

MARITIME SQUADRONS ASSOCIATION



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Newsletter

Jan 2022

President's Message

Dear Members,

A Happy New Year to you all. I trust you had a relaxing and enjoyable Christmas and New Year and, more importantly, that you have not been too greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and are managing to stay safe and well.

Annual General Meeting

Thanks to the efforts of our Brisbane team, Barry Collins, Maurice Ritchie and Geoff Hyde, our Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held last October, albeit with limited numbers due to the COVID travel restrictions having prevented many of us from outside Queensland travelling to Brisbane. The AGM, chaired by Vice President Barry Collins, included the election of the National Executive and State Representatives as follows:

President	Keith Brent
Vice-President	Barry Collins
Secretary	Maurice Richie
Treasurer	Geoffrey Hyde

ACT Rep	Keith Brent	NSW Rep	Rod Smallwood
QLD Rep	Barry Collins	NQld Rep	Holger Hildebrandt
NT Rep	Jim O'Doherty	SA Rep	Noel Shelton
TAS Rep	Chris Stunden	VIC Rep	Graham Wade
WA Rep	Geoff Ward		

Vale Departed Members

We have noted with much sadness the deaths of the following members since December 2020:

- Colin King (ENGFIT – 11SQN) 05 Dec 2020
- Greg Richardson (PLT – 11SQN) 12 December 2020
- Mike Mackenzie (PLT – 11SQN) 16 December 2020
- Bruce Niblett (NAV – 10SQN, 11SQN) 11 January 2021
- Allan Salisbury (SIG/AEO – 10SQN, 11SQN) 18 May 2021
- Terry Neil (PLT – 10 SQN) 04 Aug 2021
- Alex Taylor (AEO – 10SQN, 11SQN) 01 September 2021
- Arnie DELVINS (NAV – 11SQN, 292SQN, 92W) 28 October 2021

Proposed Amendment to Constitution

As you are aware, COVID restrictions prevented us from holding an AGM in 2020 and last year's AGM was held with limited numbers due to travel restrictions. The National Executive did investigate the feasibility of holding an online AGM but, at present, our Constitution does not allow this option – a face-to-face AGM is the only option.

As I foreshadowed late last year, the National Executive is considering an amendment to our Constitution to allow the holding of online meetings in the future. You can expect to receive the proposed amendment in the coming weeks. However, any formal amendment to our Constitution can only be passed 'by a three-quarters majority of financial members present or voting by proxy at an Annual or a Special General Meeting of this Association'. So, while we may reach agreement in principle for online meetings, it will have to wait until the next AGM to be ratified and enacted.

MSA Activities

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on our regular MSA activities over the past two years. While we are hoping that things will improve this year, health advice still indicates that we exercise a degree of caution, which impacts on the ability for us to hold functions and can often restrict both interstate and intrastate travel. As a considerable number of our MSA members are in the COVID-19 high-risk group, many will be reluctant to attend a function due to the potential risk, particularly if infections are still

occurring. While the COVID vaccines appear to have eased the situation, the Omicron variant has raised other issues. For now, all we can do is make tentative plans for any functions and continually review the latest health advice/restrictions. The final decision, however, on whether to hold any MSA event is one for the individual State Representatives, taking into account the prevailing situation and government/health advice at the time.

2022 Canberra Lunch. As far as this year's Canberra function is concerned, I am currently investigating the feasibility of organising an informal pub lunch at a local hotel/club in Canberra on a Sunday in March 2021 (possibly 6 or 13 March). It will be conducted on a 'pay as you go' basis, similar to last year, where the hotel reserves some tables for us in an area and people order and pay for their own meals and drinks from the hotel menu. Obviously, it will be dependent on ACT government advice re social distancing and any other restrictions that may apply due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Further advice on the Canberra function will be sent out by separate email in early February.

