

Gotha Go 242/244

Gothaer Flying Wagon

Complete 242/244 SERIES



Medium German Transporter of World War II





Go 242/244 – German Cargo Glider & Aircraft of World War II

During World War II, transport aviation played an important role for the battling parties. Transport aircraft were expensive to build and operate, and gliders were a cheaper and easier to obtain alternative. The RLM realized very early on that the Luftwaffe would need such an alternative, and shortly after the introduction of the DFS 230 light gliders, ordered a heavier transport glider. Since Gothaer Waggonfabrik A.G. had participated in the development of the DFS and already had experience in constructing such machines, the task was entrusted to this company. In 1941, GWF was awarded a contract to develop a glider that could carry 20 fully equipped soldiers or equivalent cargo. Chief designer Eng. A. Kalkert decided on an upper-wing layout with two tail beams, a wide fuselage to provide ample cargo space, and the entire rear end opened to facilitate loading. The new model was given the designation Go 242. The design soon proved to be successful and the flight characteristics proved to be better than the lighter DFS 230 glider. The Go 242 lived to see many versions, and the changes focused mainly on improving lift and ease of handling on the ground, which resulted in the development of a couple of landing gear versions.

The structure was designed from the beginning so that it would be possible to equip it with engines and convert the glider into a transport aircraft, and after successful testing, their production also began. The engined versions were designated Go 244, and soon the Gotha's distinctive silhouette with a double tail became recognizable among supplying troops in the Mediterranean and the Balkans, and especially on the Eastern Front.

This study focuses on series-produced machines and discusses the multitude of differences between series and versions of a machine. The IBG Models kit takes into account all the differences discussed and allows the construction of selected variants.

1. Go 242A-1 (combat cargo glider) – first mass production series built

- The first series-produced version
- Jettisonable wheeled undercarriage and landing skids
- 6-ton towing hook at the nose allowing single towing setting
- Originally, smooth-type wing covering between fuselage and booms installed (Fig.1A)
- On some machines stiffening of the wings added between fuselage and booms (Fig.1B)

