



ADF Serials Telegraph News

News for those interested in Australian Military Aircraft History and Serials

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Message Starts:

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Message Board – Current hot topics:

These boards can be accessed at: www.adf-messageboard.com.au/invboard/

News Briefs

- **4th December 2015:** The second of two contracted LHDs for the Navy, L01 HMAS Adelaide, was commissioned into the RAN.
- **21st December 2015:** The Government of Australia has requested a possible sale of 3 CH-47F Chinook Helicopters through FMS, increasing AAV total to 10 CH-47Fs
- **28th December 2015:** Two Gulfstream G550 business jets, modified for surveillance and electronic warfare, will be delivered to the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) under a U.S. foreign military sale.
- **19th January 2016:** Six No 1 Squadron Super Hornets, six No 75 Squadron F/A-18A Hornets, an E-7A Wedgetail and an AP-3C Orion deployed to Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada for Exercise Red Flag 16-1



A44-201 of No 1 Squadron at Nellis AFB(USAF) during Red Flag 2016. Photo RAAF Official

- **25th January 2016:** The first Australian pilots to undertake conversion training on the Pilatus PC-21 pilot training aircraft recently arrived in Switzerland. 49 PC-21s are on order for the RAAF

- **28th January 2016:** The US Department of Defense has awarded Boeing a US\$2.469 billion Lot III P-8A full rate production contract for 20 P-8A Poseidon maritime surveillance aircraft, covering 16 aircraft for the US Navy ,which included a further four for the RAAF (Making eight Contracted, with a further four on option).
- **Redress: April 2015,** below is the Royal Australian Air Force's first P-8A Poseidon aircrew: Warrant Officer Ray Bailey, Airborne Electronics Analyst; Flight Lieutenant Christopher Godfrey, Pilot; Flight Lieutenant James Pears, Pilot; Squadron Leader Arran Moore (Detachment Commander and Air Combat Officer); Flight Lieutenant Johnathon Logan (Air Combat Officer); Warrant Officer Tony Stevenson (Airborne Electronics Analyst); and Flight Lieutenant Troy Murphy (Air Combat Officer). Photo RAAF Official



- **Redress: September-October 2015:** A Royal Australia Air Force KC-30A Multi-Role Tanker Transport, A39-001, has completed successful refuelling trials with the F-35A Lightning II. Operating from Edwards Air Force Base in the California desert, the RAAF KC-30A flew 12 sorties with a United States Air Force F-35A from 23 September to 26 October. The RAAF crew made a total of 479 'dry' and 24 'wet' contacts with the refuelling receptacle on the F-35A, and transferred more than 95 tonnes of fuel over the course of the trial. Photo RAAF Official



- **Redress: 23rd October 2015:** A historic day for the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) following the first combat refuelling by a RAAF KC-30A. The receiver was a No 2 Squadron E-7A A30-001. Photo RAAF Official



- **Redress 11th November 2015:** 723 Squadron Bell 429, N49-048 transferring personnel to HMAS Rankin in Jervis Bay. Note Hi Viz Rotor Blades. Photo RANFAA



- **12th January 2016:** F-35A AF-1, operated by the 461st Flight Test Squadron USAF, launched an AIM-9X missile for the first time over the Pacific Sea Test Range.



The Malaya Emergency and the start of Konfrontasi: The Malaysian Based RAAF Konfrontasi Involvement **Part 2**

Konfrontasi

Malaya gained official independence from the British in 1957. During April 1959 the first aircraft, a Scottish Aviation Twin Pioneer was delivered to Malaya as the initial equipment of the Royal Malayan Air Force. Subsequently the Malayan Government ordered three additional Twin Pioneers and four Prestwick Pioneers. A decade later, they would get ex RAAF Avon Sabres as their first jet fighters in 1969.

The Malayan Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman and the British wanted North Borneo to join Malaya in a New Federation of Malaysia, which was to come into being in 1963. Indonesian President Sukarno, however, not only opposed the idea of a greater Malaysia, but also aimed to incorporate North Borneo into Indonesia – as had recently occurred in the case of the former Dutch colonies in western New Guinea.

The confrontation was an undeclared war with most of the action occurring in the border area between Indonesia and East Malaysia on the island of Borneo (known as Kalimantan in Indonesia). The conflict was characterized by restrained and isolated ground combat, set within tactics of low-level brinkmanship. Combat was usually conducted by company or platoon-sized operations on either side of the border. Indonesia's campaign of infiltrations into Borneo sought to exploit the ethnic and religious diversity in Sabah and Sarawak compared to that of Malaya and Singapore, with the intent of unravelling the proposed state of Malaysia.

The Confrontation was set in motion on the 8th December 1962 by an attempted coup d'état in the tiny pro-British sultanate of Brunei in north Borneo began by elements of the North Kalimantan National Army (NKNA). The Indonesians backed the thirty-four year old coup leader Sheikh A.M. Azahari, and gave military training to his supporters.

Although the coup itself was quickly suppressed by British Royal Marine Commandos (No 42 Commando RM) and Gurkha soldiers, flown in via Labuan Island by No 48 Squadron Hastings, some 209 Squadron RAF Twin Pioneers, a No 32 Squadron Beverley and a single Bristol Britannia. A single 45 Squadron RAF Canberra made a series of dummy strafing runs during the day. However, armed incursions from the Indonesian side of the border into northern Borneo continued, and Indonesian soldiers began to join Azahari's supporters in these incursions.

A further Royal Marine Commando, No 40 Commando, aboard the commando carrier, HMS Albion, (with three Squadrons of Wessex HU5s) landed by Helicopter at Labuan and then by watercraft, arrived at Kuching. In support were the mid carrier HMS Bulwark (with and the Cruiser HMS Tiger. Helicopters from No 66 (Belvederes), 103 (Sycamore) and 110 Sqn RAF (Whirlwind Mk10) were involved heavily in troop movements and supply.

RN Units that served in theatre at this time in mid 1963 were HMS Ark Royal and HMS Hermes, equipped with DH Sea Vixen and Supermarine Scimitar Aircraft. More Carriers came and relieved those units on station over the next few years.

