

DHC - 3 OTTER

UPDATE 3

DHC-3 OTTER

CD-ROM UPDATE 3

Correct to 1 January 2008

As promised on the CD, periodic Updates will be published to report on developments to the Otter fleet since the publication of the CD, the information on which was correct to 1st January 2005. Update 1 was issued with the CD and Update 2 brought the situation up to 1st January 2007. Update 3 is current to 1st January 2008 and includes a listing of all Otters currently in service and their engine type.

R-1340 = Pratt & Whitney R-1340 Wasp (600hp piston)
Vazar = Pratt & Whitney PT6A (750hp turbine)
PZL = ASz-621R-M18 (1,000hp piston, Polish)
Walter = Walter M601 (750hp turbine, Czech)
Texas Turbine = Garrett TPE-331 (1,000hp turbine)

3

C-FODH. In service with Harbour Air, Vancouver as a Vazar, fleet number 307.

7

C-GPPL. Having been operated by Hawk Air out of its base at Wawa, Ontario since April 2001, Otter number 7 was sold to Alaska Coastal Airlines of Juneau, Alaska and was registered to its new owners on 30th May 2007 as N342AK. Alaska Coastal Airlines trades as Wings of Alaska and already operates four Texas Turbine Otters on sight seeing flights from its Juneau base. N342AK arrived at Vernon, BC in late July 2007 to be converted as a Texas Turbine Otter by Kal-Air. On 20th November 2007 the registration was changed to N753AK. Work on the conversion continued at the Kal-Air facility over the winter of 2007/08.

8

C-FSUB. This Otter has been operated by Cargair Ltee from its base at St.Michel-des-Saints, Quebec for twenty years, since 1987. In 2007 the bush aircraft division of Cargair, including the Otter, was purchased by Air Mont Laurier (1985) Inc of Ste.Veronique, Quebec to whom C-FSUB was registered on 5th April 2007. Air Mont Laurier also operate Otter C-GGSC (366), both Otters still with their original R-1340 engines.

10

C-FGTL. Following its crash on 11th October 1990 at Tarp Lake, Ontario while operated by Gold Belt Air Transport, the wrecked Otter was brought to Kuby's Aircraft, Kenora where it lay for many years, still painted in its original Lambair colour scheme. In October 2005 the wrecked Otter was sold by Kuby's Aircraft, along with three other wrecked Otters, to Recon Air Corporation of Geraldton, Ontario and all four were trucked to Geraldton for rebuild. C-FGTL was registered to Recon Air Corporation on 9th August 2007.

11

N87KA. In service with Kenmore Air, Seattle as a Vazar.

13

C-FODK. In service with Nestor Falls Fly-In Outpost Camps, Nestor Falls, Ontario. R-1340

14

C-FODJ. In service with Green Airways, Red Lake, Ontario. PZL

15

N150BA. In private use with Kenai River Xpress, Soldotna, Alaska named "Norville's Otter". Texas Turbine

19

C-FEYY. This was one of the two Orenda engined Otters, grounded since December 2002 following the closure of the company which manufactured the engine. EYY was in storage since then, with the engine removed, at Dolbeau/St.Felicien, Quebec. In June 2007 the Otter was sold to Harbour Air and it departed St.Felicien on 29th June 2007 loaded into a truck for the long cross country drive to Vancouver. Over the following months it was converted by Harbour Air as a Vazar and given fleet number 316. It was registered to Harbour Air as C-GHAZ on 23rd August 2007, their sixteenth turbine Otter.

21

C-FRNO. In service with Harbour Air, Vancouver as a Vazar. Fleet number 301.

24

C-FIOF. In service with Huron Air and Outfitters, Armstrong, Ontario.

During March/April 2007 C-FIOF of Huron Air and C-GBTU (209) of Blue Water Aviation Services were chartered by a film company and used in the making of a movie called "Whiteout". The plot of the film was a US Marshal tracking a killer in the Antarctic, the film being shot on location on frozen Lake Manitoba, which had to make do as "Antarctica". Both Otters were painted with grey fuselages and red tails and carried "National Science Foundation" (NSF) titles. First Air L100 Hercules C-GHPW, also carrying NSF titles, put in a cameo appearance in the film as well. The film is due for release in 2008.

26

N26DE. Converted to a turbine Otter in 1992 by All West Freight at Sterling, Alaska with a Lycoming T-53 engine taken from a Grumman Mohawk, but the conversion was not certified by the FAA and the aircraft remained in storage at Sterling since 1992. Sold in August 2005 to Mike Spisak of Kotzebue, Alaska who also purchased Otter N338D (338) which had crashed and the wreck of which was also in store at Sterling. Both Otters were trucked away from Sterling and N338D subsequently restored to flying status. Noted during a visit to Kenai, Alaska in July 2007 were N338D without engine, N26DE and C-FQOS (398), both being rebuilt.

28

C-FSVP. In service with Nordair Quebec 2000 Inc, Radisson, Quebec. Vazar

30

N63354. In service with Ward Air, Juneau, Alaska. This Otter arrived Vernon, BC on 4th October 2006 for conversion to a Texas Turbine by Kal-Air and to have a new interior installed. This work was carried out over the winter of 2006/07 and N63354 departed Vernon on 7th April 2007 returning to its base at Juneau as a Texas Turbine and re-entered service with Ward Air.

31

C-FAPR. In service with Ignace Airways (1996) Ltd, Ignace, Ontario. R-1340

35

ZK-VAS. In service with Volcanic Air Safaris, Rotorua, New Zealand. R-1340

37

N606KA. In service with Kenmore Air, Seattle. Vazar

39

C-GOFB. In service with Watson's Skyways of Wawa, Ontario. Vazar.

