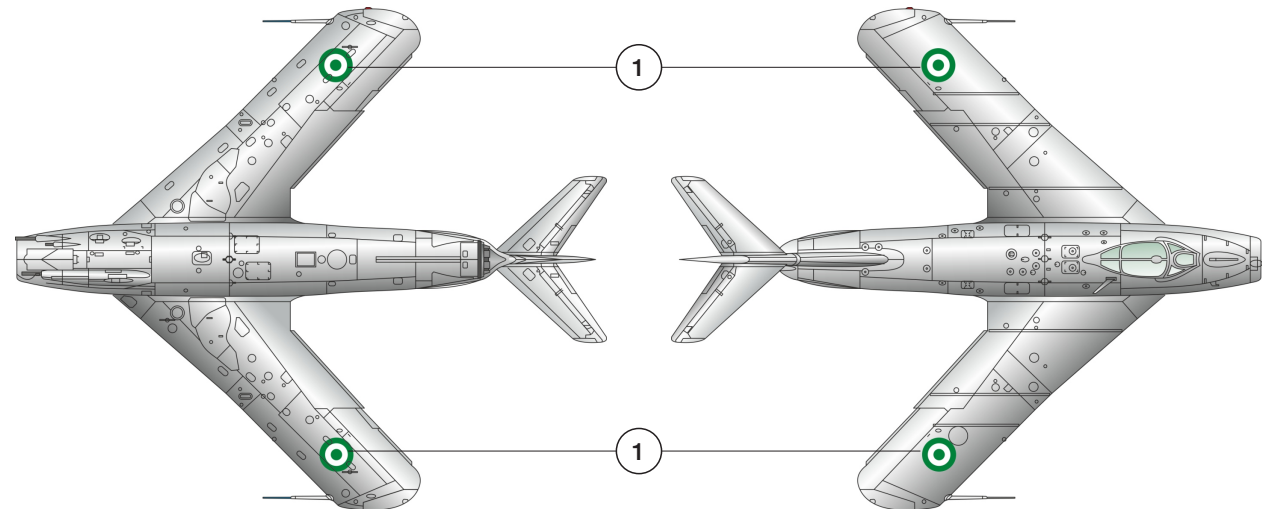
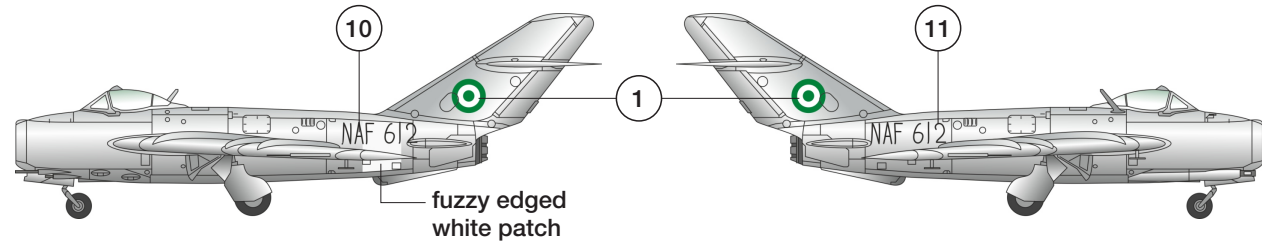
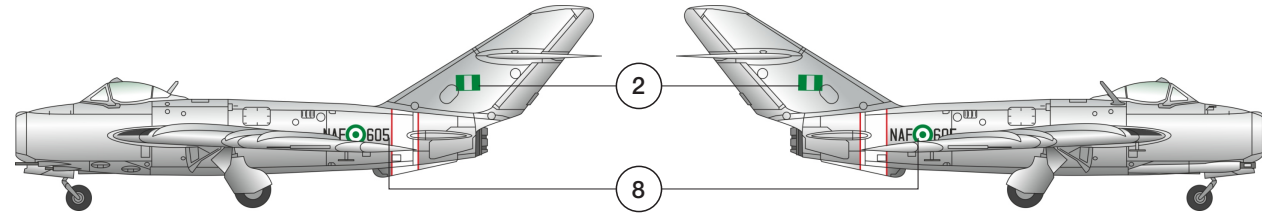
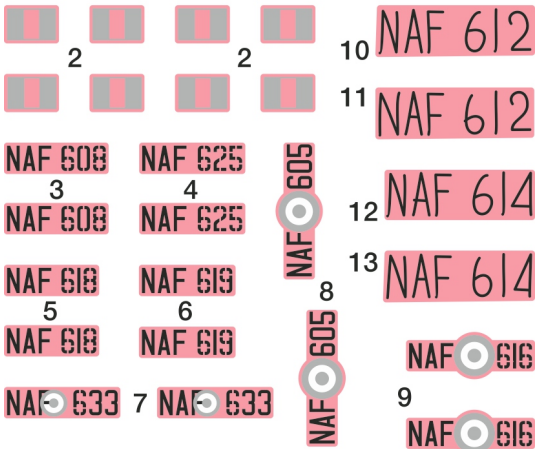
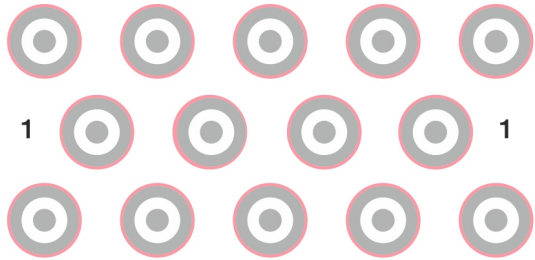


