

## ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE 96<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Counter Terrorism, Minister for Corrections, and Minister for Veterans Affairs) (16:02):** I inform the House that last Sunday I had the pleasure of representing the Premier and visiting the Glenbrook RAAF Officers' Mess to celebrate the ninety-sixth birthday of the Royal Australian Air Force. As the Minister for Veteran's Affairs and a former member of the Defence Force, I must congratulate the men and women of the air corps on this milestone. I thank those who have served and continue to serve Australia with bravery and dogged determination to keep her safe in turbulent times, at home and abroad. I was particularly chuffed to meet 94-year-old Eric Barton, who flew over the skies of Europe during the darkest days of World War II. It is the stories of people such as Mr Barton that remind us that the heart and soul of the Australian Defence Force is the people who served with courage in the past and those who currently serve. It was a delight to celebrate in the company of Air Vice Marshall Gavin Turnbull and his beautiful wife, Jacqui, as well as United States Consul General Valerie Fowler and her husband, Captain Chip Fowler, USN, retired. Happy birthday, Ronnie RAAF.