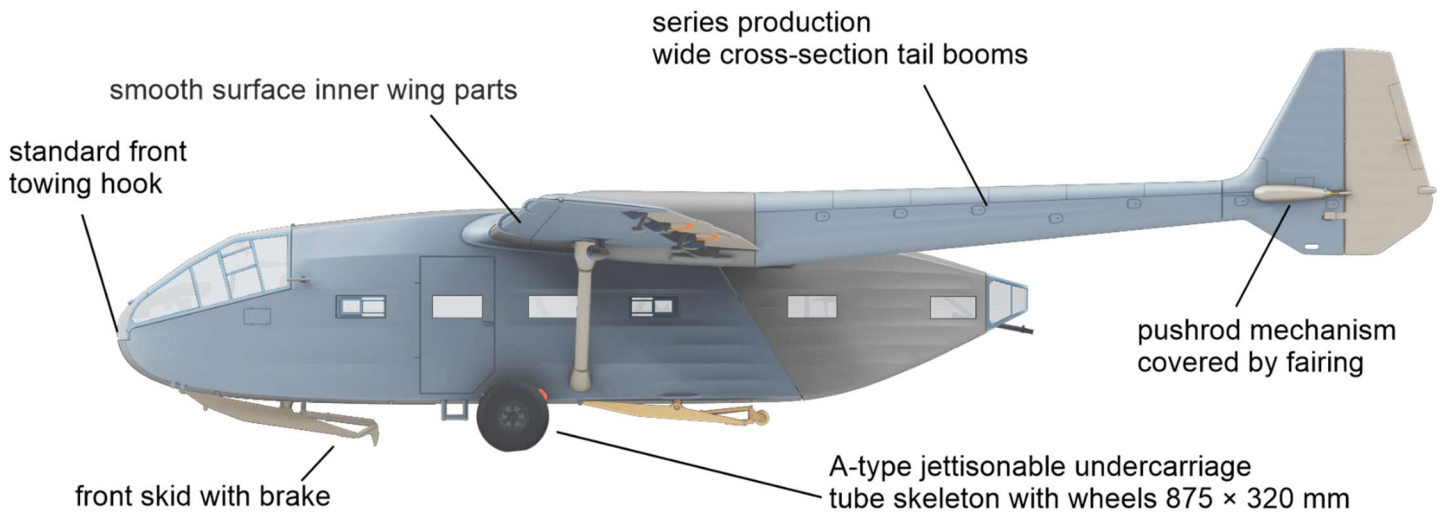


Fig. 1

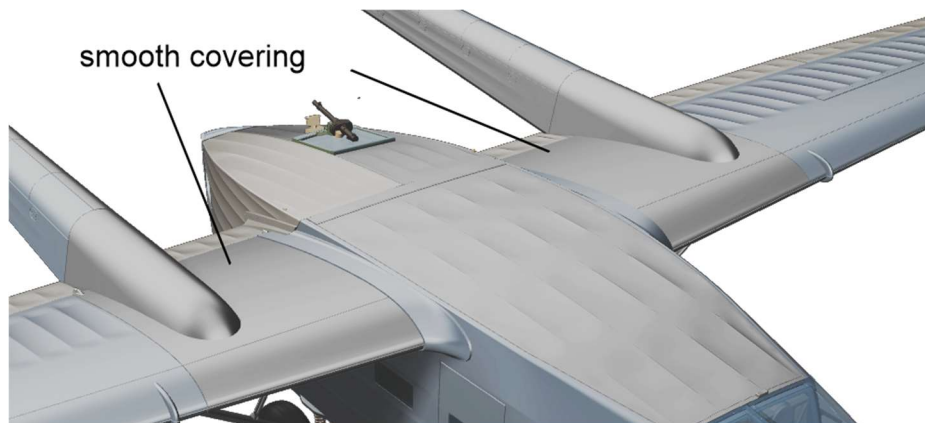


Fig. 1A

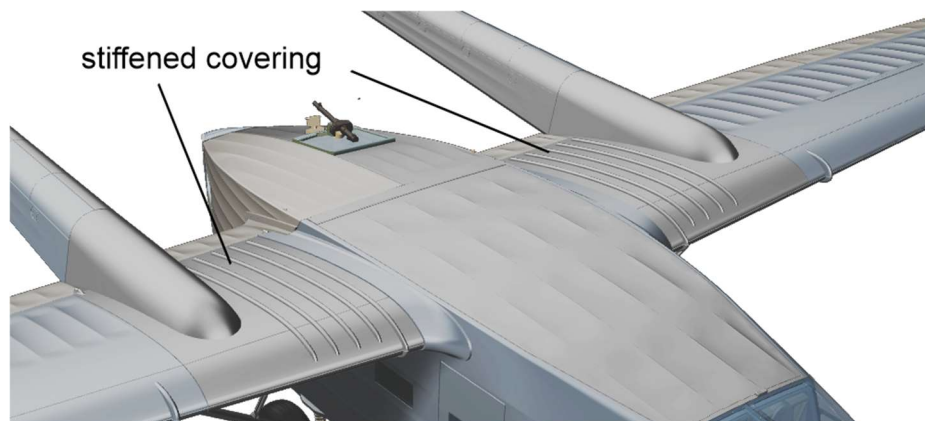


Fig. 1B

2. Go 242A-2 (combat cargo glider, improved) – gliders modified from A-1 version

- Introduced second rear hook and modified front, allowing double towing setting (one glider behind another)
- No new machines were built, instead the existing A-1 were rebuilt
- Machine gun above the second pilot seat fitted on later machines

