General view of the new S.A.T.C.C. at London Airport, looking past the height - finder scanner towards the main operations-room block and a long-range scanner.

SOUTHERN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

AS briefly reported last week, the new Southern Air Traffic Control Centre at London Airport is about to begin operation. The photographs and diagram on this page provide further information on the unit, which comprises a self-contained air traffic control centre including its own radar installation.

This is the largest and busiest of this country's three main A.T.C. centres, the other two being located at Prestwick (Scottish Area) and Preston (Northern England, North Wales and Northern Ireland). In order to handle the large number of aircraft, the airways and advisory routes controlled by the southern centre are divided into the following sectors:

Sector 1: Traffic east of London on airways Green One and Red One (to and from Brussels, Amsterdam, Scandinavia); and traffic south-east of London on airway Amber Two (from Paris and Rome).

Sectors 2 and 3: Inbound traffic in the vicinity of the London Control Zone (either bound for aerodromes in the zone or over-flying the zone to, say, Manchester).

Sector 4: Outbound traffic from aerodromes in the London Central Zone.

Sector 5: Traffic on airways Amber One south of London (to Paris and Rome) and Red One west of London (to Channel Islands, Spain, Portugal, Western France).

Sector 6: Traffic on airways Green One west of London (transatlantic services *via* Shannon), Amber One and Amber Two north of London (to Dublin, Belfast, Prestwick, Manchester and Birmingham).

Each sector has its own "executive" (or "D" controller) and his assistant (or "A" controller), both of whose radio-telephone equipment for communication with aircraft is capable of covering the whole of the routes, by means of remote transmitting and receiving stations.

As illustrated in the diagram, the "procedural" controllers
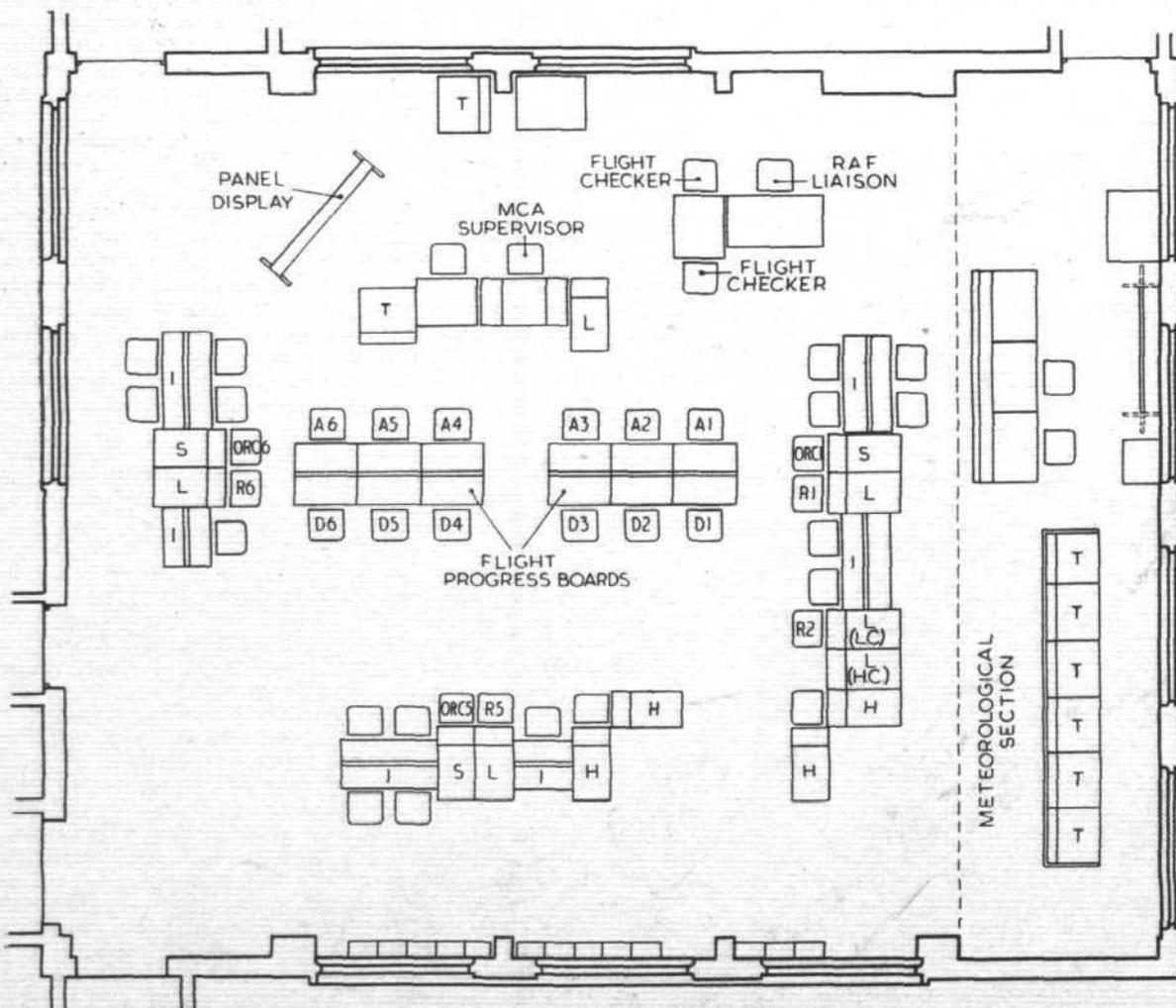
Main advantage of the new Southern Air Traffic Control Centre over its predecessor at Uxbridge is that procedural controllers and radar controllers work together in the same operations room, the layout of which is shown here.

I	= Information display
L	= Long-range radar
S	= Short-range radar
L.C. =	Low cover
H.C. =	High cover
H	= Height-finder
T	= Teleprinter