

**MEDIA RELEASE**

Stans, Switzerland, July 21, 2016

**AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE PC-21 COMPLETES FIRST FLIGHT**

**Pilatus Aircraft Ltd is pleased to announce that the first of 49 PC-21 aircraft destined for the Australian Defence Force has successfully completed its initial production test flight at the factory in Stans, Switzerland. The flight took place only seven months after contract signature.**

Under a contract signed in December 2015 aimed at harmonising Australian Defence Force flight training across all three services – Army, Navy and Air Force – Pilatus will deliver a total of 49 PC-21 which will operate from four Royal Australian Air Force bases. Pilatus will also supply significant elements of ground based training equipment and the in-service support capability.

This first PC-21, registered as A54-001, will be handed over to the Royal Australian Air Force at East Sale in June 2017 after completion of testing and verification work in both Switzerland and Australia.

Oscar J. Schwenk, Chairman of Pilatus, commented:

“This initial flight of the first Australian PC-21, only seven months after contract signature, is a remarkable achievement and illustrates both the commitment of Pilatus and the hard work of all those involved in the project”.

Under the AIR 5428 project the PC-21 aircraft will replace both the aging PC-9 fleet, which has been in service since 1988, and also the CT-4 aircraft currently used for basic training. The PC-9 is due to be withdrawn in 2019 after thirty years of service and more than 500,000 flying hours. Originally intended to be withdrawn after 20 years of operation, the extended service life of the PC-9 is testament to Pilatus quality and customer support.

Markus Bucher, CEO of Pilatus, said:

“Having worked directly with the Australian Defence Force for many years, I am delighted to see Pilatus continuing to deliver outstanding service. The first flight of this aircraft, the very first Australian PC-21, marks a very significant chapter in the continuing relationship between the Commonwealth and Pilatus. We look forward to many more.”

The PC-21s for Australia will form the backbone of future pilot training for the Australian Defence Force for the next 25 years.

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Pilatus will continue to provide the Australian Defence Force with premium Swiss quality and work with our partners to provide a proven world class training system – **the Pilatus PC-21**.

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**Further information for the media is available from:**

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Founded in 1939, Pilatus Aircraft Ltd is the only Swiss company to develop, produce and sell aircraft to customers around the world: from the legendary Pilatus Porter PC-6 to the best-selling PC-12, a single-engine turboprop, and the PC-21, the training system of the future. Pilatus' newest aircraft is the PC-24 – the world's first ever business jet that can be operated from short unprepared runways. Domiciled in Stans, the company is certified to ISO 14001 in recognition of its efforts for the environment. The Pilatus Group includes two independent subsidiaries in Broomfield (Colorado, USA) and Adelaide (Australia) as well as a joint venture company in Chongqing (China). With over 1800 employees at its headquarters, Pilatus is one of the largest employers in Central Switzerland. Pilatus provides training for over 110 apprentices in eleven different professions – job training for young people has always been a very high priority at Pilatus.