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Immediate Use

## NEW INFRA-RED SEARCH AND RESCUE CAMERA FOR NSW

The second of three Forward Looking Infra-Red (FLIR) cameras purchased by the Federal Government is now available for search and rescue operations in New South Wales.

AMSA's General Manager of Australian Search and Rescue (AusSAR), David Baird, said the new camera, which has been fitted to a dedicated search and rescue aeroplane in Wollongong, would significantly enhance the night-search capability of the aircraft.

"Search and rescue, particularly at night, has always been extremely challenging," Mr Baird said. "This new camera should enhance the response to an incident in New South Wales."

The camera has been installed on a McDonald's Australian Aerial Patrol aircraft and initial crew training has been completed.

It is the first fixed-wing aircraft in New South Wales available around the clock for search and rescue purposes to be fitted with a FLIR camera.

The installation of the camera was carried out by Hawker Pacific. The cameras were manufactured in the United States by FLIR Systems International.

The Federal Government allocated \$1.5 million in the 2001-2002 Budget to purchase three aircraft-mounted FLIR cameras for search and rescue. A camera has already been fitted to an aircraft in Melbourne and a third unit will be installed on a Tasmanian helicopter.

Australian Aerial Patrol is contracted to provide a dedicated search and rescue service for AusSAR, which is a division of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority. AMSA coordinates maritime and aviation search and rescue on behalf of the Federal Government.

The FLIR camera picks out heat-generating objects like human bodies from the general environment. The cameras are most commonly used by search and rescue authorities and law enforcement agencies to locate people and vehicles at night.



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