

Acquisition of the Douglas DB-7B and DB-7C for the Netherlands East Indies Navy



By Scott A. Thompson

Boeing-built DB-7B similar to the 12 transferred to the Dutch East Indies MLD by the U.S. government in December 1941. Boeing built 240 DB-7Bs on a contract originally placed by the French in 1940, that was assumed by the British in June 1940, many of which were diverted to the U.S. Army Air Corps after December 7, 1941. (Douglas)

There has been confusion in accounts of the acquisition and use of the Douglas DB-7B and DB-7C by the *Marine Luchtvaartdienst* (MLD)—the Naval Air Service of the Netherlands East Indies—between October 1940 and May 1942. It was a tumultuous period, and few primary sources are available. In an effort to provide a more complete account of this subject, the following combines material from primary sources, particularly the archives at the Douglas Aircraft Co., with secondary source material that directly cites primary sources. From these records, a reasonably complete account of the 32 DB-7Bs and 48 DB-7Cs that were planned to be placed in service with the *Marine Luchtvaartdienst* (MLD), or Naval Air Service of the Netherlands East Indies, is presented.

Background

Britain and France declared war on Germany on September 3, 1939, after the German invasion of Poland. During the “Phony War” period that followed, the British and French continued frantically trying to rearm. The Netherlands joined the French and British effort, and all three turned to the United States for weapons, particularly aircraft.

The Netherlands government combined several initiatives to procure arms from the U.S. through the Netherlands Purchasing Commission (NPC), based in New York. Efforts to place orders for aircraft were necessarily complicated by the clamor for production from the expanding but still limited output of American factories. The priority offered to the British and French in the rearming effort often pushed the NPC to the back of the line. In October 1939, the NPC placed an order for

24 Curtiss Model 75 Hawk fighters, the export version of the Air Corps P-36. However, efforts made to place orders with other manufacturers were frustrated by priorities and engine shortages.

The situation changed radically in May 1940 with the German invasion of the Netherlands, Belgium, and France. The Dutch army surrendered on May 14, 1940, but the government went into exile in London. The Dutch colonies, including the Netherlands East Indies (NEI), continued efforts to rearm. In June 1940, the NPC ordered 108 Brewster Model 340s, the export version of the U.S. Navy’s SB2A, for the MLD.¹ In October, 72 Brewster Model 339 Buffaloes, the export version of the Navy F2A, were ordered for *Militaire Luchtvaart KNIL* (ML-KNIL), the equivalent of the Dutch East Indies Army Air Force.² Engine shortages remained as a production roadblock and in many cases the engines to equip these orders had to be obtained through second-hand channels. Although these two production orders were placed in the summer and fall of 1940, deliveries were not scheduled until 1941.

The Douglas DB-7

The Douglas DB-7 was a very capable twin-engine attack bomber, derived from the Model 7B, which first flew in October 1938. In February 1939, the French government received permission from the U.S. to purchase 100 DB-7s, the initial version of the upgraded 7B design. The French DB-7 was powered by a pair of 900-hp Pratt & Whitney SC3-G Twin Wasp engines. (Note: In this article, the manufacturer’s designation is used for those aircraft/engines not originally ordered by the



Unidentified Boeing-built DB-7B most likely seen at Boeing Field in Seattle. Boeing delivered its DB-7Bs between August 1941 and January 26, 1942, with 12 of the earlier deliveries ultimately being transferred to the Dutch MLD in December 1941. (AAHS Photo 56077)



The Douglas flight line outside the factory at Santa Monica in 1941. Air Corps A-20s and British DB-7Bs are seen, along with two DC-3s. (Douglas)

U.S., those having no U.S. military designations. Contractual and other document details for such non-U.S. government orders specify the manufacturer's designation.)

Douglas was already working on a version of the DB-7 for the U.S. Army, using the Wright R-2600 powerplant. In May 1939, the Army placed an order for its version of the DB-7, designated A-20, ordering 63 A-20s and 123 A-20As. In October, the French Purchasing Commission placed a second order for an additional 170 DB-7s. The second order specified that later production DB-7s would be equipped with the 1,000-hp Pratt & Whitney S3C4-G engines with two-speed superchargers. Also in October, French placed a third order, this one for 100 improved DB-7As, the major change being an engine switch to the 1,600-hp Wright GR-2600AB Cyclone. This was followed shortly by a British order for 150 DB-7Bs, with an option for 150 more, also to be equipped with the Wright Cyclone engines.

