

# Inquiry into Australia's Defence Relations with the United States: Interoperability, Force Structure and Missile Defence Issues

Dr Carlo Kopp, MIEEE, MAIAA, PEng,  
Defence Analyst and Consulting Engineer  
Email: Carlo.Kopp@aus.net

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## **Regional Air Power Supplement**

Submission to the  
**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,  
DEFENCE AND TRADE DEFENCE SUBCOMMITTEE**

## 1 People's Liberation Army Air Force and Navy

The following material was compiled from publicly available sources and reflects the best currently available unclassified intelligence.



Figure 1: Q-5 Variants. The Q-5 is an indigenous evolution of the Russian MiG-19 Farmer and is broadly equivalent to the A-4 Skyhawk. Around 600 are in service (PLA).



Figure 2: Chengdu J-7 Variants. The J-7 is an indigenous evolution of the Russian MiG-21 Fishbed and is broadly equivalent to the Northrop F-5 series, but faster and more agile. Around 700 are in service (PLA).





Figure 3: *The J-8-II Finback B is an indigenous Chinese multirole fighter and is broadly equivalent to the Russian Su-15/21 series and RAF Tornado ADV/IDS (PLA).*



Figure 4: *The Xian JH-7 is an indigenous Chinese strike fighter and is broadly equivalent to the RAF Tornado IDS. Around 20 serve with the PLA naval air arm (PLA).*



Figure 5: *The Chengdu J-10 is an indigenous Chinese agile multirole fighter and is broadly equivalent to the F-16C, Rafale, Eurofighter Typhoon and defunct Israeli Lavi. It is expected to enter production next year (PLA).*





Figure 6: Chengdu J-10 (PLA).





Figure 7: The KNAAPO/Shenyang J-11 is an imported or licence built Russian Su-27SK long range multirole fighter, broadly equivalent to the US F-15C Eagle. Current planning sees around 300 in service by 2015 (PLA).



Figure 8: *The KNAAPO/Sukhoi Su-30MKK and Su-30MK2 are an imported Russian KNAAPO Su-30MK long range strike fighter, broadly equivalent to the US F-15E Strike Eagle. Around 50 have been ordered with larger numbers likely in the future, the possibility of licence builds has been reported (PLA).*



Figure 9: *The Xian H-6 is a reverse engineered Russian Tu-16 Badger, broadly equivalent to the 1960s RAF V-bombers. Around 150 are in service, mostly built between 1972 and 1992 (PLA).*



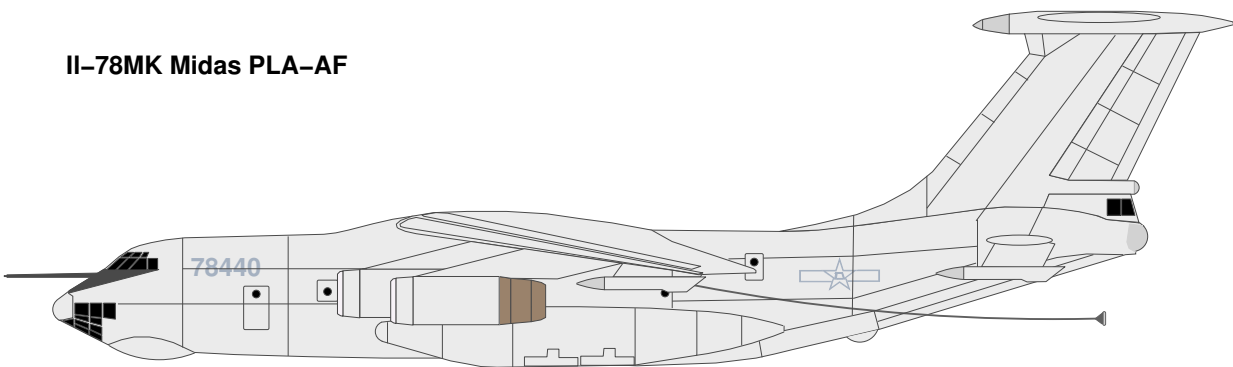
**H-6U Badger (AAR)****H-6U Badger (AAR)**

Figure 10: *The Xian H-6 is the basis of China's indigenous aerial tanker program. Development was reported to be initially a collaboration with Flight Refuelling Limited in the UK during the 1980s. With the questionable usefulness of the Badger as a strike aircraft, it is likely many more will be converted to tankers, especially given the low age of the Badger fleet. As a tanker the Badger compares closely to the now retired RAF Victor K.2 (PLA).*

