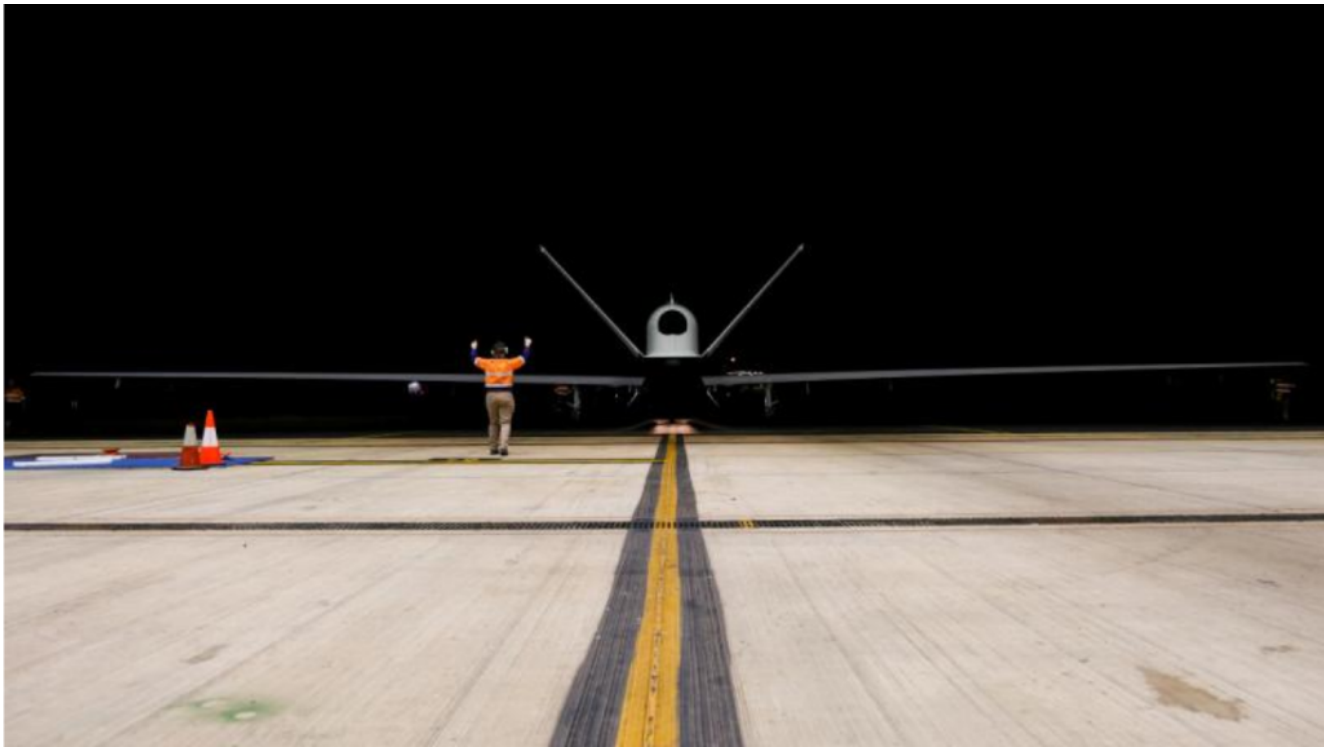
Australia’s MQ-4C Triton Fleet Grows to Three



Three Royal Australian Air Force MQ-4C Triton aircraft on the taxiway at RAAF Base Tindal. (Australian Department of Defence)

From Australian Ministry of Defence, June 27, 2025

Australia’s second and third MQ-4C Triton remotely piloted aircraft systems arrived at RAAF Base Tindal, Northern Territory, in May.

The two aircraft were remotely piloted from United States Naval Air Station Patuxent River in Maryland, safely arriving on Australian soil after completing a multi-day, multi-leg journey across the Pacific Ocean. The aircraft join Australia’s first MQ-4C Triton, which was delivered in July 2024 and successfully completed its first test flights under Australian control.

Chief of Air Force Air Marshal Stephen Chappell said the arrival of the MQ-4C Triton two and three represents a

significant milestone for Air Force.

“It delivers unprecedented persistence and awareness over Australia’s extensive maritime domain in support of the integrated focused force,” Air Marshal Chappell said.

“This acquisition clearly demonstrates the ongoing success of the cooperative program with the United States Navy, and strengthens our integrated focused force.”

Australia will acquire a total of four MQ-4C Triton aircraft and associated ground support systems through a Cooperative Program with the United States Navy and in collaboration with the manufacturer of the MQ-4C Triton, Northrop Grumman.

All four aircraft will be based at RAAF Base Tindal, and operated by Air Force’s 9 Squadron, located at RAAF Base Edinburgh, South Australia.

‘It’s going to be an exciting and challenging period, with significant learning opportunities as we continue to unlock and exploit the capabilities of the MQ-4C Triton.’

Commanding Officer 9 Squadron Wing Commander Lawry Benier said the safe arrival of Australia’s second and third MQ-4C Triton was the culmination of a large integrated effort across Defence, United States Navy and Northrop Grumman.

“It will continue to be a team game across Defence and defence industry, as we take the MQ-4C Triton further afield and put it through the paces of its mission roles,” he said.

“It’s going to be an exciting and challenging period, with significant learning opportunities as we continue to unlock and exploit the capabilities of the MQ-4C Triton.”

The MQ-4C Triton will provide the ADF with a persistent, high altitude, long endurance, maritime intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and electronic warfare capability that can contribute to a range of tasks including intelligence

surveillance and reconnaissance, anti-surface warfare and electronic warfare.

“Additional MQ-4C aircraft further realises the Triton’s ability to enable the delivery of long-range, persistent and networked surveillance and reconnaissance for the integrated force,” Wing Commander Benier said.

“It creates necessary fleet depth to afford 9 Squadron with resilience and flexibility to enable introduction into service and operational test activities.”

The MQ-4C Triton will operate alongside Air Force’s crewed P-8A Poseidon aircraft as a “family of systems” that will provide support to national security response activities, both domestically and abroad.

Australia’s fourth and final MQ-4C Triton is in production, and is scheduled to be delivered in 2028.