

MEDIA ALERT

Thursday 19 May, 2022

Vickers Vimy to complete its final journey to new home in Adelaide Airport's main terminal

The historic Vickers Vimy aircraft at Adelaide Airport will complete its final, historic journey tonight, Thursday 19 May (weather permitting) to its new home within the airport's main domestic and international terminal.

The extremely delicate operation will take approximately 4½ hours to move 2.1km from its existing memorial building adjacent the long-term car park to the terminal.

The move has been scheduled at night to minimise impact on airport traffic and due to more favourable weather conditions (cooler temperature and less wind).

Media are invited to film and photograph the relocation, which will start approximately 11.00pm on Thursday 19 May at the old memorial building adjacent the long-term car park, and completed approximately 3.30am (Friday 20 May) in the new terminal exhibition space.

Media are asked to follow the directions of project team members regarding filming locations. Due to space constraints along the route, we would recommend the use of a pool camera for this event if at all possible.

There will be no access inside the old memorial building or new terminal space, but a documentary crew will film supplementary footage from within these locations and we can provide edited footage to media outlets the following day.

A media conference will be held on the mezzanine level viewing platform inside the new exhibition space at 10.00am on Friday 20 May following the move. Meet on the plaza adjacent the taxi drop-off zone, Atura Circuit.

The more than 100-year-old Vickers Vimy - the first aircraft to fly from England to Australia in 1919 - has been carefully separated into three main pieces in preparation of the relocation - the two outer wings, and the fuselage and engines with the stub wings.

Each segment has been carefully wrapped and scaffolding built around it to carry the weight and protect the structure during the move. The project team will only have a gap as little as 70mm either side to manoeuvre it out of the existing memorial building and then into the new terminal space.

The move is being undertaken by South Australia's Artlab Australia, a recognised leader in the conservation of cultural collections to undertake the extremely delicate operation of deconstructing, relocating and piecing back together

Author and aviation history specialist, David Crotty, has been appointed as the exhibition curator, while leading South Australian architecture firm Baukultur, exhibition design specialists

Arketype and creative design studio Sandpit have designed the new exhibition space for the Vickers Vimy.

Besix Watpac is undertaking the construction works required for the relocation and exhibition space, following its successful completion of Adelaide Airport's terminal expansion project.

The Vickers Vimy relocation project has been jointly funded by the Federal Government, South Australian Government and Adelaide Airport.

Adelaide Airport Managing Director, Brenton Cox, said it would be exciting to see the Vickers Vimy finally moving to its new home.

"We've completed construction of the new space for the Vickers Vimy within the Adelaide Airport terminal as part of our \$200 million terminal expansion project – so we're ready for the aircraft to move into its new home," Mr Cox said.

"The Vickers Vimy is a treasured national asset and Adelaide Airport is proud to be its custodian.

"A significant amount of planning has already taken place to find the best solution to move what is an extremely large and fragile aircraft.

"Construction of the exhibition space is continuing with the exhibition due to open to the public later in the year."

The Vickers Vimy – a biplane made of wood lined with fabric with open cockpits - was the first aircraft to complete the epic journey between Hounslow in England and Darwin in Australia as an entrant in the 1919 Air Race.

Flown by South Australian brothers Sir Ross and Sir Keith Smith along with mechanics Wally Shiers and James Bennett, the 18,000km pioneering flight took 28 days to complete with no more than a compass and maps for navigation.

Additional footage

The following link provides archival footage of the Vickers Vimy and the 1919 Air Race:
<https://we.tl/t-qiRCkkT1zo>

The following link provides supplementary vision of dismantling the Vickers Vimy:
<https://we.tl/t-2CbWlt7o8O>

Vickers Vimy stats

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|-----------------------|--------------|
| Wingspan: | 20.7m |
| Length: | 13.1m |
| Height: | 4.5m |
| Weight: | 3.2 tonnes |
| Engine weight: | 409kg each |
| Wings: | ½ tonne each |