Tentative dates for your diary—subject to COVID-19 restrictions. I urge all members to support these functions:

- Sunday TBA (6 or 13) March 2022 – Canberra Lunch TBC
- Sunday TBA May 2022 – Adelaide Lunch TBC
- Saturday TBA July 2022 – NSW Dinner TBC
- Saturday 29 October 2022 – Brisbane Dinner at United Service Club TBC

Stay safe and well

Keith Brent

President

January 2022

Member News

Departed Members.

Since the last Newsletter we have noted with much sadness the passing of the following friends and colleagues.

Colin King

05 Dec 2020



(Notified too late for mention in recent Newsletters.)

Terry Neil

04 Aug 2021



(Notified too late for mention in the last Newsletter.)

Arnie Delvins

27 Oct 2021



New Members

Two members have joined the Association since the last newsletter.

Please welcome,

N. (Nobby) Clark
Geoff Bugden

Member Updates

QTH

Looking for any information about John Young.

Email

If you are receiving this newsletter via Australia Post & you have an email address, then you can choose to receive newsletters and other updates via email (and save the Association some money). Just let the Secretary know your email address.

If you change your address or email, **please** inform the Secretary as soon as possible.

A reminder that Annual Membership are due for payment.
Please contact the Treasurer at geoffhyde@bigpond.com

Book Review

RAAF Black Cats by Robert Cleworth and John Suter Linton

Subtitled "The secret history of the covert Catalina mine-laying operations to cripple Japan's war machine,"

Reviewed by Paul Fuller

Like many others, I have had the chance to clamber through a Catalina and thought that to sit in the bubble would be a great place to enjoy the view.

However, many years ago it wasn't like that at all

Perhaps it's worth quoting from a previous CO 11 Squadron, the late Sir Richard Kingsland AO. CBE. DFC

"The slow, frail RAAF Catalinas designed for ASW patrols assumed the mantle of Australia's very long-range bombing and minelaying force.

They were the first to bomb Japanese installations, the first to mine Japanese occupied ports all over South East Asia. They were the first in and last out in the evacuations of POW at the cessation of hostilities"

The book's authors only came across the previously classified information by accident and good luck.

Briefly, a navigator, Reg, who had been assigned to fly a new Catalina from Lake Boga to Darwin found himself with time to visit his family in Melbourne. Soon after Reg left to resume his duties and not long after the family received the dreaded telegram advising them that he had been lost on Air Operations

Many years later, his brother Bob, started to try to piece together the details of what they had not been told. He found that there was very little, if any contemporary history about the RAAF mine laying operations. The National Archives and relevant squadron archives fell short.

Bob eventually went to the US to see if he could ferret out any more information. He went to the National Archives in Washington but was given the brush off as everything was either too old or too classified. He bumped the chief archivist for NARA, the National Archives and Records Administration. As a result of this chance meeting, Bob was able to spend hours sorting through never before opened boxes of documents.

Much was incomplete but what he unearthed revealed the sacrifice and achievements played by the Catalina crews conducting covert minelaying operations all over the South and South West Pacific to

disrupt the Japanese naval movements and to block their merchant vessels from delivering vital supplies to the Japanese war machine.

The importance of aerial mining took precedence over all other activities and so the Catalinas ranged far and wide on these operations.

Their mining operations generally needed to be conducted at night and so the aircraft were painted black to reduce their visibility to naval guns, small arms fire and anything that could be pointed at them in an aggressive manner. They were painted black to reduce their chances of being spotted in searchlights

These days it's difficult to imagine an aircraft departing from base and facing a flight exceeding 20 hours to their target and return to a safe haven for refuelling.

To reduce the likelihood of being detected by radar, they would routinely fly at 50 ft at night without nav aids and under radio silence. The nav aids were usually a watch, some sort of out-of-date chart, and hopefully clear skies so they could navigate by the stars.

The mines had to be released at specific air speeds and accurate height (50 ft). If the speed and height were not quite right, it risked the mine exploding prematurely

I remember a flight once in a P2E where we had to drop some mines in Sattahip Harbour in Thailand. The mines were carried on the wings (as they were by the Catalinas) and they had the size, weight and aerodynamic qualities of a 44-gallon drum. Great for fuel consumption figures!

