

Britten-Norman BN-2 Islander/ Defender (Southern Africa)

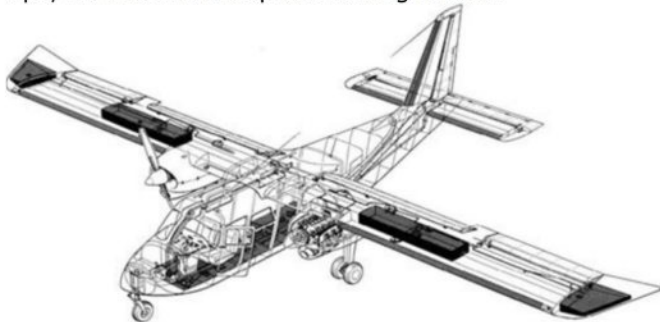
Botswana, Madagascar, Mauritius, Zimbabwe

The Britten Norman Islander BN-2 was designed as a light utility transport for 9 passengers and a pilot. It was capable to fly from tiny airfields. It got piston engines and first flight was June 1965. The Defender is the militarised version and has four under wing hard points for pylons for light armament like rocket pods or fuel tanks for extra range.

A turbine engined version was also developed with Lycoming LTP-101 in revised nacelles and a big air scoop on top of nacelle-wing fairing. First flight in 1977. The -T version got Allison 250 engines and later B17F engines. Some planes have a revised longer pointy nose profile.

Initial the BN-2 aircraft were manufactured at Britten-Norman's factory in Bembridge, Isle of Wight, UK. Later Islanders and Trislander aircraft were built in Romania, then shipped to Avions Fairey in Belgium for fitting before being flown to the UK for flight certification. Since end 2023 low rate production has returned to the U.K at the BN facility at the Isle of Wight. The Islander has been in production for over 55 years with over 1,250 planes built.

Different wings were produced over the years. The first wing had a 49 ft span (14,95 m) and "triangular" wing tips and used such as on BN-2A-1 and BN-2A-2. For extra fuel capacity, the 49 ft wing was extended 4 ft to 53 ft (16,15 m) with "triangular" wing tips, such as on BN-2A-3, BN-2A-7, BN-2B-21 and BN-2B-27. Later the 49 ft wing got modified "rectangular" curved wing tips for extra area such as on the BN-2B-20 and BN-2B-26 with also inboard leading edge droop between engine nacelle and fuselage. The BN2T had the 49 ft wing without droop and with 2 wing fences. The BN2T-4S the 53 ft wing with "rectangular" wing tips, no inboard droop but 2 wing fences.



Length 10,86 m with standard nose. Later versions length of 12,20 m with extended radar nose.

KITS

In 1/72 scale there is the good old **Airfix** kit of 1972 with a few newer releases. It has old style nacelles, 2-bladed propellers, larger 53 ft wing span and "triangular" wing tips. Modify for 49 ft wing if needed.

Omega Models has several 1/72 resin kits including for the -T turbine engined versions. These are recognized easily as these have air intake scoops on the top of the different nacelles. They have 3-bladed propellers and the 49 ft wing span with "rectangular" curved wing tips.

DECALS SYSTEM

The laser printed decal sheet has ONE continuous print film, so EACH decal needs cutting out with fine scissors. No other prior decal preparation is needed.

Note that a decal that contains a white section is often split in two sections. To apply the full decal marking, first set the white decal section at correct position and on top of that the coloured section. On the decals sheet you will often see an "arrow" to indicate this way of application (on white surfaces, the white section is optional).

Each cut out decal can be applied as usual after soaking it a short while in water. Decals are EXTREMELY THIN, so slide off from the wet backing sheet on the model surface. Do not use tweezers! They will fold doubled!

Some tiny white borders may appear at a particular decal. Cut these off with fine scissors or over paint.

After all decals have been applied, finish the model with your preferred final gloss or semi-matt varnish coats. This will also protect the decals.

REFERENCES:

Books and magazines:

Air international Vol 49/no.1, Vol 64/no.1
Flight international no. 4054, 4247

Internet websites:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Britten-Norman_BN-2_Islander

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Britten-Norman_Defender

Through an internet search... dozens of photos.

