

THE AUSTRALIAN AERONAUTICAL HISTORY RECORD

Miscellaneous List No. 1

"CIVIL" MILITARY AIRCRAFT IN THE WORLD WAR II PERIOD
AIRCRAFT ISSUED WITH "X"-NUMBERED CERTIFICATES OF AIRWORTHINESS

A COMPILATION

by

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The information collated in this listing has been so set down as a reference for use by those with an interest in the subject. It may be quoted from - in part or at length - with the strict provision that this publication with the titling as set out is clearly indicated as the source of the information extracted.

Data listed on these sheets is as accurate as has been possible to achieve to the date of printing of this copy; the work does not claim to be complete but is as complete as research into recorded material available to the author has allowed. Additions and corrections - suitably documented - are welcomed.

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"CIVIL" MILITARY AIRCRAFT IN THE WORLD WAR II PERIOD

AIRCRAFT ISSUED WITH "X"-NUMBERED CERTIFICATES OF AIRWORTHINESS

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Towards the end of 1942, the various airlines still operating in Australia were in serious difficulties with re-equipment problems. Impressments from their fleets for military purposes at the commencement of the war, combined with write-offs in the intervening period - due to losses incurred by enemy action and wear-and-tear - had reduced their fleets to but a handful of aircraft. To compound this problem, at this period there were simply no new aircraft available from any source - everybody was out there playing at war and all production was aimed in that direction.

From early/mid-1942, the airlines began to fly, under contractual arrangements, many of the transport aircraft in use in Australasia under the *aegis* of the A.D.A.T. [Allied Directorate of Transport Services], on behalf of the military forces. These various machines, a conglomeration from many sources, were beginning to shew signs of age, and towards the end of 1942 were in the process of being replaced with new aircraft from the

production lines, built specifically for the work. The older machines then became available to supplement the airline fleets - whilst still nominally controlled by the A.D.A.T. both from an ownership and activity viewpoint, some normal civilian airline operations could be undertaken with them.

Thirteen aircraft were initially issued, being placed with Qantas Empire Airways, Ltd. [Q.E.A.], Australian National Airways Pty., Ltd. [A.N.A.] and Guinea Airways, Ltd. [G.A.L.], between October 1942 and July 1943. Because of their sometime use in transporting civilian passengers, all were issued with a special series of Australian Certificates of Airworthiness, prefixed with the letter "X". A second, larger, group were made available between February and July 1944 to replace losses incurred in the intervening period within the first group, and to expand the fleets. A third and final group became available from August 1945 to March 1946.

* * *

The table overleaf sets out the detail of the particulars of these aircraft in columned form. The primary source of material for this listing is a master-list of the aircraft written into the front of one of the old Department of Civil Aviation ledgers; it is supplemented by material supplied by Geoff Goodall, Mel Davis and Al Bovelt and items from a range of miscellaneous sources. Documentation from files held in the Australian Archives have served to expand and confirm many points.

The columns as set out perform the following functions, as :-

- 1 the Certificate number : these were a special series, prefixed with the letter "X" and were numbered consecutively from 1 to 36.
- 2 lists the radio call-sign under which the individual aircraft operated : these were allotted to all machines in the A.D.A.T. transport pool, from about the end of July 1942 - they are NOT registrations.
- 3 shews the date the C. of A. was validated : my listing is in the left column, Geoff Goodall's is in the right - the two listings do not differ greatly and have been shewn for interest.

4 is the military identity for each aircraft : five of the ex-K.N.I.L.M. machines are annotated (*which see*) - it is unlikely the C.56Bs carried their serial numbers; some documentation found shews them referred to with false serial numbers, as "41-2121", in style similar to other ex-N.E.I. machines (see notes, page 3)

5 details the Manufacturer, Model Number and Designation/Name

6 is the airframe identification number of the machine - "ain"

7 lists the date the aircraft was 'delivered' to the operator - in effect, the officially accepted U.S.A.A.F. hand-over date.

8 shews the initial operators and the bases the aircraft were delivered to

9 concerns the fate of the aircraft, after return to the U.S.A.A.F or otherwise in the case of write-offs - these latter entries are compiled from a wide range of sources.

