



**DEPARTMENT OF
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AUSTRALIA GIVES FOKKER AIRCRAFT TO BANGLADESH

The Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Willesee, announced today that Australia had given two Fokker Friendship F27 Series 200 passenger aircraft to Bangladesh for use by the Bangladesh national airline, Bangladesh Biman.

Senator Willesee said that the total cost of the aircraft, together with spare parts, was \$950,000.

The first aircraft was handed over by the Australian Ambassador to the Netherlands, Dr Lloyd Thomson, to representatives of the Government of Bangladesh at Schipol Airport, The Netherlands, on Wednesday, and the second aircraft is due to be handed over today.

Senator Willesee said that Australian aid to Bangladesh was directed to assist the rebuilding of the country's shattered economy. A major problem was the re-establishment of an internal transport system, and the two Fokkers would greatly assist in this.

Senator Willesee said that the staff of Bangladesh Biman was well experienced in the operation of Fokker Friendship aircraft and had been operating this type on its internal routes.

The Australian gift would enable the airline to extend its services to more parts, such as Cox's Bazaar, Thakurgaon Shamsernagar and Rajshahi.

Bangladesh Biman have named one of the aircraft "City of Canberra".