

## = German aircraft carrier II =

The aircraft carrier II was a proposed conversion project for the incomplete French cruiser De Grasse . The ship was laid down in November 1938 and lay incomplete in the Arsenal de Lorient shipyard when Germany invaded France in May 1940 . In 1942 , Nazi Germany 's Kriegsmarine decided to convert the cruiser into an auxiliary aircraft carrier with a capacity for twenty @-@ three fighters and dive bombers . Work ceased in February 1943 , however , due to concerns with the ship 's design , a severe shortage of material and labor , and the threat of Allied bombing raids . The ship was eventually completed as an anti @-@ aircraft cruiser in 1956 by the French Navy .

## = = Design = =

The French cruiser De Grasse was laid down at the Arsenal de Lorient shipyard in Lorient in November 1938 . Work on the unfinished ship stopped following the German conquest of France in May 1940 . In 1942 , the Kriegsmarine considered several proposals to convert the cruiser into an auxiliary aircraft carrier . The final proposal was completed by August 1942 , but work on the conversion did not last long . By February 1943 , the project had been abandoned , for several reasons . The shipyard suffered from a shortage of labor and materials , and the design staff had significant concerns over the arrangement of the engine system . The Allies also posed a serious threat , as Lorient was well within the range of Allied bombers . The ship was eventually retaken by the French Navy after the end of the war , and launched in 1946 . She was ultimately completed in 1956 as an anti @-@ aircraft cruiser .

## = = = Characteristics = = =

The converted ship would have been 180 @. @ 4 meters ( 592 ft ) long at the waterline and 192 @. @ 5 m ( 632 ft ) long overall . She would have had a beam of 24 @. @ 4 m ( 80 ft ) and a draft of 5 @. @ 6 m ( 18 ft ) as designed . Her designed displacement would have been 11 @, @ 400 long tons ( 11 @, @ 600 t ) . The ship 's propulsion system consisted of two sets of Rateau @-@ Bretagne geared steam turbines , with steam supplied by four Indret ultra @-@ high pressure boilers . The engines were rated at 10 @, @ 000 shaft horsepower ( 7 @, @ 500 kW ) and would have provided a top speed of 32 knots ( 59 km / h ; 37 mph ) . The carrier would have had a range of 7 @, @ 000 nautical miles ( 13 @, @ 000 km ; 8 @, @ 100 mi ) at a cruising speed of 19 kn ( 35 km / h ; 22 mph ) .

As converted , the ship was to be armed with several anti @-@ aircraft guns . The heavy anti @-@ aircraft battery consisted of twelve 10 @. @ 5 cm ( 4 @. @ 1 in ) SK C / 33 guns in twin mountings . The mounts were the Dopp LC / 31 type , originally designed for earlier 8 @. @ 8 cm ( 3 @. @ 5 in ) SK C / 31 guns . The LC / 31 mounting was triaxially @-@ stabilized and capable of elevating to 80 ° . This enabled the guns to engage targets up to a ceiling of 12 @, @ 500 m ( 41 @, @ 000 ft ) . Against surface targets , the guns had a maximum range of 17 @, @ 700 m ( 58 @, @ 100 ft ) . The guns fired fixed ammunition weighing 15 @. @ 1 kg ( 33 lb ) ; the guns could fire HE and HE incendiary rounds , as well as illumination shells . Close @-@ range anti @-@ aircraft weaponry consisted of twelve 3 @. @ 7 cm ( 1 @. @ 5 in ) SK C / 30 guns and twenty @-@ four 2 cm ( 0 @. @ 79 in ) Flak 38 guns . The 3 @. @ 7 cm gun was a single @-@ shot gun , with a rate of fire of around 30 rounds per minute . At its maximum elevation of 85 ° , the gun had a ceiling of 6 @, @ 800 m ( 22 @, @ 300 ft ) . The 2 cm gun was a magazine @-@ fed automatic weapon , firing at up to 500 rounds per minute . Twenty and forty @-@ round magazines were supplied for the guns ;

The ship 's aircraft facilities consisted of a 177 @. @ 5 m ( 582 ft ) long , 24 m ( 79 ft ) wide flight deck and two elevators . Aircraft were handled in a single hangar , which was 142 m ( 466 ft ) long and 18 @. @ 6 m ( 61 ft ) wide . The ship 's air complement was to have consisted of eleven Bf 109 fighters and twelve Ju 87 Stuka dive @-@ bombers . The Bf 109 fighters were a navalized version of the " E " model , designated as Bf 109T . Their wings were longer than the land @-@ based model to allow for shorter take @-@ off . The Ju 87s were to have been the " E " variant , which was

a navalized version of the Ju 87D , and were modified for catapult launches and were equipped with arresting gear .