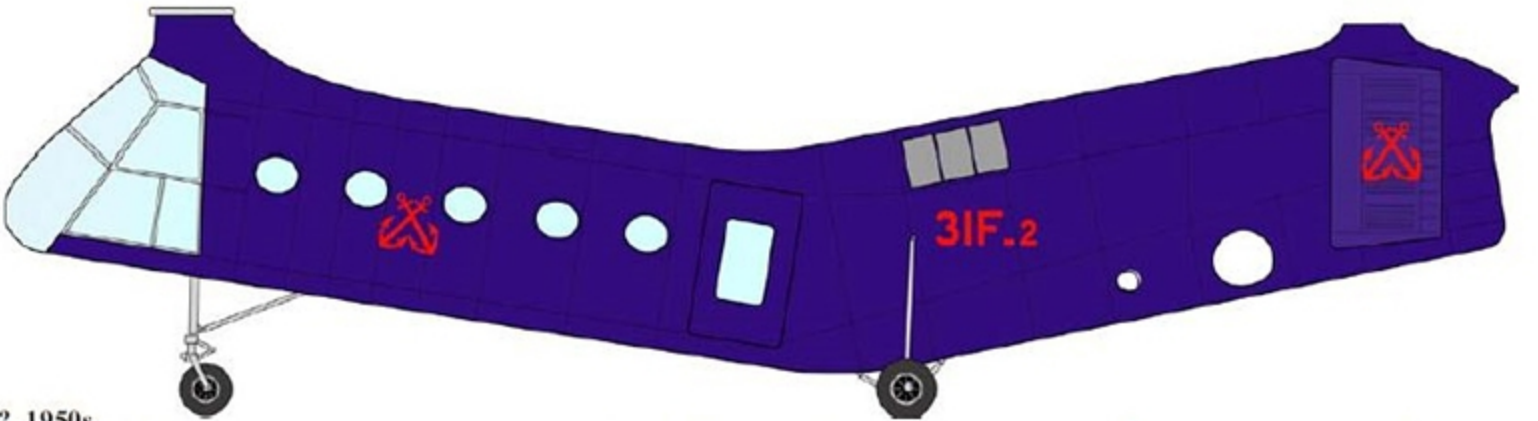




9. H-21B. s/n ?, 1950s

This is believed to be the delivery scheme for H-21s for the Aeronavale. Overall Gloss Sea Blue with the word MARINE in white. The tail code letters are white. Roundels are 36" diameter and are aligned with the forward fuselage.

Ref: Piasecki H-21 Helicopter p142.



10. H-21B. s/n ?, 1950s

This is a lo-vis scheme applied after some time in combat in Algeria. Overall Gloss Sea Blue (although the paint is faded and not so glossy). The squadron identifier (Flotille 31) and aircraft number (2) are shown in red on the fuselage sides along with the crossed anchors of the French Aeronavale. These are repeated on the tail. No other markings are visible.

Ref: Piasecki H-21 Helicopter p142.

Belcher Bits Decal BD20: RCAF H-21 1/48

The Piasecki Vertol H-21 in Canadian Service

In 1949, the USAF issued a requirement for a rescue helicopter which could operate in the Arctic, picking up crews of ditched strategic bombers. Piasecki's PD-22 (a development of the USMC HRP-2) was selected as the YH-21. 18 H-21s and 28 H-21As were built, and the RCAF was an early adopter, taking 6 H-21As into SAR service. The construction of the Mid Canada Line of radar sites across the north took priority, though and these machines were diverted to that task, as well as another 9 H-21Bs which were owned by the RCAF but operated under civilian contract by Dominion Helicopters (and given civil registrations). To make up for attrition losses, around 1959 the RCAF purchased 5 Vertol H44s (3 H44Bs went to the civilian contractor Spartan Air Services, and 2 H44As were used for military SAR work). When the radar line was shut down in 1965, some of the H-21Bs were rebuilt to Vertol H44B standards and taken back into service as base SAR machines, while other were scrapped. It all gets a little confusing.

This decal sheet provides markings for all H-21s in Canadian service. It also provides markings for the HKP-1 in Swedish service and as an added bonus, markings for French Navy H-21Bs from Escadrille 31F in Algeria in the fifties.