In February 2007 C-GOFB was leased to Provincial Airlines of St.Johns, Newfoundland, being registered to the company on 12th February. It was based at Goose Bay, Labrador for general charter work, operated by Innu Mikun which is a subsidiary of Provincial Airlines based at Goose Bay with a fleet of Twin Otters. It returned to its owners Watsons Skyways of Wawa, Ontario in time for the summer 2007 season and was registered again to Watson's Skyways on 20th June 2007.

42

C-GHAR. In service with Harbour Air, Vancouver. Vazar. Fleet number 308

43

C-GQDU. In service with Air Saguenay, Jonquiere, Quebec. PZL

44

C-FYCX. In service with Waweig Air, Armstrong, Ontario. Vazar

46

N565TA. In service with Talkeetna Air Taxi, Talkeetna, Alaska. Texas Turbine

47

52974. US Army. The fate of this Army U-1A Otter is now known. It was one of the first six Otters delivered to the Army in March 1955 and first served with the 521st Engineer Company at Crissy AAF, San Francisco. It deployed to Alaska during the summer of 1955 to take part in a survey of Alaska. It was subsequently re-assigned to Fort Carson, Colorado and while engaged in a troop transport flight, crashed in a ravine near Fort Carson on 16th June 1959. It came to rest inverted and sustained major damage. The pilot and nine passengers survived the crash, with some injuries. The Otter was a write off and was deleted from the Army inventory in October 1959.

52

N87AW. In service with Alaska West Air, Kenai, Alaska. Vazar

54

N3904. Following its crash at Nikolai, Alaska in December 2002 and the subsequent purchase of the wreck by Rich Fowler and Carl Penner, the rebuild of number 54 continued during 2007 at Heber, Utah. The remains of Otter 327 were purchased for use in the rebuild, and 327 and 54 were mated in May 2007, the rebuild continuing during the rest of the year.

58

N100BW. In service with Rainbow King Lodge Inc, Iliamna, Alaska. R-1340

59

C-GIWQ. In storage with Viking Air at Victoria, BC, intended for future conversion to a Viking Turbo Otter

61

N61FE. In service with Rainbow King Lodge Inc, Iliamna, Alaska. R-1340

67

C-FHXY. In service with Lac Seul Airways, Ear Falls, Ontario. PZL

69

C-FCZP. This Otter joined the fleet of Walsten Air Service (1986) Ltd in July 1998 and flew out of Kenora, Ontario for the next nine years. Following the death of the owner of the company, its aircraft were put up for sale, including Otter CZP which had a total time of 26,183 hours on the airframe, as this was one of the pair of Otters originally delivered to Canadian Pacific Airlines back in April 1955, both of which have been very active in Canadian skies ever since. CZP was registered to 656288 Ontario Ltd, Kenora on 16th April 2007 in connection with its sale, and was sold to Slate Falls Airways (1999) Inc of Sioux Lookout, Ontario who already operate Vazar Otter C-FNWX (412). CZP was flown from Kenora to Fort Frances, Ontario where over the winter of 2007/08 it was converted to a Vazar turbine for its new owners by Lakeland Aviation. C-FCZP was registered to Slate Falls Airways (1999) Inc on 9th October 2007.

71

C-FCZO. In service with Osnaburgh Airways Ltd, Pickle Lake, Ontario. R-1340

74

C-FMAU. Originally delivered to the Manitoba Government Air Service in February 1956, the Otter continued to serve the Province of Manitoba for nearly fifty years until it was withdrawn from use at Winnipeg in February 2005 and put up for sale. It was eventually sold to that veteran Canadian aviator Max Ward (the founder of Wardair) and departed Winnipeg in early January 2007, routing via Calgary to Vernon, BC where it arrived 8th January 2007. At Vernon it was to be converted to a Texas Turbine Otter by Kal-Air. This work took place over the following months and on 23rd May 2007 C-FMAU was registered to Marjorie Ward of Edmonton, Alberta. The Otter made its first flight with its new Garrett engine at Vernon on 15th June 2007 and Max Ward, now aged 86 years and still going strong, was present for the event. Mr Ward decided to retain the all-yellow scheme the Otter had worn in Manitoba Government service. The Otter later departed for Edmonton and was then used by Max Ward based out of Yellowknife for the summer of 2007.

77

C-GCQA. North Star Air, Pickle Lake, Ontario. Vazar

89

C-FITF. Harbour Air, Vancouver. Vazar. Fleet number 303

90

C-FITS. This Otter flew for Cochrane Air Services until the end of the summer 2005 season, when it was sold. It was noted in early December 2005 at the AOG facility at Kelowna, BC paint stripped and in the course of conversion to a Walter turbine. It was sold to Tofino Air Lines of Gibsons, BC, registered to them on 3rd February 2006 and departed Kelowna on delivery early June 2006.

From Kelowna C-FITS flew to Campbell River on Vancouver Island where it was fitted with a 'glass cockpit' by ASAP Avionics Service. Very few Otters have this modification. A company called SAGEM Avionics Inc hold the STC for this modification, for which ASAP Avionics is a licensed installer. As its website explains: "One or two SAGEM multi-function displays (MFDs) can be used to present engine data. The MFDs can be further enhanced with a moving map display to improve situational awareness. The upgraded installation reduces the clutter of conventional instruments, increases operational efficiency and improves flight safety". The Otter then continued to Tofino, its new base, on the west coast of Vancouver Island and entered service with Tofino Air. It joined a fleet of four

Beavers serving the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia, Vancouver Island and Canada's Gulf Islands. The company offers a scheduled seaplane service from Vancouver's South Terminal to Sechelt, Nanaimo, Victoria and Gabriola Island, plus scenic charter tours from its Tofino base, using the Otter or a Beaver depending on the passenger load.

97

C-GGOR. In service with Jackson Air Service, Flin Flon, Manitoba. Vazar

105

C-GVNL. In service with Harbour Air, Vancouver. Vazar. Fleet number 304

106

N707KA. In service with Kenmore Air, Seattle. Vazar. Named "Captain Greg Munro".

