Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0319

Hammer, Julie Margaret

(1955 -)

Born	19550217, Brisbane Queensland Australia
Occupation	Servicewoman

Summary

Julie Hammer was the first woman to command an operational unit in the RAAF, the Electronic Warfare Squadron, and was awarded a Conspicuous Service Cross for that command. She was the recipient of the 1996 Association of Old Crows (Australian Chapter) Award for Distinguished Service to Electronic Warfare. She was awarded the 2001 Sir Charles Kingsford Smith Memorial Medal by the Royal Aeronautical Society to recognise her contribution to Australian aerospace and delivered the 2001 Kingsford Smith Memorial Lecture. She is a Fellow of the Institution of Engineers Australia, a Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society and a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. She was the first woman in the RAAF to become a member of the General List on promotion to Group Captain 1996, and the first serving woman in the history of the Australian Defence Force to be promoted to One Star level, on promotion to Air Commodore in 1999. She served for three years from 1996 to 1998 as one of the Prime Minister’s representatives on the Governor General’s Australian Bravery Awards Council.

Details

Julie Hammer completed her schooling in Brisbane and in 1971 was placed 8th in the State of Queensland in the Senior Public (Matriculation) Examination. She joined the Royal Australian Air Force in 1977 after completing a B.Sc. (Hons) in Physics at the University of Queensland. Initially an Education Officer, she transferred to the Engineer Branch in 1981 shortly after that employment was opened to women. In her early career as a junior officer, she was a staff member at the Engineer Cadet Squadron, instructed in electronics at the School of Radio, managed deep level maintenance on F-111, Iroquois, Chinook and Canberra aircraft at Amberley, and worked at Headquarters Support Command in the engineering management of avionics equipment for the RAAF fleet. She was promoted to Squadron Leader in June 1985.

In 1987, after 16 months study at RAF Cranwell, UK and completion of an M.Sc. in Aerosystems Engineering, Julie Hammer returned to Canberra and served as a technical intelligence analyst in the Joint Intelligence Organisation. She subsequently worked on a major Electronic Warfare project, the P-3C ESM Project, first as project engineer and then, after promotion to Wing Commander, as project manager. In 1992, she assumed command of the Electronic Warfare Squadron in Adelaide and served in that post for three years.

Returning to Canberra in 1996 and completing a Graduate Diploma in Strategic Studies at the Joint Services Staff College, Julie Hammer was promoted to Group Captain and again posted into major projects, this time as the Project Director of a number of command and control projects. During this period, she was seconded for four months to serve on the Science and Technology Team of the Defence Efficiency Review. Throughout 1999, she was the sole Australian student at the prestigious Royal College of Defence Studies in London, completing that 12 month course in strategic and international studies with 83 fellow course members from 38 nations. Returning to Australia in December 1999 on promotion to Air Commodore, she assumed duties as Director General Information Services, responsible for the operations and support of Defence’s fixed communications networks and computer systems throughout Australia. In December 2001 she became the Commandant of the Australian Defence Force Academy, where midshipmen and officer cadets from all three Services are provided with a balanced and liberal university education in a military environment.

Julie Hammer was the first woman to command an operational unit in the RAAF, the Electronic Warfare Squadron, and was awarded a Conspicuous Service Cross for that command. She was awarded the 2001 Sir Charles Kingsford Smith Memorial Medal by the Royal Aeronautical Society to recognise her contribution to Australian aerospace and delivered the 2001 Kingsford Smith Memorial Lecture. She is the only woman in the history of the Australian Defence Force to have achieved ‘starred’ rank. In 2002, she was appointed by the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Status of Women to be one of Australia’s Honouring Women Ambassadors. She was awarded the 2003 Alumnus of the Year of the University of Queensland to recognise her contribution to her profession.

On 26 January 2004 Air Vice Marshal Julie Hammer was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for exceptional service in the fields of electronics engineering in Defence, and military education as the Commandant of the Australian Defence Force Academy.

Events

2001 - 2001
Inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women

Published resources

Resource
Where are the Women in Australian science?, Australian Science and Technology Heritage Centre, 2003, http://www.austehc.unimelb.edu.au/wisa/wisa.html

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Journal Article
Engineers in our Community, 2002

Newspaper Article
Julie Hammer, Commandant, Wife, Daughter, Engineer, Role model, 2003

Resource Section
Julie Hammer - the most senior woman in the Australian Defence Forces, Doogue, Geraldine and Pearcy, Kate [Producer and Researcher], 2002, http://www.abc.net.au/rn/talks/lm/stories/s602564.htm

Air Vice-Marshal Julie Hammer is UQ's 2003 alumni ace, 2003, http://www.uq.edu.au/news/index.phtml?article=4914

Julie Hammer, Air Vice-Marshal, 2002, http://www.alumni.uq.edu.au/index.html?id=11435&pid=273||

Site Exhibition
From Lady Denman to Katy Gallagher: A Century of Women's Contributions to Canberra, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2013, http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/ldkg

Archival resources

National Library of Australia
[Biographical cuttings on Julie Hammer, airforce officer, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals]

Author Details
Anne Heywood

Created 27 February 2002
Last modified 12 September 2017