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Royal Australian Air Force to Gift an F-111C Jet To Retire at Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor

Honolulu, HI – This week, Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor will welcome the General Dynamics F-111C jet (serial number A8-130) to its collection of vintage and high performance aircraft. A gift from the Royal Australian Air Force, the jet is one of seven airframes being released to civilian institutions, the only one being gifted outright and the only one being given outside Australia. The others are on loan. Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor Executive Director Kenneth DeHoff has made it one of his projects over the last three years to ensure that the Museum receives this famed aircraft upon its retirement.

Arriving at Hickam Air Field of Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam in three shipments, the final shipment is planned for Wednesday September 4, arriving at Hickam about 10 p.m. and moving to Pacific Aviation Museum about 1 a.m. Thursday, September 5, across Ford Island Bridge. This final shipment will include the fuselage of the plane. Members of the RAAF will accompany the fuselage on this final shipment of the aircraft to the Museum and will be at the Museum through September 12 to reassemble the aircraft, which is in pristine condition.

According to Mr. DeHoff, “This is an important acquisition for us. We honor aviation history in the Pacific as part of our Museum mission, so to receive this from the Royal Australian Air Force is particularly significant. We’ll give it a final resting place that recognizes RAAF and Australia as the allies and aviation leaders they are in the Pacific region.”

From seeing combat in Vietnam to participating in the bombing raids of Operation Desert Storm, the F-111 has had a long and storied 37-year military career.

This remarkable aircraft was the world’s first fighter with variable sweep wings, which allowed the wing configuration to be changed while in flight. With wings fully extended, the F-111 could take off and land in as little as 2,000 feet; with the wings fully swept back, it could reach supersonic speeds at high or low altitudes. Capable of attacking in all weather conditions, the F-111 was also equipped with terrain-following radar, which allowed it to hug the ground at supersonic speeds.

The F-111C that the Museum will be receiving, serial number A8-130, is being retired from the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), the only country outside of the United States to operate the F-111. “This gift symbolizes the close working relationship we enjoy with our American colleagues – on operations, on exercises and through airmen-to-airmen talks,” said RAAF Chief of Air Force, Air Marshal Geoff Brown.

This particular aircraft is one of only seven F-111C’s the RAAF released to civilian institutions, and the only one outside of Australia, under the F-111 Disposal Project. It is being transported to Hawaii from RAAF Base Amberley, on three flights from late August through September 4.

The F-111C was Australia’s principal strike aircraft from 1973 through 2010 and was affectionately known there as the *Pig* due to its ability to hunt at night with the nose of the aircraft close to the ground.

The outright gift of the F-111 to the Museum is a reminder of the F-111’s shared service between Australia and the United States and

Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor plans a reception for Australian and American dignitaries and military representatives in October, to properly welcome the aircraft and honor the Royal Australian Air Force for their gift to the Museum.

Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization that accepts donations of historic aircraft and aviation memorabilia. Donated artifacts are professionally cared for and enjoyed by millions of visitors from around the world. The Museum also invites monetary donations for its Restoration and Education programs.

The Museum is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, except Christmas, New Year's, and Thanksgiving Days, and is accessible by shuttle from the USS Arizona Memorial/Pearl Harbor Visitor Center. Daily, visitors from around the world view the 45+ aircraft in the Museum's two WWII hangars, see the Ford Control Tower and Luke Field, enjoy hands-on technology experiences, including combat flight simulators, hear moving stories told by aviation docents, and see historic films and video displays.

The Museum Store and Laniakea Café restaurant are unique in their offerings and their 1940s ambiance. Phone (808) 441-1000 or visit www.PacificAviationMuseum.org for tickets and more information. Located at 319 Lexington Boulevard, Historic Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96818, Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor has been named "one of the top 10 aviation attractions" nationally by TripAdvisor.

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