

C.S.O.

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(Formerly)

SUBJECT :

I. G. A. S.

COMMUNICATIONS - AIR - REPORTS.

NOT TO LEAVE THE OFFICE WITHOUT H.C.S.'s AUTHORITY.

CONNECTED FILES.

NUMBER AND YEAR.

FLYING HOURS. JAN - DEC. 1950.

		Hrs.	Mins.	
Total hours flown	1950	480	20	:
(" " "	1949	132	15)

Days on which flying took place.

Monthly totals for 1950

Jan.	39. 00	*	18
Feb.	49. 40		17
March	32. 05		15
April	37. 45		18
May	31. 50	†	14
June	31. 20	x	16
July	42. 05		17
Aug.	38. 35		15
Sept.	33. 55		12
Oct.	50. 25		18
Nov.	40. 15		14
Dec.	53. 25		17
<u>Total.</u>	<u>480. 20.</u>		<u>191.</u>

* Land Auster, VP-FAB, in use all year.

† Float Auster, VP-FAC, entered service with F.I.G.A.S. May 7th. 1950.

x Norseman I, VP-FAD " " " " June 2nd 1950.

Aircraft totals for 1950.

Land Auster. VP-FAB	:	190. 15
Float Auster VP-FAC	:	174. 40
Norseman I VP-FAD	:	121. 20.
		<u>486. 15.</u> *

* This total exclusive of hours flown by VP-FAC & FAD in 1950 before being handed over to F.I.G.A.S., but inclusive of 5.55 hours by F/Lt. Lewis and F/O. St. Louis in the Falkland Islands which is not included in the 1950 total of 480. 20 taken from my own log book.

V.H. Spencer.

2
ACS.

File in new file

"Communications - An - Annual Report 1950."

a p.c.

B.

9 JAN 1951

This Aikem is producing some new facts and figures for us, which should be included herein.

I should also be grateful if Postmaster could inform me of the revenue collected by him in 1950 in respect of air freight and delivery of paper and parcel mail to the West.

Office
Please obtain
bill of exchange
L.H.

11 JAN 1951

C.

all.

Following figures from P.M., R: for period 18.7.50 - 31.12.50.

(a) air freight on parcels £ 17 - 12 - 6

(b) " " " (bagged) - 7 - 10 -

25 - 2 - 6

Ant. yet to be paid under (b)

£ 1 - 3 -
£ 26 - 5 - 6

£/12.1.

Miss Aikem
as at para 1 of
B above, R
1/2


A.C.S. (for Miss Aiken)

In connection with the annual report on the operation of the Air Service which I shall have to prepare I will require the following information :-

1. Total number of flights made in the year, and per each month.
2. Total number of flights to (a) East Falkland
(b) West Falkland
(c) East and West Falkland.
3. Total receipts due, showing Govt: and private a/c separately, monthly totals and annual total.
4. Total receipts actually received, Govt: and private a/c separately, annual total only.
5. Total expenditure for the year (a) P. Es.
(b) Other Charges.

I should be glad to have this as soon as possible.

2. Please ensure that a D.V.E.A. book is kept this year. ✓



8.1.51.

Miss Aiken.

Thank you for these figures. There are two points which occur to me. On the revenue side I see that several Govt: accounts are long outstanding. These are normally cleared by adjustment vouchers. I remember that I signed an A.V. on the 29th December which related to some long outstanding medical dept accounts with the air service. Would you please check that this has been passed through the treasury and is included in your list of amounts received during the year. The second point relates to expenditure on the air service. Do your figures include the cost of hiring the Norseman from FIDS. ? We should have paid £300 on this account.

24.1.51.

N.C.S

I have checked with the Medical Department and an adjustment voucher had been passed on the 29th of December, 1950, and it is included in the list.

2. Yes, the figures include the cost of hiring the Norseman from FIDS pl.

M. Aiken

25th January, 1951.

26/1/51

YE Draft annual report 1950 for F.I.S.A.S. submitted & corr.

7/2/51

Thank you - I think we might give the Service a slightly bigger hand? Something might be said about its growing popularity and its great value from a medical point of view?

MC 9/ii

YE I have added a small piece at the end of para 10.

26/2/51

Thank you.

MC 26/ii

ACS F.I.S.A.S. annual report as in draft at cover to be printed in the Gazette, unless this will cause any trouble which case it must be amended.