108

C-GMCW. In service with Black Sheep Aviation & Cattle Company, Whitehorse, Yukon. Texas Turbine

111

C-FODQ. In service with Chimo Air Service, Red Lake, Ontario. R-1340

113

C-GPHD. In service with Osprey Wings, Otter Lake, Missinipe, Saskatchewan. Vazar. Named "What's Up Doc".

118

N104BM. In service with Bald Mountain Air Services, Homer, Alaska. Texas Turbine.

119

C-FHAD. In service with Harbour Air, Vancouver. Vazar. Fleet number 315

125

C-GBNA. In service with Voyage Air, Buffalo Narrows, Saskatchewan. Walter

128

N5322G. In service with Alaska Cargo Service, Dillingham, Alaska. R-1340

130

C-FKOA. Sioux Narrows Airways/Plummers Lodge, Great Bear Lake, Northwest Territories. Texas Turbine

132

C-FJCT. One of four former Ethiopian Army Otters imported into Canada. Registration cancelled 11th September 2000. Current status and whereabouts unknown. Has not flown since importation.

135

C-FIUZ. Harbour Air, Vancouver. Vazar. Fleet number 306

140

C-FBEW. Following its crash on 17th March 1986 near its base at Pickle Lake, Ontario and further damage caused when it was dropped by the helicopter attempting to retrieve it from the crash site, the wreck was brought to Kuby's Aircraft, Kenora, Ontario where it lay for many years. It was one of four wrecked Otters sold to Recon Air Corporation of Geraldton, Ontario in October 2005 and which were trucked to Geraldton for rebuild.

141

N560TR. In service with Jespersen Aircraft Services/Brooks Range Aviation, Bettles, Alaska. PZL

144

N93356. While flying for Ward Air of Juneau, Alaska as a Texas Turbine, N93356 crashed at Slate Cove, Alaska on 31st July 2006 and was shipped south to Kal-Air at Vernon, BC for repair. The rebuilding of the Otter took most of a year and N93356

took off from Vernon on 25th August 2007 returning to Juneau to resume service with Ward Air.

145

C-FFVZ. Jackson Air Services, Flin Flon, Manitoba. Vazar

147

C-GLPM. Propair Inc, Rouyn-Noranda, Quebec. Vazar

150

C-GLJI. Labrador Air Safari (1984) Inc, Baie Comeau, Quebec. R-1340

151

144670. US Navy Test Pilots School, Patuxent River NAS, Maryland. R-1340.
The world's only active military Otter.

152

N90422. Kenmore Air, Seattle. Vazar

157

C-FDAK. Air Saguenay, Chicoutimi, Quebec. R-1340

159

N959PA. Pro Mech Air, Ketchikan, Alaska. Vazar. On lease from Pantechnicon Aviation.

165

C-FDDX. Hearst Air Service, Hearst, Ontario. Vazar

166

C-GGSL. Pipestone Air Inc, Emo, Ontario. PZL

172

C-GLCW. Leuenberger Air Service, Nakina, Ontario. Vazar

174

C-GFTZ. Alpine Lakes Air, Smithers, BC. Texas Turbine

183

N435B. Pro Mech Air, Ketchikan, Alaska. Vazar. On lease from Single Otter Leasing LLC

184

C-FQMN. Hawk Air, Wawa, Ontario. Vazar

201

N205RC. Rapids Camp Lodge, King Salmon, Alaska. Texas Turbine.

205

C-FJZN. Labrador Air Safari (1984) Inc, Baie Comeau, Quebec. R-1340

206

N455A. Wood River Lodge, Dillingham, Alaska. Texas Turbine

207

C-FTOK. North of Sixty Flying Services, Obre Lake, NWT. R-1340

208

C-FWEJ. Jackson Air Services, Flin Flon, Manitoba. Vazar

209

C-GBTU. Blue Water Aviation Services, Silver Falls, Manitoba. Walter. See under C-FIOF (24) for details of the use of C-GBTU in the film “Whiteout”.

213

C-FWRA. White River Air, White River, Ontario. Vazar

214

4R-ARA. In 2003 Sri Lankan Air Taxis had been formed, as a subsidiary of Sri Lanka Airlines, to operate domestic air services within Sri Lanka and started operations with a leased Cessna 208 Caravan. This was replaced in October 2004 by two Vazar turbine Otters 4R-ARA (214) and 4R-ARB (393). These two Otters continued in service for nearly three years but due to the declining security situation within Sri Lanka (with frequent attacks by ‘Tamil Tiger’ insurgents), many of the destinations served had to be abandoned, and this fact together with the declining number of tourists visiting the country rendered the operation no longer viable. Sri Lanka Airlines decided to close down the operation, with the last flight operating on 5th June 2007. The two Otters were put into storage at Colombo and put up for sale. During nearly three years of operation, Sri Lanka Air Taxis had operated 3,700 revenue flights and carried over 17,000 passengers, demonstrating that in better times there was sufficient demand for such domestic air travel within Sri Lanka.

The buyer of the two Otters was Harbour Air of Vancouver. The two Otters were shipped from Colombo to Vancouver, arriving in four large containers on 31st October 2007 and over the winter of 2007/08 the Otters were repainted into Harbour Air colours and made ready for service. 4R-ARA was registered to Harbour Air as C-GHAG on 3rd October 2007 and on the same day 4R-ARB was registered to Harbour Air as C-FJHA.

216

C-GLMT. Air Saguenay, Chicoutimi, Quebec. Vazar

218

C-FODT. Air Saguenay, Chicoutimi, Quebec. Texas Turbine

221

N50KA. Kenmore Air, Seattle. Vazar. For 2005, 2006 and 2007 this Otter was operated in a logo colour scheme of the K5 Radio Station in Seattle.

225

N3952B. Pro Mech Air, Ketchikan, Alaska. Vazar. On lease from Single Otter Leasing LLC.