The book details the flights undertaken by the RAAF and sometimes in conjunction with the US Forces, but more often than not, the mine laying ops belonged to Australia.

When crews failed to return, there was never any real ideas of why and where they had met their end.

At the end of hostilities, the Catalinas were used to evacuate POW's from the Japanese camps in South East Asia.

Imagine the joy of the POW's being told that they were going to be taken home in their poor health state, being little more than walking skeletons, and facing a 20 hour flight in an overcrowded Catalina to return home via Labuan, Darwin, Cairns or any other convenient airfield

Each Cat had four bunks, one small toilet, and a small electric stove with a cooktop measuring 30 x 60cm

The RAAF Black Cats book is a fascinating account of a story never been told before and well worth a read particularly for ex RAAF aircrew.

Paul Fuller

News from here and there

AVM Russell Law RAAF (Retd), passed away on 25 October 2021 in Mildura. AVM Law served from 1950 to 1984 initially flying Dakota Aircraft with 38 and 36 Squadron followed by Lincolns and Canberra Bombers. He completed test pilot course in the UK and later participated in the test flights and acceptance of the Macchi Jet trainer. He held appointments at No 11 Squadron, ARDU and was Officer Commanding RAAF Base Edinburgh. RAAF Official

Terry Marker AFC (PLT) Royal Air Force (Retd) passed away peacefully on 28 Oct 2021 at the age of 80 years old. Terry was the RAF exchange officer flying with No 11 Squadron in the late '70s.
Via Garry Sampson

Museum News

The following link is associated with a Youtube video about the Queensland Air Museum restoration of Neptune A89-277.
Via Ian Pearson

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uSjZKEe8_tM

Poseidon News

[Australian P-8A fleet damaged by hailstorm](#)

A number of P-8A Poseidon sustained damage during a hailstorm at their home station of RAAF Base Edinburgh in October 2021.

The Australian Department of Defence (DoD) is assessing the damage done to its fleet of Boeing P-8A Poseidon maritime multimission aircraft (MMA) following “a severe weather event” last year.

A DoD spokesperson told *Janes* on 13 January that a hailstorm in South Australia had affected an undisclosed number of Poseidons.

While the department did not say how many Poseidons were involved in the incident, *Janes* understands that it involved six of the RAAF's 12 aircraft. Despite half the fleet seemingly being affected, the RAAF has reportedly experienced minimal impact to operations as a result of the hailstorm.

RAAF Edinburgh also accommodates 10 Squadron, which operates the Lockheed AP-3C Orion, although there was no word if the two remaining Orion platforms were affected.

[New refuelling system at RAAF Edinburgh](#)

A RAAF P-8A Poseidon has for the first time refuelled using a new ‘in-ground’ system at RAAF Base Edinburgh rather than rely on traditional trucks.

The new process is 30 per cent quicker because it removes the need for a pause to swap in new vehicles.

The new system utilises a hydrant line that is plumbed from the Edinburgh Base Fuel Farm to a hydrant point at the No. 92 Wing apron at the base.

When an aircraft now needs fuel, it is connected to a No. 24 Squadron tanker hydrant cart, which connects to the hydrant point, rather than relying on trucks

[Carl Vinson CSG And Royal Australian Navy Conduct Bilateral Training Exercise](#)

The Carl Vinson Carrier Strike Group conducted a bilateral training exercise with the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) to test and refine warfighting principles, Dec. 10-19, 2021.

The bilateral, multi-phase exercise was conducted over several weeks and included events such as enhanced maritime communication tactics, electronic warfare operations and integrated anti-air, anti-surface operations.



[RAAF's mysterious surveillance missions from Singapore](#)

A RAAF Boeing P-8A Poseidon Multi-Mission Aircraft has been flying what Defence calls “maritime surveillance” missions from Singapore since mid-October, with data from flight tracking websites suggesting these take place over the South China Sea. This is the sixth deployment of RAAF aircraft to Paya Lebar airbase in Singapore since July 2020 and the first using the P-8A. Previous occasions have seen RAAF Lockheed-Martin AP-3C (EW) Orion Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance and Electronic Warfare (ISREW) aircraft being deployed, with each lasting approximately one month.

