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International Air Transport Association (IATA)

W. M. Sheehan

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INTERNATIONAL REVIEW

INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION (IATA)

TECHNICAL CONFERENCE

IATA's Sixth Annual Technical Conference, presided over by J. A. Collings, Executive Vice-President of Trans World Airlines, took place at Puerto Rico from April 20th to May 2nd. It was attended by 150 persons representing 65 airline and manufacturing companies and government agencies from a score of countries.

Helicopter Symposium

A notable part of the session was devoted to a Helicopter Symposium, held April 24th through 26th, at which there was a full and frank exchange of information between IATA airlines, metropolitan helicopter operators, manufacturers, government authorities and other interested groups, including representatives of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Mr. J. T. Dymont, Director of Engineering for Trans-Canada Air Lines, was Chairman of the Symposium.

A particularly valuable contribution was made by those companies and agencies which have already begun helicopter operations — Los Angeles Airways, Helicopter Air Services (Chicago), Okanagan Airways, New York Airways, Port of New York Authority, British European Airways and SABENA Belgian Airlines — and by representatives of the Helicopter Committee of the Air Transport Association of America.

The full and official record of the Symposium will be published by IATA later this year. Meanwhile, the following statement of requirements for the further development of the helicopter for commercial transport service was adopted by the participants:

"The consensus of opinion of the Helicopter Symposium of the Sixth IATA Technical Conference is that transport helicopters will be brought into effective commercial operation as rapidly as the development of equipment and technique will permit.

"It appears that suitable transport helicopters may become available in quantity before adequate facilities, techniques and regulations for their operation have been fully developed.

"These developments are dependent upon the broadening and acceleration of the present efforts of government agencies, operators and manufacturers.

"In view of the importance of the transport helicopter to the transportation systems of the future, and of the mutual dependence of civil and military developments, it is hoped that military departments and appropriate civil regulatory agencies will foster, together with civil operators and manufacturers, a program of prototype testing of helicopters in commercial operating regimes. The objectives of this program should be the improvement of reliability, the development of operating procedures and techniques, and the accumulation of handling experience.

"Since commercial transport helicopter operations will need to be carefully blended into the nature of the cities they will serve, civic agencies should be encouraged to participate in the development program outlined above, with the object of providing adequate heliports and facilities; and protecting suitable approach paths in built-up areas, by keeping to a minimum the number and height of towers and other aerial obstructions and by marking adequately those obstructions which must be permitted.

"Since certain of the problems associated with operations over city-centers have a fundamental bearing on the design of future transport heli-

copters and heliports, regulatory agencies should be encouraged to accelerate the determination by flight research of flight safety criteria and optimum approach, landing and take-off procedures for all-weather operations of transport helicopters. This program should include the development of instruments adequate for manual hovering in blind flight.

"In view of the necessity for operating helicopters under adverse weather conditions in close proximity to obstacles in order to serve city centers and otherwise to exploit their advantages, appropriate government agencies should be urged to accelerate the development of better weather forecasting, navigational facilities and procedures to meet the problems peculiar to the helicopter, and to institute smoke prevention laws in built-up areas.

"In view of the lack of extensive transport helicopter operating experience, all regulatory and local governing agencies should be cautioned against restrictive requirements, primarily applicable to fixed-wing aircraft, which might deter the full exploitation of the unique characteristics of this new vehicle.

"In order to reduce the cost and increase the availability of transport helicopters, both for military and commercial operators, government agencies, operators and manufacturers should attempt to assimilate as far as possible the design criteria and specifications of civil and military helicopters.

"Since the usefulness of the helicopter depends upon its convenience and freedom from delays associated with surface and fixed-wing operation, and since these delays have been most serious in international operations, governments should be urged to take the necessary steps to relax requirements for unnecessarily involved ticketing and other transport documents and to make proper arrangements for adequate and expeditious handling of customs and immigration facilities at heliports."

The Helicopter Symposium was unique, not only in the remarkable degree of collaboration between government officials, operators and manufacturers evinced, but from the point of view of air transport regulation. International regulation of fixed-wing aircraft was preceded by and has been based upon national regulation. Witness ICAO, which is an international concordance based upon pre-existing national codes. With helicopters, however, the international regime is being approached more directly: the indicated international standards and procedures are being devised well before corresponding national standards and procedures have been established.

Terminal Area Problems

A second major problem dealt with by the Technical Conference was that of obtaining the full use of airport traffic handling capacity. The conclusion drawn by the Technical Committee after considerable discussion was that the maximum use of airports can be gained only by proper correlation of airport runways, air navigation and landing aids, airway facilities and traffic control arrangements in the terminal areas.

The discussions also evolved the following four-point formula which may assist airport traffic planners in their attempts to provide for the greatest possible capacity:

1. The total capacity of an airport to handle traffic under instrument flying conditions must be related, not only to the air navigation system which serves it, but equally to the capacity of the airways which feed into it, its relationship to other airports in the same terminal area, and to such ground facilities as runways, taxiways, run-up and by-pass areas and the like.

2. It is likely that most airports will reach their maximum capacity to handle traffic when they have two-nonintersecting runways, one for landings and the other for take-offs. However, if these two are to accommodate their maximum potential, they must be planned with

adequate high speed exits, suitable taxiways, run-up and by-pass areas and the like; there must be adequate separation between them; and the terminal area itself must be planned to provide separate in-bound and out-bound traffic lanes and the flexible traffic patterns needed to feed the instrument landing system at its maximum capacity. Failure to consider all of these elements may either severely restrict the capacity of the airport, or prove costly when changes must be made.