27/2/51

6

H.L. / G overleaf?

H.L. spoken

BU.
31/3/57
2/4/57

J
for CS.
27.2.

X) Office H.L. wishes the Report to be removed now and copies sent to members of Ex Reg. Co before the middle of April. The Report should thereafter be published in the Gazette when the printer can get down to it.

H.L.
2/4/57

Miss Aitken

Re proceed - bearing in mind the dead line as x above

J
2/4

ACS

Prod. Copies to:

- Ex: Co: ✓ sent a.u. 51
- Leg: Co: ✓ - m
- F.I.S.A.S. personnel ✓
- S/S ✓

2/4

please. I have sent a copy to H.E.

U.
9/4/57

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GOVERNMENT AIR SERVICE

ANNUAL REPORT

1950

Prior to the arrival of a qualified engineer in November, 1949, the operations of the Air Service were confined to mail delivery flights, emergency medical flights and the carriage of a few officials and others flying on Government business. During this period much useful preparatory work had been done both in selecting and proving landing grounds and in gaining experience of flying conditions in the Colony. From December, 1949, the service started acting as a proper passenger-carrying service, and thus 1950 marks the first year of its existence as a fully operative service.

2. The most serious obstacle to flying operations is and must always be the weather. The provision of expensive aircraft equipped with all the aids which science has now placed at the disposal of air crews, together with properly laid out and similarly equipped landing grounds would be entirely beyond the resources of the Colony. The Meteorological section of F.I.D.S. with its headquarters in Stanley has been of great assistance in providing information about the weather, and the installation of standard pattern R/T Sets at all farm settlements has helped in this respect as well as facilitating general communication. But though the means of obtaining information about the weather are good, the weather itself is not. Rain, mist, cloud and snow with the periods of high wind so frequent as to be almost more the rule than the exception must limit the number of days on which flying can take place. During 1950 flying did take place on 191 days, however, the monthly totals being shown below; in the circumstances this can be regarded as very satisfactory.

<u>Month</u>	<u>Flying time Hrs.</u>	<u>Mins.</u>	<u>Days on which flying took place</u>
January	39.	00.	18
February	49.	40.	17
March	32.	05.	15
April	37.	45.	18
May	31.	50.	14
June	31.	00.	16
July	42.	05.	17
August	38.	35.	15
September	33.	55.	12
October	50.	25.	18
November	40.	15.	14
December	53.	25.	17
	<u>480.</u>	<u>20.</u>	<u>191.</u>

The figures are of interest, though it should be remembered that flying is influenced not only by the weather but by the availability of the planes and also by the present makeshift nature of the air port facilities; thus far maintenance work on the aircraft has had to be undertaken in the open and was in consequence confined to days on which work was possible.

3. At the beginning of the year the service was operated with one Auster land plane. Its activities were restricted by

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the fact that the only runway in Stanley, on the racecourse, runs East and West and is very narrow. Furthermore the number of Settlements in the Camp having suitable landing places was limited. The Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey had purchased two float planes, a Norseman and an Auster, for use in the Antarctic in connection with the relief of Base E, and when they returned to Stanley they were taken over on a hiring arrangement for experimental service in the Colony. The Norseman, with seating capacity for 8 passengers, was a very welcome addition and was in commission just in time to help in bringing in from the Camp a number of people who wished to come to Stanley for the May holiday.

4. A slipway had been built for beaching the float planes but it was thought wiser not to indulge in the expense of a permanent hangar for them until it could be shown that they were suitable for use in the Colony. The nature of the terrain is such that the making of landing strips at all Settlements in the Camp is not practical, or would at best be costly, whereas there is plenty of relatively sheltered water at or near every Settlement. Practice soon proved that the float plane is of more general use in the Colony than the land plane, and work has therefore started on the erection of a permanent hangar for these float planes at the head of the slipway. The hangar is an ex-RAF model which was bought on the site at a former Air field in Scotland and shipped out to the Colony. The planes, which had been protected in the interval only by a wind break, do not appear to have suffered unduly from exposure to the weather (the Auster was the more affected by its service in the Antarctic), but once they are properly housed the work of maintenance will be made easier and quicker and the life of the planes will be prolonged.