Flight tracking data shows that the P-8A, serialised A47-009, arriving in Singapore from RAAF Base Edinburgh via Darwin on the 18th of October and flying missions out of Paya Lebar between two to five days a week from the 20th.

The missions usually last between seven to eight hours, with most of the missions starting off in the late morning local time and ending before sunset.

The P-8 has been supported by a RAAF Airbus KC-30A tanker on at least some of its missions, with flight data showing a KC-30 tanker

flying nine-hour missions that took it to the South China Sea off Brunei on the 5th, 8th and 11th of November, at the same dates and roughly the same time as the P-8s. Data on earlier dates were not available.

The flight trackers also show the aircraft departing Paya Lebar northbound and flying up the east coast of peninsular Malaysia before turning to the north-northeast towards the South China Sea on all the days it had been flying.

The P-8 would turn off its transponder upon leaving Malaysian airspace and turning it on again just before return. In contrast, the RAAF AP-3C (EW) Orions did not normally turn on the transponders during their missions when deployed to Singapore, although it was noted that their missions lasted about 10 hours each.

Singapore's Ministry of Defence said that the RAAF is flying maritime surveillance missions from Singapore under the auspices of the Australia-Singapore Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP), which it says allows both militaries access to each other's bases.

The longer AP-3C(EW) mission duration could simply be a result of its slower speed, meaning it took a longer time to transit to the area of interest, and its use on the Singapore missions suggests these are not typical "maritime domain awareness" missions.

The AP-3C(EW), which is one of two aircraft assigned to 10 Sqn based at Edinburgh and are part of 42 Wing and the RAAF's Surveillance and Response Group. The aircraft were deployed to Singapore in July and October 2020 as well as February, April and August 2021.

The RAAF has been flying maritime domain awareness missions in the South China Sea and Indian Ocean since 1980 as part of Operation Gateway

[Boeing Australia wins contract to maintain RAAF P-8A Poseidon fleet](#)

Boeing Australia has been awarded a \$43.4m (A\$60m) contract to provide maintenance services for the P-8A Poseidon fleet at Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base Edinburgh.

Australian Defence Minister Peter Dutton said: "The P-8A Poseidon is one of the most advanced maritime patrol and response platforms in the world.

"This new contract with Boeing Australia to maintain the Poseidon fleet is an important contribution to Defence's mission.

"It brings heavy maintenance work to Australia that would otherwise have been performed in the United States."

In 2020, the Australian Government approved the purchase of two additional aircraft, taking the total units in the fleet to 14.

[Allies sharpen ASW skills at multi-national Exercise Sea Dragon](#) 15 JANUARY 2021

Royal Australian Air Force P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft have joined allies from the US, Japan, Canada, India and New Zealand in Guam to conduct a series of joint training exercises to support interoperability and multinational anti-submarine warfare capabilities.

Sea Dragon 2021 centres on anti-submarine warfare (ASW) training and excellence to include 125 hours of in-flight training ranging from tracking simulated targets to the final problem of finding and tracking USS *Chicago*, a US Navy Los Angeles Class nuclear submarine.

During classroom training sessions, pilots and flight officers from all countries will build plans and discuss incorporating tactics, capabilities and equipment for their respective nations into the exercise.

Lieutenant Commander Kyle Hooker, Officer in Charge of the US Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance aircraft from Patrol Squadron 5 (VP-5) explained the importance of the operations, stating, "As OIC, I am eager for the opportunity to further develop our partnerships with Japan, India, Canada, and Australia while at Sea Dragon 2021.

"The COVID environment will be challenging for all our participants, but I know we will come together to adapt and overcome while executing our goal of anti-submarine warfare interoperability."

Each exercise is graded, and the nation scoring the highest total points will receive the coveted Dragon Belt award. The belt was formally introduced last year when awarded to the Royal New Zealand Air Force.

