

## AIR COMMERCE . . .

centre engine are baseless. There has been "no trouble of this nature even at high angles of incidence." There was a temporary restriction in the early days against operating the engine within a limited band of r.p.m., which meant that approaches had to be made with two engines working above the restricted band with the third idling. This restriction has now been removed.

Reverse thrust has been used regularly from the outset, and it has been quite trouble-free and efficient. There are no asymmetric problems with only one of the two side engines in reverse. Small amounts of reverse have been used successfully during flare-out; thanks to the rear-mounted engines there is no loss of lift and no appreciable trim change. Combination of reverse thrust and the Dunlop Maxaret brakes has resulted in an aircraft of remarkable stopping power. Take-off measurements have still to be completed in full but there is no indication that design performance will not be achieved.

Tail-bumper-scraping take-offs have been tried with no obvious loss of lift or increase in drag or unusual handling characteristics on the climb.

By the time the second Trident flew on May 20 the first aircraft had made 111 flights totalling 118hr, 12hr more than called for in the original programme. The second aircraft is at present being used mainly for systems testing. Later in the year it will carry out tropical trials. More than 200hr have now been flown by the three Tridents.

Summing up, John Cunningham says that certification of the Trident 1 next year will be "the first step in what I am sure will be a long period of development." All good aeroplanes, he says, have in them the capacity for stretch and the Trident will be no exception [see page 301]. Auguring well for the future, he feels, is the "really remarkable degree of reliability which has been achieved." Only on three occasions can he recall slight delays in the flying programme due to mechanical trouble.

## RUSSIA JOINING ICAO?

EARLY reports from the meeting of the International Civil Aviation Organization general assembly which opened in Rome on August 21 state that the Soviet Union has decided to join ICAO. If correct, this excellent news means that the Russians, hitherto the only major civilized civil air power to have remained aloof from the Chicago Convention, will put its signature to an international treaty which contains the famous preamble:—

*"Whereas the future development of international civil aviation can greatly help to create and preserve friendship and understanding among the nations and peoples of the world, yet its abuse can become a threat to the general security, and*

*"Whereas it is desirable to avoid friction and to promote that co-operation between nations and peoples upon which the peace of the world depends,*

*"Therefore, the undersigned governments having agreed on certain principles and arrangements in order that international civil aviation may be developed in a safe and orderly manner and that international air transport services may be established on the basis of equality of opportunity and operated soundly and economically . . ."*

For some years the Russians have sent observers to ICAO, and the international operations of Aeroflot have largely conformed with the ICAO recommended standards and practices as set out in the annexes to the Chicago Convention. This conformity has been reached bilaterally between the Soviet Union and those countries with whom it has signed air agreements. But actual ratification of the Chicago Convention, 18 years after it was signed in 1944, has important implications for international air transport as a whole.

Of particular significance is Article 37 of the Convention, which says that "each contracting state undertakes to collaborate in securing the highest practicable degree of uniformity in regulations, standards, procedures and organization in relation to aircraft, personnel, airways and auxiliary services in all matters in which such uniformity will facilitate and improve air navigation." In other words, each state adopts the standards and recommended practices as set out in the annexes to the Convention. Article 38 requires members who cannot comply with these standards and procedures to notify ICAO of the differences between its own practices and those established by the international standard, and all

this information is published. The Russians are thus obviously prepared, as are all other ICAO members, to let the world know about—for example—their methods of licensing personnel, their airworthiness certification regulations, communications and air navigation aids, and so on.

Ratification of the Chicago Convention by the Soviet Union would also mean that they intend to participate in the work of ICAO and its committees and that they are prepared to publish for the first time facts and figures about Aeroflot traffic, finances, fleet, and so on. It is reasonable to expect that the Soviet Union would be given a place on the ICAO Council (recently increased from 21 to 27 member states) and that it would be prepared to contribute funds in accordance with ICAO assessments. These were \$4m in 1961, the biggest contributors being the USA (one-third) and the UK (one-tenth).

Obviously the Russians would feel their way slowly at first towards full participation in ICAO's work. But ratification of the Chicago Convention would bring nearer the day when the Russians are as open as the rest of the world, with the major exception of China, about their civil aviation.

## HOW MANY ARE FLYING FOREIGN?

IN an article under the above heading on May 24 last, *Flight International* published some facts and figures, based on information supplied by the Ministry of Aviation, relating to the amount of UK inclusive-tour business authorized to foreign carriers. The broad conclusion was that although foreign operators' IT traffic will go up substantially this year, British carriers too have been granted (by the Air Transport Licensing Board) access to a share of the market which, relative to the foreign carriers, is about the same as it was last year. This share in round terms was  $\frac{3}{4} : \frac{1}{4}$ . The number of seats authorized to foreign carriers by the Ministry for 1962 is 139,000, compared with 390,000 authorized to British independents by the ATLB.

Although these shares of seats appear comparable with the shares of actual passengers carried in 1961, the independents—BIATA and non-BIATA—are believed to have expressed concern to the ATLB that, in fact, the share of foreign carryings is disturbingly higher than last year. This is borne out by the statement in the ATLB's 1961-62 report, reviewed last week, that the foreign share of the IT charter market is likely to be up this year.

What are the facts? Facts are extraordinarily difficult to come by, because no returns have yet been made by either the British or foreign charterers of traffic actually carried; indeed, this is not yet possible, because the season is still in full spate. What seems to have happened is that the British independents have not, for various reasons, taken up all the capacity for which they have been licensed by the ATLB and it is possible that the foreign carriers have been taking up rather more of the capacity authorized by the Ministry than they did last year. The combined effect would account for the alleged increased foreign share.

The independents do not seem to be justified in blaming ATLB restrictionism towards them on the one hand and Ministry liberality towards foreign carriers on the other. There is little doubt that their real problem is straightforward commercial competition from foreign carriers, whose attractive DC-6-type equipment and low prices appeal to British travel agents.

In its report the ATLB says that the Minister assured the Board that, in granting rights to foreign carriers, it "will adopt similar criteria to those of the Board when licensing British operations." As discussed in *Flight International* for May 24 (page 822) this statement would appear to need considerable qualification if it is not to mislead. The Minister cannot apply such criteria to non-British carriers; he can only consider them. The Board says "it should not be assumed that the obtaining by a foreign operator of British traffic rights in the United Kingdom is automatic." But in actual practice considerations of reciprocity mean that, at the moment, the Minister must grant to foreign carriers virtually everything for which they ask—and must do so until the "equal shares" stage is approached.

Meanwhile there is evidence, as was apparent at a recent ATLB public hearing into 1963 IT applications for Palma, that some British travel agents who have booked business with foreign carriers (Aviaco in the case of Palma) want to book British for next season. All in all, however, there is no doubt that the independents must be prepared to accept an increasing foreign share of the inclusive-tour charter market.