In April 1940, the French came back and ordered 480 revised DB-7s that the French called the DB-73 and Douglas called the DB-7C. These aircraft were to be equipped with the smaller Pratt & Whitney S3C4-G engines. Planned armament changes included a solid gun nose and other refinements. Because the French were desperate for aircraft, particularly the DB-7s, an arrangement was worked out whereby Douglas would build 240 DB-7s, while Boeing would build the other 240 DB-7s at its Seattle plant.

The Dutch order the DB-7

By April 1940, there were 1,336 DB-7s or A-20s on order: 100 DB-7s on the first French contract, 170 DB-7s on the second French contract, 186 A-20s and A-20As for the Air Corps, 100 DB-7As on the third French contract; 300 DB-7Bs on the British contract; and 480 DB-73s on the fourth French contract. However, none of the 480 French DB-73s from the fourth French contract were built as ordered. After the fall of France, the British assumed the contract on June 17, 1940, and all 480 aircraft were subsequently built to the British DB-7B standard.

In October 1941, the NPC came to Douglas' Santa Monica, Calif., plant to negotiate the purchase of a torpedo-carrying



The Douglas factory at Santa Monica produced the majority of the DB-7s and A-20s, though some were built at the nearby (old) Northrop factory in El Segundo and the new Douglas plant at Long Beach. (Douglas)

version of the DB-7 for the NEI Naval Air Service, the MLD. The Dutch government already enjoyed a working relationship with Douglas Aircraft, having previously purchased eight Northrop 8A-3Ns.³

After working out the design details, Douglas designated the design as the DB-7C (one it had also initially assigned to the French aircraft that were ultimately built as DB-7Bs). The resulting contract called for 48 DB-7Cs built in accordance with Douglas specification DS-421, dated October 10, 1941, powered by Wright GR2600-A5B engines and modified as necessary to accommodate the American Mark XIII aerial torpedo and other custom equipment.

The terms of the contract, to include 20 percent spare parts, specified a \$8,395,000 price, of which \$5,457,000 was paid before the contract was even signed. The contract assumed the performance guarantees of the British DB-7B but mandated no additional tests. The first aircraft was to be used to check the torpedo installation and conduct dropping tests. Otherwise, each aircraft was to be fabricated, assembled, test flown, and then disassembled for shipping. The contract specified that the aircraft were considered delivered when on the dock at San Pedro packed for shipping.⁴



Another of the MLD DB-7Cs on the ramp at Santa Monica. This is msn 6266 delivered to the Army Air Forces at Las Vegas, Nev., on May 9, 1942. It was soon its way to the Soviet Union as a Lend-Lease transfer. This airplane was probably initially painted with the Dutch inverted orange triangle insignia but was delivered with the AAF insignia. It would then carry the Red Star of the Soviet Union. (Douglas)

Douglas scheduled production on the DB-7C contract at Santa Monica, and assigned company serials 6265 through 6312. In the production sequence, this was after a second Air Corps A-20A contract for 20 aircraft and before any A-20C production. The Dutch contract specified delivery dates of 20 aircraft in April 1942 and 28 aircraft in May 1942.⁵

After the initial payment was received, Douglas placed orders with the necessary suppliers, including Curtiss-Wright for the engines and Hamilton Standard for the propellers. However, on December 3, 1941, the NPC advised Douglas that it wanted to utilize 96 of the 120 GR2600-A5B engines already delivered to the Brewster Aeronautical Corp. for installation on their Model 340 dive bomber being built for the MLD. The NPC decided to use upgraded engines in the Brewster aircraft, making the GR2600-A5B engines available for the DB-7. Douglas canceled their contract with Curtiss-Wright and worked out an arrangement with Brewster to take delivery of the available engines.⁶

Another source indicates that the NPC was having difficulties obtaining any engines for the Model 340 production by Brewster, the U.S. government having deemed that the Royal Air Force order of Model 340s had priority. The NPC-earmarked engines were instead sold to the British for their aircraft.⁷ The tie-in between the NPC instructions to Douglas and the engine shortage remains unresolved.

