

Raytheon Australia – a trusted partner of Defence and the Shoalhaven

Raytheon Australia's decade-long commitment to HMAS Albatross is evidence of its trusted partnership with both the Department of Defence and the Shoalhaven region.

Raytheon Australia's Nowra Site Executive, Dave Cunningham, with the company's Electronic Warfare Training Services Aircraft.

From small beginnings in 1999 Raytheon's presence has grown to a team of more than 70 people today. "Back then we were just 10 people when we were first contracted to provide logistics and engineering support services to Navy helicopters based at HMAS Albatross," said Raytheon's Nowra Site Executive Dave Cunningham. "Since that time we have prospered with every new opportunity."

Mr Cunningham was an original member of Raytheon's Nowra team and has seen tremendous growth for the company in Nowra. "From the day we arrived, we made a commitment to support our naval customer and the local community. Over the years we have delivered on that promise by making important investments in people and aircraft that have built a strong local capability. We moved into new premises here at the Albatross Aviation Technology Park and have always retained that constant focus on supporting our naval customer."

Raytheon Australia now boasts a strong portfolio of activities at Nowra. Since 2001 the company has provided the Royal Australian Navy with highly effective electronic warfare training services based on

the company's Lear 35 aircraft. The company also undertakes support for the RAN Seahawk helicopters and the Navy's fleet of 13 Squirrel basic helicopter training aircraft.

It is in this field of supporting helicopter aircrew training that the company has developed a particularly strong capability. In 2006 Raytheon won the contract to provide three light twin helicopters to the Navy for its Retention and Motivation Initiative (RMI). This has involved providing 1500 flight hours per year to improve and maintain the skills of junior aircrew who have initially trained in the Squirrel helicopter.

The company has responded well to the Navy's many requirements under the RMI program. Mr Cunningham explained that two of the company's helicopters were deployed to assist in Queensland flood relief efforts in January where they were engaged in activities such as transporting task force command staff to affected areas, undertaking survey operations and carrying out search operations. "I was particularly proud of the way our team prepared these aircraft to be deployed with short notice and then accompanied the helicopters to Queensland to provide maintenance support," he said.

The RMI program has been such a success for Raytheon Australia that the company was awarded a new four-year contract in September to provide three new Bell 429 helicopters to continue its activities.

The Bell 429 is the most modern light twin engine helicopter on the market. It is the only light twin engine helicopter fully certified to the latest crashworthiness standards and has a large cockpit capable of handling the full range of military pilot candidates. Raytheon Australia has chosen to also offer the Bell 429 as part of its bid for the Air 9000 Phase 7 Helicopter Aircrew Training System.

"This program offers wonderful opportunities for Nowra and will be an exciting new source of jobs in the region," Mr Cunningham said, adding that Raytheon was focused on drawing upon the experience and training capabilities developed at Nowra.

Mr Cunningham explained that one of the reasons for Raytheon's success at Nowra has been the way in which it had developed a capable local workforce. "When we came here we understood the need to invest in local young people. That's why we

have a number of apprentices and logistics trainees and work to develop their careers in the local defence industry."

The Raytheon site executive pointed to the example of James Bailey who joined the company in 2010 after starting his apprenticeship elsewhere. As a Raytheon employee James has recently achieved his trade papers and Civil Aviation Safety Authority Aircraft Engineers Licence. James has since gone on to work on the Squirrel and RMI helicopters and, as a Raytheon Licensed Aircraft Maintenance Engineer, accompanied RMI helicopters to the Northern Territory and Queensland to provide maintenance support for Navy detachments.

Mr Cunningham also applauded the work of the Shoalhaven Defence Industry Group in promoting the cause of the local industry. "Defence is very important to the economic base of the region and companies such as Raytheon Australia play a significant role. However, the work of the NSW Government through Trade & Investment NSW as well as that of the Shoalhaven City Council, the Shoalhaven Business Chamber and local MPs is critical to securing major investment and jobs."

The Shoalhaven Defence Industry Group promotes defence industry capability to attract business, investment and jobs to the region. This case study showcases one of the high tech defence companies already contributing to the Shoalhaven economy.



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