Douglas D.558-2

The Douglas D.558-2 was the second phase of a research project begun in the mid 1940s to examine the characteristics of transonic and supersonic flight. Three D.558-2s were made and one was the first aeroplane to exceed Mach 2.

The D.558 was designed and constructed for the US Navy and later flew in association with the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (forerunner of NASA). The first phase D.558-1 was a straight wing jet powered aeroplane, the second phase D.588-2 was fitted with either jet or rocket engines and swept wings. The first D.558-2 made its maiden flight on 4 February 1948 with a jet engine that was later replaced by a rocket motor. The three aeroplanes made a total of 313 flights that explored many facets of supersonic flight before the research program concluded in 1956. On 20 November 1953 a D.55-.2 was the first aeroplane to faster than twice the speed of sound.

This model represents the first D.558-2.

Data: experimental research aircraft. *Engines* one Reaction Motors XLR-8-RM-5 rocket engine of 27kN (6000lbf). *Wing span* 7.6m (25ft). *Length* 12.8m (42ft). *Maximum take-off weight* 7,171kg (15,266lbs). *Maximum speed* 2010kmh (1250mph).

Mach 2 1/72 kit completed by Leigh Edmonds in May 2008.