Pearl Harbor: All Plans Altered

On December 7, 1941, the Japanese unleashed an onslaught that brought the United States into World War II and marked the beginning of an offensive that quickly swept over much of Southeast Asia and into the South Pacific. The Japanese tidal wave reached the NEI on March 1, 1942, when units of the Japanese Army landed on Java, the Dutch colony's main island. Allied forces remaining on Java were evacuated to Australia, and within a few weeks the island had been overrun. The bulk



One of the MLD-bound, RAAF-diverted DB-7Bs was A28-5, shown here in RAAF service, date unknown. It rolled off the production line at Santa Monica as msn 3825 with RAF serial AL893 in November 1941. It was slated to go to the MLD, probably as D-68, but was instead diverted again to Australia when the NEI capitulated in early March 1942. It served with RAAF 22 Squadron until September 1943 when it suffered sufficient battle damage on a mission to cause it to ultimately be scrapped for parts. (Douglas)

of the NEI had surrendered by March 8, 1942—at least a month before the first MLD DB-7C was scheduled to be delivered.

In the U.S., the war emergency that began on December 7 placed any and all available military aircraft up for grabs for the most critical needs. Of the group of 480 DB-7Bs (half built by Douglas, half by Boeing), approximately 163 were eventually delivered to the RAF as Boston IIIs.⁸ The remaining 317 RAF-earmarked aircraft were either still under construction at Boeing or elsewhere in the continental U.S. awaiting transport to England. Many were at east coast airfields, specifically Floyd Bennet Field in New York and Grenier Field, New Hampshire, where these aircraft were being marshalled for delivery to the RAF.

On December 15, 1941, these DB-7Bs were taken over by the U.S. Army Air Corps for use as needed to meet the war emergency. On or about December 24, 32 of these, most delivered from both Boeing and Douglas in the middle of November, were designated for delivery to the MLD. *[Editor's note: These DB-7s were in addition to the 48 DB-7Cs order placed in October.]* (See Table 1 for allocated aircraft.) One source indicates that these DB-7Bs were at first slated to go as emergency aid to China but were instead re-diverted to the MLD.⁹

Seven of these DB-7Bs¹⁰ were located at the Ogden Air Depot and immediately flown to Douglas for conversion for Dutch use and preparation for shipment.¹¹ This involved the installation of Dutch radios and instruments, where available, plus other details to make the aircraft combat ready after assembly at their destinations.

Events may have been moving even faster than the documentation suggests. One of the allocated aircraft (RAF s/n AL902) was destroyed in a crash near Taft, Calif., on December 10, 1941.¹² Another (AL905) was badly damaged



Creative work by a Douglas darkroom turned a photo of AAF A-20As into DB-7Cs destined for the Netherlands East Indies. The photo was used to illustrate the type wearing the Dutch insignia. Some of the actual DB-7Cs were most likely painted with the Dutch insignia prior to deliveries that began in May 1942, but they all had AAF markings when actually delivered as the U.S. government had taken over the aircraft. Most, if not all, of the DB-7C built went directly to the Soviet Union as part of Lend-Lease. (Douglas)

the same day.¹³ Due to these accidents, neither aircraft was actually transferred to the MLD, yet both are shown in a USAAF export report as being earmarked for the NEI.¹⁴ So it would seem that the MLD allocation occurred in some fashion prior to December 10. It was a confusing time and other available information does not always reflect what the catch-up paperwork documents.