Infiltrations into Northern Borneo continued, however there were kept in check on the ground by the two Royal Marine Commandos and several Gurkha Units, with 1 Trp, A Sqn 22 SAS Regiment, and a Ferret Armoured Car Squadron sent in as reinforcements. Additional and replacement ground units would be supplied up to 1966.

On 18th September 1963, Exercise Dovetail, a combined RAF, RN and RAAF Exercise started at the Asahan Range near Malacca, Malaysia, opposite to Sumatra.

In January 1963 the Indonesian Foreign Minister Dr Subandrio announced that his country's attitude to Malaysia would be one of Confrontation or Konfrontasi. This terminology suggested that the Indonesians were sanctioning –

and indeed promoting – violence, without going so far as to declare war. However, the Federation States of Malaysia did come into being on the 16th September 1963, with the full guarantee of the British Government.



Map of theatre: AWM

The threat of offensive air actions by the AURI began when several infringements of Malaysian Air Space started in late 1963. These consisted of aging B-25 Mitchell Bombers dropping leaflets, escorted by NA P-51D Mustangs over Sarawak and Sabah, in North Borneo.

From December 1963, deployments of Victors (with some Vulcans deployments made later) the RAF Bomber Command's V Force were made and rotated to Tengah and Butterworth. Rotated from No 15, 55 and 57 Squadrons RAF, the four Victor aircraft Flight provided a offensive Bomber Force in theatre that could reach any part of Indonesia with a bomb load of some twenty-one thousand pounds in each aircraft.

During one week in January/February 1964, night drops of leaflets were made along the Northern Borneo/ Indonesian Kalimantan Border by both AURI B-25s, C-47s and a even few of their new C-130B transports participated.

Because of these infringements, the FEAF set up a Air Defence Identification Zone along the borders of Sarawak and Sabah to a depth of three miles.

To patrol and intercept any AURI aircraft, the RAF sent Tengah Based No 20 Squadron, armed with twenty Hawker Hunters FGA Mk9, sent eight of its number to Borneo (four at Labuan and four at Kuching) from the 20th February 1964, and additionally, the most advanced in-service Fighter at that time, the Gloster Javelin Mk9R equipped with Firestreak AAMs, were also deployed in similar numbers from No 60 Squadron RAF, then based at RAF Tengah, to the two Borneo airfields.

The Joint Intelligence Committee of the British Services in late 1964 suggested that there was about 10,000 Indonesian combat troops in Kalimantan made up of three Javanese and eight regional infantry battalions, two parachute companies and two marine companies. A further three brigades from Java, were moving into West Kalimantan, as was an additional two brigades comprising of infantry and marine battalions were moving into

East Kalimantan (opposite of Sabah). The Indonesian Air Force (AURI) was also showing signs of redispersing of Radar Units to facilitate the operational use of its Air Force outside of Java.

The capability of the AURI as of January 1965, follows:

- Fighters: 15 x F-51D Mustangs, 43 x MIG17 Fresco, 7 x MIG19 Farmer, and 18 x MIG21 Fishbed.
- Bombers: 15 x B-25 Mitchells, 19 x Il28 Beagles, and 18 x TU16A/B Badgers
- Additionally, two SA-2 Guideline SAM Batteries at Djakarta and Surabaya in Java.

All of these assets would be ready for operations by January or February 1965.

During the last part of 1964, the Indonesians had built up their base structure in the Riouw Islands (surrounding Singapore Island) and Sumatra, to support their infiltrations into Malaysia and Singapore. Some 450 of the Regulars and Volunteers committed in those raids on the peninsula, some 420 Indonesians, had been killed or captured. Support of the Malaysian Dissident Groups and the Communist Terrorist Organization by the Indonesians, in Thailand continued. Things were heating up indeed.

The military situation in Borneo thus far had consisted of company bases located along the border between Indonesia and Malaysia to protect centre's of population from enemy incursions. By 1965 the British government had given permission for more aggressive action to be taken, and the security forces now mounted cross-border operations with the purpose of obtaining intelligence and forcing the Indonesians to remain on the defensive on their own side of the border.

Uncertain where the Commonwealth forces might strike next, the Indonesians increasingly devoted their resources to protecting their own positions and correspondingly less on offensive operations, although these continued on a much reduced scale.

The Australian government was reluctant in becoming involved in Confrontation, for fearing that the conflict may spread to the border between Papua New Guinea and Indonesia. However, they did agree that the resident 3rd RAR would be used in the defence of the Malay peninsula against any external attack.

In the event, such attacks occurred twice, in September and October 1964, when Indonesia launched paratroop and amphibious raids against Labis and Pontian, on the south-western side of the Malaysian peninsula. Members of the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (3 RAR) were used in clean-up operations against the invading troops. The Australian government finally agreed to the deployment of a Infantry Battalion, along with a supporting Squadron of SAS in January 1965 for Borneo.

The actual RAAF Fighter and Helicopter Involvement in Konfrontasi, from the Northern Malaysian side

The Royal Australian Air Force, unlike the RAN or Army, had a limited combat involvement in Confrontation.

In comparison to the RAF Hawker Hunters FGA Mk9 and the Gloster Javelin Mk9R; the RAAF Avon Sabre, could not be considered on equal grounds in performance and range.

Starting from the 7th May 1963, No 78 Wing Avon Sabres, under command of Group Captain J R Kinninmont DSO DFC, commenced "Maximum Effort Trials" in line with the Air Defence requirements.

Committed to the 224 Group RAF (Strategic Reserve), the Wing consisted of two fighter squadrons (No 3 and No 77) of Avon Sabres, totalling some thirty-two aircraft. Lastly if needed, further third squadron (No 79) of eight Avon Sabres that was forward deployed in Thailand, could be added*.

Prior to this maximum effort, the Avon Sabres had in 1961-62, only just been modified to carry and fire two AIM-9B Missiles. The Wing fired its first live Sidewinder in theatre on the 2nd March 1962; with 78 Wing Gp Capt Rose, No 3 Sqn's CO Wg Cdr Hanstein and B Flt Leader Sqn Ldr Hughes, being the first to do so.