See for a few Airfix Islander models website:

<https://aircraftinplastic.com/models/islander-defender/islander-1.html>

BOTSWANA Defence Force

Botswana, a land locked country in Southern Africa, became independent in 1966. The defence force including an Air wing was set up in 1977 and used a variety of aircraft and helicopters. Strikemaster jets were flown and from 2000 some ex-Canadian CF-5 fighters. The first Defenders came in the seventies and a few were later delivered and are still flying.

The first scheme is for Defender BN-2A-21 c/n 918 coded OA6 was flown probably from the seventies. A small OA6 code also on the standard nose with a flag.

It has the wing with extra fuel capacity with span of 53 ft with "triangular" wing tips.



It has a Kalahari desert camouflage scheme with middle stone brown (about BSC381c: 362) and aircraft gray green (about BSC381c: 283). The wing camouflage pattern is unknown but appears to be a wrap around scheme. The 2-bladed propellers have camouflaged coloured spinners, black blades with white-red-white tip stripes. It has the long wire antennas.

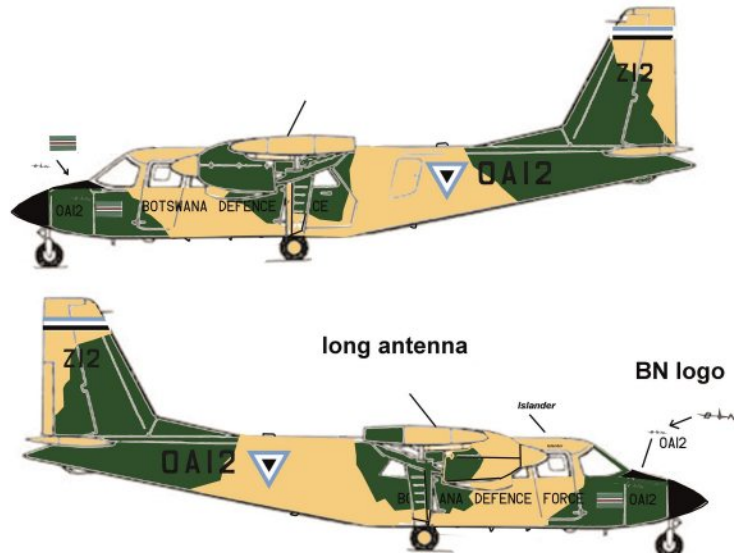


The second scheme is for Defender BN-2B-20 c/n 2265 coded OA12 and tail code Z12 that was flown probably from the 1990s.

It has the wing with span of 49 ft with "rectangular" curved wing tips. (so different than OA6).

The fuselage has a black pointy nose.

It has a Kalahari desert camouflage scheme with now a lighter appearing light stone brown (about BSc381c: 361) and aircraft gray green (about BSC381c: 283). The wing camouflage pattern is unknown. The 2-bladed propellers have camouflaged coloured spinners, black blades with white-red-white tip stripes. It has the long wire antennas. On the roof small islander titles are set and Britten-Norman logo on the nose. (tiny decals on the sheet).



MADAGASCAR (MALAGASY)

Madagascar is a large island state east of Southern Africa in the Indian Ocean that became independent in 1961. The Armée de l'Air Malgache is quite small but even acquired MiG fighters in the 1970s. But now a few small transports and helicopters are operated.

A single Defender BN-2A-21 c/n 382 with code 382 and 5R-MSA registration with SA letters was flown probably from the early 1990s.

It has the wing with extra fuel capacity with span of 53 ft with "triangular" wing tips.

The aircraft is gloss white with lower sections about medium sea grey (BSC381c: 637) with on the fuselage a thin black cheatline in between. (these are decal stripes).

(the paint scheme is symmetrical port and starboard).

