

Vale Robert "Bob" James Laing

3 August 1943 - 23 August 2024

Bob joined the Royal Australian Air Force on 4 July 1963 and graduated as a pilot on 23 October 1964. His first posting was to 11 Squadron flying P-2E Neptune maritime patrol aircraft based at RAAF Richmond NSW before re-equipping with P-3B Orions at USNAS Moffett Field, California, then relocating to RAAF Edinburgh in South Australia. Then followed tours as a qualified flying instructor at 2FTS on Macchi jet trainers at RAAF Pearce Western Australia and then back at 11 Squadron.



After completing the Canadian Forces Command and Staff Course in Toronto came staff duties in Air Force Personnel and then Operations at Russell Offices Canberra.



Wing Commander R.J. Laing PLT returns to Edinburgh and to maritime aviation. His maritime postings include two tours with 11SQN from Nov 64 to May 69 and from Jul 72 to Jul 75. Prior to his posting to MATS for the conversion course, Wing Commander Laing served for several years with DEFAIR, his last year being as DOPS-AF (OPSMAR). Wing Commander Laing is a graduate of the Canadian Forces Staff College. He will be CO MATS from mid 1980, replacing Wing Commander R.R. Tayles who is posted to the US.

In January 1980 Bob returned to RAAF Edinburgh as Commanding Officer of Maritime Analysis and Training Squadron/292 Squadron followed by 10 Squadron flying P-3C Orions. A third of this period was spent on deployments to RMAF Butterworth Malaysia conducting Cold War tasks mainly against Soviet warships and submarines in the South China Seas and Indian Ocean.

After a tour as the Director RAAF at the Australian Joint Anti-Submarine School/Joint Maritime Warfare Centre at RANAS Nowra NSW

Bob completed the Joint Services Staff Course at Weston ACT in 1985. Following one-year as the Senior Administrative Staff Officer HQ Operational Command/Air Command at RAAF Glenbrook NSW he returned to Canberra as Director Air Force Development and then Director Air Warfare.

Bob was promoted to Air Commodore and appointed Commander Maritime Patrol Group based at RAAF Edinburgh in June 1992 and returned to Canberra in January 1996 as Director General Policy and Plans - Air Force before retiring in August 1997.



Torpedo preflight - RIMPAC 82



Prior to the RAAF's first Harpoon firing - Anzac Day 1982