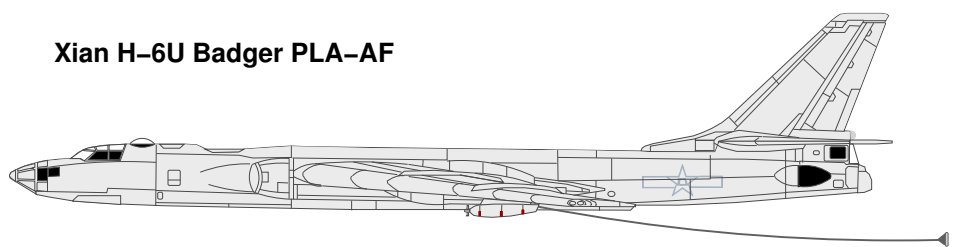




**Il-78MK Midas PLA-AF**



**Xian H-6U Badger PLA-AF**



**Xian H-6DU Badger PLA-N**

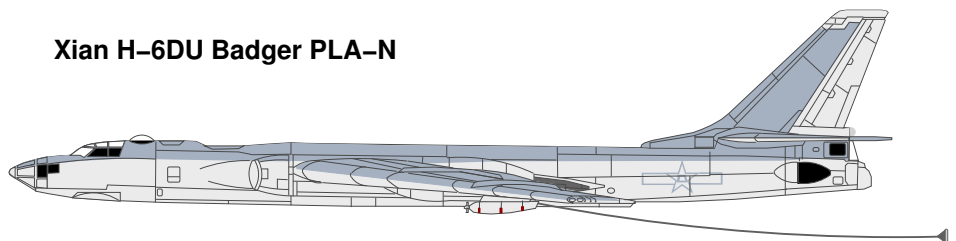


Figure 11: Numerous reports indicate the PLA's ongoing interest in fielding the Russian Il-78MK Midas tanker. With India's recent delivery of this type, it is now more likely that China will also order this type (RuMoD/Author).



Beriev A-50E PLA-AF (Schmel M MSA)

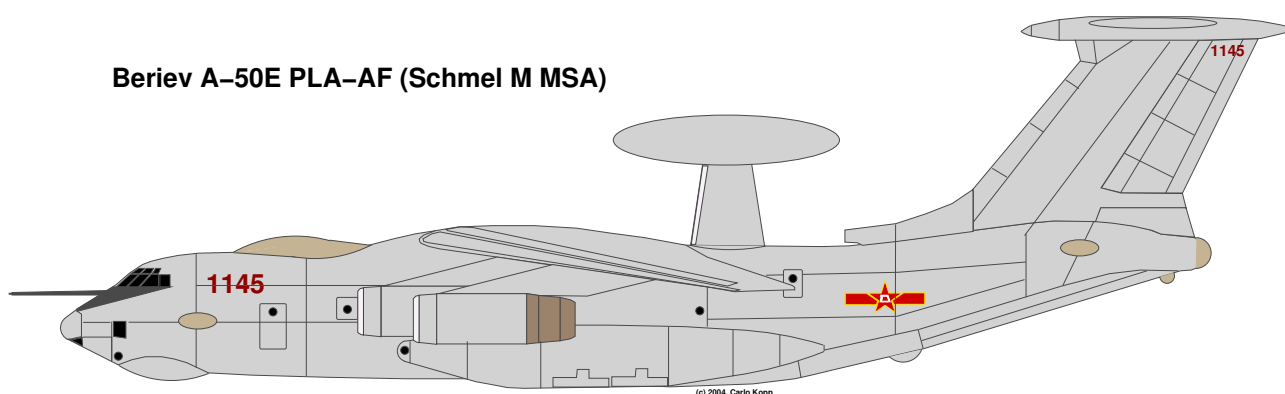


Figure 12: China has ordered several examples of the Russian A-50E AWACS in the wake of the aborted deal to source the better Israeli A-50I Phalcon variant. The A-50E is an upgraded variant of the former Soviet A-50 (RuMoD/Author).

