



Australian Government
Department of Defence

UNCLASSIFIED

Payne: MA16-001458
Ref: AHQ/OUT/2016/1892
R26350397

MINISTERIAL ADVICE

Minister for Defence – For action

Copies to: Secretary, CDF, CN, CAF.

SUSPENSION OF FLYING FOR MRH-90 TAIWAN HELICOPTERS

Critical Date: 24 June 2016 **Reason:** Maintenance issues with MRH-90 Taiwan Helicopters attract significant media attention.

Recommendations:

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| 1. That you note MRH-90 Taiwan flying operations have been suspended due to software technical errors discovered in the aircraft fleet record management program. This program is known as the Computer Aided Maintenance Management 2 system. | Noted / Please discuss |
| 2. That you note that this error is not in the aircraft itself. The error resides in the Computer Aided Maintenance Management program which is managed separately to the aircraft. Defence engineering staff are investigating the problem, including whether it may affect other ADF aircraft fleets. | Noted / Please discuss |

Minister for Defence..... Date / /

Key Points:

1. All Army and Navy MRH-90 Taiwan flying operations have been suspended due to a technical issue. The technical issue does not involve error in the aircraft itself.
2. At least five MRH-90 Taiwan aircraft had been flying with items that were listed on the aircraft management software as overdue for maintenance, including tail rotor slip rings and main rotor dampener assemblies.
3. The issue is due to data errors in the system which tracks aircraft maintenance, known as the Computer Aided Maintenance Management 2 system. There are potentially other components on the Taiwan aircraft that are also overdue for maintenance.
4. The impact is under investigation by Defence engineering staff. As the same system and processes are used for other ADF aircraft, precautionary data checks are being conducted across all Defence flying units. At this stage, this issue does not affect any other aircraft types.
5. MRH-90 Taiwan aircraft are presently operating as follows:
 - a. Eight are based at the Army Aviation Training Centre at Oakey, Queensland;
 - b. Seven are based at 808 Sqn (Navy) in Nowra, New South Wales, one of which is currently deployed on HMAS *Adelaide* and two which are deployed on HMAS *Canberra*. HMAS *Canberra* is presently enroute to participate in the multi-national Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC).

- c. Thirteen are based at the 5th Aviation Regiment (Army) in Townsville, Queensland, six of which are currently deployed on Exercise HAMEL in South Australia.

6. Once the investigation is complete you will be advised whether or not any further follow up action is required.

s22

For:

JM Spalding
Brigadier
Chief of Staff
Army Headquarters

Contact officer: COL Andrew MacNab
Contact officer phone: s22

23 June 2016

Sensitivity:

Yes. MRH 90 Taipan helicopters attract significant media attention as a result of their troubled introduction into service.

Consultation:

CDRE Chris Smallhorn, Commander Fleet Air Arm, Navy.

Financial Impacts:

Nil.

Background:

Nil.

Related Briefs:

Nil.



Australian Government

Department of Defence

UNCLASSIFIED

Payne: MA16-001471
Ref: AHQ/OUT/2016/2003
R26416316

MINISTERIAL ADVICE

Minister for Defence – For action

Copies to: Secretary, CDF, CN, CAF.

UPDATE – SUSPENSION OF MRH-90 TAIWAN FLYING OPERATIONS

Critical Date:

Reason: Routine

Recommendations:

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| 1. That you note the MRH-90 Taiwan flying suspension was lifted on 30 June 2016 by Army's Operational Airworthiness Authority. | Noted / Please discuss |
| 2. Individual aircraft will return to flying operations over the coming weeks once rectification and assurance action has been completed. | Noted / Please discuss |
| 3. That you note this issue has limited and low risk impacts on other Army and Air Force air platforms. This issue has no impact on other Navy air platforms. | Noted / Please discuss |
| 4. That you note an Aircraft Incident Investigation Team from the Directorate of Defence Aviation & Air Force Safety will be appointed by the Defence Aviation Authority (CAF). | Noted / Please discuss |

Minister for Defence..... Date / /

Key Points:

- On 23 June 2016, Army provided your office with a Ministerial Submission to advise that all Army and Navy MRH-90 Taiwan Flying operations have been suspended due to a technical issue (Attachment A).
- At least six MRH-90 Taiwan aircraft had been flying with items that were overdue for maintenance. There are potentially other components on MRH-90 aircraft and in the spare parts inventory that are also overdue for maintenance.
- On 30 June 2016, the suspension was lifted by Army's Operational Airworthiness Authority, based on implementation of a technical airworthiness issue strategy that defines measures to rectify and assure MRH-90 technical airworthiness.