5. A floating landing stage was essential for the effective operation of float planes, and one was constructed and moored to the outside of the hulk at the end of Sullivan jetty. It is interesting to note that part of the wooden crating in which the Norseman had originally been shipped was used for this purpose. Provision of similar floating landing stages at Camp Settlements would greatly facilitate the landing of passengers and freight. The fixing of buoys, which has been undertaken at most Settlements, is another important item in ensuring efficiency in operation.

6. It has been necessary to experiment with fares in order to achieve a system which is as fair as possible for all potential passengers. At present the tariff has been fixed at \$1 plus 1/- per mile for each mile of a passenger's flight reckoned as the shortest distance between his point of departure and his destination. The present allowance of baggage is 30 lbs per passenger. Children under 7 years are carried at half price, and infants under 1 year old are carried free of charge. A limited amount of express air freight is carried, the tariff being based on twice the charge for internal parcel post.

7. The delivery of mail was one of the first functions performed by the service and remains one of its more important duties. As soon as possible after the arrival of the mail boat, an event which occurs about once every five weeks, the letter mail is flown to as many Settlements as possible and dropped. An experiment has more recently been made in delivering newspaper and parcel mail by the Norseman to those Settlements on the West Falkland at which the mail boat is not scheduled to call. No extra charge is made for the delivery of letters but the newspaper and parcel mail is charged for at half Air freight rates. During the year 19 mail trips were flown.

8. The total number of passengers carried during the

year/

I hope managers will take this too heart - BU for SOA meeting.

This is too much 3 months.

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Year was 744, of whom 636 were on private account and 108 on Government account. The latter included medical cases coming into Stanley, medical officers flying to attend patients and Government officials and members of the Executive and Legislative Councils flying on Government business.

9. Revenue collected during the year amounted to £2,573. Of this total £1,828 was from private accounts and £745 from Government account. In addition £25 was collected by the Post Office for air parcels. Recurrent expenditure for the period totalled £3,081, including a sum of £300 representing the charge paid to the Dependencies administration for the hire of two aircraft for seven months of the year. These figures are provisional, as the final accounts for the year have not yet been completed. A sum of approximately £480 is due to revenue from accounts outstanding.

I hope
this has
now
been
collected.

10. It thus appears from the provisional figures that during the period under review the service very nearly covered its recurrent expenditure. The year cannot be taken as typical and it would be unwise to draw any firm conclusions from the figures because for the first five months of the year it was operating with only one small plane. But it can certainly be said that the operating loss is negligible having regard to the amenity which it provides for the public and is one which the Colony can properly afford. Its ready acceptance by the public - understandable when it is remembered that the alternative is usually a ride of many hours in inclement weather along bad tracks - is proved by the number of private passengers carried in this first year of operation. The value of the service in transporting medical cases is readily acknowledged by all those who have benefitted from it in this way, some of whom owe their lives to it.

11. The staff of the Department is as follows:

Acting Controller of Civil Aviation.	The Colonial Secretary.
Government Pilot	V.H.Spencer.
Engineer	M.Smith.
Mechanic	H.D.Jones.
Learner Mechanic	N.Aldridge.

Mention should be made of the valuable assistance given by those members of the R.A.F. and R.C.A.F. who were seconded to the Dependencies Administration for work in connection with the relief of Base "E", and who re-assembled and put into commission the two Dependencies planes after they returned from the Antarctic.

On the occasion of the issue of the first report on F.I.G.A.S. I wish to place on record my high appreciation of the services of the Pilot and Engineer the former for the cheerful, willing spirit and flying skill which he has displayed and which has made the service so popular; and the latter for maintaining the aircraft in operation under most adverse conditions.

The Colony is indebted to both. A copy of the

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report shd. go under coming
despatch to Sd/S.

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ACS

Copies of H.E.'s minute
to be made for Messrs Spencer
& Smith & sent to them
with their copy of the
F.I.S.A.S. report v.c.s.

C.C.A.

Copies also to their files.

9/4/80

B supra - copies distributed

accy. D 10/4.

as at x
Jule

FALKLAND ISLANDS.

FIGAS/21.

The Governor of the Falkland Islands presents his compliments to the right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies and has the honour to forward herewith for information six copies of the Government Air Service Annual Report 1950.

7-9

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,

STANLEY.

10th May, 1951.

Handwritten signature
14/5/51

The Harbour Master's Office,
PORT STANLEY.

14th January, 1952.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit the following report on
THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT DURING 1951.

