

## Abbreviations and Terms used in Canada's Air War

updated 23/01/05

2, 3	When used as a superscript to an aircraft code identifies aircraft with duplicate side letters, ie WP-E and WP-E <sup>2</sup> are different aircraft on the same squadron. See also Bar.
A & AEE	Aircraft & Armament Experimental Establishment (RAF)
(A)	Aviation Branch, Royal Navy, as in Lt(A).
AAAF	Auxiliary Active Air Force, RCAF reserve force prior to October 1938. See also NPAAF
AASF	Advanced Air Strike Force, Bomber units in France 1939-40.
ABC	Air-Borne Cigar, a form of radio jamming equipment.
ABC-1 Talks	America-Britain-Canada discussions that took place before the USA entered the war, but laid out basic policy between those countries in the event of America entering the war.
(AC)	Army Co-operation, Squadron designation, RCAF.
AC	Aircraftsman, class unknown.
AC1	Aircraftsman First Class
AC2	Aircraftsman Second Class, lowest rank in the Commonwealth air forces
A/C	Air Commodore
ACFC	Air Corps Ferrying Command (USAAF)
(ACT)	Army Co-operation Training, RCAF Sqn. designation
ACW1	Aircraftswoman First Class, WAAF rank
ACW2	Aircraftswoman Second Class, WAAF rank
ADRU	Air Dispatch and Reception Unit
ADU	Air Delivery Unit
AFS	Advanced Flying School
AFU	Advanced Flying Unit (instrument flying)
AFM	Air Force Medal
AFV	Armoured Fighting Vehicle (target description)
AG	air gunner
AID	Air Inspection Department, deployed at factories to ensure quality
A/LA	Acting Leading Airman, RN enlisted rank for naval airmen under instruction
A/M	Air Marshall
AM (US)	Air Medal, US decoration
AMES	Air Ministry Experimental Station, cover designation for RDF, later Radar, stations.

ANS	Air Navigation School, to train navigation techniques, especially advanced methods
AOC	Air Officer, Commanding, the commanding officer of an air force station or group.
AOP	Air Observation Post, spotter aircraft or squadrons manned by artillery officers to spot gunfire
AOS	Air Observers School, to train navigators and bomb aimers, functions that were originally combined in the Observer trade.
Ar xx	Designation of aircraft made by Arado in Germany
Article 15	Article 15 of the BCATP agreement signed Dec. 17, 1939, that aircrew from New Zealand, Australia and Canada be formed in National squadrons.
ASR	Air/Sea Rescue, operations involving search, recovery or dropping survival equipment, either by aircraft or by High Speed Launch. Also designation of units, aircraft or boats involved in this work.
ASV	Air to Surface Vessel, radar for detecting ships or surfaced submarines
ATA	Air Transport Auxiliary, an English organization of civilian pilots who ferried aircraft to and from factories, maintenance units and bases in England. Personnel included pilots too old to join military, women pilots, volunteer pilots and cadets who acted as aircrew.
ATC	Air Training Command (UK, Air Cadets), Air Transport Command (USA)
ATFERO	Atlantic Ferry Organization, set up in Canada by Canadian Pacific
Aus.	Australia
AVG	American Volunteer Group, aka the " <i>Flying Tigers</i> ", US military pilots seconded to fly fighters for the Nationalist Chinese Air Force as "civilian volunteers".
AVM	Air Vice Marshal
AW1	Aircraftswoman First Class, RCAF
AW2	Aircraftswoman Second Class, RCAF
B.xx	Bomber (RAF type designation, not commonly used, ie, most Lancasters were either a B.I, B.II, B.III or B.X, but were referred to as I, II, III or X)
B&G School	Bombing and Gunnery School, to train bomb aimers and air gunners
BA	bomb aimer
Bar	as in "EQ-B Bar", a marking (a solid line above the aircraft letter B) to indicate a second aircraft using the individual letter "B" on the

same Squadron. Later changed to 2, as in 'squared', as in "EQ-B<sup>2</sup>". The number system may have been implemented during the first 1,000 Bomber Raid May 30-31, 1942. This applies to operational squadrons, in training units with large aircraft establishments a double letter/number individual ID would be used, ie, -A1, -A2, -A3, with both painted full size. (In the RCAF codes when used were often underlined in the early part of the war, ie, MK-G, which was only a different form of squadron marking.)