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4. Priority of audit and rectification:
 - a. HMAS *Canberra* aircraft x 2 (supporting RIMPAC, Hawaii)
 - b. HMAS *Adelaide* replacement aircraft currently at Nowra
 - c. Army aircraft supporting Ex HAMEL x 6
 - d. Navy aircraft at 808 Squadron, Nowra
 - e. Army aircraft at the Army Aviation Training Centre, Oakey
 - f. Army aircraft at 5th Aviation Regiment, Townsville x 7
 - g. Aircraft in deep maintenance or storage
5. An audit of each aircraft is underway, which takes up to three days, and results in an individual aircraft rectification plan. The first Army MRH-90 has completed this activity and will begin ground testing on 1 July 2016, prior to flight testing. Aircraft will progressively be returned to flying operations over the coming weeks once rectification and assurance action has been completed.
6. Precautionary data checks have been conducted which indicate a low technical airworthiness risk across other Defence flying units.
7. An Aircraft Incident Investigation Team will investigate the incident to enable action to be taken to prevent recurrence/reduce the probability of a recurrence so far as reasonably practicable.

s22

JM Spalding
Brigadier
Chief of Staff
Army Headquarters

Contact officer: COL Andrew MacNab
Contact officer phone: s22

01 July 2016

Sensitivity:

Yes. MRH-90 Taipan helicopters attract significant media attention as a result of their troubled introduction into service.

Financial Impacts:

There are no financial impacts.

Summary of Attachments:

A – MA16-1458 *Suspension of Flying for MRH-90 Taipan Helicopters*, dated 23 June 2016.

Consultation:

CDRE Chris Smallhorn, Commander Fleet Air Arm, Navy.

AIRCDRE Peter Yates, Acting Deputy Chief of Air Force.

UNCLASSIFIED

Payne: MA16-001556
R26588114

Email Advice

Return to Flying Operations for MRH-90 Taipan Helicopter

The ADF MRH-90 fleet consists of 36 aircraft.

22 of the 36 aircraft (61%) have been cleared to resume flying operations.

The table below details the allocation of aircraft to operating units, the number of aircraft cleared to resume flying operations, and the number of aircraft still to be cleared.

Unit / Organisation	Number of Aircraft Allocated	Aircraft Cleared to Resume Flying	Aircraft Still to be Cleared
808 Squadron	7	4	3
5th Aviation Regiment	14	14	0
Army Aviation Training Centre	8	4	4
Airbus Group	7	0	7
Total	36	22	14

The 7 aircraft at Airbus Group are in Deeper Maintenance (5) or unallocated (2).

The forecast dates for the remaining 14 aircraft to be cleared are:

808 Squadron (3 aircraft) by 22 Jul 16

Army Aviation Training Centre (4 aircraft) by 29 Jul 16

Airbus Group (7 aircraft) by 29 Jul 16.

For those aircraft cleared to resume flying operations, there is still scheduled and unscheduled maintenance to be completed.

The investigation into this incident has commenced. The Aircraft Incident Investigation Team is due to submit its report to the Defence Aviation Authority (Chief of Air Force) by 12 Aug 16. Further Ministerial Advice will be provided by Army on the outcomes of this investigation in late August/early September.

Drafted By: COL D Phillips
Cleared By: BRIG G Lawler

Tel: 07 3332 2665
Tel: 07 3332 7136

Date: 15 Jul 16
Date: 15 Jul 16

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~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~Payne: MA16-001976
Ref: AHQ/OUT/2016/2677
R26929719

Email Advice

MRH 90 Helicopter: Return to Flying Operations – Update

Question:

On 8 July 2016 you requested a brief on the investigation report on the Multi Role Helicopter (MRH) 90 helicopter maintenance software (MA16-001471). On 15 July 2016 Defence provided you with an update by email advice, and agreed to provide further advice concerning the outcomes of the investigation in late August/early September (MA16-001556).

Response:

The investigation report on the MRH 90 helicopter maintenance data is not likely to be available for release before late September 2016.

Background

In June 2016, all Army and Navy MRH 90 flying operations were suspended due to data errors discovered in the aircraft fleet record management program which tracks aircraft maintenance. This program is known as the Computer Aided Maintenance Management (CAMM) 2 system. The technical issue does not involve an error in the aircraft itself, but it meant that the aircraft had been flying with items overdue for maintenance (MA16-001458 refers).

