



# *The Spotter's Journal*

*Aviation News from Luxembourg*

N°75

October 2012

TC-ACF My Cargo / Magma replacing TF-ATX (Peter BAKEMA)



© Peter BAKEMA

**NATO AWACS incident**



© Coert VAN BREDA

**Phantom Special**

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## Another new Cargolux Boeing 747-8F

The latest Boeing 747-8F, LX-VCF (City of Grevenmacher), arrived on 13<sup>th</sup> September. It is the 5<sup>th</sup> Dash 8 for Cargolux.



© Mike MORO

## Return holiday charters

On 4<sup>th</sup> September another holiday charter operated a flight from Cabo Verde to Luxembourg. D4-CBP (flight TCV6440) touched down around sunset.



© Peter BAKEMA

## Gazprom Boeing 737

Gazprom used their Boeing 737-700BBJ, VP-BNZ on 5<sup>th</sup> September for a flight to Luxembourg.



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## Qatar Executive

Qatar Executive operated a flight on 5<sup>th</sup> September with their Bombardier BD-700 Global Express, A7-CEE.



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## Silkway Boeing 767

5<sup>th</sup> September was quite a busy day. Azerbaijan Silkway Airlines was present with a Boeing 767-300, 4K-SW808.



© Peter BAKEMA

## Mistral Air flight from Rome

Another charter flight on 24<sup>th</sup> September. This Mistral Air Boeing 737-300, EI-BUE, arrived from Rome in quite bad weather.



© Olivier BOUTON

## Air China Airbus A330

This Air China, an Airbus A330-200, B-6130, arrived on 7<sup>th</sup> September and stayed until 9<sup>th</sup>.



© Tristan SULZBERGER

## My Cargo / Magma Boeing 747 replacing TF-ATX

A My Cargo / Magma Boeing 747-400F, TC-ACF, arrived on 26<sup>th</sup> September for a first flight to Luxembourg. It has replaced the well known Air Atlanta Icelandic TF-ATX.



© Peter BAKEMA

TF-ATX (Boeing 747-200F, sn: 23744/972) was ferried on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2012 to Marana for storage. The Boeing 747-200 was first flown by British Airways (G-BDXM) and also later operated by Malaysia Airlines and MK Airlines (G-MKLA) in 2009/2010.



© Mike MORO



## NATO AWACS training flight with a little incident

After quite a long break, NATO started their training flights again at Luxembourg airport. LX-N90458 flew around for some hours doing training flights on 19<sup>th</sup> September.



© Mike MORO

On 21<sup>st</sup> September, LX-N90455, did some touch and go's. During an approach the right-hand outboard engine blew up spilling some oil and leaving engine parts on the runway. The runway was closed down for about an hour to clean up the debris.



© Peter BAKEMA

After an engine replacement the Boeing E-3 Sentry departed on 27<sup>th</sup> September.

A spotter caught the incident on video: [LINK](#)



*Text and Photos by Coert VAN BREDA (unless otherwise stated)*

She flew for the first time on May 27th, 1958. A few years later she got introduced to the US NAVY, shortly after followed by the US Air Force, and US Marine Corps. The F-4 Phantom II became the workhorse of the US armed services over the next decades. She earned her stripes in the War over South East Asia, was the major aircraft in the Cold War build-up, before slowly started to be replaced by more modern aircraft, such as the F-14, F-15, F-16 and F-18. She saw her last combat in Desert Storm I in the Suppression of Enemy Air Defense (SEAD)- and Reconnaissance role in 1991, before her US military career ended in 1996.

Did it completely end? No, not really. The US military found a second 'career' for this mighty aircraft: the F-4 is being used as full-scale aerial target (FSAT) for weapons tests.

From experiences of the War over SEA, the USAF learned 2 major things : their pilots needed to be trained in aerial combat (resulting in the creation of the US Fighter Weapon School at Nellis AFB), and the weapon systems used on USAF aircraft needed to be reliable.

The best example of this last point made was the AIM-4 Falcon missile that was introduced on the F-4D in 1967. Produced in both heat-seeking and radar-guided versions, it was designed to be used against slow moving aircraft, with limited maneuverability.



*Sharkmouth QF-4E 71-1073 leads a nice row of 4 QF-4s*

However, it proved ineffectively against the agile enemy fighters over Vietnam. The famous triple ace Colonel Robin Olds, at that time commander of the 8th TFW operating out of Ubon RTAFB, Thailand, explains in his book *'Fighter Pilot'* his frustration for this missile.

