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HISTORICAL

The time of recovery (1945-1946)

It is obvious that when the German Reichsluftfahrtministerium issued in 1935 a medium bomber program which was to end in the Junkers Ju 88, no one suspected, on one side of the Rhine as on the other that the aircraft, whose serial production was launched in 1938, would serve a few years later under the colors of the French Navy! This was the case from 1946 to 1951.

The explanation is simple however: in 1945, at the end of the second world war, France, like all the powers which had contributed to put down Hitler's Germany, very quickly interested, and with very close, with the advanced techniques and armaments developed by the Third Reich.

The Navy, which interests us here, sets up in the autumn of 1945 various organizations and personnel charged with "recovering" very officially the materials formerly seized in France by the occupier, but also and especially request of transfers of aircraft and German ships in the hands of Anglo-Saxon allies, or "requisition" of "brains" and technicians more or less willing to cooperate with French consulting firms. The phenomenon deserves to be stopped within a few lines: it is the time of the petty officers officially designated to work in the American occupation zone, German equipment recovered in the British occupation zone, Junkers 52 transported from Sylt via Felixstowe, others from Leck to Mureaux (after Dutch overflight agreement by the Dutch authorities), Fieseler 156 and Messerschmitt 108 also convoyed from Germany by and on behalf of Naval Aviation. With the agreement of the British, Bramo engines (for "our" Dornier 24) leave Neuwied for the AIA Bordeaux, and we are looking for others until ... Yugoslavia! In Bordeaux, Focke Achgelis Fa 330 autogires were found for the submarines of the Kriegsmarine.

The interest in all these German materials and equipment is not only scientific and military. It is also partly motivated by the lack of foreign exchange: since the end of the war, getting equipment and spare parts from allies (especially in the United States) is expensive. The "recovery" in Germany is cheap, and the materials are still often of quality. Thus in April 1946, it is decided that the Jumo 213 will propel the SO-8000, because the British Griffon is too expensive to import. The ejection seat of the SNCASO comes directly from Heinkel. And six years later, at 58.S Squadron,

In the field of advanced technology, the Navy's intelligence and research offices are interested in fields as diverse as a Spanner telescope or the military use of infrared, but most of all they are of great interest. special gear (not yet called missiles). These are the Fx-1400, FK and Hs-293. For this purpose, the Naval Aeronautics has created a group specialized in the experimentation of these machines, the GANES. The latter, after a year of experiments with German machines, will be dissolved in July 1946. But the tests are continued in a special section within CEPA, whose leader, the LV Decaix,

Junkers 88 for Naval Aeronautics

Of course, there was never any question of putting the Junkers 88 into service in an operational unit of the Naval Aeronautics. On the other hand, the aircraft whose production was relaunched under French control seems indispensable to the Navy to carry out various tests, in particular torpedo tests, of which the last Kriegsmarine models are the object of attentive care.

The DTIA therefore provides for the transfer of five aircraft to the Navy in 1945. For its part, from 3 January 1945, the Directorate of Construction and Naval Weapons (DCAN) program in its workshops Cuers work for the adaptation of these five Junkers Ju 88. The works are supposed to be started at the beginning of the second half of January 1945. The supply follows, with, for example, in March, the order to the nearby establishments of ten BMW 801G engines for Junkers (Models 88 and 188), or, the following month, spare parts at AAB (Ateliers de Grenelle, Boulogne, Lioré-Clichy, and Jumo-Argenteuil).



The five aircraft themselves are distributed as follows:

1. A Ju 88 torpedo version A-17, completed at Orly with plans and landing gear assembly that come from the SNCASE in Clichy.
2. Three Ju 88 cable cut version (Ju 88A-14). The German numbers of these devices are 144539, 144502 and 144219. The three copies are repaired by the former Tampier factory in Boulogne, an establishment that worked for Junkers.
3. Finally, a fifth aircraft to be identified in the remaining batch will be assigned to the Navy.

The times are difficult, difficulties abound in all areas, and the program of manufacturing and conversion of the old German aircraft is falling behind. The first aircraft intended for the Navy was not received until May

26, 1945. That day, the Junkers 88 No. 8 was taken into account in Cormeilles-en-Vexin by CC Rousselot, Head of the Reception and Conveying Service (SRC), for a control flight of 2 hours. He is then transported on May 30 from Le Bourget to Luc, his Provençal base.

The Navy plans to assign its 88 Junkers to the Test Section (SE), also known as SEAN (Naval Aerospace Test Section). This organization, created by decision of December 19th, 1944, but really active only in 1945, is installed in Hyères, and includes a detachment to the Luc. The section will become the [10.S squadron](#) in July 1945.