The Swedish Navy operated the Vertol 44 as the HKP-1 from 1958 to 1972 when they were replaced in the ASW role by the HKP-4 (CH-46). The original purchase was for nine machines, but in 1964 Sweden took over the five H-44Bs from New York Airways. Only one of these entered service, the rest were apparently used for spares.

France was impressed with the military helicopter, based on their experiences in Indo-China and ordered 98 H-21s for the Army as well as 10 more for the Navy. The machines were put to use immediately in Algeria where France was engaged in a civil war. The Navy transferred their machines to Army control and they were used for troop transport as well as early armed helicopters.

References:

1. Royal Canadian Air Force Aircraft Finish and Markings by Patrick Martin, 2003
2. The Piasecki H-21 Helicopter, R. Brandt and W. Davies
3. Marin Helikoptern, I. Norberg and P. Liander, 1997
4. Les Insignes des Formations de l'Aéronautique Navale (1917-1996), Y. Gouriten, 1996
5. Rotor Torque newsletter, Summer 1997

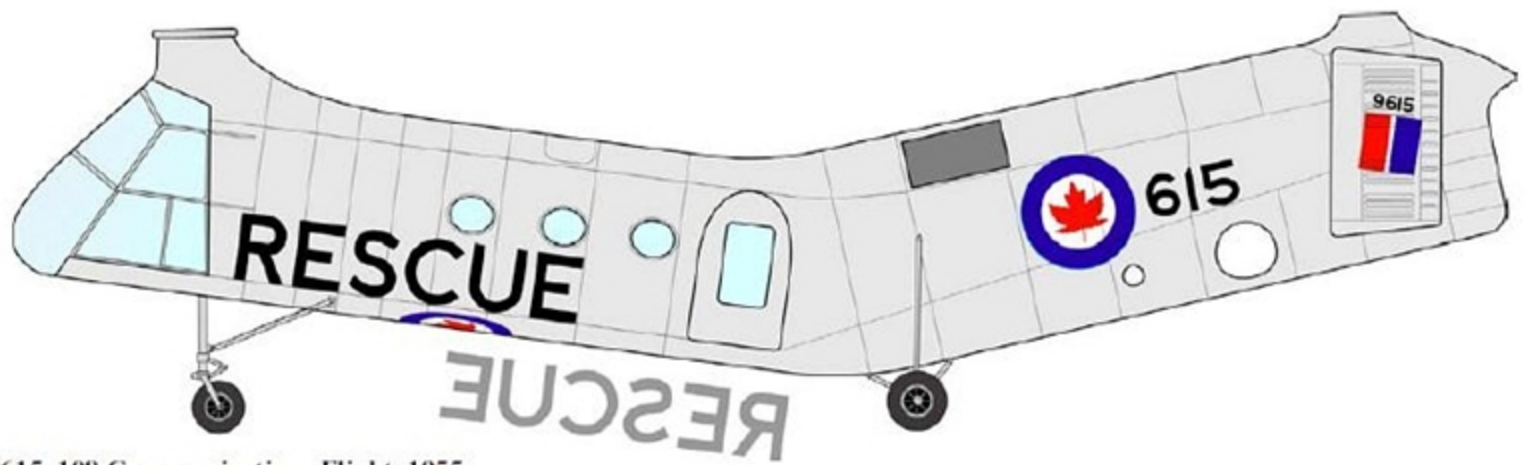
Belcher
Bits



33 Norway Spruce St, Sittsville, ON, Canada, K2S 1P3

Phone: (613)-836-6575, e-mail: info@belcherbits.com

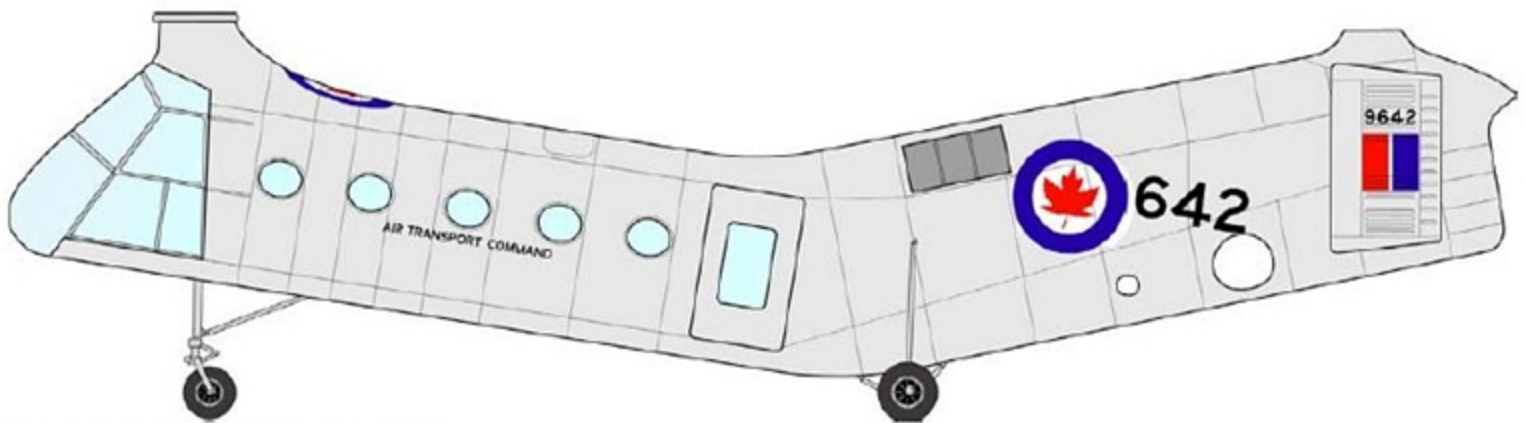
See our web site at www.belcherbits.com



1. H-21A. s/n 9615, 108 Communications Flight, 1955

This represents the delivery scheme. Overall polished natural metal, with 36" roundel underneath and on rear fuselage sides. The rear roundels and the 18" last three of the serial are aligned with rear fuselage. The 24" x 24" fin flash and 4" black serial on the tail are aligned with the forward fuselage, and are canted to the tail itself. On the forward fuselage is the word RESCUE in 24" black letters; note the position is different on port and starboard sides.

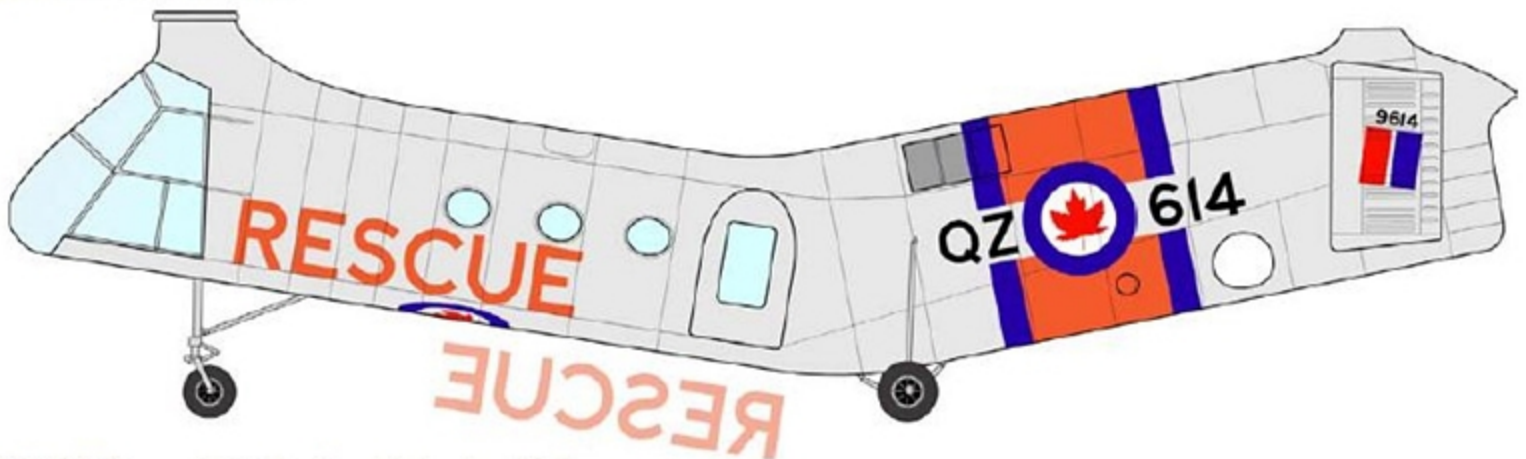
Ref: Piasecki H-21 Helicopter p132.



