

BOTSWANA : BOTSWANA DEFENCE FORCE AIR ARM

As a result of increasing tensions in Southern Africa the Botswana Defence Force was duly constituted as a Defence Force by an Act of Parliament referred to as the BDF Act, No 13 of April 1977. The Air Arm was formed during the latter part of 1977 with a dramatic start when the second BN2A-1 Defender en-route from the UK force-landed at Maiduguri in Nigeria on 07.11.77, was impounded and ferried to Lagos. This same Defender crashed during May 1978, and was replaced by c/n 783 on 31.10.78 and given the same serial OA2.

A Defender made an emergency crash landing at Francistown Airport on 8 August 1979, after the crew intervened during a Rhodesian Combined Operations cross-border raid into northern Botswana. The Rhodesian forces were attacking a camp housing terrorists belonging to Joshua Nkomo's Patriotic Front, and were supported by Alouette III helicopters and ground forces when the Botswana Air Arm Defender intervened, and was shot at by one of the Alouette III helicopters. The Defender's crew survived.

The main duties of the Defenders were to conduct border patrols and the evacuation of sick and injured persons. Defender OA12 c/n 2295 has been fitted with a sliding door.

Another loss was OA4 w/o 20.11.99 shortly after take-off from Kwando airstrip, killing three occupants including the soldier brother of the then President.

The first trainers to be used to train Botswana pilots were two Cessna A152s. OB2 was sold in November 1980 and registered in RSA, and OB1 served until 1999 when it was disposed of in Botswana. It is since been reported as being used as a training aid in the Botswana Air Arm.

The serial OB1 was re-issued on 8 March 1999 to a Beech B200 which was taken into service for VIP transport. The first two transports to be taken into service in 1979 were Short Skyvans. They served until 1993, when they were disposed of, and two CASA 212-300 Aviocars were purchased and received the same serials.

After a prolonged competitive evaluation against the SAAB Safari, the British Aerospace Bulldog 120 was selected as the Air Arm's first basic trainer and an order for six aircraft was placed with the Scottish division of British Aerospace.

All the Bulldogs have been sold and replaced by the Pilatus PC-7, seven of which were delivered during February 1990. The PC-7s have retained the same serials as the Bulldogs. A PC-7, OD5 crashed on 26.02.97 near Kanye and was replaced by another PC-7 on 10.12.97. Another PC-7 (believed to be OD-1) was written off in another crash. The pilot was killed.

During 1984 the Botswana Defence Force took delivery of two Britten-Norman Trislanders to supplement the Defenders already in service. They were sold locally before being disposed of in Zimbabwe.

As part of their on-going policy to reduce poaching, the US Government supplied a number of countries in Southern Africa with ex-USAF Cessna O-2 observation aircraft. Botswana was to receive nine, Zimbabwe to receive two and Namibia to receive six aircraft. Serials to c/ns not confirmed.

Having identified the need for helicopters, two AS350s Ecureuils were brought into service in 1985. Mention has been made of 6 Bell 206s being supplied by the USA under their Foreign Military Aid programme. These have yet to be observed. Another three Eurocopter AS350BA Ecureuils were delivered via Johannesburg on 27.05.95, followed by two in 2000 and another three in January 2004. A few have been written off in crashes.

The first of two CN.235M's was handed over in January 1988, at San Pablo, Spain, to Colonel A. Scheffers, Commander of the Air Arm. The aircraft were delivered with 48 troop seats and configured for para-dropping, with static line fixtures at the rear doors. In addition, a 12-seat VIP transport kit and a 38seat transport interior were supplied. The CN.235's replaced the pair of BN Trislanders, that were sold.

Another helicopter type to be delivered was the Bell 412SP. Initial deliveries were for three aircraft in 1988 followed by two in 1989. There have been reports of OH5 having been damaged beyond repair in an accident. Confirmation is still required. It is reportedly now operated by the Royal Norwegian Air Force. During 1994 an Agusta Bell 412 was delivered and subsequently disposed of in 2001.