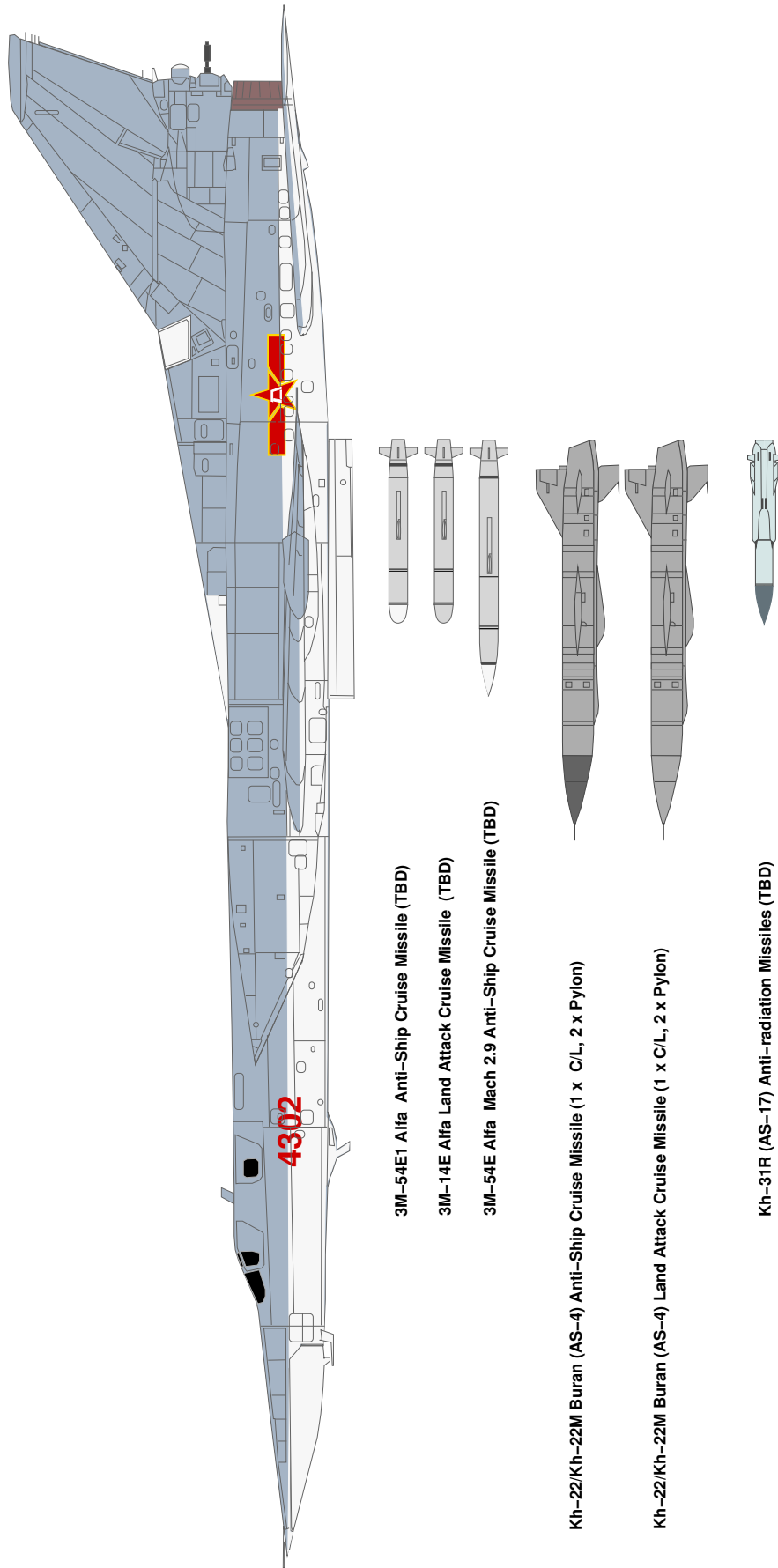


Figure 13: During the 1990s China made repeated attempts to persuade the Russians to supply the Tu-22M3 Backfire C supersonic strategic bomber, of which around 250 were built during the Cold War. There have been no recent reports of plans to purchase (Author).

## 2 Indian Air Force and Fleet Air Arm

The following material was compiled from publicly available sources and reflects the best currently available unclassified intelligence.





Figure 14: India has plans to operate 180 Russian IAPC Su-30MKI strike fighters, of which 150 will be licence built in India. These aircraft are the most capable non-US production long range fighters in operational service worldwide (US DoD/Bharat-Rakshak).



