

**Press Release****For Immediate Publication**

## Nomad 40 Years Young



40 years ago this month the Australian designed and built GAF Nomad multi role aircraft first flew. A healthy number of Nomads are still active around the world and Australian aircraft manufacturer GippsAero, a Mahindra Aerospace Company, is working hard to bring its Nomad based GA18 twin turbine multi role aircraft into production.

The Nomad began life in the late 1960s at the Government Aircraft Factories (GAF), near Melbourne as Project N. The Australian Government, which was keen to maintain aircraft production skills at GAF after the Mirage III fighter production ended, funded the building of two prototypes in January 1970 for the twin-engined, multi-purpose transport market.

The first prototype (VH-SUP) flew for the first time on 23 July 1971 with Stewart Pearce at the controls. The aircraft, known as the N2, was aimed at both military and civilian markets. The designation was changed to N22 and became the N22B in production. Many examples of the 12 seat N22B have been used in various roles around the world. An 18 seat development was designated the N24 and later the N24A (with an increase in Maximum Take-Off Weight (MTOW)).

In 1972 the government approved an initial production run of 20 Nomads, including 11 for the Australian Army. The Army Nomads were known as Mission Masters and were delivered between 1975 and 1977. The Australian Defence Forces eventually operated 29 Nomads, including 8 N24s. The Nomad is operated by the military services of the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia, and was also flown by the Papua New Guinea Defence Force. Major civil users included the Royal Flying Doctor Service, Northern Territory Medical Service, Northern Territory Aerial Works, Skywest Airlines, Australian Customs, many Commuter airlines in Australia, Holland, PNG, the USA and the US Customs service.

A total of 172 Nomads, including the two prototypes, were manufactured and the following variants were offered.

- N2 Nomad - Prototype, two built.
- N22 - Initial production version- Only one built.
- N22B - 10 passenger version, MTOW 8,500lb.
- N22C - MTOW increased to 4,050 kilograms (9,100lb).
- N22S -Searchmaster- B and L models
- N22F - Floatmaster - Amphibian float version.
- N24 -Aeromedical role transport aircraft with a fuselage lengthened by 3ft 9in (1.14m) 6 built.
- N.24A - Improved commuter version for 18 passengers, MTOW 9,400lb, 37 built.

In 1986, GAF was incorporated into Aerospace Technologies of Australia, which was later sold to the Rockwell.Boeing Australia Limited acquired the Nomad Type Certificate in 1996 after The Boeing Company purchased the Rockwell Group including ASTA. Boeing maintained ASTA's close working relationship with the Commonwealth to support and maintain the aircraft's Type Certificate requirements.

On 2008, GippsAero, the manufacturer of the GA8 Airvan utility aircraft, announced they had acquired the Nomad's Type Certificate with a view to restarting production and would provide engineering and spares support to the existing Nomad fleet. GippsAero's parent company, Mahindra Aerospace, has since committed funding to return the type to production as the GA18.

The N24A based GA18 will be re-engineered with upgraded engines, new propellers, glass cockpit, weight-saving measures, reduced maintenance requirements and aerodynamic refinements. Following an extensive development and test program, the type will be certificated to FAR 23 at Amendment 59.GippsAero plans to bring the GA18 to the market place in 2014.

As of 20 July 2011 there are several operational Nomads in the armed services of Indonesia (15), Thailand (16) and the Philippines (3), with another 26 aircraft are classed as being in storage. In the civil world there is one Nomad in the UK, three in Sabah and an amphibian in the USA. In Australia there is one operational Nomad,an N22C VH-ATO, with another four in New Zealand. One of these, a N24A ZK-NMC, has now been purchased by GippsAero and following its return to Australia, will become the developmental aircraftfor the GippsAero GA18.



A Mahindra Aerospace Company



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