

= RAAF Transport Flight ( Japan ) =

Transport Flight ( Japan ) was a Royal Australian Air Force ( RAAF ) transport unit that operated in the aftermath of the Korean War . It was formed in March 1955 at Iwakuni , Japan , and equipped with three Douglas C @-@ 47 Dakotas and a CAC Wirraway . The flight 's main duty was flying a regular courier service between Japan and South Korea in support of Commonwealth military units based on the peninsula . Transport Flight ( Japan ) ceased operations in June 1956 and disbanded in September that year .

= = History = =

Transport Flight ( Japan ) traced its lineage to a transport contingent that the Royal Australian Air Force ( RAAF ) maintained in Japan prior to the Korean War . When the war broke out in June 1950 , No. 77 ( Fighter ) Squadron was based at Iwakuni as part of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force . Equipped primarily with North American P @-@ 51 Mustangs , the squadron also operated a communications flight of two Douglas C @-@ 47 Dakotas and two Austers . No. 91 ( Composite ) Wing was established at Iwakuni in October 1950 to administer all RAAF units during the war . This included No. 77 Squadron , the newly formed No. 391 ( Base ) Squadron and No. 491 ( Maintenance ) Squadron , and No. 30 Communications Flight , formerly the No. 77 Squadron Communications Flight . It was designated No. 30 Communications Unit in November . By then it had a complement of eight Dakotas and two Austers . No. 30 Communications Unit was redesignated No. 30 Transport Unit in November 1951 . By the end of 1952 , its strength was eight Dakotas and one CAC Wirraway , and fifty @-@ nine personnel .

In March 1953 , No. 30 Transport Unit re @-@ formed as No. 36 ( Transport ) Squadron , which had disbanded the previous day at RAAF Base Richmond , New South Wales . Elements of No. 36 Squadron began returning to Australia in January 1955 , and by the end of the month its strength was four Dakotas and one Wirraway , and fifty @-@ eight personnel . No. 36 Squadron ceased flying on 13 March , after which its remaining strength left Iwakuni for Australia . RAAF Transport Flight ( Japan ) was formed at Iwakuni the next day under the control of No. 91 Wing . The unit was equipped with three Dakotas and one Wirraway , which had been left behind when the last members of No. 36 Squadron departed for Australia . Transport Flight ( Japan ) ' s personnel , consisting of eight officers and sixty @-@ six other ranks by the end of month , were drawn mainly from No. 36 Squadron , including its commanding officer , Squadron Leader G.L. Waller , as well as from No. 391 ( Base ) Squadron .

The flight 's regular duty consisted of a courier service to Pusan and Kimpo in South Korea five days a week ? Wednesdays and Sundays were excluded ? to support Commonwealth forces on the peninsula . It became known in the process as " Japan ? Korea Airlines " . Generally carrying freight on the outbound journey , the aircraft often ferried casualties back to Iwakuni , and two nurses formerly of No. 391 Squadron were attached to the flight to assist with this task . The unit was also responsible for transporting VIPs . No. 391 Squadron and No. 91 Wing were disbanded at Iwakuni on 30 April 1955 . Transport Flight ( Japan ) flew its last courier missions on 28 June 1956 , and shortly after handed over its base facilities to the United States Navy . The flight 's last Dakota ? the last RAAF aircraft to be based in Japan ? took off for Australia from Iwakuni on 8 July . It left behind some ground staff and Flight Lieutenant Raleigh , a small yellow dog that had accompanied No. 81 ( Fighter ) Wing ? parent formation of No. 77 Squadron at the time ? to Japan as its mascot in 1945 and had remained with the RAAF contingent at Iwakuni ever since . Raleigh , a keen flyer but considered too old to return to Australia , was to be given over to the care of a US service family when the last RAAF personnel departed Iwakuni . Transport Flight ( Japan ) was disbanded on 28 September 1956 . It was reported to have carried 4 @,@ 400 passengers and 610 @,@ 000 pounds ( 280 @,@ 000 kg ) of cargo between its first flight in March 1955 and its last in July 1956 , including 690 Commonwealth troops in April 1956 alone , and to have only missed one scheduled service , owing to a typhoon .