FLIGHT International, 17 July 1969

AIR TRANSPORT...

Pilot's Point of View

Necessary exercises

T

HE BOARD OF TRADE has been discussing aspects of asym-metric training during recent months and has apparently come to the conclusion that there should be restrictions on such exercises. There have been accidents during this type of training work ever since the first twin-engined aircraft was made, but it is only recently that we have become so conscious of the need to review the situation. This may be because of the civil aircraft accident-statistics record, or of information gleaned from various Service sources, or even because a strong lobby of professional safety-committee men, and also some pilots, see this as & field for necessary restriction and revision. It appears that the BoT committee involved in this matter thinks that various categories of aircraft should have a manda-tory minimum height above ground for the complete shutdown of an engine. This height varies from about 5,000ft upwards and, if implemented, will certainly bring about a major revision in training. Whether it will significantly reduce the training accident pattern is arguable—as is the effect on overall pilot competency.
We could remove the risk in training by cutting out training altogether. This might certainly bring a few other problems in its wake and is obviously impracticable. Where, then, does the practical compromise lie? We must keep our heads, and avoid rushing off into corners that seem attractive to the statisticians and flight-safety organisations. Most of the decisions taken on matters of such fundamental importance appear to flow from sources that are not possessed of current experience of modern multi-engined training work.
I work for an airline which has just completed a massive training programme, involving the conversion of hundreds of new pilots, most of whom have only light-aircraft experience, to large jet aircraft. More than 80 promotion-to-command training courses have been completed concurrently, involving many two-engined approaches and many practice shutdowns of powerplants. Thousands of landings have been completed without accident or incident. There is some experience around, and it is available in the airlines that have had big training programmes in recent years. In fact, the training accident rate, expressed in terms of landings, would make interesting com-parison with that for revenue-carrying accidents.

The answer to questions of training safety lies in the quality of instruction and the environment within which flight training has to be conducted. With correct procedures and good

BUA DOMESTIC TRAFFIC UP

A SHARP rise in the number of passengers using the three BUA InterJet domestic trunk-route services linking London with Glasgow, Edinburgh and Belfast was announced last week by the airline. During the first six months of this year 81,680 passengers were carried, compared with 63,730 from January to June last year, an increase of 28 per cent. Passenger traffic on the Glasgow route rose by 45 per cent, on Edinburgh by 15 per cent and on Belfast by 14 per cent.
On this basis BUA is predicting an InterJet passenger in-crease of about 20 per cent for the whole of 1969, compared with 1968. Before the end of this year the 500,000th InterJet passenger is expected to be carried. The services began in January 1966.
Next year BUA is to increase the frequency of London-Edinburgh round-trip flights from the current 10 a week to 17; Belfast flights will be increased from 12 to 17, and Glasgow from 22 to 23. For the first time BUA will operate three daily round trips between London and Edinburgh and London and Belfast.

personnel it is possible to complete many exercises on an air-craft that are at present impossible to simulate.
There is a lobby developing which queries the safety, when large aircraft are involved, of the "roller" or "touch-and-go" landing used to conserve time and brakes by most airlines and air forces. This manoeuvre involves co-ordination of a high order from the instructor and certainly offers handling risks equivalent to those of engine-shutdown practice on some types of aircraft. We have to be specific when we start discussing types of aircraft, for each has its own layout, handling prob-lems and performance.
Performance is not only to be measured in terms of olimb rate left after double engine failure on a four- or three-engined type, or engine failure on a twin-engined type. There is the matter of control response, accessibility and total con-trollability. Even noise may have a contributory part to play in accident generation by cutting down ease of communication if assisted intercom is not used. Then there is the matter of systems performance, where deactivation of a particular component or circuit can produce handling problems.
It is easy to reason that a further failure of a good power-plant can hazard an aircraft at a time when one is already shut down. This is already recognised and guarded against by careful training of instructional personnel, by the restriction of training to light weights and by working under rigidly specified con-ditions. To add a further and arbitrary height restriction would seem to capitulate to an element of shallow reasoning. When we examine some of the accidents that have occurred to big aircraft during engine-failure exercises we usually see that the aircraft has been substantially mishandled and that the in-structor has allowed the aircraft to be manoeuvred into an irrecoverable position. A large proportion of these accidents have also had some further mechanical real failure super-imposed on the training simulation of engine failure—such as rudder-power failure, feathering-pump trouble, structural failure of rudder boost mechanical input and so on.

The need will remain for pilots and crews to become pro-ficient in handling aircraft in non-standard configurations, and to permit anything else will invite real trouble. Until simulators can fill the need with acceptable accuracy we will need to carry out some relatively hazardous exercises during non-revenue flights. The answer to an unsatisfactory training-accident rate is to be found in better instructor training. MAINLINER

Cathay to Perth Subject to government approval, Cathay Pacific will operate a service from Hong Kong to Perth, Western Australia, via Djakarta, Indonesia, from April 1970.

Out-of-season Growth The number of charter movements at British airports last November, December and January was 38 per cent higher than in the same period for 1967-68, says the Board of Trade. The equivalent growth in scheduled movements was only 1 per cent. The figures are further evidence of the current growth of winter-holiday traffic.

Ansett Airlines it is With the roll-out of an overhauled Boeing 727 in the complete new livery, the name "Ansett Airlines of Australia" has, after six months, now been officially announced. The new livery features an orange-red tail with "A" in a white circle. The remainder of the aircraft is white on top and silver below with a dual chocolate and orange-red stripe between. The full name is in orange-red on the white top.