



South Australian Aviation Museum *Aircraft Profile*

de HAVILLAND DH-112 SEA VENOM WZ931

Single engine carrier-borne, all-weather fighter-bomber

History of WZ931

Constructed as a Sea Venom FAW.53. Purchased by the Royal Australian Navy Fleet Air Arm in February 1956, it left Britain a month later on board HMAS *Melbourne*. Arriving in Sydney in May 1956, it was transferred to 724 SQN HMAS *Albatross* at Nowra. During a display the airframe was subjected to 8Gs resulting in a cracked false spar, starboard stub plane buckled. It was operated by 805 SQN at some point during its service life and was also on display at Naval Aviation Museum, Nowra. It arrived at SAAM from the RAN Museum, Nowra, in October 1987.





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History of Type

The Sea Venom is a descendant of the DH-100 Vampire, upgraded and navalised for carrier operations. These modifications include an arrester hook for deck landings, and folding wings. Like the Vampire, the fuselage was built from layers of balsa wood and plywood, whilst the wings and tail booms were of conventional aluminium construction. Later, power-operated folding wings were introduced. The Sea Venom first flew in 1951 and was the Royal Navy's first all-weather jet fighter placed into service, succeeding the DH Sea Hornets in 1954.

Originally it was intended that the Sea Venoms for the RAN would be built by de Havilland (Australia) at Bankstown, NSW, following on after the Vampire on the production line, but this changed to a direct purchase of 39 from the UK. These were operated by the RAN from 1956 until 1978.

In September 1967 HMAS *Melbourne* sailed to the USA to pick up the A-4 Skyhawks and the S-2E Trackers to replace the Fairey Gannets and Sea Venoms. The Venoms then operated as land-based aircraft until they were superseded progressively when the Macchis started to arrive in 1970.

Technical Specifications

Engine: de Havilland Ghost 104 turbojet of 4,950 lb thrust (22 kN)

Maximum take-off weight: 7,212 kg

Length: 11.2 m

Wing span: 13.05 m

Height: 2.6 m

Maximum speed: 500 kt (927 kph)

Range: 1080 km (600 nm)

Crew: 1 pilot and 1 navigator

Armament: 4 x 20mm Hispano Cannon, 8 x 60 lb 3 in rockets or 2 x 1,000 lb bombs