Tragedy nearly followed on the 9th December 1963, when No 3 Squadron's CO, Wg Cdr R Hanstein, was nearly killed when piloting **A94-967**. He entered a spin at 37000 feet, but elected to leave the aircraft at 8000 feet, landing in a Rubber Plantation some 12 miles north east of Butterworth.

Almost two weeks later, on the 19th December 1963, F/O Norsworthy of No 3 Squadron, ejected from Avon Sabre **A94-947** after experiencing a multiple emergencies, including the loss of Hydraulics, airspeed, electrics, trim failure and finally a control failure. He landed in the sea some ten miles north of Penang.

On 17th July 1964, No 3 Squadron performed CAP flights over Butterworth during the visitation of CAS Air Marshall Sir Valston Hancock KBE. CB, DFC who arrived by air.

A new Unit, No. 5 Squadron RAAF, formed on the 4th May 1964 in Australia, would provide Iroquois UH-1Bs helicopters for operations in the area around the Thai border and, as a SAR Relief for 103 Squadron RAF (equipped with 12 Whirlwinds Mk10), if one of their Helios were down, at RAAF Butterworth.

The Squadron and its four UH-1B aircraft, **A2-385**, **A2-386**, **A2-387** and **A2-391*****, arrived at Penang on HMAS Sydney on the 16th June 1964 and were flown off the next day to Butterworth RAAF.



Portrait photograph of all of No 5 Squadron Members in June 1964 after arrival, with UH-1B A2-386 as background. No 5 Sqn Assoc.

By the end of its first deployed month, the Unit's four Iroquois had flown some 245hrs by day and 2 hours by night, using some 8351 gallons of AvTur. Its main role included trooping, Police Special Branch, flying Doctor tasks and re-supply flights along the Thailand and Malaysian Border, and shifting medical X-Ray Equipment (for TB) as part of hearts and minds via a Aboriginal medical service support for locals around villages in this area.

On the 5th September 1964, it was disclosed to the Malaysian Public, that Indonesian Paratroopers had landed inside the country. RAAF Butterworth was placed on emergency alert and plans made for dispersal in case of air attack. On the 6th, 7th and 8th September 1964 six No 3 Squadron Avon Sabres were deployed to RAF Tengah.

On the 1st October 1964 six No 3 Squadron Avon Sabres were again deployed to RAF Tengah for two days.

On the 27th October 1964, six No 3 Squadron and two No 77 Avon Sabres deployed for the third time to RAF Tengah.

29th October 1964, some 60 Indonesian Infiltrators were landed by boat near Malacca .

30th October 1964, an urgent operational request was made for a UH-1B (flown by CO Sqn Ldr Martin) to be sent to Merlinau, Malacca /East Johore where these landings were made by Indonesian Infiltrators. These Infiltrators surrendered quickly and the UH-1B was returned to RAAF Butterworth.

18th November 1964, saw one UH-1B being detached to 224 Group and based at RAF Seletar, Singapore Island for a few days.

During December 1964, the main activities for No 5 Squadron was support for the Scots Guards and 1st Malayan Rangers on the northern Malaysia/Thailand Border, totalling some 742 Sorties(215.15Hrs Flown).

15th and 16th January 1965, six 78 Wing Sabre aircraft deployed to RAF Changi for strike exercises.



A sole No 5 Sqn UH-1B flies along the taxiway past HP Victors of 15 Sqn RAF and a sole GAF Canberra of No 2 Sqn RAAF. No 5 Sqn Assoc.

8th February 1965, UH-1B (flown by new CO, Sqn Ldr L Hindley) was sent to Ayer Durion area near Malacca for four days whereupon clearing parties were lowered into terrain to clear landing zones for helicopters for a forthcoming exercise, "Jungle Beat".

From the 21st February 1965, Two UH-1Bs flew 177 Sorties during the exercise, carrying 494 Troops, 2 Casevacs and some 1757lbs of freight.

On the 25th, these two UH-1Bs were sent to RAF Seletar, Singapore Island, for internal Security operations. The following day, one was detached, flown by F/Lt Rees to provide a static display at RAF Changi, Singapore Island, for HRH Prince Phillip, the Duke of Edinburgh, who was touring.

On the 24th March 1965, only three Sabre aircraft were serviceable with No 3 Squadron.

On the afternoon of the 30th March 1965, F/Lt Lane flew a UH-1B to Port Kenar to collect five survivors of a single engine Pioneer that crashed onto the strip, whilst trying to dead stick land after engine failure.

Serviceability rates grounded two UH-1Bs in early April 1965 for nearly two weeks, then followed by problems with tail boom vibration cracks. In May 1965, Mr. H Miller of Bell Helicopters visited 5 Squadron to discuss tail boom problems, leaving two days later. Modifications to existing booms were made, and strengthened. Only 66 hours were flown that month.

The following month, the rate was back up, 160 hours flown. The serviceability rate during the following month was hampered by a cracked main rotor on one UH-1B, from the 1st July to the 11th August 1965.

Runway Closure at Butterworth for two weeks from 12th July 1965, with majority of No 3 Sqn deployed with 77 Sqn to RAF Tengah for two weeks. Cancelled on 16th as found out work was not starting. Deployed on 31st July 1965 to RAF Tengah. However, the crew levels were raised from four to five for the first time since the squadron's arrival.

In May 1964, President Sukarno called for the destruction of this Federation, and initiated a command that intensified infiltrations into Sarawak and Malaysia. However, after the loss of two C-130Bs in 1964 and 1965, infiltration by air was stopped.

In 1965, the Indonesians also became involved in the war in Laos, by openly supporting Kong Le. They began to train his troops as paratroopers in airborne tactics and to fly-in ammunition and weapons.

Eventually, the Indonesian Army advisers trained a total of six Neutralists paratrooper battalions which became, however, rather a sort of "élite" light infantry than true airborne troops. AURI C-130s were nevertheless used to transport supplies for the Neutralist forces which included medicine, guns and uniforms, and flew out 65 junior officers selected to receive training in Indonesia. During the anti-communist coup of 1965 in Indonesia, they were placed under a house arrest until it was over and then the training continued. Subsequently, from December 1965, more supplies were delivered on board AURI An-12 transports, and in April 1966 the officers that had finished their training were brought back to Laos, forming the 58th Battalion, originally based near Vientiane.