The NPC requested that Douglas fabricate 32 complete sets of “new-type” self-sealing fuel tanks, including fuel lines, for the earmarked DB-7Bs. The documentation for this order is dated February 7, 1942, and noted that payment for the tanks would be made when delivered ready for shipment at San Pedro. Whether this order was fulfilled is doubtful, given the rapidly changing situation.¹⁵

Although the official transfer was not approved until late January 1942, the need for the aircraft was more urgent than completed paperwork, and the remaining Dutch DB-7Bs were ferried to Long Beach by December 27, 1941.¹⁶ The first six were expeditiously modified, disassembled, and crated. These shipped from San Pedro aboard the freighter *Kota Baroe* on or about January 15, 1942. As the six DB-7s were in transit, Douglas continued to convert the 22 remaining in the Dutch allotment. Upon completion of the required modifications, 17 were ferried from Long Beach to Floyd Bennet Field in New York, where they were disassembled, crated, and shipped out between late January and mid-February. The remaining five DB-7Bs were shipped from San Pedro on the M.V. *Tarakan* on or about February 9, 1942.¹⁷

In summary, available records conclude that of the 32 air-

The original source of this photo remains unknown, but it shows one of the two MLD DB-7Bs that fell into Japanese hands when the NEI capitulated in March 1942. One was tested by the Japanese Army at Tachikawa and the second by the Japanese naval air forces at Atsugi, both in Japan. (Douglas)

craft earmarked for the NEI, two were lost in accidents on December 10. Another (AL889) was held at Long Beach, and one (AL457) was a late delivery from Boeing and seems never to have been incorporated. This left a total of 28 DB-7Bs planned for shipment to the NEI in January-February 1942.

The DB-7 in the NEI Campaign,

In early 1942, 10 ships were headed for the NEI with a variety of war materiel aboard—including disassembled P-40Es, Brewster 339s, and Curtiss-Wright CW-22Bs—in a desperate attempt to stem or at least slow the Japanese advance.¹⁸ In late February, the freighters were still in transit as the Japanese invasion loomed. On February 27 the *Kota Boroe* docked at Tjilatjap, on the southern coast of central Java, with its load of the first six MLD DB-7Bs plus four Lockheed 12A light transports and four Curtiss Wright CW-22B Falcon trainers.¹⁹ Over the next two days, the aircraft crates were unloaded and dispersed around the harbor to protect them from Japanese air raids. The original intent was for the crated aircraft to be sent by rail to a base at Djocjakarta (on Java) for assembly. Due to Japanese air raids, the plan was changed. Three of the disassembled DB-7Bs were sent by rail to Bandoeng (now Bandung), about 150 miles to the west, for assembly at Andir airfield.

The other three DB-7Bs were scheduled for assembly right at Tjilatjap. Even though the port lacked an airport, a makeshift runway was created to handle departures of reassembled P-40s and the DB-7Bs. An enemy air raid on March 4th significantly damaged the port area, but the DB-7Bs, two still mostly in their crates, were not damaged. That evening, one of the DB-7Bs was ready for flight. It departed the following morning for the base at Tasikmalaja, where it was to be refueled. However, 100-octane fuel was not available there, and it ended up being



The faint "240" on the nose in the lower left of this photos signifies it was the 240th, or last DB-7B built by Douglas on the French contract assumed by the British. This would make it msn 3839 and RAF serial AL907. (Douglas painted the production fuselage numbers on its DB-7Bs that often carried forth into their operational service.) This aircraft was earmarked to go to the MLD in December 1941 but was diverted enroute to the RAAF instead, being received in March 1942 and assigned the RAAF serial of A28-8. It served in 22 Squadron with the RAAF until a September 1943 crash landing at an airfield in New Guinea. It was written off but then recovered by the RAAF in 1987 and restored for display at the RAAF Museum at Pt. Cook in Australia. (J.W. Smith Collection/J.L. Horsthuis via P.C. Boer's paper on the Dutch DB-7s)

the other earmarked DB-7Bs, at least one source states that Douglas removed the RAF markings and replaced them with Dutch markings and serials. "All of these Bostons [that arrived in Australia] had their British national marking over-painted with Dutch insignia and the legend "Kon Marine" painted in small black letters on either side of the fuselage, beneath the cockpit windows. The British fin flash had been over-painted with the relevant camouflage colors. . . . Problems had to [be] overcome with translations of instruments, placards, and manuals, which were all in Dutch. Some items had to be replaced with ones manufactured locally."²⁸

