

QUEENSLAND AIR MUSEUM



Founded 1974.
Located at Caloundra Airport on
Queensland's Sunshine Coast

All correspondence to:
G.P.O. Box 2315
Brisbane QLD 4001
Telephone: (07) 54925930
Facsimile: (07) 54925930
ABN 88 760 302 357

MEDIA RELEASE

SCANDAL RE DESTRUCTION OF F-111s

When the Queensland Air Museum asked the federal government to give it one of the soon to be scrapped F-111s, it was still in with a chance provided the museum could raise \$2.5M , and a competitive tender.

Since then the federal government has created a mechanism whereby it can destroy all the remaining F-111s, without further tenders .

'Our representations to Stephen Smith MP, Minister for Defence, have fallen on deaf ears,' said Mr. Cliff Robinson, President of the Queensland Air Museum. 'We are still waiting for his promised response "early in the new year (2011)".

A brief has also been sent to Stuart Robert MP, Federal Member for Fadden (Qld) and shadow minister for Defence Science, Technology and Personnel. The Queensland Air Museum has requested that he raise the matter in the house.

www.qam.com.au

Donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible

The fleet of swing-winged F-111 strategic bombers entered service with the Royal Australian Air Force in 1973, and were retired on 3 December 2010. It has been an icon in Queensland skies for 37 years.

Mr. Cliff Robinson said, 'Why would a public museum in the F-111's home state be left out? We are community based, and entry fees and donations are all we have to run the QAM, restore significantly important aircraft and grow our collection. Allowing the public to view this iconic aircraft during open cockpit weekends would be an enormous boost to the museum, and to Sunshine Coast tourism.'

The museum requested it be considered for an F-111 as early as March 2005 with a letter to the F-111 Disposal Project Management Office at Amberley. It received advice that the QAM's interest had been registered.

In May 2007 an approach was made to the then Defence Minister Brendan Nelson, requesting that an F-111 aircraft be gifted to QAM as a demonstration that the Australian Government recognises the contribution QAM has made to the community over the past 33 years. In November 2008 the museum made another approach to the succeeding Minister for Defence, Joel Fitzgibbon. Joel Fitzgibbon replied that 'once the overall F-111 Disposal Plan has been approved, advice will be provided to all interested parties including QAM.'

Last September yet another approach was made to the current Defence Minister Stephen Smith, welcoming him to his new portfolio and restating the case for an F-111 to be gifted to QAM.

'It's not solely a matter of pushing the QAM's barrow,' said President Cliff Robinson. Thousands of museum visitors ask us when we'll be getting an F-111. It has made it obvious to us that there is a public expectation the QAM will be displaying an F-111.' With over 40 complete aircraft and more under restoration the QAM has been built purely on the dedication of volunteers. It has no paid staff. 'This is also about government recognition of the value of volunteers who dedicate their spare time to give back to the community by preserving Australia's aviation heritage,' said Mr. Robinson

CALL FOR COMMUNITY HELP

Once again the QAM urges Queenslanders and aviation enthusiasts to write to their local member asking them to urge the minister for defence to rescue an F-111 doomed for the scrap yard, and have it delivered to the Queensland Air Museum as a gift from the government to the community.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact: Tony Iozzi, Community Relations Manager (volunteer)
Mobile: 0411 636 820
QAM: 5492 5930
Email: community-relations@gam.com.au