



A P-3C Orion A9-752 military aircraft will fly into Lismore this December as part of a grand plan to house the old submarine hunter at the Evans Head Heritage Aviation Museum.

The plane is too big to land at Evans Head, so the museum has devised a plan to land it in Lismore, have it demilitarised and dismantled, and relocate the parts to Evans Head for reassembly.

The Lockheed P-3 Orion is a four-engine turboprop anti-submarine and maritime surveillance aircraft developed for the United States Navy and introduced in the 1960s. The aircraft is easily distinguishable with its distinctive tail stinger or 'MAD Boom', used for the magnetic detection of submarines.

Aviation enthusiasts will have the opportunity to watch the 30-tonne aircraft fly into Lismore on Sunday, 9 December between 12.30pm and 3.30pm. It will then go through 'demilitarisation' and have the classified equipment removed before being converted into a static display.

There will be an official ceremony at Lismore Regional Airport to 'hand-over' the Orion from the RAAF to the museum with Air Commodore John Meier, Director RAAF History and Heritage, on Sunday, 16 December at 10am.

The Orion will then be disassembled and relocated to its final home at the Evans Head Heritage Aviation Museum where it will be open to the public for tours.

"It's exciting for us here at Lismore and definitely exciting for the Evans Head Heritage Aviation Museum – this is yet another wonderful feather in their cap," Council's Business Development Manager Kevin Trustum said.

Evans Head Memorial Aerodrome Heritage Aviation Association President Rod Kinnish said the addition of the P-3C Orion was a huge coup for the museum.

"The Evans Head Aerodrome was originally an Airforce training base during WWII. Australia's first submarine patrol and hunter squadron started at Evans Head so it's a fitting home for this aircraft – we're bringing it back to where sub hunting started in Australia," Rod said.

"As part of the museum display we can tell the full story of where sub hunting started in Australia right through to where it is today.

"This aircraft is intact and functional minus the military secrets, which is very exciting. People will be able to visit the museum and explore inside the aircraft, viewing some of the latest technology used to defend Australia. While this particular aircraft has been decommissioned, there are still two P-3C Orions actively defending Australia alongside their replacement, the P-8A Poseidon aircraft."

Rod said the museum is always looking for aviation enthusiasts or anyone with time and energy to join them as

volunteers. If you'd like to sign up, phone Rod on 0411 378 998.

For the exact ETA of the Orion in Lismore, keep an eye on the Facebook page www.facebook.com/evansheadmuseum.