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# Introduction: Australia in Iraq 2014 -

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In September 2014 the Australian government [announced](#) the deployment of an 600-person ADF contingent as part of a US-led coalition to attack Islamic State in Syria and the Levant (ISIL) forces in Iraq. The deployment has subsequently expanded in size and in mission.

The first deployment was made up of 400 personnel in an [Air Task Group](#) and 200 in a [Special Operations Task Group](#).

An RAAF element made up of up to eight Boeing F/A-18F Super Hornets, a Boeing E-7A (737) Wedgetail airborne early warning & control aircraft, and an Airbus Defence & Space KC-30A (A330 MRTT) air-to-air refuelling tanker was based initially at Al Minhad Air Base. RAAF C-130J Hercules and C-17A Globemaster aircraft used in humanitarian relief operations were also deployed to Al Minhad.

As of early 2015, ADF operations in the Middle Eastern and Central Asian regions were conducted under four headings:

- ADF activities in Iraq against ISIL are conducted under [Operation OKRA](#).
- ADF Middle Eastern support and sustainment activities are conducted [Operation ACCORDION](#).
- Australia's longrunning maritime operations in the Middle Eastern Region are classified as [Operation MANITOU \(Maritime\)](#).
- ADF activities in Afghanistan are conducted under [Operation Slipper](#). (See [Australia in Afghanistan](#))

On 24 February 2015, New Zealand prime minister John Key [announced](#) that up to 143 New Zealand troops would be sent to Iraq to help train Iraqi forces. Most would be deployed to Taji, he said, and would be part of a joint training mission with Australian forces.

On 3 March 2015, the Australian government announced the deployment of a [further 300 ground troops](#) to train Iraqi security forces, to be based at al-Asad Air Base near al-Bagdadi, in Anbar Province.

On 25 March, [Prime Minister Tony Abbott announced that there was "no time limit"](#) on the ADF Iraq deployment. He went on to confirm that RAAF refuelling and early-warning and air control aircraft were now supporting coalition air strikes in Syria.

For regularly updated details of air operations see [Air Task Group](#).

## GOVERNMENT SOURCES

2015 -

[Press conference with Chief of Joint Operations Vice Admiral David Johnston](#), who gives an update of Australian operations in Iraq, transcript, Department of Defence, 12 February 2015

2014 -

[Minister for Defence - Visit to Australian Defence Force Personnel in the Middle East](#), 25 September 2014

The Special Forces task group includes up to 200 personnel who will be available to support the Iraqi Security Forces in an advise and assist role.

The Air Task Group includes approximately 400 Royal Australian Air Force personnel as well as F/A-18F Super Hornets, a KC-30A Multi Role Tanker Transport (MRTT) aircraft, and an E7-A Wedgetail Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) aircraft. This deployment is in addition to the RAAF C-130J Hercules and C-17A Globemaster aircraft that are already providing humanitarian and logistic support to Iraq.

[Operation Accordion](#), Global Operations, Department of Defence

Operation ACCORDION's mission is to support the sustainment of Australian Defence Force (ADF) operations, enable contingency planning and enhance regional relationships in the Middle East Region (MER).

Around 400 ADF personnel work under Operation ACCORDION providing support to Operations SLIPPER and [MANITOU](#), predominantly from the Al Minhad Air Base (AMAB) in the United Arab Emirates.

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