

NEWS RELEASE



The Hon. Graham West MP
Minister for Juvenile Justice
Minister for Youth
Minister for Volunteering
Minister Assisting the Premier
on Veterans' Affairs

Tuesday 31 March 2009

Celebrating the 88th birthday of the Royal Australian Air Force

NSW Minister Assisting the Premier on Veterans' Affairs, Graham West, today helped celebrate the 88th birthday of the Royal Australian Air Force at a memorial service in Martin Place.

In the lead-up to Anzac Day on April 25, Mr West said, "it is important for us all to remember the sacrifices made by those who served for our country".

"The Royal Australian Air Force was formed on 31 March, 1921, making it one of the world's oldest independent air forces," Mr West said.

"The Air Force had its origins in World War 1, as an arm of the navy and land forces, but did not establish in its own right until 1921.

"At the onset of World War 2, the Royal Australian Air Force had grown from a force of about 3,000 personnel to more than 180,000 personnel.

"It has played an important role in Australia's military history, having not only served in World War 2, but also in Korea, Malaya, Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq.

"In our recent history, the Royal Australian Air Force has also taken part in a number of important humanitarian missions, such as Cambodia, East Timor, Indonesia, Soloman Islands, Rwanda and Papua New Guinea.

"The sacrifices involved in defence force service are well known to many New South Wales families.

"Today's memorial service for the Royal Australian Air Force and the Royal Australian Air Force Association at the Cenotaph in Martin Place, ensures these sacrifices are not forgotten," Mr West added.

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