226

N226UT. Ultima Thule Outfitters, Chitina, Alaska. Texas Turbine

230

C-FCBA. Kenora Air Service, Kenora, Ontario. R-1340

233

C-FQND. Waweig Air, Armstrong, Ontario. Vazar

239

C-FSOR. Nestor Falls Fly-In Outposts, Nestor Falls, Ontario. Texas Turbine

247

C-FYLZ. Wabakimi Air, Armstrong, Ontario. Walter

250

VH-OTV. This Otter was noted at Broome on 19th May 2005 just out of the hangar after overhaul and repaint into a new colour scheme of white overall, red cheatline and red tailband. It was registered to Vazar (Pty) Ltd of Broome on 23rd February 2006 and was given titles www.reefflight.com.au on the fuselage side. According to this website, Caneflight Enterprises Ltd is a company managed by a Rod and Lee Johnston and Reef Flight is one of the operating names used by the company, which located in Broome in 2002 when the company won the contract to operate and manage VH-OTV on behalf of Broome and Maxima Pearling Companies. The Otter is used for pearl farm crew transfers and for tourist flights from Broome to the offshore pearl farms. The company also operates a Beaver and a Cessna 208 Caravan. Otter VH-OTV was advertised for sale in December 2007 on Wipline 8000 amphibious floats, with 13,610 hours on the airframe. It is a Vazar turbine.

252

N252TA. Talon Air service, Soldotna, Alaska. Texas Turbine

254

N254AW. Alaskan Wilderness Outfitting Company, Cordoba, Alaska. Texas Turbine.

258

C-FXRI. Osprey Wings, Otter Lake, Missinipe, Saskatchewan. Vazar

261

C-GKYG. Alkan Air, Whitehorse, Yukon. Walter

262

N338AK. Alaska Coastal Airlines Inc, Juneau, Alaska, trading as Wings of Alaska. Texas Turbine.

267

C-FMAX. Province of Manitoba Air Services, Winnipeg. Vazar

270

N270PA. Pro Mech Air, Ketchikan, Alaska. Vazar. On lease from Pantechnicon Aviation

273

C-FHPE. Transwest Air, La Ronge, Saskatchewan. Vazar

274

N6868B. Flown during summer 2007 by Kirk M. Thomas trading as Gateway Aviation out of Ketchikan, Alaska as a PZL-engined Otter in support of his own

fishing lodges and tourist flights to the Misty Fjords area. At the end of the summer season, the Otter was sold to Doyon Air Transport LLC of Ketchikan and in mid October 2007 was flown south to Vancouver where over the winter of 2007/08 it was converted to a Vazar turbine Otter by Aeroelite Industries. As well as the turbine conversion, it is reportedly to be upgraded to an executive class configuration for the new owner's upmarket clientele. Doyon Air Transport trades as Misty Fjords Air & Outfitting and N6868B was registered to its new owners on 7th December 2007. The Otter will return to Ketchikan in Spring 2008, joining the existing fleet of a Cessna 185 and beaver. As its website explains: "Misty Fjords Air & Outfitting flies to all points in Southeast Alaska and British Columbia, providing executive class seaplane service specializing in flightseeing tours of Misty Fjords National Monument, transport to all Southeast Alaska Forest Service cabins, charter flights and freshwater sportfishing guide service".

276

C-GYYS. Northwest Flying Inc, Nestor Falls, Ontario. R-1340

280

C-FMPX. Air Saguenay, Chicoutimi, Quebec. R-1340

282

C-FCEE. Johnny May's Air Charter, Kuujjuaq, Quebec. R-1340

284

C-GHAS. Harbour Air, Vancouver. Vazar. Fleet number 310

286

C-FLEA. Green Airways, Red Lake, Ontario. PZL

287

C-GYKO. River Air, Minaki, Ontario. Texas Turbine

288

DQ-GLL. Pacific Island Air, Nadi, Fiji. Vazar

289

C-FLAP. Nordplus 1988 Ltee, Schefferville, Quebec. R-1340

292

C-FLLL. Osprey Wings, Otter Lake, Missinipe, Saskatchewan. Vazar.

296

N103SY. This Walter-powered Otter flew for Mavrik Aire, a company owned and operated by Craig Schweizer. It was based at Soldotna and Kenai, Alaska, mostly flying hunters and fishermen to remote northern parts of the State. It was also used in winter, and during April 2007 was flying out of Bethel hauling mining equipment to Kisaralik Lake in the Kilbuck Mountains. On the 12th June 2007, at the start of the summer season, the Otter was registered to Ascention LLC of Kenai, Alaska but continued to operate for Mavrik Aire.

Trouble however struck the following month. “The Anchorage Daily News reported that Craig Schweizer, son of imprisoned Montana Freeman leader Leroy Schweizer, lost his aviation licence in July for multiple safety and legal violations. But Craig Schweizer says that is baloney and maintains that FAA inspectors have a vendetta against him because of his family ties to the Freeman, the defunct self-described ‘Christian Patriot’ group famously headed by his father”. According to various newspaper reports, the FAA revoked Mavrik Aire’s Part 135 Certificate, which allows the company to operate air taxis and charter services, but the company may still provide guided fishing and bear viewing trips. It also revoked Craig Schweizer’s pilots licence and aviation mechanic’s licence, citing a long list of violations. The current status of N103SY following these developments has not yet been ascertained.

300

N79JJ. Prof Fate Inc, Bellingham, Washington. Vazar

302

C-GMDG. Fort Frances Sportsmen Airways, Fort Frances, Ontario. Vazar

307

N8510T. This Otter last flew for Alaska West Air Service based at Nikiski, Alaska until the end of the summer 1995 season. It was then flown to Victoria, BC where it was put into storage, intended for conversion as a Viking Turbo Otter. In April 2000 the Otter was registered to Splash Air LLC of East Sound, Washington but all the time remained in storage at Victoria, awaiting certification of the Viking Turbo Otter.

