



# Military English

ADFELPS 4 / CEFR A2  
and above

Lesson: Snapshot of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) -  
Reading

**TEACHER'S COPY**

## Overview:

This lesson teaches words related to an air force.

## In this lesson, you will:

- ✓ read and find general and specific information in a text
- ✓ learn the meaning of words related to an air force
- ✓ use new words in sentences and in conversations

## Prepare for Reading

1) Let's find out how much you know about your air force. Talk to a partner – do you know the answers to the questions? *Ask ss to discuss in groups of 2-3. Tell them it's ok if they don't know the answers. Give ss 3 min. For feedback, ask a few ss to give their answers to the whole class. Answers (ans) will vary.*

- How many aircraft are there in your air force?
- What kind of aircraft does your air force have?
- How many air force **bases** are there in your country?

*Teach the meaning of 'air force base'. Ask ss to read the text to the right. Ask CCQs: 1. Is this place we are having this English lesson a base? (ans: probably yes); 2. Is there only air force base or can you also have army and navy base? (army and navy bases are also possible); 3. Is the picture below an air force base? (y. This is RAAF base Amberley (/ 'æmbəltɪ/), in Queensland, one of the largest air force bases in Australia). Now briefly model and drill 'air force base' with the whole class.*

an **air force base** (n) –  
the place where air  
force personnel work  
and aircraft stay when  
they are not flying.



## Reading

2) Before reading the text below, discuss this question in groups.

Many countries have an air force. So, why is the air force different from the army and the navy?

This activity will help prepare students for the reading. Answers may vary. Expect to hear answers like, 'an air force has planes, but an army has tanks and trucks'. 'An air force protects the skies'. 'A navy has ships and submarines.' However, like the Australian Army and the Royal Australian Navy, many armies and navies operate aircraft as well, which is a similarity. Expect ss to mention this as well.

3) Read the text quickly and complete the table below with numbers or words.

Before they start reading, direct ss' attention to the box below the text. Go over it with them and elicit what kind of information from the text they need to fill in with. E.g., item 'a' is a number, so they have to look for a number. Give ss 5-6min to read and answer Qs a-d. For FB, ask them to check with a partner. Then ask the whole class for the ans.

### Outline of the RAAF



17 air bases across Australia

21,000+ **personnel** including 6,400 **reservists**

270+ aircraft

#### MAIN MISSIONS:

The RAAF defends Australian air space and assists other countries, for example:

- supporting international **security** and **counter-terrorism** missions,
- guarding **coastlines**,
- conducting **search and rescue** missions,
- supporting **peacekeeping operations**,
- and providing **disaster relief**.



Main aircraft types:

**Fighter aircraft** → Used for fighting other aircraft. The RAAF has 72 F-35A Lightning 2 fighter aircraft.

**Ground Attack aircraft** → Used for attacking ground targets, like tanks, trucks, and buildings. Weapons can include bombs and rockets. The RAAF has 24 F/A-18 Super Hornet fighter / ground attack aircraft.

**Maritime Patrol aircraft** → Used for flying around the coastlines and oceans hunting for enemy submarines and ships. The RAAF has 12 P-8A Poseidon Maritime Patrol aircraft.

**Transport aircraft** → Used for carrying personnel, vehicles, and equipment. Some transport aircraft can carry tanks and helicopters. The RAAF has 8 C-17 Globemaster, 12 C-130 Super Hercules, and 10 C-27J Spartan.

**Trainer aircraft** → Used for training pilots and crews. The RAAF has 33 BAE Hawk and 46 Pilatus PC-21.

#### RAAF stats:

a. **21,000**: number of people in the RAAF.

b. 72: **F-35A Lightning 2**

c. 8: **C-17 Globemaster**

d. 46: **Pilatus PC-21**






## Learning military vocabulary

- 4) The words in **bold** in the text are important military vocabulary that you should learn to use. Match the military words on the left to their definitions on the right. Look at the example. *Have ss look at the example. Explain 1. they have to match the words on the left with the definition on the right; 2. the tables are separate e.g. the answer for table one are only in table one, not table two. Give ss 10min. Then ask them to check with a partner. Then ask individual ss to give answer to the whole class, one student per ans.*