*By the beginning of June, we all hated the new AIM-4 Falcon missiles. I loathed the damned useless things. I wanted my Sidewinders back. In two missions I had fired seven or eight of the bloody things and not one guided. They were worse than I had anticipated. Sometimes they refused to launch; sometimes they just cruised off into the blue without guiding. In the thick of an engagement with my head twisting and turning, trying to keep track of friend and foe, I'd forget which of the four I had (already) selected and couldn't tell which of the remaining was perking and which head was already expiring on its launch rail. Twice upon returning to base I had the tech rep go over the switchology and firing sequences. We never discovered I was doing anything wrong*

At the end, he even went so far, to have the F-4Ds rewired and fitted with the AIM-9 Sidewinder instead. Maybe not exactly following the rules, but at least it was effective: at the end, his example was copied by the entire air force, signing the faith of the Falcon missile.

So, under United States law (Title 10, Section 2366 of the U.S. Code) a missile system must undergo lethality testing before it can enter full-scale production. This means it must be fired at a combat-configured target, which for air-to-air or surface-to-air missiles is a full-size, fully capable aircraft. The cost and hazards of using a manned aircraft from the active-duty inventory for this purpose are obvious.

For the US Air Force the 325th Fighter Weapons Wing from Tyndall AFB Florida became responsible for conducting the USAF weapons evaluation. On 1 July 1981 the then 82nd Flying Training Squadron was re-designated 82nd Tactical Aerial Target Squadron, and became assigned to the 325th Fighter Wing. On 15 October 1983 the 82nd Tactical Aerial Target Squadron was transferred to the 475th Fighter Group, from Eglin AFB, Florida, but stayed at Tyndall AFB. It is now part of the 53rd Weapons Evaluation Group, which in turn is assigned to Air Combat Command's 53rd Wing from Eglin AFB.

The 53 WEG is responsible for conducting the USAF Air-to-Air Weapons System Evaluation Program known as Combat Archer from Tyndall AFB and the Air-to-Ground version known as Combat Hammer from Eglin AFB. For these tests the 82nd uses the MQM 107 Streaker and BQM-34 Firebee as Sub-Scale Aerial Targets (SSAT). For data gathering during the different flights the 82nd has 2 E-9A (a special version of the civilian Dash-8) in its inventory. After having used aircraft as the F-102 Delta Dagger, F-100 Super Sabre and the F-106 Delta Dart as FSAT drones over the years, it was a logical decision to pick the F-4 as a successor to the F-106: the F-4 had proven to be a very reliable aircraft and with the retirement of the F-4 in 1996 many aircraft came available.





The redundant F-4s were parked at the Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group (AMARG) Davis-Monthan AFB, Tucson, Arizona, some with only a few flying hours on them. Once 'selected' the candidate QF-4 is made operational again, and then flown to Mojave, California. Here BAe Systems (former Tracor Flight Systems Inc), part of Boeing Company, performs the conversion to the QF-4 FSAT. Tracor, already for years the provider of drones to the US Air Force, received the first contract to convert 12 F-4s to drone in 1992. Many contracts later BAe Systems has converted over 300 F-4s - ranging from F-4E, F-4G to RF-4C.

Main changes made to the F-4 to become a FSAT, is the adding of a 'remote control' system, necessary for the 'in case used for weapon testing'-target role. After completion of the conversion the QF-4 is flown to Tyndall AFB, where they receive the final modification into FSAT. The complete process takes almost 6 months. Only then the drone will be put into service with the 82nd ATRS at Tyndall AFB, being used over Tyndall's air weapons range in the Gulf of Mexico. The squadron's Detachment 1 at Holloman AFB, New Mexico provides target services for the Army and civilian contractors over the Army's White Sands Missile Range (WSMR). The QF-4s are used in 3 type of missions. In the first a manned FSAT is fitted with advanced countermeasure system. During these flights the QF-4 is used as target, but is not fired upon (at least not with a live missile) in order to gain information on the performance of the new weapon system. Since early 2011 the USAF is using the Tyndall based QF-4s for banner tow missions, creating an air-to-air target that combat fighter aircrews could practice on, to continue training and developing their aerial gunnery skills. And finally, there is of course the mission for which the QF-4 was designed : to act as an aerial target, to enable manufactures to test their new weapon systems - such as missiles or aircraft - in practice.