Other evidence confirms this. When, in the late 1980s, the RAAF museum restored one of the DB-7Bs it operated (AL907), it was found that the fuselage had several layers of insignia on the aft fuselage. The first layer had the standard factory-applied RAF roundel (yellow, blue, white, and red.) Second was the Dutch black and orange triangle insignia, most likely applied by Douglas at Long Beach. The outermost layer was a reapplication of the standard RAF roundel from March 1942 when it was re-diverted to the RAAF. At some point shortly afterwards, the yellow and red were painted out, leaving the

blue and white roundel of the RAAF.²⁹

A published photo of AL907, recovered from Goodenough Island in 1987, shows a faint white number "240" on the nose of the aircraft under the cockpit. This Douglas production line number was applied to early production DB-7s and A-2s.³⁰ Number 240 denotes the last of the French-ordered, RAF-diverted DB-7Bs, which was accepted at Santa Monica on November 19, 1941.³¹ As noted above, MLD serial numbers D-47 through D-78 were assigned to the original group of 32 DB-7Bs.

The Dutch DB-7Cs

Production of the 48 Dutch DB-7Cs began in late spring 1942. The first ship was delivered on May 9, 1942, the last on July 14, 1942. The DB-7Cs were finished at the factory in the standard RAF-type camouflage scheme similar to that applied to the DB-7Bs. Douglas may have applied the black-outlined orange triangle Dutch insignia to at least some of the DB-7Cs, just as British roundels had been applied to the RAF DB-7Bs. Despite the situation in the NEI, production of the DB-7Cs remained under the jurisdiction of the NPC, at least on paper,



A view of DB-7C D-6282 in May 1942 on the ramp at Douglas during engine runs. These aircraft were painted in accordance to the British DB-7B scheme. The primary difference between the RAF DB-7Bs and the MLD DB-7Cs was the provision to carry the U.S. Mark XIII torpedo, as the MLD planned to use their 48 DB-7Cs as torpedo bombers. (Douglas)

until late April 1942, so it is probable that the production continued with the torpedo-carrying modifications, Dutch instruments and placards, and Dutch markings. But by late April 1942, seven weeks after the NEI was overrun and weeks before the first DB-7C was delivered, there were indications that changes were coming to the contracted delivery of the aircraft.

The first indication of the ongoing discussions between Douglas, the NPC, and the AAF was in April 30 in an internal Douglas memorandum that stated:

1. With the exception of existing camouflage scheme, all Netherlands Purchasing Commission's insignias and markings shall be deleted from the subject airplanes and full complement of Army Air Force's (sic) insignias and markings shall be permanently installed.
2. Army Air Force's (sic) serial numbers will be forwarded as soon as they are available.

3. No insignias are to be applied to the spare wings prior to the spare wings prior to packing and shipping.

In another Douglas memorandum of the same date, the contractual agreement between Douglas and the NPC was clarified:

We [Douglas] are advised by the Export Sales Department, who have been conducting all negotiations with the Netherlands Purchasing Commission and the Air Forces relative to the contract for our shop order #600, that to date, the contract for this order is presently between the Netherlands Government and Douglas, and it is indicated we may anticipate that it will remain so. It is our understanding that the airplanes and spare parts on this order will be transferred to the air forces by separate negotiation between them and the Netherlands Purchasing Commission.



A view of a Soviet DB-7C in service in 1943. The Douglas-applied fuselage number on the nose (17) indicates this is msn 6281, earmarked to become D-95 in MLD service but diverted to the Army Air Forces and then on to the Red Air Force via Lend-Lease. (C.F Geust/G. Petrov Collection)

Finally, on May 8, the NPC formally advised Douglas that it had negotiated an agreement to transfer all DB-7Cs to the AAF. The commission noted in a letter to Douglas that:

We have decided not to ship [the DB-7Cs] to the Netherlands East Indies, as originally contemplated, because we have been compelled to agree to transfer possession of and legal title to said airplanes to the United States Army Air Forces.

We desire, accordingly, that reference Agreement be hereby amended so as to provide (1) that you shall (instead of delivering said airplanes to us (at) F.A.S. San Pedro, California, boxed and crated for export shipment, as aforesaid) deliver said airplanes to us, fully assembled, complete, and ready for flight at Las Vegas, Nevada, and (2) that the purchase price of each of said airplanes shall, because of such change as to delivery, be decreased by

the amount of \$1,350.