1988 saw the arrival of 9 ex-Kuwaiti Air Force Strikemasters. These had been parked in the UK since 1986. An unconfirmed report in 1994 stated that the survivors of the Kenya Air Force Strikemasters

found their way to Botswana. This was confirmed in April 1997 when the Strikemasters were disposed of and registered to Global Aviation of Binbrook. Amongst the registrations were Strikemasters with Kenya Air Force serials.

One (OJ5) crashed at an air display on 29.04.89 and another two (OJ4 & OJ9) crashed near Gaborone on 12.12.89, when they are believed to have collided in mid-air and both pilots ejected safely.

For VIP transport a British Aerospace BAe 125-800B was purchased in 1988. This aircraft force-landed in Angola after being attacked by Angolan Air Force MiG-21s on 08.08.88. One engine was destroyed and the pilot did well to land on only one engine. It was returned for repairs in December 1988 and subsequently sold in South America. Another BAe 125-800B was supplied on 15.03.90 and has also since been sold as G-OBLT on 15.07.92. This was replaced by a Grumman Gulfstream IV.

It was announced on 4 June 1996 that 13 of the 36 upgraded Canadian Air Force CF-116(CF-5's) were to join the Botswana Defence Force Air Arm, with the first to be delivered in August of 1996 and the last during 1997. These CF-116 fighters became surplus to Canadian requirements, and were retired during 1995. The US\$50million deal was brokered by Bristol Aerospace, who were responsible for preparing the aircraft for delivery, providing logistic support and maintenance training. The deal consisted of ten CF-116s (single seat) and three CF-116D's (dual seat). In addition, new electronics, cockpit controls, head-up displays and weapons targeting systems were provided as part of the Canadian Air Force upgrade. The aircraft were to have new radios installed and revised IFF systems.

Serials are in the range OJ1 - OJ10, with OJ2 being seen at the factory in Canada before delivery. This same OJ2 was to make a wheels-up landing at Gaborone International Airport during 1997 and was damaged extensively. It is a possible write off. With the exception of OJ2 tie-ups are assumed. Another 4 dual-seaters were to follow. OJ25 was seen at AAD at Waterkloof AFB.

During 1995/96 the Botswana Defence Force Air Arm was offered two ex-USAF C-130B Hercules. During this same period other Air Forces such as the SAAF and the Air Force of Zimbabwe were also offered the Hercules. The SAAF accepted five Hercules and the AFZ declined the offer because of financial restraints. The first Botswana DF Air Arm Hercules arrived during early 1997 and was shown to the public on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Botswana Defence Force on the 29th April 1997. It received the serial OM1.

The Air Arm has taken delivery of a number of Aviatika 890U Mais (Streak Shadow) from the agents at Wonderboom Airport in South Africa. One, c/n 74 was seen awaiting delivery on 1.10.97. Although the plate on the aircraft had the c/n 73 ?? Delivery is believed to have taken place on 7.11.97.

The another arrival has been the Dornier 328OB2....on the 1st November 2008. Latest arrival has been a Bombardier BD700 Global Express...OK1(4) on 18th September 2009. The earlier Gulfstream IV, OK1 (3) (which has not been sold) has been allocated the serial OK2.

New Botswana Air Base "Thebe-Phatshwa" at MOLEPOLOLE

French, South African, British and Italian firms built an airbase for the BDF Air Arm at Molepolole about 80km north west of Gaborone. *Project Eagle* was to cost a total of US\$350 million, and was funded by a French government loan.

The French firm Spie Batignolles was awarded the major portion, some US\$230m of the construction contract. Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners were the consulting engineers, and LTA of SA was a major sub-contractor. The base was to have two runways with four alert pads, four hangars and the usual aviation and accommodation facilities. It is reported to be spread over some 30sq kms.

Project Eagle was approved in 1989 and construction began in 1990. The completion date was set for 1992, but poor access roads hampered construction. Completion was scheduled for 1995.

