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7 Oct 39 - No 10 Squadron told to stay in Britain



10SQN ground haul a Sunderland ashore, RAF MountBatten, Plymouth, May 45;

At a meeting on 6 October 1939, the War Cabinet acceded to a proposal that Short S.25 Sunderland flying boats on order for No 10 Squadron of the RAAF should remain in Britain as part of RAF Coastal Command, owing to the outbreak of World War II in Europe. Crews had arrived from Australia during July and August for large flying-boat conversion training, prior to taking delivery of the aircraft and ferrying them home. The Cabinet also decided that sufficient air and ground crews should be dispatched to build the ferry detachment up to full squadron strength. The commanding officer, Wing Commander Leon Lachal, was advised of these arrangements on this day. With the nine Sunderlands originally destined for the RAAF received from Short's Rochester factory by 21 December, and personnel strength risen to 16 officers and 197 airmen, No 10 Squadron began earnestly preparing for war operations.

10SQN WWII history here: http://www.awm.gov.au/units/unit_11037.asp

More on the Short Sunderland
here: <http://www.airforce.gov.au/raafmuseum/research/aircraft/series2/A26.htm>

7 Oct 94 - Caribous supported Op LAGOON



On this day, Caribous A4-140 and A4-275 from Townsville-based No 35 Squadron arrived at Buka Island for Operation LAGOON, aimed at facilitating a peace conference to end a five-year conflict between the government of Papua New Guinea and the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA). In addition to the Caribous, the RAAF also sent personnel to establish a forward operating base at Buka, and a surgical team. Australia was leading a joint and combined effort to provide security during the conference, and the Caribous were to move elements of a South Pacific Peacekeeping Force (SPPKF) between Buka and the conference venue at Arawa, in central Bougainville. RAAF and RNZAF C-130 Hercules transports began moving the SPPKF on 6 October, but in the event the BRA decided not to attend the conference and the initiative collapsed. By 21 October the 35 members of the RAAF contingent were on their way back to Australia.

Aircrew coming up short

'Australian officials were careless with the tape measures because, by 1944, over 100 under-sized pilots were in England. The 'bantams' could have been sent to Mosquito and light bomber squadrons, but other men had stronger claims to those postings. Some were sent to Transport Command as map-reading spare pilots, a few were employed as staff pilots and three or four volunteered to re-train as glider pilots. With still about eighty bantams waiting at Brighton or doing courses, it was decided to send them home. Most did not leave England until after the end of the war in Europe.'

RAAF Narrative of Flying Training, 8/2/A AWM 173