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# RAAF Base East Sale

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**RAAF Base East Sale** (ICAO: **YMES**) is a [Royal Australian Air Force](#) (RAAF) [military air base](#) and [training school](#), located in [Sale, Victoria](#), Australia. The base is one of the main training establishments of the RAAF, including where [Australian Air Force Cadets](#) have their annual General Service Training. It is home to *The Roulettes* aerobatic team. It is also now the home of the RAAF's [Officers' Training School](#) (OTS) following its relocation from [Point Cook Base](#). East Sale was upgraded to house the new OTS, which had its first intake of students in January 2008.<sup>[2]</sup> The base houses approximately 700 air force personnel.<sup>[3]</sup>

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## History [\[edit\]](#)

RAAF Base East Sale opened as a training base on 22 April 1943. Initially, the base was home to No.1 Operational Training Unit (1 OTU) equipped with [Bristol](#)

### RAAF Base East Sale

Sale, Victoria in Australia



RAAF Base East Sale [Winjeel Gate Guardian](#)



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**Beaufort** light bomber aircraft, relocated from airfields at **West Sale** and **Bairnsdale**. The base was primarily responsible for training air crew, but units from East Sale also operated in some convoy protection and maritime surveillance roles. Over 3,000 aircrew were trained at the base between its opening and the end of **World War II**.<sup>[4]</sup> In addition to the Beauforts, a variety of different aircraft types were operated from the base during this time, including the **Lockheed Hudson** on which future Prime Minister of Australia **Gough Whitlam** undertook training as a navigator. Other types used by 1 OTU included **Airspeed Oxfords** and **Fairey Battles**.

Following the war, the RAAF Central Flying School was relocated from **RAAF Base Point Cook** to East Sale in 1947. By 1953, the school had received its first **De Havilland Vampire** jet aircraft. In 1962, four Vampire jets from CFS at East Sale formed "The Red Sales" aerobatic display team. However while practising aerobatic routines on 15 August, all four Red Sales crashed in formation after failing to recover from a manoeuvre, killing six Central Flying School staff.<sup>[5]</sup> Six months later, a second display team, "The Telstars" was formed, also flying Vampires and later **Aermacchi MB-326** (Macchi) jets. The display team was disbanded in May 1968 due to budget constraints and a shortage of available Macchi airframes.<sup>[6]</sup> To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Royal Australian Air Force, the current **Roulettes** aerobatic display team was formed in 1970, initially operating Macchi MB-326s.

On 24 November 1987, the first two of 67 **Pilatus PC-9** aircraft for the RAAF arrived at East Sale.<sup>[7]</sup> This would become the primary aircraft used by the Central Flying School until the present.

On 1 July 1989, **32 Squadron** - formerly a bomber and reconnaissance unit during World War II - was reactivated at East Sale and equipped with **Hawker Siddeley HS 748s**. These aircraft were operated on general transport and training duties, including RAAF Navigator and Airborne Electronics Analyst

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**Type** Military airfield and training school

### Site information

**Owner** Department of Defence

**Operator** Royal Australian Air Force

**Website** [RAAF Base East Sale](#)

### Site history

**In use** 22 April 1943 – *present*

### Garrison information

- Occupants**
- [Headquarters Air Training Wing](#)
  - [Officers' Training School RAAF](#)
  - [No 453 East Sale Flight](#)
  - [No. 32 Squadron](#)
  - [No. 30 \(City of Sale\) Squadron](#)
  - [Central Flying School](#), incorporating the [Roulettes](#)
  - [School of Air Traffic Control](#)
  - [No.1 Flying Training School](#)
  - [Aviation Candidate Management Centre](#)
  - [Training Aircraft Systems Program Office](#)
  - [No 1 Expeditionary Health Squadron Detachment](#)
  - [4/19th Prince of Wales's Light Horse Regiment](#)
  - [Defence Support and Reform Group](#)
  - [No. 409 Squadron Australian Air Force Cadets](#)

### Airfield information

**Identifiers** [ICAO: YMES](#)

**Elevation** 7 metres (23 ft) [AMSL](#)

Runways

**Direction** Length and surface

04/22 2,437 metres (7,995 ft) [Asphalt](#)

training, and [Royal Australian Navy](#) Observer training. By June 2004, the squadron had completed conversion to new [Beechcraft King Air 350](#) equipment.

09/27 2,230 metres (7,316 ft) Asphalt  
Sources: Australian [AIP](#) and aerodrome chart<sup>[1]</sup>

In 1992, the RAAF restructured its flight training programs, handing responsibility for [ab-initio](#) training and screening to civilian contractors and retiring its fleet of [CT-4](#) aircraft. The successful bidder to operate the Basic Flight Training School was the Ansett/BAe Systems Flight Training College at [Tamworth](#) in [New South Wales](#) using new build and ex-Australian and New Zealand Airforce CT-4s. Central Flying School operates four BAE-owned CT-4s for training military flight instructors.

In 2000 the nearby [Dutson Bombing Range](#) ceased to be used for bombing practice.<sup>[8]</sup>

In 2015 the RAAF announced that Basic Flight Training would be returning to East Sale in 2019 with Lockheed Martin selected to provide support for this new program using [Pilatus PC-21](#) aircraft that will replace the current PC-9 fleet. Until this time BAE will continue to provide support to the existing training program in Tamworth.<sup>[9]</sup>

Today it remains the RAAF's primary training base, operating continuously in this role since 1943.

## Units [ edit ]

Unit name	Force Element Group	Aircraft
<a href="#">No. 44 Wing Detachment East Sale</a>	<a href="#">Surveillance and Response Group</a>	
<a href="#">No. 32 Squadron</a>	<a href="#">Air Force Training Group</a>	<a href="#">King Air 350</a>
<a href="#">Headquarters Air Training Wing</a>	<a href="#">Air Force Training Group</a>	
<a href="#">Central Flying School</a>	<a href="#">Air Force Training Group</a>	<a href="#">PC-9</a> , <a href="#">PAC CT/4 Airtrainer</a>
<a href="#">No. 30 (City of Sale) Squadron</a>	<a href="#">Combat Support Group</a>	
<a href="#">Officers' Training School</a>	<a href="#">Air Force Training Group</a>	
<a href="#">No.1 Flying Training School</a>	<a href="#">Air Force Training Group</a>	
<a href="#">School of Air Traffic Control</a>	<a href="#">Air Force Training Group</a>	
<a href="#">No. 409 Squadron Australian Air Force Cadets</a>	<a href="#">Australian Air Force Cadets</a>	
<a href="#">Training Aircraft Systems Program Office</a>	<a href="#">Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group</a>	

## Accidents and incidents [ edit ]

On 29 October 1991 a **Boeing 707** of **No. 33 Squadron** crashed into the sea 43 km (27 mi) south of RAAF Base East Sale while on a training flight. The aircraft **stalled** after an asymmetric flight condition was mishandled, causing an unrecoverable loss of control. All five RAAF crew were killed in the accident.<sup>[10]</sup>

## See also [ edit ]

- List of airports in Victoria
- List of Australian Air Force installations

## References [ edit ]

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## External links [ edit ]

- RAAF Base East Sale official site



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