Table one

RAAF <b>personnel</b> train for different missions (n)	<b>c</b>	a. missions which try to stop wars and make places safe for people
a <b>reservist</b> (n)	<b>d</b>	b. something that means safe and protected
<b>security</b> is important at this air base (n)	<b>b</b>	<b>c. people who work in a military service, for example, soldiers and sailors</b>
some officers are trained in <b>counter-terrorism</b> (n)	<b>g</b>	d. a person in the military who works part-time, for example, this person might only do military training on weekends
guarding the <b>coastline</b> (n)	<b>f</b>	e. to look for people who are in trouble and help them
a <b>search and rescue</b> mission (n)	<b>e</b>	f. the area between the land and the sea, for example, the line around an island on a map
after the war, <b>peacekeeping operations</b> made the country safer (n)	<b>a</b>	g. to fight terrorists ( = people who create fear by hurting or killing other people)

Table two

providing <b>disaster relief</b> (n)	<b>j</b>	h. aircraft used to teach a student how to fly	
this <b>fighter aircraft</b> is very fast (n)	<b>k</b>	i. an aircraft which moves heavy things like tanks, helicopters and personnel	
a <b>ground attack aircraft</b> (n)	<b>m</b>	j. to help people after a natural disaster like flood, earthquake, tsunami, etc	
a <b>maritime patrol aircraft</b> (n)	<b>l</b>	k. an aircraft which can shoot down another aircraft	
a <b>transport aircraft</b> (n)	<b>i</b>	l. an aircraft which can look for ships and submarines	
some <b>trainer aircraft</b> are easy to fly (n)	<b>h</b>	m. an aircraft which can attack ground targets such as buildings	

In order to make sure ss have understood, what some of the words in ex 4 mean, ask the following CQs:

personnel – 1. Are personnel like employees of the military? (y); 2. Do military personnel wear a uniform? (y); 3. Is 'personnel' singular or plural? (plural, it can only be used in plural. It means a group of people e.g. 'military personnel' means a group of people in uniform)

reservist – 1. Does a reservist work in the military every day? (n); 2. Does a reservist usually have another job? (y); 3. Does a reservist do military training? (y); 4. Does a reservist train more or less than other military personnel? (less)

security – 1. Does the air force help with the security of a country? (y); 2. Does it mean the air force helps keep the country safe and protected? (y); 3. How do you keep the security of an air force base? (ans will vary, but expect ans like 'guards with guns at the gate', 'high walls around the base', 'cameras around the base', etc); 4. How do you keep the security of your mobile phone? (ans will vary, but expect ans like 'setting a password', 'setting up face recognition', 'keeping the device near you all the time')

coastline – 1. Is the coastline always near the sea? (y); 2. Do countries like Australia, Thailand and Indonesia have very long coastlines? (y) [Teacher, if you have a map in the classroom, use it to show the coastline of the ss' country, or ask a strong student to come up to the front and show it]

search and rescue – 1. Does search and rescue mean to help a person in danger? (y); 2. Do we know where this person is? (n); 3. Do we have to find the person? (y); 4. Does search and rescue only happen at sea? (no, it can happen anywhere a person is lost and in danger, for example in the jungle or mountains. In this case, the army or other organisations may help).

peacekeeping operations – 1. Who usually organises Peacekeeping Operations? (the United Nations – UN); 2. Where do Peacekeeping operations usually happen? (in places that have had wars such as Middle East and Africa); 3. What colour is the helmet of Peacekeeping personnel [Teacher, point to your head to help ss with the meaning of helmet]? (blue)

disaster relief – 1. When does a disaster relief operation happen? (After a natural disaster like flood, earthquake, tsunami, etc); 2. In a disaster relief operation, does the military bring things like food and water to the people? (y); 3. In a disaster relief operation, does the military help take people away from dangerous places? (y)

- 5) Let's practise saying the words. Listen and repeat. Pay attention to the word stress parts of words. *E.g. reservist*. Use this stage of the lesson to drill pronunciation with class/individuals Play the recording and ask the class to repeat. Then play again and ask random individual ss to repeat. Correct pronunciation, especially syllable stress. If time, ask ss to test each other e.g. "What does *personnel* mean?" OR "What's the word for a plane that looks for ships and submarines?"