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1/144 Nigeria AF MiG-17s

Shelf
Oddity



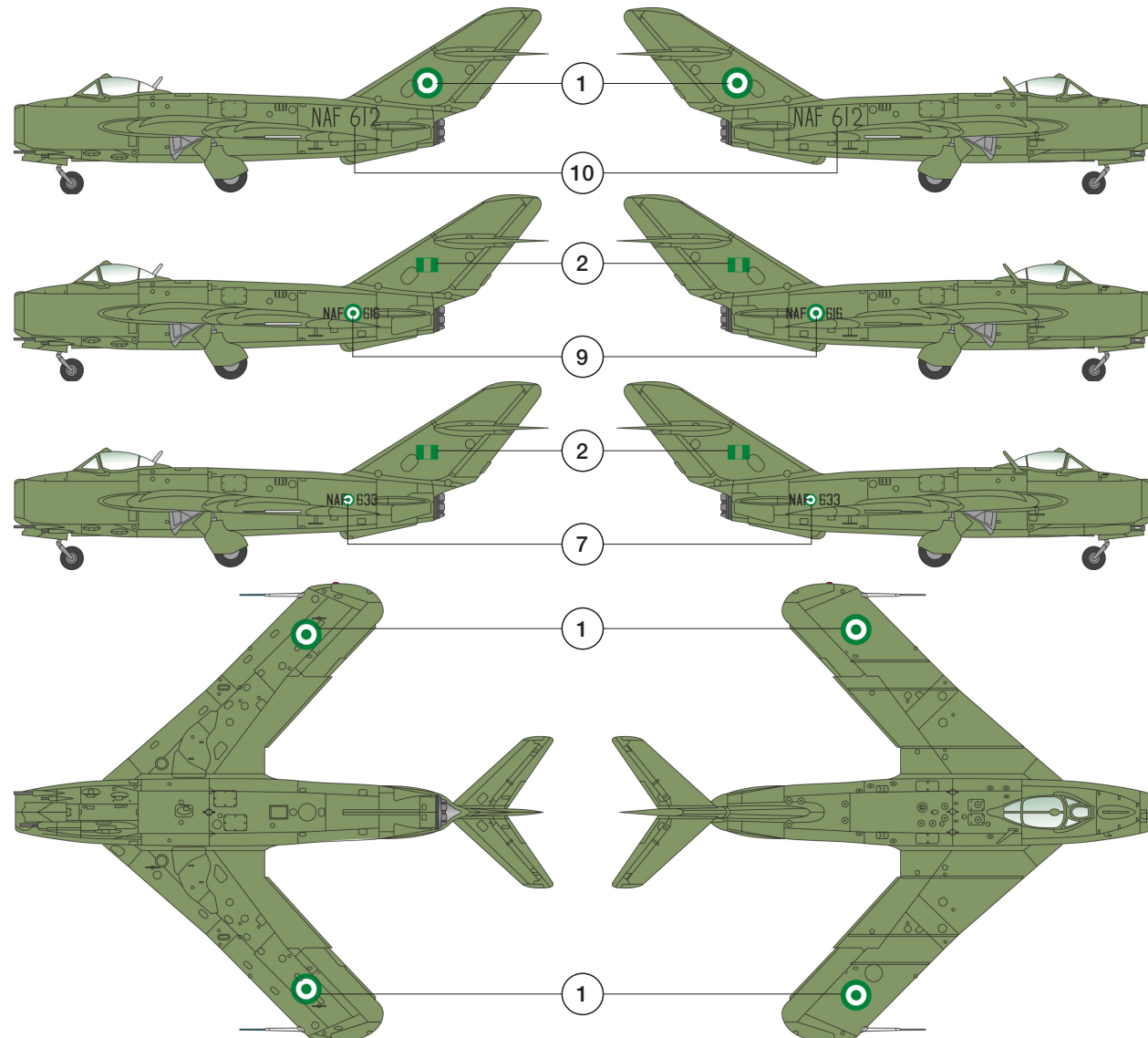
SO314452

1/144 Nigeria AF MiG-17s

Shelf
Oddity

Nigeria gained independence in 1960, it took 4 more years to establish national Air Force, with initial help from India and West Germany, later Italy. In 1965 the domestic situation began to deteriorate to the point in which by 1967 an embargo on arms was imposed by western countries. This directed Nigerian sights to Soviets, with talks begun in spring 1967. The Kremlin looked at Nigeria as a prospect anchor in central Africa. The matter did not appear urgent until on 30 May Col. O. Ojukwu declared independent state Biafra. This was serious blow to Nigerian economy, as the oil fields fell to secessionate state. Deal to supply Nigeria with Soviet jet fighters (among other equipment) was signed at the beginning of August. The origin of Nigerian MiG-17s is not known, popular belief is that they come from Egypt. All arrived in Nigeria in bare metal finish, with no markings or insignia, possible exception being NAF605 which rear fuselage band bears resemblance to Egyptian markings. This however is superficial only: the stripes location and width differ from Egyptian standard, the colour is difficult to establish without new photographs emerging from archives. Different scenario may be considered, as it was a standard procedure back then to supply equipment from United Arab Republic and replenish the stock. Delivery performed by an An-12 suggest yet another alternative, in which MiGs would originate from Siberian overhaul plant.

- Field Green (worn and not too uniform) FS34095
- bare aluminum
- medium grey
- steel



SO314452

1/144 Nigeria AF MiG-17s

Shelf
Oddity

Whatever the source, first batch of MiG-17s arrived to Kano, Nigeria on 18 August 1967 on board An-12 transports. The aircraft were accompanied by two MiG-15UTI trainers and approx. 30 Soviet technicians.

Biafran intelligence was very accurate about the delivery, and the next day a strike by B-26R was launched against Kano airfield just as the last Red Star An-12 left the runway. The effectiveness of the attack is difficult to assess as the exact number of MiG-17Fs delivered remains uncertain - any number between 10 and 15 is possible - which would imply Nigerian losses be between 0 and 5 aircraft. The fact is Biafran strike was not able to prevent further assembly of aircraft and first flight was made on 21 August and first sortie 9 days later.

The pilots were initially Egyptian mercenaries, which was not the happiest arrangement of them all with pilot displaying minimal involvement and willingness to perform risky assignments. Later the mercenaries came from South Africa, Britain and even United States.