- Bar as in medal, indicating multiple awards of the same medal, ie, "DFC and Bar".
- BAT Beam Approach Training or Blind Approach Training, ie, instrument landing training
- BCATP British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, name of the plan to train Australian, British, New Zealand and Canadian aircrew in Canada, the name is commonly used in Canada (see EATS)
- BCL Bomber Command Losses, books by W. Chorley, ie, BCL'42, BCL'OTU, etc.
- BEM British Empire Medal
- Bf xx Designation of early Messerschmitt designs, stands for for Bayerische Flugzeugwerke AG, the original company (D. Vincent). See also Me xx.
- BG(H) Bomber Group, Heavy (USAAF)
- BG(M) Bomber Group, Medium (USAAF)
- Biggs' Boys Canadian men and women sponsored in the RAF and other organizations by Captain Seymour-Biggs RN (retired) of Victoria, BC.
- BOAC British Overseas Airways Corporation
- (BR) Bomber Reconnaissance (RCAF Squadron Designation)
- BS Bomber Support (RAF)
- BS Bomber Squadron (USAAF)
- BULLSEYE A training sortie made to simulate as near as possible a bombing operation, involving a long navigation exercise to a large city in England and return with a valid target photograph, while the "target" city would "defend" itself with searchlights. Sometimes routed to act as decoys for an actual operation. A FLASHLIGHT BULLSEYE used a ground infrared light to mark the target. A COMMAND BULLSEYE had aircraft from various airfields forming a bomber stream, similar to a bomber operation (quoted from contributor Daz, 78SqnHistory, [www.rafcommands.com](http://www.rafcommands.com))
- BWI British West Indies, Caribbean islands controlled by England during

the war.

C.xx	Cargo, ie, transport aircraft (RAF type designation)
(CAC)	Coastal Artillery Co-operation, RCAF Sqn. designation.
CAHS	Canadian Aviation Historical Society
CAM	Catapult, Aircraft, Merchantman - a cargo ship converted to carry an aircraft launching catapult.
Caterpillar Club	Informal organization sponsored by the Irvine Parachute Company for people who have saved their lives using an Irvine Parachute. Members are given a card and a gold caterpillar pin. Predates the war.
CMA	Canadian Mutual Aid, a program to provide Canadian built arms and equipment and food to Allied countries free of charge, patterned on the US Lend-Lease program, and in value about 10% of the total provided by US Lend-Lease.
CB	British decoration, Commander of the Bath.
CBE	British decoration, Commander of the Order of the British Empire
CCMA	Canadian Chronology of Military Aviation
CF	Communications Flight or Conversion Flight
CG (Belg.)	Croix de Guerre (Belgium)
CG (Fr.)	Croix de Guerre (France)
CGM	Conspicuous Gallantry Medal
CGS	Central Gunnery School
CGTAS	Canadian Government Transatlantic Air Service, a Federal agency set up to fly passenger service across the Atlantic, using TCA aircrew.
CH	Chain Home, RAF designation for RDF or Radar units to detect aircraft
CHL	Chain Home Low, RAF designation for RDF or Radar units to detect aircraft approaching at low level.
CIRCUS	A small but heavily escorted daylight bomb attack designed to lure enemy fighters into combat. Later used for escort operations for USAAF daylight bombing attacks.
CJCA	<i>War Diary, Canadian Press</i> (CJCA Radio, Edmonton), a chronological listing of wartime headlines. Some headlines require explanation, and some appear after the event. Included to give an idea of what was being reported to the public during the war.
CLH (Fr)	Chevalier of the Legion of Honour (France)
CNS	Central Navigation School
CO	Commanding Officer

CP	Canadian Pacific
CPO	Chief Petty Officer, naval Warrant Officer rank
Cpl	Corporal
CPR	Canadian Pacific Railways
(CR)	Coastal Reconnaissance (RCAF Squadron Designation)
CWAAF	Canadian Women's Auxiliary Air Force
CWGC	Commonwealth War Graves Commission web based records search
CU	Conversion Unit, where crews learned to use operational aircraft prior to being posted to a Squadron for combat. See also HCU, LFS.
DC	Depth Charge
DCM	Distinguished Conduct Medal
DFC	Distinguished Flying Cross (Commonwealth), awarded for valour
DFC (US)	Distinguished Flying Cross (US), awarded for achievement (ie, number of missions flown, number of aircraft shot down) as well as recognition of special effort
DFM	Distinguished Flying Medal
DICaT	Difesa Contraerea Territoriale, Italian anti-aircraft organization
"Died on Active Service"	"death due to natural causes or accident not related to their duties" (Ken MacLean, <a href="http://www.rafcommands.com">www.rafcommands.com</a> ).
DIVER	Allied code name for V-1 Flying Bombs
DSO	Distinguished Service Order
Do xx	Dornier aircraft
DoT	Canadian Department of Transport
EAC	Eastern Air Command (RCAF)
EATS	Empire Air Training Scheme, alternative name for the BCATP, often used by UK references, also covers training in South Africa, Rhodesia, Iraq and Egypt.
ECM	Electronic Counter Measures. Called RCM during the war.
EFTS	Elementary Flying Training School, first stage of a pilot's flight training
E&RFTS	Elementary & Reserve Flying Training School, pre-war unit, became EFTS later
(F)	Fighter Squadron (RCAF Squadron designation)
F.xx	Fighter (RAF type designation, not usually used unless modified, ie, a Spitfire F.IX was usually called a IX, but an LF.IX or HF.IX were noted as such)

