



CAC WINJEEL

The Winjeel (an Australian Aboriginal word meaning young eagle) is an Australian designed and built training aircraft.

History

In 1948 a single basic trainer was required to replace both the Tiger Moth and the Wirraway, a difficult task as one was an initial trainer and the other an advanced trainer.

The first CA-22 Winjeel prototype was flown in February 1955. This was followed by a lengthy testing phase in which there were difficulties getting the aircraft to spin, a crucial requirement for military flying training. The subsequent redesign included moving the fin and rudder forward from their original position and modifying the engine cowling. Sixty-two aircraft were produced and designated CA-25.

The Winjeel served as the RAAF's basic trainer until 1968 when the arrival of the Macchi and the 'all through' jet training philosophy for RAAF and RAN pilots was supposed to see them retired.

The new scheme was not totally successful, as a result the Winjeel was retained for initial training duties until 1975, when it was finally replaced by the CT-4 Air-trainer.

Even so, the Winjeel's RAAF career continued. Four remained operational well into the 1990's providing target marking with smoke bombs for Forward Air Control training from their base at Williamstown. They were replaced by Pilatus PC-9's commencing in April 1994 and were subsequently retired.

Army Instructors on Winjeels

When the Army became owner operators of aircraft in 1960 the RAAF became responsible for the training of Army personnel, both flying and technical. As a result, all Army pilots undergoing training from that time flew the Winjeel. As more pilots were trained the Army had a responsibility to provide instructor pilots to assist with this training. Army pilots were periodically posted as instructors to the RAAF's Number One Flying Training School (1FTS) at Point Cook, Victoria.