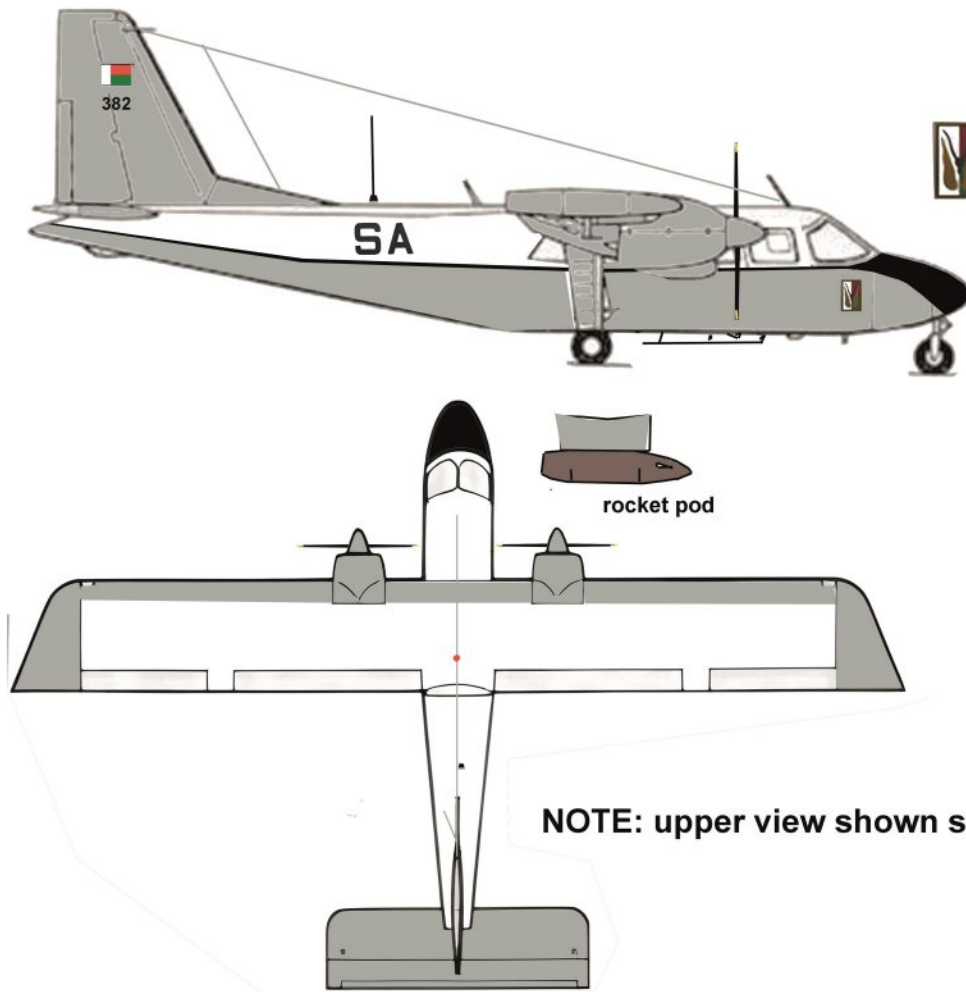
It has a black curved nose paint and mat black anti-glare panel. The lower cockpit wind screen frame is white.

Medium grey are the vertical tail with rudder, nacelles and stabilizer as well as the wing tips and wing leading edges.

The 2-bladed propellers have medium grey spinners, black blades with probably yellow tips.

Long wire antennas are also fitted as well as were long antennae below the fuselage. It also had a very long vertical wire antenna on the rear fuselage.

The small window in the front port entry door has a white outline.



MAURITIUS COAST GUARD

Mauritius is an island country east of Southern Africa in the Indian Ocean.

A single **BN-2T** Turbo islander c/n 2238 coded MP-CG-02 was flown by the Maritime Air Squadron/ Coast Guard from 1992.

The turbine version has Rolls Royce M250-B17C engines in a different engine nacelle with on top of each nacelle also an air scoop. The turbine engined aircraft are fitted with 3-bladed propellers.

These aircraft have a wing span of 49 ft with "rectangular" curved wing tips and 2 wing fences for the -T.

It is fitted with a radar nose. In the port rear fuselage a small extra window (with light?) was seen.



