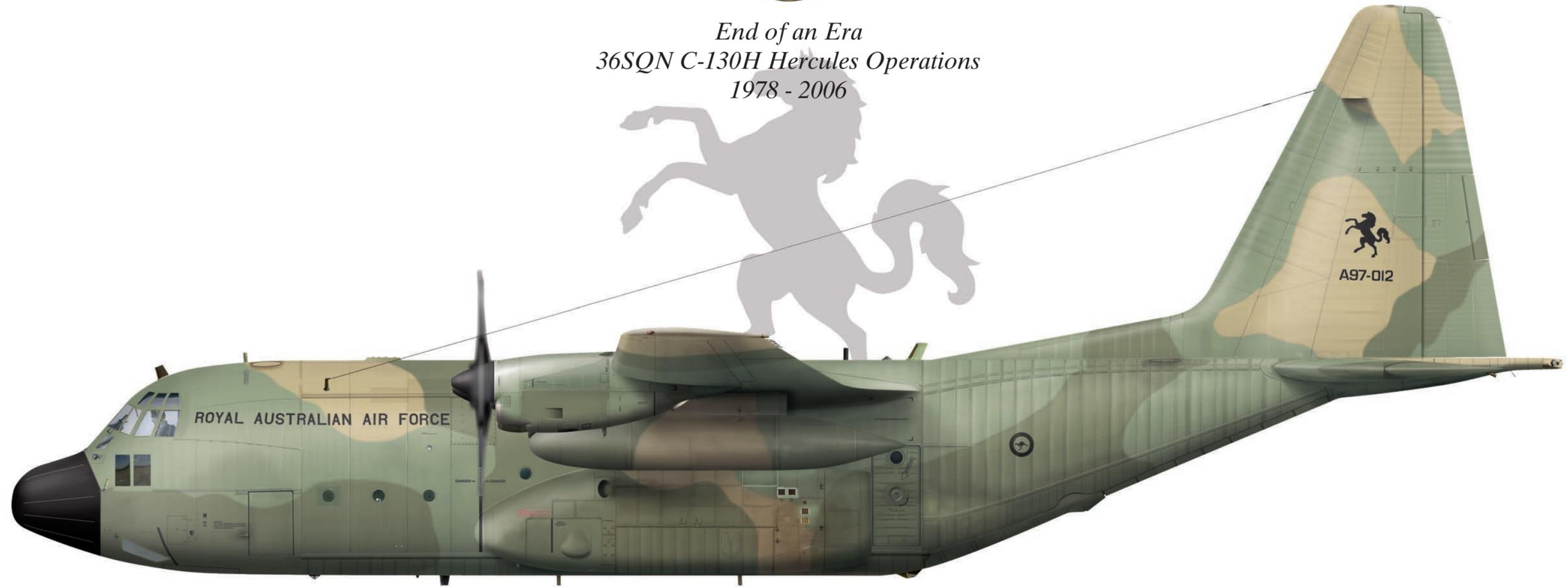




*End of an Era*  
*36SQN C-130H Hercules Operations*  
*1978 - 2006*



**C-130H Hercules A97-012**  
**36 Squadron RAAF Richmond**



No. 36 Squadron was equipped with Lockheed C-130H Hercules tactical transport aircraft at RAAF Richmond in 1978. After 28 years the airframes are still amongst the most capable tactical transport aircraft in the world, due to a series of upgrades and modifications, and have amassed a magnificent record of over 200 000 accident free flying hours. The C-130H has operated over a diverse and often unique range of tasking. Passengers transported include the King of Tonga, crocodiles out of Darwin and SAS troops into Afghanistan; while cargo carried varies from combat supplies into the Middle East, to the terracotta warriors out of China. The C-130H has covered the globe: operating from as far north as the Arctic Circle, to Antarctica support missions in the south; from assisting the UN in Rwanda, to participating in countless exercises in the US. The C-130H aerial delivery experience ranges from mail and food drops to Australians on McQuarie Island, to 30,000 lb bulldozers. Four of the aircraft were fitted with a self-protection suite by 1996 and all the airframes have undergone an upgrade to their fuel, engine and flight instrumentation. 36 Squadron flew resupply missions into Somalia in 1991 and to the Persian Gulf in the same year. The first troops transported into East Timor in 1999 arrived by C-130H. The next major deployment for the Squadron was in 2003 to Operation FALCONER in the Gulf, in support of the coalition forces fighting in Iraq. Since then, ground and air crews have been serving in the Middle East on a rotational basis, to support coalition rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. 36 Squadron is always among the first to deliver humanitarian aid. The C-130Hs first deployment was on Operation RICEBOWL delivering famine relief to Cambodia in 1980. They helped in the evacuation of Pnom Penh in 1992; were used to evacuate casualties from Bali in 2002; and delivered aid to Indonesia after the Tsunami in 2005 and to Pakistan later that year. The C-130H has been involved in Operation ANODE, providing assistance to the Solomon Islands, since 2003. When violence erupted again in East Timor in 2006, the squadron deployed crews in support of Australia's troop commitment. At home the C-130H crews have flown aerial fire fighting missions, airdropped hay during flood relief and flown maritime search and rescue missions. The C-130H airframes together with their complement of air and ground crews were transferred to 37 Squadron in November 2006, augmenting the C-130J fleet with a special operations capability, significant aerial delivery expertise and a tradition of flexible, rapid and reliable tactical transport.

September 2006  
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