Figure 15: The NIIP BARS (N-011M) phased array radar (upper) fitted to India's Su-30MKI is the largest phased array carried by any third generation fighter, and is highly competitive against the newer technology APG-63(V)2 phased array radar fitted to some US F-15C fighters (NIIP). India has licensed the Russian Yakhont supersonic cruise missile (lower right), to be produced under the name 'Brahmos'. This missile will be available in anti-ship and land attack models (NIIP, S. Lavrov).





Figure 16: Russia is actively marketing smart bombs for the Sukhoi fleets supplied to Asian nations. These images depict the laser and television guided KAB-1500 (1500 kg) series and KAB-500 (500 kg) series guided bombs, available in bunker busting and standard explosive variants. These weapons are broadly equivalent to the US Raytheon GBU-10, GBU-24 carried by RAAF F-111s, and the Boeing GBU-15 which was carried by the F-111 during the 1980s (Rosvooruzheniye).



Figure 17: India recently took delivery of its first Ilyushin Il-78MKI aerial tankers from the CIS. This aircraft is the most capable non-Western tanker in service. This example is refuelling two Su-30MKI fighters (IAF).



### Elta/Beriev A-50I IAF (EL/M-2075 AESA)

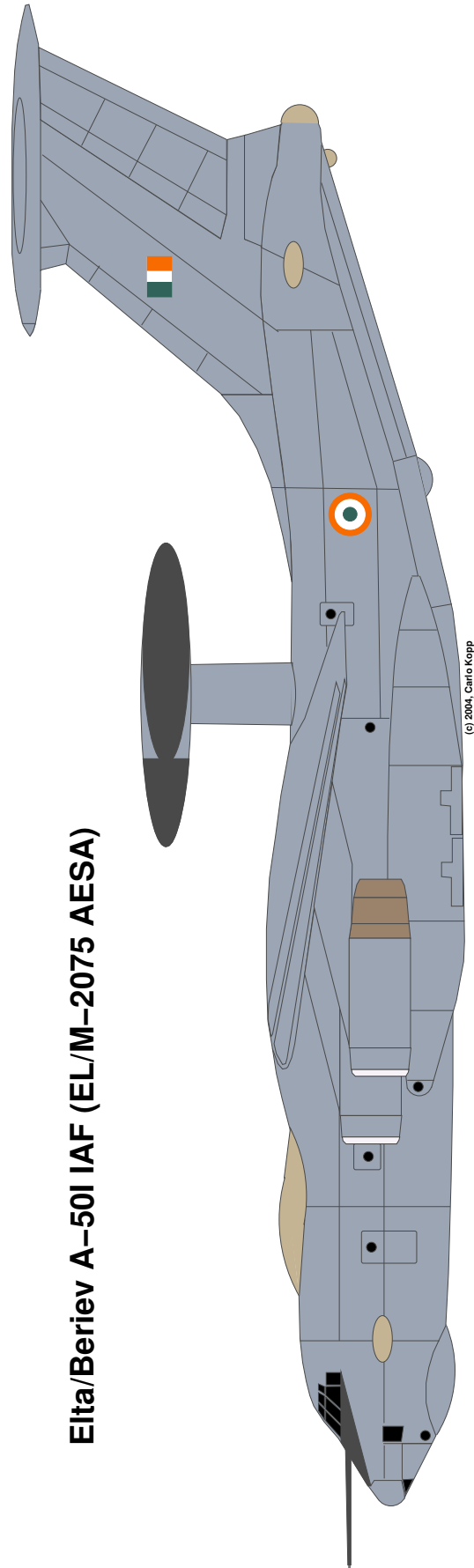


Figure 18: India signed a contract earlier this year for the delivery of several Israeli-Russian Beriev/Elta A-50I Mainstay AWACS aircraft. This is the most capable non-US system in existence, utilising a variant of the same Elta Phalcon phased array radar bid for Australia's Wedgetail AEW&C program (Author).



Figure 19: India has opted to extensively upgrade and expand its fleet of Russian Tupolev Tu-142M Bear F long range maritime patrol aircraft. Much larger and faster than Australia's AP-3C Orions, the Tu-142M has no equivalent in the West (upper). Reports indicate that India's Bears are likely to acquire a missile delivery capability, most likely using the 'Tomahawk-like' 3M54E1 Alfa or supersonic Brahmos missile. Russia continues to use the Tu-95K Bear H as a cruise missile carrier (lower), effectively matching the US B-52H (IN, RuMoD).