MASTER LIST - 'X'-NUMBERED CERTIFICATES OF AIRWORTHINESS

"X" No.	CALL SIGN	C. of A. Date		SERIAL NUMBER	TYPE			ain	Del. Date	DELIVERED TO		DISPOSAL DATA	
		Hopton	Goodall		Manuf.	Model	Designation			Airline	Base		
1	VHC-AK	021142	021142	42-68357	Lockheed	18-40	C.56B-LO	2129	261042	Q.E.A.	Brisbane	261042	U.S.A.A.F. - FL & DBR150344, Bundaberg, Qld.
2	VHC-AJ	021142	021142	42-68356	Lockheed	18-40	C.56B-LO	2128	211142	A.N.A.	Archerfield	270243	U.S.A.A.F. - CR & DBR 260243, Garbutt, Qld.
3	VHC-XD	211242	111242	"41-1941"	Douglas	-	DC.3-194B	1941	071242	A.N.A.	Archerfield	050545	FL & DEST 050545, Higgins Field, Qld.
4	VHC-AC	161142	161142	42-68349	Lockheed	18-40	C.56B-LO	2104	281042	G.A.L.	Parafield	180945	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became VH-ARY
5	VHC-XC	251242	251242	<i>no record</i>	Douglas	-	DC.5-510	426	261242	A.N.A.	Archerfield	300444	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became VH-ARD
6	VHC-AB	010143	010143	42-68348	Lockheed	18-40	C.56B-LO	2103	291242	Q.E.A.	Brisbane	261143	CR & DBF 261143, 6 mls. ex Wards Strip, PNG
7	VHC-AA	011242	280143	42-68347	Lockheed	18-40	C.56B-LO	2102	051142	Q.E.A.	Brisbane	200544	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became VH-ARZ
8	VHC-CH	050643	050643	38-532	Douglas	-	C.39-DO	2089	060643	A.N.A.	Essendon	040544	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became VH-ARC
9	VHC-XI	110543	110543	<i>no record</i>	Lockheed	14.F-62	-	1414	060443	G.A.L.	Parafield	130244	CR & DEST 130244, Alice Springs, N.T.
10	VHC-AF	030643	xx0643	42-68352	Lockheed	18-40	C.56B-LO	2121	090643 020144	A.N.A. Q.E.A.	Essendon Brisbane	020144 100544	TRN to Q.E.A. U.S.A.A.F. : CR <u>2302</u> 44, Archerfield, Qld.
11	VHC-CG	310743	070743	38-519	Douglas	-	C.39-DO	2076	080743	A.N.A.	Essendon	030544	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became VH-ARB
12	VHC-EC	060843	220743	42-32172	Lockheed	18-56	C.60-LO	2192	220743	A.N.A.	Archerfield	230444	U.S.A.A.F. : SCR after 211044
13	VHC-EH	140743	150743	42-32176	Lockheed	18-56	C.60-LO	2196	150743	A.N.A.	Archerfield	260444	U.S.A.A.F. : ?
14	VHC-CF	010144	010144	38-530	Douglas	-	C.39-DO	2087	020144	A.N.A.	Archerfield	090344	FL & DAM 090344, Molesworth, Vic.
15	VHC-EE	010344	xx0344	42-32174	Lockheed	18-56	C.60-LO	2194	180244	G.A.L.	Parafield	070644	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became VH-BAG
16	VHC-XL	310344	xx0444	"41-1944"	Douglas	-	DC.3-194B	1944	010444	A.N.A.	Essendon	?	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became VH-ANR
17	VHC-XJ	220744	200744	<i>no record</i>	Lockheed	14.F-62	-	1442	111242	G.A.L.	Parafield	160544	U.S.A.A.F. : ?
18	VHC-DK	160544	xx0544	41-7697	Douglas	-	C.50-DO	4119	010544	G.A.L.	Parafield	160544	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became VH-ANI
19	VHC-DB	240444	xx0544	41-7687	Douglas	-	C.49A-DO	3272	040544	A.N.A.	Archerfield	?	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became VH-ANN

ADDITIONAL NOTES CONCERNING THESE AIRCRAFT

- X-3 (1) on seizure by U.S. forces, for book-keeping purposes the airframe identification number 1941 was prefixed with "41-" to provide an aircraft "serial number" - this aircraft was retrospectively designated as a type C.49H-DO and allotted serial number 44-83228 early in 1945 (a paper exercise); this was never carried on the machine. (2) the remains of ain 1941 are to-day still there at Higgins Field, designated as a war memorial.
- X-5 unlike the former N.E.I. DC.2 and DC.3 types, the DC.5s do not appear to have been allotted the book-keeping "serial numbers" note above - ain 426 was, however, also retrospectively designated - as C.110-DO - and allotted serial number 44-83232 early in 1945 similarly to X-3 above.
- X-9 as with X-5 above, the Lockheed 14s do not appear to have been allotted the book-keeping "serial numbers" - ain 1414 was also retrospectively designated, as type C.111-LO, and allotted serial number 44-83233 early in 1945 : this was in the true sense a paper exercise, as it had been written-off for about a year by the time this event took place!
- X-14 the remains of this aircraft were transported back to Essendon and stored - damage was not all that bad and it was considered as rebuild material : civil registration VH-ARA was allotted, but the C.39 was not rebuilt - it is thought that with the large numbers of much-better-condition Dak variants available, it was cheaper to simply use it for spares for VH-ARB & VH-ARC.
- X-16 (1) the history of this aircraft is identical to that quoted for X-3 above : it was recorded as "41-1944", and retrospectively a C.49H-DO as serial number 44-83229. (2) the DC.3 is still with us, currently in the hands of the Queensland Air Museum at Caloundra
- X-17 (1) the history of this aircraft is identical to that quoted for X-9 above : it was retrospectively a C.111-LO as serial number 44-83234 (2) the date in column 7 is correct - it had been delivered to Guinea Airways, Ltd. at Parafield for repair, on completion of which it transferred to them directly for their use under this system [*the detailed history of this can be found in the A.H.S.A. Journal, Vol. 4, No. 2, page 45*].