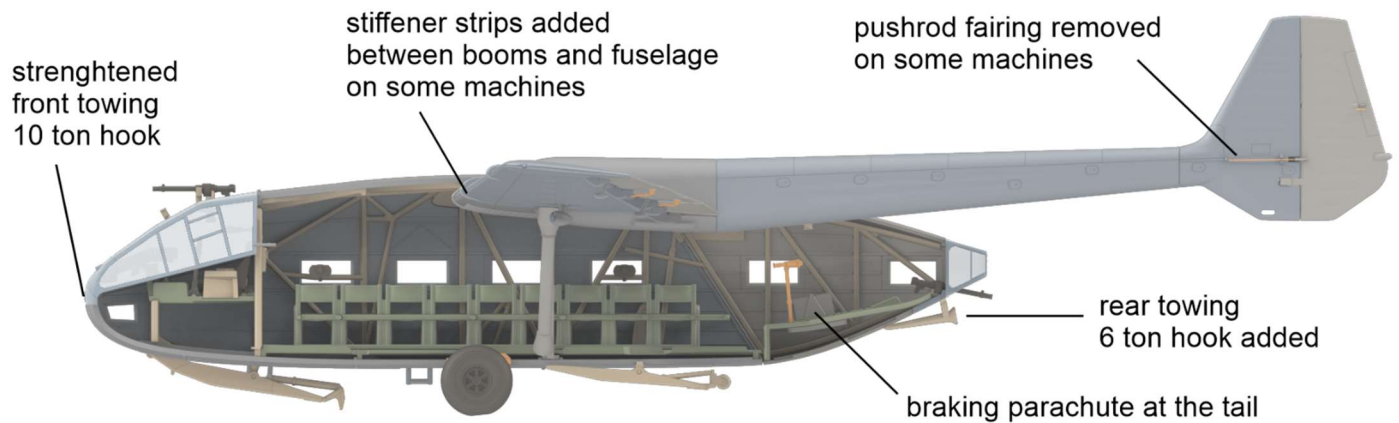


Fig. 2

3. Go 242B-1 (transport glider with fixed undercarriage) – gliders retro-converted from Go 244B-1

- Early, B-type fixed undercarriage on wheels with single brake
- Only small number built as a new glider machine, most (184) were converted from transport engined Go 244B-1
- Machine gun above the second pilot seat fitted as standard
- No rear towing hook



Fig. 3

4. Go 242B-2 (transport glider with improved fixed undercarriage) – Production series built

- Late outrigger fixed undercarriage with bigger wheels designed for engined Go 244
- After Go 244B-2 engined version cancelled, all aircraft reversed at factory to glider configuration
- Second most numerous built glider variant after A-1 version, 256 newly built
- Rear towing hook added + braking parachute at the tail
- Some machines fitted with new, internally-balanced rudders and enlarged tabs