2. H-21B. s/n 9642, 108 Communications Flight, 1957?

This is a H-21B; note the five windows and square door this side. Bs were marked differently than As. The rear fuselage roundel was aligned with the forward fuselage as was the last three. On the starboard side, the roundel is placed further back, and the last three are also to the right of the roundel. There was a roundel on the top of the fuselage, but not on the bottom. The fin flash is aligned with the tail, which more or less is parallel to the ground. There were no RESCUE markings but the fuselage had smaller AIR TRANSPORT COMMAND under the windows.

Ref: Piasecki H-21 Helicopter p134-136.



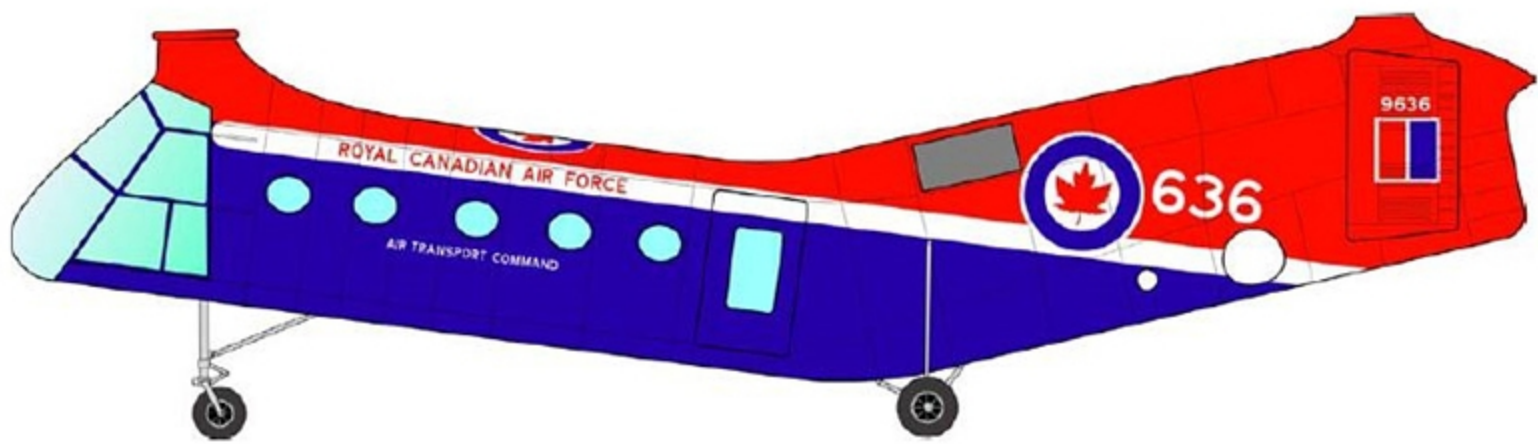
3. H-21A. s/n 9614, 107 Rescue Unit, Northern Labrador, 195?

This may be a unique scheme; I have only seen one very small photo which supports it. As for the delivery scheme, except the rear fuselage is banded with a blue-dayglo-blue band behind the roundel, and the squadron code letters (QZ) are also included. The large RESCUE is evidently not black, and dayglo is an educated guess.

Ref: National Aviation Museum photograph no. 13331.

