INDIVIDUAL HISTORY

PANAVIA TORNADO PO.2 XX946/8883M
MUSEUM ACCESSION NUMBER 1994/1458/A

Constructed as the first of four British prototypes of the tri-national Multi Role Combat Aircraft (MRCA). This was a joint development by the British Aircraft Corporation (BAC) in Britain, MBB in West Germany and Aeritalia in Italy Assembled at Warton, PO.2 was the first aircraft with fully movable engine intakes. Nine prototypes flew in all for development trials, plus one built at Warton for static tests. Photos of PO.2 before and after painting - Tornado (F.K.Mason - 021353)

12 Aug 74 Test No.1 - attempted auxiliary power unit run.

17 Aug 74 First engine run.

17 Oct 74 First taxy run, crewed by Paul Millet and Dave Eagles, who had also carried out the engine running and ground systems testing.

25 Oct 74 Scheduled first flight - postponed due to weather conditions.

30 Oct 74 Maiden flight from BAC Military Aircraft Division's Warton, Lancs airfield following taxiing trials there. Pilot for the 60-minute flight (curtailed by the weather) was the division's chief test pilot, Paul Millett, with Aeritalia's MRCA project pilot Pietro Trevisan in the navigators' seat. The flight covered the flight envelope cleared by the first prototype, including manoeuvrability, wing sweep, engine handling, maximum cleared speed and aircraft systems, and a short supersonic run concluding with low level swept wing passes and a full roll over the aerodrome for the benefit of the watching workforce, together with a touch and go landing and single engine approach and climb-away. Photo of engine runs beforehand; Test Flying in Lancashire Vol 2 p.241. Photos taking off on maiden flight - Flight International 7 Nov 1974; Air Clues Jan 75 p.37; Aircraft Annual 1978 p.32; Tornado (021353) p.50. This first flight had been delayed a week due to bad weather. Took off at 08.12, accompanied by Hunter and Canberra chase planes. The flight included passes over the BAC factories at Preston and Samlesbury. The aircraft was painted in a special red and white paint scheme, also carried by German built prototype PO.1 which first flew 14 August 1974.See Panavia Tornado in Action (027613); World Air Power Journal Vol.3 p.40; Tornado -Aeroguide No 4 - (011998) p.32; Air Data 2 Panavia Tornado IDS (Evans) p.4; British Aircraft Corporation – A History (Skinner) p.25 and 147.

18 Nov 74 Second flight, again from Warton. Flight time 55 minutes, flown by BAC project pilot David Eagles, accompanied by Military Aircraft Division deputy

chief test pilot Tim Ferguson. Photo - Flight International 28 Nov 1974. A successful flight with no defects.
The initial task was to clear the flight test flutter boundary plus handling and engine performance, progressively extending the flight envelope of the aircraft in 'clean' configuration.

Laid up as scheduled at the end of 1974 to permit installation of additional equipment and instrumentation and minor modifications in the light of flight experience thus far. One modification was the fitting of a plastic and wood fairing over the jet pipes to improve airflow and eliminate bounce at speeds over 300 knots. Photos - Panavia Tornado - Spearhead of Nato (023133) p.39; Tornado (021353) p.52-53.

3 Dec 74 Third flight - achieved Mach.1.Supersonic handling and engine loads test, at one point flying past Blackpool Tower. Photo – Test Flying in Lancashire Vol 2 p.244.

Jan 75 Flight-testing resumed from Warton. Photo - Flight International 27 Feb 1975.Work at this stage included engine and intake test data on the latest Rolls Royce RB199 engine.

20 Mar 75 Flutter and handling trials – crew Ferguson and Millet.

2 Apr 75 On a test flight piloted by Paul Millett (the 18th flight, with Dave Eagles in the second seat) a herring gull entered the port engine intake during a low speed run over the airfield at Warton, necessitating shutdown of that engine and a rapid landing at Warton.

Jun 75 Flight refuelling probe fitted and flight trials carried out to check aircraft behaviour at various speeds, with no measurable effect.

