

Britten-Norman BN-2 Islander "Dutch Lesser Antilles" (SSS)

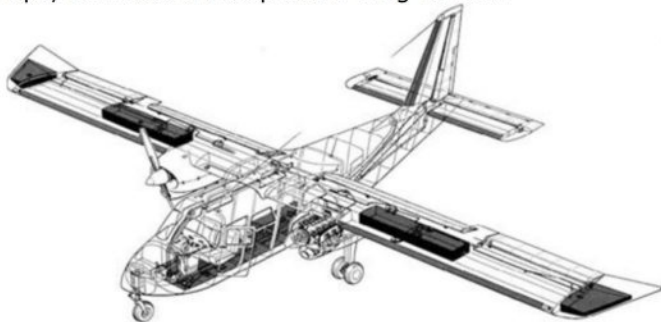
Windward Islands Airlines (WIA), Windward Express Airways

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.

DECALS SYSTEM

The laser printed decal sheet has ONE continuous print film, so EACH decal needs to be cut 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... easy to find photos. Search islander + PJ... registration.

See for a few Airfix Islander models website:

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

Dutch "Netherlands" Antilles aviation (St.Maarten, St.Eustatius, Saba)

Six islands in the Caribbean are part of the Kingdom of The Netherlands since first Dutch settlers arrived from The Netherlands/ Holland and a Colony was established in the 17th Century. The Dutch West Indies Trading Company was set up.

The islands are Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao in the Leeward Antilles off the coast of Venezuela and Saba, St.Eustatius ("Statia") and St.Maarten in the Windward Antilles. On the Windward Antilles the official languages are Dutch and English and on the lower Leeward islands Dutch and Papiamentu.

The islands after the Second World War were referred to as The Netherlands Antilles. In 1986 Aruba got bigger independence as "country" within the Kingdom and in 2010 Curaçao and St, Maarten also became "countries" as well and Bonaire, Saba and St.Eustatius became special Dutch Municipalities.



Windwards/ Winair (short for Windward Islands Airways company) is the regional airline based in St.Maarten, Dutch Antilles. It was founded in 1961 by Georges Greaux and Hippolyte Ledee.

It still flies small regional commuter aircraft mostly within the Leeward Islands group in the North East Caribbean. It has its headquarters at Princess Juliana International Airport at St.Maarten.

The airline and its pilots are specialized in short take-off and landing operations as many islands have a small runway and mountains. Flights are made also to the World's shortest commercial airport runway at Juancho E. Yrausquin Airport on Saba, a Dutch volcano island. Small aircraft like BN islanders and Twin Otters are flown.

Aviation in the Dutch Antilles started already in the 1930s with a large role of Dutch **KLM** Airlines that started local flight services on routes between the islands and neighbouring regions.

The Dutch Antilles were important during the Second World War as oil refineries on Aruba and Curaçao provided refined oil products and particularly aircraft fuel for the Allies. These were shipped with tankers that were under constant threat of German U-boats.

Particularly after the Second World War KLM expanded services through their West Indies Division (KLM-WIB). But several airlines were also started by local Antillean business men and island Governments.

Windward Express Airways was a small airline based at Princess Juliana International Airport on the island of St.Maarten. It flew with Britten Norman Islanders PJ-WEA, PJ-WEB, PJ-WED and one Piper Aztec, PJ-WEC.

These aircraft have excellent STOL (Short Take-Off and Landing) capabilities so ideal aircraft for operation into short runways such as St. Barths, Baillif, Le Saints and Saba.



latest/ current island flags



Windward Islands Airways (WIA)

This WIA Islander BN-2A-26 c/n 2038 has registration PJ-AIW and flew around 2006 (prior to flying with EZ Air).

It has the wing with span of 49 ft with "rectangular" curved wing tips. The nose tip is standard.

The attractive paint scheme is gloss white (about RAL 9016) and dark blue (about RAL 5002) with cheatlines and gloss signal red wing tips (about RAL 3001).

Propeller spinners are white with medium grey blades with white-grey-white prop tips.

RECOMMENDED PAINTING METHOD:

- first paint overall: gloss white.
- mask upper and lower wing tips and paint red (no red paint needed on fuselage).
- mask fuselage and tail carefully including the cheatline lines areas needed white areas and then paint lower fuselage, fuselage belly and tail: blue.

RECOMMENDED DECALLING METHOD:

- 1/ apply white underlying base line decals first under the red and tiny blue cheatlines on fuselage and tail (trimming is needed).
- 2/ set the red line decals.
- 3/ set the curved white line decals.
- 4/ set the curved yellow line decals.
- 5/ set white Winair logo decals (fuselage has smaller logo, tail the larger logo).
- 6/ set yellow Winair logo decals, on right a tiny white border should remain.

