

WINGS

WINTER 2025
VOLUME 77 NO.2

HYPERSONIC WEAPONS

THE NEXT ARMS RACE?

CHRIS
DEEBLE

DELIVERING
CAPABILITY
FASTER

PROJECT
DEF129

ENHANCING
INTEROPERABILITY
& EFFICIENCIES

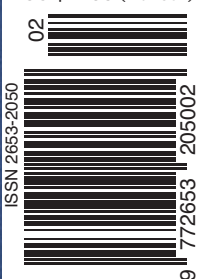
KILLER
CALDWELL

AUSTRALIA'S GREATEST
WWII FIGHTER ACE

AVALON 2025

ACTION & INSIGHTS

AUS \$14.95 (Incl. GST)



AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE
-ESTABLISHED 1943-

MANAGING EDITOR'S MESSAGE

OUR WINTER EDITION reviews the Avalon Australian International Airshow (AIA), which brought together Defence, industry, the aviation and aerospace community, and the public in a six-day spectacular. A number of post-airshow articles provide insights into the outcomes and activities at the airshow.

We examine DEF129 which highlights Defence's focus on small and tactical UASs, and cover a diverse range of subjects, including hypersonics, drone regulation and how a regional cadet's passion for drone racing took flight.

In our interview, Deputy Secretary, Capability, Acquisition and Sustainment Group, Chris Deeble AO, CSC discusses his focus on streamlining processes and working with industry more efficiently to deliver capability faster.

Our series on the RAAF involvement in the Vietnam War continues with a feature on Operation Babylift, the evacuation of hundreds of orphaned babies and children 50 years ago. RAAF history is further highlighted with a look at the Moorabbin Air Museum and the story of Spitfire pilot Clive Caldwell, our greatest WWII fighter ace.

If you enjoy *Wings*, visit our website, wingsmagazine.org, to arrange a personal or gift subscription, or become a member of the Air Force Association and receive a free copy of each edition.

Rob Amos, Wings managing editor

EDITORIAL DEADLINES

Please send submissions and letters to managing.editor@wingsmagazine.org, including your name and details. Submissions maybe edited for length and clarity. We cannot guarantee all material will be published.

EDITION	DEADLINE
Spring 2025 (September)	21 July
Summer 2025 (December)	6 October



AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION



CONTENTS

WINGS WINTER 2025 VOLUME 77/NO.2

4	MD'S WELCOME MESSAGE
	LETTER TO THE EDITOR
5	PRESIDENT'S DESK
6	MILITARY AVIATION
12	ASSOCIATION NEWS
16	INDUSTRY NEWS
22	A BUMPER WEEK Avalon AIA 2025 wrap-up
26	AIA AFTER FLIGHT Avalon insights and updates
32	INCREASED FORCE PROTECTION DEF129 focus on small and tactical UAS
36	HOME-GROWN HYPERSONICS A key Defence priority
40	CENTREFOLD
42	BASE PROTECTION Air-base defence in the drone
40	INTERVIEW Deputy Secretary CASG Chris Deeble
48	ENGINES PRIMED Pacific Airshow Gold Coast
49	WOMEN IN AEROSPACE Reigniting the passion for learning
50	CIVIL AVIATION NEWS
52	MANAGING THE DRONE AGE Commercial drone regulation
56	OPERATION BABYLIFT 1975 Vietnam evacuations
60	OUR GREATEST FIGHTER ACE Spitfire pilot Clive 'Killer' Caldwell
64	A GROWING COLLECTION Moorabbin Air Museum
66	PERSONAL FINANCE
68	BACK TO SPACE CAMP One Giant Leap's Space Tour USA
70	SELF-TAUGHT DRONE RACER A cadet's passion takes flight
72	CADETS NEWS
75	EVENTS CALENDAR
76	LAST FLIGHT
78	BOOK REVIEWS



The Wings Winter 2025 Edition reviews the Avalon Australian International Airshow (AIA) 2025. The article “A Bumper Week” highlights how the Airshow brought together Defence, industry, the aviation and aerospace community and the public in a six-day spectacular. Several post Airshow articles provide insights into the outcomes and activities at the Airshow.

This edition continues to present our regular features whilst introducing some new perspectives. We examine DEF129 which highlights Defence’s focus on small and tactical UASs. Wings also focuses on a diverse range of subjects, including hypersonics, drone regulation and how a regional cadet’s passion for drone racing took flight.

In this edition we have an Interview with the Deputy Secretary, Capability, Acquisition and Sustainment Group, Chris Deeble AO,

CSC who is focused on streamlining processes and working with industry more efficiently to deliver capability faster.

We continue our series on the RAAF involvement in the Vietnam War, with a story on Operation Babylift, the RAAF evacuation of hundreds of orphaned babies and children, along with other refugees, fifty years ago. The RAAF's history is further highlighted in the short history of the Moorabbin Air Museum, which includes a significant range of Australian produced aircraft, and also with the story of Clive Caldwell, the WWII Spitfire pilot and our greatest WWII fighter ace.

One Giant Leap's Space Tour USA describes a series of educational and entertaining experiences for students. The Women in Aerospace story reignites a passion for learning through the eyes of an

Air Force pilot, a passion for learning also displayed by the Air Force Cadets.