

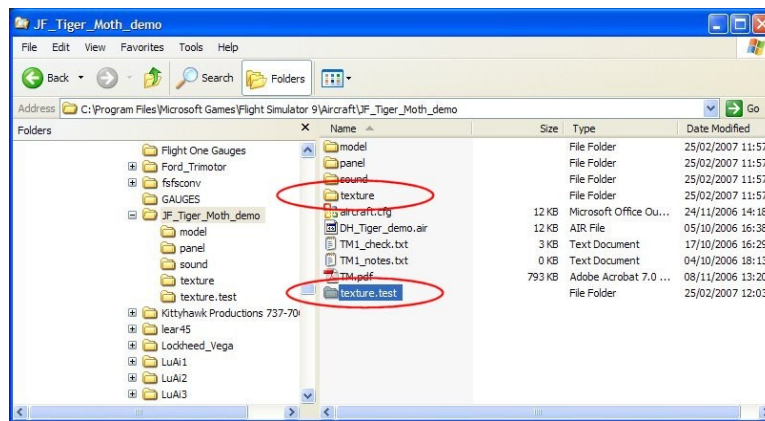
# Changing an aircraft registration for Flight Simulator

Tim Arnot

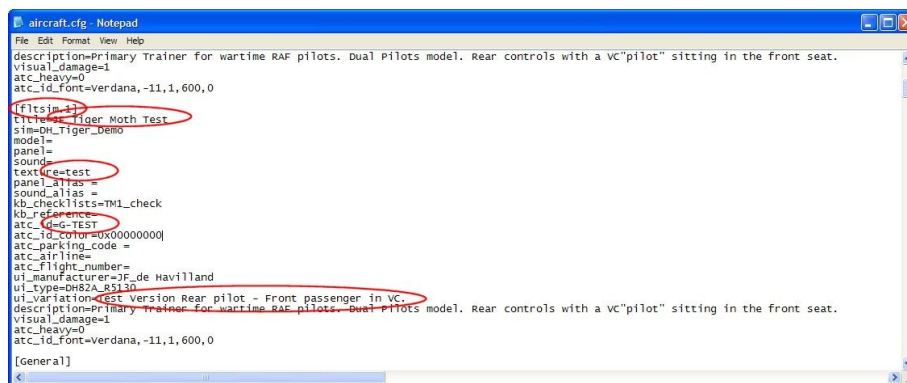
The vast majority of addon aeroplanes for Flight Sim have the aircraft registration fixed as part of the paint. If you want to have your own registration, you basically need to edit the paintwork. This tutorial shows you how.

For this tutorial, I'm going to use the JustFlight Tiger Moth demo version. It can be found on the cover CD of PC Pilot Issue 45, or downloaded from the JustFlight Web site. You also need a graphics editor such as Photoshop or Paintshop Pro, and a copy of DXTBmp, which can be downloaded here: <http://www.mnwright.btinternet.co.uk/>

**Step 1:** Make a copy of the paint you wish to change. Give the new texture directory an extension that's meaningful for your paint. In our case, we're calling it 'test'.

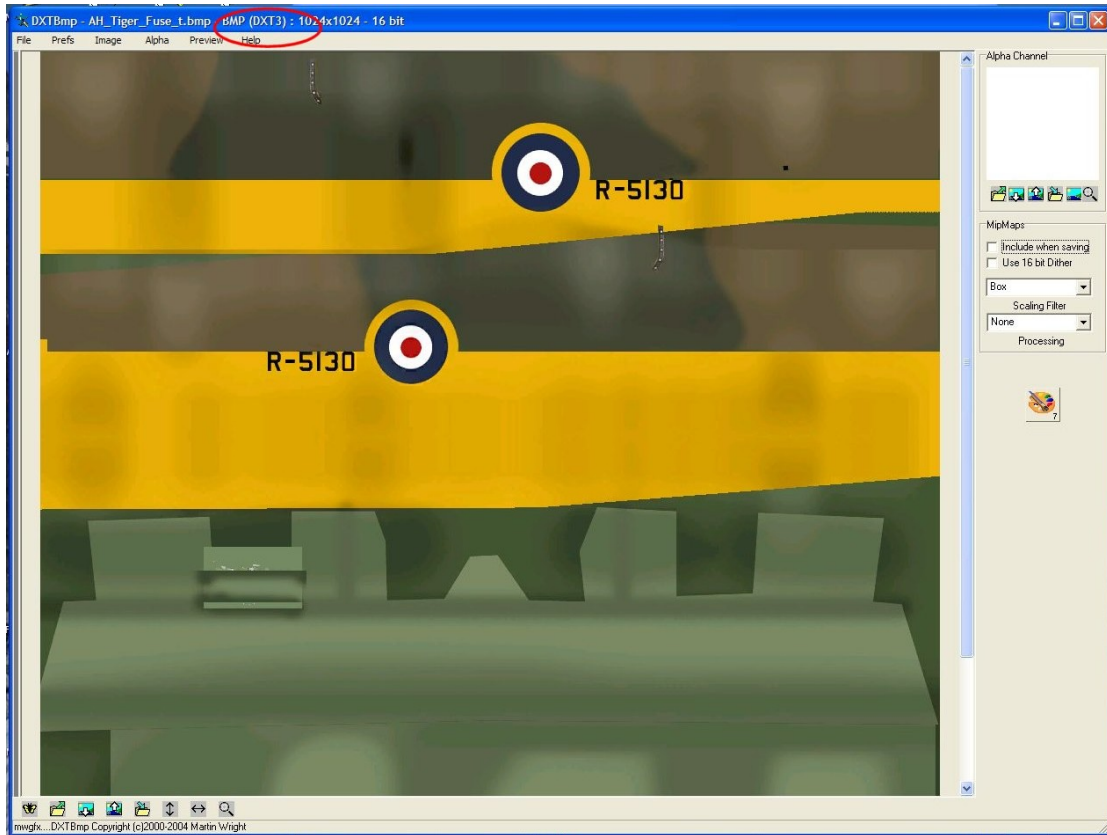


**Step 2:** Edit the Aircraft.cfg file to include the new paint. Copy the [fltsim.x] section for your aircraft and then paste it back into the same file. Change the number in [fltsim.x] to be one higher than the biggest entry in the file. Change the title to reflect your paint. FS9 is not fussy, but FSX will complain if the title is not unique. Change the texture entry to be the directory extension you created in step 1. atc\_id represents how FS ATC will address you, and UI variation is the text that will be displayed in the aircraft selection dialog.