Work eventually started on the conversion of N8510T in late 2005 and continued slowly during 2006, as the Viking Turbo Otter still had not received certification. On 30th August 2007 the Otter was re-registered to Viking Air Ltd C-GITL and made its first flight as a turbine Otter from Victoria in mid September 2007.

310

N49AW. Alaska West Air, Kenai, Alaska. Texas Turbine.

314

C-GCDX. Selkirk Air Services, Selkirk, Manitoba. PZL

316

C-FSGD. Transwest Air, La Ronge, Saskatchewan. Vazar

322

81707. This Otter was delivered to the US Army in April 1959, joined the 18th Aviation Company and served in Vietnam. It was one of eighteen Otters handed over to the Government of Cambodia in 1971 for operation by the Khmer Air Force. Its fate has now been discovered. It was destroyed at Pochentong Air Base, Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 5th May 1972 after it took a direct hit by a 122mm rocket fired by attacking Khmer Rouge forces. Please refer to the note on the Khmer Air Force Otters at the end of this Update and the website mentioned which contains a photograph of the unfortunate 81707, with nothing left apart from the engine and the tail section.

324

C-FMPY. Nakina Outpost Camps & Air Service, Nakina, Ontario. Vazar

329

C-GLFL. Air Saguenay, Chicoutimi, Quebec. PZL

333

N336AK. Alaska Coastal Airlines trading as Wings of Alaska, Juneau, Alaska.
Texas Turbine.

336

CF-MIQ. Nakina Outpost Camps & Air Service, Nakina, Ontario. Vazar.

338

N338D. Having lain dormant and in a damaged condition at Sterling, Alaska for many years, N338D was sold in August 2005 to Mike Spisak of Kotzebue, Alaska who also purchased N26DE (26) which was also lying at Sterling and both Otters were trucked away. N338D was restored to flying condition and registered to Northern Aircraft Leasing LLC of Cheyenne, Wyoming on 8th August 2005. During summer 2006 it flew for Mavrik Aire based out of Kenai, Alaska until it suffered engine failure on 22nd August 2006 and force landed in a swamp not far from the Kenai Airport. It was stuck there for four months, until mid December 2006 when it was airlifted out of the swamp by Bell 204 helicopter N70NW of Northern Pioneer Helicopters and brought to the Kenai Airport. The engine was lifted one day and the rest of the aircraft the next.

N338D remained at the Kenai Airport during 2007 and was noted there in June 2007 without engine. It was advertised for sale that month, as having 12,000 hours on the airframe and having had its last annual check in August 2005. The asking price was US\$550,000 with an additional \$25,000 for a spare engine. The Otter was sold to Rustair Inc of Anchorage and registered to its new owner on 7th January 2008. Rustair is the parent company of Rusts Flying Service of Anchorage, which already operates three turbine Otters. N338D was to be crated from Kenai to Vernon BC where it would be converted to a turbine Otter by Kal Air.

339

C-FHAX. Harbour Air, Vancouver. Vazar. Fleet number 313.

347

C-FPAD. One of the four former Ethiopian Army Otters imported into Canada, this Otter was noted at the Aeroflite Industries hangar at the Vancouver International Airport in September 1999, in the workshop, and still in its Ethiopian Army colour scheme. Registration C-FPAD was cancelled 11th September 2000. The current status and whereabouts of this Otter is unknown.

348

C-GLAB. Wilderness Air, Vermillion Bay, Ontario. Being converted to a Vazar over the winter of 2007/08 by Recon Air at Geraldton, Ontario.

349

C-FZDV. Air Tindi, Yellowknife, NWT. Vazar

353

C-GVNX. Labrador Air Safari, Baie Comeau, Quebec. R-1340

355

C-GOPP. Harbour Air, Vancouver. Vazar. Fleet number 305

357

C-FHAA. Harbour Air, Vancouver. Vazar. Fleet number 309

359

C-GMLB. Waweig Air, Armstrong, Ontario. Vazar

361

N361TT. Renew Air Taxi, Dillingham, Alaska. Texas Turbine

362

N362TT. R&J Aircraft Leasing Corp, Anchorage, Alaska. Texas Turbine

363

C-GSMG. Sioux Narrows Airways, Selkirk, Manitoba. The Otter flies for Plummers Lodge, based at Great Bear Lake in the Northwest Territories each summer. Texas Turbine.

365

C-GUTL. Fort Frances Sportsmen, Fort Frances, Ontario. Vazar

366

C-GGSC. Air Mont Laurier, Ste. Veronique, Quebec. R-1340

371

C-GEND. This Otter was overhauled at Paine Field, Everett, Washington during the winter of 2006/07 and received a new colour scheme. The former pale yellow with a light blue cheatline was brightened up and an attractive 'sky and mountain' image was added to the tail. This work was finished at the end of February 2007, when the Otter returned to service with Whistler Air at Whistler, BC. Vazar

373

C-FBEO. Following its return from Australia, the Otter was sold to Forde Lake Air Services of Hornepayne, Ontario to whom it was registered on 13th April 2006 and it flew for this company for the summer 2006 season, then went into winter storage. In January 2007 it was advertised for sale, quoting total airframe time of 16,618 hours and with an asking price of CAD\$735,000. The Otter was sold to Excellent Adventures Outposts & Air Service of Ear Falls, Ontario to whom it was registered on 2nd May 2007, joining their fleet of a Beaver and Beech 18. R-1340

376

C-GSUV. Adventure Air, Silver Falls, Manitoba. Walter

382

C-FHAS. This Otter is operated by Northern Pacific Seaplanes, an associated company of Harbour Air, Vancouver and has fleet number 312. It is based at Prince Rupert, BC. A minor incident was recorded in March 2007. The float-equipped Otter landed on the water at Masset on the Queen Charlotte Islands after a flight from Eden Lake. The pilot turned into the channel to taxi to the seaplane base. The wind was from the south east at 30 knots and gusty. When partially turned crosswind, using power, the tail suddenly lifted and the left wing and propeller struck the water. The Otter righted itself and the engine remained running. The aircraft was taken in tow by a fishing vessel and towed to the seaplane dock. The pilot, the sole occupant, was not injured. The aircraft sustained substantial engine damage. Following repairs it was returned to service.