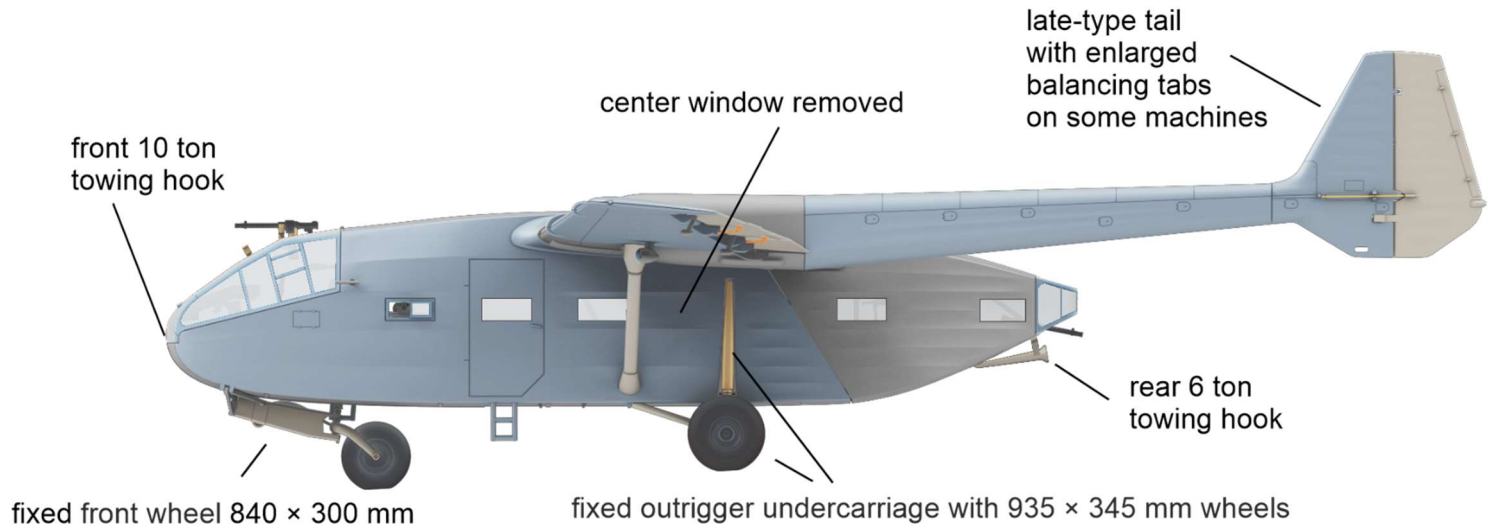


Fig. 4

5. Go 242B-3 (paratrooper transport glider) – gliders retro-converted from Go 244B-3 engined version

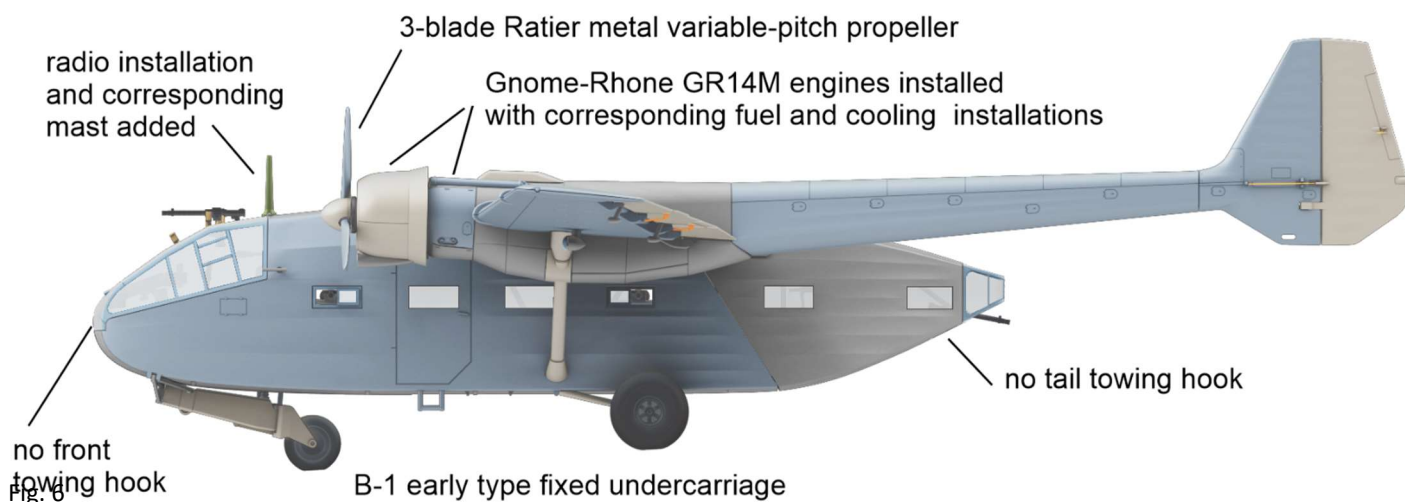
- Rear fuselage section modified with doors for paratrooper dropping (left side only)
- Three rows of seats in the cargo compartment instead two rows
- This version was not produced as new machines but was retro-converted at factory from Go 244B-3 transports
- 115 machines converted – 20 by GFW and 95 by Letov



Fig. 5

6. Go 244B-1 (transport aircraft with fixed undercarriage) – Production series built

- This is sole mass-produced variant of engined transport aircraft
- Gnome-Rhone small diameter GR 14M engines used together with metal Ratier 3-blade propellers
- 308 machines completed and later those remaining in the service, retro-configured to glider configuration



7. Go 244B-2 (transport aircraft with improved fixed undercarriage) – Production cancelled

- To emphasize the complex history of the aircraft equipped with late outrigger fixed undercarriage and bigger wheels, we note this version despite the fact that its production was cancelled
- All the machines that had been in production and were still at various stages of assembly at the factory, were converted into gliders by dismantling the installations associated with the engines. Thus, the converted machines became the Go 242B-2 version.