FAA	Fleet Air Arm, flying component of the Royal Navy
FAW	Fleet Air Wing, US Navy designation
(FB)	Flying Boat Squadron (RCAF Squadron designation)
FB.xx	Fighter-Bomber (RAF type designation)
F/L	Flight Lieutenant
F/O	Flying Officer (note a similar designation Flight Officer in the USAAF is an enlisted rank, references to this will be written in full in this work).
F/S	Flight Sergeant
FFAF	Free French Air Force
FG	Fighter Group (USAAF)
FIDO	Fog Intensive Dispersal Operation, a method for clearing a runway of fog using intense flames.
Fido	An informal name for the Mark 24 Mine or acoustic air dropped torpedo, due to it's ability to chase targeted submarines.
FIS	Flight Instructors School
Fishington	nickname for a Wellington used in torpedo dropping.
fitter	Short description of an airman ground crew with an aero engine mechanics trade, from Royal Naval Air Service usage. See also, rigger.
Flak	German acronym for Fliegerabwehrkanone, or anti-aircraft defence cannon, general description used by Allied forces of German Anti-Aircraft fire.
flash bomb	A device that is dropped with the bomb load, but is retarded to fall slower. At the moment the bomb load hits the ground this timed device explodes in a bright flash that exposes an image of where the bombs hit on a camera onboard the bomber. In effect, a very large photo-flash.
Flight	Sub-unit of a Squadron (ie A Flight, B Flight), also unit raised for special or detached duties too small to be a Squadron, usually numbered (ie, #1474 Flight).
Flight Officer	enlisted rank in USAAF, equivalent to Warrant Officer for aircrew.
Fnr	Norwegian AF rank, Sub Lt
FR.xx	Fighter Reconnaissance, a fighter aircraft also equipped with cameras for reconnaissance (RAF type designation)
FS	Fighter Squadron (USAAF)
(FT)	Ferry/Training (RCAF Squadron designation)
FTU	Ferry Training Unit
Fw	Feldwebel, Luftwaffe rank, equivalent to Sergeant
Fw xx	Focke-Wulf aircraft

xx/G A suffix appended to serial number of an RAF aircraft with secret equipment installed which requires a 24 hour guard, as in "AB123/G".

G/C Group Captain

GARDENING Mine Laying sortie/operation (Bomber Command)

GC George Cross - award for courage, often involving saving life, second highest UK award, available to Civilians.

GIAP Guards Fighter Regiment (Soviet Air Force).

GM George Medal - award for courage in saving life, awarded to Military.

Goldfish Club During the war an organization of airmen who saved their lives using life rafts or Mae West life jackets designed by P.B. Cow & Co., postwar it evolved into a group of airmen who survived ditching at sea.

(GR) General Reconnaissance (RCAF Squadron Designation)

GR.xx General Reconnaissance aircraft (RAF type designation)

GRS General Reconnaissance School

Group RAF, a large administrative unit made up of several wings, or a unit of command for a geographical area (fighter) or special purpose (bombing, pathfinder, RCM); not usually mobile.

Group USAAF, a small unit made up of several US Squadrons; nearest equivalent to an RAF Squadron.

GT.xx Glider Tug aircraft (RAF type designation)

Guinea Pig A member of the The Guinea Pig Club, airmen who were badly burned or injured and needed reconstructive surgery. See Rita Donovan's excellent book *As For The Canadians: The Remarkable Story of the RCAF's "Guinea Pigs" of World War II* for further information.

GSU Group Service Unit

H2S Codename for centimetric ground mapping radar used by Bomber Command.

H2X Codename for US version of H2S.