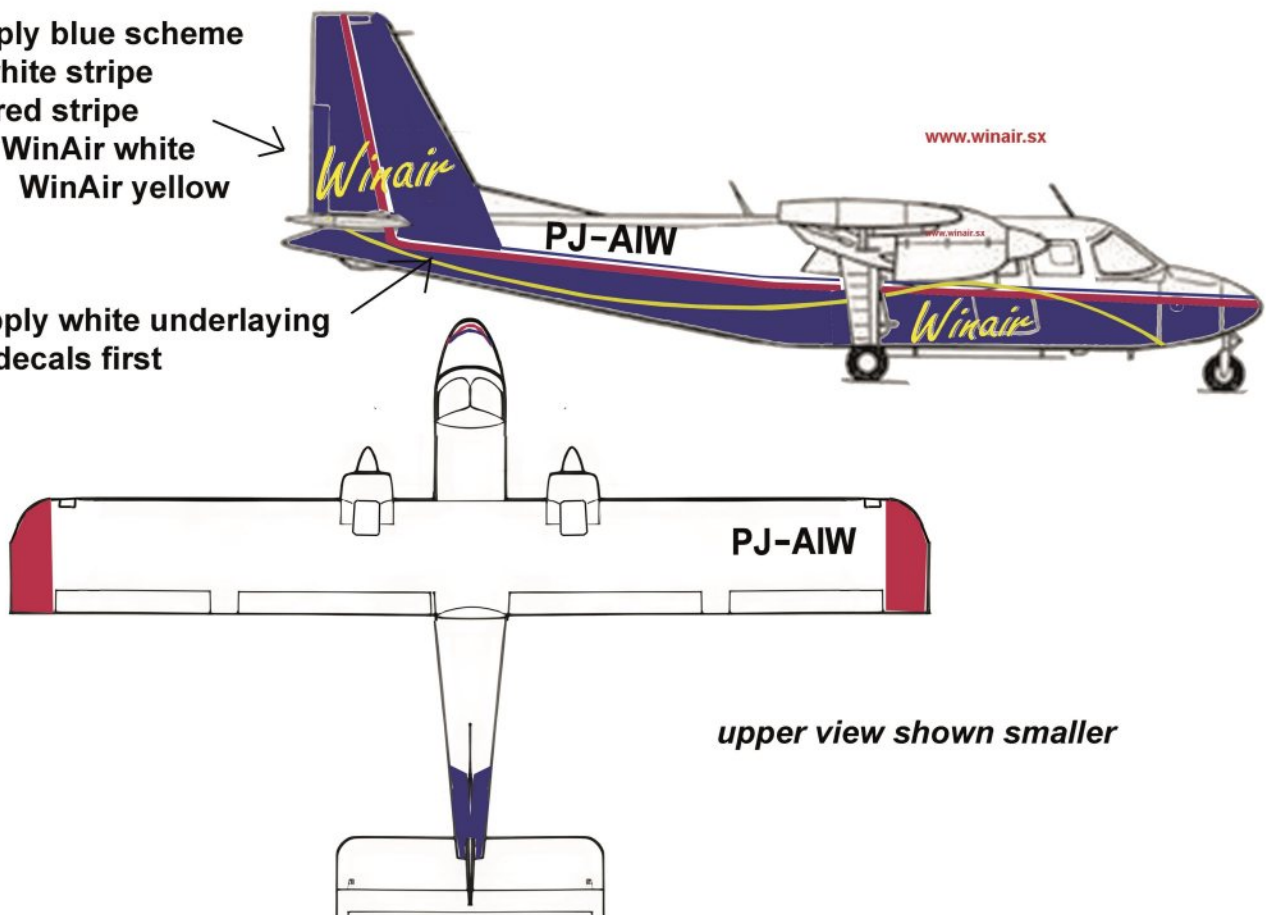
Set registration decals on fuselage and on upper starboard and lower port wing.

Set on nacelles small red website texts....

(no long wire antennas were fitted, only smaller antennas).

apply blue scheme
white stripe
red stripe
WinAir white
WinAir yellow

apply white underlying
decals first



Windward Express Airways (WEA)

Islander BN-2A-26 c/n 659 with registration PJ-WEA flew around 2011 based at St.Maarten.

