

= AFVG =

The AFVG ( standing for Anglo @-@ French Variable Geometry ) was a supersonic multi @-@ role combat aircraft with a variable @-@ geometry wing , being jointly developed by British Aircraft Corporation in the United Kingdom and Dassault Aviation of France . The project was cancelled in June 1967 , when the French Government withdrew from participation . BAC modified the specification to solely satisfy Royal Air Force needs , reconfiguring the design as the UKVG and sought out new partners to procure the aircraft , which ultimately emerged as the tri @-@ national consortium @-@ funded MRCA Panavia Tornado , a variable @-@ geometry wing fighter aircraft .

= = Development = =

= = = Background = = =

The AFVG project followed on from the earlier BAC P.45 design study for a variable @-@ geometry strike / trainer / fighter aircraft for the Royal Air Force ; one of a number of proposed designs to meet AST.362.

= = = Anglo @-@ French collaboration = = =

Discussions took place in 1964 between France and Great Britain on collaborative military aviation programs with Handel Davies , the co @-@ chairman of an Anglo @-@ French committee , and his French counterpart , Ingénieur @-@ General Lecamus , negotiating the launch of two new military combat aircraft . The French would take the lead role in a light ground @-@ attack / trainer , while the British assumed the leadership of a swing @-@ wing multirole fighter project .

On 17 May 1965 , after the cancellation of the BAC TSR @-@ 2 , the British and French governments signed agreements for the two joint projects ; one based on the Breguet Aviation Br.121 ECAT ( " Tactical Combat Support Trainer " ) proposal ; this would later evolve , after the cancellation of AFVG , to become the SEPECAT Jaguar . The other was the AFVG , a larger , variable @-@ geometry carrier @-@ capable fighter aircraft for the French Navy ( Aéronavale ) as well as fulfilling interceptor , tactical strike and reconnaissance roles for the Royal Air Force .

= = = Design specifications = = =

In RAF service , the AFVG was originally intended as a fighter , replacing the English Electric Lightning . However , following the RAF 's decision to procure the F @-@ 4 Phantom II instead , the AFVG 's expected role changed in 1966 to supplementing the F @-@ 111K strike aircraft in replacing the English Electric Canberra and the V bomber force .

The AFVG was to be powered by two SNECMA / Bristol Siddeley M45G turbofans , fed by Mirage @-@ style half @-@ shock cone inlets . The engine development programme contract was to be issued by the French government to a SNECMA / Bristol Siddeley joint venture company registered in France .

= = = Cancellation = = =

For Marcel Dassault , the founder of the firm that bore his name , relinquishing leadership on a major project , essentially taking a subordinate position to BAC on the AFVG threatened his company 's long @-@ term objective of becoming a premier prime contractor for combat aircraft . After less than a year , Dassault began to actively undermine the AFVG project , working on two competing " in @-@ house " projects : the variable @-@ geometry Mirage G and the Mirage F1 .

In June 1967 , the French government announced their withdrawal from the AFVG project ostensibly on grounds of cost . The unilateral French decision led to a censure debate in the House

of Commons . By 1967 when the French withdrew from the AFVG programme , the Air Ministry was faced with a dilemma stemming from the imminent prospect of cancelling the F @-@ 111K , a decision that was taken in November 1967 , to be formalized on 20 March 1968 .

= = Redesign = =

With the prospect of no operational aircraft available to fulfill the RAF 's strike role , BAC revamped the AFVG design , eliminating the carrier capabilities that were no longer necessary , into a larger , more strike @-@ oriented VG aircraft , renamed UKVG . While funding for the UKVG in the United Kingdom was seriously restricted , the government sought partners in NATO to create a common NATO strike aircraft . This eventually led to the Multi @-@ Role Combat Aircraft ( MRCA ) project , later to become the Panavia Tornado .

= = Specifications = =

Data from Project Cancelled : The Disaster of Britain 's Abandoned Aircraft Projects

General characteristics

Crew : Two

Length : 57 @. @ 19 ft ( 17 @. @ 43 m )

Wingspan : 42 @. @ 6 ft ( unswept ) ( 12 @. @ 98 m )

Height : 17 @. @ 68 ft ( 5 @. @ 39 m )

Loaded weight : 30 @, @ 000 to 50 @, @ 000 lb ( 13 @, @ 608 to 22 @, @ 680 kg )

Powerplant : 2 × SNECMA / Bristol Siddeley M45G

Performance

Maximum speed : Mach 2 @. @ 5 ( 1 @, @ 875 mph , 3 @, @ 017 km / h )

Range : 3 @, @ 500 nm ( ferry ) ( 6 @, @ 486 km )

Service ceiling : 60 @, @ 000 ft ( 18 @, @ 290 m )

Armament

2 × 30 @-@ millimetre ( 1 @. @ 2 in ) autocannon

2 @, @ 500 lb ( 1 @, @ 134 kg ) tactical nuclear weapon