

All this can only be brought about by a team effort as teamwork is the secret to success. I am confident as we all pull together and work towards improving the F111's capability, its maintainability, its reliability and reducing its cost of ownership, our nation will be the main benefactor. Our team effort here at Amberley is very important

to the success of the F111's future and I am certain that we have the ingredients to ensure that success.

♦ ♦ ♦

▲ Commander of the Strike Reconnaissance Group, Air Commodore David Rogers with F111 navigator FLG OFF Tony Blair who was born after the Commander began flying F111s and, at age 24, is younger than the F111 which had its maiden flight in 1964.

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