A few days later, the AAF advised Douglas that the contractor's serial number prefixed by the letter "D" was to be applied to the DB-7Cs in lieu of AAF serial numbers. The airplane data blocks carried the type as "DB-7C" and the serial number as requested by the AAF. Since these aircraft were not built on AAF contracts and did not have AAF equipment installed, they were not considered for assignment with AAF serials. It should be noted that the NPC did fulfill its contractual obligations, issuing checks on May 15 and May 28, 1942, to pay the adjusted purchase amount in full. They then turned their interest in the airplanes over to the AAF.

Epilogue: Fates of the Dutch DB-7Cs

The final dispositions of the DB-7Cs are difficult to track. A diligent search of AAF record cards has yet to turn up any records on aircraft with the assigned serials of

D-6265 through D-6312. However, there are suggestions of some AAF operations, including the crash report of a DB-7C, s/n D2690 (possibly D6290 transposed?), of the 6th Ferrying Group out of Long Beach that crashed at the Atlanta, Ga., airport on June 13, 1942. Another crash report lists D-6284 as destroyed on July 12, 1942, at Newark, N.J., in a ground accident. Curiously, that aircraft is shown as assigned to the United Nations Depot. However, the early dates of these crashes suggest these two aircraft may have been in the process of being delivered to a foreign country, most likely the Soviet Union.

There is one brief mention of one of the DB-7Cs being used by the U.S. Navy for torpedo dropping tests in Rhode Island. This aircraft is recorded with the serial of "DO-104" (D-104?) but as yet there is no other information about this possible use of a DB-7C.

It is probable that most, if not all, of the 48 Dutch-ordered DB-7Cs were transferred to the Soviet Union through Lend-Lease, though documentation is sketchy at best. One of the most authoritative sources of information about the Lend-Lease program and the Soviet Union only mentions that "even a couple of DB-7Cs originally ordered for the Dutch AF were included" among the DB-7s and A-20s sent to the USSR. No serial number information is available.

In all, 3,128 DB-7/A-20s were delivered to the Soviets during the war, so whatever Dutch DB-7Cs were included in that total would've made up a very small percentage. It is

presumed that none of the 48 DB-7Cs survived the war or its immediate aftermath. ➔

About the Author



Scott Thompson is an aviation historian and photographer who has written numerous books and articles about vintage aircraft and warbirds. His primary historical interest has concentrated on the postwar use of the B-17, and maintains a website at aerovintage.com. He has also specialized in documenting the history of Hollywood pilots Paul Mantz and Frank Tallman, and maintains another website at tallmantz.com. He retired from a long career as an FAA flight inspection pilot in November 2021, and lives with his wife in Lincoln, California. In 2004, he authored the book *Douglas Havoc* and Boston: The DB-7/A-20 Series for Crowood Press.

