

**Gunships** There were many pre-Vietnam gunship-like aircraft, not only in the USA, and even more helicopter during and after this war. I will concentrate here on USAF and USMC fixed-wing gunships, starting with the early '60s.

**Project Tailchaser: Convair (A)C-131B** First test flights with armed C-131B, serial 53-7820, at Eglin AFB, 08/1964, with General Electric 7.62 mm SUU-11A/A Gatling Minigun.

**Project Gunship (I): Douglas C-47, FC-47D, AC-47D** Tests were continued with a similar armed C-47D 44-8462 Terry & Pirates at Eglin AFB in 1964. The first real FC-47D was 43-48579 "Puff" (often called Puff the Magic Dragon), ferried back from Nha Trang to Bien Hoa, and fitted with 3 GE Miniguns, a Mark 20 Mod 4 sight (from A-1E Skyraider), VHF/UHF/FM radios, TACAN, IFF, 45 flares (200,000 candlepower) and 24,000 rounds of ammunition. Converted in 10/1964, and used by the 4th Air Commando Squadron. In Spring 1965 a second C-47D was converted in the same way. Four other were later armed with ten .30 calibre machine guns, Type M-2 Browning air-cooled. One of them was 43-48491 'Git-Em' Bullet, another was Grunt 2 and one may have had the serial '36440' (?).

Three were operational with the 4th ACS and one was used for crew training at the Forbes AFB. All 6 original FC-47D were later redesignated AC-47D. Air International at Miami, FL, converted 20 more C-47 to AC-47D, which were used from Fall 1965 by the 4th ACS. The early six were returned to Clark AFB, refitted, and camouflaged. The 4th ACS became part of the 14th SOW, which was known as 'Antique Wing'. AC-47s were flown by the 3rd SOS (tailcode EL) and 4th SOS (tailcode EN), both part of the 14th SOW, and by the 432nd TFW at Udorn RTAB (tailcode OS).

Their call sign in Vietnam was \_SPOOKY\_.

Known serials are: 43-48072, 43-48491 'Git-Em' Bullet, 43-48579 "Puff", 43-48701, 43-48801, 43-49274, 43-49852, 44-76534, 44-76985, 45-927.

Partially known serials are: 'OS 43-010', '43-263', 'EN 770' Spooky, 'EN 354', 'EN 859', and '717' Delta Queen, and 10 other serials are missing. Also the first armed C-47D was 44-8462 Terry & Pirates.

One reported serial '36440' may be wrong (couldn't find any, it is not one of the following 42-36440, 43-36440, 44-36440, 43-x6440).

18 AC-47D were given in 1969 to the VNAF, and at least 11 went to the Royal Laotian AF.

Other C-47, working close together with AC-47Ds were four types of EC-47s: EC-47D, which were C-47D, converted to ECM / ELINT aircraft, EC-47N, which were C-47A converted as ECM / ELINT aircraft, with R-1830-90D or -92 engines, EC-47P which were C-47D, converted to ECM / ELINT aircraft, with R-1830-90D or -92 engines, and EC-47Q which were C-47A and C-47D, converted to ECM / ELINT aircraft re-engined with R-2000-4 engines. These aircraft were also used as sensor relay aircraft, and to monitor and home on to VC radio traffic. After pinpointing a target, they called the Spooky gunships. USAF units using EC-47s during the Vietnam conflict were the 14th SOW "Antique Wing", with the 5th SOS (tailcode EEO) and the 9th SOS (tailcode ER), the 432nd TEWS (tailcode AN) and the 360th TEWS (tailcode maybe AJ ?).

Partially known serials were: EC-47N 'AN 42-645', EC-47 'AJ 331'.

Nose arts seen were: EC-47N Beep! Beep!

Some EC-47s were later given to the VNAF.

**Project Gunship II: Lockheed AC-130A** The prototype for the best known gunships at all, was a C-130A 54-1626 named by the crew Vulcan Express, equipped with four 7.62 mm General Electric XMU-470 Minigun Modules, four 20 mm General Electric M61 Vulcan Gatling cannons, a Night Observation Device (NOD) or Starlite Scope, a 'bread board' computer, and a 20 kW searchlight at Wright-Patterson AFB, and redesignated JC-130A. It was later known as Super Spooky and served also with the 4950th Test Wing. This aircraft, a short nose Hercules, was tested at Eglin AFB from 06/1967 to 09/1967, and was then deployed to Nha Trang AB at 09/20/1967. It flew its first operational mission seven days later.