RAF receives ninth Poseidon MMA

The United Kingdom has received its ninth and final Boeing P-8A Poseidon MRA1 maritime multimission aircraft (MMA), with ZP809 arriving at Royal Air Force (RAF) Lossiemouth in Scotland on 11 January.

The milestone brings to an end a two-year delivery run that began with the arrival of ZP801 Pride of Moray in February 2020. Since then, ZP802 City of Elgin, ZP803 Terence Bulloch DSO DFC, ZP804 Spirit of Reykjavik, ZP805 Fulmar, ZP806 Guernsey's Reply, ZP807 William Barker VC, and ZP808 have all been received. The names for ZP808 and ZP809 have not yet been announced by the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

In UK service, the Poseidon is operated by 201 and 120 squadrons, with 54 Squadron serving as the operational conversion unit.

Boeing Delivers First P-8A Poseidon to Norway



The first of five P-8A Poseidon aircraft for Norway had its first flight 09 Aug 21. *BOEING CO.*

SEATTLE — The Norwegian Defence Materiel Agency (NDMA) accepted on Nov. 18 the first of five Boeing P-8A Poseidon

maritime patrol aircraft that will be operated by the Royal Norwegian Air Force (RNoAF), the company said in a release.

Norway's first P-8A aircraft, named Vingtor, was delivered to the NDMA during a ceremony at the Museum of Flight in Seattle, Washington. The milestone comes two years before the new aircraft are scheduled to begin taking over maritime patrol duties in Norway's high north.

Norway's four remaining aircraft are all in advanced stages of production and will be delivered to the NDMA in 2022. The five P-8As will replace the RNoAF current fleet of six P-3 Orions and two DA-20 Jet Falcons and will be operated by 333 Squadron at Evenes Air Station.

The delivery to Norway also marks the 142nd P-8 aircraft delivered to global customers. First deliveries to New Zealand, Korea and Germany will take place in 2022, 2023 and 2024 respectively.

To date, the global operating P-8 fleet has amassed more than 400,000 mishap-free flight hours.

Triton News

[Australia MQ-4 Triton programme achieves new production milestone](#)

Northrop Grumman announced on 16 December a new production milestone for the RAAF's MQ-4C HALE UAV programme when the aircraft fuselage was mounted on the one-piece wing.

Northrop Grumman said the first of three UAVs under contract for the RAAF is on schedule to be delivered in 2024 in the same configuration that the US Navy (USN) is receiving.

Assembly of the first RAAF MQ-4C started in October 2020 at Northrop Grumman's Moss Point facility in Mississippi. Final assembly and flight testing will follow at the company's Palmdale facility and at Edwards AFB in California.

However, the first MQ-4C will not reach Australia before 2024 due to delays in infrastructure works at the Triton's main operating

base for the ground segment at RAAF Edinburgh near Adelaide, and at the UAVs' forward operating base at RAAF Tindal.

Infrastructure works are expected to begin in mid-2022 and be completed in 2024. The RAAF expects to receive its first Triton ground control station in early 2022, with acceptance of all three UAVs expected by late 2025, when the system is scheduled to achieve full operational capability with the RAAF.

[A snippet of P-3 Orion history](#)

Probably the least known of all the P-3 family. Three P-3As were obtained from the USN by the CIA in May 1963. They were intended as replacements for the CIA's fleet of RB-69A/P2V-7U aircraft. The three P-3As were known as "black" aircraft under "Project Axial". They were transferred from the U.S. Navy to CIA in mid-1964. The three aircraft were converted to be both ELINT and COMINT platforms. The first arrived in Taiwan mid-1966 and were issued to the ROCAF secret No 34 "Black Bat" squadron. They were armed with four Sidewinder missiles for self-defence and were flown on peripheral missions along the coast of China (PRC) collecting SIGINT information. By early 1967 all three aircraft were returned to the USA and stored. Two aircraft were later converted to EP-3Bs.

Regional News

People's Republic of China

[China Launches New Ballistic Missile Submarine That Can Strike US Mainland from the Pacific.](#)

China's rapidly expanding fleet of nuclear-powered submarines has long been a cause of concern for the US, as it is equipped with one of the most powerful submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM).

