Royal Australian Air Force – Hawk 127 lead-in fighter

Information sourced from https://www.airforce.gov.au/technology/aircraft/aviation-training/hawk-127

The Hawk 127 lead-in fighter prepares qualified Air Force pilots for conversion to F/A-18A and F/A-18B Hornets and F/A-18F Super Hornets.

The Hawk is operated by Number 76 Squadron at RAAF Base Williamtown near Newcastle, and Number 79 Squadron at RAAF Base Pearce near Perth.

Pilots complete a 14 week Introductory Fighter Course at RAAF Base Pearce with the Hawk, which includes general flying, instrument flying, formation flying, night flying and navigation.

Graduates then progress to a 20 week course at RAAF Base Williamtown for air-to-air and air-to-ground weapons training with the Hawk. Only then can pilots progress to conversion to the F/A-18A/B Hornet or F/A-18F Super Hornet.

The Hawk has been designed to allow for system upgrades to reflect evolving training requirements. Students attend major exercises such as Exercise Pitch Black in the Northern Territory as part of their training.

About the Aircraft

The Hawk is a low-wing, all-metal aircraft, fitted with a navigation and attack system, and powered by a single Adour Mk 871 turbofan engine.

Key features include:

- an avionics system integrated via a 1553 multiplex database;
- two display and mission computers which coordinate the display of information from the communications, navigation and attack sub-systems;
- hands-on-throttle-and-stick controls in each cockpit;
- Head-Up Display in the front cockpit and Multi-Function Displays in each cockpit which present flight information such as aircraft performance, attitude and equipment status reports;
- Ability to pre-program mission-specific data; and
- a Health and Usage Monitoring System that monitors and records equipment performance, aircraft fatigue and engine life data.

The Hawk 127 weapons and equipment system allows for the carriage, aiming and release, or firing of:

- practice weapons;
- conventional and laser-guided bombs;
- AIM-9M “Sidewinder” missiles; and
- a 30mm cannon.

The stores are carried on two wingtip missile stations, or mounted on four underwing and one centreline hardpoints.

Manufacturer	BAE Systems
Role	Lead-in fighter training
Crew	Pilot (instructor) and student
Engine	Single Rolls-Royce Turbomeca Adour Mk 871
Airframe	Length 11.95 m, height 4.1 m
Wingspan	9.39 m
Weight	5,443 kg
Speed	1,207 km/h
Range	1,207 km
Ceiling	50,000 feet
Weapons	Practice AIM-9M Infrared Missiles, Conventional and Laser Guided Bombs, 30 mm Cannon
Capacity	Mission Computers, Heads-Up Display, Datalink, Radar and Weapon Simulation, Mission Recording and Playback System