13 Jun 75 Wing-sweep trials over Irish Sea; crew Eagles and Kenward; colour photo Test Flying in Lancashire (Longworth) p. 300.

17 Jul 75 Air to Air-refuelling trials cleared in one test flight on a sortie over the Irish Sea with a Victor tanker of 232 OCU with a crew from No 55 Squadron. Flown from Warton by Paul Millett and Tim Ferguson for over two hours. Photos - Airframe August 1975; Panavia Tornado (023133) p.40-41; Tornado (021353) p.52; Aerospace April 1976 p.18; Royal Air Force News w/e 16 August 1975 p.5. This followed fuel transfer tests on the ground. This was the aircraft's' 47th flight.

Late 1975 Made series of test flights from Warton to investigate behaviour when fitted with external stores - Photos Aeroplane Monthly Jan 76 p.2; Aircraft Annual 1978 (Frontspiece and p.29); Tornado (021353) p.51; Aerospace April 1976 p.16. The first flight with external stores was on 20th October. In December 1975 PO.2 made 16 test flights in a three week period.

21 Apr 76	115th flight. Wing-sweep failure at 41 degrees due to swept wing feed-back shaft fracturing jettisoned flutter - test stores and landed safely with 41 degree sweep.
Aug 76	The aircraft was painted in the standard RAF all-over grey and green camouflage scheme. Photo - Tornado (021353) p.53.
17 Feb 78	206th flight. Both engines failed, but successfully re - lit.
17 Mar 78	209th flight. First trial streaming of anti - spin parachute; fitted with emergency power unit (EPU) at around the same time.
5 Mar 79	281st flight. Achieved 809 knots/Mach 2.02.Exceeded Mach 2 twice in this sortie.
1980	Involved in high incidence and spinning trials at Warton. The aircraft had been flown up to 50 degrees wing incidence with full back stick without entering a spin. Fitted with anti-spin parachute on gantry behind the afterburners and emergency power unit.
1 Feb 80	320th flight. Both engines shut down and anti-spin parachute deployed, snapping off the fin tip; aircraft recovered and engines re-lit.
7 Dec 84	601st flight to highest altitude achieved - 63,007 feet.
Nov 85	Still flying on engine handling flights.
17 Dec 85	Allocated to RAF Honington, Suffolk for instructional use with maintenance serial 8883M.
5 Feb 86	Last flight – as recorded in his log book, flown solo by Dave Eagles from Warton to the TWCU at RAF Honington for ground crew training in weapons loading procedures, initially for Saudi personnel and earmarked as a future museum exhibit. Flight time 34 minutes. Servicing documents for this period with DoRIS, ref. AC94/37/1 - 2. This, the aircraft's' 620th and last flight, concluded a total flying time of 608 hours. Allocated instructional serial 8883M. Photo in use at Honington - Flypast Dec 1987.
27 Jan 87	No.IX Squadron (A code) and tri -national markings removed and replaced by standard RAF markings.
21 Mar 90	Transferred by road to RAF Laarbruch, Germany via Harwich and Hamburg ports for further instructional use.
3 Mar 92	Returned to Honington from RAF Laarbruch.

27 Sep 94 Allocated to RAF Museum - Honington had become an RAF Regiment base - its resident flying units had moved out prior to the cessation of flying 31st March 1994.The TWCU had moved to RAF Lossiemouth in November 1993.

16 Nov 94 Delivered by road to RAF Museum Hendon from RAF Honington and assembled in the main aircraft hall over the following four days. Photo during assembly - Flypast Feb.1995 p.10. The first Tornado to be preserved in the UK. Photo on display; Air Pictorial Museums Supplement May 2001 p. XIII.

4 Mar 03 Dismantling underway by RAF personnel prior to move by road to RAFM Cosford.

11 Mar 03 By road to RAF Museum Cosford for further display. Photo displayed – Wrecks and Relics 19th Edition. Currently stored off display.

TEXT; ANDREW SIMPSON