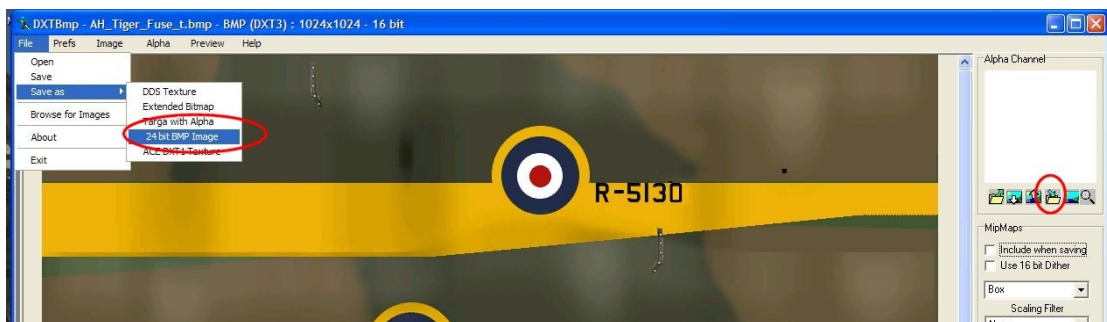
You can run Flight Sim and check that your copied aircraft can be selected.

**Step 3:** Load a texture into DxtBmp. Texture files have a .bmp extension, but you can't directly edit them. So we need to load them into DxtBmp and save a copy that we can edit.



In this case, the file is AH\_tiger\_fuse\_t.bmp. File names differ from plane to plane, so you may need to experiment to find the file(s) containing the registration. Make a note of the format as shown ringed (DXT3 in this case).

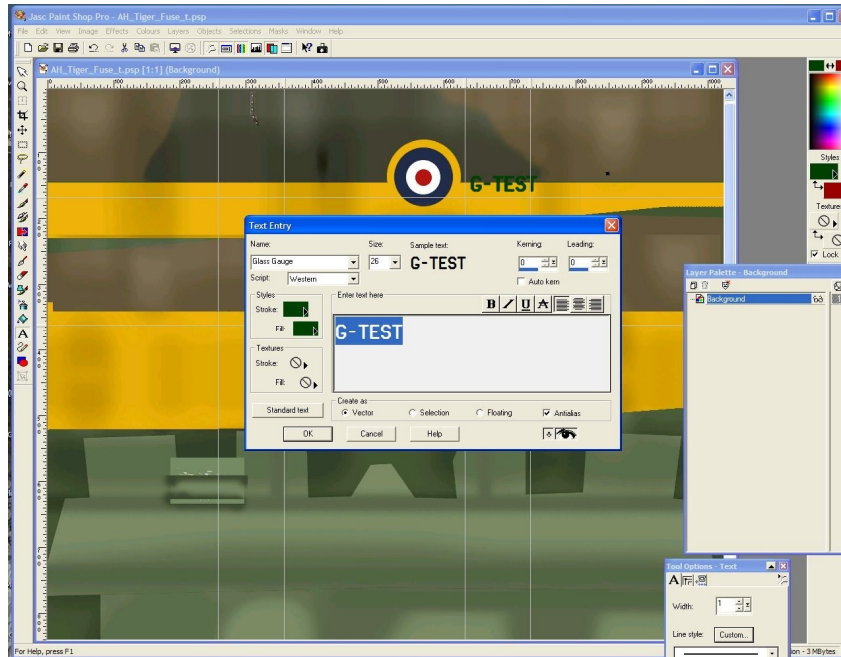
**Step 4:** Export the file so we can edit it.



Some paints have an alpha channel (this one doesn't), which is used to add reflections, shine, transparency, chrome effects etc. If so, you'll need to save it so we can restore it later. I typically call it alpha.bmp.

**Step 5:** Edit the bitmap.

I've used Paintshop Pro V7, but you can use any graphic editor you're familiar with. Erase the old registration, and add your new one.



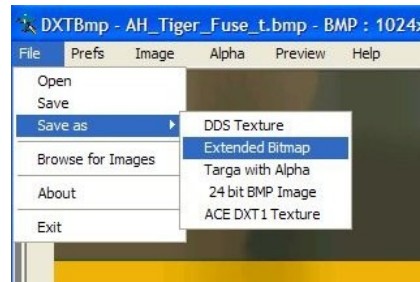
Save the final result as a 24 bit bitmap file.

**Step 6:** Import the edited bitmap file into DXTBmp.



Before we can save it, we will need to import the alpha channel, if the original had one. We also need to make sure the 'include MIPs' checkbox is deselected, otherwise our textures may appear blurry in FS.

**Step 7:** Save the texture.



Use the original file name and file format (DXT3 in this case), overwriting the original.

**Step 8:** Load the modified aircraft into Flight Sim.



Now, it is possible that the registration is included on more than one texture – this plane has it included under the bottom wings, for example. Simply find the additional textures and repeat the process.