On 30 June 2016, the suspension was lifted by Army's Operational Airworthiness Authority, based on the implementation of a number of technical measures to rectify and assure MRH 90 technical airworthiness. Individual aircraft progressively returned to flying operations once rectification and assurance action was complete (MA16-001471 refers).

The Defence Aviation Authority (DAA), the Chief of the Air Force, appointed an Aircraft Incident Investigation Team from the Directorate of Defence Aviation and Air Force Safety (DDAAFS) to investigate the incident. The investigation report was due to the Appointing Authority on 12 August 2016 (MA16-001556 refers).

DDAAFS has requested an extension to mid-September 2016. This timeframe permits the detailed subject matter under investigation to be properly assessed by the investigators prior to conducting interviews with numerous stakeholders.

DAA consideration, direction and advice following the release of the investigation result is not expected until late September 2016.

Cleared By: COL A MacNab Tel: 
Cleared By: BRIG J Spalding Tel: 02 6265 1790

Date: 16 August 2016
Date: 26 August 2016 

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Department of Defence

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MINISTERIAL ADVICEPayne: MA16-002181
Ref: AHQ/OUT/2016/2831
R27059132**Minister for Defence – For action**

Copies to: Secretary, CDF

MRH 90 HELICOPTER – SUSPENSION OF FLYING OPERATIONS**Critical Date:****Reason:** Routine**Recommendations:**

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. That you note MRH 90 Taipan helicopter flying operations have been suspended due to further errors discovered in the data relating to aircraft component servicing. | Noted / Please discuss |
| 2. That you note this is separate to the previous data errors and relates to maintenance policy development errors. | Noted / Please discuss |
| 3. That you note Defence engineering staff are auditing data related to flight critical components as a matter of urgency to assure data integrity and safe flying operations. | Noted / Please discuss |

Minister for Defence..... **Date** / /**Key Points:**

1. All Army and Navy MRH 90 Taipan flying operations have been temporarily suspended due to an additional issue relating to the management of the aircraft component servicing timeframes that has resulted in at least 19 MRH 90 aircraft flying with items overdue for maintenance.
2. This is different to the condition experienced in the MRH 90 aircraft in June 2016 and it was not able to be detected through the audit mechanisms established to resolve that issue.
3. The Directorate of Defence Aviation and Air Force Safety (DDAAFS) investigation into the June 2016 occurrence is ongoing; however, the June issue related to the management of a Computer Aided Maintenance Management (CAMM) 2 software idiosyncrasy, whereas the recent incidents appear to be attributable to complexity in transferring the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) requirements into Australian Defence Force (ADF) maintenance policy and onto CAMM 2.
4. These errors resulted in some component servicing requirements not being completed at the due time. The Operational Airworthiness Authority assesses that the causal factors give rise to potential that other parts may be similarly affected. An audit of all components is underway, and Army and Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group have commenced an additional review of maintenance policy management.
5. The emergence of this further issue has eroded confidence in the surety of maintenance policy data entered into the CAMM 2 database. There are no concerns regarding CAMM 2 as a software product.
6. The Operational Airworthiness Authority has suspended MRH 90 flying operations until sufficient assurance may be given that safety critical aircraft components are serviced in accordance with the OEM requirements.

7. A baseline audit of all MRH 90 component maintenance policy is underway, with a focus on safety critical items to facilitate a return to flying as soon as possible. Once safety component lifing has been assured, a wider audit of all components will then continue in order to improve surety of data.
8. The MRH 90 Taipan remains a safe platform operating within an assured design basis. Systemic complex maintenance policy issues have exposed the platform to an elevated risk in the short term which is treatable through a comprehensive audit.
9. MRH 90 aircraft are presently operated by the ADF as follows:
 - a. Eight aircraft are based at the Army Aviation Training Centre at Oakey, Queensland;
 - b. Seven aircraft are based at 808 Squadron (Navy) in Nowra, New South Wales, two of which are currently deployed on HMAS *Canberra* and one on HMAS *Adelaide*; and
 - c. Thirteen aircraft are based at the 5th Aviation Regiment (Army) in Townsville, Queensland.

s22

JM Spalding
Brigadier
Chief of Staff – Army Headquarters
Telephone: 02 6265 1243

Contact officer: Colonel AN Macnab
Contact officer phone: s22

02 September 2016

Sensitivity:

Yes. MRH 90 Taipan helicopters attract significant media attention as a result of their troubled early introduction into service.

