

Britten-Norman BN-2 Islander / Defender

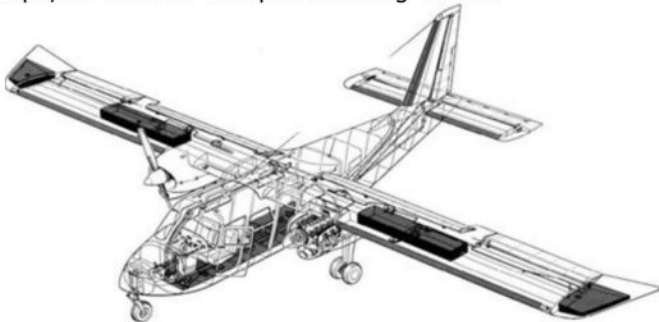
Central America Caribbean: Antigua, Belize, Jamaica, Panama

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 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.

DECALS description

The decals are for the scheme described. Other AIPD-xx sheets offer more Islander/ Defender schemes.

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... hundreds of photos.

See for a few Airfix Islander models website:

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



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

This small twin island country in the Caribbean has a small defence force (ABDF). The Air Wing was founded April 2022 and operates a BN-2A-8 Islander (c/n 542) with serial A-1.

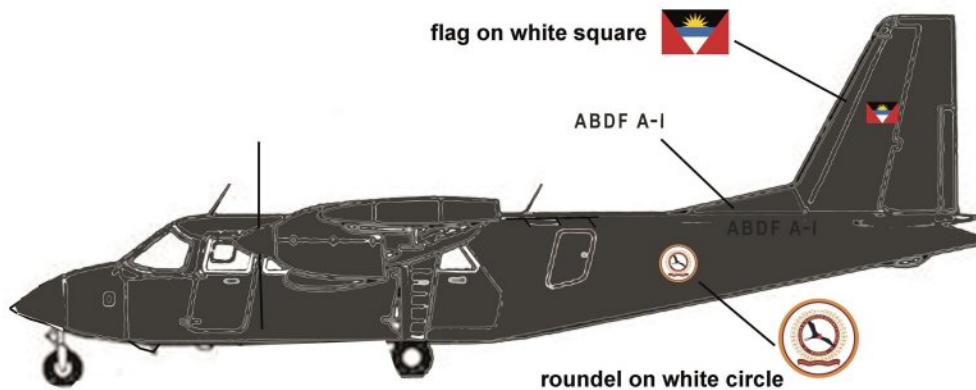
It has the 49 ft wing span and "rectangular" curved wing tips.

It has a pointy nose and is painted overall very dark glossy green (about FS34052/ RAL 6015/ RLM 70).

Apply the white underlaying decals sections first and then the roundel and fin flash.

The small black ABDF A-1 code is at the rear fuselage.

White cabin window borders. (No roundels on wing).





BELIZE

Belize is a small British Commonwealth country in Central America with shores at the Caribbean sea. The Defence Force was established in 1978 and an Air Wing in 1983 flying from Belize city.

The first aircraft were two Defenders that are Islanders than can be lightly armed. The first pair BN-2B-21 were delivered in 1983 with the pointy nose. Upon delivery the BDF-01 and BDF-02 had a camouflage scheme. Islander BDF-01 was written off in 1998.

Another Defender BN-2A-21 coded BDF-05 was acquired as a few other types including Bell UH-1 helicopters.

Aircraft have the wing with extra fuel capacity of 53 ft span and "triangular" wing tips.

Defender camouflage scheme is a wrap round of dark green (*about* FS34079/ BSC 241) and brown (*about* FS30117). The camouflage scheme on the wing is *unclear*. But large black code on lower starboard wing.

Propellers light grey with small red-white-red tips. Prop spinners are red. White cabin window borders. Seen with long wire antennas.

Apply the white underlaying decals sections first and than the 4 flags.



Later BDF-02 got an another paint scheme (seen below) that appears to be overall "dark green" (*about* FS14062 / "Brunswick green").

Propellers light grey with small red-white-red tips. Prop spinners are red. White cabin window borders. No wire antennas were seen. Flag on tail.



This Defender BN-2A-21 coded BDF-05, c/n msn 277, has also the overall "dark green" paint scheme.

Compose the serial of BDF-05 of several decal bits.



JAMAICA

This island state in the Caribbean has a small Defence Force and the Air Wing established mid 1963 also operates a few aircraft including helicopters and a pair of BN Islanders based at Kingston airport from the seventies.