8. Go 244B-3 (paratrooper transport aircraft with fixed undercarriage) – Production series built

- Conversion from Go 244B-1 for paratrooper drops
- Rear fuselage section modified with doors for paratrooper dropping (left side only)
- Three rows of seats in the cargo compartment instead two rows
- 13 machines build with four-blade fixed-pitch wooden propellers
- Remaining production retro-converted at factory to glider configuration
- Some machines fitted with new, internally-balanced rudders and enlarged tabs

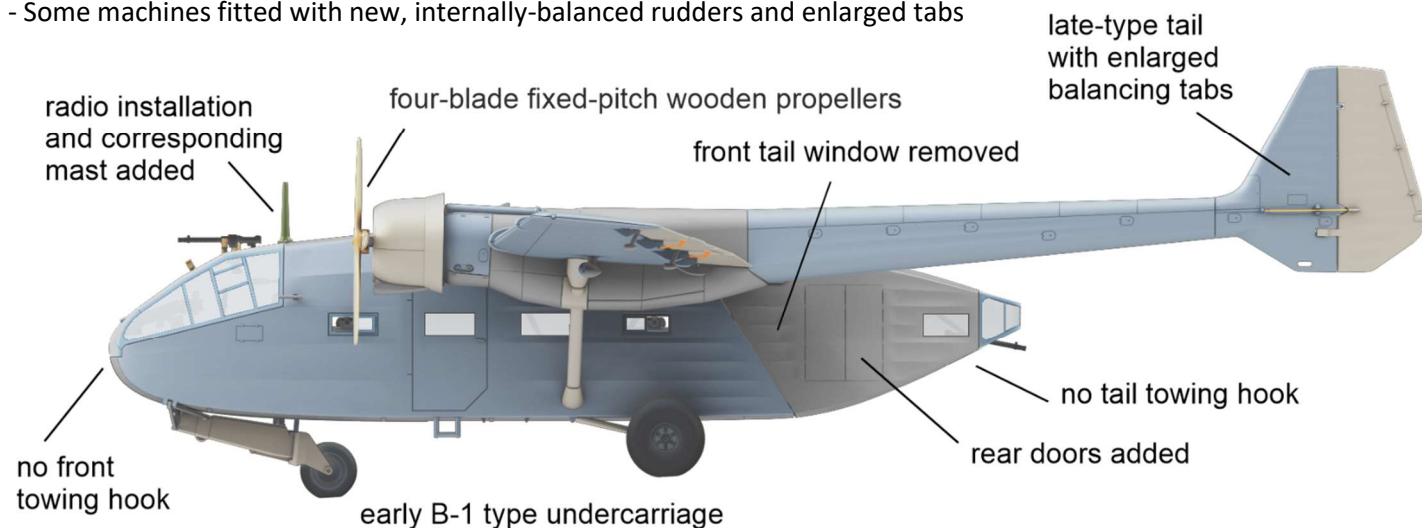


Fig. 7

9. Go 244B-5 (transport aircraft with improved fixed undercarriage) – Production series built

- Late outrigger fixed undercarriage with bigger wheels designed especially for the type Go-244
- Equipped with dual control yokes
- Remaining production retro-converted at factory to glider configuration
- Fitted with new, internally-balanced rudders and enlarged tabs