Financial Impacts:

There are no financial impacts.

Related Briefs:

MA16-001976 – Email Advice – MRH 90 Helicopter: Return to Flying Operations – Update (26 August 2016).

MA16-001556 – Email Advice – Return to Flying Operations for MRH-90 Taipan Helicopter (15 July 2016).

MA16-001471 – Update – Suspension of MRH-90 Taipan Flying Operations (18 July 2016).

MA16-001458 – Suspension of Flying for MRH-90 Taipan Helicopters (23 June 2016).

Consultation:

Air Commodore Graham Edwards, Acting Deputy Chief of Air Force, Royal Australian Air Force.

Commodore Chris Smallhorn, Commander Fleet Air Arm, Royal Australian Navy.

Brigadier Anthony McWatters, Director General Army Aviation Systems, Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group.



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Department of Defence

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MINISTERIAL ADVICE

Payne: MA16-002502
Ref: AHQ/OUT/2016/3422
R27232410

Minister for Defence – For action

Copies to: Secretary, CDF

MRH-90 HELICOPTER – RESUMPTION OF FLYING OPERATIONS

Critical Date: **Reason:** Routine

Recommendations:

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| 1. That you note Multi Role Helicopter (MRH) Taipan flying operations were recently suspended due to an increased technical risk associated with systemic complex maintenance policy issues. | Noted / Please discuss |
| 2. That you note the audit of maintenance policy has been completed to a satisfactory standard, and additional control measures have been specified to increase confidence in the maintenance system. | Noted / Please discuss |
| 3. That you note the MRH Taipan flying operations suspension has now been lifted by the Army Operational Airworthiness Authority. | Noted / Please discuss |

Minister for Defence..... Date / /

Key Points:

1. As a result of errors identified in the maintenance data, MRH-90 operations were suspended. The Operational Airworthiness Authority directed a 100 per cent audit of maintenance policy for safety critical items and selected mission items as the key prerequisite to resume flight operations. This audit has been completed with satisfactory outcomes and a positive recommendation from the Technical Airworthiness Authority.
2. In relation to prevention of future errors, the Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group has directed the Authorised Engineering Organisation, Airbus Group, to investigate the matter and report the findings of the recent MRH maintenance policy errors, and submit associated remediation plans by 23 September 2016. Whilst this is in progress, the Operational Airworthiness Authority has requested additional oversight of MRH-90 maintenance management policy. This oversight, which includes an independent review of all maintenance policy changes prior to their release, has been implemented immediately.
3. The satisfactory audit results of maintenance policy, and additional controls implemented by the Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group, have reduced the hazard to MRH-90 airworthiness 'so far as reasonably practicable' and set the conditions to lift the suspension on MRH-90 flying operations.
4. The MRH-90 Taipan remains a safe platform operating within an assured design basis. While systemic complex maintenance policy issues have exposed the platform to an elevated risk in the short term actions taken to date, along with additional controls, seek to prevent recurrence of the conditions leading to platform suspension.

5. MRH-90 aircraft are presently operated by the ADF as follows:
- Eight aircraft are based at the Army Aviation Training Centre at Oakey, Queensland
 - Seven aircraft are based at 808 Squadron (Navy) in Nowra, New South Wales, two of which are currently deployed on HMAS *Canberra* and one on HMAS *Adelaide*
 - Thirteen aircraft are based at the 5th Aviation Regiment (Army) in Townsville, Queensland.

s22

JM Spalding
Brigadier
Chief of Staff - Army Headquarters
Telephone: 02 6265 1243

Contact officer: Colonel AN MacNab
Contact officer phone: s22

19 September 2016

Sensitivity:

Yes. MRH-90 Taipan helicopters attract significant media attention as a result of their troubled early introduction into service.

Financial Impacts:

There are no financial impacts.

Related Briefs:

MA16-002181 – MRH-90 Helicopter – Suspension of Flying Operations dated 2 September 2016.

MA16-001976 – Email Advice – MRH-90 Helicopter: Return to Flying Operations – Update dated 26 August 2016.

MA16-001556 – Email Advice – Return to Flying Operations for MRH-90 Taipan Helicopter dated 15 July 2016.