This department was established as a separate entity during 1951, taking over the duties previously carried out by Executive Engineer, acting as Harbour Master, and the Colonial Secretary, acting as Controller of Civil Aviation. It is still too early to judge whether the experiment will prove to be a success or not, but indications to date show a very marked improvement in the operations of the M/V "Philomel", and it will be remembered that the previous failure of this vessel to meet the requirements of those people living in the 'camp' was the primary reason for the establishment of the Communications Department.

THE M/V "PHILOMEL".

The attached sketch chart illustrates very forcibly the scale of the vessels operations since the new department was formed in June, every settlement in the islands with the exception of Port Stephens having been visited at least once. It is particularly pleasing to note that many of these voyages have incorporated calls at 'island' settlements - farms which nowadays very rarely see a ship owing to the absence of schooners and cutters engaged on freighting. For instance the Sea Lion Islands have been visited on an average once every two months with mails and sundry freights and the Manager there has expressed his great appreciation of this service. Similarly West Point Island has had three visits during the past six months, while New Island, although only receiving the ship once, had a whole voyage devoted to carrying their requirements alone - forty tons of cargo in all being delivered there.

The "Philomel" is still occasionally hampered by engine trouble, but delays for this reason have not been unduly serious and it is confidently expected that they will disappear altogether when the long-awaited spare parts arrive from the United Kingdom.

A more frequent cause of delay is the coincidence in arrival at Port Stanley of the "Philomel" and the "Fitzroy". While the latter vessel is in port it is impossible for the "Philomel" to load cargo at the F.I.C. jetty as the gang there are fully engaged discharging or loading the "Fitzroy". Efforts have been made to arrange an itinerary for the "Philomel" which obviates her being in Stanley at the same time as the "Fitzroy", but this has so far proved unsuccessful as neither vessel appears to be able to keep to their itineraries, and with so many variable factors to consider it is a matter of luck whether they avoid each other or not.

A very considerable improvement has been made in the cargo carrying capacity of the "Philomel" by the removal from her hold of the long-range fuel tank and the storeroom, neither of which were essential to her operations in Falkland Island waters. Cargo handling has been considerably facilitated by the installation of a petrol driven winch to replace the cumbersome and slow power winch originally fitted to the vessel. The main driving shaft of this old winch sheared while the vessel was at sea, rendering the winch completely unserviceable: as a temporary measure a much smaller petrol winch was borrowed from the C.D.C. at Ajax Bay, and this has proved so successful that it is intended to allow it to remain in the vessel, especially as a replacement from England would cost over £1,000. The small hand windlass for working the ship's light starboard anchor has been installed forward: this arrived in the Colony in 1949, but for some reason was never fitted. It is now giving satisfactory service.

The improved running and cargo carrying capacity has naturally resulted in a gratifying increase in revenue earned, and for the first time since the Government purchased the ship, we are in the happy position of having underestimated the vessels takings. This cheerful aspect is unfortunately tempered by the fact that running costs are also rapidly increasing, and to meet these it has been necessary to raise the freight rates charged by the Government to those applying to the "Fitzroy".

THE FALKLAND ISLANDS GOVERNMENT AIR SERVICE.

The achievements of the Air Service have also displayed an improvement during the year, as the attached graph shows: it must be remembered however that for some months the service has had the advantage of possessing two pilots, a fact which definitely stepped up the scale of operations during the closing months of the year.

The result of there being two pilots in the Falklands available to operate the aircraft has not been without interest. In general there is insufficient bookings to make it worth while to employ two permanent full-time pilots, since the number of passengers carried by the second pilot in the Auster aircraft is negligible when compared with those carried in the Norseman. On the other hand it means that when the mail flight is being undertaken, the larger aircraft is still available for passenger work. Of necessity, a day on which it is possible to fly mail around all the West Island settlements is one of almost perfect flying weather and so the continuance of passenger work on that day is an undoubted advantage. Equally the second pilot comes into his own when an urgent medical case, off the normal passenger route, suddenly occurs. This can be collected by the second pilot without interference of the passenger programme. The obvious conclusion is to employ a Controller of Communications capable of undertaking the mail delivery and the collection of the outlying sick patients.