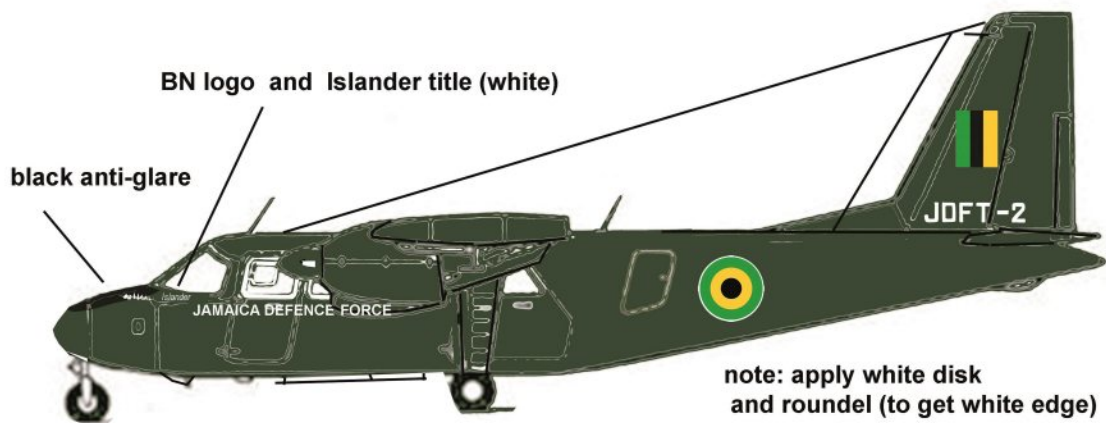
BN-2A-3 coded JDFT-2 and JDF T-5 have standard nose and the wing with extra fuel capacity of 53 ft span and "triangular" wing tips.

Overall color is *about* gloss "dark green" with black anti-glare panel at nose.

Fitted with long wire antennas.

At the nose the small BN logo and Islander title is seen.

The roundel has a tiny white edge. (set white disk)



PANAMA COAST GUARD



This country is the connection between North/Central America and South America with the well know Panama canal under U.S. control. In 2000 canal control was passed to the Panamese Government and the canal provide huge revenues due to the fares of transferred ships. The Darien Gap border area with Colombia in the east is unsurpassable hence marine smuggling along the coasts is a big problem.

A Servicio Nacional Aeronaval "Coast Guard" was established to monitor activities and also flies several small aircraft and helicopters.

This included from 2002 3 Islanders:

- BN-2A-26 c/n 722 coded SAN 207 with *probably* 49 ft wing with modified "rectangular" wing tips.
- BN-2A-3 c/n 256 coded SAN 208 with wing with extra fuel capacity of 53 ft span with "triangular" wing tips.
- BN-2A c/n 44 coded SAN 209 with 49 ft wing with "triangular" wing tips.

The upper surfaces and entire wing are gloss white. The lower surfaces of fuselage, nacelles and gear struts gloss medium grey.

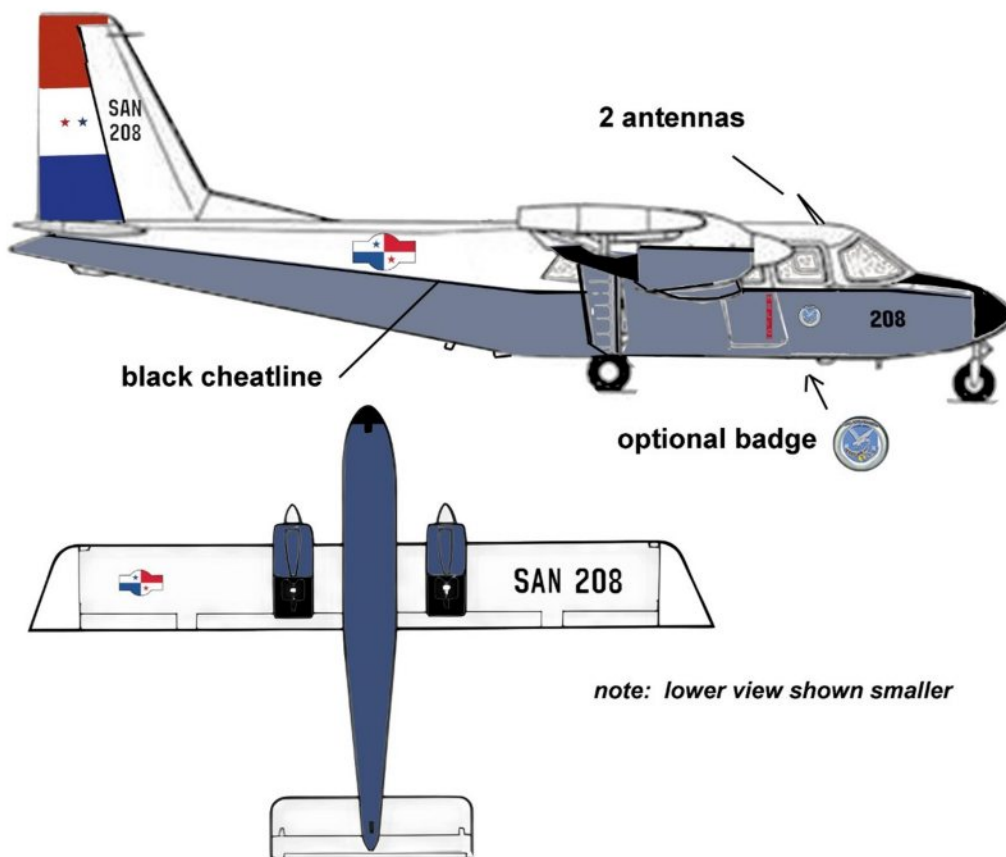
Black cheatlines are seen in between (for which decal stripes are provided).

Black nose and anti-glare panel, please note the white edge between anti-glare panel and cheatlines. Rear sections of nacelles aft of exhaust are black.

Propellers are light grey with white-grey-white tips and white spinners.

No long wire antennas were seen but 2 antennas are fitted on cockpit roof.

The badges below the cabin windows were not always seen.



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