



THE HON. GREG COMBET AM MP
Minister for Defence Personnel, Materiel and Science

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HIFIRE: Five times the speed of sound

Greg Combet, Minister for Defence Personnel, Materiel and Science, today announced that the Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO) and the US Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) have successfully completed a second hypersonic flight at the Woomera Test Range.

Hypersonic flight is flight through the atmosphere at speeds above Mach 5.5, or more than five times the speed of sound.

“Today’s flight represents a significant scientific milestone, enabling scientists to collect fundamental data critical to the design and development of an engine capable of sustained hypersonic flight,” Mr Combet said.

“The flight was the second in a series of up to ten planned flight experiments under a joint research program between DSTO and the US Air Force.

“The program, called the Hypersonic International Flight Research Experimentation (HIFiRE), is investigating the fundamental science of hypersonics technology and its potential for next generation aeronautical systems.

“The research being undertaken by DSTO and AFRL scientists is aimed at investigating fundamental air vehicle and propulsion technologies critical to the realisation of sustained hypersonic flight.

“Hypersonic flight has the potential to revolutionise global air travel and provide cost-effective access to space, giving Australia the opportunity to launch satellites economically for communication purposes.

“The continued collaboration between DSTO and the US Air Force Research Laboratory will help expedite the development of hypersonics technology and the potential for high-speed flights in the future.

“Thanks to the work of this dedicated team of DSTO scientists, Australia is at the forefront of this technology,” said Mr. Combet.

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