CRACKING FOUND IN RAAF PC-9S

News / Maintenance / Trainings



The RAAF's Pilatus PC-9/A turboprop trainer fleet is undergoing inspections after cracking was discovered in the folding strut of the aircraft's nose landing gear, the Department of Defence said in a statement on Thursday.

"Consequently, Air Force is assessing the implications of these cracks, so as to ensure the aircraft meet Air Force's strict safety standards," the statement read.

"Therefore, as a precautionary measure, each PC-9/A will undergo an additional engineering review, and remediation repairs, before returning to normal flying activities."

While the statement does not explicitly state that the PC-9 fleet has been grounded or that flying has been suspended, it does note that some displays by the Roulettes formation aerobatic display team "must be cancelled", and that, "As the aircraft are reviewed and return to flying, Roulette displays will resume."

The PC-9 is the RAAF's primary pilot training aircraft, operated by 2FTS from RAAF Base Pearce in WA. It is also operated by the Central Flying School (CFS), of which the Roulettes are a part, from RAAF Base East in Victoria and by 4SQN from RAAF Williamtown, NSW for Forward Air Control (FAC) and Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC) training.

The PC-9 first entered RAAF service in 1987 and is due to be replaced by the Pilatus PC-21 under the AIR 5428 Pilot Training System program later this decade. In April the RAAF marked 500,000

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PC-9 flying hours.

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