Canadian H-21 variants

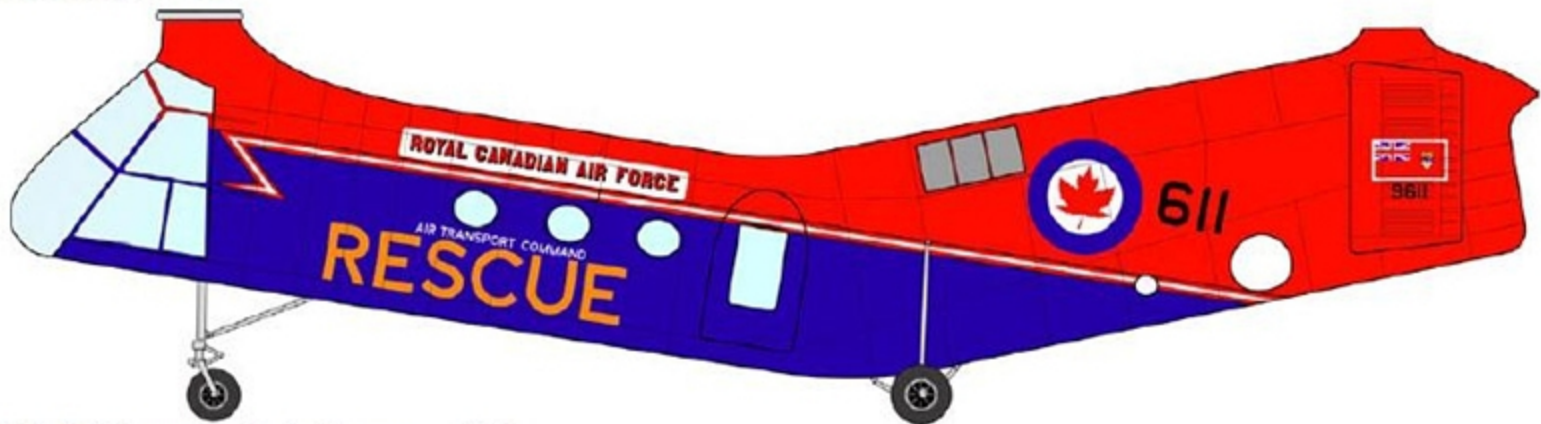
Externally, the H-21A had 3 windows on the port side and a round-topped cargo door. The H-21B had 5 windows and a rectangular cargo door. Towards the end of their lives, the ex-civilian H44As and some of the H-21Bs were rebuilt to civilian H44B standards. As far as I could tell, none of the H-21As were upgraded. The main external differences were the removal of the first window aft of the cockpit on the port side, which was replaced with a larger escape hatch, and the use of the larger tailplanes. New-build H44Bs had larger windows, vertical oblongs rather than horizontal ellipses, but none of the rebuilt aircraft changed to include this feature.



4. H-21B. s/n 9636, Mid Canada Line support, 1958

The second major variation of the paint scheme, with red 509-102 (FS 11310) over blue 502-103 (FS 15065) with a white cheatline. The words ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE are in red (not shadow lettering) on the cheatline. The last three is now white as is the AIR TRANSPORT COMMAND on the side, and the tail serial number is white.

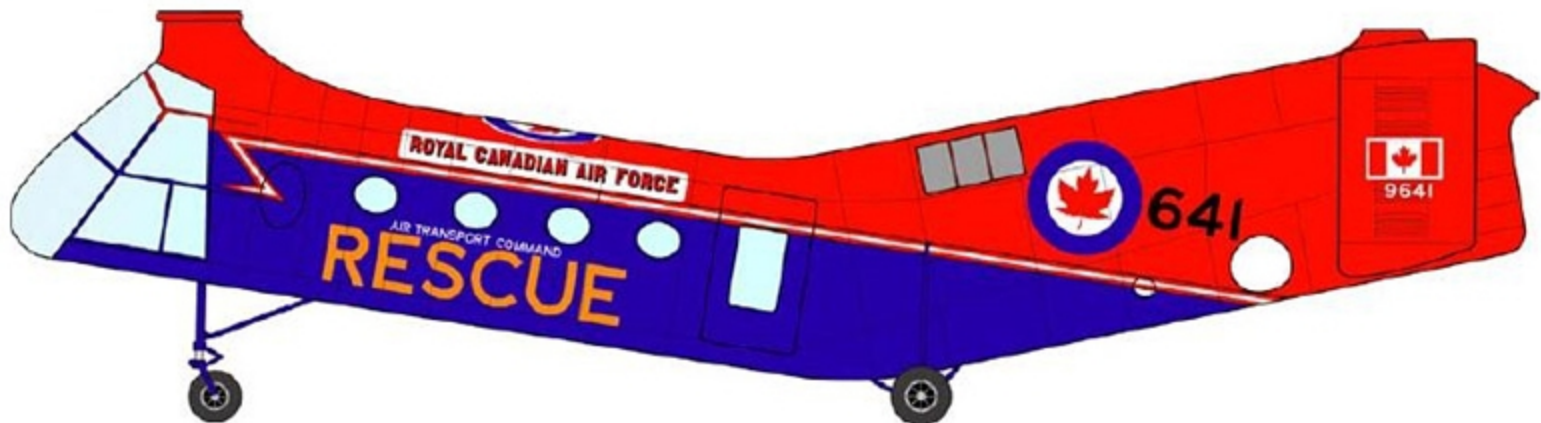
Ref: Piasecki H-21 Helicopter p135.