**Tupolev Tu-22M-3 Backfire C Strategic Bomber**

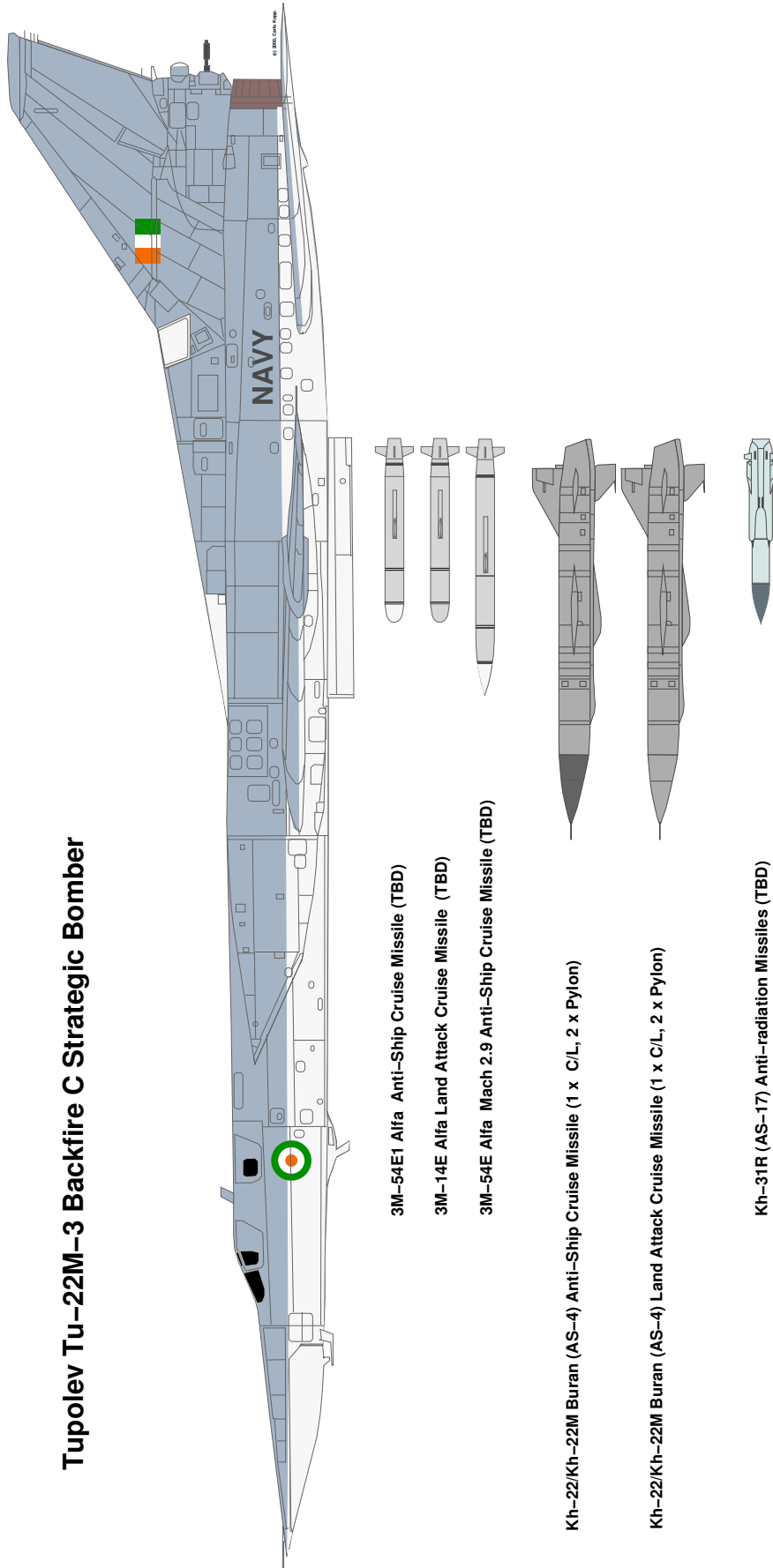


Figure 20: Public reports indicate that the Indian Naval Fleet Air Arm intends to lease several surplus Russian Tu-22M3 Backfire C supersonic strategic bombers. There have been no reports of deliveries to date (Author).





Figure 21: *The Indian Navy recently closed a deal for a surplus Russian aircraft carrier (formerly the Gorshkov) and a wing of navalised MiG-29K fighters. The MiG-29K broadly compares to the RAAF's F/A-18A but is more agile (RuMoD).*

End of Submission