

# USASC-USAAS-USAAC-USAAF-USAF MILITARY AIRCRAFT SERIAL NUMBERS--1908 TO PRESENT

SOURCE: [http://www.joebaugher.com/usaf\\_serials/usafserials.html](http://www.joebaugher.com/usaf_serials/usafserials.html)

On August 1, 1907, the Aeronautical Division of the United States Army Signal Corps was established, and the United States Army purchased its first heavier-than-air aircraft, a Wright Model A, in 1908. It was allocated the serial number 1. Further Army aircraft were assigned serial numbers in sequence of their purchase. Unfortunately, early records from these days are rather incomplete, and there are numerous gaps and conflicts. To add to the confusion, it often happened that at the time an aircraft was rebuilt, it was assigned a brand new serial number. Some aircraft from this period (for example the DH-4 "Liberty Plane") are known to have carried at least four serial numbers during their careers. After a while, certain serial number blocks were introduced--the 200 block was reserved for seaplanes, the 40000 block for experimental aircraft, and the 94000 block for prototypes and aircraft under evaluation.

The new Army Aeronautical Division was renamed the United States Army Air Service (USAAS) on May 14, 1918. The sequential serial number scheme continued until the end of US Fiscal Year (FY) 1921 (which was June 30, 1921). At that time, the numbers had reached 69592, plus a special block of 1919-1921 experimental procurements in the 94022/94112 range.

Starting on July 1, 1921 (the beginning of FY 1922) a new serial number system was adopted based on procurement within each Fiscal Year. Each serial number now consisted of a *base number* corresponding to the last two digits of the FY in which money was allocated to manufacture the aircraft, and a *sequence number* indicating the sequential order in which the particular aircraft was ordered within that particular FY. For example, airplane 22-1 was the first aircraft ordered in FY 1922, 23-1 was the first example ordered in FY 1923, etc. This system is still in use today.

It is important to recognize that the serial number reflects the Fiscal Year in which the order for the aircraft is placed, NOT the year in which it is delivered. Nowadays, the difference between the time the order is placed and the time the aircraft is actually delivered can be as much as several years.

On July 2, 1926, the Army Air Service was renamed the United States Army Air Corps (USAAC). On June 20, 1941, the USAAC was renamed the United States Army Air Force (USAAF). On September 18, 1947, the United States Army Air Force was split off from the US Army and became a separate service, the United States Air Force. Throughout all of these changes the earlier fiscal-year serial number system remained unchanged.

In 1947, at about the same time that the USAF was officially formed, DoD regulation 5304.9003 was promulgated which required that the sequence number now have at least 3 digits. This means that fiscal year serials with individual sequence numbers less than 100 are filled up with

zeroes to bring them up to 3 digits in length. So 48-1 is written as 48-001 in official documentation. Sequence numbers greater than 9999 are written with 5 digits. In 1958, the minimum number of digits in the sequence number was raised to four, so that the 1958 aircraft series started at 58-0001.

### **Army Aircraft**

Following the split off of the USAF from the US Army, the Army continued to use the same serial number system for its aircraft, with the serials for Army and Air Force aircraft being intermixed within the same FY sequence. Beginning in FY 1967, the Army began using serials beginning at 15000 for each FY, so Army aircraft could usually be distinguished from USAF aircraft by their high serial numbers. In addition, if an Army aircraft of helicopter had a serial number with less than 4 digits, extra zeros were added to pad the number out to 5 digits. In FY 1971, the Army went over to a new serial series for their helicopters, which started at 20000 and had continued consecutively since then. Within each FY, the US Army numbers are much higher than the USAF numbers are ever likely to get, so there is not much danger of any overlap.

### **Army Serial Numbers**

After the United States Army Air Force was split off from the US Army and became a separate service, the United States Air Force on September 18, 1947, both the Army and the Air Force continued to use the same set of serial numbers for their aircraft. Army aircraft serials were seamlessly intermixed with Air Force serials, with no gaps or overlaps.