The People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) currently has six Type 094 SSBNs, commonly known as the Jin-class, each capable of carrying 12 JL-2 SLBMs.

Type 094 is the PLAN's only current nuclear-capable submarine. The platform is China's "first credible sea-based nuclear deterrent," according to the US Department of Defence. China has developed four Type 094 SSBNs and two Type 094A variants with significant upgrades.

China is currently developing its next generation of SSBNs, the Type 096, which might bolster the PLA's nuclear deterrent at sea. The JL-3 SLBM, which is not yet operational, is expected to be mounted on Type 096. The new SLBM is expected to have a range of about 10,000 km. According to the Department of Defence, China could field up to eight SSBNs by 2030, with Type 094s and Type 096s operating simultaneously.

The Type 094 platform is said to be capable of carrying up to sixteen JL-3 missiles, while the Type 096 submarines can carry as many as 24 of these SLBMs.

Brazil

[Brazil's Nuclear-Powered Submarine Project Making Progress](#)

In a ceremony held on November 25, the Brazilian Navy signed an agreement to start building the hull of its first nuclear-powered submarine.

India

[Navy Gets Two More Poseidon P-8I MRA](#)



The Indian Navy has inducted two more Poseidon 8I maritime reconnaissance and anti-submarine warfare aircraft, in a boost to its surveillance capabilities in the Indian Ocean in the face of China's increasing forays into the region.

The two aircraft, manufactured by US aerospace major Boeing, arrived in India on December 30, officials said on Tuesday.

The Navy had acquired the first batch of eight P-8I aircraft in 2013 and are stationed at INS Rajali, Arakkonam. The second batch of four additional aircraft will be flown by Indian Naval Air Squadron 316, to be commissioned at INS Hansa base.

To boost its surveillance mechanism, the Navy had taken on lease two Sea Guardian drones from a US defence major over a year ago.

All India Press Trust of India Updated: January 05, 2022

[Arihant class submarine quietly launched in November](#)

The third of the Arihant-class SSBN (Sub Surface Ballistic Nuclear) submarine code-named S4, was quietly launched in the last week of November in Visakhapatnam.

The first of the SSBN pack, INS Arihant (code name S2 was launched amidst much fanfare, when it was launched on July 26, 2009. S4 is bigger compared to S2 and S3.

Sources say unlike S2 and S3, which can carry four K-4 or 12 K-15 SLBMs (submarine launched ballistic missiles), S4 is being built to carry eight K-4 or 24 K-15 SLBMs.

[Indian Navy Commissions 4th Scorpene Submarine](#)

The Indian Navy today commissioned INS Vela, its fourth Scorpene type submarine. Vela follows INS Kalvari, INS Khanderi and INS Karanj. Two more submarine of the class will join the Indian Navy fleet as part of P-75 program.

The fifth submarine of the class, *Vagir*, is conducting sea trials, whilst construction of the sixth and final submarine, *Vagsheer*, is ongoing.

[New Zealand](#)

[RNZAF Orion crew find missing Kiribati sailors](#)

06 October 2021

A crew on a Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) Orion located two people who were reported overdue from a trip to Maiana Island in Kiribati.

The two people had last been seen on board a 5.8m fibreglass boat departing Tarawa, Kiribati, on 30 September.

The Rescue Coordination Centre Fiji sought assistance from New Zealand through the Rescue Coordination Centre NZ.



The Orion departed RNZAF Base Auckland to search for the pair, covering a search area of approximately 7300 square nautical miles on the first day of searching.

The aircrew overnighted in Nauru before resuming the search today and were successful in locating the boat with two people in the morning, 230 nautical miles from Nauru.

New Zealand's search and rescue area is one of the largest in the world, covering 30 million square kilometres.

[NZDF Help Ensure Pacific Fishing Rules Are Followed](#)

The Royal New Zealand Navy's HMNZS Wellington and a Royal New Zealand Air Force Orion aircraft have identified several vessels of interest during a maritime resource border protection operation currently underway in the Pacific.

