

Fokker F27 “Friendship”

The Hickory Aviation Museum’s F-27 Side Number N705FE was a Mountain Air Cargo aircraft donated by FedEx. It was flown in by Chris Knollmeyer on 30 January 2008, performing a low & high speed pass prior to arrival. Coordinated by Jeff Wofford.



Fokker F-27, N705FE, the only civilian aircraft on the Aviation Museum’s Flight Line!

Role	Airliner Aircraft
National origin	Netherlands
Manufacturer	Fokker
First flight	24 November 1955
Introduction	19 November 1958
Status	Out of Production; in active service
Primary users	Netherlands, United States, Panama, Turkey, New Zealand, Sudan, Bangladesh, Argentina, Pakistan, Icelandic Coast Guard, numerous others
Produced	1955–1987
Number built	586
Propulsion	2 × Rolls-Royce Dart Mk.532-7 two-stage centrifugal compressor turboprop
Unit cost	\$17.5 Million

Design of the Fokker F27 started in the 1950s as a replacement to the successful Douglas DC-3 airliner. The manufacturer evaluated a number of different configurations before finally deciding on a high-wing twin Rolls-Royce Dart engine layout with a pressurized cabin for 28 passengers.

The first prototype, registered PH-NIV, first flew on 24 November 1955. The second prototype and initial production machines were 0.9 m (3 ft) longer, addressing the first aircraft's slightly tail-heavy handling and also providing space for four more passengers, bringing the total to 32. These aircraft also used the more powerful Dart Mk 528 engine.

<p>General characteristics</p> <p>Crew: 2 or 3</p> <p>Capacity: 48-56 passengers</p> <p>Length: 25.06 m (82 ft 3 in)</p> <p>Wingspan: 29 m (95 ft 2 in)</p> <p>Height: 8.72 m (28 ft 7 in)</p> <p>Wing area: 70 m² (750 sq ft)</p>	<p>Performance</p> <p>Cruising speed: 460 km/h (286 mph; 248 kn)</p> <p>Range: 2,600 km (1,616 mi; 1,404 nmi)</p> <p>Rate of climb: 7.37 m/s (1,451 ft/min)</p> <p>Empty weight: 11,204 kg (24,701 lb)</p> <p>Max takeoff weight: 19,773 kg (43,592 lb)</p>
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Design and Development

In 1956, Fokker signed a licensing deal with the US aircraft manufacturer Fairchild for the latter to construct the F27 in the USA. The first U.S.-built aircraft flew on April 12, 1958. Fairchild also independently developed a stretched version, called the FH-227. Most sales by Fairchild were made in the North American market.

In the early 1980s, Fokker developed a successor to the Friendship, the Fokker 50. Although based on the F27-500 airframe, the Fokker 50 was virtually a new aircraft with Pratt & Whitney Canada engines and modern systems. Its general performance and passenger comfort were improved over the F27.

Operational history

The first production model, the F27-100, was delivered to Aer Lingus in November 1958. Other early Friendship customers included Braathens SAFE and Luxair in Europe; New Zealand National Airways Corporation; Trans Australia Airlines and its Australian competitors Ansett and East-West Airlines; and Turkish Airlines.

Basic price for an RDa.6 powered F27 in 1960 was £239,000. At the end of the Fokker F27's production in 1987, 586 units had been built (plus another 207 F-27s and FH-227s in the USA by Fairchild), more than any other western European civil turboprop airliner at the time.

Many aircraft have been modified from passenger service to cargo or express-package freighter roles. The last major cargo user of the F27 in the United States was FedEx Express, as cargo "feeder" aircraft. These were retired and replaced by ATR 42 and ATR 72 aircraft by the end of 2009, with the last of the aircraft being donated to the Hickory Aviation Museum.

As of July 2010 a total of 65 F27s were in commercial service with almost 30 different airlines. By July 2013 only 25 Friendships remained in service, operated by 13 different airlines; most were F27-500s, with two -400s and a solitary -600 series aircraft in service. Italian cargo airline MiniLiner operated six F27s and Air Panama had four in its fleet. The United States Army Parachute Team has used a C-31A Troopship for its skydiving exhibitions since 1985.

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