

# Westland Scout AH1 – XT626/Q (G-CIBW)



The Westland Scout was developed from the Saunders-Roe P531 and the British Army was immediately interested in it as a light battlefield helicopter. The pre-production and development variant flew in 1960 and proved so successful that only one month later, the Army placed its initial order for the Scout AH1. This version differed from earlier models by having powered controls. The type entered service with the Army Air Corps (AAC) in 1963 as a replacement for the Skeeter. The Scout offered greater reliability, substantially improved payload and operating superiority. Since 1963, these have been standard multi-role tactical aircraft with skid landing gear, a six-seat cabin and the Nimbus 101 or 102 turboshaft engine. External loads included two litters in side-mounted pods, an underslung capability and in the anti-tank role the aircraft carried 4 x SS-11 wire-guided missiles.

## The Scout AH1 in Army Service

The Scout proved operational versatility in close-support, liaison, light freight, medivac, communication, reconnaissance, search and rescue and training roles. It served with distinction in Borneo, during the Indonesia-Malaysia confrontation, the Aden emergency, Oman, Rhodesia, Northern Ireland, the South Atlantic and in the British Army Over the Rhine. It was used by the Royal Navy (Wasp variant), Royal Australian Navy (Wasp variant), Royal Jordanian Army, South African Air Force, Bahrain State Police and the Kenyan and Uganda Police Air Wings. XT626 served from 1963 until the late 1980s, seeing out its service with the Territorial Army at Netheravon. She has continued to fly with the Historic Army Aircraft Flight at Middle Wallop since then.

- **Construction Number:** F9632
- **Crew:** Pilot and up to four passengers
- **Army Role-** Close-support, liaison, light freight, medivac, communication, reconnaissance, search and rescue and training roles
- **Engine Manufacturer and Model:** Rolls-Royce Nimbus MK 10501, Turboshaft, 685 shp (511 kW) derated from 1,050 shp
- **Dimensions:** **Span:** 30 ft 4 in (9.25 m), **Height:** 8 ft 11 in (2.72 m), **Rotor:** 32 ft 3 in (9.83 m)
- **Speed:** 131 mph (211 km/h, 114 kts)
- **Ceiling:** 17,700 ft (5,400 m)
- **Range:** 315 mi (507 km, 274 nm)
- **All Up Weight:** 5,300 lb (2,404 kg)

## **AIRCRAFT HISTORICAL TIMELINE**

1964 – Built at Westland Helicopters, Yeovil, Somerset.

30/10/1974 - Westland Trials Flight, noted at Wroughton, undergoing modifications to carry SS.11 missiles.

3/1982 - 656 Squadron (Sqn) Wroughton.

29/7/2007 - 666 Sqn AAC badge, in 50th anniversary marks on the Beach Gardens at Weston-super-Mare for Helidays 2007.

11/10/2013 – Registered to the Ministry of Defence (MOD), Army Historic Aircraft Flight AAC, Middle Wallop.

27/3/2015 – Registered to the Historic Aircraft Flight Trust, Middle Wallop.

## **OTHER AIRWORTHY SCOUT AH1**

Although there are about 10 Scouts on the UK register, as of August 2024 there are three airworthy examples in the United Kingdom.

Apparently, there is one airworthy Scout (ZS-HAS) in South Africa.