

## INTRODUCTION

Volume 6 covers most of the craft that were not covered in the previous Volumes 1 through 5. In the main the craft, lighters and ships covered in this Volume do not fall into any significant class and without exception were craft/vessels etc NOT built specifically for the RAF or Air Ministry.

The volume has been split into three sections, the titles of which, cover the description of the craft therein.

Section ONE                      Craft acquired by the RAF from other services and other countries.

Section TWO                      Craft requisitioned and locally acquired craft during WWII

Section THREE                    RAF Auxiliaries and miscellaneous craft & ships.

Thus in section One, details will be found of craft acquired by the RAF from the likes of the US Army, US Navy, the RNLI and the Royal Navy. Apart from the latter, which made up the initial RAF Marine Craft Establishment in 1918, most of the remainder were during WWII at overseas locations. These craft pressed into RAF service due to the lack of purpose built ASR craft available long distances from the UK.

It follows that Section TWO covers the majority of craft of various types and descriptions that were transferred to RAF control from the MOWT during WWII. It includes motor boats, the first ASR craft in the English Channel in WWII, fishing vessels, lighters and even Dhows in the Middle East. The other part of this section covers similar small craft acquired in the various overseas locations by the RAF, that were NOT from another service (as in section ONE).

The large RAF auxiliaries, Air Ministry shipping and a host of really miscellaneous, but still vitally important craft in RAF service are covered in Section THREE. These include tugs, lighters, large tankers, hovercraft and weather ships - converted RN WWII escorts and frigates.

The majority of the historical information has been retrieved from the RAF records of the miscellaneous craft covered in this Volume, but also from the MOWT records themselves. Once having names and in some cases just numbers, the research continued throughout the period whilst Volumes 1 through 5 were compiled. The information then came from various sources, but a great deal of research was "concluded" after reference to collections and other notes deposited at the RAF Museum Reserve Collection site at RAF Stafford - all of which is maintained by Ken Hunter. Photographic evidence was very hard to come by - like hens teeth - as they say, and some of those in the Volume are, I can assure you, very rare - not what you normally associate with any book or work on RAF ASR craft!.

The sourcing of drawings for this Volume was extremely difficult - I will say no more.