Apart from the experiment of utilising two pilots, the organisation of the Air Service has altered little during 1951. One minor improvement that may be worthy of mention has been the utilisation of either the "Alert" or the F.I.G.A. motor boat as a water taxi/crash tender - this has speeded up the arrival of passengers at the slipway, especially as it is now almost impossible to obtain a taxi willing to risk its springs on the road past Government House.

On the basis that actions speak louder than words, the achievements of the Air Service during 1951 compared with the preceding years may best be summarised in the table given below.

	1949.	1950.	1951.
Passengers carried.	35	747	919
Medical passengers.	6	+	60
Passenger miles.	+	41,000	53,000
Revenue earned.	£207	£3040	£3650
Flying hours.	132	480	475

+ Not assessed.

THE HARBOUR DEPARTMENT.

In the Harbour Department itself, 1951 may be regarded as being a year of clearing away the accumulated wreckage of past years. The hull of the launch "Penguin" has been sold, as this was of no foreseeable value to the Government, while its new owner, the Manager of New Island, will doubtless be able to make good use of it as a cutter when he has completed the re-rigging of the vessel. One very old dinghy, again of no service to the Government has been sold to the Manager, Bluff Cove, where a boat was urgently required. That leaves the Harbour Department with the "Alert", F.I.G.A.S. motor boat, one whaler and two dinghies: in addition there is a small dinghy on loan to the Air Service from the M/V "Philomel", and kept at the seaplane slipway. Even with this reduced number of craft to maintain, it is still difficult to manage any repairs to the boats, and were it not for the use of 'volunteer' labour, whose services are repaid by free use of the boats when not required by Government, any attempt to repair boats during the past six months would have been impossible. In this manner the whaler has recently been repaired by Mr S. Bennet and the apprentices from the Government carpenters shop.

On the jetty fuel tanks have been established for refuelling the M/V "Philomel", and a start (not a very large one, again owing to labour shortage) made to dismantle the old crane at the jetty head and replace it with the one from the Canache jetty. The provision of a warehouse near the jetty envisaged for 1952 will prove most useful in providing a safe stowage place for sundry freights arriving in the M/V "Philomel" and act also as a weighing-in station for the aircraft. Necessary repairs to the Government jetty are fortunately mostly of a superficial nature and will not prove unduly expensive.

The Government slipway has carried only one vessel of any size during the year. It is not in good condition, but repair or extension would be costly and is not recommended with the present very limited demand.

The administration of the Government boat shed is at the moment most unsatisfactory: it appears to fulfil a dual role of boat shed and carpenters shop, with the inevitable result that it is impossible to make any one individual responsible for the stores contained in it. Now that the Executive Engineer is no longer responsible for the Harbour Department I recommend that this shed be used solely as a boat shed and that the harbour Department assume responsibility for its management.

Navigation lights around the islands are still a problem: all those in the approaches to Port Stanley, with the exception of Engineer Point which awaits some new tubing, are now operating satisfactorily, and it is hoped that the S/V "John Biscoe" will be able to relight Bull Point and Cape Meredith in the near future. It is hoped that once this has been done the lights next year will prove easier to maintain, but until it has been proved that they can be efficiently maintained I feel it would be most unwise to embark upon any further scheme of coastal lights - a light which cannot be kept burning tends to become more of a danger to navigation than a help.

The office has become established, but it has been found impossible to keep level with the paper work owing to the amount of time the Controller has had to spend away from Port Stanley with the M/V "Philomel". Also there is a great deal more paper work involved than I was originally led to believe. However, the months charter of the "Philomel" should provide ample time to catch up with all arrears of this sort, and I consider that it is vital to keep up to date with the running time of the vessel, which once lost can never be recovered, and to do so office efficiency has had to suffer.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Harbour Master.

Bu. 10. 13
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5th December,

53.

To: The Harbour Master,

From: The Colonial Secretary

Stanley.

Annual Reports.

The last annual report issued on your Department was for the year 1950 which covered the Government Air Service only. It is now desired to issue an annual report covering all activities of the Harbour and Aviation Department. Would you please therefore submit a report covering the period 1952/53.

Reply at

(Sgd.) C. Campbell

Colonial Secretary.

Jes

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(1952/53).

