

A new colour scheme for a new airline: Orion Airways' (see news item on this page) Viking Mk 1 "Sirius" was converted by Eagle and is finished in two shades of green with white lettering.



## CIVIL AVIATION . . .

a DC-6 cabin heater fire," he writes, "and may well be proud of our ability to recite them while doing many other unrelated things. But when the bells and lights are on, and you see one crew member doing step number 3 or 7, another doing step number 5, or perhaps a wrong thing, it is very difficult to co-relate what is being done and what is being omitted."

Capt. Leroy argues that some accidents ascribed to pilot error could have been traced to a crew's trying to follow complicated emergency procedures to the letter instead of relying on common-sense. "Sadly enough, we have reached a point where too many people are dictating what we should do," he adds. "May I suggest that the pilots who are faced with these problems daily may know more about handling them than they are given credit for?"

Capt. Leroy maintains that no single member of a crew should have more than three immediate emergency items to perform from memory. He says tests have shown that by reducing the number of procedures to be memorized, the chance of error is almost eliminated.

### QANTAS "STILL NEGOTIATING"

THE author of the article *Australia's Air Transport* published in *Flight's* special Commonwealth Industry number of August 23 writes to us about the forthcoming Qantas service into London from New York. It is not his intention, he says, to imply that the negotiations had been completed: they are still proceeding between the governments of Australia and the United Kingdom. He had referred only to the Australian discussions with the United States, which have in fact been concluded, permitting Qantas to fly across the U.S.A. and pick up traffic in New York for Europe. Sir Hudson Fysh, chairman of Qantas, and Mr. C. O. Turner, chief executive, have both arrived in London for discussions.

### A NEW BRITISH INDEPENDENT

ORION AIRWAYS, a new British independent company, began charter operations at Blackbushe on August 9. Although they are at present limited to one Viking Mk 1, G-AHOS, they hope to receive another aircraft in October and will then consolidate on a two-aircraft fleet until further increases are made next year. G-AHOS was previously registered VP-TAT and was in service with B.W.I.A.; before being purchased by Orion it belonged to Eagle Aircraft Services, who modified and converted it to a 36-seater with fully adjustable seats. They also installed a Standard Telephones SR.14/15 instrument landing system and STR.12D V.H.F. equipment.

Orion's livery is striking; a pastel-green top, white lettering and white rudder, and a dark green centre band. This is a variation on the new Eagle Aviation theme of red top, white lettering and white rudder, and grey centre band.

Just over a fortnight after starting operations Orion had completed five charters to airfields in Germany, Perpignan, Palma and Nice—and were able to boast that all had left exactly on time and arrived on time or early. They are operating

Last week, the Comet 2E G-AMXK was taken over by B.O.A.C. for noise tests using Cullum mobile silencers at L.A.P. The outboard R.A.29s are fitted with Greatrex suppressors, now a feature of all four engines on the Comet 3.



under sub-contract to Airwork, Skyways, B.K.S. and Atlas Air Express, but will also undertake direct charters.

The managing director of the airline is Capt. Peter Palmer, the technical director is Mr. H. Biddle, and the other directors are Capt. P. Wilson and Capt. A. Donati.

### TURBOPROP SUPER CONNIE?

FROM Burbank come reports, quoted in *Aviation Daily*, that Lockheed are "planning" to offer a turboprop freighter version of the Super Constellation—presumably a development of the L.1049H. The engines being considered are the Allison 501 powerplants of the Electra. The payload would be 55,000 lb, 22,470 lb more than the piston-engined aeroplane, and purchase price would be about \$2.5 million (£900,000).

For some months now Douglas have been trying out the reactions of U.S. airlines to a turboprop-powered DC-7C: two versions, both with Rolls-Royce Tynes, have been proposed, tentatively designated DC-7D (passenger transport), and DC-7T (freighter). Considering Lockheed's engineering and flight experience with turboprop Super Connies, it is surprising that they have not already been selling at least the idea of the turboprop Super Constellation more strongly. It seems unlikely that such an aeroplane would "unsell" the Lockheed Electra.

### BRITANNIA PRODUCTION QUERIED

WHEN Mr. Howard Hughes announced some weeks ago that he was prepared to buy Britannias for T.W.A. provided an initial batch could be delivered by next summer, the production aspect of supplying the aircraft was commented on by Mr. J. Matthews, secretary of the workers' side of the National Joint Council for Civil Air Transport. Plenty of capacity was, he said, apparently available at the Blackburn factory at Dumbarton, which employed men trained in Britannia fuselage and component manufacture, and, if additional capacity was required, Hawker's Hunter factory at Blackpool had recently been closed. He wrote to Mr. Aubrey Jones, the Minister of Supply, asking for an investigation.

The Minister agreed that it would be "absurd" (as Mr. Matthews had suggested in his letter) if B.O.A.C.'s aircraft were diverted to T.W.A. while men engaged on Britannia production were stood off. But these were not the facts; the requirements of the customer could only be met by working the existing production line to the maximum and releasing to the American airline aircraft built for other customers. Later Mr. Aubrey Jones said that additional Britannia production was not practical at the moment. Dumbarton did not in fact make complete fuselages, and the issue was whether more Britannias could be produced by next June than at present planned: "No one in this country or anywhere else could . . . make the required number of new Britannias by this date."

Whatever the foundation for the National Joint Council's charge that this reply "highlighted the failure of the industry to face up to an urgent call for action," Bristol and Shorts are not at present geared to anything like the rate of production required to produce additional aircraft by June; Rear-Admiral Slattery, chairman of Shorts, said that it would take his firm 15 months to produce the first aircraft—and they had the tools and materials available. Only by risking shareholders' money at the rate of about £1m an aircraft could speculative production be undertaken. Shorts and Bristol had considered just over a year ago whether they had the "courage and money" to lay down Britannias for stock, and had in fact put some into production.

### DRINK ON BOARD

THE U.S. Senate, which is considering two Bills prohibiting the service and consumption of alcoholic beverages aboard U.S. aircraft on domestic flights, have been told by Mr. Stuart G. Tipton, president of the A.T.A., that not once in more than 20 years has there been evidence of an aircraft accident caused by the service of alcohol. He was subsequently supported by the Democrat senator for New York, Mr. Emanuel Celler, who said that an investigation of several thousand complaints had revealed no case where alcoholic drinks had imperilled airliners.

An opposing viewpoint was adopted by the U.S. Air Line Pilots' Association, who said that 34 incidents had occurred in which drunken or drinking passengers had caused trouble, and they listed three unscheduled landings which had had to be made to get rid of such persons.