



AUSTER AOP-9

The last of the line

History

The Auster AOP-9 was designed specifically for the British Army Air Corps as an air-observation post aircraft to replace previous Auster variants that had been civil designs converted to fill that role.

The first production machine was flown on 19th March 1954 and deliveries to the British Army began in 1955. Although it looked much like other Austers, the AOP-9 differed in that it was an all metal construction, with some fabric covering, and seated a pilot and two passengers in the communications role, or a pilot and observer in the air-observation post role, the observer being able to face forwards or aft as required.

The doors could be jettisoned and the rear cabin floor could be removed to permit conversion to other roles, such as aerial photography.

The AOP-9 subsequently entered service with the Indian Army and the Indian and South African Air Forces.

Eventually AOP-9 aircraft began to be replaced by Helicopters in the British Army and several were sold to civil owners.

Post Script

The British Army Air Corps presented this aircraft to the newly formed Australian Army Aviation Corps in 1970.