



Royal Australian Air Force F/A-18A/B



F/A-18A/B Hornet

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Hornet Upgrade Program (HUG) improves Australian F/A-18 capability and interoperability

Australia leads the Hornet community in updating their fleet

The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) operates two models of the Boeing F/A-18 Hornet; the single-seat A model and the two-seat B model. Both are high-performance multimission tactical aircraft designed to operate from aircraft carriers and land bases. It is the first tactical aircraft designed from its inception to perform both air-to-air and air-to-ground missions.

On October 20, 1981, Australia selected the F/A-18A/B as its next-generation fighter aircraft to replace the Mirage III. From 1984-1990, 57 A-model Hornets and 18 B-model Hornets were delivered to the RAAF. All but two of the RAAF Hornets were assembled in Avalon at the Government Aircraft Factory, which is now Hawker de Havilland. Hawker de Havilland is an Australian aerospace company owned by The Boeing Company. Immediately following production, RAAF Hornets were standardized to the AFA-18A+/B+ configuration. The RAAF fleet is operated by 81 Wing within the Air Combat Group and includes three operational squadrons (Nos. 3, 77 at Williamtown NSW and 75 at Tindal, NT) and the No. 2 Operational Conversion Unit also at Williamtown.

The RAAF continues to enhance the capabilities of its Hornet fleet. Under Project Air 5376 the Hornet Upgrade Program (HUG) is bringing a wide variety of upgrades to the Hornet's communications, avionics and weapon systems. Phase I of the HUG was completed in June 2002 and included enhancements to the computers, navigation and communications systems, and supported advanced air-to-air weapons. Phase 2.1 was completed in August 2003 at RAAF/Boeing facilities and included the installation of new APG-73 radars, advanced software, and secure communications equipment. Future improvements currently in development include aircraft structural enhancements, and new electronic warfare systems.



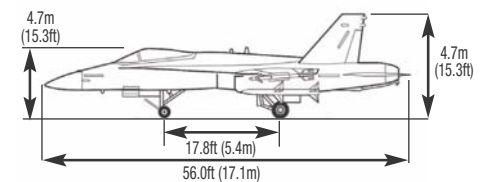
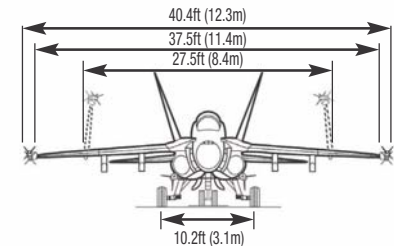
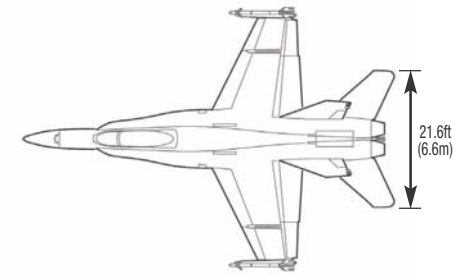
Full Colour Display

The future of the HUG is Phase 2.2 and includes the 19C(A) software configuration set – also known as the Operational Flight Program – and is the latest and most capable Mission Computer software.

Additional elements of the HUG 2.2 upgrades will improve the interoperability of the Australian F/A-18 with U.S. Navy common systems, such as Multifunctional Information Distribution System (MIDS), Joint Helmet Mounted Cueing System (JHMCS), Tactical Aircraft Moving Map Capability (TAMMAC) and ALE-47 digital expendable dispenser. The production installation of these modifications is fully funded and slated to begin by the end of 2005 with completion by the end of 2007 at RAAF/Boeing facilities in Australia. These modifications define the best cost to performance ratio; and increases participation of Australian industry.

Hornet Upgrade Program Additions

- 19C(A) Operational Flight Program brings the latest in mission computers.
- Full-color display suite – the first of its kind in the F/A-18A-D fleet.
- APG-73 radar delivers the latest in sensors.
- TAMMAC helps pilots manage and display maps, and improves fleet readiness.
- CIT queries other platforms to help distinguish friend from foe.
- MIDS-Link 16 pulls together information from other platforms via a digital communication link to reduce the pilot's workload and decision time.
- With JHMCS, the pilot can aim sensors and weapons merely by pointing the helmet at the target and pressing a button.



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