



RAAF Security and Fire School

Motto: Security through Training

RAAF Security and Fire School forms part of the Ground Academy, of the Air Force Training Group, Air Command. The School is located at RAAF Base Amberley, Queensland and conducts initial employment training as well as post-graduate training for Defence personnel engaged in protection, security and firefighting duties. The School's unit badge depicts a chained portcullis, or vertically closing gate, set in front of flames and surmounted by an enflamed torch, symbolizing the School's protective nature and function of imparting knowledge. The School's motto is: *Security through Training*.

The School was first formed as the Defence and Security Training School at RAAF Base Amberley on 23 November 1982 under the command of Squadron Leader Gerald A. Broadhead. Its formation was preceded by a review of base physical security resources that led to the establishment of base security flights and the integration of training provided to the four musterings concerned with physical security: ground defence, RAAF police, security guard and firefighter. On formation, the School was headquartered at Amberley and comprised five flights, four of which were located in Queensland and one in Victoria. In Queensland,

Security Guard Training Flight was based at No 7 Stores Depot in North Drayton near Toowoomba, and Administration Flight, Ground Defence Training Flight and Police Training Flight were located at RAAF Base Amberley. Fire Training Flight in Victoria was located at RAAF Base Point Cook.

Existing at Amberley in various forms since January 1958, Ground Defence Training Flight had trained ground defence officers, airfield defence guards and allied musterings for nearly twenty-five years before the Defence and Security Training School was formed. The Flight was first established in January 1958 as Ground Defence Training Section within Base Squadron Amberley. In February 1958 it became a section of Headquarters Training Command, and in September 1959 was transferred to Headquarters Support Command as the latter's Ground Defence Training Section. On 19 April 1960, Ground Defence Training Section was re-formed as the Defence and Security Training Squadron under command of No 3 Aircraft Depot. The Squadron was downgraded and renamed Ground Defence Training Flight in June 1972, and on 15 February 1982 was amalgamated with the RAAF Police Training Flight to form Defence and Security Training Squadron, a

unit of No 3 Aircraft Depot. The Squadron was reformed as the Defence and Security Training School on 23 November 1982.

RAAF Police training had been conducted at a number of RAAF establishments until 8 September 1965 when this function became the responsibility of a police training flight within Headquarters RAAF Provost (later renamed RAAF Police) located at Chancery House, Melbourne. Headquarters RAAF Police disbanded in February 1981, after which Police Training Flight came under command of Headquarters Support Command before relocating to Amberley in February 1982 as part of Defence and Security Training Squadron.

Although guard dogs had been used by the RAAF since World War II, RAAF police dog and security guard training was introduced in the late 1950s, followed in 1962 with the introduction of the security guard mustering. RAAF police dog and security guard training relocated from No 1 Stores Depot in Tottenham near Melbourne, to No 7 Stores Depot in January 1969 as the Security Guard Training Flight. The first female security guard to graduate was Aircraftwoman Josephine (Jody) Emslie who, with her partner *Sabu*, completed training on 18 December 1985. The RAAF firefighting mustering was formed in 1956 after a call for volunteers from other musterings. A firefighting training centre commenced operations at RAAF Base Point Cook in January 1957 forming part of the Base Squadron.

With the formation of the Defence and Security Training School in 1982, command of the Fire Training Flight at Point Cook and the Security Guard Training Flight at No 7 Stores Depot passed to the School's Commanding Officer. Administrative control of the two flights remained with the local commanders until the two flights relocated to Amberley at the end of 1986.

With all elements co-located at Amberley, on 1 January 1987 Defence and Security Training School was renamed RAAF Security and Fire School under the command of Squadron Leader Clive A. Nelson. The School assumed the roles and tasks of its predecessor without amendment. The School

was restructured into three flights: Administration and Training Support Flight, Ground Defence and Fire Flight, and Police and Security Service Training Flight. The School trained all RAAF ground defence, police, security guard/dog, and fire fighting personnel, as well as providing selected training in security matters and counter-intelligence for Navy, Army and Air Force personnel.