Most of the QF-4s are recognized by the orange painted wingtips and tail. However, the 82nd ATRS also has some QF-4s in SEA camouflage scheme. These QF-4s belong to the USAF Heritage Flight. In celebration of the 50th anniversary of the USAF the Heritage Flight program was founded in 1997. US Heritage Flight performances of modern fighter attack aircraft flying with World War II and Korean War warbirds dramatically display USAF airpower history and honor the brave men and women who have served, or are currently serving, in the USAF. Already in 2004 the 82nd tried to add the (Q)F-4, the main US tactical fighter during the Vietnam era, to the USAF Heritage Flight program. Lacking the appearance of the F-4, an aircraft that formed the backbone of the US services for decades, was according the 82nd not acceptable.

In 2005, after receiving approval from the USAF, the QF-4 took part in some Heritage Flights at a few airshows. As from 2006 the QF-4 is fully integrated into the USAF Heritage Flight, and receives annual funding from Air Combat Command. This allows the QF-4 to appear at approximately 20 airshows per year. As well, a simple QF-4 solo display routine was introduced.



*QF-4E 71-1087: 40 years, but still going strong*

A few years ago, the USAF has indicated that the performances of the QF-4 didn't really match the current (and future) adversaries anymore. In search for a replacement, the Department of Defense awarded a \$70 million multi-year contract to Boeing that represented Phase I of the initial engineering, manufacturing and development of the QF-16 Full Scale Aerial Target (FSAT). The first delivery is scheduled for 2014. The 'Viper-Drone' will be a higher-performing aircraft than the QF-4, and representative of fourth-generation targets. They will be flown manned or unmanned within a controlled range and equipped to evaluate how U.S. fighters and weapons will operate against potential adversaries.

On 22 April 2010, the first F-16 to be converted to an aerial target arrived at Boeing's facility at Cecil Field, Jacksonville, Florida. Six F-16s will be modified during the development phase, as prototypes for engineering tests and evaluation. From 2014, up to 126 QF-16 drones will be created. The prototype QF-16 took its maiden flight on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Starting in January 2013, the 576th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Squadron refit team will begin modification work on the QF-16 program. Davis-Monthan AFB / AMARG has 210 F-16s stocked for conversion. From that pool, the Air Force will draw airframes for its 126 planned QF-16 drones.

With the foreseen replacement by the QF-16, the Phantoms 'career' as drone will obviously come to an end. It is planned that the last QF-4 is expected to be expended around 2015. Last May the last F-4 to be regenerated for the FSAT program was towed into AMARG's production line. The final F-4 regeneration and delivery of RF-4C, serial no. 68-0609, is expected to take place in January 2013, which will bring the total number of QF-4 deliveries to 318.



© Desert Lightning News

With the help of the F-4 Phantom II Society, an organization dedicated to the preservation of the history of the F-4 Phantom II, I was able to visit Det.1 82nd ATRS at Holloman AFB on August 16th 2011. A dream came true, a smile grew on my mouth from ear to ear, when walking onto the ramp, packed with 30 QF-4s.... I wish to thank 'Mr. President', 'die Phantomfrau' and LtCol. Danserau for their help in making this visit possible.



No need to give QF-4E 68-0464 a new paintjob: her days are numbered, as she is sitting on Death Row.....



QF-4E 72-0162/HD, the personal ride of Det1 Commander, LtCol "Dizzy" Gillespie, painted in the colors of Air Force legend, Col. Robin Olds. Olds, a quadruple ace, scored 4 kills in the skies over Vietnam, hence the 4 stars on the splitter-plate. This is one of the USAF Heritage Flight F-4s, appearing on airshows all over the States.



