

The Bell UH-1B Iroquois in Norwegian service

The Bell UH-1B Iroquois was introduced to the Royal Norwegian Air Force in 1963 when four aircraft were delivered through the Mutual Defense Assistance Program. These were assigned to 339 Squadron at Bardufoss, which previously had operated North American F-86K Sabre fighter jets. Four more aircraft were received in 1965, and another four in 1966, also these went to 339 Sqn., as well as a modified Bell 204B in 1967. In addition to the aircraft delivered through MDAP, Norway acquired 24 aircraft between 1967 and 1976. The aircraft were spread among 339, 719 and 720 Squadrons. Norway also provided a helicopter flight in Lebanon supporting the UN peace keeping force in 1978-79. The UH-1B was retired from the RNoAF in 1991, being replaced by the Bell 412SP.

Variant notes

Most RNoAF UH-1Bs were of the «standard» variant. There were however some airframes with alternative configurations.

- Four aircraft (65-12853/4/5/6) were "long range" and fitted with 242 US gal fuel tanks, instead of the standard 164 US gal. These had the fuel cap on the left-hand side of the fuselage instead of the standard right-hand side. These aircraft did not have the double antennas on the nose.
- Several aircraft (possibly 11 or more) were from 1970 and onwards retrofitted with a "twisted" tail fin. It had broader chord than the standard UH-1B tail fin, and also had the tail light installed on either side of the rear tail boom instead of the trailing edge of the fin.
- One aircraft (66-14420) had long 48 ft main rotor blades (as opposed to the standard 44 ft length rotor) and thus also had a longer tail. It was originally built as a civil Bell 204 B. It had the fuel cap on the left-hand side of the fuselage. The tail light was as for the "twisted-finned" aircraft. It did not have the double antennas on the nose, but had two pitot tubes, one on either side on the nose. This aircraft was delivered with a stepping board on either side, beneath the cabin doors, which was removed after a couple of months. The rotor was eventually replaced with a standard length rotor, hence also retrofitted with a standard length tail boom.

The emergency beacon transmitter (the red disk on the starboard side) was installed from the 1976.

Colour notes

The aircraft were delivered in standard US Army colour for assault helicopters, Olive Drab FS 24087. Some airframes were however very dark. From the early 1970s they were repainted in a new scheme consisting of Olive Drab uppersides and Grey undersides. The paint was local manufactured. The green was specified as Olive Green Field Colour OGF 70, matching FS 34098 (a bit lighter than the original colour). The grey was Grey Field colour GF 72, matching FS 36251. This colour was eventually superseded by GF 70, matching FS 30318.

Upon delivery the general colours for the main rotor blades were Olive Drab FS 24201 on the upper surfaces and flat black on the undersides, with the last 6" of the blade being yellow (FS 33538). The tail rotor blades were generally black, with different styles of high visibility colours.

In the late 1980s, three UH-1Bs from 720 Squadron were used in trials to evaluate new camouflage colours for the Bell 412SP.

Markings notes

Up until 1972, RNoAF aircraft carried registrations consisting of a two-letter squadron code and a single individual letter. In this period the UH-1Bs had a white surrounding to the roundels. There seems to have been roundels on the tail boom only, not on the fuselage top. In September 1972 new directions came for registrations. There should only be a three-digit number on the fin (in some cases four digits). A roundel was applied to the fuselage top. There were no surrounding to the roundels.

The decal sheet contains some alternative stencilling markings, not applicable for the aircraft depicted on the instruction sheet.

Modelling notes

The best model kit of the Bell UH-1B in 1/72 scale is probably the Italeri kit which was released 1994. It has since been reboxed several times. It is configured as a "standard" UH-1B type. One problem with the kit is that the rotor length scales out to just over 40 ft, while the correct length should be 44 ft. Also, the Italeri rotors lack trim tabs on their trailing edges. Another model kit of the UH-1B was released by Hobby Boss in 2008.

The Norwegian UH-1Bs were fitted with locally manufactured snow shoes. An etched set in 1/72 scale was offered by Whirlybird, but has long time been out of production.

Decal application

The decals have a very thin carrier film and need to be handled with care. Individual decals should be cut out and soaked for a few seconds in lukewarm water. Slide the decal from the paper over to the model's surface without wrinkling. Avoid moving the decal excessively to avoid tearing the film and washing off the adhesive. The carrier film might at first seem rigid and difficult to lay down over complex surfaces, but using decal solutions like Micro Set and Micro Sol will make them snuggle down over detail and make them look painted on when completely dry. For best results, decals should always be applied to a gloss surface.