## Practice

- 6) Read the text again and think about the words you have learned in this lesson. Answer **true or false**.  
Give ss 5 min to do this. When they finish, ss check with a partner. Ask random ss to give their ans to the whole class.
- The RAAF can help find people if they are lost. **T**
  - The F-35 Lightning II is used for transporting tanks and trucks. **F – F-35 is a fighter plane**
  - The F/A 18 Super Hornet is a fighter plane and a ground attack plane. **T – the '/' in the text means 'and'. Ask ss for other words for 'plane' (ans: aircraft, airplane, aeroplane and plane all have the same meaning)**
  - The C-130 Hercules is a maritime patrol plane. **F – the Hercules is a transport aircraft.**
  - The Pilatus PC-21 is a training plane. **T**
- 7) Now complete these sentences with some of the words from exercises 3 and 4. Give ss 5-7 min to do this. Monitor and provide help if needed. For example, if you notice a student has a wrong answer, instead of giving them the correct answer, just say something like "This answer is wrong, can you make it correct?" When they finish, ss check with a partner.
- Operation Fiji Assist was a disaster relief operation conducted by the RAAF after a cyclone hit Fiji in 2016. The RAAF used some of its transport aircraft to bring basic items such as food and water.
  - The P-8A Poseidon, which is a maritime patrol aircraft, can fly around the coastline of Australia searching for submarines and ships. It can also be used for search and rescue missions if people or ships are lost at sea.
  - Before flying a fighter aircraft, pilots spend many hours practising on a trainer aircraft.
  - Reservists don't get the same amount of training as other air force personnel, but they are ready to join the fight if there is a war.

- 8) Discuss these questions with a partner. Use the vocabulary from exercises 3 and 4.  
 Encourage ss to use as much of the new vocab as possible. Give them 5 min. For feedback, ask a few ss to give their ans.
- Which of the operations below does your air force conduct? When did they happen?  
 search and rescue // counter-terrorism // peacekeeping
  - What kinds of missions would be most interesting to do? Why?
  - If you could be a pilot, what kind of aircraft would you like to fly? Why?

- For more practice with the words you've learned here, scan the QR code. →

The link takes ss to a Quizlet flashcard set. It's a very useful tool for self-study (e.g. revise the vocab in this lesson). There, ss can test their knowledge with flashcards or computer generated activities. Ss will have to create a Quizlet account, which is free. Encourage them to install the Quizlet app, as most of the Military English lessons have a Quizlet set. Ask ss to access this set two days after as a revision activity, then access it every so often (e.g. every 2 weeks).



- For more information about the Royal Australian Air Force, watch this video:  
 Type on YouTube [F-35s, Hornets and Growlers team up for Exercise Arnhem Thunder](#)  
 or scan the QR code:



This is an optional activity. Tips for using it:

- Assign as homework or watch it in class. Ss watch and write down any words from this lesson that appear in the video. Ans: air force base; transport aircraft (this is not very clear, but in the first seconds of the video transport aircraft can be seen in the background); fighter aircraft (you may ask the ss which type of fighter plane this is. Ans - F-35); ground attack aircraft (FA-18 Super Hornet); personnel. Depending on the level of the class, you may ask them: 1. Does the video show a war situation? (n); 2. What does it show? (training); 3. What do we call this training? (a military exercise). [Teacher, there is a lesson titled Military Exercises (reading), if you wish to use it]
- This lesson links with → Lesson – Military Drones;
  - Vocabulary Builder – Types of Military Aircraft (fixed wing)
  - Vocabulary Builder – Types of Military Aircraft (rotary wing)
  - Vocabulary Builder – Parts of an Aircraft
  - Vocabulary Builder – Types of a Helicopter
  - Vocabulary Builder – Ranks in the Royal Australian Air Force