*By November 1966 the remaining Lao officers, trained in communications, were flown home on board Indonesian C-130s. Extract **By Marco Pennings***

By August 1965 this was further increased with the five crews now raised to six crews. However, the weeks and months later reflected a sharp drop in availability due to the CO getting malaria along with two other suspected cases.

It was further compounded in September 1965, by the need to perform "E" Servicing on all four UH-1Bs as their hours flown since arrival in Australia and then in Malaysia as part of the first eight delivered in 1962 had reached this milestone.

The first scramble by No 3 Squadron Avon Sabre on a AURI C-47 was performed on the 1st October 1965.

The first UH-1B to complete a "E" Service in RAAF Service was 5 Sqn's **A2-385**, which was completed on the 13th October 1965 at RAAF Butterworth. An interesting and unusual operation was carrying a US Army Medical Research Unit, along with some three hundred caged mice, on the 25th October 1965, to the northern border area to research whether they could see if they could contract Scrub Typhus from the jungle environment.

Towards the middle of October 1965, more Air to Air Training was performed by No 3 and No 77 Squadron Avon Sabres, prior to a secret Rotational Temporary flight deployments to Labuan Island Strip, in Northern Borneo to replace No 20 Squadron RAF at the beginning of November 1965.



The all weather FEAF Fighter component: RAF 64 Sqn Gloster Javelin Mk9 at Tengah, being armed and ready for flight. The de Havilland Firestreak was Britain's first operational air-to-air guided weapon, entering service in 1959. Firestreak, first known as Blue Jay, was an with infrared homing air-to-air guided missile fired by one aircraft at another aircraft. In other words, it replaced the guns of an aircraft. This missile was fitted to Lightning, Javelins and Sea Vixens, and it had only one disadvantage: it could be fired only when the aircraft is actually in pursuit of its victim. It could not be fired at an aircraft which is approaching it, or at another aircraft which is broadside on to it. It seemed to some that it was of very limited value. The RAAF ARDU had one Sabre modified to fire these at one time. Photo 64 Sqn RAF Assoc

After leaving RAAF Butterworth to fly to RAF Labuan, the stopped over at RAF Seletar, where they were to pick up a sixth Avon Sabre before arriving at RAF Labuan at 1330hrs local. The support crew, flying on a RAF Beverley were delayed by a day due to the aircraft going U/S at RAF Seletar.

The remaining Engineering staff arrived by RAF Argosy on the 27th October 1965, the day No 77 Squadron took over alert from the Hawker Hunter MK9s of No 20 Squadron RAF. Border Patrols were flown thereon until the 29th October 1965, when No 20 Squadron RAF departed. Until relieved by No 3 Squadron Avon Sabres, the Detachment Flight flew Southern Border Patrols and Alert duties. At that time of the year, there were almost continuous cloud cover over the mountains with only gaps of two hundred feet between those peaks and saddle gaps between valleys. *Pilots were authorised to carry out direct armed action with enemy aircraft, though no raiders were actually encountered during the period of deployment*

On the 3rd November 1965, some pictorial photos of the Labuan Detachment Avon Sabre flights were photographed in the air by a 230 Squadron RAF aircraft. Two alert scrambles on sighted aircraft were performed on the fourth and fifth, but with no intercept made. On the 9th November 1965, a change out of pilots and aircraft was performed.

On the 15th November 1965, four aircraft took off and performed a fly past over some Australian Army Engineers at Pendawan, before splitting into two air patrols, one into Eastern and one into Southern areas.

The 17th November 1965 saw two aircraft scrambled for a reported bogey. Nil sighting, and the intercept was changed to a routine Patrol. Two No 3 Squadron Pilots arrived in a RAF Argosy for familiarizing flights on the 23rd November 1965; The two, Wg Cdr E W Tonkin and F/Lt Ray Funnell(Later CAS in 1990's) flew the following day in borrowed No 77 Squadron Avon Sabres.

On the 2nd December 1965, a pair of Avon Sabres were scrambled on a bogey report of four AURI helicopters (Mil4s) with a twin engine aircraft in escort. Weather was greatly restrictive, therefore no intercept was made. Another scramble was made the following day to intercept two to three twin propeller aircraft south west of Pen Sian Gan. Again, by the time the Sabres were on location, the aircraft had long gone.

A southern border patrol and a practice scramble, was followed by a rendezvous with a Royal Navy Radar Picket Ship (A destroyer) off the east coast of Borneo on the 5th December 1965. Sqn Ldr R E Frost arrived on the 6th December 1965 and replaced F/Lt Ray Funnell as Detachment Leader, who returned to RAAF Butterworth.

On the 9th December 1965, a eastern patrol to Tawau was flown in the morning. Three days later, the pilots were rotated and replaced (Including Sqn Ldr P G Larard and F/Lt Hans Roser (Later CAS in 80's)). Sqn Ldr Frost returned the next day to Butterworth following leading their familiarizing flights from RAF Labuan.

On the 12th December 1965, Due to rain, the southern patrol was restricted in length. Again, after this, the pilots were rotated back to Butterworth, Malaysia and replaced by 77Sqn (F) Pilots. The following day, the 13th, two border patrols with three Sabres were flown to indoctrinate the new pilots, with Sqn Ldr Frost, who later returned to Butterworth the same day on a CFS Dakota.



A94-980 in No 3 Squadron Boss's Markings during Period. Photo Rod Farquhar

On the 14th, a pair of Sabres patrolled the Eastern Sector of the border. This was repeated a day later in the southern sector of the border.

On the 16th December, 1965, one border patrol and a practice scramble were flown. The later was for the visiting British High Commissioner of Malaysia, Viscount Head, who was at Labuan on this day.

During this time, the monsoonal weather affected operations at Labuan, requiring a returning Sabre Patrol of the Southern Sector, to divert to Jesselton, Borneo on the 17th. The following day, the 18th, another two aircraft Sabre patrol flew the Eastern Sector without contact.