3. The establishment of another airport in a given terminal area may actually reduce the handling capacity of the area rather than expand it, unless its runways and approach patterns are properly oriented with respect to existing airports and routes.

4. To achieve maximum capacity for an airport, air traffic control, airline operations and navigational aid specialists, as well as airport design engineers should participate in its planning. It is desirable that planning should anticipate an ultimate need, even though actual facilities may be installed to meet the immediate demand only as it develops."

Performance Requirements

Another achievement of the Conference was an extensive examination of operational factors effecting aircraft performance. Based on an exchange of views between airlines' specialists, governments, manufacturers and research establishments, IATA will recommend to its 67 airline members that they make a thorough evaluation of the impact on their operations of the proposed new "rational" performance requirements code being drafted by the Standing Committee on Performance (SCP) of the International Civil Aviation Organization. It is expected that this code will be put to an ICAO meeting of Divisional status in March 1954 and subsequently to the ICAO Council for approval.

In urging such an evaluation, the Technical Committee, which sets technical policy for IATA, stressed the desirability of arriving at a new performance requirements code which will add to the efficiency of air transportation without detracting from its present level of safety, but which would not sacrifice that efficiency for the sake of theoretical and uneconomic restrictions on performance.

The Committee felt that it was particularly important that performance requirements be as simple as possible in their framing and application; that they be flexible enough to permit local treatment of peculiar local problems; and that they allow operators a certain amount of latitude within the statistical variables expressed in the requirements. While it was recognized that requirements would have to be drafted with the very large bulk of operations in mind, there is still a small, but nevertheless important, range of operations where local conditions might make the general rule unnecessarily restrictive, and that it is therefore important to allow the operator to work out with local authorities procedures which will be suited to local circumstances and which will provide an equivalent level of safety.

The Committee also stressed the danger of premature applicability of the new performance standards to turbine-powered aircraft, whose operation has not yet been extensive enough to provide a sufficient statistical background.

The imperative need to develop sufficient meteorological statistics for all international airports was urged by the Committee as a prerequisite to the incorporation of temperature, humidity and wind accountability in performance codes. It was pointed out that, while ICAO requirements call for the gathering of weather data, a greater degree of compliance by national governments with the reporting specifications is urgently necessary for present operational purposes, as well as for those of SCP. More data on runway wind statistics and wind variability, as well as more exact standardized wind speed forecasts were also felt to be necessary.

SINGLE AGENCY AGREEMENT SCHEME

Of particular interest from a legal point of view is IATA's unheralded, but strikingly successful application of the Single Agency Contract Scheme between IATA and its approved passenger and cargo sales agents. Authorized by the Buenos Aires Traffic Conferences in May 1952, and put into motion at the beginning of this year, the Scheme has now been in operation for more than six months.

Previously, each IATA member has had to execute and maintain a separate lengthy contract with each of the many agents who sold transportation for it. The new Scheme is for IATA to make and maintain a contract with each agent on behalf of all those members wishing to retain him. Thus, IATA executes and sends out the standard form of agreement to each IATA approved agent. The latter signs and returns it to IATA. The Conference Secretary then notifies members which approved agents have executed and returned the agreements. Thereupon each member that wishes to appoint an IATA approved agent as its own agent does so by sending a simple Certificate of Appointment to the agent with copy to the Conference Secretary. Thus on the basis of a single agreement executed by IATA and the agent, the latter enters into contractual relationship with as many IATA members as may wish to appoint him.

In accordance with the authority given by the Traffic Conferences at Buenos Aires, the Conference Secretaries signed and circulated last Fall more than 7,000 agreements to agents on the IATA approved list. Despite legal uncertainties in several countries, with few exceptions agreements have been signed and returned to IATA by the agents.

It is expected that the new Scheme will effect substantial savings of time, trouble and expense to IATA members, as well as to thousands of agents. For example, when it was necessary recently to effect a minor amendment to the IATA standard form of agreement, this was accomplished by the three Conference Secretaries sending out approximately 7,000 notices and receiving approximately the same number of replies from agents. Under the previous system each IATA member would have been obliged to communicate with each of its appointed agents for an industry total of well over 100,000 separate communications.

A similar scheme has been put into force by members of the Air Traffic Conference of America with its agents. But it is believed that IATA's use of the single contract principle is quite unique in respect to its scope of application, number of parties and the multitude of legal jurisdictions concerned.

NINTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Ninth Annual General Meeting of IATA will be held October 5th-9th at Montreal. Trans-Canada Airlines and Canadian Pacific Airlines will act as Host Airlines. At the commencement of the meeting, Mr. Gordon R. McGregor, President of Trans-Canada Airlines, will succeed Dr. W. Berchtold, President of Swissair, as President of the International Air Transport Association.

TRAFFIC CONFERENCES

The Traffic Conferences have been convened for their usual worldwide Composite Session at Honolulu on November 2nd. Unlike the previous annual Traffic Conference meeting at Cannes in November 1952, which lasted 37 days, it is contemplated that this session will be able to complete its business in three weeks.

W. M. SHEEHAN*

* Legal Drafting Officer, International Air Transport Association.