The purpose of this forum is to share aviation related images of African Air Forces and is not for gain. These are sourced from various sites on the internet and from Winston Brent's own collection and from various owners who over the years have been prepared to share their images with him on the proviso of anonymity, and who prefer not to have their names acknowledged. Remember that on the African continent and also on some of the other continents, the recording of details of aircraft and images thereof has sometimes resulted in immediate detention. Where the source is known, it will be listed in the credits and where it is already on the image, it will be left on the image for the benefit of the viewers and it also gives the copyright owner greater exposure.

Air display



Fly past by bull-dog aircraft.



PC 7s in a flight formation



A colourful formation of Defender aircraft.



A BDF helicopter flying the national flag.



An F5 aircraft during its flight demonstration at Sir Seretse Khama International Airport.

CASA 235 off-loading members of the infantry.



<u>BOTSWANA:</u>					
<u>Botswana Defence Force</u>					
<u>Botswana Defence Force Air Arm</u>					
<u>Serial</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>c/n</u>	<u>dd</u>	<u>ex-</u>	<u>fate</u>
OA 1	B-N BN2A-21 Defender	791	04.10.77	ex G-BDTC	
OA 2	B-N BN2A-21 Defender	795	28.10.77	ex G-BDTG	w/o 09.05.78
OA 2 (2)	B-N BN2A-21 Defender	783	31.10.78	ex G-BDRP	w/o 09.08.79
OA 3	B-N BN2A-21 Defender	799	18.02.78	ex G-BDTK	to 9J-PLJ .02.07
OA 4	B-N BN2A-21 Defender	772	21.05.79	ex G-BDMT	w/o 23.11.99
OA 5	B-N BN2A-21 Defender	836	20.03.79	ex G-BEMN	
OA 6	B-N BN2A-21 Defender	918	14.08.81	ex G-BIUC	
OA 7	P-BN BN2B-20 Defender	2226	23.10.90	ex G-BRSS	
OA 8	P-BN BN2B-20 Defender	2227	20.12.90	ex G-BRST	
OA 9	P-BN BN2B-20 Defender	2257	15.03.93	ex G-BTVK	
OA 10	P-BN BN2B-20 Defender	2258	03.03.93	ex G-BTVL	
OA 11	P-BN BN2B-20 Defender	2265	12.01.94	ex G-BUBH	
OA 12	P-BN BN2B-20 Defender	2295	15.05.98	ex G-BWNE	
OB 1	Cessna A152	A152-0806	1979	ex N7387L, ZS-JUU	sold 1999
OB 2	Cessna A152	A152-0861	1979	ex N4674A(ntu), N1840C,	sold as ZS-KJC 11.80 to A2-FUC, ZS-PNV
OB 1 (2)	Beech B200	BB1352	08.03.99	ex N5568V	
OB 2 (2)	Dornier 328	3083	01.11.08	ex D-CDXO,5N-SPC D-CIAC, OY-NCC	
OC 1	Short Skyvan 3M	SH1962	10.04.79	ex EC-006, G-BFUM	sold 03.93 as N6196P, G-BFUM, 9M-PIH
OC 2	Short Skyvan 3M	SH1964	21.05.79	ex G-BGFR	sold as 9M-FAT .93, to OE-FDN
OC 1 (2)	CASA 212-300 Aviocar	392	.06.93	ex EC-006,	
OC 2 (2)	CASA 212-300 Aviocar	394	.06.93		
OD 1	Scot Avi Bulldog 120-1210	407	15.07.80	ex G-BHXA	cr 02.02.81, re-built, sold as G-BHZA 06.03.91
OD 2	Scot Avi Bulldog 120-1210	408	25.06.80	ex G-BHXB	sold as G-BHXB 04.03.91
OD 3	Scot Avi Bulldog 120-1210	409	12.08.80	ex G-31-33, G-BHZP	w/o 19.11.82 2 killed
OD 4	Scot Avi Bulldog 120-1210	410	12.08.80	ex G-BHZR	sold as G-BHZR 04.03.91
OD 5	Scot Avi Bulldog 120-1210	411	18.09.80	ex G-BHZZ	sold as G-BHZZ 04.03.91
OD 6	Scot Avi Bulldog 120-1210	412	18.09.80	ex G-BHZZ	sold as G-BHZZ 04.03.91
OD 1 (2)	Pilatus PC-7	551	.02.90		w/o 01.10.97. 1 killed
OD 2 (2)	Pilatus PC-7	552	.02.90		
OD 3 (2)	Pilatus PC-7	553	.02.90		
OD 4 (2)	Pilatus PC-7	554	.02.90		
OD 5 (2)	Pilatus PC-7	555	.02.90		w/o nr Kanye 26.02.97
OD 5 (3)	Pilatus PC-7	481	10.12.97		
OD 6 (2)	Pilatus PC-7	556	.02.90		
OD 7 (2)	Pilatus PC-7	557	.02.90		
OE 1	B-N Trislander	1054	19.09.84	ex G-BEPJ	sold as A2-AGX/Z-AIR .91 to SX-CVM