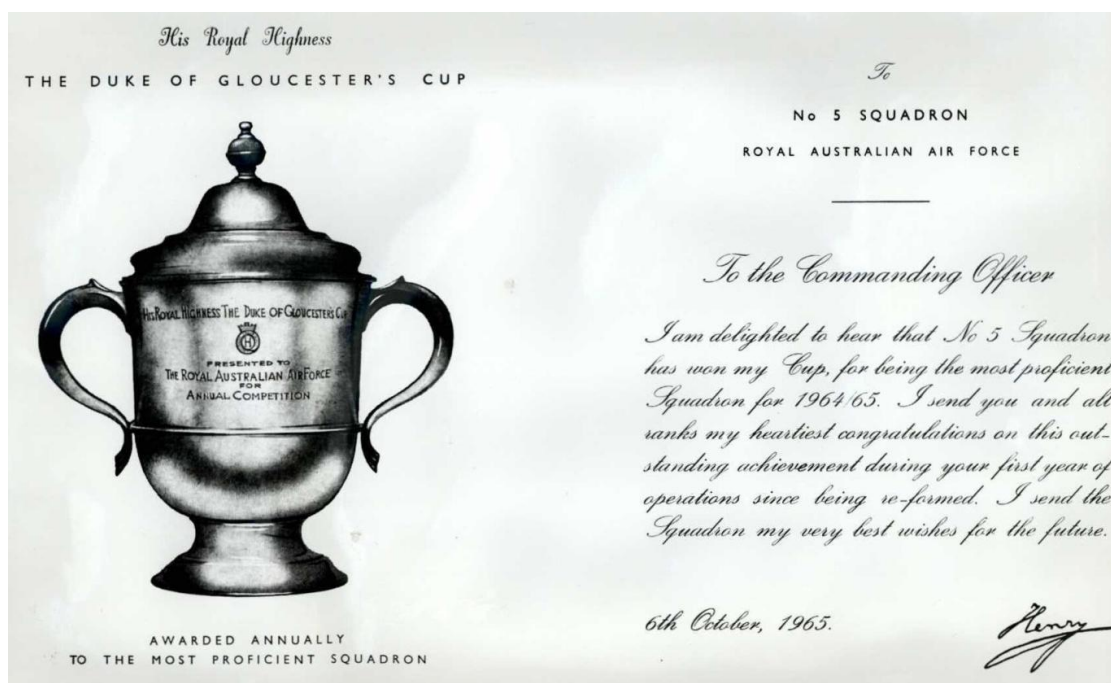
These paired Sabre Patrols, to the Southern and Eastern Sectors, alternatively each day, were performed , along with a weekly Scramble, until the 27th December, when all six Labuan based Sabres were flown back to Butterworth, lead by Sqn Ldr P Larard, after staging through RAF Changi.

Only one more Scramble had been made on the 25th December 1965 near lunch time, without any contact.

It was then back to normal high readiness operations at Butterworth for both Squadrons till late 1966.

A unusual No 5 Squadron flight took part on the 10th January 1966, when F/Lt H S Rees flew into Sonkala, Thailand to perform an emergency medical evacuation.

On the 17th January 1966, No 5 Squadron was presented with the Duke of Gloucester Cup by the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester for completing its operational and training tasks with a remarkable degree of skill and proficiency and thereby maintaining a high standard of operational readiness between 1964 and 1965.



Three days later, on the 20th January 1966 , the bleak news was advised by the engineering staff that all four UH-1Bs would be grounded due to Rotor Head defects. Mr. McKeown, a Technical Representative from Bell Helicopters, arrived for a three day visit on the 31st January 1966 to assist in documentation, parts and repairs.

On the 6th February 1966, the first repaired UH-1B, **A2-387** was test flown by F/Lt K J Sharpley. The next day **A2-391** was also back in service. It wasn't too soon, for on the 8th February 1966, the first seaward winch operation was performed by F/Lt R A Macintosh in retrieving by winch a unconscious seaman from HMS Tidereach some 30 miles west of Penang.

At the beginning of April 1965, No 5 Squadron became No 5 Squadron Detachment C , with the Squadron "main" being based in Canberra, as No 9 Squadron departed to South Vietnam in early 1966.

On the 28th April 1966, Prime Minister Harold E Holt visited RAAF Butterworth and inspected No 5 Squadrons' aircraft. The following day, with all of the Squadron's aircraft serviceable, the entire Squadron aircrew flew a four ship formation over RAAF Butterworth and surrounds, which became the last official flight of No 5 Squadron's UH-1Bs in Malaysia.

No 5 Squadron Detachment C was disbanded on the 23rd May 1966. **A2-391** arrived RAAF Fairbairn ACT on the 8th July 1966 by C-130A, followed by **A2-387** on the 4th July 1966, then **A2-386** and **A2-385** on the 16th and 18th July 1966 respectively.

After two years away, all four UH-1Bs had arrived home without any loss or damage on operations.

Six C130A flights per month carried troops and supplies between Malaya and Borneo. During the period of Confrontation 36 Squadron C-130A aircraft were also involved in supporting the Australian effort in Vietnam.

The Konfrontasi was formally ended on the 11th August 1966, when both Malaysia and Indonesia signed a peace treaty in Bangkok, Thailand, bring to an end to confrontation after three years and eight months after it began. Commonwealth Losses numbers some 114 killed and a further 180 wounded. These figures included some 7 Australians.

