



AIRCRAFT PROFILE

VH-AAX

de Havilland DHC-2/A1 Beaver

Wilton, NSW

Turbine Beaver c/n 1411. A Wilton jump ship. Engine failure over Moruya in 2022, then a landing accident at Deniliquin in February 2025. On rebuild in Canada.

TYPE	de Havilland DHC-2/A1 Beaver
CONSTRUCTOR'S NO.	1411
BUILT	Canada, 1959
ON THE VH REGISTER	30 August 1960
ENGINE	Garrett / Honeywell TPE331
REGISTERED OPERATOR	Jump Aviation, from June 2025
STATUS	Damaged at Deniliquin, Feb 2025; on rebuild in Canada

History

Constructor's number 1411 was built in Canada in 1959 and delivered to Australia in March 1960. It went on the register as VH-AAX on 30 August 1960 with Aerial Agriculture at Bankstown, and was withdrawn in May 1967.

S.W.P. Aircraft Engineering restored it and, in 1968, fitted a Garrett TPE331 in place of the Wasp Junior. The conversion was called a DHC-2/A1, or Walleroo 605, and it carried a revised tail. It went back to Aerial Agriculture, was cancelled as withdrawn in December 1982, and crashed on 31 December 1983. Aviation Industries put it back on the register in September 1986.

With a turbine fitted again, it was being ferried for parachute work on 26 October 1990 when the TPE331 failed near Somersby. The pilot forced-landed heavily. From 1996 it was with Mobile Carpet Cleaning Factory and flew as a Sydney Skydiving Centre jump ship from Wilton, with a jump step on the fuselage. It was offered for sale in August 2018 with 15,925 hours, and was in a major rebuild at Bankstown by June 2020. By November 2020 it was flying from Moruya with Skydive Oz.

On 4 April 2022, overhead Moruya with Skydive Oz, the engine failed just after the parachutists had left. The pilot shut it down and landed back at Moruya. The ATSB found a fatigue crack in the third-stage turbine wheel, which had been left in service past its cycle limit. The airframe had 17,039 hours.





It was flying again by early 2025. On 23 February, on a positioning flight from Langhorne (YLGH) into Deniliquin with Jump Aviation, the pilot met a crosswind on landing and lost control. The right main undercarriage leg came off, and the right wing and propeller struck the ground. Nobody was hurt. The damage was substantial. It remains on the Australian register, to Jump Aviation from 19 June 2025, and as of May 2026 was on rebuild at Sealand Aviation in Campbell River, British Columbia. The earlier photographs are from the Wilton years. The November 2020 set is at Moruya.





AIRCRAFT PROFILE

VH-EAG

Lockheed L-1049 Super Constellation

Shellharbour Airport

Connie — HARS' Super Constellation, Southern Preservation. The last flying L-1049, grounded in 2026 for an engine change.

TYPE	Lockheed C-121C (L-1049)
CONSTRUCTOR'S NO.	4176
NAME	Southern Preservation
OWNER	Historical Aircraft Restoration Society
BASE	Shellharbour Airport
EARLIER IDENTITIES	54-0157, N4115Q
STATUS	Grounded, 2026, for an engine change

History

Connie was delivered to the USAF on 6 October 1955 as 54-0157 and served with the 1608th Air Transport Wing at Charleston. She moved to the Mississippi Air National Guard in 1962, then the 183rd MAS, the West Virginia ANG at Martinsburg, and the Pennsylvania ANG's 193rd Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron.

On 28 March 1977 she arrived at Davis-Monthan for storage. Her last periodic maintenance, on 5 November 1977, recorded 18,452 hours. HARS inspected her in December 1991 and began restoration at the Pima Air & Space Museum the following April.

She flew again on 23 September 1994, now with tip tanks and the Australian registration VH-EAG. She reached Sydney on 3 February 1996, and ownership passed to HARS on 21 February 1997. Named Southern Preservation and painted in Qantas colours, she has been based at Shellharbour Airport and, for years, was the only Super Constellation still flying.

In 2026 an engine problem grounded her. HARS removed the number 1 Wright R-3350 in September while a replacement powerplant is prepared, and opened a public appeal to fund the work. She is still at Shellharbour Airport, waiting to fly again.



AIRCRAFT PROFILE

VH-IBS

Shorts SC.7 Skyvan

Wilton, NSW

Skyvan c/n SH.1893. A Wilton jump ship from 1999 until it left for Israel as 4X-AGP in 2012.

TYPE	Shorts SC.7 Skyvan 3
CONSTRUCTOR'S NO.	SH.1893
BUILT	United Kingdom, 1971
IN AUSTRALIA	1999–2012
EARLIER IDENTITIES	G-AYZB, PK-PSA, N8189J, 9M-BAM
NOW	4X-AGP, from May 2012

History

SH.1893 was built by Shorts in 1971 and first flew as G-AYZB. It was delivered that year to Pelita Air Service in Indonesia as PK-PSA, one of a batch of Skyvans there, later passed through Royair, and in 1989 became N8189J. In 1998 it was 9M-BAM.