The aircraft was a great success, and LTV E-Systems at Greenville, TX, got a contract to modify seven early model JC-130A to similar AC-130A, but equipped with better Texas Instruments AN/AAD-4 FLIR, Singer-

General Precision fire control computer and a Texas Instruments Moving Target Indicator (MTI), and other equipment to reach current C-130A production standard.

Four were finally deployed to Vietnam in late 1968, and the other went to the 16th SOS (tailcode FT) at Ubon RTAB in 05/1969. These seven aircraft were painted black overall and also known as Plain Janes, to distinguish them from the single Surprise Package AC-130A and the Pave Pronto AC-130As. The 4413th CCTS, 4410th CCTW (tailcode IH) was later redesignated the 415th SOTS, 1st SOW at Hurlburt Field, FL (tailcode AH) and was charged with the training of all AC-130 crews.

Apparently, some of the Plain Jane aircraft were later updated to the Pave Pronto standard, including 54-1630 and 56-0490.

Gunship II JC-130A-LM serial was: 54-1626 Vulcan Express / Super Spooky, (first painted white over grey, and later in three-tone camouflage).

Plain Jane AC-130A-LM serials were: 53-3129, 54-1625, 1627, 1628, 1629 (the first AC-130 casualty - two crew member killed 05/24/1969 when she crashed at Ubon after being hit over Laos), 1630 Azarel Angel of Death (3 mission markings during Desert Storm).

Plain Jane AC-130A-7-LM serial was: 56-0490 Thor.

Other nose arts were: Mors de Caelis (Death from Above).

**Project Surprise Package: Lockheed AC-130A** A single AC-130A was equipped by the Gunship System Program Office at Wright- Patterson AFB with two 40 mm Bofors cannons in place of the aft pair of 20 mm Vulcans, General Electric ASQ-145 Low Level Light TV (LLLTV) and a Konrad AVQ-18 laser designator/rangefinder, and a new AYK-9 digital fire control computer. The aircraft was an even greater success! Surprise Package AC-130A serial was: unknown, see Project Pave Pronto.

**Project Pave Pronto: Lockheed AC-130A** LTV E-Systems was awarded another contract, covering nine more AC-130As, all based on the Surprise Package design. The only additional equipment carried was an AN/ASD-5 Black Crow Direction Finder Set to find the emissions of the ignition system of Russian truck engines. These aircraft were first painted in the typical Vietnam three-tone camouflage scheme, but later the underside and the sides were painted black. AC-130As often carried ALQ-87 ECM pods or SUU-42A/A Ejector Pods (starboard for flares, port for chaff) under the wings.

During Operation Desert Storm, six AFRES AC-130A of the 711th SOS, 919th SOG, from Duke Field, FL, were deployed (probably under Operation Proven Force to Turkey: 54-1623, 1630, 55-0011, 0014, 0029, and 56-0509).

Pave Pronto AC-130A-LM serials were: 54-1623 Ghost Rider, 55-0011, 0014 Jaws of Death (20 mission markings during Desert Storm), 0029 (the first loss, crashed at Ubon RTAB after AAA hit on 05/29/1969), 0040, 0043, 0044.

Pave Pronto AC-130A-20-LM serial was: 55-0046.

Pave Pronto AC-130A-6-LM serial was: 56-0469.

Pave Pronto AC-130A-7-LM serial was: 56-0509.

One of the serials belongs to the original Surprise Package aircraft.

Three AC-130A were lost during the Vietnam conflict, one to AAA, one to a shoulder launched SA-7 Grail over South Vietnam, and one over Laos to an SA-2 Guideline. With F-4 Phantom driver, the AC-130 Hercules gunship was known as the Fabulous Four Engined Fighter.

Other interesting C-130As were the so called Blind Bat night FAC aircraft, which initially tested all the FLIR, LLLTV and Black Crow systems, later used on AC-130A gunships. Serials for C-130A Blind Bat flareships: unknown.

**Project Pave Spectre (I): Lockheed AC-130E** Because of the airframe limitations of old C-130A Hercules, a new program evolved, using low-time C-130E as basis for the gunship conversion. Eleven C-130E were converted with the same equipment and the same armament as the Pave Pronto AC-130A, becoming the Pave Spectre AC-130Es. The first aircraft arrived in Ubon on 10/25/1971, and they were operational with the 16th SOS their whole operational life. In 1973, some aircraft began arriving at Ubon in a new overall Flat Black paint scheme in place of the old gloss Black and camouflage scheme. One AC-130E,

69-6571, was lost in combat, before the Pave Spectre II program started, probably shot down over Laos by an SA-2 Guideline.