Thanks

Thanks to Dag Roger Stangeland, Jon Arne Bergseth and Per Einar Jansen for sharing their knowledge on Norwegian UH-1Bs.

Front page:

UH-1B, 63-12855 / XJ-C. 719 Sqn., Bodø 1967. Note black step-markings on fuselage and walkway line on fuselage top.

UH-1B, 61-0699 / 699. 720 Sqn., Rygge 1986. Winter camouflage on tail. Broad chord twisted fin.

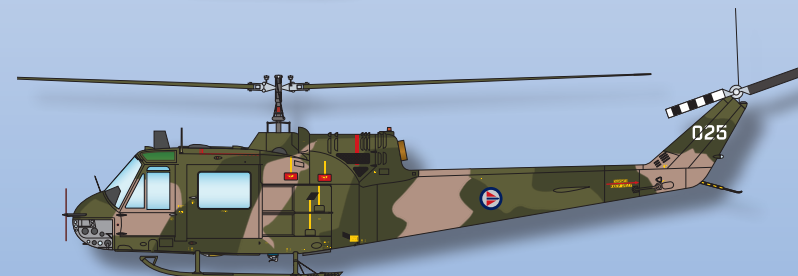
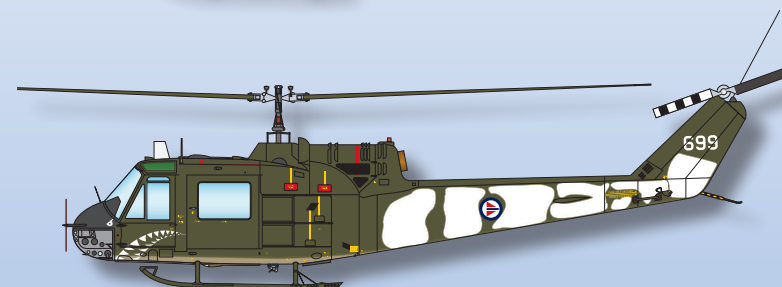
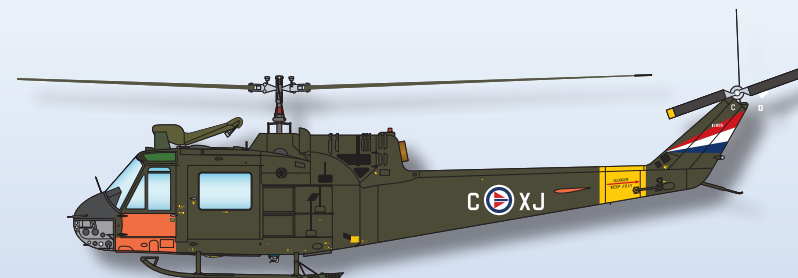
UH-1B, 62-2025 / 025. 720 Sqn. Rygge 1989. Camouflage trials aircraft.