Commissioning

Mainly intended for torpedo tests in connection with the DCAN factory in Saint Tropez, the Junkers 88 of the Navy will therefore be installed on the site of Luc, halfway between Hyères and Saint Raphael, a track conveniently located 30 kilometers from Saint-Tropez, where the tests will take place. The Hyères runway is considered too short for the aircraft in certain wind and loading conditions. The Marine Department has very formally asked the Air Ministry for permission to install the detachment of the test section in the field of Luke, mail 1111 EMG / 4 dated 12 May 1945.

The aircraft No. 8, which [10.S squadron](#) adopts the training number 10.S-5, is progressively followed by four other Junkers, numbered respectively 51, 58, 62 and 76, which will become, "to run", the aircraft 10.S-6 to 10 .S-9.

September 1946 is a bad month for the Junkers of the squadron: the 11, the 10.S-5, victim of a hydraulic damage, is accidented on takeoff, and must be sent for repair in the Paris region. Two days later, No. 62 made a forced landing in the vineyards, but too badly damaged, will not be repaired.

Three devices are still available, but, it must be recognized, the activity of Junkers 88 is not strictly speaking feverish. At the beginning of 1947, the Naval Aeronautical Engineering Bureau, in its report of activity for the months of January and February, indicates that the study of the planing torpedo (of German origin) L 50 progresses to St Raphaël, Saint-Tropez and Cuers, that the equipment of the Junkers 88 launchers is on track, and that the first launches by the CEPA are planned for the month of May.

Torpedo tests (1947-1949)

The tests conducted are not entirely satisfactory. The torpedo plane now seems to be a formula of the past, and the Navy's insistence on wanting to put the Bloch (SO-) 175T in service at the same time will not be crowned with great success. In its semiannual activity report for the second semester of 1948 CEPA announces that the tests of the planing torpedo L.50 were stopped in January 1948, but that further tests are being carried out with the Junkers n ° 8 and 58. Some other tests are attested in the spring (torpedo launch T114 in particular), but, from the end of the year, the LV Lucas, commander of the [squadron 10.S](#) , reports in its account of activities a "big problem" with the parts of the German equipment.





In early 1949, the situation continues to worsen: the Junkers 88 (as the Ju 188, by the way!) Need to undergo a general overhaul, and a grooming in the form of fresh paint! Finally, there are no more spare stocks. The aging of aircraft is even more striking in the fall of 1949, even if it hits only equipment and circuits, the cells being declared fit for service. However, despite difficulties, the test campaign is continued, and, especially in October 1949, there are various launch (L.50, T114) and even October 11, a launch of mines.

The slow agony of Ju 88 to 10.S (1950-51).

In 1950, during the first quarterly report of activities, the LV Guyon, new commander of the training since early 1949, now asks for the urgent

replacement of Ju 88 and 188 and reports that the condition of these devices is getting worse. From the middle of the year, we talk about condemning the most damaged devices, the Junkers are now considered "outdated" devices.

After an abusively long stay in revision in the workshops Toulon Mourillon No. 8 10.S-8 ended up returning to the fold, but steals very little because of the difficulties of development of the engines.

Throughout the year 1950, measurement tests or rare launches of L50 torpedoes were carried out, and on 17 October a "MA20" was launched, a model that remains to be identified.

The extinction of Junkers 10.S is now on the agenda. At first, a note dated September 23, 1950 [1840 Secretariat / Aero / Orga] states that, since the Department no longer has spare parts for Junkers 88, it is decided to condemn the devices as and when they become unavailable.

Choice soon confirmed in the classification into 4 categories of aircraft in service in the Navy [2371 SC Aero / M of 30 November 1950]: the Junkers 88 is placed, and three other types (PV-1 Ventura, Cessna UC-78 and Taylorcraft), in "category 3", ie the extinction of the type is imminent and should occur in the year following this classification.



De facto, this amounts to condemning the type very soon, since any device can be cannibalized, for lack of spare parts. This does not fail to point out the LV Mauban, commander of the [squadron 10.S](#) , in its quarterly report of activities.

At the end of July 1951, in his general report on Naval Aeronautics in the Third Maritime Region, Vice-Admiral Sala, Prefect Maritime, expresses it clearly: "The aircraft of German origin Ju 88 - Ju 188 - Siebel 204 must to be regarded as having only a small yield: their maintenance is more and more difficult, their availability more and more rare.The replacement of this equipment out of order is required at short notice. The response of the Central Service of Naval Aeronautics, in the report of the Secretary of State for the Navy sent to Toulon on November 23, 1951 is very terse: " Ju 188

and 88: withdrawn from service. "

Which only ratifies a decision already made in the summer of 1951: the Junkers disappeared at this date of the inventory of the [squadron 10.S](#) , the general condemnation of the Junkers 88 and 188 having been notified by decision of the 21 Aug. 51 [1480 SC Aero / M]. The transfer to Arsenal for the two survivors (nos. 6 and 58) was considered. In the current state of research, this remains to be confirmed. A note of 9 January 1952 provides for the transfer of survivors to the DTIA for the benefit of the CEV, with 9 Jumo 211 engines still held by the Navy.

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