Pave Spectre AC-130E-LM serials were: 69-6567 to 6577.

**Project Pave Aegis: Lockheed AC-130E** Under the Pave Aegis program, all AC-130Es were supposed to be equipped with an 105 mm howitzer, replacing one 40 mm L-60 Bofors, but many were updated directly to Pave Spectre II, including the Pave Aegis modifications.

## **Project Pave Spectre II: Lockheed AC-130H**

Beginning in 1973, all but one AC-130E were re-engined with new Allison T56-A-15 turboprops, equipped with the latest radio and avionics gear, and redesignated AC-130H \_Pave Spectre II. During Operation Desert Storm, five AC-130H of the 16th SOS, 1st SOW, Hurlburt Field, FL, were deployed to Saudi Arabia: 69-6567 (which was lost on 01/31/1991 probably to a hand-held SAM, using the call sign SPIRIT 03 - all 14 crew killed), 69-6569, 69-6570, 69-6572, and 69-6576.

The last one mentioned (69-6576), was lost on 03/14/1994 over the Indian Ocean, due to fire caused by a 105 mm round exploding in the barrel during a test firing. The aircraft was at this time part of Operation Restore Hope in Somalia, and was on a 8.5 hour reconnaissance flight, using the call sign JOCKEY 14. Of the crew of 14, only 6 survived.

- The cockpit crew survived, and evacuated from the cockpit after the crash landing (ditching near the shoreline), and was rescued:
  - Capt. John Palen - Aircraft Commander (A/C, pilot), 33
  - Capt. Kevin Thompson - Co-pilot, 31
  - Staff Sgt. Steve Anderson - Flight engineer, 33
- Four of the crew bailed out before the crash, but only three were found and rescued later:
  - Tech. Sgt. Raul Savedra - Lead gunner, 33
  - Tech. Sgt. Bruce Grieshop - Gunner, 36
  - Staff Sgt. Dave Ceurvals - Gunner, 31
- The other 8 crew members did not survive:
  - Capt. David Mehlhop - Navigator (Nav), 30
  - Capt. Tony Stefanik - Fire Control Officer (FCO), 31
  - Capt. Mark Quam - Electronic Warfare Officer (EWO), 27
  - Master Sgt. Roy Duncan - Loadmaster (LM), 40
  - Tech. Sgt. Bobby Daniel - Infrared sensor (IR), 34
  - Staff Sgt Bill Eyler - TV sensor, 32 - first to bail out, but he was never found even though he was a jumpmaster
  - Staff Sgt. Mike Moser - Gunner, 32
  - Staff Sgt. Brian Barnes - Gunner, 26

Pave Spectre II AC-130H-LM serials were: 69-6567 to 6570, and 6572 to 6577.

Starting in 1973, all AC-130A, and AC-130H were painted overall gunship Grey, and were sometimes referred to as Grey Ghosts.

The call sign for most AC-130 during Vietnam was SPECTRE.

**Project (Pave Spectre III?): Lockheed AC-130U** In 1986, another Hercules gunship program was initiated, and the resulting aircraft was designated AC-130U. Thirteen aircraft, including 1 as attrition for an AC-130H), were procured from Lockheed, (originally as C-130H) and modified by Rockwell International with improved guns, AN/AAQ-117 FLIR, new ALLTV, better ECM systems, GPS, sat-coms and AN/APG-180 strike radar. They were tested by the 418th TESTS at Edwards AFB, CA. The AC-130Us are also known as U boats. Besides the FSD aircraft, which is permanently assigned to Edwards, all should be operational by now with the 4th SOS Ghostriders, 16th SOG, 16th SOW, at Hurlburt Field, FL. Serials of AC-130U: 87-0128 (FSD aircraft), 89-0509 to 0514, 90-0164 to 0167, 92-0253, and maybe others. Several have the well known Spectre (or Ghostrider) nose art markings, and 90-0166 was named Hellraiser. Most gunships were built and used during Vietnam, but AC-130 Hercules served also:

- 1979 in Iran: Operation Eagle Claw,
- 1983 in Grenada: Operation Urgent Fury,
- 1989 in Panama: Operation Just Cause,
- 1990/91 in Iraq: Operation Desert Storm,
- 1993/94 in Somalia: Operation Restore Hope,
- 1993/95 in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Operation Deny Flight, and
- 1994 in Haiti: Operation Uphold Democracy right now.