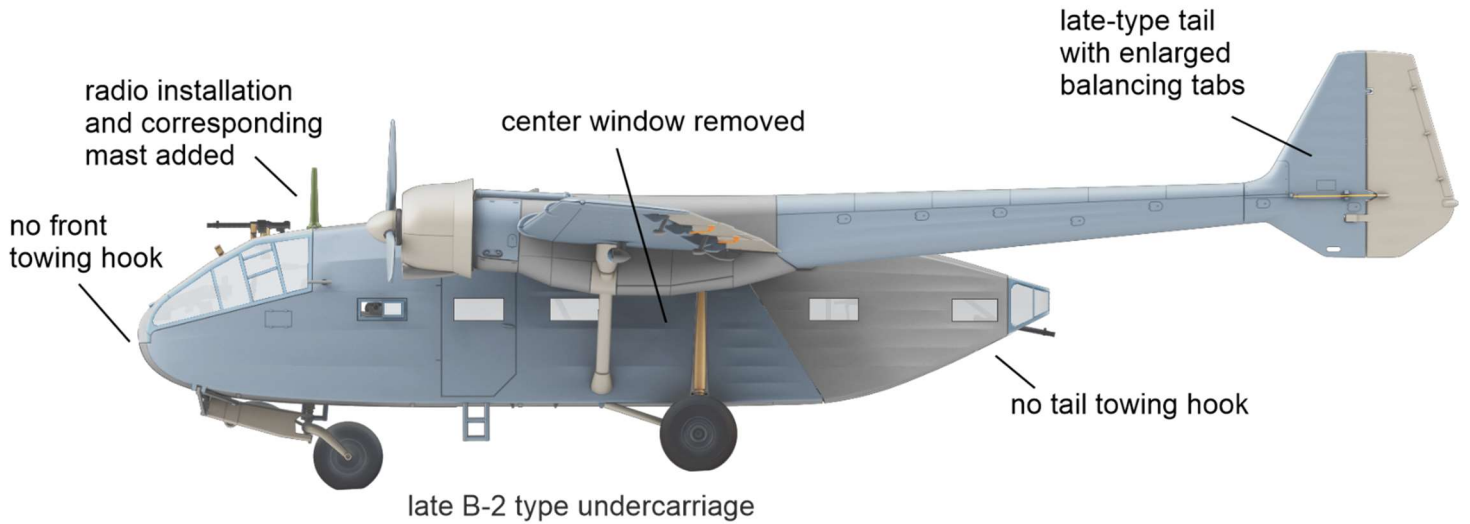


Fig. 8

10. Undercarriage comparison

jettisonable-type undercarriage

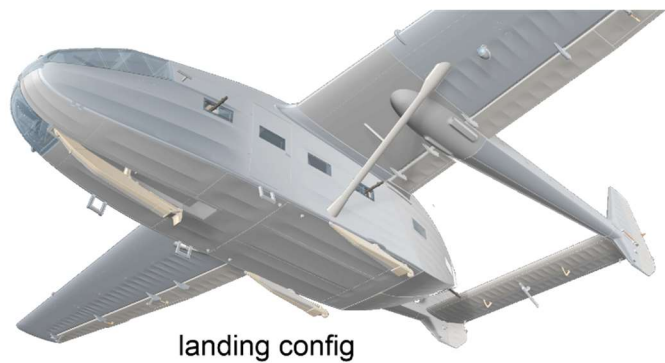
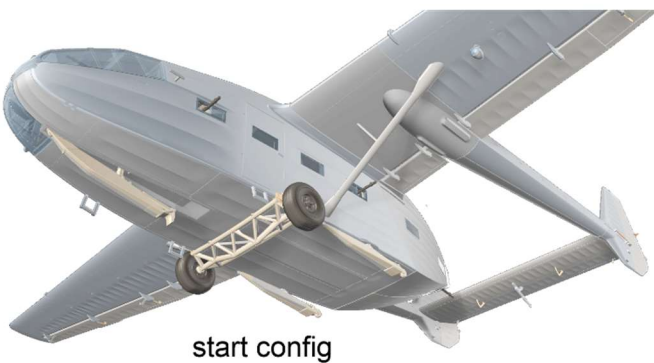