OE 2	B-N Trislander	1055	19.09.84	ex G-BEPK	sold as A2-AGY/Z-UTD .91
					to SX-CPG, YJ-0019
OE 1	Cessna O-2A	337M0205	18.10.93	ex USAF 68-10840	tie-up of Botswana serials
OE 2	Cessna O-2A	337M0322	18.10.93	ex USAF 68-11046	with c/ns assumed
OE 3	Cessna O-2A	337M0326	18.10.93	ex USAF 68-11050	
OE 4	Cessna O-2A	337M0394	18.10.93	ex USAF 68-11169	
OE 5	Cessna O-2A	337M0397	18.10.93	ex USAF 68-11172	
OE 6	Cessna O-2A	337M0413	18.10.93	ex USAF 69-7615	
OE 7	Cessna O-2A	337M0448	18.10.93	ex USAF 69-7650	
OE 8	Cessna O-2A	337M0460	18.10.93	ex USAF 69-7662	
OE 9	Cessna O-2A	337M0464	18.10.93	ex USAF 69-7666	
OE 10	Cessna O-2A	337M.....		ex USAF	
OF 1	Aerospat AS350B Ecureuil	1586	1985		
OF 2	Aerospat AS350B Ecureuil	1587	1985	ex F-ZKBW	
OF 3	Aerospat AS350BA Ecureuil	2857	27.05.95	ex F-WQDO	
OF 4	Aerospat AS350BA Ecureuil	2864	27.05.95		
OF 5	Aerospat AS350BA Ecureuil	2872	27.05.95		w/o
OF 5 (2)	Eurocopter AS350BA Ecureuil	4329		ex F-WQER	
OF 6	Eurocopter AS350BA Ecureuil				
OF 7	Eurocopter AS350B3 Ecureuil				
OF 8	Eurocopter AS350B3 Ecureuil	3765	.01.04	ex F-WWPD	
OF 9	Eurocopter AS350B3 Ecureuil	3767	.01.04		
OF 10	Eurocopter AS350B3 Ecureuil	3769	.01.04		
OG 1	CASA-IPTN CN.235	C008	21.12.87		
OG 2	CASA-IPTN CN.235	C009	15.03.88		
OH 1	Bell 412SP	33174	10.88	ex N3209T	
OH 2	Bell 412SP	33175	10.88	ex N3209G	
OH 3	Bell 412SP	33176	10.88	ex N3209H	
OH 4	Bell 412SP	33193	18.09.89		
OH 5	Bell 412SP	33194	18.09.89	ex N3215D	possible w/o. to 194 RNAF
OH 6	Agusta Bell 412	25611	1994	ex I-GPBF	sold 2001
OH 7	Bell 412EP	36281	01.02.02	ex C-GFNM, N9181F	definite VIP
OH 8	Bell 412EP	36351	21.05.07	ex N46052	possible VIP
OJ 1	BAe Strikemaster Mk83	158	22.03.88	ex ZG805, KAF110	to G-BXFU 29.04.97
OJ 2	BAe Strikemaster Mk83	159	22.03.88	ex ZG806, KAF111	to G-BXFT 29.04.97
					to N4242T
OJ 3	BAe Strikemaster Mk83	163	22.03.88	ex ZG810, KAF115	gate guard Base Thebe Phatshwa
OJ 4	BAe Strikemaster Mk83	175	21.09.88	ex ZG813, KAF121	w/o 12.12.89
OJ 4 (2)	BAe Strikemaster Mk87	70	1994	ex Kenya AF 601	to G-AYHR 29.04.97
OJ 5	BAe Strikemaster Mk83	160	11.07.88	ex ZG807, KAF112	w/o 29.04.89
OJ 5 (2)	BAe Strikemaster Mk87	71	1994	ex Kenya AF 602	to G-BXFP 29.04.97
OJ 6	BAe Strikemaster Mk83	161	11.07.88	ex ZG808, KAF118	to G-BXFW 29.04.97
					to ZU-PER 1998
OJ 7	BAe Strikemaster Mk83	162	11.07.88	ex ZG809, KAF114	to G-BXFV 29.04.97
OJ 8	BAe Strikemaster Mk83	173	21.09.88	ex ZG811, KAF119	to G-BXFX 29.04.97
OJ 9	BAe Strikemaster Mk83	174	21.09.88	ex ZG812, KAF120	w/o 12.12.89
OJ 9 (2)	BAe Strikemaster Mk87	73	1994	ex Kenya AF 604	to G-BXFR 29.04.97