HC Heavy Conversion, as in flight, or High Capacity, referring to bombs.

HCU Heavy Conversion Unit, Bomber Command, where crews learned to operate four engined operational aircraft prior to being posted to a Squadron for combat. Developed from CUs.

He xx Heinkel aircraft

HDT Horse Drawn Transport (target description)

HF.xx High Altitude Fighter (RAF type designation)

HF/DF	Also called "Huff-Duff". High Frequency Direction Finding, a secret device developed in England that gives a bearing of a radio transmission instantly on a cathode ray tube. Land based units used to locate aircraft and ships at sea by cross-bearing radio or Pip Squeak transmissions. HF/DF was also mounted on ships and was invaluable in locating U-boats preparing to attack convoys. A development of this is used today in fighting forest fires, plotting lightning strikes so they can be checked visually later by aircraft. Developed in part from initial research of General A.G.L. McNaughton, Canadian Army, for detection of artillery guns.
HMAS	His Majesty's Australian Ship, RAN
HMCS	His Majesty's Canadian Ship, RCN
HMHS	His Majesty's Hospital Ship
HMIS	His Majesty's Indian Ship, RIN
HMNZS	His Majesty's New Zealand Ship, RNZN
HMS	His Majesty's Ship, RN, or His Majesty's Station, for facilities on land.
HMT	His Majesty's Transport ship, also His Majesty's Trawler, for armed anti-submarine craft converted from fishing vessels.
Hptm	Hauptmann, Luftwaffe rank
IAF	Indian Air Force
IAP	Fighter Regiment (Soviet Air Force).
IFF	Identification, Friend or Foe, a radar activated radio device that produces an identifying mark on a radar screen; a coded transponder.
INTRUDER	Squadrons or sorties tasked to attack or suppress enemy airfields, transportation and/or targets of opportunity, usually at night.
IRA	Irish Republican Army
IRCC	International Red Cross Committee
ITS	Initial Training School, designed to bring eligible aircrew volunteers lacking education up to requirements for flight training.
Ju xx	Junkers aircraft
(K)	Composite Squadron (RCAF Squadron Designation)
KC	King's Commendation for Valuable Services in the Air
killed	died, body or grave identified.
L/Air, LA	Leading Seaman (Air), RN enlisted designation.



LAC	Leading Aircraftsman
LAC(AG)	Leading Aircraftsman, air gunner under training or aircrew in the early period of the war.
LAC(BA)	Leading Aircraftsman, bomb aimer under training
LAC(FE)	Leading Aircraftsman, flight engineer under training
LAC(N)	Leading Aircraftsman, navigator under training
LAC(O)	Leading Aircraftsman, observer under training
LAC(P)	Leading Aircraftsman, pilot under training
LAC(WAG)	Leading Aircraftsman, wireless operator/air gunner under training or aircrew in early part of war.
LAGOON	Fighter support for Coastal Command anti-shipping strike
LAW	Leading Aircraftswoman (RCAF Rank)
LACW	Leading Aircraftswoman (WAAF Rank)
Leigh Light	An aircraft mounted searchlight used with radar to illuminate a submarine in the final stages of a night attack.
Lend-Lease	US program to provide arms to Allied nations. These were provided free of charge but at the end of the war surviving equipment must be purchased, returned or destroyed. Canada did not take Lend-Lease arms directly but did accept into the RCAF aircraft provided to the RAF under Lend-Lease. These aircraft usually kept their RAF serials in the RCAF. <u>See also Canadian Mutual Aid.</u> Lend-Lease also provided for items built in Canadian factories, paid by US funds, for distribution to Allied countries, such as cargo ships and aircraft, and components paid for by Lend-Lease to be incorporated into Canadian production for Allied countries, such as Packard Merlins in Canadian built Mosquitos. Food, farming equipment and industrial machinery intended to help the war effort were also supplied under Lend-Lease.
Leopoldville Group	The first group of 161 RCAF airmen specially recruited by Canada for their advanced electrical background to work in the RAF on the development and deployment of radar, who traveled to England on the Belgium liner <i>SS Leopoldville</i> in January, 1941. Over 5,000 Canadians served in the RAF in this special electrical work.
LF.xx	Low Altitude Fighter (RAF type designation)
LFS	Lancaster Finishing School, an intermediate step for crews from HCUs who had used Halifax or Stirling aircraft, before being posted to Lancaster equipped squadrons.
Link Trainer	An instrument training simulator mounted on a bellows system to teach instrument flying in a realistic environment, developed in

the USA in the 1930s and adopted by the RCAF in 1937. See also VLT.