Fig. 10

fixed-type undercarriage



10. Tail comparison

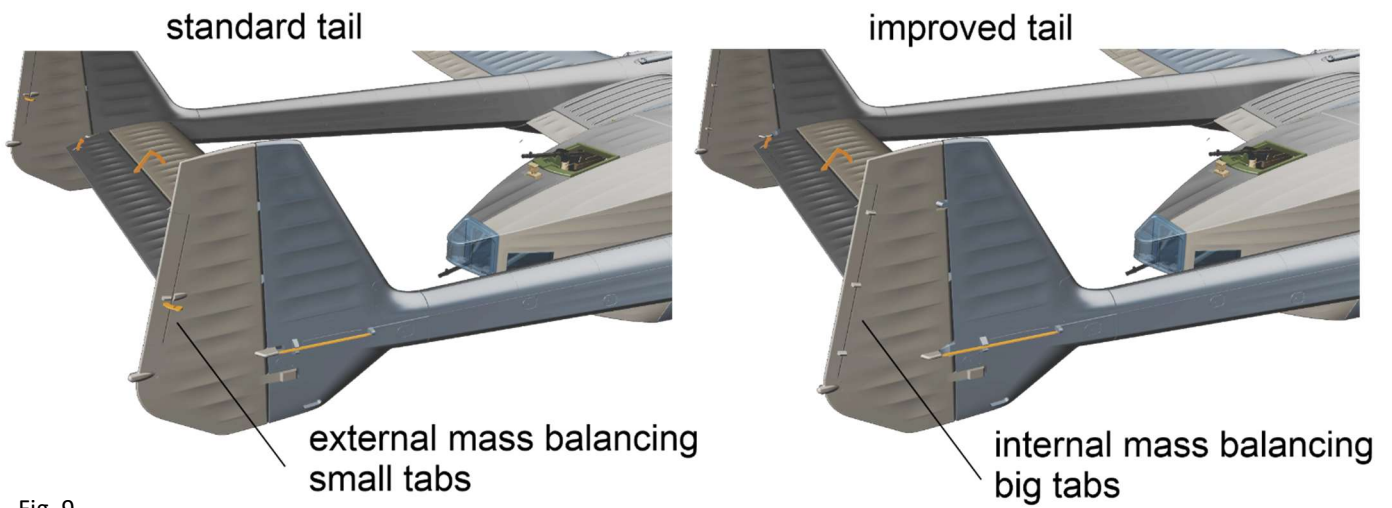
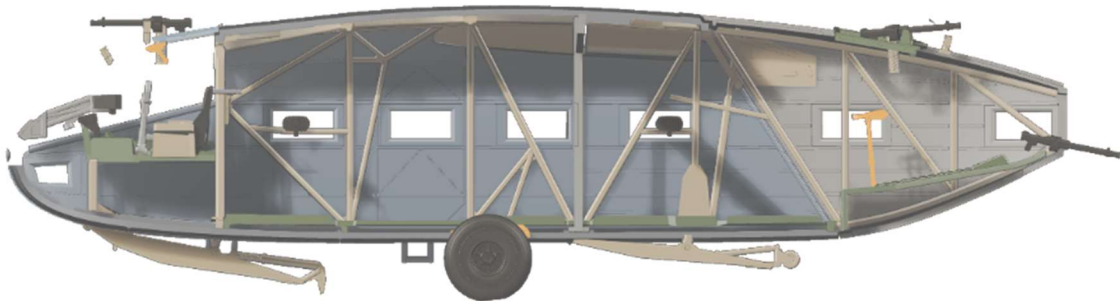
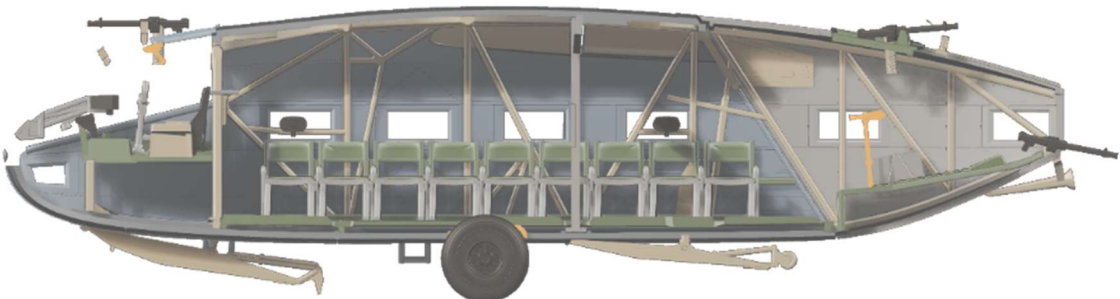


Fig. 9

cargo transport setting



trooper transport setting



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