

Civil Aviation Committees

Councils and Committees Which Advise the Ministry of Civil Aviation

AS Minister of Civil Aviation, Lord Nathan was supported and advised by a number of committees which were established to study and report on different aspects of aviation. Perhaps the results have not been impressive, but nevertheless there was always the hope that some good would result from the time and energy spent by committee members. At this stage it is opportune to review the various organizations which are still behind the scenes in the Ministry of Civil Aviation, their composition, their terms of reference and, where possible, to determine what progress has been made.

Air Transport Advisory Council: Lord Terrington is the chairman and Sir Donald Banks deputy-chairman with Mr. John Ure Primrose, the Hon. Walter Runciman and Mr. Gilbert Savil Szlumper as members of the Council, which was established as a result of the Civil Aviation Act of 1946. The Council considers questions referred by the Minister relating to facilities for transport by air or charges for such facilities, or any other question relating to the improvement of air-transport services. It also gives consideration to any representations from any person in respect of the adequacy of facilities provided by the three corporations, or with respect to the charges for them. It is understood that a wide variety of complaints have been noted, many of which were trivial, but others such as lack of amenities at certain British airports, currency difficulties, catering problems, and tiring air schedules have been given attention. The Council, in accordance with the Civil Aviation (Air Transport Advisory Council) Order dated June 11th, 1947, do not make known their conclusions except in reporting to the Minister.

The Air Safety Board: On November 14th, 1946, the Air Safety Board was constituted by the Minister of Civil Aviation as an expert body to exercise responsibility under his authority for all matters pertaining to safety in British civil aviation. Present members of the Board are Sir Frederick Bowhill, Lord Brabazon, Professor A. A. Hall and Dr. Leonard Bairstow. The Board functions in an advisory capacity and has no executive powers. It may, however, consider and make recommendations on any matter affecting the safety of civil air operations. Its method of working is flexible and independent; the Board has free access to departments within the Ministry and to civil aviation interests outside the Ministry, and although much of its work is at the request of the Minister seeking advice, the Board may initiate investigations and consider problems from any quarter. Since its inception the Board has provided guidance to the Minister who has frequently made decisions as the result of recommendations made by the Board.

National Civil Aviation Consultative Council: The terms of reference for the Council are that it shall be a forum for the review of developments in civil aviation generally in the examination of questions relating thereto. The Minister of Civil Aviation is chairman with the Parliamentary Secretary as his vice-chairman. The members of the Council are: Mr. J. Booth, Mr. W. N. Cumming, Mrs. A. C. Douglas, Mr. G. d'Erlanger, Sir Harold Hartley, Mr. G. H. M. Miles, Major R. H. Mayo, Mr. G. Hitchings, Capt. J. W. G. James, Mr. D. H. Lamb, Sir F. Handley Page, Mr. W. R. Verdon Smith, Mr. C. O. Stanley, Mr. Leslie Gamage, Capt. A. G. Lamplugh, Col. H. H. Gardiner, Councillor F. Russell, A/Crde. A. R. Churchman, G/Capt. D. de B. Clark, Mr. S. Kenneth Davies, Mr. A. C. Jack, Lord Provost Sir Hector McNeil, Mr. C. M. Newton, Mr. J. S. Nicholl, and W/C. N. H. Woodhead.

The United Kingdom was divided geographically in order to establish advisory councils of which there are four:—

The Channel Islands Joint Air Advisory Council held a meeting on November 21st, 1947, followed by the formation of the Channel Islands Legislation Council, which held its first meeting on December 12th, 1947, and a second meeting on March 22nd, 1948. The members for Jersey are Deputy W. H.

Kricheski, Jurat P. Cabot, and Mr. J. Du Val, and the members for Guernsey are Jurat R. H. Johns, Jurat P. De Patron and Dr. A. Symons. The recommendations which have been made to date are that individual complaints should not be investigated by the Council unless they are of a serious nature; that a Channel Islands Division should not be formed; that weekend capacity should not be increased at present but only if necessary; and that mail service timings should be discussed by the M.C.A. and the P.M.G.

The Scottish Advisory Council was formed in November, 1946, and the first meeting was held in December of the same year. The members of the Council are Sir Patrick Dollan, Sir Hector McNeil, Mr. Andrew Murray, Mr. J. Ure Primrose, Viscount Arbuthnott, Brigadier G. D. K. Murray, Mr. Malcolm Macmillan, Mr. John Mann, Mr. J. Gibson Kerr, Mr. Daniel L. Stewart, Mr. Charles Murdoch, Mr. Robert Taylor, Mr. J. M. Toothill and Mr. A. D. Mackellar. Recommendations made include the following: The holding of the helicopter demonstration in Glasgow, the re-opening of Turnhouse Airport on May 19th, 1947, in time for the International Festival and Enterprise Scotland Exhibition, and its continued use for East Coast services; refusal to agree to the withdrawal of the Turnhouse services; increase in air-mail services; the development of Hatston rather than Grimsetter, as the airport for Kirkwall, and suggested improvements to traffic and passenger handling facilities were put forward by the Council and adopted.

The Northern Ireland Advisory Council was formed in December, 1946, and consists of the following members: Mr. W. E. Edmensen, A/Cdre. A. R. Churchman, Sir Basil McFarland, Messrs. J. P. Mackie, F. Storey and G. Porter. Recommendations which have been made by this Council are as follows: That services should be provided to London, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Carlisle, Newcastle, Isle of Man, Renfrew and Prestwick; that interest should be retained in Sydenham as an alternative airport, and the possibility of using Bishop's Court as a further alternative airport when larger aircraft are operated; that sign-posts should be erected in the vicinity of Nutts Corner airport; that a Belfast-London Sunday service should be provided; that rent charged to B.E.A. for the hangars at Nutts Corner is too heavy; that better accommodation should be provided as traffic offices at Nutts Corner; that heating was necessary and should be provided in the hangars at Nutts Corner; that in effecting the reduction of staff, individuals who had been sent from Great Britain should be dispensed with before locally employed staff; that facilities should be provided for garaging cars at Nutts Corner; that there should be more press advertising of the Northern Ireland services; that services between Great Britain and Derry, or feeder services from Nutts Corner to Derry are not yet warranted; and that no hard-and-fast rule should be made regarding priority seats.

The Welsh Advisory Council was formed on January 6th this year, and the members, who meet monthly, are: Mr. Kenneth Davies (chairman), Mr. J. B. Bennett, Councillor H. T. Edwards, Mr. D. R. Grenfell, Mr. William Jones, C.B.E., Mr. William Jones, O.B.E., Mr. E. John Powell, Alderman Tudor E. Watkins, and Mr. Vernon Lawrence.

The Council has recommended that persons with specialized knowledge and experience should be co-opted on to the committee; that application should be made to the Ministry of Civil Aviation for arrangements to be made as soon as possible for the following airfields to be made available for civilian aircraft without having, in certain cases, to get prior permission to land: Wrexham, Valley (Anglesey), Haverfordwest, Fairwood Common, Llandow and Cardiff; that the following services should be established as soon as possible: Swansea-Cardiff-Weston-Exeter-



Lord Terrington



Mr. Whitney Straight.



Mr. W. N. Cumming.



Mr. John Ure Primrose.