

MINISTERIAL PRESS RELEASE

RAAF PR S3942/65

WEDNESDAY 22nd DECEMBER, 1965

STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE PETER HOWSON, MP, MINISTER FOR AIR

RAAF APPOINTMENT IN VIETNAM

A senior RAAF fighter pilot, Wing Commander V. Drummond, AFC, has been attached to the Operational Staff of the Second Air Division, United States Air Force at Saigon, Vietnam.

Wing Commander Drummond, who has a wide background of operational flying and control, will study the conduct of operations by the United States Air Force against the Viet Cong in the transport support, air defence, air reconnaissance and air strike roles.

The Minister for Air Mr Peter Howson said today that Wing Commander Drummond's appointment would be a continuing commitment, based on a twelve months tour of duty.

Mr Howson said that the RAAF was vitally interested in the employment of modern aircraft under conditions similar to those operating in Vietnam. Mutual benefits would be derived by the USAF and the RAAF from such an arrangement.

Wing Commander Drummond is one of the RAAF's most experienced fighter pilots. He served in Korea with No 77 Squadron, and was taken prisoner-of-war by the North Koreans. Prior to going to Saigon he was in the Personnel Branch at Department of Air Canberra. He has only just been granted the acting rank of Wing Commander.

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