MA16-001471 – Update – Suspension of MRH-90 Taipan Flying Operations dated 18 July 2016.

MA16-001458 – Suspension of Flying for MRH-90 Taipan Helicopters dated 23 June 2016.

Consultation:

Commodore Chris Smallhorn, Commander Fleet Air Arm, Royal Australian Navy.

Brigadier Anthony McWatters, Director General Army Aviation Systems, Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group.



MINISTERIAL ADVICE

Payne: MC16-003998
Ref: AHQ/OUT/2017/6
R28433267

Minister for Defence – For action

Copies to: Secretary, CDF, CN, CAF, DEPSEC CASG, HHSD

INVESTIGATION OUTCOMES FOLLOWING THE SUSPENSION OF FLYING FOR MRH-90 TAIWAN HELICOPTERS

Critical Date: N/A

Reason: Routine

Recommendations:

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. That you note the Aircraft Incident Investigation Team (AIIT) from the Directorate of Defence Aviation and Air Force Safety has completed an investigation into procedures related to the record management programme known as Computer Aided Maintenance Management 2 (Camm2). | Noted / Please discuss |
| 2. That you note the recommendations made by the AIIT will be closed out as erroneous software features are corrected by the end of April 2017. | Noted / Please discuss |

Minister for Defence..... Date / /

Key Points:

1. On 18 July 2016, you were advised that an Accident Incident Investigation Team (AIIT) was appointed to investigate the suspension of flying of Army and Navy MRH-90 Taiwan Helicopters which occurred on 23 June 2016. In MA16-001471 at Attachment A you requested a brief on the AIIT investigation report.
2. The AIIT highlighted 12 findings focussing on the functioning of Computer Aided Maintenance Management 2 (Camm2), Camm2 data manager training, issues in the Maintenance Policy Amendment Notification (MPAN) process, and the Camm2 publication suite.
3. From those findings the AIIT made five recommendations:
 - a. Rectification of the software scripting error that introduces a fault into Camm2 – the incorporation of the critical software patch to rectify this error is scheduled for April 2017.
 - b. Updating the Camm2 publication suite – publication amendments are due for release in early 2017.
 - c. Updating the Camm2 Data Managers' Course – a trial of the updated course was conducted in February 2017.
 - d. Amending publications to ensure there is a mechanism to provide formal feedback upon policy application.
 - e. Amending publications to ensure supervisory oversight of the process when applying maintenance policy.

4. The Defence Aviation Authority has directed that he is to be advised when all of the Directorate of Defence Aviation and Air Force Safety (DDAAPS) recommendations are complete, which is expected to be by the end of April 2017. DDAAFS is the tracking authority for completion of this activity.
5. MRH-90 Taipan Helicopters are currently operating as follows:
 - a. Eight aircraft are based at the Army Aviation Training Centre in Oakey, Queensland.
 - b. Seven aircraft are based at the Royal Australian Navy's 808 Squadron in Nowra, New South Wales, two of which are currently deployed on HMAS Adelaide and HMAS Canberra.
 - c. 18 aircraft are based at the Army's 5th Aviation Regiment in Townsville, Queensland. Further aircraft will be transferred as they are delivered by the manufacturer.

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JM Spalding
Brigadier
Chief of Staff – Army Headquarters
Telephone: 02 6265 1243

Contact officer: Colonel Andrew MacNab
Contact officer phone: s22

01 March 2017

Sensitivity:

Yes – MRH-90 Taipan Helicopters attract significant media attention as a result of their delayed introduction into service.

Financial Impacts:

There are no financial impacts.

Attachments:

A - MA16-001471 – Update – Suspension of MRH-90 Taipan Flying Operations dated 18 July 2016.

Consultation:

Commodore Chris Smallhorn, Commander Fleet Air Arm, Royal Australian Navy
Brigadier Anthony McWatters, Director General Army Aviation Systems, Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group
Air Vice-Marshal Warren McDonald AM, CSC - Deputy Chief of Air Force, Royal Australian Air Force

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PDR: MA17-001522
Ref: AHQ/OUT/2015/945
R29506083**MINISTERIAL ADVICE****Australian Government****Department of Defence****Minister for Defence – For action****Minister for Defence Industry – For information**

Copies to: Secretary, CDF, CN, CAF, DEPSEC CASG, HHSD

MRH-90 TAIWAN HELICOPTER FLIGHT RESTRICTION**Critical Date:** 13 April 2017**Reason:** To advise you of media interest in this issue.**Recommendations:**