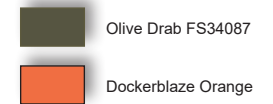
72-158

Vingtor

DECALS

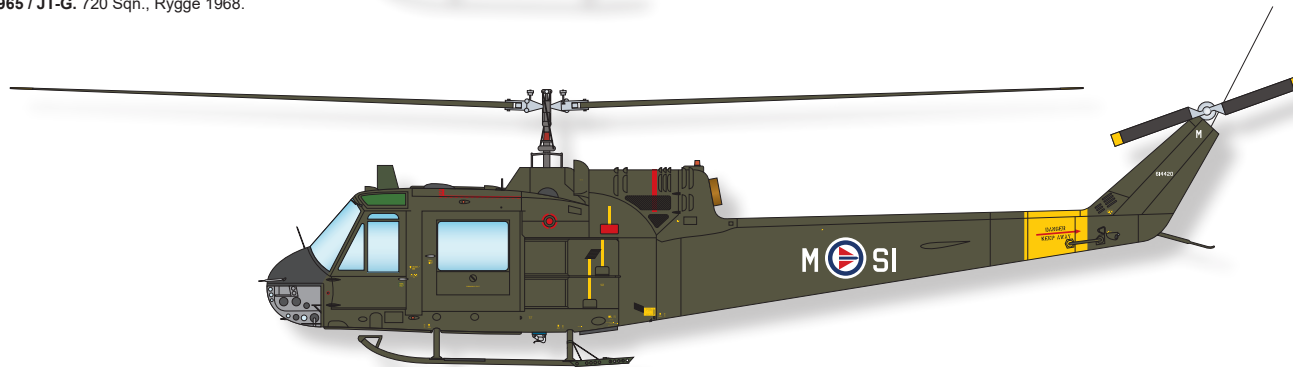
Bell UH-1B Iroquois RNoAF



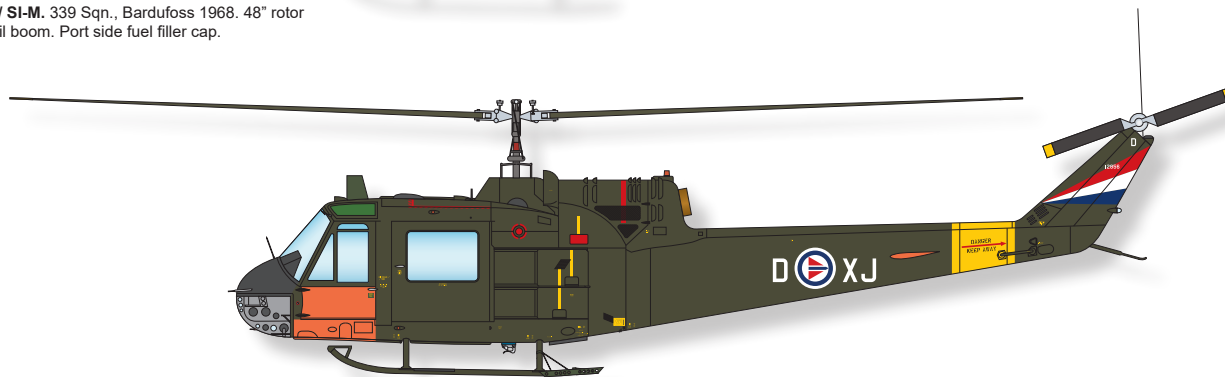


UH-1B, 64-13965 / JT-G. 720 Sqn., Rygge 1968.

There should be no roundel on the fuselage top for the aircraft on this page.



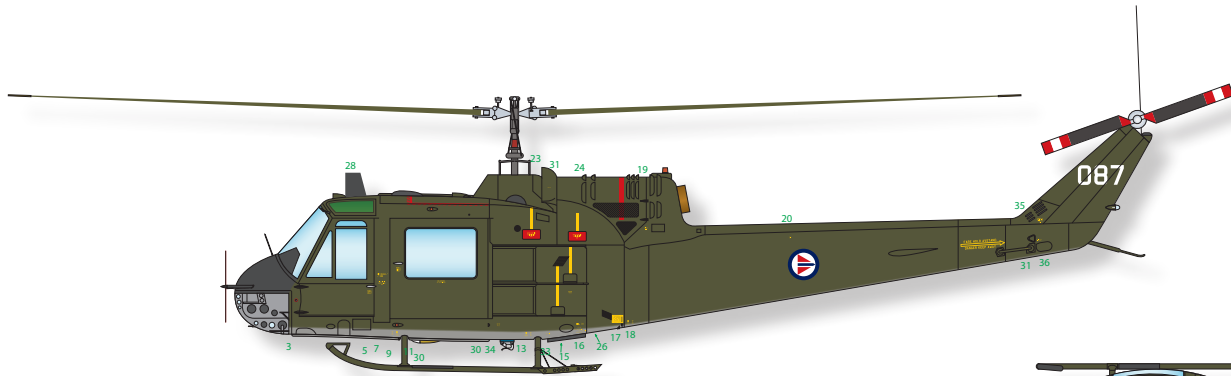
UH-1B, 66-14420 / SI-M. 339 Sqn., Bardufoss 1968. 48" rotor blades and long tail boom. Port side fuel filler cap.



