

after the close of the financial period covered, estimates had to be made, but it is thought that these estimates are reasonably accurate. The report as a whole is a model of what such a report should be, and it is to be hoped that when those of B.O.A.C. and B.S.A.A. are published they will be equally lucid.

That part of the report which deals with operational statistics is especially interesting. We are very glad to find that, to take an example, the regularity of operation is expressed by giving the figures for services scheduled and services completed. In the early days of air transport it was customary to state the number started and the number completed. In that way a company could show close on 100 per cent reliability by confining its flights to days of perfect weather. In the period under review, B.E.A.C. scheduled services numbered 10,191, of which 8,417 were completed; 208 were not completed, and 1,566 were cancelled due to weather, etc. If, therefore, ground aids had been better, there is no doubt that the number of completed services would have been very much greater.

The interesting fact is disclosed that the Dakotas put in by far the greatest number of service flying hours (15,230). If the Vikings had not had to be withdrawn for most of the period under review, they would doubtless have reached or even exceeded this figure. As it was, the Dominies (45) were second with 2,504 hours. It cannot be said that the utilization figures for either are impressive, even when bearing in mind that the period in question for the internal services is only two months and that for the Continental services eight months. We appear to be still a long way from that 3,000 hours per annum about which some talk so glibly when estimating operating costs.

The report stresses the fact that B.E.A.C. attaches supreme importance to safety in air transport. That it has so far succeeded in spite of difficult conditions is shown by the fact that there was but one fatal accident,

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that near Oslo, in which four crew members lost their lives, one was injured, and three passengers suffered minor injuries. Such a record makes up for a good many shortcomings in financial results.

1947

MIXED is, perhaps, the word which best describes the year that has just closed. If it had its disappointments it also had its minor triumphs. A goodly number of prototypes made their first appearance and gave a glimpse of future possibilities, but it is becoming increasingly evident that with modern aircraft and power plants the road from first flight to service fitness is likely to be a long one. During the year we were able to test for ourselves, and report frankly upon, the characteristics of several aircraft types, ranging from light planes to jet-propelled fighters, a feature of this journal which has been much appreciated, both at home and abroad.

One of the most encouraging features of 1947 was the export trade which the British aircraft industry built up, in spite of many handicaps, and which goes a long way towards redeeming the sorry showing of our civil air transport corporations.



POWER CHECK : The two D.H. Gypsy Queen 70s, here seen running up, will soon lift this prototype Short Sealand amphibian on a first flight over the Belfast Lough. Reversible-pitch airscrews are fitted to these geared and supercharged "Queens" to aid in handling on the water.