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A good view of the business end of the Carvair, showing the manually operated hingeing mechanism of the nose door. Five average cars should
be on board in not very much more than it takes to get three cars into
the Bristols, which are scheduled with a 20min turn-round time

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the aft passenger cabin will be as good as in any turboprop air-liner, and in welcome contrast with the rather noisy Bristol. Stewardesses, who have not been used on Bristol services, will be in attendance.
The Air Bridge is hoping to extract a utilization of 2,000hr out
of each Carvair during the first year. Like the Bristols, the new aircraft will be fitted with the Decca flight log (which the company's Bristol pilots have found an invaluable aid); and unlike the Bristols, the Carvairs will eventually be fitted, primarily for use on the long-haul sectors, with Ekco E.190 weather radar.
Although the Carvair's primary mission will be the operation of the long-haul routes, it will be used also on the existing Bristol services to Calais, Ostend and Rotterdam. Indeed, as from next month, the Rotterdam route will be operated by Carvairs, Bristols being used to supplement them during the peak months of the coming summer. Thereafter the Rotterdam route will be all-Carvair again. The very first Carvair is due to be put into service on the Rotterdam route towards the end of this month, providing the public with its first taste of the new aircraft.
Carvairs will also be scheduled on the Calais and Ostend routes at a frequency of three flights daily during the 1962 summer season. This will help the Air Bridge's capacity-shortage problem (which was acute last summer) and it will incidentally serve as a useful flag-showing operation for the new aircraft. By 1963 the Bristols will be scheduled only on the Calais route, with Carvairs on all the others. By 1965, predicts Mr Whybrow, Carvairs will have displaced the Bristols completely on car ferry operations.
If one describes an arc, with Southend as centre, of radius 1,500 n.m. (Carvair full-payload stage length), the potentialities of the new aircraft are readily apparent. Actually, the Carvair's economic radius as a vehicle ferry is probably about 400-450 miles, a stage length which strikes the best balance between cost and price. Thus the Air Bridge can now set its sights on many holiday markets beyond reach of the Bristol. British licences are already held for Lyons, Bremen and Dusseldorf, and among the other new places being surveyed are Angouleme in France and Esbjerg in Denmark. Prospects of serving the latter place, on the west coast of Jutland, depend on the realization of plans for a new airport there.
Looking farther ahead. Aviation Traders and the Air Bridge have up their sleeves the possibility—technically quite feasible—of "doing a Carvair" to DC-6s and even to DC-7s.

The future of the Bristols—eight Mk 32s and one Mk 31—is problematical to say the least. Although most of them have already been fully depreciated (over seven years to zero, the same rate as is being adopted for the Carvairs), they are likely to become time-expired because the spar modification can only be done twice— once after 10,000 landings and again after a further 9,000 (equivalent to four years' operation to Calais). After a further 9,000 landings the Bristol is no longer airworthy. A replacement for these aircraft would have been necessary in any case—a point which cannot have escaped other Bristol operators.
To what extent will the new long-haul routes divert traffic from
the existing ones? This is difficult to predict: but Mr Whybrow guesses that there will be a pause in the growth of traffic on the shorter routes when the long ones are in full swing. Perhaps 2,000 cars will be carried on the new long-haul routes during the first year; of these perhaps 1,000 could be "robbed" from the shorter routes, on which more than 40,000 cars will be carried. Of course, these estimates may be conservative, and the new long-haul routes may attract as many as 3,000 cars. In this case perhaps 1,500 might be diverted from the existing routes. Mr Whybrow recalls that when the Air Bridge opened its second route, Southend - Ostend, there was a pause in the growth of the Southend - Calais route—and there was a similar experience after the Southend - Rotterdam route had been opened.
On fares policy in general, the Air Bridge can claim to have opposed every fare increase in Europe since it began operations in 1954—and there have been four such "across-the-board" increases. The only time the airline has voluntarily put up fares was in 1958 when Southend introduced a passenger service charge of 5s (sub-sequently 7s 6d). The latest European across-the-board fare increase of 5 percent, effective since November 1, has not been applied by the Air Bridge; in the company's view fare increases are a dubiously effective means of increasing revenues. Though the Air Bridge is non-IATA, its parent is; and Brit ish United successfully negotiated a standstill on fares for its vehicle ferry subsidiary. KLM gave this status quo recognition as a "piston differential," thus establishing on the Southend - Rotterdam route a new prin-ciple in European air transport—and one that may gain wider currency. As yet there is no propeller differential in Europe; but the principle of a quality differential—perhaps IATA's biggest challenge in the years ahead—has been established by this small independent airline.
The Air Bridge's distaste for fare increases is motivated by some-thing more than altruism. The company's prices are subject to constant pressure from the cross-Channel boat ferries, which are cheap, convenient, comfortable and (since the speed advantage of the air diminishes with distance) competitively quick. How do the fares compare? On the boat from Dover to Calais you can take a medium-sized car and two passengers for £40 return. Comparative Air Bridge fare Southend - Calais is £56. Sixteen pounds is a lot of money in a holiday budget for a few hours' saving in journey time, especially as the boats offer (except when it is rough) comfort-able and sociable travel. Nevertheless, in 1960, for the first time, boat traffic declined. Relative carryings in that year were nearly 100,000 cars by air and about 289,000 by boat.
The Air Bridge must be one of the very few airlines in the world which sells three distinct kinds of scheduled air transport: cars, passengers and freight. The company's primary business is, of course, ferrying cars and their occupants (averaging three per car). Out of this has grown the so-called supplementary-passenger busi-ness, useful as fill-up for the seats left over after the car-occupants
have been catered for. The facts are that of the 265,000 passengers
carried by the Air Bridge in 1961 about 60,000 were supplementary
or day-trippers.
But this traffic is not as integral a part of the business as freight.
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One of the Air Bridge's nine Bristols, G-APAU, is flown in the handsome blue and white colours ofSabena. Used prim-
arily for Southend - Ostend it is a token of Belgian interest in that route. It is owned and operated by the Air Bridge

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