Table 1									
DB-7Bs Allocated to MLD Serial Number Assignments									
RAF	Douglas msn	Boeing msn	Delivered	MLD	RAAF	Ship	Ship Date	Arrive	Remarks
AL347	3924	2728	11/4/1941	D-53?	A28-2	Tosari (NY)	2/3/42	Melbourne c. 3/42	
AL358	3935	2739	11/10-17/1941	D-54?	A28-10	Tarakan (SP)	2/9/42	Sydney 3/21/42	
AL361	3938	2742	11/10-17/1941	D-58?	A28-15	Wettervreden (NY)	2/19/42	Sydney 4/2/42	
AL362	3939	2743	11/10-17/1941	D-59?	A28-16	Wettervreden (NY)	2/19/42	Sydney 4/2/42	
AL363	3940	2744	11/10-17/1941	D-60?	A28-17	Wettervreden (NY)	2/19/42	Sydney 4/2/42	
AL364	3941	2745	11/10-17/1941	D-55?	A28-11	Tarakan (SP)	2/9/42	Sydney 3/21/42	
AL365	3942	2746	11/10-17/1941	D-56?	A28-12	Tarakan (SP)	2/9/42	Sydney 3/21/42	
AL366	3943	2747	11/10-17/1941	D-57?	A28-18	Tabinta (NY)	2/10/42	Sydney 4/1/42	
AL367	3944	2748	11/10-17/1941	D-61?	A28-13	Tarakan (SP)	2/9/42	Sydney 3/21/42	
AL368	3945	2749	11/10-17/1941	D-62?	A28-19	Wettervreden (NY)	2/19/42	Sydney 4/2/42	
AL369	3946	2750	11/10-17/1941	D-63?	A28-20	Wettervreden (NY)	2/19/42	Sydney 4/2/42	
AL457	4034	2338	12/31/1941	D-75 to 78?					Not transferred
AL887	3819								
AL889	3821		11/17/1941	D-75 to 78?					Not transferred
AL890	3822		11/17/1941	D-65?	A28-1	Tosari (NY)	2/3/42	Melbourne c. 3/42	
AL891	3823		11/17/1941	D-66?	A28-9	Mapia (NY)	1/30/42	Melbourne c. 3/42	
AL892	3824		11/17/1941	D-67?	A28-14	Tarakan (SP)	2/9/42	Sydney 3/21/42	
AL893	3825		11/19/1941	D-68?	A28-5	Mapia (NY)	1/30/42	Melbourne c. 3/42	
AL894	3826		11/17/1941	D-69?	A28-21	Tabinta (NY)	2/10/42	Sydney 4/1/42	
AL895	3827		11/18/1941	D-70?	A28-4	Mapia (NY)	1/30/42	Melbourne c. 3/42	
AL896	3828		11/17/1941	D-47?		Kota Baroe (SP)	c. 1/15/42	Tjilatjap 2/27/42	
AL897	3829		11/18/1941	D-71?	A28-7	Mapia (NY)	1/30/42	Melbourne c. 3/42	
AL898	3830		11/18/1941	D-72?	A28-22	Tabinta (NY)	2/10/42	Sydney 4/1/42	
AL899	3831		11/18/1941	D-73?	A28-6	Mapia (NY)	1/30/42	Melbourne c. 3/44	
AL900	3832		11/19/1941	D-48?		Kota Baroe (SP)	c. 1/15/42	Tjilatjap 2/27/42	
AL901	3833		11/19/1941	D-49?		Kota Baroe (SP)	c. 1/15/42	Tjilatjap 2/27/42	
AL902	3834		11/19/1941	D-75 to 78?					crashed 12/10/41 in U.S.; not transferred
AL903	3835		11/19/1941	D-50?		Kota Baroe (SP)	c. 1/15/42	Tjilatjap 2/27/42	
AL904	3836		11/19/1941	D-51		Kota Baroe (SP)	c. 1/15/42	Tjilatjap 2/27/42	Captured by Japanese
AL905	3837		11/19/1941	D-75 to 78?					damaged 12/10/41 in U.S.; not transferred
AL906	3838		11/17/1941	D-52		Kota Baroe (SP)	c. 1/15/42	Tjilatjap 2/27/42	Captured by Japanese
AL907	3839		11/19/1941	D-74?	A28-8	Mapia (NY)	1/30/42	Melbourne c. 3/45	1987 photo: fuselage #240 (Boer)
Boeing Built						NY=Shipped from New York			
Douglas Built						SP=Shipped from San Pedro			
Delivered to MLD 2/27/42						Probable MLD serial allocation based on Ship Manifests as reported in			
Diverted to RAAF						Dr. P.C. Boer's "The Story of the Douglas DB-7B of the Dutch Naval Air			

