

RAAF Base Curtin

Recommended Citation

Richard Tanter, "RAAF Base Curtin", Australian Defence Facilities, March 31, 2014,
<https://nautilus.org/briefing-books/australian-defence-facilities/raaf-curtin/>

Introduction

Location: 17°36'18.0"S 123°49'15.0"E (-17.605000, 123.820833) [Wikimapia](#); [Google Maps](#)

[RAAF Base Curtin](#) is an Air Force facility located on the northern coast of Western Australia 40 kilometers southeast from the town of Derby. It is a so-called "[bare-base](#)" [airfield](#), meaning that the base is minimally maintained by [No. 322 Expeditionary Combat Support Squadron \(322ECSS\)](#) on a caretaker basis to allow for rapid deployment of aircraft and crew if need be. Normally, no flying or support staff are deployed there.

RAAF Curtin, together with RAAF Learmonth near Exmouth Gulf and RAAF Base Scherger in Far North Queensland are also maintained as bare bases. The three bare bases were established as a result of The Defence of Australia white paper (the Dibb Report) which oriented major defence assets to the north and western approaches to Australia. The 1991 Force Structure Review could then be conducted from the bare bases, including Curtin.

Two decades later, the 2012 Force Posture Review recommended upgrading Curtin for future combat aircraft operations, and also for KC-130 refuelling aircraft and P-8 maritime surveillance aircraft. However the Review noted that difficulties of supplying fuel by road during the west season limit Curtin's utility. The [Gillard government responded](#) to the Review recommendations by agreeing to upgrade Curtin for air combat operations, but to defer response on the recommendations for unrestricted operations for P-8 and KC-130 aircraft.

The [Curtin Immigration Detention Centre](#) is located within RAAF Base Curtin, and has been the subject severe criticism of the conditions of detention, including as the subject of an [extensive report](#) by the Australian Human Rights Commission in 2011.

[caption id="attachment_34229" align="aligncenter" width="755"]



RAAF Base Curtin - Google Maps[/caption]

[caption id="attachment_34231" align="aligncenter" width="1680"]



RAAF Curtin - Google Earth July 2013.[/caption]

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