OJ 10	BAe Strikemaster Mk87	74	1994	ex Kenya AF 605	to G-BXFS 29.04.97
OJ 1 (2)	Canadair CF-5A	1005	22.03.97	ex RCAF 116705	
OJ 2 (2)	Canadair CF-5A	1034	22.03.97	ex RCAF 116734	dam 1997 wheels up
OJ 3 (2)	Canadair CF-5A	1016	22.03.97	ex RCAF 116716	
OJ 4 (3)	Canadair CF-5A	1019	22.03.97	ex RCAF 116719	
OJ 5 (3)	Canadair CF-5A	1027	22.03.97	ex RCAF 116727	
OJ 6 (2)	Canadair CF-5A	1032	.10.97	ex RCAF 116732	
OJ 7 (2)	Canadair CF-5A	1054	.10.97	ex RCAF 116754	
OJ 8 (2)	Canadair CF-5A	1064	.10.97	ex RCAF 116764	
OJ 9 (3)	Canadair CF-5A	1065	.10.97	ex RCAF 116765	
OJ 10(2)	Canadair CF-5A	1084	.10.97	ex RCAF 116784	
OJ 21	Canadair CF-5D	2001	18.09.96	ex RCAF 116801	
OJ 22	Canadair CF-5D	2002	18.09.96	ex RCAF 116802	
OJ 23	Canadair CF-5D	2029	18.09.96	ex RCAF 116829	
OJ 24	Canadair CF-5D			ex RCAF	
OJ 25	Canadair CF-5D			ex RCAF	
OJ 26	Canadair CF-5D			ex RCAF	
OJ 27	Canadair CF-5D			ex RCAF	
OK 1	BAe 125-800B	258112	16.06.88	ex G-5-583	to PT-OBT
OK 1 (2)	BAe 125-800B	258164	15.03.90		to G-OBLT 15.07.92
OK 1 (3)	Grumman Gulfstream IV	1173	1991	ex N17587	to OK2
OK 1 (4)	BD-700 Global Express	9259	18.09.09	ex C-FMMH, N89ZZ	
OK 2	Grumman Gulfstream IV	1173	1991	ex N17587, ex OK1	
OM 1	Lockheed C-130B	3506	11.96	ex USAF 58-0711	
OM 2	Lockheed C-130B	3544	03.11.97	ex USAF 58-0746	
OM 3	Lockheed C-130B	3539	.09.99	ex USAF 58-0742	



A variety of images of the B-N BN2A-21 Defenders in service



This is one of two B-N Trislanders that were to give excellent service, before being replaced by the CASA-IPTN CN.235