Horizon Airlines put it on the Australian register as VH-IBS in 1999. This was the second Skyvan to wear those marks. From 2004 it flew for Sydney Skydivers at Wilton, registered to Mobile Carpet Cleaning Factory, climbing jumpers toward 14,000 feet. The photographs on this site are from that period.

The Australian registration was cancelled on 22 May 2012 and the aircraft was exported to Israel as 4X-AGP. The marks VH-IBS are no longer on a Skyvan.



AIRCRAFT PROFILE

VH-SRW

Cessna 180E

Australia

1962 Cessna 180E, c/n 18051176, on the Australian register since December 1962, with an inflight door.

TYPE	Cessna 180E
CONSTRUCTOR'S NO.	18051176
BUILT	United States, 1962
US REGISTRATION	N2676Y
IN AUSTRALIA	From 3 December 1962
ENGINE	Continental O-470
NOTABLE FIT	Inflight door

History

Constructor's number 18051176 is a 1962 Cessna 180E, built in the United States as N2676Y. It has been VH-SRW since 3 December 1962, and it is still on the Australian register as a normal-category 180E with a Continental O-470 and a Hartzell propeller.

Before these photographs it was restored, and it was fitted with an inflight door so it could be used for skydiving as well as ordinary touring.



AIRCRAFT PROFILE

VH-POO

Cessna 185

Australia

1963 Cessna 185B, c/n 1850549. Photographed as VH-POO; the airframe is now VH-KPZ.

TYPE	Cessna 185B
CONSTRUCTOR'S NO.	1850549
BUILT	United States, 1963
FIRST AUSTRALIAN MARKS	VH-KPA, 3 May 1963
ALSO FLEW AS	N2549Z, VH-KPW, VH-POO
CURRENT MARKS	VH-KPZ
ENGINE	Continental IO-470

History

Constructor's number 1850549 was built in 1963. It was N2549Z in the United States and was registered in Australia as VH-KPA on 3 May 1963. It was withdrawn from use in April 1983. On 29 July 1985, at the end of a landing roll at Jandakot, it ground-looped in a light quartering tailwind. The left gear leg broke and the wing, tailplane and propeller hit the ground. Nobody was hurt. It was restored and, from 1988, flew with Kevron.

In October 1998, still as VH-KPA and on a dog-baiting contract, a fuel cap was fitted incorrectly. The cap lifted, the tanks siphoned, and the aircraft ran out of fuel. That account was published in Flight Safety Australia, January–February 2008.

The marks changed to VH-KPW on 20 December 1999, and to VH-POO on 1 January 2008 — the registration on these photographs. Those marks were later given up. By 2014 VH-POO had been reissued to a different aeroplane, a Bearhawk. The 185 itself is still on the register as VH-KPZ, a 185B, with the same holder recorded from January 2006.



AIRCRAFT PROFILE

VH-WCC

Cessna 182A

Australia

1958 Cessna 182A, c/n 51438, rebuilt in Australia as a tailwheel with an inflight door. Still on the register.

TYPE	Cessna 182A
CONSTRUCTOR'S NO.	51438
BUILT	United States, 1958
US REGISTRATION	N2138G
IN AUSTRALIA	From 17 October 1958
ENGINE	Continental O-470
SINCE 2017	Private owner, Inverell, NSW

History

Constructor's number 51438 left the factory in 1958 as a nosewheel 182A, briefly N2138G, and was registered VH-WCC on 17 October 1958. It is still on the Australian register.

In Australia the airframe was substantially reworked: a skydiving inflight door, a tailwheel conversion, an engine change and a repaint. The photographs here were taken while that work was under way. Since 14 July 2017 the registered operator has been a private owner at Inverell.



AIRCRAFT PROFILE

VH-XLC

PAC 750XL

Wilton, NSW

PAC 750XL c/n 120, with Sydney Skydivers at Wilton since October 2005.

TYPE	Pacific Aerospace 750XL
CONSTRUCTOR'S NO.	120
BUILT	Hamilton, New Zealand, 2005
TEST REGISTRATION	ZK-JAY
ENGINE	PT6A-34, 750 hp
OPERATOR	Mobile Carpet Cleaning Factory
BASE	Wilton, NSW

History

Constructor's number 120 was built by Pacific Aerospace at Hamilton in 2005 and tested as ZK-JAY from 11 May that year. It was registered VH-XLC on 7 October 2005 to Mobile Carpet Cleaning Factory, the company behind Sydney Skydivers, and it is still with that operator.

The 750XL was laid out for this work: a pilot and up to 17 parachutists, and a Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6A-34. From Wilton it can be at 14,000 feet in about a quarter of an hour.