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| 1. That you note MRH-90 Taiwan helicopters are currently restricted to essential flying operations. | Noted / Please discuss |
| 2. That you note that this is as a result of missed servicing for critical flight components. | Noted / Please discuss |
| 3. That you note that progress will be reviewed and an update will be provided to you by 13 April 2017. | Signed / Not signed |

Minister for Defence..... Date / /**Key Points:**

- MRH-90 Taiwan helicopters are currently operating under a restricted condition for essential flying only.
- The Chief Engineer MRH, Army Aviation Systems Branch, has advised that Safety Critical Maintenance on multiple components has been overflowed on several MRH-90 aircraft.
- This is due to a discrepancy between Original Equipment Manufacturer maintenance requirements and the Interactive Maintenance Technical Publication used by Defence.
- The key affected components have been identified; however, there exists the potential for other components to be impacted. An investigation into why this has occurred is underway.
- The current restriction is a step to control potential risk until the breadth of the issue is fully understood. This restriction would not prevent Defence support to essential operations at this point.
- Similar issues led to a fleet grounding in August 2016. Next steps will be advised within the next 24 hours once engineering assessments have been considered.

s22

AJ Campbell
Lieutenant General
Chief of Army
Telephone: 02 6265 4311

Contact officer: Colonel Andrew MacNab
Contact officer phone: 02 8335 6525

12 April 2017

Sensitivity:

Yes. MRH-90 Taipan operations were suspended in July and September 2016 for similar overfly of maintenance on critical components. While this is not the same issue, it may easily be conflated and create an undue negative image.

Financial Impacts:

There are no financial impacts.

Consultation:

Yes

Commodore Chris Smallhorn, Commander Fleet Air Arm, Royal Australian Navy
Brigadier Jeremy King, Director General Army Aviation Systems, Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group

MRH-90 TAIWAN HELICOPTER FLIGHT RESTRICTION

MINISTERIAL TALKING POINTS

- Defence MRH-90 Taiwan Operations have been temporarily restricted to essential flights.
- There is evidence indicating some components have not been serviced in accordance with the Original Equipment Manufacturer requirements.
- The affected components have been identified and the aircraft affected will have those components replaced in accordance with routine maintenance practices.
- There is a low risk that other components may be affected.
- To minimise exposure to these risks, only essential flying operations are permitted until that risk is eliminated.
- This does not affect our ability to provide essential Defence support to operations or to emergencies.
- MRH90 have recently been used to support rescue and recovery during Cyclone Debbie in Queensland and New South Wales.

Contact officer: COLONEL Andrew MacNab, Director Operational Airworthiness- Army
Contact officer phone: s22

Clearance	Name	Appointment	Date and time
Cleared by: (Group/Service)	Brig Scott Benbow	SES Band 1 / 1 Star or above	12 Apr 17
Cleared by: MECC Division	Ms Alex Kelton	A/Sec Corporate Comms	1824 12 Apr 17

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MINISTERIAL ADVICE

PDR: MA17-001526
Ref: AHQ/OUT/2017/952
R29515645

Australian Government

Department of Defence

Minister for Defence – For action

Minister for Defence Industry – For information

Copies to: Secretary, CDF, CN, CAF, DEPSEC CASG, HHSD

MRH-90 TAIWAN HELICOPTER FLIGHT OPERATIONS

Critical Date: 13 April 2017	Reason: Advise you of the status of MRH-90 flying operations
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Recommendations:

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. That you note Defence has ceased MRH-90 flying operations. | Noted / Please discuss |
| 2. That you note that this as a result of missed servicing for critical flight components. | Noted / Please discuss |
| 3. That you note this is an extension of the previous MRH-90 restrictions and is necessary in the interests of safety. | Noted / Please discuss |
| 4. That you note that Defence and Airbus Group Australia Pacific have identified a way forward and are working to define the status of critical flying components. | Noted / Please discuss |

Minister for Defence..... Date / /

Key Points:

- On 12 April 2017, you were advised that the MRH-90 was operating under restricted operating conditions (essential operations only) while a preliminary investigation into the management of critical flight components was undertaken (MA17-001522 currently with your office). Airbus Group Australia Pacific (AGAP) is responsible for the management of this process.
- The investigation noted that a previous audit, required to support a return to flying operations in September 2016 did not identify all errors. Evidence of this shortfall was only confirmed this week.
- Operations were restricted on 11 April 2017 to reduce risk while AGAP sought to confirm the status of critical flying components. AGAP has been working on this issue and is well advanced in providing a solution; however, a timeline is yet to be confirmed.
- Sufficient doubt exists over the maintenance status of other critical flight components that has led Army and Navy to cease MRH-90 flying operations. This cessation will remain in place until AGAP can provide assurance of the continuing airworthiness of the MRH-90 safety critical flight components and systems.
- Defence intends to conduct an external review and provide increased oversight of AGAP management and quality systems.

