



**ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE
RECEPTION TO MARK THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE FORMATION OF NO. 29 (CITY OF HOBART) SQUADRON
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE CAROLINE WELLS
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, TUESDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2026**

Good evening, everyone, and welcome to Government House.

I am especially pleased in my newly confirmed role as your Honorary Air Commodore to host the Squadron for this reception to mark the significant milestone of the 25th anniversary of the formation of Tasmania's own Royal Australian Air Force Unit, No. 29 (City of Hobart) Squadron.

I will begin and acknowledge the Palawa people as the First Peoples of lutruwita/Tasmania and the Traditional Custodians of this land. For countless generations, they have cared for and nurtured this remarkable island, its landscapes, waterways and communities.

I pay my respects to Elders past and present and recognise the enduring contribution of Aboriginal Tasmanians to the cultural, social and spiritual life of our State.

A quarter of a century ago, on 1 September 2001, our squadron was formed at Anglesea Barracks as part of the Royal Australian Air Force's Combat Reserve Wing, with the squadron's parent unit later redesignated as the Reserve Training Wing RAAF on 1 January 2006.

Prior to that date, the Royal Australian Air Force's presence in Tasmania consisted only of the Senior Air Force Officer, Tasmania, supported by a small staff. It was hoped that establishing the squadron would encourage more Tasmanians to join the RAAF Reserve, its formation meaning that the RAAF had a reserve unit located in each of Australia's state and territory capital cities.

This achievement did not emerge from nowhere. It stands upon decades of Royal Australian Air Force heritage in this city, tracing back to January 1926, when officers of the newly formed RAAF first arrived at Anglesea Barracks to interview applicants for flying training.

This continued through the establishment of RAAF Support Unit Hobart in 1977, a unit which was itself reorganised into a tri-service establishment before disbanding in 1992. 29 Squadron, therefore, represents not merely a fresh beginning but the continuation of a proud and enduring Air Force tradition on Tasmanian soil.¹

Since its formation, the squadron has carried out a role vital to our national defence architecture.

As Tasmania hosts no permanent RAAF base or aircraft, 29 Squadron has not had any dedicated positions for aircrew or maintenance personnel. Instead, its enduring purpose has been to prepare reservists for air base defence tasks and to provide personnel for the reinforcement of other RAAF units when required.

Members of the Squadron have deployed to the Middle East Area of Operations and, more recently to Bushfire Assist and COVID Assist Task Forces. This is a role demanding discipline, adaptability, and unwavering

¹ <https://www.airforce.gov.au/about-us/history/our-journey/ensign-raised-first-time-anglesea-barracks>
accessed 17 Aug 26

commitment. Qualities that the men and women of this Squadron have demonstrated in full measure over twenty-five years.

The operational function of the Squadron had an important addition in July 2016, with the official inauguration of Operation Southern Discovery.

CO 29 Squadron was appointed Commander, Australian Contingent, and the Squadron became the mounting headquarters for all ADF personnel deploying to Antarctica as part of the Operation.

In addition, the Squadron provides logistic support to 36 Squadron operations of C-17A Globemaster aircraft to provide an airbridge to the Antarctic from Hobart as part of Operation Southern Discovery.

Beyond its operational function, 29 Squadron has become woven into the civic fabric of Hobart itself.

In a ceremony held on 16 September 2006, the squadron was granted the Freedom of Entry to Hobart by the Hobart City Council.

Freedom of Entry is a significant honour that reflects the deep bond between this squadron and the community it serves.

Squadron members have stood in ceremonial dress at the Hobart Cenotaph for commemorations of the Battle of Britain and at services honouring individual personnel, ensuring that the sacrifices of past generations of aviators are never forgotten.

In only a couple of weeks' time, members of the Squadron will join the national commemorations marking the 1940 Battle of Britain alongside the Chief of Air Force, a further testament to the squadron's continuing role in Tasmania's military and civic life.

Under its motto, "Faithful in Strength," 29 Squadron has, for twenty-five years, embodied the very spirit of the Air Force Reserve, citizens who, alongside their civilian careers and family lives, commit themselves to the defence of this nation.

To those who have served in the squadron's ranks since 2001, please accept the gratitude of this gathering and, indeed, of the wider Tasmanian community.

Your service, given often without fanfare, has strengthened not only our national defence but the very identity of this island state within the Royal Australian Air Force.

As we look to the next twenty-five years, may 29 Squadron continue to grow in strength, in skill, and in the fidelity that its motto proclaims.

I ask you now to join me in a toast: to 29 (City of Hobart) Squadron and to its history, its members past and present, and to its future.

To the Squadron.