385

C-FDNK. In March 2007 the Otter was advertised for sale by Viking Air, located at Victoria, BC. It was advertised as a Viking Turbo Otter with new PT6A-35 engine, Hartzell three-blade prop, Panaview windows, 15 seats, Seaflight 8100 floats, new

paint and interior, with an asking price of \$1,350,000. Total time was 18,151 hours. By August 2007 it had been withdrawn from sale and was then on offer for lease, at an hourly rate of \$275 per flight hour plus engine reserve of \$55 per flight hour, with a minimum lease of 700 hours.

386

C-GHYB. Blue Water Aviation Services, Silver Falls, Manitoba. PZL

387

C-GIIQ. After its accident in March 1994 at Sandy Bay, Saskatchewan the Otter was brought to Kuby's Aircraft, Kenora where it lay, in the company of other wrecked Otters, for years, intended for eventual rebuild. In the event, Kuby's Aircraft sold their stock of wrecked Otters to Recon Air of Geraldton, Ontario and four Otters including C-GIIQ were trucked to Geraldton in October 2005. Rebuilding commenced during 2006 and IIQ was advertised for sale in November 2006, with total airframe time of 12,845 hours, in the course of rebuild to "like new" status, with a change of engine.

The buyer of the Otter, in March 2007, was Charles Bethel of Andros Island in the Bahamas where he runs the Flamingo Quay resort. He needed a replacement for his original Otter N335AK (263) which had crashed in December 2006. By the end of September 2007, IIQ was nearing the completion of its rebuild and had been converted to a Texas turbine Otter with the Garrett engine. It also had new avionics fitted, a new interior, new paint scheme and was on Wipline amphibious floats. It was registered N443CB on 12th October 2007 to Bank of Utah Trustee, Salt Lake City and set off on its delivery flight, routing from Geraldton-Duluth-Champaigne (Illinois)-La Grange (Georgia)- Fort Luaderdale-Nassau-Flamingo Quay, a flight time of 26 hours. It then entered service supporting the Flamingo Quay resort, collecting its guests at Nassau and flying them to and from the resort.

392

N1018B. Emerald Air Service, Homer, Alaska. R-1340

393

4R-ARB. Vazar. As explained above in relation to Otter 214, 4R-ARB was one of two Otters operated by Sri Lanka Air Taxi providing domestic scheduled air services within Sri Lanka until the operation was closed down in June 2007 and both Otters put up for sale. Both were purchased by Harbour Air of Vancouver, becoming their 17th and 18th turbine Otters. Both arrived at Vancouver in four large crates on 31st October 2007 and over the winter of 2007/08 were to be prepared for service with Harbour Air. Otter 393 was registered C-FJHA to Harbour Air on 3rd October 2007.

394

N3125N. Alaska Air Taxi, Anchorage, Alaska. PZL. Following its accident on 2nd September 2006 at Wainright, Alaska the Otter was returned to Anchorage on board a Lyndon Air Cargo Hercules and was under rebuild during 2007 at Anchorage.

397

C-FQEI. Following its crash on Vancouver Island in August 2005 while operated by Air Nootka, the damaged Otter was sold to Mr. Urs Wamister of Switzerland who arranged for the Otter to be shipped to Hereg in Hungary where the rebuild commenced. During 2007 it was transported to the Altenrhein St.Gallen Airport in Switzerland where work on the Otter was to be completed and a Vazar turbine engine installed by Altenrhein Aviation. The Canadian registration was cancelled on 15th August 2007 as “exported to Switzerland”. The rebuilt Otter was scheduled to fly again in March 2008.

389

C-FQOS. Vazar. Following its crash in September 2001 at Goose Bay, Labrador while operated by Air Labrador, the wreck of the Otter was sold to aircraft broker Glen W. Ernst of Temecula, California. The Otter somewhat disappeared from view until July 2007 when during a visit to the Kenai Airport in Alaska it was noted in a hangar there under rebuild.

399

9419. This Otter was delivered to the RCAF in November 1960 with serial 9419. It continued flying for the Canadian military until an accident on 7th May 1970 when operated by 401 Squadron at St.Hubert, Quebec. The flight on that day was a local area training flight to familiarize a student with local water landing sites. In the course of take off, the right float dug into the water, followed by the right wing after which the aircraft cartwheeled, coming to rest inverted with the nose and cockpit submerged. The crew of four rapidly evacuated the aircraft and there were no injuries.

The wrecked Otter was first taken back to St.Hubert and the following month was brought to the Mountain View Storage Depot, Ontario. For a time the fuselage was used for rescue training at CFB Trenton, Ontario and the Otter was then reported to have been scrapped. Thankfully it now transpires this was not the case and for years the Otter languished at the Mountain View depot. It was seen there by a group of visiting aviation enthusiasts on 26th September 2007. Shortly thereafter it was sold to Atlantic Aircraft Salvage and trucked to the company’s facility at Halifax, Nova Scotia for rebuild.

401

C-GBQC. Fort Frances Sportsmen Airways, Fort Frances, Ontario. R-1340

403

C-FODW. Jackson Air Services, Flin Flon, Manitoba. Vazar

404

C-GFUT. Nordplus (1988) Ltee, Schefferville, Quebec. R-1340

405

C-GUTW. Harbour Air, Vancouver. Vazar. Fleet number 302

406

C-FHAH. Vazar. After many years service in Europe with a Swedish parachute club, registered SE-KOX, the Otter was purchased by Wipaire in February 2005 and ferried to its base at St.Paul, Minnesota as N406H. It was then sold to Harbour Air in Vancouver and registered to its new owners as C-FHAH in January 2006. It was ferried to Vancouver in March 2006 and having been overhauled and repainted it entered service with Harbour Air, fleet number 314. The opportunity arose to place the Otter on a contract in Malta that summer, but there was insufficient time to make all the necessary arrangements and the deployment to Malta was postponed to the following year. Early in 2007 procedures were undertaken to increase the aircraft's gross weight to 9,000 pounds for the Malta contract.

