



RAAF WAGGA

AVIATION HERITAGE CENTRE

Gloster Meteor Mk.8

A77-871

The Meteor Mk.8 was the first jet aircraft type used by the Royal Australian Aircraft (RAAF) in combat. A77-871 served with the RAAF from March 1953 and was retired from service in 1961.

Gloster Meteor A77-871 was built in the United Kingdom (UK). It was delivered to RAAF's No 91 Wing in March 1953, which was established to exercise command over RAAF units deployed during the Korean War. This included No 77 Squadron (77SQN), who operated Meteors.

A77-871 was briefly allocated to No 78 Wing (No 75 Squadron) when the RAAF reorganised. When 77SQN converted to Sabres in 1956, A77-871 was transferred to the General Reserve. In 1958, the aircraft was transferred to RAAF Wagga in NSW for instructional use.

A77-871 has been displayed at RAAF Wagga since 1961 and now resides in the RAAF Wagga Aviation Heritage precinct.



A77-871 with other Meteors. Source: ADF Serials

Technical Specifications

DESCRIPTION: Single-seat interceptor and ground-attack fighter of all-metal, stressed-skin construction.

POWER PLANTS: Two 16.0kN (3600lb) thrust Rolls-Royce Derwent 8 turbojets.

DIMENSIONS: Span 11.33m (37ft 2in); length 13.59m (44ft 7in); height 3.96m (13ft 0in).

WEIGHTS: Empty 4853kg (10,700lb); normal loaded 7121kg (15,700lb); max loaded 8663kg (19,100lb).

ARMAMENT: Four 20mm cannons in nose; eight 27kg (60lb) rockets or two 454kg (1000lb) bombs under wings.

PERFORMANCE: Max speed 941km/h 585mph at sea level, 869km/h 540mph at 9144m (30,000ft); cruising speed 666km/h (414mph); initial climb 2134m/min (7000ft/min); service ceiling 13,106m (43,000ft); range with ventral tank 1234km (767 miles).

Gloster Meteor Mk.8

The Gloster Meteor Mk.8 was the first operational jet aircraft in Royal Air Force (RAF) service. On 12 July 1944, the Meteor made its debut with No 616 Squadron RAF and it was the only allied jet to be flown in combat roles during World War II.

The Rolls-Royce Derwent 5 turbojet engine powered the Meteor F.4. Its first flight took place in May 1945. This engine enabled speeds of 940 km/h (Mach 0.77) at sea level and Mach 0.8 at altitude.

A total of 3886 Meteors were produced, with the final one (an NF.14 variant) delivered in May 1955.

In May 1946, the RAAF officially welcomed its first jet fighter when the ex-RAF Meteor F.3 (EE427) arrived at RAAF Laverton in Victoria from the UK. Designated as A77-1, it captured the attention of the Australian people when it flew over Melbourne in Victoria at a speed of 788 km/h (490 mph).



A77-871 undergoing undercarriage maintenance in Hobart in Tasmania, shortly after 775SQN's return from service in Korea and Japan. The Meteors were in Tasmania as part of an Australia-wide public relations tour in 1955. Source: Australian War Memorial, P02948.095

When the Korean War broke out in June 1950, the RAAF urgently needed a jet fighter and the Meteor was the only one available at such short notice. Seventeen Meteors (Mk.8 fighters and Mk.7 two-seat trainers) were shipped to Japan as deck cargo, with subsequent deliveries made by air. 775SQN made RAAF history on 29 July 1951 by being the first RAAF squadron to deploy a jet aircraft in combat.

The RAAF received a total of 93 Meteor Mk.8s and four Mk.7s. Additionally, three Mk.7s arrived in Australia in 1955, and Meteor NF.11 joined as A77-3 for missile trials and other tests. By late 1956, the Meteor was phased out and replaced by the CAC Sabre.

Sources

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