BLACK HAWK FLYING OPERATIONS
PRECAUTIONARY SUSPENSION

It was announced on 20th January that the Australian Army had temporarily suspended flying operations for the Black Hawk helicopters upon identifying a number of fractured bolts during a routine maintenance check.

Acting Director General Aviation, Colonel Stephen Evans said the suspension, which commenced on the day before, was to ensure safety and is consistent with Australian Army’s Operational Airworthiness procedures. He said, “The precautionary suspension will remain in place to allow an investigation into the cause of the fracture to be completed.”

Three Army Black Hawks are assigned to Joint Task Force 631 in Timor Leste. Emergency aero-medical evacuations for International Stabilisation Force personnel in Timor Leste remain authorised during the temporary suspension.

The Royal Australian Navy’s Seahawk helicopters differ significantly to the Black Hawk in the affected area, and Seahawk flying operations have not been suspended.