Malta is an island in the Mediterranean and for many years there had been a helicopter service connecting Valetta, the capital, with the outlying island of Gozo, a popular tourist destination. The helicopter operation proved very expensive and Harbour Air combined with local interests to provide the Otter as a replacement. By May 2007 the Otter was ready to be ferried to Malta on wheels, the floats and all necessary spares and equipment for the operation being shipped to Malta in a container.

Flown by two ferry pilots, C-FHAH departed Vancouver on 14th May 2007, its routing being to Calgary (Springbank)-Flin Flon, Manitoba-Churchill-Iqaluit-Sondre Stromfjord-Reykjavik-Prestwick, where it arrived on 21st May, -Duxford-Marseille-Luqa, Malta where it arrived on 24th May. It was then put on amphibious floats and undertook the necessary local test flying for the operation to achieve Maltese certification. The Canadian registration was cancelled on 18th July 2007 and the Otter registered 9H-AFA to Harbour Air (Malta) Ltd.

The scheduled service commenced on 23rd July 2007 and for the summer season involved five daily flights connecting the Valetta Sea Passenger Terminal, Malta with Mgarr Harbour, Gozo, where the Otter arrives at Pontoon F. Flight time is twenty minutes and the new service has proved most popular, being much cheaper than the previous helicopter operation.

407

N3125S. Kenmore Air Harbour, Kenmore, Washington. Vazar. For 2007 the Otter carried a “Metronatural.com” logo colour scheme.

409

N409PA. Pro Mech Air, Ketchikan, Alaska. Vazar. On lease from Pantechnicon Aviation.

410

C-FVVY. Big River Air, Fort Smith, Northwest Territories. Vazar

411

C-FODV. Wilderness Air, Vermillion Bay, Ontario. R-1340

412

C-FNWX. Slate Falls Airways, Sioux Lookout, Ontario. Vazar

418

N337AK. Alaska Coastal Airlines, Juneau, Alaska trading as Wings of Alaska. Texas Turbine. The Otter arrived at Vernon, BC early October 2006 for a repaint and installation of new interior by Kal Air over the winter of 2006/07. It was repainted in a new yellow and white colour scheme and departed Vernon 7th April 2007 for return to Juneau.

419

N727KT. Rustair Inc, Anchorage, Alaska. Vazar. Operated by K2 Aviation, Talkeetna, Alaska which is a division of Rustair.

420

C-GLCO. Labrador Air Safari, Jonquiere, Quebec. Texas Turbine.

422

C-GLCP. North Pacific Seaplanes, Prince Rupert, BC (a division of Harbour Air, Vancouver). Fleet number 311. Vazar

425

N2899J. Rusts Flying Service, Lake Hood, Alaska. Vazar

427

N644JJ. Aircraft Investments LLC, Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Vazar

428

C-GLCS. Alkan Air, Whitehorse, Yukon. Vazar

429

C-FODY. Province of Manitoba Air Services, Winnipeg. Vazar

431

N17689. Katmai Adventure Trips, King Salmon, Alaska. Vazar

434

N491K. Katmai Air Leasing, Anchorage, Alaska. PZL

436

C-FAYR. North of Sixty Flying Service, Obre Lake, NWT. R-1340

437

C-FSOX. Leuenberger Air Service, Nakina, Ontario. Vazar

438

C-FPEM. Thunderbird Aviation, Stony Rapids, Saskatchewan. R-1340. The Otter flies for Athabaska Fishing Lodges.

439

C-FPEN. This Otter was sold by Fast Air to North Star Air Ltd of Pickle Lake, Ontario to whom it was registered 29th August 2007. Texas Turbine.

445

C-FRHW. Central Flyways Air (Venture Air), Thompson, Manitoba. R-1340

447

C-FDJD. Otter 447 was originally delivered to the Argentine Air Force in February 1965 for operation in the Antarctic and it served with the Fuerza Aerea Argentina with serial P-11 until August 1972 when it was donated to the Paraguayan Air Force, serial T-05. It was named “El Caballero Rojo” (The Red Gentleman) as it retained the all-red colour scheme from its days in the Antarctic. It was re-serialised 0209 and used for parachute work until an accident at Asuncion in 1981, after which it languished in a damaged state in a hangar at Nu-Guazu Air Base for many years. In 1991 it was sold for scrap but by good fortune it was purchased by Mr Randy D’Aoust/Quality Aircraft Sales of Edmonton, Alberta where it arrived in a crate early in 1997. It was sold to Vazar Aerospace and used for tests on a new window configuration before being sold to Recon Air of Geraldton, Ontario in February 2005 as C-FDJD, the first time this Otter had carried a Canadian registration. It was advertised for sale as a rebuilt Otter with low airframe time of only 5,900 hours, stored since 1981, with whatever engine the buyer specified.

The Otter was sold to 39649 Yukon Inc of Whitehorse, Yukon to whom it was registered C-GZCW on 18th January 2007. It was for operation by Black Sheep Aviation & Cattle Company, based at Whitehorse, who also operated Otter C-GMCW (108), a Texas Turbine conversion. Otter 447 C-GZCW was also converted as a Texas Turbine at Geraldton and in March 2007 was delivered to Geraldton and entered service with Black Sheep Aviation & Cattle Company.

Tragically its career was very short, as it crashed and burned at Mayo Airport in the Yukon on 2nd June 2007, killing the pilot, the only occupant. It had only flown 240 hours since rebuild. At the time of writing the accident report has not been published but it appears that the Otter had just taken off from Mayo with a load of timber when it made an emergency return to the airfield and crashed on landing.