LG-#	Landing Ground (desert) (ie, LG-43)
LNSF	Light Night Strike Force, Bomber Command Mosquito Squadrons operating special sorties, especially diversionary attacks. Developed into a bomber force capable of serious attacks on its own.
LOCOs	Locomotives (target description)
lost	In the time of the war aircraft reported "lost" were usually those downed over enemy held territory, which the enemy could confirm, or over the ocean. Thus aircraft which crashed in England or Allied territory were not usually reported publicly as "lost". This sometimes leads to confusion when the report on an operation reports a loss which is actually less than the number of aircraft crashed. For example Feb. 24-25, 1943, Bomber Command reported no loss on an operation to Wilhelmshaven yet a 424 Wellington crashed on return to England. It is also widely used in this work to describe an aircraft down for which no further details are known, ie, "lost over Belgium", crashed in Belgium, unknown cause.
LRDG	Long Range Desert Group, irregular soldiers who used the desert to penetrate behind German and Italian lines in North Africa for Intelligence operations.
Main Force	Bomber Command Squadrons tasked with bombing a designated target, as distinct from specialist Pathfinder, LNSF, or RCM units.
MAC Ships	Merchant Aircraft Carrier ships, large bulk freight carriers built with decks to land aircraft on, which could sail as part of a convoy and use its aircraft to patrol against submarines.
MC	Military Cross
MC (Czech.)	Military Cross of Czechoslovakia
MCU	Mosquito Conversion Unit
ME	Middle East
Me xx	Messerschmitt AG aircraft, designs produced after the Bayerische Flugzeugwerke AG firm was renamed in 1938.
MET	Mechanized Enemy Transport or Mechanical Transport (target description)
Met.xx	Meteorological Aircraft (RAF type designation)
METS	Middle East Training School
MGB	Motor Gun Boat, high speed attack boats with primary gun

	armament. See MTB.
MHDOIF	Most Highest Derogatory Order of the Irremovable Finger, a spurious award by the RAF pilots safety magazine <i>Tee Emm</i> for spectacular blunders, errors or cock-ups, meant to improve pilots skills by illustrating how not to do things. The events were real but the award was anonymous.
MiD	Mentioned in Dispatches, recognition for special work or valour. One of only 2 awards in the commonwealth that could be awarded for bravery in combat posthumously, the other was the Victoria Cross.
mid-lower	a semi-remote controlled defensive gun turret that could be installed in an aircraft, not common in Commonwealth bombers, usually installed and manned for daylight operations. Also simpler manned gun positions that replaced them. The hatch for this was also used for installation of other equipment such as H2S, Leigh Light or parachute hatch in bombers. "Mid-lower gunner", term for operator. In USAAF aircraft this was a retractable manned turret referred to as a "ball turret" due to it's shape.
mid-upper	a defensive gun turret semi-permanently installed in an aircraft, can be removed to save weight for special operations. "Mid-upper gunner" term for operator.
mission	USAAF, equivalent to an operation
missing	no known grave, buried in a remote location, lost at sea, body not found or body not identified. Commonwealth war missing are celebrated on official memorials, for example, the Runnymede Memorial in England.
MM	Military Medal
MM (Czech.)	Military Medal of Czechoslovakia
MSFU	Merchant Ship Fighter Unit, formed to operate Catapult launched Hurricanes off CAM equipped merchant ships.
MTB	Motor Torpedo Boat, high speed attack boats equipped with torpedoes. See MGB.
MTU	Mosquito Training Unit
MU	Maintenance Unit, an RAF unit that receives new or re-built aircraft for issue to Squadrons, stores aircraft, recovers or receives damaged aircraft for repair or scrapping and salvage.
MV	Motor Vessel (usually a cargo ship with diesel engines)
(N)	navigator under training
NAAFI	Navy, Army and Air Force Institute, an English organization

established to provide for the welfare of enlisted members of the armed forces.