5. H-21A. s/n 9611, 121 Composite Unit, Vancouver, 1962

This shows the final paint scheme although there were still marking variations to come. The red and blue were now separated by a RCAF lightning flash. Above this on a white background is ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE in shadow lettering. The fin flash has now been replaced with the Red Ensign, and the tail serial numbers are black again.

Ref: Piasecki H-21 Helicopter p137.



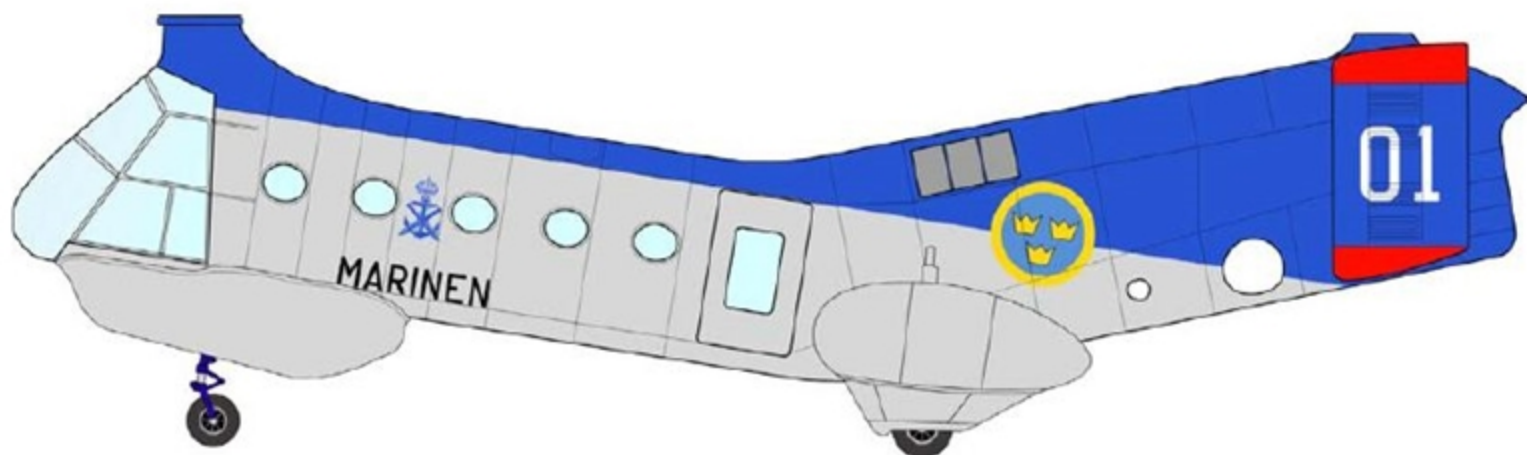
6. H-21B. s/n 9641, 1965+

This is one of the H-21Bs returned to service from Mid Canada Line support, rebuilt to H44B standard (note the blanked-off forward window) and used for SAR. It has the same paint scheme as 611 but the Red Ensign has now been replaced with the new Canadian flag on the tail. Note that this machine has the larger civilian (H44 style) tailplanes typically fitted to rebuilt H-21Bs

Ref: Piasecki H-21 Helicopter p138.

