

Media release

13/2012 – 22 April 2012

Airservices welcomes Nancy-Bird Walton home to Sydney

Airservices air traffic controllers and aviation fire fighters have welcomed the return of Qantas' flagship A380, the Nancy-Bird Walton, to Sydney today.

Call-signed 'QF32' (Qantas flight 32), the A380 touched down on Sydney's runway 16R at about 9:20am, having flown in from Singapore after passing flight testing just days earlier.

The occasion was marked with a special welcome radio transmission by the tower controller.

"Qantas 32, on behalf of Airservices at Sydney tower, welcome home Nancy-Bird Walton." the controller said.

On landing, the aircraft was also treated to a traditional 'water arch salute' by Airservices aviation fire fighters.

Airservices Chief Fire Officer, Peter Smith, said a water arch salute involved two ultra-large Mk8 fire vehicles throwing water over a distance of more than 80 metres as the aircraft passed through the arch.

"The water salute is used for ceremonial purposes to mark a significant event," Mr Smith said.

"It is a significant achievement for an aircraft to return to service after such an incident and our aviation fire fighters were pleased to be there to help Qantas mark the event."

The Nancy-Bird Walton was grounded on 4 November 2010 when an uncontained engine failure struck shortly after take-off from Singapore, resulting in extensive damage.

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For imagery of the water arch salute and an audio grab of the controller's welcome, visit newsroom.airservicesaustralia.com.

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