NAS	Naval Air Station (USN)
N/Air	Naval Airman (FAA enlisted rank)
NEI	Netherlands East Indies
NRC	National Research Council (Canada)
NF.xx	Night Fighter (RAF type designation)
NICKEL	Leaflet Dropping (Bomber Command)
NPAAF	Non-Permanent Active Air Force, RCAF reserve force after October, 1938 to the start of the war. See also AAAF.
Nuclear	In text reference to <i>Canada's Nuclear Industry and the Myth of the Peaceful Atom</i> articles, or events in development of atomic energy.
Observer	Aircrew designation, later divided into navigators and bomb aimers
OADU	Overseas Aircraft Delivery Unit
OPAS	Ontario Provincial Air Service
operation, operations	A planned flight or flight into combat, of various size, for a single defined purpose (RCAF & Commonwealth). Same as missions (USAAF).
operational	In Commonwealth airforces a squadron, or an aircrew member, or an aircraft, being rated ready for combat (ie, "considered operational"), or a crew or pilot that is serving on a squadron in war in combat operations. Also an airman or aircrew which has completed their training and is ready to be posted to a combat Squadron.
OSRD	Office of Scientific Research and Development, US government group involved in research of weapons, notably the initial work on the atomic bomb.
(OT)	Operational Training (RCAF Squadron Designation)
OTU	Operational Training Unit, where Commonwealth crews or pilots learned advanced skills in their specialties under simulated combat conditions using older or recently retired bombers or fighters.
(P)	Pilot under training, as in LAC(P)
P/O	Pilot Officer
PAF	Polish Air Force
Pathfinder Force	Bomber Command Squadrons with special mission to initially and continually mark a designated target accurately using various methods. Originally called Target Finding Force.

PD	Personnel Depot
Pfc	Private, First Class, US Army rank.
PFNTU	Pathfinder Force Navigation Training Unit
Photo Flash	A pyrotechnic device dropped with the bomb load that explodes in the air giving a brief flash of light for taking a photograph of where the bombs were dropped.
Pip Squeak	A device used on RAF fighters that broadcasts short radio signals at regular set intervals that can be noted on HF/DF to give position of friendly fighters in real time.
Pink Pansy	An early Target Indicator producing a pink coloured fire.
PoW	Prisoner of War
PPCLI	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
PR	Photo Reconnaissance
PR.xx	Photo Reconnaissance aircraft (RAF type designation)
PRC	Personnel Reception Centre
PRU	Photo Reconnaissance Unit
Prune or "Pulling a Prune"	A silly mistake, or making a stupid mistake, after the inept cartoon character P/O Percy Prune, whose errors and poor judgement cost the RAF so many aircraft in the pages of the safety magazine <i>Tee Emm</i> , intended to teach young aircrew better skills in flight.
Pvt	Private
RA	Royal Artillery
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RAF	Royal Air Force
RAMROD	A heavily escorted daylight bombing mission similar to a CIRCUS, but with the bomb target as the main objective. Commonwealth fighter escort operations for USAAF bombing missions were later coded RAMRODs as well.
RAN	Royal Australian Navy
RANGER	fighter sweep to attack targets of opportunity
RASC	Royal Army Service Corps
RC	Recruiting Centre, Repatriation Centre
RCA	Royal Canadian Artillery
RCAF	Royal Canadian Air Force
RCAF (--)	Royal Canadian Air Force member from another country, ie, Newfoundland, USA, Mexico, Argentina etc.
RCAMC	Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps
RCE	Royal Canadian Engineers
RCM	Radio Counter Measures, disruption, detection or coercion of

enemy radar or radio signals and communications by passive or aggressive means.

RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RCN	Royal Canadian Navy
RCNR	Royal Canadian Navy Reserve
RCNVR	Royal Canadian Navy Volunteer Reserve
RCOC	Royal Canadian Observer Corps
RD	Repair Depot
RDF	Radio Direction Finding, RAF (later called Radar).
rear gunner	Operator of a rear defensive gun, usually a turret in a Commonwealth bomber, sometimes a hand held gun on light or dive bombers.
RFC	Royal Flying Corps, merged in 1918 with the Royal Naval Air Service to produce the RAF.
RHUBARB	A small fighter sweep over enemy territory to attack targets of opportunity.
rigger	short description for an airman ground crew with air frame mechanic trade, from the RNAS usage. See also fitter.
RIN	Royal Indian Navy
RM	Royal Marines
RMS	Royal Mail Ship
RN	Royal Navy
RNAS	Royal Naval Air Service, merged in 1918 with the Royal Flying Corps to produce the RAF.
RNAS	Royal Naval Air Station, RN airfield, often with a name like HMS Daedalus
RNeth.AF	Royal Netherlands Air Force (english acronym)
RNLI	Royal National Lifeboat Institute (UK)
RNor.AF	Royal Norwegian Air Force (english acronym)
RNor.N	Royal Norwegian Navy (english acronym)
RNR	Royal Navy Reserve
RNVR	Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve
RNZAF	Royal New Zealand Air Force
RNZN	Royal New Zealand Navy
ROADSTEAD	An attack on coastal shipping at low level.
RODEO	A large fighter sweep over enemy territory.
RP	Rocket Projectile (RAF), also called UP (Unrotated Projectile).
RSM	Regimental Sergeant Major
RSU	Repair and Salvage Unit, Repair and Service Unit
RU	Radar Unit (RCAF designation)

S/L Squadron Leader  
screened Taken off combat flying at the completion of a tour of operations, as in "the crew was screened".