But in 1966, the Army started using five digit sequence numbers that were greater than any sequence numbers used by the USAF, so that observers would not confuse aircraft between the two services. In addition, Army sequence numbers that were allocated within the Air Force sequence were often padded with extra zeros to make them have a total of 5 digits. Unfortunately, there is some confusion, since this system was not always consistently followed, and there were numerous departures from this norm. Although the Army started using 5 digit serial numbers starting in 1964, there was a mixed bag of four and five digit numbers in actual use. For tail number presentations (or pylon numbers for helicopters), the early years were pretty consistent, using the last digit of the fiscal year and just the four digits of the serial number being shown. When the five digit serial numbers started being used, there was a mixture of tail number presentations of just the five digits with no year (and sometimes a leading zero!), as well as presentations in which the last digit of the year was shown, along with all five of the sequence numbers. Sometimes both the digits of the year number were painted over and then just the five-digit sequence number was presented. Sometimes, Army helicopters used the last three digits of the sequence number as a call sign and you will often see those three digits painted on the nose, the side window or highlighted on the pylon itself. There are even a few older aircraft with the two digit year and the entire five digit serial number shown, just to round out all the options. (Ref, Nick Van Valkenburgh, Jul 26, 2013)

In 1971, the Army started using sequence numbers starting at 20000, and the numbers were not restarted with each succeeding fiscal year.

In written correspondence, the leading zeros were often dropped. It is not at all clear when the system of padding sequence numbers with zeros actually started. It also seems that the Army continues to use both systems for its aircraft serial numbers, one a sequence number greater than any sequence numbers used by the USAF, plus lower sequence number padded with zeros. (Ref, Nick Van Valkenburgh, Jul 26, 2013)

**66-18000/18040 Beechcraft U-21A Ute MSN LM.1/41. Army staff transport version of Model A90 King Air.**

18000, 18003, and 18027 converted to EU-21A SIGINT aircraft, later reverted back to standard U-21A configuration.

18000 (MSN LM.01) to US Navy. To civil registry as N7000B

18001 (MSN LM.02) to civil registry as N7007G

18002 (MSN LM.03) w/o Apr 14, 1977

18003 (MSN LM.04) WFU.

18004 (MSN LM.05) to US Navy as 668004. To civil registry as N7007Q. Current as N87E with dynamics Avlease Inc of Bridgewater, Virginia

18005 (MSN LM.06) seen at Muskogee-Hatbox field, OK May 4, 2001 wearing civil registration of N70088 with Dynamic Aviation Group, Inc. of Bridgewater, VA.

18006 (LM.07) converted to GU-21A instructional airframe. Seen at Muskogee-Hatbox field, OK May 4, 2001 wearing civil registration of N7010L with Dynamic Aviation Group, Inc of Bridgewater, VA.

18007 (LM.08, 210th Aviation Battalion, 1st Aviation Brigade) w/o Mar 16, 1969 when it crashed into Loc Thuy Mountain near Hue Phu Bai, Vietnam in poor weather. All onboard killed. [CAC aircraft]

18008 converted to JU-21A SIGINT test bed. The aircraft carried cloud-calibration equipment above the cockpit that measured cloud liquid water content and particle size using forward scattering laser spectrometers. To N70135. Current as N85Z with Dynamics Avlease Inc of Bridgewater, Virginia

18009 to N70135

18010 to N555ND

18011 (MSN LM.12) callsign ASHAK 011 crashed Jan 20, 1978 on a snow covered mountain tip near the Black Sea coast near Sinop, Turkey. Two crew and three passengers killed. Flight from Istanbul to Sinop, Turkey.

18012 converted to GU-21A instructional airframe. Sold as N7018F

18013 (LM.14) on civil registry as N70224, later N67X with Dynamic Avlease, Inc for aerial pest control. Used in California medfly control program. To N226DR with Technical Education Services Incorporated, Virginia Beach on August 4, 2015.