1. HARBOUR.(a) M/V "Philomel".

During this period it was twice necessary for the "Philomel" to be sent to Punta Arenas, Chile, the first overseas voyages made by the vessel since her arrival in the Colony. The first of these was necessitated by the need for a thorough inspection and repair of the stern gear fittings, which could not be effectively carried out on the beaches in the Falkland Islands, despite repeated efforts and considerable assistance from H.M. Ships. During the outward passage the "Philomel" was escorted to within twenty miles of Punta Arenas by H.M.S. "Vernan Bay", this precaution being considered prudent as the propeller locking nut was considerably corroded. All the necessary repairs were effected during five days on the slipway at Punta Arenas, where every facility was offered to the ship and the willing cooperation of the Chilean authorities was most gratifying. The "Philomel" returned to the Colony independently at the end of the refit with a cargo of coal and diesel oil for the Harbour Department, the saving effected in purchasing these stores on the spot practically offsetting the cost of the refit. Opportunity was taken to visit Beauchene Island during the return passage to examine suspected seal poaching in that area.

This voyage proved quite conclusively the necessity for a proper underwater inspection of the vessel at regular intervals - every two to three years would be adequate - if long lay-up periods are to be avoided. The beaches, although useful for a preliminary inspection, are not good enough for actual repair work, since the tide makes this into a constant race against time, and the only effective method is to slip or dock the vessel. As there is no slipway of sufficient size in the Falklands, the only alternative is to despatch the vessel to Punta Arenas.

The second voyage to Punta Arenas, where a pilot was embarked, and thence onward through the Straits to Natales, was to tow back to the Colony the hull of the ketch "Gambler", which had been purchased by Mr C. Bunde. This operation was successfully concluded without incident, and it should be noted that without the assistance of the "Philomel" it would not have been possible for the Colony to obtain the services of another sorely needed coasting vessel. Again the assistance received from the Chilean authorities was most welcome, and a financial profit was shown on this voyage, as all costs were borne by the company buying the "Gambler".

During the remainder of the year the "Philomel" was engaged in her normal coasting operations in the Colony, these being on a reduced scale to those of 1951/52 owing to a large number of crew changes impairing the vessel's efficiency. Occasional voyages were also made at the request of the medical department at times when no pilot was available in the Colony, or when prolonged periods of bad weather unduly delayed flying operations. With the establishment of the "Gambler" as a coasting vessel, the floating of a further company, the InterCoastal Trading Company, to operate the M/V "Protector III" on a commercial basis at the conclusion of her sealing activities, the Government policy regarding "Philomel's" operations was modified so that the vessel was employed more upon Government business, thus avoiding competitive carrying with the other concerns. This change was, however, gradual owing to the teething troubles experienced by the new concerns necessitating some carrying to the farms by the "Philomel" to obviate undue delays in cargo delivery.

(b) Harbour Craft.

As usual the most used of the harbour craft was the M/L "Alert", which still remains in good running order, despite her twenty six years of arduous operation. The petrol engine, made by Parsons in 1925, began to show increasing signs of age however, and in consequence it was necessary to confine the launches activities almost exclusively to the harbour and Port William, most of the work being on behalf of the Agricultural Department. A new Lister diesel engine was ordered from the United Kingdom to replace the old petrol engine.

Other boats available to the department during the year were:- one steel ex-lifeboat, which was used in conjunction with the "Alert" to bring tussac in from the islands in Port William; two ten foot dinghies, one of which remained at the aircraft slipway for emergency use in beaching operations, and the other at the Government jetty; one sixteen foot motor dinghy, which is eventually destined to be used as the aircraft crash tender, but which cannot at present be used owing to the absence of a crew. There is also an old fourteen foot dinghy in a poor state of repair lying on the bank near the boatshed: this craft has not been in use for some years, but could be repaired and put into use again when labour is available for the work.

(c) Coastal Light Beacons.

These remain spasmodic in their appearance, and their upkeep is still far from satisfactory. During the year all the lights were in operation at one time or another, which proves that the mechanism is still in working order, but for only a short period was it possible to have all lights working. The lights at present established are at the following points:- three in the entrance to Port Stanley (Blanco Bay, Engineer Point and Nany Point); Mengesary Point, Bull Point and Cape Meredith. The intention is to establish further lights at Fox Bay (2), San Carlos Waters entrance (3), Cape Dolphin and Cape Carysfort. Those in the entrance to Port Stanley can be maintained by the "Alert", and 'Camp' lights by the "Philomel". But correct maintenance will only be possible if the "Philomel" can be made available for a sufficient number of days every year to service the lights, and to date this has been impossible owing to other commitments; it is estimated that the vessel will require 90 days per annum to service all these lights when they are finally established, and considerable improvement will also have to be made in the refilling and supply of cylinders from Montevideo, for even with the present limited number of lights in operation an acute shortage of cylinders is experienced, partly due to the fact that cylinders from the Colony have been despatched to the Dependencies for urgently required lights in that area.