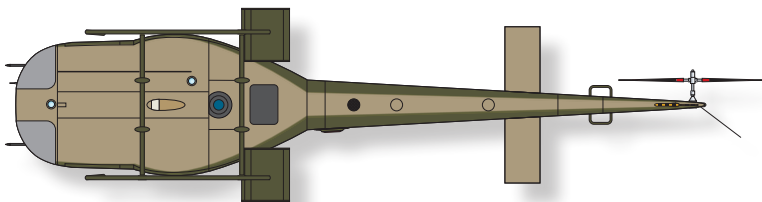
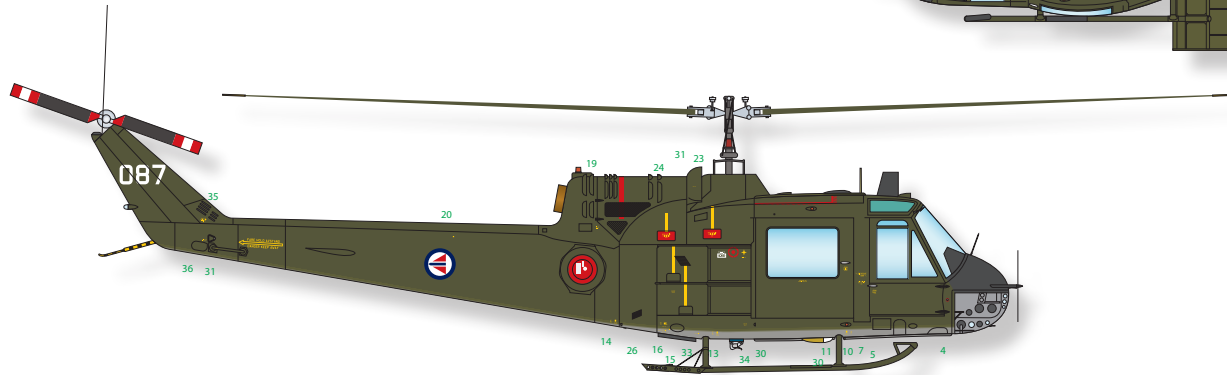
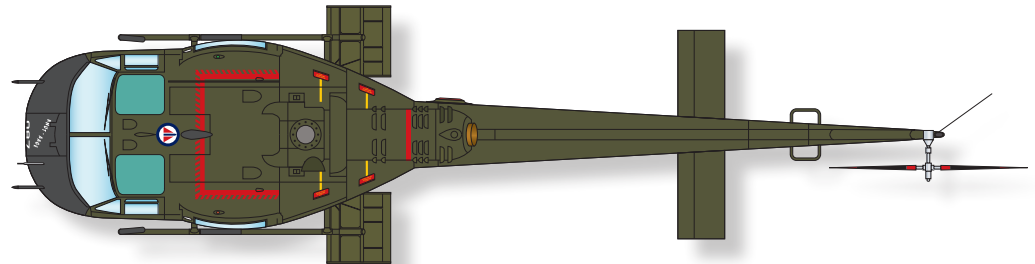
UH-1B, 63-12856 / XJ-D. 719 Sqn., Bodø 1987. Port side fuel filler cap.



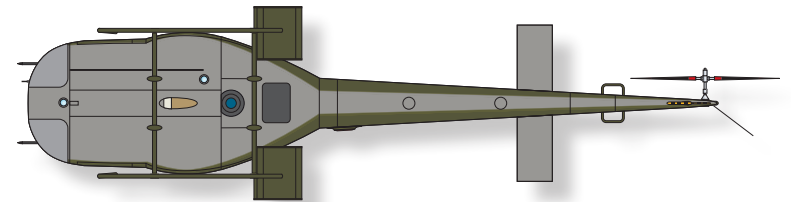
-  Olive Green Field Colour
OGF 70 (FS 24098)
-  Grey Field Colour
GF 72 (FS 36251)
-  Grey Field Colour
GF 70 (FS 30318)

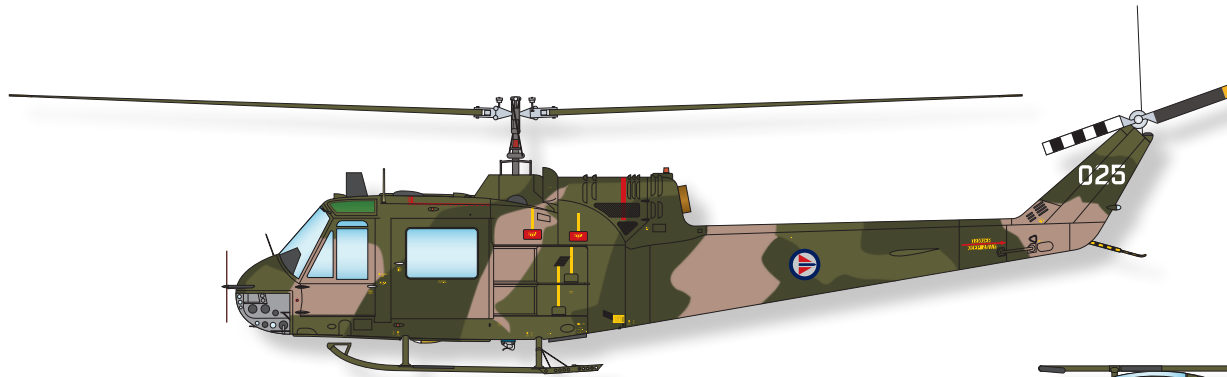


UH-1B, 63-13087 / 087 "Knut-Aage". 339 Sqn., Bardufoss 1980.