Modelling the H-21 in 1/48

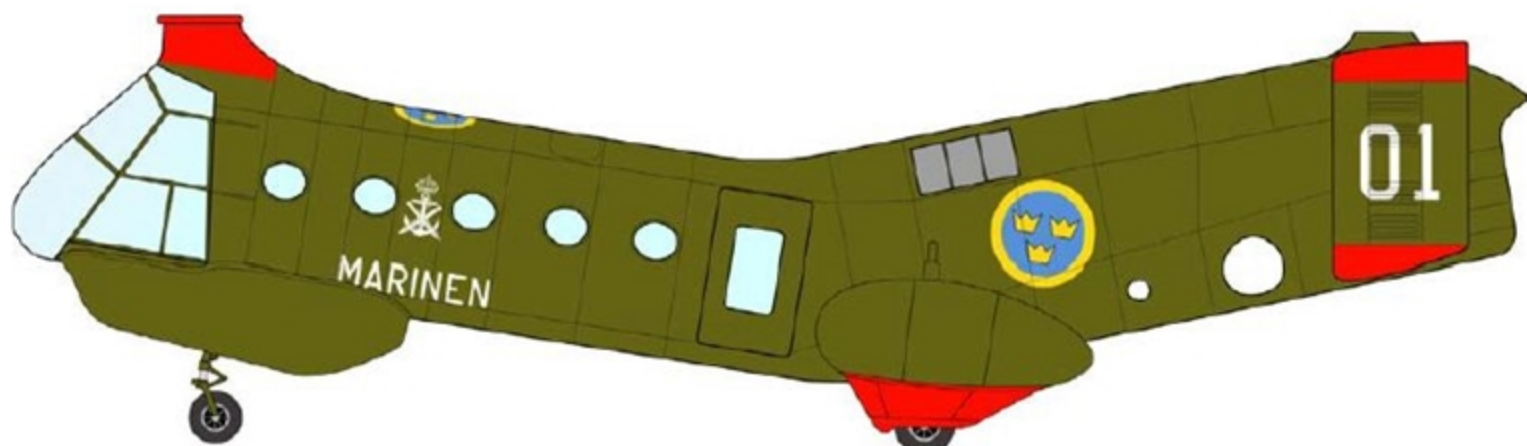
The Special Hobby H-21 kit is the third in this scale (Aurora and FM) and is the only one really worth considering. It is well detailed and fairly accurate. It also comes with optional tailplanes which come in handy for some of the options on this sheet. After some careful comparison with structural drawings, it appears the shape of the fuselage is a bit off in the aft end, being slightly short and about 1/8" (3mm) too shallow aft of the landing gear. It's subtle, and it looks OK, but you will notice that fuselage stripes which when aligned with the windows, pass through the round engine vent on the real aircraft pass below it on the model. To be accurate, the rear cargo door should be moved 5/32" (4mm) further aft, but it doesn't look out of place where it is, so I wouldn't recommend moving it. The rotor blades are noticeably too small in chord; the real aircraft blades (wood or metal) were 18" in chord, while the kit ones are about 11". If this bothers you, replacement blades are available from Belcher Bits as BB28 (wood) or BB29 (metal). Coming soon from Belcher Bits will be the flotation landing gear.



7. HKP-1. s/n 101, 1959

This is the first colour scheme for the Swedish navy HKP-1s. Bright medium blue (to me eye, similar to FS 15180) over painted aluminum. The larger civilian-style tailplanes are blue with red tips. Tail number (01) is in white. A blue naval badge is located on the fuselage sides, with the words MARINEN in black below. References state that rotor blades are olive green above, black below.

Ref: Piasecki H-21 Helicopter p142.



8. HKP-1. s/n 101, 1964

The same machine a few years later. The marking layout remains the same but the colours have changed. Now the machines are overall olive green, with red tips to the tailplanes, main gear fairings and above the cockpit.

Ref: Piasecki H-21 Helicopter p142.

Swedish Scheme 7

RCAF 18" numbers

RCAF Scheme 4

RCAF Schemes 5,6



French Scheme 9

Do not use

Swedish Scheme 8

HKP Tail numbers

RCAF Scheme 4
Paint white stripe, then apply these decals with flat side just overlapping the stripe. Roundel applies over this when dry.