If these lights are to be of any real assistance to coastal shipping in Falkland Islands Waters, their efficient maintenance must be organised, for an unreliable light is more of a menace than a guide. It is to be hoped that with the alleviation of "Philomel's" cargo work by the introduction of the "Gambler" and "Protector" a great improvement may be effected, but this will only be possible provided that the time is made available, and the operating policy of the vessel is, of course, outside the control of the Harbour Department.

(d) Wrecks.

The Receiver of Wrecks had an easy year, only one occurring during the period, the Drifter "Golden Chance" being lost on the beach at Port San Carlos, but ultimately salvaged with Royal Naval assistance.

(e) Registration of Shipping.

Owing to shortage of office staff, this duty is still very inefficiently carried out in the Falkland Islands. Even without

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the necessity to register or re-register new ships, the amount of paper work involved in routine reports is considerable, and the time taken to complete these is made greater by the inexperience of all concerned. A serious difficulty is the absence of a qualified ship surveyor in the Colony, which makes the measurement of a new vessel, or re-measurement of an alteration an arduous task. It is hoped that some assistance in this may be obtained from the Master, R.R.S. "John Biscoe", as several local vessels require a new surveyors certificate, without which they cannot be re-registered.

(f) Naval Reporting Officer.

With the presence of an H.M. Ship in the Falklands at all times, these duties have been considerably reduced, and now consist almost entirely of the safe custody of the requisite cyphers and codes. It is doubtless possible for the officer performing these duties to liaise more closely with visiting warships than at present, but this is not considered to be a first call upon his time, and while an H.M. Ship is maintained here, it might even be worth considering declaring this post redundant.

(g) Personnel.

The complement of the Harbour Department during the year was as follows:-

Office.	Acting Harbour Master (Agricultural Officer). Clerk.
Philomel.	Master. Mate. Engineer. Engineman. Cook. 2 Deckhands.
Alert.	Coxswain. Mechanic.

Some instability was noticeable in the crew of the "Philomel" during the period, which adversely affected her operational efficiency, no fewer than fifteen different men being employed in four posts in three months. Other members of the staff remained unchanged throughout the year.

It was found difficult to reconcile the duties of Agricultural Officer with those of Acting Harbour Master for so long a period, the Harbour Master being under training in the United Kingdom, and it is suggested in future that an officer whose normal duties do not call for his being away from Stanley be appointed as Acting Harbour Master. In other respects however the Agricultural Officer's intimate knowledge of the requirements of the Camp was of undoubted assistance to him in the dual role.

(h) Office.

A considerable improvement was made during the year in bringing the accounts up-to-date, these having been sacrificed in the past to get work done. It was found however, that this policy led to an enormous back-log of accounting to be cleared up, and ought not to be encouraged. Had it not been for the fact that the "Philomel" was away from the Colony for two long periods, and the scale of her operations after her return was reduced, it is doubtful if this recovery could have been made.

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2. AVIATION.

(a) Aircraft.

The aircraft available to the Air Service during the year were:- one Norseman seaplane; one Auster seaplane; one Auster landplane. Of these, the Norseman was rapidly nearing the end of its useful life owing to rapid spread of salt-water corrosion on the airframe, and had to be put out of action for considerable periods while essential maintenance work was carried out. It is intended to replace this aircraft with a Beaver seaplane next year.

The Auster seaplane was used to a considerable extent, and apparently suffered very little from corrosion owing to the metalisation of the airframe. The payload of this aircraft is however so poor that its only real utility is in fetching medical cases and delivering mails - at least until a second pilot is available.

The Auster landplane was not used owing to the poor state of the racecourse runway, which is really only usable in emergency, which fortunately did not arise.

(b) Installations.

No alterations were made during the year to the hangar installations, but it is hoped that work may be begun in the near future on the extension of the slipway, which causes serious delays to the Norseman in launching and slipping.

(c) Operations.