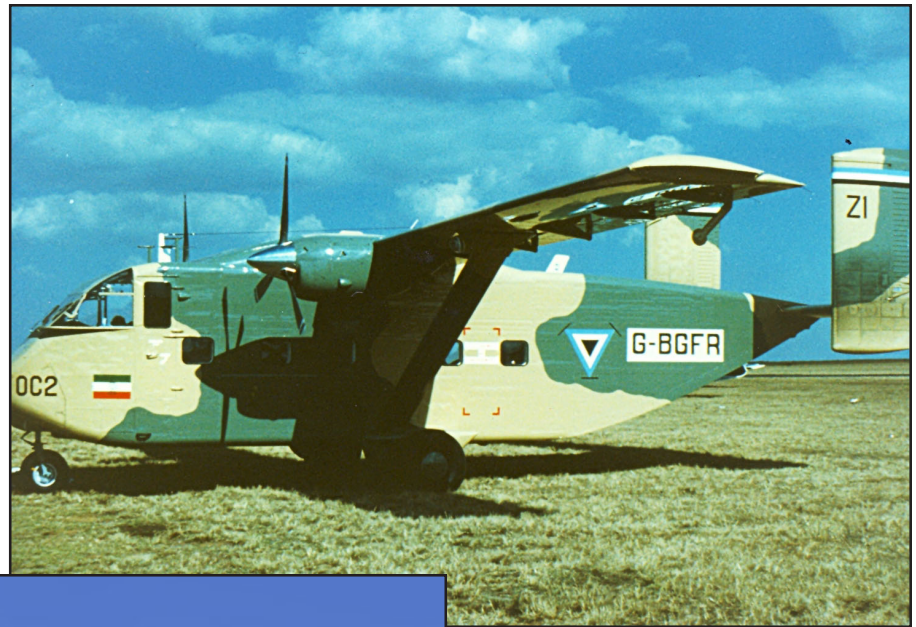




A variety of rare images of the Cessna O-2As supplied by the USAF to assist in anti-poaching duties



Short Skyvan 3M ...OC2



CASA 212-300 Aviocar ...OC2 (2)

BAe 125-800B...OK1 (2).



A view of the damage to OK 1 (1)
BAe 125-800B after the incident
with an Angolan Air Force MiG-21



Beech 200 OB 2 (2)

Grumman Gulfstream IV OK 1 (3)
visiting Lanseria





Fine images of two of the original BAe Strikemaster Mk83s, OJ 1 & OJ 2

Scottish Aviation Bulldog 120-1210 G-BHZZ was to become OD 3



BAe Strikemaster OJ 2 was to find a home in Heber City Utah as N4242T





When the BAe Strikemasters were taken out of service, OJ 3 was erected as a gate guard at the entrance to the new Botswana Base - Thebe-Phatshwa



BAe Strikemasters OJ 1 & OJ 6 during a flypast



The Pilatus PC-7 was introduced as a basic trainer, after disposal of the Scottish Aviation Bulldogs.

CASA/IPTN CN.235 OG1, undergoing maintenance.



The Botswana Defence Force has had 10 AS.350B & BA & B3s on strength. Here is a variety of images







Paratroopers preparing to embark on a C-130 Hercules, with a Eurocopter AS350BA Ecureuil OF 7 in the foreground



Bell 412SP OH 5 was used in a field exercise to collect paratroopers who missed their landing ground



Bell 412SP OH 3 undergoing an engine change



Bell 412EP - OH7 is one of possibly two VIP helicopters

Bell 412SP - OH2 is one of the first of this type to arrive in 1988



Excellent side view of CASA/ IPTN CN235M-100 - OG1



OM 1 & OM 2 are two of the three C-130 Hercules, received from the USAF





This C-130 Hercules, OM 3 was the third to be received from the USAF

Photographers to AAD at Waterkloof Air Force Base were given an unimpeded opportunity to photograph this Botswana Defence Force Canadair CF-5D - OJ 25





The Canadair CF-5As and CF-5Ds were air freighted into Botswana from Canada





Used for anti-poaching patrols, the Aviatika 890U above, as well as the Streak Shadow below also receive prominence in this article



Image credits: Brent Collection, Dave Becker, Morne Booijis-Liewes, Tim Spearman, Peter W, Internet, Andre de Ruijter, BAe photographic division, and any other individuals whose names are unintentionally omitted.