**Project Gunship III: Fairchild AC-119G, AC-119K** (This project, or one of their deployments, might be also known as Project Combat Hornet\_, but none of my sources, listed below, mention this, so I am not definitely sure.)

Fairchild-Hiller (later Fairchild-Republic) converted 26 C-119G to AC-119G at St. Augustine, FL. Armed with four 7.62 mm SUU-11A/1A minigun pods. Later aircraft got General Electric MXU-470 minigun modules. They were also fitted with an AVQ-8 20kW Xenon light, Night Observation Sight, LAU-74A flare launcher, armor, APU, fire control computers, APR-25 and APR-26 radar warning receiver / ECM-gear. They were used by the 71st SOS from 05/1968, until they became part of the 14th SOW as the 17th SOS. Their call sign in Vietnam was SHADOW.

Known serials were: 52-5892 Charlie Chasers, 5898, 5905, 5907, 5925, 5927, 5938, 5942, 53-3136, 3145, 3170, 3178, 3189, 3192, 3205, 7833, 7848, 7851, 7852, 8114, 8115, 8123, 8131, 8155 and two others.

Other nose art was: City of Columbus /Indiana/Shadow, Midnite Special.

Fairchild also converted 26 C-119G to AC-119K. The prototype was 53-3187. They were first brought to C-119K standard (including J85-GE-17 jet engines in underwing pods) then brought to AC-119G standard and then two M61A1 20 mm Gatling guns, AN/APN-147 Doppler terrain following radar, AN/AAD-4 FLIR, AN/APQ-133 side-looking beacon tracking radar, and AN/APQ-136 search radar was added specifically for the truck-hunting role. After testing, the first was delivered 11/03/1969 to the 18th SOS at Nha Trang and were part of the 14th SOW. The 1st SOW (tailcode AH) flew also AC-119K.

Their call sign in Vietnam was STINGER (after the two M61A1 Vulcans).

The serials were: 52-5864, 5889, 5910, 5911, 5926, 5935, 5940, 5945, 9982, 53-3154 Good Grief The Peanut Special, 3156, 3187, 3197, 3211, 7826, 7830, 7831, 7839, 7850, 7854, 7877, 7879, 7883, 8121, 8145, and 8148. Other nose art was: The Super Sow, The Polish Cannon, Fly United, and Montezuma's Revenge (sp).

Some AC-119G and a few AC-119K were turned over to the VNAF in 1971.

**Project Black Spot: NC-123K, AC-123K** Fairchild-Hiller modified 183 C-123B to C-123K with two additional J85-GE-17 jet engines in underwing pods. Two of them were then modified for a test program by LTV E-Systems in 03/1966 to NC-123K. The nose was extended by 57.75 inches to house an X-band Forward Looking Radar (same as in F-104J). Just aft of the new radome was a turret with FLIR, LLLTV and laser range-finder / illuminator. Also a low-level Doppler navigation radar and weapons release computer were installed. The aircraft were equipped with 12 chute dispenser in a container in the aft cargo compartment. (The aircraft was supposed to carry two of these stacked over each other, but the heavy load reduced the range nearly to 'Zero'). Each chute could carry three CBUs. Depending on the type of CBU loaded, 2,600 to 6,300 one pound bomblets were carried. The first aircraft, 54-691, was delivered to Eglin AFB in 08/1967 and the second, 54-698, incorporating an AN/ASD-5 Black Crow direction finder set (engine ignition sensor), was delivered in 02/1968.

The Black Spot aircraft were often referred to either as AC-123K or as NC-123K. They became operational in 1968 and flew 28 operational missions between 08/19/1968 and 10/23/1968 in the South Korean Sea, trying to stop infiltration from North into South Korea by sea. But no bad guys were caught. From 11/14/1968 to 05/11/1969 the aircraft were used in Vietnam to fly night missions over the Ho Chi Minh Trail. During this time, they flew 186 missions, destroyed 415 trucks and damaged 273 more. They also attacked boats in the Mekong Delta. They were later assigned to the 16th SOS at Udon RTAB. On 05/11/1969 ECM and RAHW gear was installed, and the first aircraft, 54-691, got also a Black Crow system. They continued their mission from late 1969 till 06/1970 from Udon, often with night fighter escorts, because of heavy anti-aircraft fire.

