

= John Newham =

Air Marshal John William " Jake " Newham , AC (born 30 November 1930) is a retired senior commander of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) . He served as Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) from 1985 until 1987 . Joining the RAAF in 1951 , he flew Gloster Meteor jets with No. 77 Squadron in the Korean War in 1953 , and subsequently de Havilland Vampires with No. 78 Wing on garrison duty in Malta . From 1958 to 1960 , he served with No. 3 Squadron , operating CAC Sabres during the Malayan Emergency . He took charge of No. 3 Squadron in 1967 , when it re @-@ equipped with the Dassault Mirage III supersonic fighter . His commands in the early 1970s included the Aircraft Research and Development Unit , RAAF Base Laverton , and No. 82 Wing , the last @-@ mentioned during its first years operating the long @-@ delayed General Dynamics F @-@ 111C swing @-@ wing bomber . He was appointed Deputy Chief of the Air Staff in March 1984 , and CAS in May the following year . His tenure as CAS coincided with the release of the Dibb Report on Australia 's defence capabilities , and the controversial transfer of the RAAF 's battlefield helicopters to the Australian Army . Newham retired from the Air Force in July 1987 and became a company director .

= = Early career = =

John William Newham , known as " Jake " , was born in Cowra , New South Wales , and educated at Cowra High School . After matriculating , he worked as a clerk in the Commonwealth Bank , and joined the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) in February 1951 . He underwent flying training at RAAF Base Point Cook , Victoria , and graduated as a sergeant pilot in July 1952 . Following fighter training , he saw operational service in the Korean War , flying Gloster Meteor jets with No. 77 Squadron from February to September 1953 . He later recalled that his first sortie was as wingman to a Royal Air Force flight lieutenant : " We flew up past P 'yongyang and he showed me enemy gun locations by arranging for them to shoot at us " .

Having been commissioned as a pilot officer midway through his Korean service , Newham 's next posting was with No. 78 (Fighter) Wing on Malta , where he flew de Havilland Vampires until 1955 . The wing had been on garrison duty in Malta since July 1952 , and Newham was one of five Korean War veterans who replaced pilots posted back to Australia . He married Jo Cranston in 1956 ; the couple had two daughters and a son . By November 1957 , Newham had been promoted to flight lieutenant and was undergoing conversion training on the CAC Sabre . From 1958 to 1960 he served in Malaya with No. 3 Squadron , whose Sabres conducted operations against communist guerrillas in the final years of the Malayan Emergency .

= = Rise to senior command = =

Newham attended RAAF Staff College , Canberra , from January to December 1964 . He then served as Chief Flying Instructor at No. 2 Operational Conversion Unit at RAAF Base Williamtown , New South Wales , taking temporary command of the unit as a squadron leader from July 1965 to April 1966 . That August , he commenced conversion training on the Dassault Mirage III supersonic jet fighter . Promoted to wing commander , from July 1967 to October 1968 he led No. 3 Squadron at Williamtown as it re @-@ equipped with the Mirage . In 1971 , Newham was appointed commanding officer of the Aircraft Research and Development Unit . The following year he became Officer Commanding RAAF Base Laverton , Victoria .

By now a group captain , Newham was appointed Officer Commanding No. 82 Wing at RAAF Base Amberley , Queensland , in 1973 . He formed the RAAF Washington Flying Unit at McClellan Air Force Base , California , on 31 March to ferry the first twelve (out of a total order of twenty @-@ four) General Dynamics F @-@ 111C swing @-@ wing bombers to Australia . On 1 June , Newham led the first three F @-@ 111s in to land at Amberley , a gala occasion attended by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence , Lance Barnard , the Chief of the Air Staff , Air Marshal Charles Read , the Air Officer Commanding Operational Command , Air Vice Marshal Brian

Eaton , and a large media contingent . Newham later recalled that " our air force cred went up in the area and in the world with that aeroplane " . Read ordered Newham to operate the F @-@ 111 with great caution initially , well within limits , lest the long @-@ delayed and controversial aircraft suffer greater damage to its reputation through early attrition . Despite Newham 's protests over the plane 's capabilities , the restrictions remained in place until 1975 . That year he was appointed Staff Officer Operations at Headquarters Operational Command (OPCOM) .

= = Senior command and later life = =

Newham was promoted air commodore in 1976 and became Senior Air Staff Officer at OPCOM , serving through the following year . In 1978 he attended the Royal College of Defence Studies , London , and was made Director General of Operational Requirements in 1979 . In this capacity he visited Israel to investigate air @-@ to @-@ air refuelling operations , coming away favourably impressed : " the Israelis had more match practice than anybody around at the time . The experience gave me confidence in operational judgments . " He was promoted air vice marshal and appointed Chief of Air Force Operations in March 1980 , effective from April , and served on the Chief of the Air Staff Advisory Committee . In 1982 he was posted to the United States as the Head of Australian Defence Staff in Washington , D.C. Returning to Australia , Newham became Deputy Chief of the Air Staff in March 1984 . He was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia on 11 June for services to the RAAF .

Promoted to air marshal , Newham became Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) on 21 May 1985 , succeeding Air Marshal David Evans . Newham initially endorsed the Federal government 's 1986 Review of Australia 's Defence Capabilities , otherwise known as the Dibb Report , but shortly afterwards publicly criticised its " understanding of the application of air power " and " debatable judgments " , especially its lukewarm attitude to the employment of the F @-@ 111s for strategic strike . At a conference the same year , he reiterated the RAAF 's position that " defensive action may prevent defeat , but wars can be won only by offensive action " . On 9 June , he was raised to Companion of the Order of Australia for service to the RAAF , " particularly as Chief of the Air Staff " . Newham 's term as CAS was also marked by the Federal government 's decision to transfer the RAAF 's battlefield helicopters to the Australian Army , against the recommendation of an independent committee . According to Air Force historians Alan Stephens and Keith Isaacs , " Newham protected the best interests of the Australian Defence Force by getting on with the business of effecting the transfer , notwithstanding the deep disappointment within his own service . In February 1987 , OPCOM (subsequently Air Command) was restructured into Force Element Groups (FEGs) , large functional organisations that supplanted the earlier concept of all @-@ powerful air base commands , to which every unit on a base reported . Initially established on a one @-@ year trial basis , the FEGs have remained in place .

Newham completed his tenure as CAS on 3 July 1987 and was succeeded by Air Marshal Ray Funnell . Retiring from the Air Force , he became Director of Helitech Industries . On 23 July 1998 , he was among those present when the Korean Ambassador to Australia awarded his government 's Presidential Unit Citation to No. 77 Squadron . Newham was one of ten surviving veterans of the squadron belatedly presented with the US Air Medal in Canberra on 27 June 2011 , for meritorious service in the Korean War .