Sources:

- National Archives of Australia: Aircraft as replacement for the Canberra's
- National Archives of Australia: Procurement of nuclear weapons - use of by the Australian forces
- National Archives of Australia: South East Asia - Indonesia - Malaysia - Relations - Confrontation
- National Archives of Australia: Indonesia - Special actions and operational plans [Confrontation]
- National Archives of Australia: Capability of the Indonesian air force
- National Archives of Australia: 81 Wing Detachment (76 Fighter Squadron), Darwin. Neptune AEW Trials - Darwin
- National Archives of Australia: A50 History sheets for No 3/No77/No5 Sqn's' (No 2 Sqn A50 was not open in the NAA listings!)
- www.3squadron.org.au/subpages/Malaysia
- WWW.se-asia.commemoration.gov.au/background-to-indonesian-confrontation

Article Source Notes 1 & 2

1/Flight Magazine 1950-1960 Articles

2/Stanley Brogan Article collection 1950/1960s

Notes:

**Pilots for the later were rotated from 78 Wing which caused Pilot ratios to aircraft numbers per the two remaining Butterworth based Sabre Squadrons to dip down to fourteen pilots to sixteen aircraft. Serviceability rates however were averaging 50% to 65% on average, thus there were still more pilots than operational aircraft. In early September 1964, a further fifteen pilots were sent from Australia to bolster the crew ratio within the Wing. A second RAAF Canberra Squadron from 82 Wing based at Amberley Qld was earmarked as reinforcement if required.*

***On the 11th December 1963, he had landed with a high all up weight and entered the barrier at the end of the strip. On the 14th December 1963, he had attained the highest Air to Ground Banner gunnery score with 65 hits, however his follow-up sortie on the day was cancelled by the OC 78 Wing due to three "A" Class Failures on start-up. All this in one month*

****On the 9th September 1963, this aircraft, **A2-391**, had performed the first RAAF SAR Rescue in Australia when Sabre **A94-916** crashed landed near RAAF Williamtown.*



RAAF Pilotless Interceptors Pt2 : Darwin 1965: *the defacto Bridging Fighter and Bridging AEW Aircraft* Written by Gordon R Birkett@2016

As stated in the last Newsletter, approval by the Minister of Defence on the 31st May 1965 of the deployment of a detached of 30 Sqn Bloodhound SAM Flight to RAAF Darwin was made, pending the arrival of the new Mirage IIIO(F) equipped Squadrons in sufficient numbers.

The establishment of a Bloodhound SAM Detachment Flight "A" at Darwin was considered as a necessity to protect the Darwin based No 2 CRU(Control and Reporting Unit) from enemy attack (possibly AURI Badgers). In support of this were twelve Australian Regular Army L40/60 Bofor Light Anti Aircraft Guns manned by both ARA and local CMF Gunners.

With only a inventory of twelve Bloodhound Mk1s launchers in Australia, four were originally sent to Darwin with four ready rounds installed, and a further three reserve rounds in held in store; *meaning total seven rounds of a possible twenty-four Bloodhound Mk1 war shot Rounds held in RAAF Inventory, aside from inert training rounds.*

"The deployment of a four launcher element is seriously deficient in its ability to "kill" more than one , or at most two targets" Extract from Ministerial Paper 03/11/1965 to Acting Prime Minister"

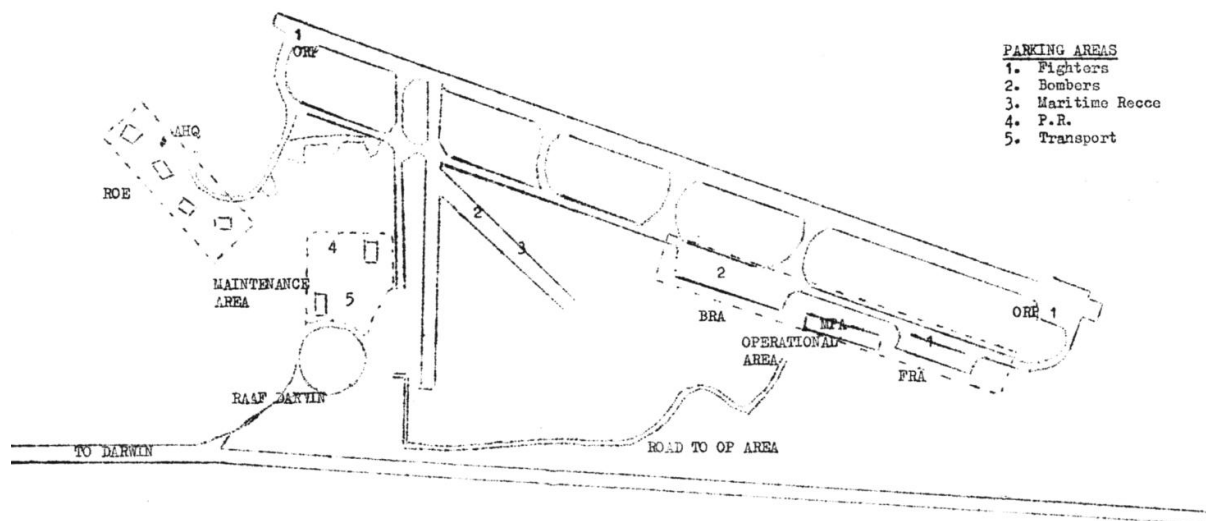


Meanwhile in Malaysia late in 1964: RAF Bloodhound 2 surface-to-air missiles of 65 Sqn at RAF Seletar, Singapore, **the first operational location of the type in RAF.** Another RAF Bloodhound 2 squadron, No 33 Sqn RAF, was working up at RAAF Butterworth, near Penang to provide SAM Defence to any Indonesian Incursions. No 65 Sqn has a particular affiliation with Singapore, in that it was re-formed there (having been a fighter unit) at the beginning of 1964 as the first overseas RAF SAM squadron. It also takes an special pride in being mobile, having spent five months at Kuching in Sarawak, Borneo. This mobility was achieved largely through the use of mobile tactical radar. ***Flight Magazine***

A further allocation of four Bloodhound Launchers would deploy to Darwin by C-130A from Williamtown between the 1st and 10th of December 1965 when supporting "Exercise Rigel", then being held with V Bomber units from the RAF¹.

These additional Launchers would increase the Flight's total to eight Launchers and would double a intercept tally at Darwin in time of war². Thus a further four concrete pads had to be constructed after designated sites were surveyed and cleared by this period.