The patrols are being coordinated with the nations of Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, and Tuvalu, with the areas for survey also being covered by aerial surveillance involving the HMNZS Wellington's embarked Seasprite helicopter from No. 6 Squadron, and the Orion from No. 5 Squadron of the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF).

New Zealand is one of 17 nations contributing to the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency's (FFA) efforts to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the region.

Tuesday, 23 November 2021, Press Release: [New Zealand Defence Force](#)

[NZ to deploy P-3K2 Orion in support of UNSC sanctions on North Korea](#)



New Zealand will deploy a Royal New Zealand Air Force P-3K2 Orion (P-3) aircraft in support of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) sanctions on North Korea.

The resolutions, adopted unanimously by the UNSC between 2006 and 2017, aim to persuade North Korea to denuclearise and abandon its ballistic missile capabilities.

The deployment will be the fifth, following deployments in April 2021, October 2020, October 2019 and September 2018.

The aircraft will again operate out of Kadena Air Base in Japan and will conduct maritime air patrols over international waters in North Asia during November.

South Korea

RoK Navy Poseidon May Be Called P-8K

A well-informed source during ADEX 2021 (the Seoul Air Show held in November) confirmed on the condition of anonymity that the Republic of Korea (ROK) Navy will procure 6 P-8 Poseidon Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) by 2024, at the price of 2 trillion KRW which includes operational training, equipment, and necessary facilities.

The aircraft could be designated P-8K and feature some South Korean equipment. The first P-8 is expected to arrive in 2022.

The ROK Navy currently uses 6 P-3Cs and P-3CK since 2010 and might consider purchasing new P-8 Poseidons to replace them.

The Indian Navy so far is the only P-8 customer to fly a “customized” version of the aircraft, known as the P-8I Neptune. The P-8I features specific equipment for the Indian Navy not fitted on the P-8A. These include a Telephonics APS-143 OceanEye aft radar and a magnetic anomaly detector (MAD).

Taiwan

Taiwan Is Building Eight New Subs

To avoid angering China, nobody will sell submarines to Taipei. So, it must build them itself.

Taiwan has begun construction of the first of eight locally designed and constructed submarines.

The subs will replace an aging fleet of four, including two submarines dating back to World War II.

This first submarine is scheduled to be delivered to Taiwan's navy in 2025. Seven more submarines will follow.

History Corner

World War Two

In Europe

No 10 Squadron

Harsh winter weather restricted operational flights. In contrast to cold Britain the Squadron "enjoyed" more pleasant weather during many deployments to the Mediterranean theatre of operations. The flights operated through Gibraltar to Malta and Egypt. Anti-submarine patrols were flown in addition to transport flights.

On 22 October FLT LT Burrage's crew were involved in a dramatic open ocean rescue of the crew of a Whitley aircraft.

An accident involving the Squadrons training aircraft resulted in some fatalities although most on board survived.

In the last months of 1941, many personnel were returned to Australia after two years of service in the UK. Included was FLT LT Hodgkinson who was posted to No 20 Squadron.

In early 1942 the Squadron was transferred back to Mount Batten.

In Australia

(War looms larger)

No 6 Squadron

The Squadron continued routine patrols from RAAF Richmond covering the approaches to Sydney Harbour searching for German ships and submarines using Lockheed Hudson aircraft.

No 11 Squadron

During November 1941 one Catalina was positioned to Western Australia to search for survivors of the battle between HMAS Sydney and the German auxiliary cruiser Kormoran. Two of the C-Class flying boats (A18-10 and -11) were transferred to No 20 Squadron.

Around this time the Lewis guns in the waist blisters were replaced by American .50 calibre machine guns.



On 08 December when Japan entered the war, the Squadron suffered its first loss. Two hours after returning from a 10 hour patrol, Flg Off Sloan and crew were killed when A24-15 crashed on take off at Port Moresby.

On 13 January, SQNLDR Cohen and crew in A24-1 departed Tulagi for a reconnaissance of the Gilbert Islands landing after 19 hours 37 minutes.