18014 to N7026H, in 2013 was N76Q

18015 to N823SB

18016 to N70264

18017 (LM.18) has civil identity of N70292 with Dynamic Aviation Group, Bridgewater, VA.

18018 (LM.19) has civil identity of N7031F with Dynamic Aviation Group, Bridgewater, VA.

18019 n display at Hunter AAF, made to resemble an RU-21H.

18020 (MSN LM.21) to N7031L. Currently registered N80R with Dynamic Avlease, Inc, Bridgewater, Virginia

18021 (LM.22) to civil registry as N7034K then CS-DCP.

18022 (LM.23) w/o, no further details

18023 to N7035B, in 2013 was N67K

18024 (MSN LM.25) seen at Muskogee-Hatbox field, OK May 4, 2001 wearing civil registration of N70356 with Dynamic Aviation Group, Inc of Bridgewater, VA.

18025 (MSN LM.26) seen at Muskogee-Hatbox field, OK May 4, 2001 wearing civil registration of N7036L with Dynamic Aviation Group, Inc of Bridgewater, VA.

18026 (MSN LM.27) w/o May 25, 1970

18027 (MSN LM.28) seen at Muskogee-Hatbox field, OK May 4, 2001 wearing civil registration of N7038Y with Dynamic Aviation Group, Inc of Bridgewater, VA.

18028 (MSN LM.29) w/o, no further details

18029 (MSN LM.30) seen at Muskogee-Hatbox field, OK May 4, 2001 wearing civil registration of N7039T with Dynamic Aviation Group, Inc of Bridgewater, VA.

18030 to N7040J. Current as N32P with Dynamics Avlease Inc of Bridgewater, Virginia

18031 (MSN LM.32) seen at Muskogee-Hatbox field, OK May 4, 2001 wearing civil

registration of N7040V with Dynamic Aviation Group, Inc of Bridgewater, VA.

18032 (MSN LM.33) has civil identity of N7041M with Dynamic Aviation Group, Bridgewater, VA. Current as N84G with dynamics Avlease Inc of Bridgewater, Virginia

18033 (MSN LM.34) to N7042R. Was N65JA with Dynamic Avlease Inc, Bridgewater, Virginia in Oct 2003 and currently registered with them as N89N

18034 (MSN LM.35) seen at Muskogee-Hatbox field, OK May 4, 2001 wearing civil registration of N7043D with Dynamic Aviation Group, Inc of Bridgewater, VA.

18035 (MSN LM.36) broken up, no further details

18036 to N7043G

18037 to N7043N

18038 (MSN LM.39) seen at Muskogee-Hatbox field, OK May 4, 2001 wearing civil registration of N7043Y with Dynamic Aviation Group, Inc of Bridgewater, VA.

18039 (MSN LM.40) w/o at Fort Stockdale, TX Apr 26, 1975. Five killed

18040 (MSN LM.41) seen at Muskogee-Hatbox field, OK May 4, 2001 wearing civil registration of N7047D with Dynamic Aviation Group, Inc of Bridgewater, VA.

**66-18041/18047      Serials listed as being allocated to U-21A Ute, but probably belong to next fiscal year.**

**67-18041/18076      Beechcraft U-21A Ute MSN LM-42/77. Army staff transport version of Model A90 King Air.**

**18041/18047 sometimes listed as being in FY 66.**

18041 (MSN LM-42) the starboard engine caught fire and crashed into the Gulf of Tonkin near Hon Son Cha island Dec 14, 1971. 2 crew and 4 passengers killed. [CAC aircraft]

18042 (MSN LM-43) to N70503 as instructional airframe with Le Tourneau University Aeronautical Science Department, Longview, Texas

18043 to N7051K

18044 to N7052X

18045 (MSN LM.46) W/o, no further details

18046 to N7052Y

18047 to N7059H

18048 (MSN LM.49) seen at Muskogee- Hatbox field, OK May 4, 2001 wearing civil registration of N7062W with Dynamic Aviation Group, Inc of Bridgewater, VA.