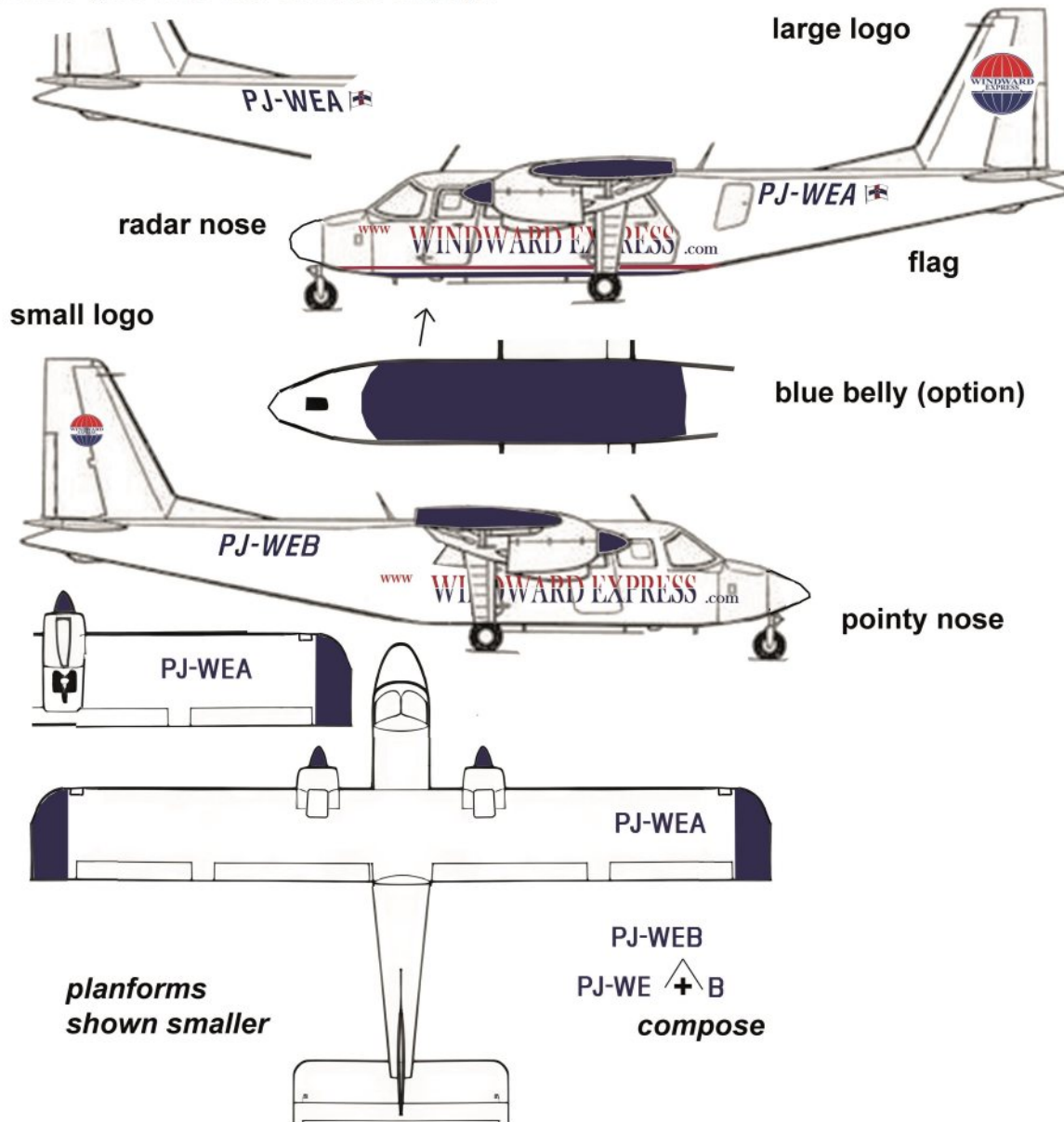
The lower fuselage belly is also dark blue. Dark blue is about RAL 5002.

It has the wing with span of 49 ft with "rectangular" curved wing tip. It seems to be fitted with a round radar nose (though the radar system may not have been installed).

Propeller spinners are also dark blue with medium grey blades and white-grey-white prop tips.

On the tail, the large logo is seen.

Paint scheme is gloss white with dark blue wing tips.



Shown is also Islander c/n 2208 with registration PJ-WEB as it flew around 2009 based at St.Maarten. It has the wing with span of 49 ft with "rectangular" curved wing tip. It has a pointy nose.

Propeller spinners are also dark blue with medium grey blades and white-grey-white tips.

On the tail a small Express logo is seen. Note the different registration orientation on starboard fuselage with no Antillean flag.

It had a simply paint scheme of gloss white with dark blue wing tips. Dark blue is about RAL 5002.

(no long wire antennas were fitted).