



**THE HON MAL BROUGH MP
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES
Minister Assisting The Minister For Defence**

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, January 20, 2004

MINASSIST 01/04

HELICOPTER PILOT RECRUITMENT DRIVE

The Australian Army is recruiting people to fly the latest state-of-the-art armed reconnaissance helicopters.

Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence, Mal Brough said, following a comprehensive training program, new recruits will have the chance to fly the multi-million 'Tiger' helicopter which is part of the Australian Government's preparation for the future of Army aviation.

During a visit to Australia Aerospace in Brisbane, which has started production on some of the 22 Armed Reconnaissance 'Tiger' Helicopters (ARH) being built for the Army, Mr Brough said recruitment of pilots would be vital to utilising this new capability.

"Defence has recently increased its quota for Army pilot training from 40 to 56 candidates each year," Mr Brough said.

"I anticipate those numbers will be comprised of both newcomers to the field of aviation and pilots from the civilian sector who are seeking a career in the Army, flying the armed reconnaissance aircraft. The next intake will commence basic flying training in February this year."

Four of the ARH Tigers are being fully produced in Europe. The remaining 18 are to be assembled at the Australia Aerospace facility in Brisbane.

Ground testing of the first Tiger is due to start at Marignane in France next month with the first two aircraft to be delivered to Australia around the end of the year. Three ARH aircraft are currently in the early stages of assembly at the Brisbane facility.

Once complete, the ARH Tiger will have advanced sensor and communication suites for information gathering, a 30 mm turreted gun, 70mm rockets and a Hellfire air-to-ground precision missile system.

Two ARH Tiger helicopter squadrons will be based in Darwin. They will support the Australian Defence Force in reconnaissance and fighting missions and provide armed escort support for troop transport helicopters.

General Army pilot training begins with a six-month course in basic flying training on fixed wing aircraft at Tamworth. Helicopter training is then conducted at Oakey where pilots earn their 'wings', after which they are allocated to an operational aircraft type and undertake further training with an emphasis on tactics.

Anyone interested in becoming a pilot should contact Defence Force Recruiting on 131901.

Attention News Editors: Mr Brough will be available for interviews at Australia Aerospace, 65-76 Pandanus Ave, Brisbane Airport at 1pm today where he will be inspecting the Tiger helicopter.

Media Contact: Peter Gandolfi on 0419 155 447