

The Rhodesian Civil Aircraft Register

(and Individual Aircraft Histories): **1927-80**

compiled by DaveNewnham

Introduction

This register shows the historical time-line of the aircraft registered in Rhodesia. It is as complete as is possible; given that much of the information has been lost, or destroyed.

Overview

Rhodesian registrations started with the 'VP-Y' sequence and once these had all been used (in late 1965), continued with the 'VP-W' sequence. Once the VP-W sequence was in use, the re-issue of VP-Y registrations continued, on a random basis.

- a. The letter Q was not used in Rhodesian registrations.
- b. VP-YZ? registrations were reserved for Rhodesian Air Force aircraft call-signs and are not shown.

From 1953 until 1963, the Federation of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland was in being. At the start of this period all aircraft previously registered in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland (VP-R and VP-N) were re-registered in the VP-Y sequence. Full details of Federal registrations are shown.

After the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in 1965, details of Rhodesian aircraft registrations are difficult to obtain and there is evidence that the Rhodesians made deliberate efforts to suppress them.

After gaining their independence, Northern Rhodesia [Zambia] and Nyasaland [Malawi] re-registered their aircraft in the '9J-' and '7Q-' sequences.

This "Rhodesian" Register, ceases with Zimbabwean independence (18-Apr-80). However, the VP-W sequence continued to be used in Zimbabwe until c.1985, when the Z- sequence replaced it.

The listing shows the immediate previous registration and the immediate post Rhodesian registration only. Full aircraft histories are not included. This register contains details of 894 aircraft. This total includes 72 duplicated registrations.

As a subsidiary project, I am trying to build a photo file of every Rhodesian aircraft. As at Dec-21 I have photos of 36% of the 894 aircraft.

Notes on the Rhodesian Civil Aircraft Listing

Note 1 The Rhodesian DCA issued a quarterly "snapshot" register (6-monthly for the last few years). Thus "pre" and "post" before dates, indicate that the registration is known to have occurred on or before/after (usually within 3 months of) the date quoted. A "c." before dates indicates "about" the date shown.

Note 2 It was not unusual for the Rhodesian DCA to re-issue registration marks that had

been used previously. [2] and [3] behind the registration indicate second and third aircraft to use the registration.

Note 3 Where no information is available the cells are left blank, except for registration dates, where entries are placed in all cells, in order to allow a search by date. These entries are in **RED** and are my best estimate, based on available information.

Note 4 Where Airfields or Countries have had name changes, they are referred to by the name they were known by, at the time. Aircraft located outside Southern Rhodesia are shown as; SA = South Africa, NR = Northern Rhodesia, Ny = Nyasaland and UK = United Kingdom.

Note 5 Locations are the Airfield on which the aircraft was based or the postal address of the owner.

Note 7 Prior to the introduction of the Rhodesian Civil Register, and for a short while thereafter, aircraft flew in Rhodesia marked with their previous registration. Where this occurred, they are shown in the register. Aircraft flying regularly in Rhodesia in “foreign” registrations are shown in a separate listing.

Note 8 Abbreviations:

BUS	Broken Up for Spares.
CAA	Central African Airways Cotporation
DBF	Destroyed By Fire
DBR	Damaged Beyond Repair
INTAF	Internal Affairs
Lonrho	London & Rhodesian Mining & Land Co, Salisbury.
NFK	Nothing Further Known.
NTU	Not Taken Up.
PRAW	Police Reserve Air Wing.
RAC	Rhodesian Aviation Syndicate/Company, Bulawayo.
RAMS	Rhodesian Aviation Maintenance Services Ltd
RANA	Rhodesian And Nyasaland Airways Ltd
RATG	Rhodesian Air Training Group (RAF)
Reg	Registration
Regd	Registered
RhAF	Rhodesian Air Force
RUAC	Rhodesian United Aviation Company Ltd
SOC	Struck Off Charge.
SRAF	Southern Rhodesia Air Force.
SRAS	Southern Rhodesia Aviation Services Ltd
DCA	Department of Civil Aviation.
WENELA	Witzwatersrand Native Labour Association.
WO	Written Off

Note 9 This Moth was previously registered to the Durban Light Plane Club. It crashed, was re-built and then sold by Douglas “Duggie” Mail, to the Salisbury Light Plane Club. It is not known if it had any registration marks applied after its crash and during its time with the club. It was used by the club instructor, C.S. “Sandy” Wynne-Eyton to give flying instruction to members of the club during 1929. And in due course became the first aircraft on the Rhodesian register.

Note 10 This Moth stalled and spun in after take-off at Bulawayo; “Pat” Judson and pupil “Jock” Speight were killed. The first fatal air crash in Rhodesia.

Note 11 This Fox Moth was reported as damaged at Port Harcourt, Nigeria on 14-Nov-36; was crashed there again on 22-May-37. The location is suspect.

Note 12 This Leopard Moth operated the First mail flight from Blantyre to Beira. It crashed at Nova Lusitana, Mozambique and was WO on 22-Jul-39.

Note 13 Arthur Mechin used this Anson Mk.1 on the early morning “Sunday Mail” newspaper delivery from Salisbury to Lusaka and Ndola. He always took his faithful co-pilot along - an African called Spider - whom he taught to maintain a steady compass heading with wings level. Comfortably in the cruise one morning, the snoozing captain was rudely awakened by Spider's exclamation, ‘Boss we have lost an engine!’ It had departed the main plane and fallen off! Arthur, now fully awake, managed to land on the Marlborough Flying Club air strip on one engine but the aircraft was DBR. He advertised in the Salisbury Herald newspaper next day; “If anyone in the northern suburbs has found a ‘Cheetah’ it’s mine!” [The Anson had Cheetah engines]

Note 14 This Viscount was leased from Overseas Holidays & Aircraft Hire, SA on 16-Apr-70 and registered VP-YTE[2] to Air Rhodesia. It was returned upon the completion of the lease and in due course on the 09-Mar-76, was sold to Aviation Hire And Travel, SA as ZS-JUJ. This SA registration is thought to have been applied upon its return ex lease to Overseas Holidays & Aircraft Hire.

Note 15 This Cessna was used on PRAW duties by Bill Ludgater. It crashed after the conflict, on 5-Dec-80, (4 killed) the Ludgaters, Phillipa Berlin and an overseas visitor.

Note 16 These two BAC One-Elevens were on order for CAA. Delivery was prevented by United Nations sanctions. Instead, they were sold/gifted? To Zambia Airways.

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Additions or corrections are most welcome, to davenewnham@uwclub.net

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