AIRCRAFT PROFILE

VH-XLV

Cessna 208 Supervan 900

Wilton, NSW

1985 Caravan, twice wrecked in Alaska, rebuilt at Bankstown as a 900 hp Supervan. Still a jump ship in 2026.

TYPE	Cessna 208 Caravan, Supervan 900
SERIAL	20800053
BUILT	1985, as N9438F
CONVERSION	Honeywell TPE331-12JR, 900 hp, four-blade prop
OPERATOR	Mobile Carpet Cleaning Factory
STATUS	Still flying, 2026

History

20800053 was built in 1985 with a 650 hp PT6A and registered N9438F to Hermens / MarkAir Express. On 19 December 1987 it failed to stay airborne at Bethel, Alaska — ice, a tailwind and a loading that was out of limits — and the nosewheel collapsed in the snow. It was repaired.

On 3 September 1991, at Dillingham, the engine failed after the oil dipstick was fitted incorrectly on the pre-flight. The pilot put it down in the tundra and it nosed over. Repaired again, it passed to Styles Aviation in 1992 and, in 2001, to Aire Express as a jump ship. It was later seen derelict and without an engine in Florida and New Jersey.

The US registration was cancelled on 9 September 2010 and the airframe was exported to Australia as VH-XLV. CJ Aerospace at Bankstown fitted the Texas Turbines Supervan 900 conversion, exchanging the PT6 for a 900 hp Honeywell TPE331-12JR and a four-blade propeller.

It has stayed with Mobile Carpet Cleaning Factory, flying as a Sydney Skydivers jump ship. Through 2026 it was still working short parachute sorties from Moruya, and from Wilton.



AIRCRAFT PROFILE

N707JT

Boeing 707-138B · ex VH-EBM

Sydney

Qantas City of Launceston, later John Travolta's V-Jet. Donated to HARS and being reassembled at Shellharbour Airport in 2026.

TYPE	Boeing 707-138B
SERIAL	18740 / 388
FIRST FLIGHT AS VH-EBM	1 September 1964
QANTAS NAME	City of Launceston
CURRENT IDENTITY	N707JT
SINCE 2017	Donated to HARS
STATUS	Reassembly at Shellharbour Airport, 2026

History

Rolled out as a 707-138B on 29 July 1964, she first flew as VH-EBM on 1 September for Qantas Empire Airways and was named City of Launceston. On 6 March 1965 a right-hand main axle failed on take-off from Perth; the wheel stayed on the torque rod and she landed safely. Her last Qantas revenue service was 1 April 1968, after which she was stored at Sydney without engines.

Braniff bought her in June 1969 as N108BN and withdrew her in October 1973. Boeing took her back in 1975, then Tracy Investments, then TAG Aviation in Saudi Arabia. She was parked again in 1981, returned to service, became N707XX in 1990, and passed to Aviation Methods in 1995.

In May 1998 she was sold to Jet Clipper Johnny LLC — John Travolta — and that December became N707JT. In June 2002 she was repainted in full Qantas V-Jet colours after Travolta became a Qantas ambassador. The photographs here are from her visit to Sydney, including Hangar 96.

Travolta donated her to the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society in 2017. Corrosion and airworthiness work in the United States made a ferry flight impractical, so she was dismantled at Brunswick, Georgia, in March 2026 and shipped to Australia. The fuselage and wings reached Port Kembla on 13 May 2026 and HARS at Shellharbour Airport on 20 May. Reassembly for permanent display began that October. She is the last of the thirteen short-body 707-138Bs built for Qantas.



AIRCRAFT PROFILE

VH-BOB

CA-18 Mustang Mk 21

Australia

Commonwealth Mustang A68-104. Wheels-up in 2008, flying again from Point Cook since January 2023.

TYPE	Commonwealth CA-18 Mustang Mk 21
CONSTRUCTOR'S NO.	1429
RAAF SERIAL	A68-104
BUILT	September 1947, Fishermans Bend
CIVIL REGISTRATION	VH-BOB, 26 February 1976
BASE	Point Cook, Victoria
STATUS	Flying again since 26 January 2023

History

A68-104, constructor's number 1429, was built by the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation at Fishermans Bend in September 1947 and accepted by the RAAF on 18 November. It flew from East Sale between 1950 and 1955, logged 551 hours, and was stored at Tocumwal.

In 1960 it was sold for scrap and sat at Bankstown and Mascot. In 1962 it was with Sepal and Adastral at Mascot, still in open storage. In April 1964 Dr Tony Fisher bought it, made it airworthy, and flew it for a few years in RAAF markings with the call-sign NA-68. Bob Eastgate bought it in October 1970. It sat at Jerilderie for three years while a weekend crew brought it up to ferry standard. Jack MacDonald flew it to Essendon on 10 March 1973 for a rebuild that put a second seat where the fuselage tank had been.

It went on the civil register as VH-BOB on 26 February 1976 and first flew in those marks the same day, painted as A68-104. From 1994 it operated on an air operator's certificate from Point Cook, taking passengers, with volunteer engineers at RAAF Williams doing the maintenance.

On 5 April 2008 it landed wheels-up on the grass at Point Cook. Nobody was hurt, but the rebuild took fifteen years. Bob Eastgate died on 1 July 2020, still the owner. The Mustang flew again at Essendon on 26 January 2023, with Peter Clements, in RAAF markings. It was active in 2026 and is flown from Point Cook by Mustang Joy Flights.