On 15 January, A24-11/"J" piloted by SQN LDR Davies crashed on takeoff near Nusu Island. During taking off, for an attack on Rabual, the wing bombs on this Catalina exploded when hit by a swell. The explosion killed the entire crew and the flying boat sank in deep water. Above, Catalina A24-13, piloted by Lt. Hutchinson, USN witnessed the accident and immediately landed nearby and attempted to rescue any survivors.

A planned bombing attack by six Catalinas on enemy shipping in Truk Lagoon on 16 January failed. Only one aircraft made it to the target but any damage was undetermined.

More tragedy hit the unit on 21 January when A24-9 piloted by Lt George Hutchinson on a mission over the Huon Gulf, was attacked by enemy fighters. Hit by gunfire that killed or wounded most of the crew. Damaged, the aircraft went into a dive and gunner CPL Tom

Keen managed to bail out. Keen managed to return to Port Moresby ten days later.

The pilot, George "Hutch" Hutchinson was an United States Navy (USN) pilot who was serving with the U.S. Embassy in Canberra, Australia. At the start of the Pacific War, he volunteered to fly with the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). He became the first American killed in action in New Guinea.

The C-Class Empire flying boats flew many missions to rescue civil and military personnel after the fall of Rabaul at the end of January. Three rescue flights also evacuated many wounded and civilians from Ambon to Darwin.

No 12 Squadron

Based at Darwin the Squadron carried out more routine operations from Darwin using Wirraway aircraft. Anti-submarine, seaward reconnaissance, and shipping escort became the usual tasks.

No 13 Squadron

From the 24 November, three of the Squadron's Hudsons spent several days in Western Australia in a fruitless search for any survivors from the missing HMAS Sydney. More than 60 sorties were flown during the prolonged search. On 25 November a Hudson found three lifeboats with survivors from the German raider *Kormoran* near Carnarvon.

No 14 Squadron

In November in addition to regular anti-submarine patrols the Squadron was tasked with the search for HMAS Sydney in co-operation with other RAAF units.

After the Pacific War began in December 1941, No. 14 Squadron stepped up its program of patrols. No Japanese submarines or warships were sighted.

No 20 Squadron

During November 1941 one squadron aircraft joined with another from No.11 Squadron in Western Australia in the search for survivors of HMAS Sydney.

The first anti-submarine patrol was carried out on 17 December 1941 without success.

On Christmas Eve, 1941 Empire flying boat A18-10 landed on the Brisbane River with 27 USAAF pilots withdrawn from the Philippines.

On January 21, 1942 A24-8 (FLT LT Thompson) took off from Gizo Harbor on a reconnaissance mission over the area north and west of Kavieng to search for Japanese warships. The aircraft reported four cruisers south of Kavieng and stated it was under attack by anti-aircraft fire. The crew was ordered to shadow the enemy vessels. Meanwhile, A6M2 Zeros from the aircraft carrier IJN Shokaku shot down the Catalina causing it to crash land in the Bismarck Sea. Three of the crew went down with the aircraft.

Thompson, Metzler, Sollitt, Parkyns and Blackman survived the crash landing and deployed their life rafts. Several hours later, they were picked up by the Japanese heavy cruiser "Aoba". On January 26, 1942 Aoba arrives at Rabaul where the survivors became POWs and were turned over to the Japanese Navy 8th Special Base Force. All five survived captivity and were liberated at the end of the war.

Many flights by the C-Class Empire aircraft are used to save scores of personnel evacuated from Rabaul after the Japanese invasion.

No 68 and 69 Squadrons

Both Squadrons formed in December at Geraldton equipped with Avro Anson aircraft. Both units began anti-submarine and convoy escorts from 12 January 1942. The crew and aircraft were drawn from No 4 Service Training School based at Geraldton.

Footnote: During December and January No11 and No 20 Squadrons flew 427 sorties, totalling 3,764 flying hours losing one third of their aircraft and crews.

A Final Thought

"ONE MAY TALK OF PEACE ONLY WITH THOSE WHO ARE PEACEFUL"

JOHN OF SEVILLE