

## Training and Support Aircraft



VZ637/P a Meteor T.7 of 502 Sqn visiting Bovingdon, sporting pale blue and red unit markings on nose and fuselage.  
(Arthur Percy)

The organisation and types of aircraft through which prospective fighter pilots and navigators underwent their flying training prior to reaching operational squadrons was detailed in Volume 1 of 'Cold War Shield', as was the work and aircraft of the Station Flights. To maintain flying competence it was usual for each fighter squadron to have at least one dual-controlled aircraft with which to assess newly-arrived pilots and to periodically evaluate their instrument flying capabilities, to confer an appropriate rating (detailed in Vic Dabin's contribution as an IRE on page...).

In the early 1950s the Meteor T.7 was issued to Vampire and Venom squadrons for these tasks, because it was the RAF's only dual-controlled jet, and also the type on which pilots would have done their advanced training. After the dual-controlled Vampire T.11 gradually supplanted the Meteor T.7 in the flying training role from late 1952, examples were

issued to Vampire, Venom, and Sabre squadrons for continuation training, though only a few filtered through to the RAuxAF Vampire squadrons, mostly in the closing months of their existence. A few Meteor F.8s were also allocated, primarily for target-towing duties, mostly to Vampire and Venom night fighter squadrons featured in this volume.

As described, fighter squadrons, particularly those based overseas, were frequently on the move in response to operational demands, in many instances requiring the associated conveyance of groundcrews, servicing equipment, and spare parts. This vital though unglamorous role was mainly fulfilled by the Valettas and Hastings of RAF Transport Command or their MEAF and FEAF counterparts, hence the illustrated inclusion of these types as a tribute to the unsung logistics heroes.

### Meteor T.7 usage

#### 3 Squadron

Serial	Codes	Arr	Dep	To
WA656		19/01/50	01/01/52	Gutersloh Meteor Flt
"		17/07/53	06/03/56	20 MU
WA662		11/02/50	01/01/52	Gutersloh Meteor Flt
"		17/07/53	11/06/54	FRL

#### 4 Squadron

Serial	Codes	Arr	Dep	To
WA692		29/07/50	02/07/51	Cat 5 (a)
WF836		26/04/54	30/12/54	2 Gp Com Flt
WF858		14/08/51	06/11/51	Wunstorf Meteor Flt
"		03/03/52	31/03/52	Glos
WL338		17/03/52	24/01/55	16 Sqn

(a) Belly landed in error at Wunstorf.

#### 5 Squadron (see Vol.1)

#### 6 Squadron

Serial	Codes	Arr	Dep	To
VW482		22/05/50	01/07/53	109 MU
WA605		01/05/50	09/12/53	109 MU
WH206		11/11/53	22/02/57	MECS

#### 8 Squadron (see Vol.1)

#### 14 Squadron

Serial	Codes	Arr	Dep	To
WF779		21/04/51	20/10/53	541 Sqn

#### 16 Squadron

Serial	Codes	Arr	Dep	To
WA657		09/03/50	24/05/50	Cat 4 Glos
WA659		23/01/50	23/02/52	87 Sqn
"		25/07/52	22/06/54	FRL
WF789		27/04/51	07/08/52	Cat 5 (a)
WL338		24/01/55	22/04/55	83 Grp Com Flt

(a) Ran out of fuel and abandoned at Billerbeck, WG.

#### 20 Squadron

Serial	Codes	Arr	Dep	To
WG996		15/07/52	16/08/55	Oldenburg S/F