18049 to N7063D

18050 given as w/o Oct 10, 1970 but was later allocated N7063W

18051 (MSN LM-52) seen at Muskogee-Hatbox field, OK May 4, 2001 wearing civil registration of N7064Q.

18052 to N70648

18053 to N7066X

18054 to N7067S

18055 to N7069F

18056 (MSN LM-57) to N7070Z, then to N75N with Dynamic Aviation Group

18057 (MSN LM-58) seen at Muskogee-Hatbox field, OK May 4, 2001 wearing civil registration of N7071H with Dynamic Aviation Group, Inc of Bridgewater, Va.

18058 (MSN LM-59) converted to EU-21A radio relay aircraft. To N7071N. Current as N67B with dynamics Avlease Inc of Bridgewater, Virginia

18059 to N7076X. Current as N87Q with dynamics Avlease Inc of Bridgewater, Virginia

18060 to N7201S

18061 (MSN LM-62) destroyed in midair collision with Piper PA-31 (N60SE) Oct 20, 1987 over Independence, MO. 3 fatalities on U-21, 3 fatalities on PA-31

18062 (MSN LM-63) w/o at Fort Bragg, NC Dec 12, 1984. 4 killed, one survived.

18063 (MSN LM-64) converted to JU-21A 'Left Jab' electronic warfare aircraft, later reverted to standard U-21A configuration. Assigned to 138th Aviation Company (Radio Research), Hue Phu Bai, South Vietnam 1971. Assigned to 156th Aviation Company (RR), Fort Bliss, TX Assigned to 138th Army Security Agency Company, also known as the 138th Aviation Company (Electronic Warfare), 81st US Army Reserve Command in McCoy AFB, Orlando, Florida until the mid-1980s when the aircraft was removed from service. Registered N70766 as Beech 65-

A90-1 Apr 9, 1997. Reported sold to owner in Mali Aug 2005. N70766 cancelled Aug 15, 2005. Registered Aug 2005 as TZ-ZBE

18065 (MSN LM-66) converted to JU-21A 'Left Jab' electronic warfare aircraft. Assigned to 138th Aviation Company (Radio Research), Hue Phu Bai, South Vietnam 1971. Shot down in Vietnam May 4, 1971 by surface-to-air missile, all 5 onboard KIA.

18066 (MSN LM-67) to N7078J with Dynamic Aviation Group

18067 (MSN LM-68) on civil registry as N66W in 2013

18068 (MSN LM-69) seen at Muskogee-Hatbox field, OK May 4, 2001 wearing civil registration of N7078L with Dynamic Aviation Group, Inc of Bridgewater, Va.

18069 (MSN LM-70) converted to JU-21A 'Left Jab' electronic warfare aircraft. Later reverted to standard U-21A configuration. Assigned to 138th Aviation Company (Radio Research, Hue Phu Bai, South Vietnam 1971. Assigned to 156th Aviation Company (RR), Fort Bliss, TX. Assigned to 138th Army Security Agency Company, also known as the 138th Aviation Company (Electronic Warfare), 81st US Army Reserve Command in McCoy AFB, Orlando, Florida until the mid-1980s when the aircraft was removed from service. Registered N7079S as a Beech 65-A90-1, c/n LM-70 [sic] 12Mar99; current Seen at Muskogee-Hatbox Field, OK May 4, 2001 wearing civil registration of N7079S with Dynamic Avlease of Bridgewater, VA.

18071 to N7081L

18072 to N70841

18073 to N7087U

18074 to N70876

18075 (MSN LM-76) seen at Muskogee-Hatbox field, OK May 4, 2001 wearing civil registration of N70879 with Dynamic Aviation Group of Bridgewater, VA.

18076 to N7089Q