MASTER LIST - 'X'-NUMBERED CERTIFICATES OF AIRWORTHINESS

"X" No.	CAL SIGN	C. of A. Date		SERIAL NUMBER	TYPE			ain	Del. Date	DELIVERED TO		DISPOSAL DATA	
		Hopton	Goodall		Manuf.	Model	Designation			Airline	Base		
20	VHC-DC	250444	xx0444	41-7690	Douglas	-	C.49A-DO	3282	300444	A.N.A.	Archerfield	131145	CR & DEST, in sea, 1 ml. off Leyte Island
21	VHC-DD	210544	xx0444	41-7691	Douglas	-	C.49B-DO	4094	030544	A.N.A.	Archerfield	?	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became VH-ANO
22	VHC-DE	210444	xx0444	41-7693	Douglas	-	C.49B-DO	4096	260444	A.N.A.	Archerfield	?	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became VH-ANP
23	VHC-DG	250544	xx0444	41-7686	Douglas	-	C.49-DO	3271	230444	A.N.A.	Archerfield	?	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became VH-ANQ
24	VHC-WA	090544	xx0544	41-20070	Douglas	-	C.53-DO	4840	190444	Q.E.A.	Brisbane	xxxx46	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became PI-C151
25	VHC-DL	090544	xx0544	43-15454	Douglas	-	C.47A-85-DL	19920	080544	Q.E.A.	Brisbane	290744	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became PI-C25
26	VHC-DM	090544	xx0544	43-15436	Douglas	-	C.47A-85-DL	19902	080544	Q.E.A.	Brisbane	180744	U.S.A.A.F. : transferred to N.E.I. forces as Q-4
27	VHC-CB	290744	-	41-20053	Douglas	-	C.53-DO	4823	070744	Q.E.A.	Brisbane	210446	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became PI-C149
28	VHC-DJ	300944	-	41-7698	Douglas	-	C.50-DO	4120	020544	G.A.L.	Parafield	xxxx46	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became VH-ANH
29	VHC-CC	270744	xx0744	41-20054	Douglas	-	C.53-DO	4824	140744	Q.E.A.	Brisbane	210446	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became PI-C150
30	VHC-HB	240845	xx0845	41-18649	Douglas	-	C.47-DL	6010	?	?	?	?	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became VH-ANS
31	VHC-DC2	030146	xx0146	42-24044	Douglas	-	C.47A-40-DL	9906	?	?	?	?	U.S.A.A.F. : ?
32	VHC-DB2	230146	xx0146	42-16199	Douglas	-	C.47A-85-DL	20665	?	?	?	?	U.S.A.A.F. : ?
33	VHC-DD2	190246	xx0146	42-23903	Douglas	-	C.47A-35-DL	9765	?	?	?	?	U.S.A.A.F. : ?
34	VHC-DE2	300146	xx0246	43-49755	Douglas	-	C.47B-20-DK	27016	?	?	?	?	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became PI-C95
35	VHC-DG2	200346	xx0346	43-16239	Douglas	-	C.47B-1-DL	20705	?	?	?	?	U.S.A.A.F. : ?
36	VHC-XL2	110246	-	43-15484	Douglas	-	C.47A-85-DL	19950	?	?	?	?	U.S.A.A.F. : after disposal, became VH-BHB

ADDITIONAL NOTES CONCERNING THESE AIRCRAFT

X-30 call-sign VHC-HB is often quoted against this C. of A. : the main source for this data shews VHC-DH2, and it is suspected that the call-sign was probably changed to this form at the time the aircraft was transferred to this system, or more likely during or after January 1946 when the last group were added to this system - all of which are notably in the VHC-Dx block.

COMMENTARY

A This document was originally published in *Man and Aerial Machines*, in Volume 1 of 1989, as pages 27-29 : it has been modified in layout and up-dated in the text since.

B Those of you out there in aeronautical-history-land who read through this document are invited to add any points that you think might be of value - we are always pleased to hear from fellow researchers in this field. Of particular interest would be additional material to eliminate some of the vacant date spaces.