Both aircraft were later refitted to standard C-123K at Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ (the storage code 'CP024' was assigned to 54-698). Both aircraft retained their unique wrap-around camouflage and served as normal transports. Serials were: 54-691 and 54-698.

Other interesting special operations (test) Provider were:

- Several C-123B were used as 'Flare Ship's by the 14th SOW, using the call sign CANDLE. One (55-4577), (tailcode TO), was painted black on the underside with standard three-tone camouflage on top.
- One NC-123B 'Light Ship' with 28 very big, very bright retractable lights in the cargo compartment, which could light a 2 mile diameter area on the ground from 12,000 ft altitude.
- One NC-123B (55-4528) with a radome above the cockpit and infrared sensors mounted under the fuselage, to detect trucks on the Trail. Used also the wrap-around camouflage of NC-123Ks.
- One NC-123B (54-652) with a nose mounted infrared sensor. This was the first "anti-trail" aircraft to operate over the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Painted Dark Gull Gray, and carried VNAF insignia in a placard holder.
- One C-123B (54-683) was equipped with a "Fulton Device" mounted on the nose. The aircraft was assigned to the 4410th Special Operations Training Group, Hurlburt Field, FL, 1968.

**Project Pave Gat: Martin Marietta RB-57G** One Tropic Moon 3 RB-57G 'Night Intruder' (ex B-57B) was equipped with a three-barrel 20 mm cannon under the belly. The system was not deployed to SEA for operational tests. The serial was: 53-3906.

**The Lockheed SP-2H AP-2H, OP-2E** In 1967 four SP-2H were field modified with multiple Miniguns mounted at various angles in the bomb bay, which created a spray effect when fired. BuAeros: unknown.

The only other known thing is that one was overall black, one was green, and the two others were overall grey. In 1966 Lockheed started to modify four SP-2H under the TRIM (Trails and Road Interdiction, Multisensor) program as gunships. The ASW radome and the MAD tail were removed, and in place of the MAD boom, a twin 20mm cannon was installed. The place of the ASW radar was occupied by an AN/APQ-92 search radar in an external pod / radome. LLLTV and FLIR were mounted in a chin fairing under the nose. A removable, large SLAR (Side-Looking Airborne Radar) was mounted in a pod, like on an OV-1D, on both sides of the aircraft, aft of the wing trailing edge on the fuselage. Also an Airborne Moving Target Indicator, DIANE (Digital Integrated Attack and Navigation Equipment), and an AN/ASD-5 Black Crow truck ignition sensor were employed, of which much was later used by A-6C TRIM Intruders.

Two forward firing 7.62 mm SUU-11A/1A Minigun pods, two Mk 82 500 lb. GP bombs, and two Mk 77 incendiary bombs were mounted on the wings, outside the engines. They also used special 'sound suppression muffler pipes' for the J34-WE-36 jet engines and flame dampener at the piston engines.

Between 09/01/1968 and 06/16/1969 the four aircraft flew over 200 missions with VAH-21 from Cam Rahn Bay against road and river traffic in the Mekong Delta area. Some missions were flown against the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and inside Laos and Cambodia. They returned back to ConUS in 1969 and were placed in storage at Davis-Monthan AFB, after being demodified. All but one (displayed at the Pima AFB Museum) were scrapped.

BuAerNos: 135620 ('SL 1'), 148353 ('SL 2'), 148337 ('SL 3') Napalm Nellie, and another ('SL 4') Iron Butterfly. Lockheed also prepared twelve SP-2E for conversion to OP-2E, by updating them to SP-2H standard. They were then converted at China Lake into OP-2Es, by removing the MAD tail and installing a blunt bulkhead with AN/ALE-29 Chaff Dispenser in it. Under the tail were a rearward looking camera, and under the nose was mounted a large radome housing an AN/APQ-131 radar.

The mission of the OP-2E was to drop ADSID seismic sensors over the Ho Chi Minh Trail, which were carried on multiple ejector racks under the wings and other sensors were carried in the bomb bay. The aircraft were also equipped with SUU-11A/1A Minigun pods under the wings.

The aircraft were deployed with VO-67 at Nakhon Phanom AB, Thailand, and the sensor drop missions were part of Project Igloo White. Acoustic sensors like Spikebouy and Acoubouy were dropped too, and the signals

were relayed by QU-22B or EC-121R aircraft to gunships. After the OP-2Es were retired and sent back to the US, where they were scrapped, F-4D Phantoms were used to drop the sensors under Project Igloo White. BuAerNos: 131423 ('MR 10'), 131455 ('MR 6'), 131462, 131525, 131528 ('MR 1'), and 7 others. Several AP-2E (ex P2V-5F) ECM / SIGINT Neptunes were used by the US Army 1st Radio Research Company, out of Cam Rahn Bay from 07/1967 to 04/1972, and also relayed sensor data. BuAerNos: 131429, 131458, 131485, 131492, 131496, 131526, 131531, and others.