Serial Numbers Aircraft - A unique identification number applied to an aircraft to track its purchase, production, status, location, unit, modifications, damage or loss. The majority of aircraft in this database use either RAF or RCAF serial numbers. The RAF system uses a combination of 5 letters and numbers starting with one or two letter and numbers starting at 1000 or 100, for example X6789 or AB123. These were assigned sequentially, the next number after HE999 for example would be HF100. The RCAF when first formed used a block of British registrations beginning G-CY (ie, G-CYZF), but this became impracticable, so they changed to a numeric system initially assigned by type, then sequentially as the numbers increased, for example #940, #5629 or #10640. Other countries used other forms, for example 42-7896 is a USAAF number indicating the 7,896 aircraft acquired from 1942 funding, A28-78 is an RAAF number indicating the 78th aircraft of type 28, and NZ6735 would be an aircraft of the RNZAF.

Serial Numbers Personal - An identification number to track and identify military personal. Please refer to H.A. Halliday's *RCAF Serial Number Prefixes Explained* on the [www.rafcommands](http://www.rafcommands) website for a detailed explanation. In simple terms in the RCAF during the war these numbers were sequential and bore a prefix letter C, R, J, W or V meaning an officer serving or trained in the prewar service (C), an Airman enlisted for the war (R), a wartime officer (J), an airwoman (W) or a woman officer (V). Note that an aircrew candidate would begin training as an airman with an R prefix but if promoted as an officer would receive a new serial number with a J prefix. The best source for enlisted serial numbers of those who were later officers is *They Shall Grow Not Old*, for those killed during the war.

SERRATE RAF Night Fighters tasked to find and destroy enemy night fighters in the bomber stream usually using a device that homes in on enemy radar signals.

SFTS Service Flying Training School, where Commonwealth pilots learned advanced flying and basic military techniques.

Sgt	Sergeant
SHAEF	Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force
Sky Marker	A parachute retarded pyrotechnic that cascades bright coloured flames, used for optical aiming above clouds or to mark navigation way-points.
SM	Soldiers Medal, US decoration.
SNAKE	Applied as a stencil below aircraft serial numbers for aircraft being ferried from England required urgently in the Far East, as in AB123 SNAKE, notifying handlers in the Middle East that these aircraft have priority and are not to be diverted for local use or delayed enroute.
SOE	Special Operations Executive
SP	Service Police (Commonwealth Air Forces)

special operator - Wireless Operator with special skills or training. For aircraft equipped with Air-Borne Cigar (ABC) this meant an operator fluent in German.

Spoof	An operation designed to fool the enemy into making a wrong assumption, ie, a diversionary raid or a false radar image.
sortie	A combat flight of a single or pair of aircraft, a component of an operation or an independent operational flight.
Squadron	Basic administrative unit of Commonwealth Air Forces composed of aircraft of the same type with a defined mission divided into Flights (in USAAF a small unit of aircraft nearest to a Flight in RAF terms)
SS	German abbreviation for 'Schutzstaffel', German political special police force, under direct control of the Nazi Party, that included the Gestapo, used for guards for concentration camps, and later morphed into military combat units noted for special dedication to Nazi ideology.
SS	Steam Ship
SS (US)	US Silver Star medal
SSgt	Staff Sergeant, USAAF rank
SWEEPSTAKE	Code name for a planned diversion force of bombers, usually from OTUs, intended to mislead enemy controllers. For a description of such an operation see L. Morrison.
x.T	Aircraft modified with a powered turret, RCAF, usually applied to Fairey Battle aircraft as Battle I.T .
T.xx	Trainer (RAF designation)