451

C-FAZW. Labardor Air Safari, Jonquiere, Quebec. R-1340

452

C-FDIO. Waasheshkun Airways, Baie-du-Poste (Mistassini Lake) Quebec. Vazar

454

N339AK. Alaska Coastal Airlines, Juneau, Alaska trading as Wings of Alaska. Texas Turbine.

456

C-FUKN. Northway Aviation, Pine Dock, Manitoba. R-1340

458

C-FAZX. One of the two Orenda-engined Otters, which has been in storage at Laval, Quebec since December 2002 when Orenda Recip Inc, the manufacturers of the engine, decided to close the company down. Even though the Orenda engine had been certified for use in the Otter (as well as the Air Tractor AT-401 agricultural aircraft), certification was withdrawn by the airworthiness authorities as there was no longer a manufacturer to support the engine. During 2007 Trace Engines of Midland, Texas completed the purchase of all technology rights in respect of the Orenda engine and started manufacturing engines at their Midland plant, so there is some prospect of C-FAZX flying again with its Orenda engine. As of December 2007 however it remained withdrawn from sue at its Laval, Quebec base.

460

C-FDIZ. Osprey Wings, Otter Lake, Missinipe, Saskatchewan. Vazar

461

N929KT. Rustair Inc, Anchorage, Alaska. Operated by K2 Aviation, Talkeetna, Alaska, a division of Rustair Inc. Vazar

463

C-FASZ. Osprey Wings, Otter Lake, Missinipe, Saskatchewan. Vazar

465

N342KA. Vazar. PM Holdings LLC, the holding company of Pro Mech Air of Ketchikan, Alaska. During winter 2006/07 the Otter flew south to International Aero Products, Courtenay, BC on Vancouver Island where it was overhauled and painted in Pro Mech Air's new colour scheme. It returned to Ketchikan on 31st May 2007 to rejoin Pro Mech Air's six strong Otter fleet for the summer 2007 season.

C-FVQD. Walter. Owned by 3097448 Manitoba Ltd (Adventure Air), Silver Falls, Manitoba. The Otter was leased 16th May 2007 to Northwest Air Lease, Fort Smith, NWT for mining and lodge support flights.

KHMER AIR FORCE U-1A OTTERS

In 1971 the United States Army transferred 18 Otters to the Cambodian Air Force, then known as the Khmer Air Force. The US Army had stopped flying the Otter in Vietnam in May 1971, its fleet of Otters at that stage being put into storage at Vung Tau, thirty four in number. Some of these were scrapped, some transferred to the Nicaraguan Air Force and 18 to the Khmer Air Force between July and December 1971. This transfer was made under a Military Aid Program known as “Project Flycatcher” and after some training had been given to Khmer Air Force pilots, the 18 Otters were flown to Pochentong Air Base, outside the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh.

Whatever became of these 18 Otters, whether any of them might still be lurking somewhere in Cambodia, was one of the great unanswered questions of Otter research. As the country was over-run by Communist Khmer Rouge forces in 1975, followed by the barbaric Pol Pot regime, it was presumed that all of these Otters had been destroyed, but there was no firm evidence. Proof of this is now to be found on a most interesting website of the University of Texas: www.utdallas.edu/library/collections/speccoll/Leeker/ku1a.pdf. An easy way to access the website is to type “Khmer Air Force U-1As” into Google and it is the first site to come up, or at least it was at the time of writing.

In March 1970, pro-Western General Lon Nol seized power in Cambodia, replacing Prince Sihanouk who had been very antagonistic towards the United States. At that stage, the US Government was heavily involved in the Vietnam War but there was also trouble in Cambodia where communist forces had infiltrated areas of the country. In order to support General Lon Nol, the US Government agreed to transfer aircraft and equipment, to help the General in his fight against the communists.

To assist with this process, in January 1971 the MEDTC (Military Equipment Delivery Team Cambodia) was formed, a US military institution which would organise the flow of supplies to Cambodia, including spare parts to maintain the aircraft. The Khmer Air Force was also going to need maintenance training to look after all these aircraft which it was receiving, and here the US Government turned for help to Air America, the CIA airline. A group of Air America maintenance personnel were transferred to Phnom Penh in November 1971, under the name of LMAT (Logistics Management Assistance Team), who would train the Cambodian mechanics.

Large numbers of aircraft were transferred to the Khmer Air Force, including C-47s, C-123s, T-28s, AU-24s, O-1A/Ds and T-41s as well as the 18 Otters, and were based at the Pochentong Air Base outside the capital of Phnom Penh. Each month the Air America station chief at Pochentong sent back a report to Head Office and the website summarises the position based on these reports. The reports paint a desperate and depressing picture of all manner of difficulties experienced at Pochentong, including chronic supply of spare parts problems, insufficient tools and equipment, poor attendance by mechanics, low morale of mechanics, deterioration of the runways and taxiways of the airfield itself, not to mention constant rocket and mortar attacks by the enemy. Against this background, it is a wonder that the Khmer Air Force functioned at all, but it did apparently manage some limited operational capability.

As far as the 18 Otters are concerned, as set out on the website, by July 1973 sixteen of the aircraft were in a derelict state and only 53253 (93) and 81709 (325) were still flyable and both of these succumbed not long afterwards. The photographs on the website show what the fate of these Otters was at Pochentong, a huge Otter scrapheap, a tragic sight! As the website summarises: "The whole U-1A program was unoperational in July 1973". The Otters continued to deteriorate at Pochentong until the air base was over-run by communist forces in April 1975. Between 11 and 17 April 1975, ninety seven Khmer Air Force aircraft managed to escape to Thailand, including fifty T-28s, seven C-47s and ten C-123s. No Otters escaped as none were at that stage airworthy, and after the communists took over whatever was left of the Otters was destroyed.

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Any updates and further Otter information, current and historic, would be much appreciated.

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