In the first year after the reorganisation, the School graduated 413 trainees from forty-four courses, including the first Combat Training Courses. The first RAAF Police Basic Course to undergo Combat Training commenced in May 1988 and included two female trainees.

The years that followed became increasingly busy and challenging as School staff turned their skills to providing some of the most physically demanding training in Air Force for airfield defence guards, security police, military working dog handlers and firefighters. The rigorous training prepared them to undertake their potentially dangerous duties while understanding and managing the inherent risks. The School introduced specialist external guest lecturers to their curriculum, including in February 1988, guest lecturers from the Queensland Police Arson Squad and Sexual Offenders Squad, as well as the Army Bomb Disposal Team. On 14 January 1990 the School introduced tri-service firefighting training with the inaugural course including Navy members.

The School's proficiency was recognised via the award of the Markowski Cup for calendar year 2001. In May 2002 the School opened a state-of-the-art fire training facility, delivered under the Amberley redevelopment project. The first two Rosenbauer Panther fire tenders acquired by the RAAF were received by the School at a formal acceptance ceremony on 9 July 2008. The School then conducted firefighter conversion training at each base.

On 30 November 2007, the School paraded with Air Force Band accompaniment, to celebrate two anniversaries: twenty-five years since the formation of the Defence and Security Training School, and twenty years since its reorganisation as the RAAF Security and Fire School. The School had almost doubled in size

in the previous twenty-five years. At the time of the anniversary it consisted of five training flights and two support flights. The School's personnel establishment had grown to approximately 102 permanent staff and forty-eight Reservists. A training flight had been added in 2004 to manage and deliver response training to airfield engineering tradespeople such as electricians, carpenters, plant operators and site foremen. That, and the disbandment of the drug education section, were the only significant variations to the School's role. Given its increased size and course offerings the School was keen to move from its demountable buildings and connex farm into better facilities being delivered under Amberley Redevelopment Stage 3.

On 31 July 2008 the Chief of Air Force, Air Marshal Mark Binskin, AC, reviewed the graduation parade of the latest military working dogs. The occasion coincided with the fiftieth anniversary since the formal introduction of military working dogs into the Air Force. The Air Marshal, a fighter pilot and supporter of the School's Puppy Foster Program, was reunited after the parade with his former puppy 'MiG'.

The School was honoured to be presented with the Governor-General's Banner on 23 November 2011, by the Governor of Queensland Ms Penelope Wensley, AC. In the nearly thirty years since its formation as the Defence and Security Training School, the School had turned out more than 14 000 trainees who put their skills to use across the Air Force and on operations and humanitarian and disaster relief missions. After

the security police and military working dog handler musterings were merged, creating the Air Force security mustering, the School restructured its training program. The twenty-four week, three-phase Air Force Security Course was introduced replacing the Security Police Course, the last of which graduated in 2013. The introduction of the Air Force Gap Year Program created a new training demand on the Security and Fire School as Gap Year trainees on the program undertook the twelve-week Security Force Common Training course at the School after completing recruit training.

Keen to enhance the training experience and outcomes, the School introduced virtual reality training aids into its training program in 2018, to complement training delivered in the classroom. The training, conducted on powerful laptops with virtual reality software and equipment, places students in virtual scenarios during which they exercise the tactics, techniques and procedures they have learned in the classroom. Moreover, the School and No 35 Squadron commenced a collaboration in September 2020, through which Security Forces trainees gain early exposure to an operational flying environment.

The Royal Australian Air Force Security and Fire School trains the officers and other ranks of the Navy, Army and Air Force who work in some of the most dangerous, stressful and physically demanding work environments. Its graduates continue rendering essential service on operations both within Australia and overseas.



RAAF Security and Fire School personnel marching through Ipswich for Anzac Day 2019. Source: Department of Defence