**Netherlands Air Force**

The Dutch Air Force has the single focus of defending Western European airspace and is tied directly into the operations of 2nd Allied Tactical Air Force (2 ATAF). In addition to supporting elements, there are two key contributors to that role: The F-16; and Ground Based Air Defence (GBAD) in the form of Patriot and I-Hawk missile units.



**F-16**

As one of the four European nations using the F-16 the Netherlands was key to the development of the Fokker assembly plant in Holland. In total 213 F-16A/B were acquired (177 single seat ‘A’ models, and 58 double seat ‘B’ versions). The first was delivered in 1979 and the last in 1992. Dutch F-16s were modified to operate the Orpheus Reconnaissance Pod, currently 306 ‘Hawk’ Squadron is equipped for this task. As part of NATO’s AMF (ACE Mobile Force) plan to defend the northern flank, 322 ‘Polly Parrot’ Squadron was tasked with rapidly deploying to Norway in times of emergency.

As a result of increased tensions in the Northern Fury storyline, upgrade of the older F-16s to the MLU (Mid Life Upgrade) standard began as soon as the last production model was complete. The MLU airframes can use the Aim-120 AMRAAM air to air, and the AGM-65 Maverick air to ground missiles. Approximately 42 ‘A’ models have been upgraded to the MLU standard and equip two Squadrons based at Volkel.

In addition to a training squadron in Tucson Arizona, there is a test and evaluation (T & E) unit stationed at Volkel. Each operational squadron maintains three to five ‘B’ model twin seat versions for readiness and refresher training.

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| Sqn | Name | Location | No. | Type | Remarks |
| 306 | Hawk | Volkel | 18 | F-16A Recon | T & E |
| 311 | Eagle | Volkel | 24 | F-16A MLU |  |
| 312 | Bonzo | Volkel | 24 | F-16A MLU |  |
| 313 | Tiger | Twenthe | 24 | F-16A |  |
| 314 | Redskins | Gilze-Rijen | 24 | F-16A |  |
| 315 | Lion | Twenthe | 18 | F-16A |  |
| 316 | Falcon | Eindhoven | 24 | F-16A |  |
| 322 | Polly Parrot | Leeuwarden | 24 | F-16A |  |
| 323 | Diana | Leeuwarden | 24 | F-16A |  |

**F-5A**

Although the NF-5 was retired from service in 1992, the Netherlands Air Force maintains them in ready reserve. 105 aircraft (75 single seat and 30 double seat) are in storage ready to mobilize. It will likely only take 2-3 weeks to organize reserve pilots into new squadrons.



**KDC-10**

Historically the Dutch Air Force received its two KC-10 aerial refuelling aircraft in 1995 but the requirement was identified in 1992 and there were several delays in converting the civilian pattern DC-10 airliners to military refuelling standard. In Northern Fury, the delays were avoided and the two aircraft were delivered to 334th ‘Pegasus’ Squadron at Eindhoven in late 1993.



**C-130 Hercules**

Also at Eindhoven is 336 Squadron operating 4x C-130H in the transport role.

**Ground Based Air Defence (GBAD)**

The other element fielded by the Netherlands Air Force is GBAD. Each of the seven main airbases has an Air Defence (AD) Squadron consisting of 3x I-Hawk missile launchers, 3x Bofors 40mm L70 gun systems and local ‘Flycatcher’ radars. Additionally, there are two AD Groups with four squadrons, two each of the older I-HAWK (6 launchers per Squadron), and the newer Patriot missile systems (5 launchers per Squadron). Although only 160 Patriot missiles were purchased, a factory in the Netherlands will produce ~2000 missiles for the US so supply in an emergency should not be a problem.

I-HAWK



Patriot