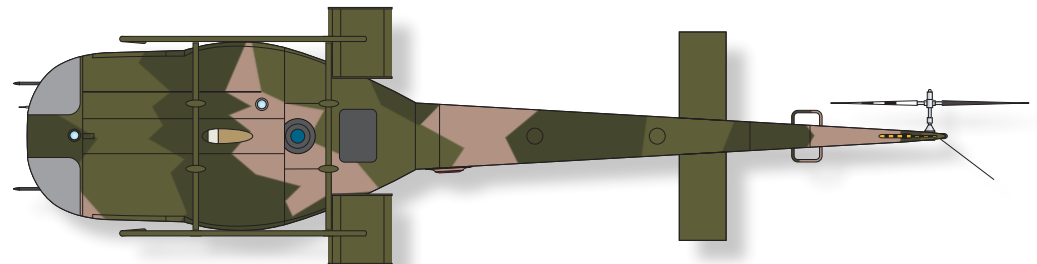
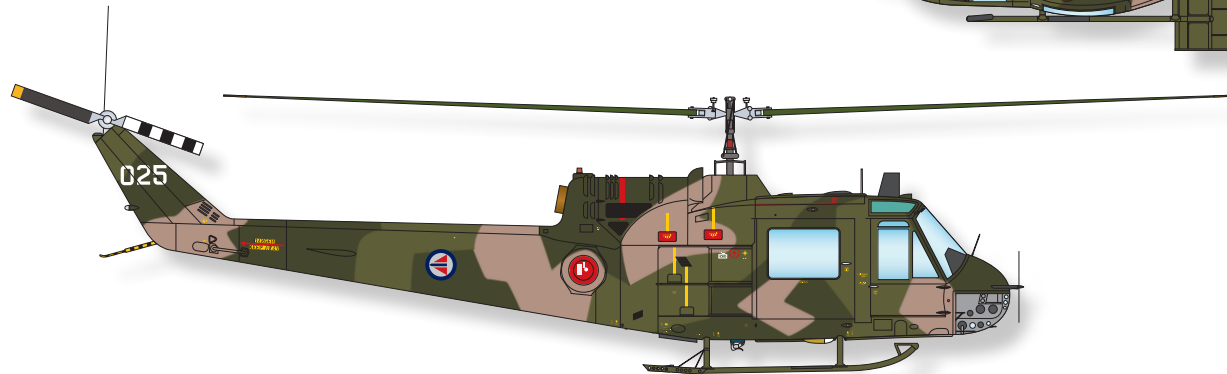
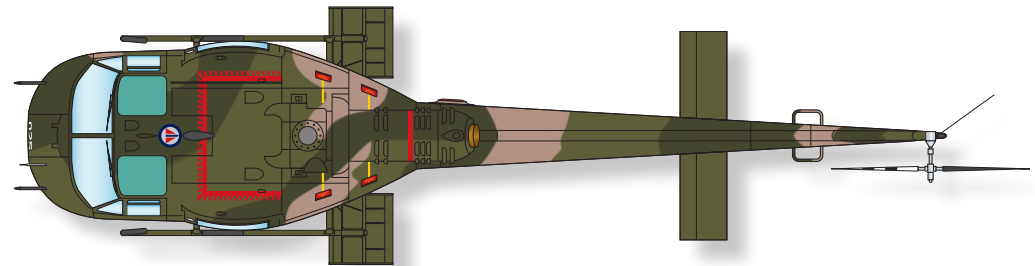


Later underside with Grey Field Colour GF 70.





UH-1B, 62-2025 / 025. 720 Sqn, Rygge 1989. Camouflage trials aircraft. Note roundels with grey background.



- Olive Green Field Colour
OGF 70 (FS24089)
- Olive Green Field Colour
OGF 70 (FS24098)
- Dark Green
(possibly FS34979)
- Grey Field Colour
GF 70 (FS30318)