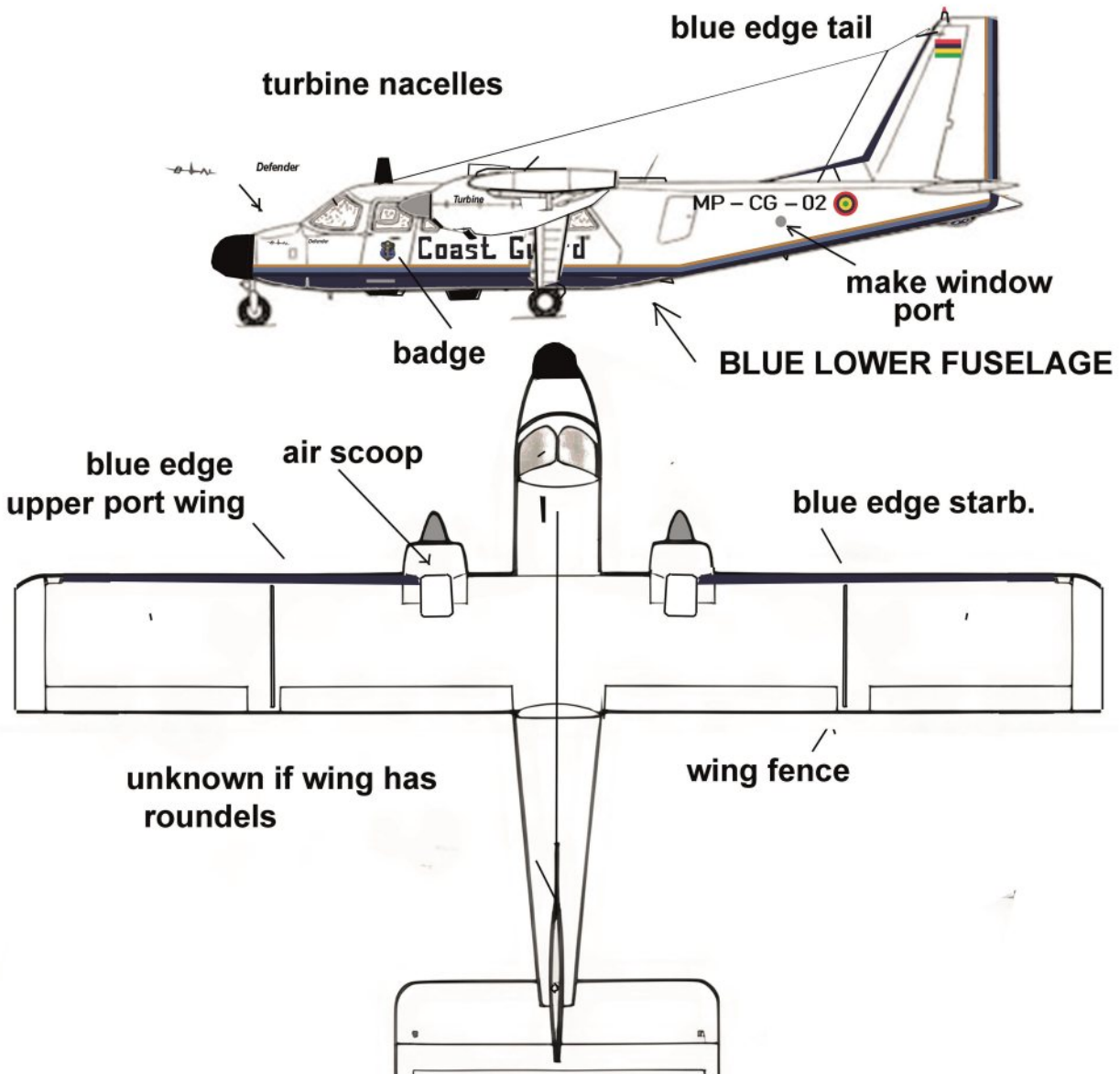
The aircraft is gloss white with lower blue fuselage with cheatlines. These are decals that need to be trimmed to size; the cheatline colours are respectively about BSC381c: 356 Golden yellow, BSC381c: 104 Azure blue, BSC381c: 105 Oxford blue. Try thus to paint the lower fuselage this Oxford blue.

The rudder also has the cheatlines and the leading edges of outboard wing and vertical tail edge are about Oxford blue (or use the decals).

(the paint scheme is symmetrical port and starboard).

The 3-bladed propellers have chrome spinners, medium grey blades with white-grey-white tips.

Long wire antennas are also fitted as well as a few antenna fairings below the fuselage. On the cockpit roof a large blade antenna is situated.



ZIMBABWE AIR FORCE



Zimbabwe (former Rhodesia) became independent in 1965 with in 1979 a big political change. The air force used many British aircraft including some 6 Islanders.