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PDR: MA17-001526
Ref: AHQ/OUT/2017/952
R29515645

6. This discrepancy is similar to the August 2016 issue relating to maintenance policy and management; it is not related to the Computer Aided Maintenance Management error in June 2016.

s22



A. CAMPBELL
Lieutenant General
Chief of Army
Telephone: 02 6265 4311

13 April 2017

Contact officer: Colonel Andrew Macnab
Contact officer phone: 02 8335 6525

Sensitivity:

Yes. MRH90 Taipan operations were suspended in July and September 2016 for a similar overfly of maintenance on critical components. While this is not the same issue, it is related and maybe confused as the same issue. This may create an undue negative image.

Airbus Group Australia Pacific conducted a 100 per cent audit of maintenance data following the previous suspension in September 2016. This most recent issue raises doubts in Defence and its industry partner's ability to maintain aircraft airworthiness. Consequently, adverse findings or reports by media may impact industry's and/or Defence's reputation.

Financial Impacts:

There are no financial impacts.

Related Brief:

MA17-001522, MRH-90 Taipan Helicopter Flight Restriction – currently with your office.

Consultation:

Yes

Commodore Chris Smallhorn, Commander Fleet Air Arm, Royal Australian Navy
Brigadier Jeremy King, Director General Army Aviation Systems, Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group.

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MINISTERIAL ADVICE

Payne: MA17-001600
Ref: AHQ/OUT/2017/992
R29579361

Australian Government

Department of Defence

Minister for Defence – For action

Minister for Defence Industry – For information

Copies to: Secretary, CDF, CAF, CN, DEPSEC CASG, HHSD

MRH-90 TAIPAN HELICOPTER RESUMPTION OF FLIGHT OPERATIONS

Critical Date: 21 April 2017	Reason: To advise you of the resumption of flight operations.
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Recommendations:

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| 1. That you note Defence has resumed MRH-90 flying operations. | Noted / Please discuss |
| 2. That you note that a complete review of critical components has been conducted. | Noted / Please discuss |
| 3. That you note that a complete review of non-critical components will be complete by the end of May 2017, and will have no impact to flying operations. | Noted / Please discuss |
| 4. That you note Defence will launch an independent review to mitigate against further issues in the Airbus Quality Management System. | Noted / Please discuss |

Minister for Defence..... Date / /

Key Points:

- On 11 April 2017 a restriction was placed on MRH-90 flight operations, with Defence deciding to suspend all flying on 13 April 2017 due to doubt existing over the status of critical flight components on Army and Navy aircraft (MA17-001522 and MA17-001526 refer).
- Army and Navy are now assured that all flight critical components are within the servicing requirements designated by the Original Equipment Manufacturer and that these requirements are reflected in the maintenance procedures managed by Airbus Group Australia Pacific.
- Non critical components will be reviewed between now and the end of May. There is no impact to flying operations.
- Defence will recommence MRH90 flight operations from 20 April 2017.

5. An independent review will be conducted of Airbus Group Australia Pacific's Quality Management System to determine the potential for future breakdowns in the maintenance assurance framework. This will be complete by 31 May 2017.

s22



AJ Campbell
Lieutenant General
Chief of Army
Telephone: 02 6265 4311

Contact officer: Colonel Andrew MacNab
Contact officer phone: 02 8335 6525

20 April 2017

Sensitivity:

Yes. Media attention has the potential to increase due to the planned tasking of MRH-90 flying VIPs to sites in Papua New Guinea for Anzac Day commemoration services.

Related Briefs:

MA17-001522, MRH-90 Taipan Helicopter Flight Restrictions and MA17-001526, MRH-90 Taipan Helicopter Flight Operations.

Consultation:

Yes

Commodore Chris Smallhorn, Commander Fleet Air Arm, Royal Australian Navy
Brigadier Jeremy King, Director General Army Aviation Systems, Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group