AREA PLAN OF RAAF BASE DARWIN



Fighter Aircraft in the Southern Front: Darwin during Konfronstki

On the 6th September 1964 under Operation "Handover" , a deployment of a CAC Sabre Squadron (sixteen aircraft and pilots from 76(F) Squadron) from the Williamtown, was initiated and would be maintained by leaving the aircraft insitu, but with 81 Wing pilots rotating on a regular monthly cycle for a extended period(up to 1966).

It was recognised that even when the Mirage IIIO(F) was in 81 Wing service, the geography of Darwin created a situation where incoming targets would not be early detected sufficiently early for an effective intercept. To remedy this, it was considered that it would be necessary to allocate additional radars and to provide either AEW Aircraft or RAN piquet ships.

The first deployment of RAAF Mirage IIIO(F) occurred at Darwin on the 29th March 1965, when three 75 Squadron aircraft arrived for "*Exercise Short Sirius*", under command of Wg Cdr C G Thomas. They would remain there until departing on the 13th August 1965.

On the 26th April 1965, two No 11 MR Squadron SP-2E's and three No 6 Squadron Canberras arrived for **AEW trials**. The two Neptunes flew some seven AEW tasked Sorties between the 27th and 30th April 1965. A further two sorties were performed on the 1st May 1965, before both aircraft deployed back to Richmond AFB, NSW the following day.

During July 1965, a Regular Army Camouflage Expert arrived to visit the Darwin RAAF Base. The resident Sabre Flight also rotated its pilots from 81 Wing on the 9th July 1965.

On the 2nd August 1965, 81 Wing deployed the eight Mirage IIIO(F) for Exercise *Short Pullox*, running for two weeks, followed by a further flight of 81 Wing Sabres on the 5th August 1965, supported by Canberra Bombers of 82 Wing.

The resident Sabre Flight again rotated its pilots from 81 Wing on the 1st September, 1965 and then again on the 28th September 1965.

It seems by no coincidence that the reinforcement of Darwin ADIZ happened, under staged exercises, with the heighten activity of Konfronstki experienced by 78 Wing in Malaysia

The resident Sabre Flight rotated its pilots from 81 Wing on the 26th October, 1965, and again on the 23rd November 1965. On the 29th November 1965, 81 Wing deployed the eight 75 Sqn Mirage IIIO(F) for Exercise High

Rigel, with RAF V Bombers, and Canberras of 81 Sqn arriving the following days from the FEAF, along with 82 Wing Canberras, to participate.

The resident Sabre Flight rotated its pilots from 81 Wing on the 10th December, 1965.

To round out the year, and to perhaps have details leaked through the back to Indonesia on the activities at Darwin RAAF, a interesting visitor passed through RAAF Darwin on the 29th December, 1965, a Russian Ilyuslin 18, requiring a RAAF Navigator to join its crew in transit to the south.

The Russian crew would have seen many V-Bombers, Canberras, some eight Mirages, as many as sixteen Sabres , some eight Bloodhound SAM Launchers, and other warlike activities

The largest Air Defence exercise would take place in March 1966 when four Tengah based RAF 35 Squadron Vulcan Bombers and two 81 Squadron Canberras, along with No 1 Squadron RAAF Canberras, and a full Squadron of RAAF Mirages of 75 Sqn, participated in Exercise *Short Spica*.

The Bombers during the ADEX phase on the 20th-23rd March 1966, operated out of Amberley, Townsville and ,..Mount Isa!



Grp Capt W N Lampe OBE CO Darwin RAAF, Wg Cdr D Arnott RAF CO of 35Sqn RAF and Wg Cdr C G Thomas DFC CO of 75 Sqn RAAF, during Exercise Short Spica, March 1966. Photo RAAF Official

From July 1966, the 81 Wing Sabre Flight was finally replaced by No 75 Sqn Mirage IIIO Flight on detachment, ending their part on the southern front of Konfrontasi after nearly two years of defending Darwin. The Bloodhounds would soldier on until 1968.



RAAF AEW Neptunes you say???.....True, rudimentary yes, but functional for over the horizon



SP-2E Neptune A89-307 over Laverton July 68 Photo: Patrick Sheehan via Maurice Austin

The RAAF SP-2E and H were equipped AN/APS-20C 1 MW peak power version airborne radar, located forward of the bombay. Essentially it was electrically and physically identical to the original AN/APS-20A used in earlier Neptune versions, differing in mainly having a newer flux-gate compass system.

Actually there was a real AEW Neptune version,..... the Model 326-59-04 **P2V-3W** Airborne Early Warning variant, of which some thirty were built. These were actually the first Neptunes to be fitted with the AN/APS-20 Radar, which would become a standard fit on all following **P2V-4 to P2V-7** models.

These APS-20 based systems represent historically the first generation of AEW systems and did see extensive use from the forties to well into the seventies as the AN/APS-20 S-Band Search & Early-Warning Radar, equipping types like the Avenger TBM-3W, WV-2, PB-1W, ZPG-2W(EZ-1), AF-2W, HR2S-1W, P-2, WB-29, RC-121C, Gannet AEW3 (UK), Shackleton AEW2 (UK)

The APS-20 radar was one of the great scientific developments of WW2, but was still undergoing testing when the war ended. This APS-20 AEW radar was developed under Project Cadillac during 1944 when it was mounted in a General Motors TBM Avenger and as the TBM-3W this became the first AEW aircraft to undergo testing.

The radar operated in the S-Band and featured a 8ft by 3ft parabolic dish antenna mounted in a plastic fairing underneath the aircraft, giving 360 degree coverage.

The radar system also incorporated various highly advanced innovations including an Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) as well as a transmitter that relayed both the radar picture and the IFF information to receiver stations onboard adjacent ships.

The relay transmission system was called 'Bellhop', but it was a long time before it operated effectively. Two operators worked the radar and 'Bellhop' system, but excessive clutter, the lack of an automatic tracking system and symbology were significant weaknesses – radar returns were manually tracked by drawing marks with a chinagraph pencil on the screen itself, significantly limiting the capacity of the operators.

The last of the line, the AN/APS-20F fitted to the Gannet AEW3 and Shackleton AEW2, unlike its early-model predecessors, the aircraft's movement was compensated for by using links with the internal Doppler navigation kit and by calculating ground speed and drift.



