

Sultan of Brunei *wings into Canberra*

Words and photos -Brian Hartigan



The Sultan of Brunei (centre) being introduced to Australian officials by His Excellency Governor-General Michael Jeffery (right) at Fairbairn Airport, Canberra.



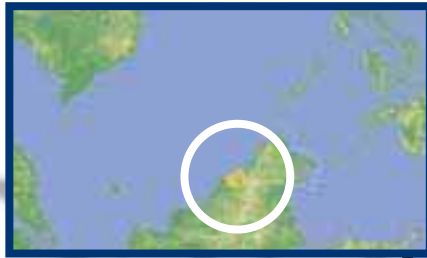
In February, the Sultan of Brunei flew himself and a large entourage into Canberra on his first official visit to Australia.

Here to sign a government-to-government agreement on counter-terrorism ties between the two countries, the royal visitor was accorded the full trappings of an official state visit including AFP Close Personal Protection.

Starting the visit in Canberra with a full ceremonial military welcome at RAAF Base Fairbairn, His Majesty Paduka Seri Baginda Sultan Haji Hassanah Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah was greeted by Governor-General Michael Jeffery, Defence Force chief Peter Cosgrove and other dignitaries.

A guided tour of the War Memorial and a couple of 'hot-laps' on a local closed driving circuit with Aussie V8 Supercar champion driver Mark Skaife were also on the Sultan's Canberra itinerary before he flew out to Sydney and finally finishing in Perth.





Brunei Darussalam (Brunei, Abode of Peace) is a Sultanate, which occupies 5 765 square kilometres on the north-west corner of the island of Borneo. Its capital, Bandar Seri Begawan, is situated on the Brunei River. Primary and secondary rainforest covers approximately 80 per cent of Brunei's landmass. Brunei claims a 200km Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) which overlaps other claims in the South China Sea.

Brunei is ruled by His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, His Majesty Paduka Seri Baginda Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, the 29th in one of the oldest continuous lines of monarchy in the world.

Information obtained from Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website.



The Australian War Memorial hosted a visit by the Sultan and his party.



The Sultan of Brunei with V8 driver Mark Skaife and Mark Vaile the Federal Trade Minister.