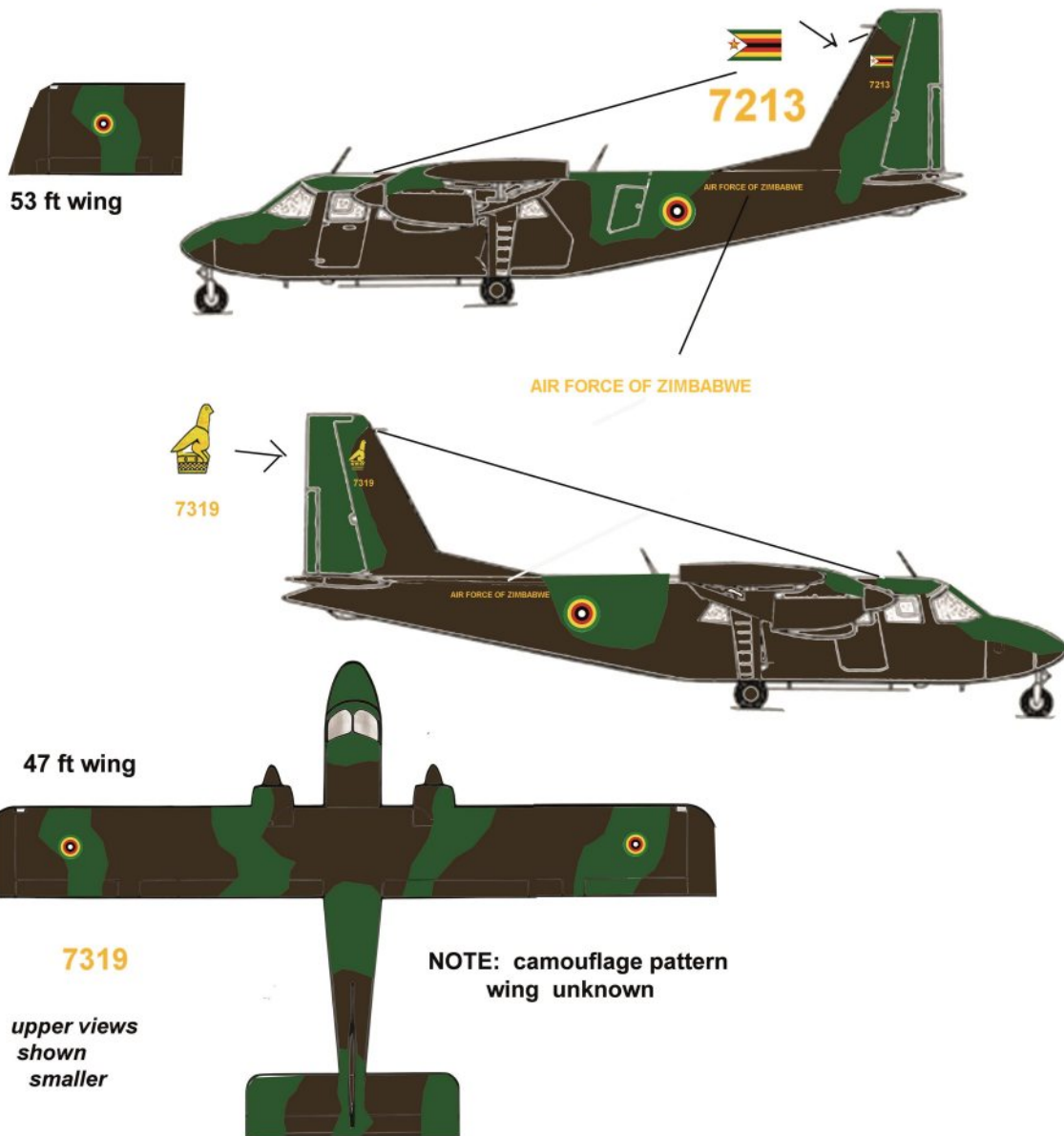
First option is Islander BN-2A-21 c/n 412 coded 7213 as flown by no.3 squadron from 1978 until 1998. It has the wing with extra fuel capacity of 53 ft span and "triangular" wing tips.

The second option is Islander BN-2A-8 c/n 656 coded 7319. It has *probably* the wing with 49 ft span and "rectangular" curved wing tips.

These aircraft has a camouflage scheme of dark green (about FS34079 / BSC381c: 241) and dark earth (about FS30219 / BSC381c: 450). The wing camouflage pattern is unknown. The colours faded quickly in de African sun.

The 2-bladed propellers have camouflaged spinners, black blades with probably light yellow tips. Long wire antennas are fitted. Cabin windows have white outlines.

IMPORTANT: because of the dark colours, many decals on the sheet have a white underlying "base" decal to be set first.



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