10 Sqn (MR) SP-2H A89-272 in contemporary 1965 Markings: Photo John Hopkins



Looks bad,..but not what it seems: A89-303 used for Runway barrier clearance trials in 1970-71. It was lifted by the big crane, the undercarriage was then folded and the aircraft was lowered again and dragged by two pay movers, one on each end of the barrier net. One blade of each prop was cut off using an oxy torch. Photo ADF Serials via Andrew Pendergast.

NB#¹: *(This at this time was the regular quarterly RAF FEAF Deployment since early 1965 when a previous detachment of four RAF 57 Squadron Victor Bombers, along with two RAF Canberras and a single Hastings Transport had deployed in January 1965 for a week).*

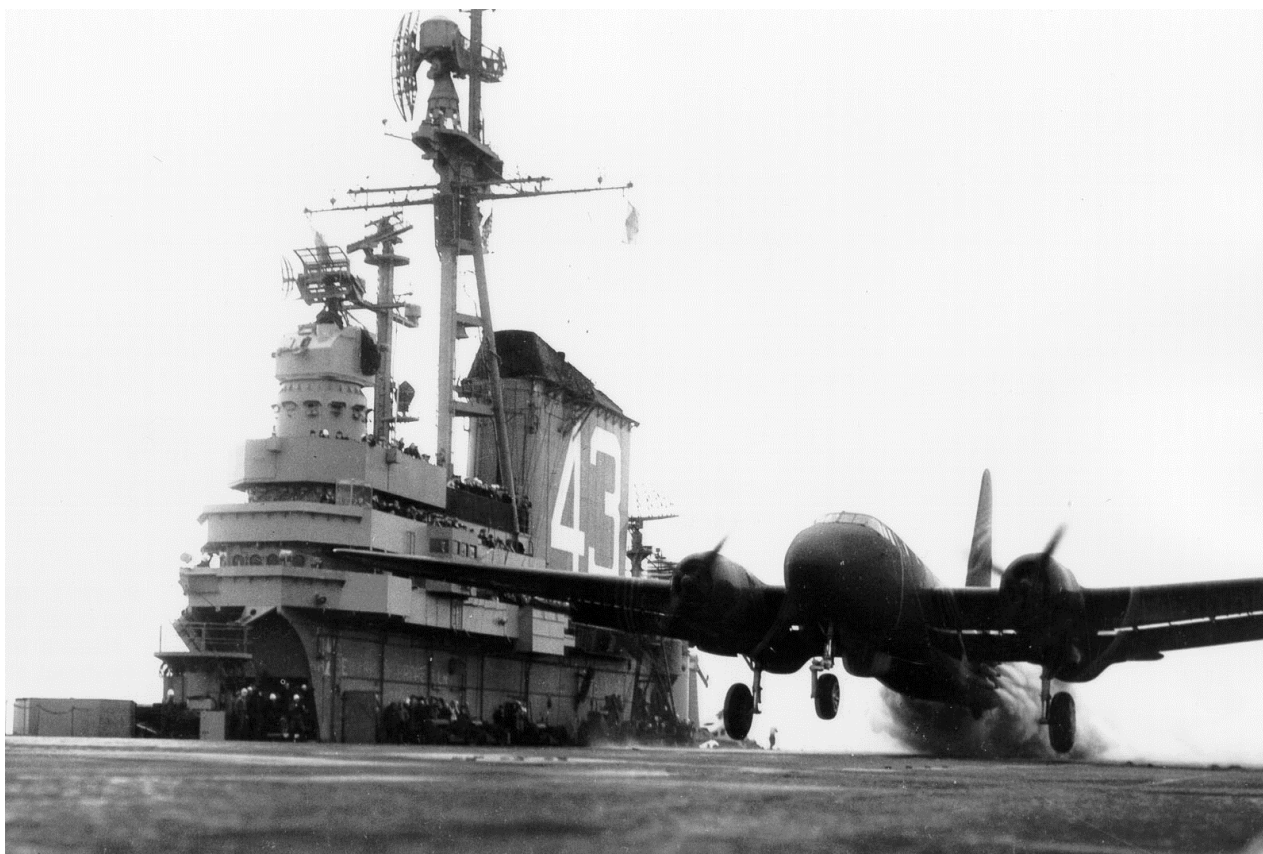
NB#²: *The Bloodhound I was not all that good. There was some little doubt about its ceiling. Bloodhound was found to be vulnerable to switch jamming even before it was first made operational. Bloodhound I came into service in 1958. Bloodhound Mark I was withdrawn from service by 1964 because it had fulfilled its purpose. Some parts of the missiles and some of the associated equipment continued to be of use; apart from minor sales the rest are being scrapped. Research and development expenditure on Bloodhound I and its launching system began in 1949 and totalled £32 million. **The Mk1 production rounded out to 1196 Shots/Rounds** costing £23 million; these operational missiles were manufactured between 1958 and 1962. These were followed in production by the Bloodhound Mk2 up to 1966.*

Sources:

- http://wiki.scramble.nl/index.php/Hazeltine_AN/APS-20<http://>
- National Archives of Australia: 81 Wing Detachment (76 Fighter Squadron), Darwin. Neptune AEW Trials - Darwin
- www.ausairpower.net/TE-AEW-AWACS
- <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/bloodhound.htm>
- GRB Data and ADF-Serials Files



Odd Shots: 1950's



One of the 59 USN P2V-3C Neptunes Nuclear Bombers built, taking off the CV43 USS Coral Sea with JATO in 1951. Photo USN



P2V-5 Neptunes A89-312 and A89-308 of 11 Squadron taken 2nd June 1953 as originally delivered. Photo via Mike Mirkovic

Next Issue, the Autumn 2016 edition, will be out circa late April 2016

Articles to be included:

- **The New RAAF Strike Aircraft choice: GAF Canberra B20 Replacement**,...first American choice requested in September 1963.
- **P-40 Operations in Australia; Supplementary #6**,...."The return" after a 11 year gap:

Contributors are most welcome to provide written articles or even topics to be covered.

Cheers

Gordy

