



## **THE HON. JOEL FITZGIBBON MP Minister for Defence**

Saturday, 2 May 2009

### **NEW KC-30A MULTI-ROLE TANKER TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT SOON TO ENTER SERVICE**

The 2009 Defence White Paper, released today, delivers an Air Force for the 21st century that will be better equipped, fully networked and better prepared to meet Australia's air power requirements.

The Minister for Defence, the Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP, announced that the White Paper has reaffirmed the important requirement for five advanced new KC-30A air-to-air refuelling aircraft for the Royal Australian Air Force.

"The KC-30A is a crucial capability project for Air Force. Once the aircraft begin to enter service next year, they will be an important force multiplier, greatly enhancing our air combat capability by extending the range and endurance of our fighters," Mr Fitzgibbon said.

"The Government's reaffirmed commitment to the KC-30A fleet has also been taken in the context that these aircraft will also augment the Air Force's air lift capability. Each aircraft will be able to deploy around 270 troops and significant quantities of stores over strategic distances," Mr Fitzgibbon said.

The tanker transport fleet also provides a key strategic option for support of coalition operations.

The first phase of aircraft and system testing was successfully completed in February 2008. This testing confirmed the performance and handling qualities of the modified aircraft for civil certification.

The second phase of flight testing commenced in Madrid in late 2008. These flights included testing of the Air to Air Refuelling systems, including the first 'dry' contact of the KC-30A as a 'receiver'. The second KC-30 is currently undergoing conversion with Qantas in Brisbane.

Air Force's No. 33 Squadron will operate the KC-30 fleet from purpose built facilities at RAAF Base Amberley.

The 2009 Defence White Paper represents the most comprehensive statement on Defence ever produced. It affirms the Government's

#### **A Defence Force for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

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commitment to the defence of Australia, the protection of our sovereign interests and the security and stability of our region.

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