TAF	Tactical Air Force, RAF. The 1st Tactical Air Force was developed from Desert Air Force and served in Africa, Sicily and Italy. The 2nd Tactical Air Force was established in England for the invasion of Europe. The 3rd TAF supported the invasion of Burma.
TAG	Telegraphist Air Gunner, RN designation
Target Finding Force	(see Pathfinder Force)
(TB)	Torpedo Bomber Squadron (RCAF designation)
TB.xx	Torpedo Bomber (RAF type designation)
TCA	Trans-Canada Airlines (now Air Canada)
<i>Tee Emm</i>	RAF pilots and aircrew safety magazine that used humour to teach safe practices for flying. The name was the phonetic for <u>T M</u> , or Technical Memorandum.
TF.xx	Torpedo Bomber/Fighter (RAF type designation)
TI	Target Indicator, a pyrotechnic that produces a very bright coloured fire on the ground intended as an aiming point when dropped. Usually in bright red, green or yellow. See also, Pink Pansy.
Tour	In Commonwealth air forces a period of operations for an airman or crew, usually of a set number of sorties or hours flown, before being rested.
TRG	Train, or Freight Cars (target description)
(Trop.)	Indicates an aircraft modified for use in the desert with sand air filters, as in "Spitfire Vc. (Trop.)". These large filters often affected the aircraft's performance due to increased drag.
TSGNO	<i>They Shall Grow Not Old</i> (reference book), list of RCAF casualties in the war.
TSgt	Technical Sergeant, USAAF rank
TT.xx	Target Tug (RAF designation)
TTS	Technical Training School, training airframe and engine mechanics to service aircraft.
turret	a powered enclosed gun position for defence on an aircraft, usually with multiple machine guns, sights and some armour protection for its operator.
UP	see RP
USAAC	United States Army Air Corps (until June 1, 1941)
USAAF	United States Army Air Force (from June 1, 1941)
USN	US Navy
V-1	German Flying Bomb (aka Doodlebug, DIVER), the first cruise missile

V-2	German ballistic missile
VC	Victoria Cross, highest Commonwealth military award for courage in combat.
VLR	Very Long Range, usually in reference to Liberator anti-submarine aircraft stripped of extra equipment needed for bombing, and given larger and extra fuel tanks, to operate at long range over the Atlantic.
VLT	Visual Link Trainer, a Link Trainer with the blind flying hood removed and placed in a room with a painted horizon, intended to teach simple flying maneuvers, and adopted by the RCAF for part of the initial aircrew selection.
W/C	Wing Commander
WAAF	Women's Auxiliary Air Force, RAF
WAC	Western Air Command (RCAF)
WAG	wireless operator-air gunner, WAG is an RCAF designation, with a half-wing WAG brevet worn on the chest (an airmen trained only in guns wore the AG brevet). In the RAF until early 1944 wireless operator-air gunners (sometimes referred to as WOAG, WO/AG or WOpAG) wore an Air Gunners AG half-wing brevet on his chest and a trade "flash" on the left arm of a wireless operator (a fist holding lightning bolts). This was replaced with a Signaller S half-wing beginning in 1944, but this was not RCAF practice. See <a href="http://www.rafcommands.com/archive/00037.php">http://www.rafcommands.com/archive/00037.php</a> for more details.
WASP	Women Air Service Pilots, US organization similar to the ATA, but made up only of women pilots. Unlike the ATA they also flew in training units, doing jobs such as towing targets. Trained to military standards, but operated as a civilian or para-military unit.
WD	Women's Division (RCAF designation)
WEM	Wireless & Electrical Mechanic. WEM-R trained in maintenance of RDF or radar, which required a security clearance.
WINDOW	Code name for metal foil cut to reflect radio frequencies and deployed by aircraft in bundles at stated intervals designed to disrupt radar, can be used as a defence or as a diversion. German name "Duppel". Modern generic name "chaff". First used by Japan.
Wing	Administrative unit made up of several Squadrons, usually of the same type or mission, or a unit formed for special duties larger than a Squadron, usually mobile. (in USAAF a larger unit,

similar in size to an RAF Group). In the air a Wing refers to any formation composed of several different Squadrons, sometimes formed for a single Operation.

Winged Boot A badge of a flying boot with wings, it was originally created in the Desert for airmen who walked out of enemy occupied territory, it was later unofficially adopted for those who evaded or escaped. Postwar it became the symbol of the Air Forces Escape and Evasion Society.

WO Warrant Officer (all Commonwealth Air Forces except SAAF and RCAF); Short form of RCAF rank in informal use; used where class of RCAF rank is unknown.

WO1 Warrant Officer First Class (RCAF)

WO2 Warrant Officer Second Class (RCAF)

WOP Wireless Operator

Z Bomb Code name for highly secret air launched anti-submarine homing torpedo developed by MIT and used by RCAF and other allied forces, aka "Mark 24 Mine" or Fido.