**The North American YOYV-10D NOGS** Two OV-10A were converted to YOYV-10D NOGS (Night Observation GunShip) for the night FAC and interdiction role. The nose was extended about three feet to fit a Hughes FLIR and a laser target illuminator / rangefinder and the fuselage hardpoints were removed and a General Electric XM-197 three-barrel 20 mm Gatling gun was mounted in a ventral turret. The turret could turn around 360 degree, but the FLIR and the laser were fixed in the forward looking position. Both were test flown and accepted by the USMC in 1970. They were tested at China Lake and later (1971/72) by VMO-2 at DaNang in Vietnam. Both aircraft used a three-tone camouflage, but were first flown in the standard green over grey camouflage of the USMC. BuAerNos: 155395 (#2) and 155660 (#1).

The test results are not known, but at least 18 OV-10A were converted to OV-10D NOS (Night Observation System), but without the cannon, even though the turret might be an option.

BuAerNos: 155395, 155396, 155409, 155410, 155436, 155451, 155466, 155468, 155470, 155472, 155473, 155479, 155482, 155489, 155492, 155493, 155494, 155502 and maybe others.

Another OV-10A was tested with an Emerson Electric turret housing a GAU-2B minigun under the fuselage. (BuAerNo: ?)

The USAF tested 1973 fifteen OV-10A under the Pave Nail program as laser designator (Night FAC) aircraft, modified by LTV E-Systems with a Martin laser pod under the fuselage. One of the aircraft used by the 23rd TASS was 67-14623.

**Project Credible Chase: Fairchild AU-23A and Helio AU-24A** The Fairchild AU-23A was a modified Pilatus PC-6 Turbo-Porter, with either a single General Electric XM-197 three-barrel 20 mm Gatling gun, or two General Electric 7.62 mm MXU-470 Minigun modules. In addition, several bombs, napalm or rocket pods could be carried on four underwing and one fuselage hardpoint. The aircraft was dubbed 'Peacemaker'. Fifteen of the 17 converted were sold to the Royal Thai Air Force for COIN missions.

Serials were: 72-1304 to 1318, c/n 2050 - 2064, and two others.

Of the other 21 aircraft, I have serials for (73-1699, and 74-2073 - 2092), 13 were later (not under the Project Credible Chase) delivered to the Thai Air Force, and 5 to the Thai Air Police.

The Pilatus Porter was also planned to be built in license by Fairchild under the OV-12A designation (20 for USN were cancelled), and 2 Pilatus built UV-20A Chiricahua (79-23253 and 23254) were used by the US Army in Berlin.

The Helio AU-24A was the gunship version of the H550A Stallion, with a PT6A-27 turboprop, equipped with a General Electric XM-197 three-barrel 20 mm Gatling gun was mounted in the left cargo door. It also had 5 underwing and fuselage hardpoints. Of the 17 built aircraft, fourteen or fifteen were sold to the Cambodian (Khmer) Air Force.

Serials were: 72-1319 to 1333.

The two prototypes were civil registered 'N9552A' and 'N9551A', of which the second was carrying \_four\_ AIM-7 Sparrow air-to-air missiles!

The Helio Stallion was also built as U-10 Super Courier (ex L-28). Over 120 were built: L-28A (2, later redesignated U-10A), U-10A (26), U-10B extended range and paratrooper doors (57), U-10D heavier (36), but no U-10C.

All \_Project Credible Chase\_ aircraft were tested at Eglin AFB, and had US serials and markings prior to delivery to the SEA countries. They were first natural silver and later overall Olive Drab. The RTAF later flew with a two-tone camouflage. The program was conducted around 1970/71.

**Project Little Brother: O-2A gunships** Another gunship project, which was not realized, was the conversion of O-2A Sleeptime FAC to Little Brother gunships, with a cannon not unlike the Project Credible Chase aircraft. As far as I know, none was converted. On the other hand, some O-2A were used (as were OV-10s, AC-130s and others) for laser illumination of ground targets with AN/AVQ-12 Pave Spot laser designators, and not only to mark targets with smoke rockets.

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