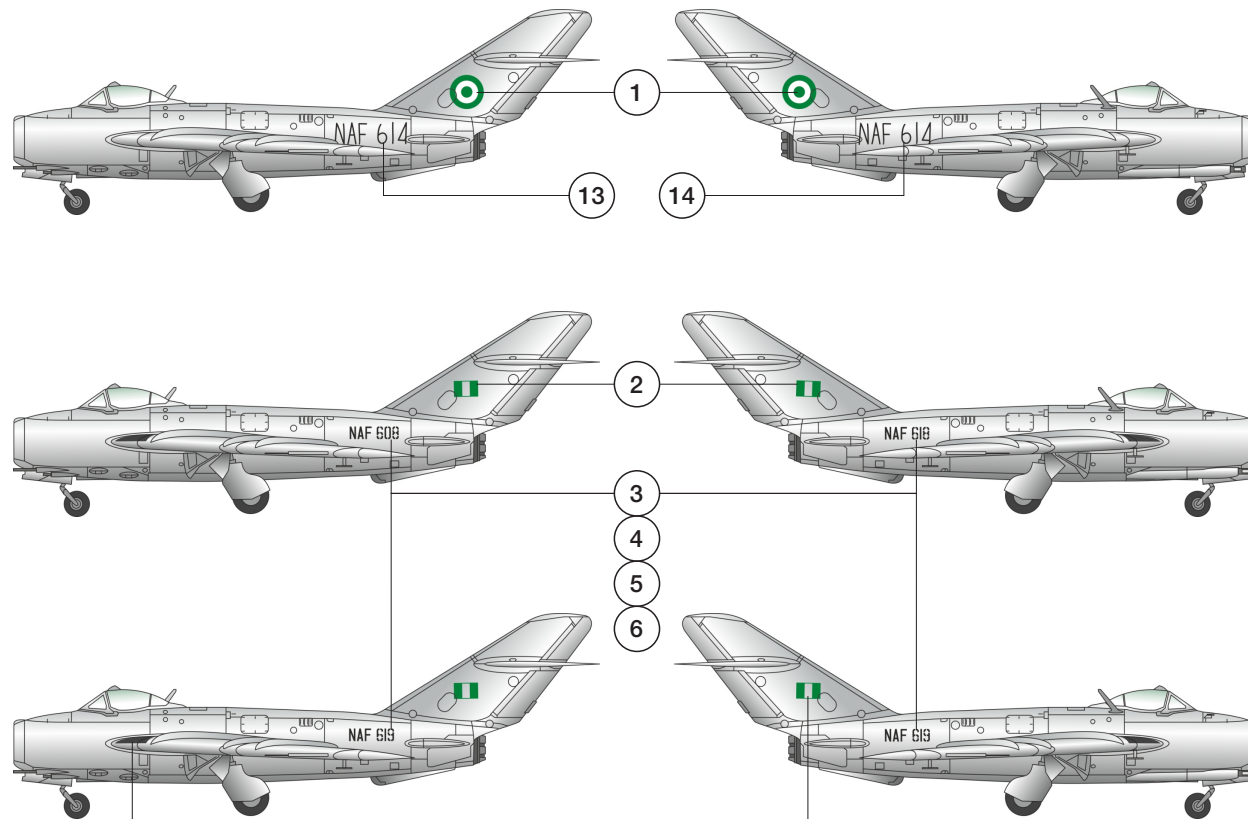
Second supply of MiG-17Fs was air-freighted in April 1968 and then third batch of 16 aircraft in October/November.

Apart from the fighter duties, the MiGs were also used in bomber role until Il-28 arrived in early 1968.

Nigerian AF never lost a MiG-17 to Biafran fire, although hits were received on several occasions.

Source:

Michael I. Draper "Shadows. Airlift and Airwar in Biafra and Nigeria 1967-1970" (Hikoki)



Note: wing walk black (and weathered) stripes are visible on some bare metal MiGs.

Note: fin flash is placed at slight angle to aircraft axis. It appears as if it was painted parallel to the ground when aircraft was sitting on its undercarriage.

● bare aluminum

● steel