## Luxembourg's Logbook: Passenger and Cargo Visitors

03.09.2012	HB-VPM	Private	Cessna 510 Citation Mustang
04.09.2012	69-033	Turkish Air Force	Transall C-160D
	D4-CBP	TACV Cabo Verde	Boeing 757-200
	G-CGSJ	TAG Aviation	Bombardier BD-700 Global Express
	I-TOPX	TopJet Executive	Hawker 400A Beechjet (400XP)
	LX-VPG	Private	Bombardier BD-10 Challenger 300
	OE-GSZ	Private	Cessna 560XL Citation XLS
	SP-KHK	Private	Cessna 510 Citation Mustang
	YL-RAC	RAF-Avia Airlines	Antonov An-26
05.09.2012	4K-SW808	Silk Way Airlines	Boeing 767-300
	9H-BOM	Orion	Bombardier CL-60 Challenger 605
	A7-CEE	Qatar Executive	Bombardier BD-700 Global Express
	C-FTNB	Bell Helicopter	Bell 429
	F-HBPP	Air Taxi	Cessna 525B CitationJet CJ3
	F-HSUN	Corsair	Boeing 747-400F
	G-RHMS	Astra Fire	Embraer ERJ-135BJ Legacy 600
	VP-BNZ	Gazprom	Boeing 737-700 BBJ
06.09.2012	G-XAVB	Private	Cessna 510 Citation Mustang
	N513EA	Private	Eclipse EA-500
	OE-GXL	Speedwings Executive	Cessna 560XL Citation Excel
	YL-RAB	RAF-Avia Airlines	Antonov An-26
07.09.2012	B-6130	Air China	Airbus A330-200
	OE-LES	Niki	Airbus A321-200
08.09.2012	4K-SW808	Silk Way Airlines	Boeing 767-300
	9H-AFJ	Eurojet	Learjet 60
	HB-VOI	Private	Raytheon 390 Premier 1A
	N7877T	Private	Cessna 525B CitationJet CJ3
	N800JH	J & J Aviation	Gulfstream GV-SP (G550)
	OE-FVJ	Airlink	Cessna 525 CitationJet
11.09.2012	G-BUUR	Atlantic Airlines	British Aerospace ATP
	G-RHMS	Astra Fire	Embraer ERJ-135BJ Legacy 600
	LX-AFD	Global Jet Luxembourg	Dassault Falcon 900DX
	LX-NVB	Global Jet Luxembourg	Embraer ERJ-135BJ Legacy 600
	VQ-BOK	Private	Bombardier BD-700 Global Express
12.09.2012	4K-SW800	Silk Way Airlines	Boeing 747-400F
	CS-DPN	Private	Cessna 510 Citation Mustang
	M-LWSA	Private	Bombardier BD-700 Global Express
	SE-RBY	NEX Time Jet	Cessna 550 Citation Bravo
13.09.2012	G-BTPG	Atlantic Airlines	British Aerospace ATP
14.09.2012	G-BTTO	Atlantic Airlines	British Aerospace ATP
	I-CMAB	Aliven	Cessna 560XL Citation XLS
17.09.2012	M-GDRS	Surf-Air	Raytheon 390 Premier 1
19.09.2012	F-GVML	Private	Bombardier Global Express
	F-HBOL	Leadair Unijet	Dassault Falcon 900EX
	G-CGSJ	TAG Aviation	Bombardier BD-700 Global Express
	G-EJEL	Private	Cessna 550 Citation 2
	HB-IUW	Jet Aviation Business Jets	Dassault Falcon 900B
	I-CALZ	Interfly	Cessna 525A CitationJet CJ2+
	LX-N90458	NATO AWACS	Boeing E-3A Sentry
21.09.2012	G-KLNR	Private	Hawker 400A Beechjet (400XP)
	LX-N90455	NATO AWACS	Boeing E-3A Sentry
	OE-LEW	flyNiki	Airbus A321-200
22.09.2012	EC-JOY	Air Nostrum	Bombardier CRJ-200LR

23.09.2012	G-CGSJ	TAG Aviation	Bombardier BD-700 Global Express
	LX-GXX	Private	Bombardier BD-700 Global Express
24.09.2012	D-CALL	Air Hamburg Private Jets	Cessna 550 Citation Bravo
	D-CREY	Triple Alpha	Cessna 650 Citation 3
	EI-BUE	Mistral Air	Boeing 737-300
	G-RHMS	Astra Fire	Embraer ERJ-135BJ Legacy 600
	VP-BIK	Air Bridge Cargo Airlines	Boeing 747-400F
25.09.2012	N120AK	Private	Bombardier BD-700 Global Express
	N497XP	Private	Raytheon 400A Beechjet (400XP)
	UR-CAK	Meridian	Antonov An-12
26.09.2012	D-AWKG	Private	Dassault Falcon 900EX
	TC-ACF	ACT Airlines	Boeing 747-400F
	VQ-BLR	Air Bridge Cargo Airlines	Boeing 747-8F
	YU-BUU	Air Pink	Cessna 525A CitationJet CJ2+
27.09.2012	CS-DGR	Private	Cessna 650 Citation 7
	I-CMAB	Aliven	Cessna 560XL Citation XLS
	OE-FWW	Private	Raytheon 390 Premier 1
28.09.2012	LX-USM	Global Jet Luxembourg	Falcon 7X
30.09.2012	TC-ACF	ACT Airlines	Boeing 747-400F

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