Endnotes

- 1 "The Brewster Model 340 Bermuda/ Buccaneer and its ML/KNIL (Netherlands East -Indies Army Aviation orps), RAF, USAAF and US Navy/Marine Corps use" by Dr. Peter C. Boer, October 2011 and revised November 2014
- 2 "Brewster Buffaloes for the Miltarie Luchtvaart KNIL" by Gerard J. Casius as available at <https://www.scribd.com/document/514544690/Brewster-Buffaloes-for-the-Militaire-Luchtvaart-KNIL>.
- 3 Editor's note: *McDonnell Douglas Aircraft Since 1920*, v.1, pp. 204-205, has the quantity as 18.
- 4 "Brewster Buffaloes for the Miltarie Luchtvaart KNIL".
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Correspondence from Douglas Export Sales to Douglas Estimating Division dated December 3, 1941, as retrieved from the Douglas archives file on the DB-7C. It specifies that the NPC had taken delivery of 120 "GR-2600 A5B" engines for the Brewster order but wanted to upgrade those engines to the "B" engines, thus wanting to use the "A" engines on the DB-7C. Douglas instructed that the engines they would receive would have to be reworked by Aircraft Industries, Inc. to match the requirements for the DB-7C, to be paid by the NPC or Brewster. The rework was deemed comparatively simple: "changing the baffles, removing a tongue accessory drive, and removing the gun synchronizers."
- 7 Boer, Model 340, p.2; he cites an "Internal NPC memo (undated but early December 1941)" that coincides with the NPC instructions to Douglas about using the 96 engines originally earmarked for the Brewster Model 340 production.
- 8 "The British Air Commission and Lend-Lease," volume compiled by KJ Meekoms; Air Britain, 2000.
- 9 Gerard J. Casius in a detailed letter titled "Royal Netherlands Navy DB-7s" published in the *Journal of the American Aviation Historical Society*, Summer 1979 (p. 158).
- 10 See post #26 under forum topic "Dutch Ordered DB-7Cs as Torpedo Bombers" by Geoffery Sinclair at ww2aircraft.net dated January 29, 2023. With the reference being a USAAF export report, Sinclair notes RAF serials AL889, AL896, AL900, AL901, AL903, AL904, and AL906. These DB-7B serials match with other sources with six of these aircraft being those actually received by the NEI in late February 1942. AL 889 was not transferred for unknown reasons.
- 11 See "The story of the Douglas DB-7B Bostons of the Dutch Naval Air Service (and the Army Aviation Corps of the Royal Netherlands East Indies Army," by Dr. P.C. Boer, August 2010 and updated September 2011 and February 2012, p. 22. This paper is an excellent resource that explains the history of the DB-7 in MLD service. For this reference, Boer cites an undated but late March 1942 document titled "Explanation of DB-7B repossessions and Arnold-Portal Allocations in January" from the Munitions Assignment Committee as found in the National Archives.
- 12 Aviation Archaeology database (USAF Summary Sheet (aviationarchaeology.com)).
- 13 Aviation Archaeology database (USAF Summary Sheet (aviationarchaeology.com)).
- 14 See Sinclair post (noted above) at ww2aircraft.net.
- 15 Letter from NPC to Douglas dated February 6, 1942 and memorandum from Douglas Export Sales dated February 7, 1942, as retrieved from the Douglas archive.
- 16 See Boer, DB-7B, p.2.
- 17 Casius Summer 1979 letter to AAHS *Journal* (as noted above).
- 18 See Byk p. 19.
- 19 See Boer, DB-7B, p. 4.
- 20 See Boer, pp 9-13. A detailed narrative of the MLD efforts and ultimate fate of the six MLD DB-7Bs is provided in this reference.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 Work Release Order dated February 7, 1942 from the Douglas Estimating Division to the Office of Chief Engineer as retrieved from the Douglas archive.
- 24 Douglas Airplane Delivery Record and the Douglas Record of Airplanes documents retrieved from the Douglas archives
- 25 Work Release Order dated February 7, 1942.
- 26 See Boer, DB-7B, p.21-24
- 27 See Boer, DB-7B, p.2-3; Boer references interviews with two Dutch military officers who recalled that the DB-7Bs upon arrival at Tjilatjap on February 27, 1942, were camouflaged but completely without markings.
- 28 See "Frend Bilong Australia Tru: The Douglas Boston in RAAF Service" by Gary Byk; Red Roo Models Publication, 2000, p.19.
- 29 See post #19 at Netherlands Air Force | Aircraft of World War II - WW2Aircraft.net Forums by "Sydhuey" for this explanation and two photos of each side of the aft fuselage with the painting details provided.
- 30 See Boer, DB-7B, p. 2.
- 31 Douglas "Airplane Delivery Record" as retrieved from the Douglas archives for Douglas msn 3839 (AL907).

MOVING

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