Air Service activities suffered a serious reverse in the early part of the year when no pilot was available owing to the medical unfitness of Mr Halla. After the arrival of Mr Devrell to take up these duties operations were begun again, and soon reached the previous scale, despite persistent snags occurring to the Norseman aircraft.

An effort was made to institute early morning flights, as this was considered the most suitable part of the day so far as weather is concerned for flying, but these experiments were of doubtful value, since it was found almost impossible to organise passengers at the hanger sufficiently early to make the effort worth while. It also entailed personnel working very long hours owing to the difficulty in slipping the aircraft with unsuitable tides. The experiment was abandoned after a month's trial, but should be reinstated later if and when the organisation can be sufficiently improved to overcome the difficulties.

(d) Personnel.

The complement of the Air Service during the year was as follows:-

* Office. Acting C.C.A. (Agricultural Officer).
 Clerk.

* Both these officers combine their duties with those in the Harbour Department.

Hangar. Pilot.
 Engineer.
 Mechanic.
 Learner Mechanic.

As mentioned above under 'Operations', the Air Service was brought to a standstill by the sickness of the pilot in the

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early part of the year, and it is to be hoped that this contingency will be safeguarded against when the Harbour Master has completed his flying course in the United Kingdom. Apart from this, the staff remained the same throughout the year. It is suggested that in future pilots be engaged for periods of at least two years, and if possible three. The engagement of pilots (as in Mr Devrell's case) for a tour of twelve months is most unsatisfactory, for it not only entails needless expense in passages, but also means that the pilot will be leaving just as he becomes accustomed to flying conditions in the Colony.

(c) Office.

The accounts for the Air Service were found to be in much better shape than those for the Harbour Department, and there was little change in the office work from previous years. Some effort was made to clear up long-standing accounts, but without conspicuous success, and it is felt that only when the threat of legal proceedings is introduced into the account sent will bad payers be forced to take notice.

A large amount of work is occasioned by the I.C.A.C. forms and questionnaires sent to the Colony: as the existing staff is quite inadequate to deal with this, all but those bearing directly upon F.I.C.A.S. activities are ignored.

3. OFFICE.

Office work has been touched upon under the headings of both Harbour and Aviation, but only in so far as it directly concerns the efficiency of those departments. It has been found that the union of the two departments has to a large extent enabled the Government to deal more efficiently with the transport problems, both freight and passenger, for campers, but it is doubtful whether the office staff established with the new department is adequate to deal with the increased volume of work.

A first desideratum is improved accommodation, the present very small office being quite inadequate to house even the files and books connected with the two departments. After this, some simplification of the accounting system is required, to ease the routine paper work and allow more time for the completion of non-productive reports - Registry of Shipping, I.C.A.C. papers, etc.

It would be useful to summarise here the various headings under which the office work in this department fall, as it is felt that these are insufficiently appreciated.

(a) Routine Government files. There appear to be over fifty files directly concerned with this department, of which approximately one third are normally in circulation. With the head of the department frequently away, be he the Harbour Master or the 'locum tenens', a bottleneck tends to develop over this work. Unfortunately the experiment of trying to deal with matters verbally as and when opportunity permitted was found to be unsuccessful as important decisions tended to become overlooked or forgotten. A possible solution is for the C/S to act as a file monitor and to call the Harbour Master to the Secretariat with all outstanding questions once a fortnight and for these to be dealt with together then. This system would have the advantage that an agreed minute written at that time would not have to be referred back once more for elucidation.

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(b) Departmental Accounts.

These can be divided into three heads:- accounts to customers, both Air Service and for the department; incoming accounts for work done for the department and stores; issue vouchers for Government stores used. It has been found that when the "Philomel" and the aircraft are both actively engaged for a month, the resulting accounts occupy the clerk fully to the exclusion of all others. Fortunately, it is rarely that both sides of the department are in full operation together, and in consequence this situation does have slack periods in which the back-log of office work can be rectified. However, it should be remembered that before the union of the two departments a clerk in the secretariat was almost continuously engaged upon Air Service accounts alone, and a clerk in the P.W.D. on the Harbour accounts. Since the union the scale of work has greatly increased in both departments, but there is now only one clerk to deal with this.

(c) Reports and Returns.

These have been previously mentioned in both departments. Little was done before the union of the two departments to attend to these routine reports called for by external organisations, such as the annual return of shipping, etc. Regrettably, little is still done, since time just cannot be spared for this work without sacrificing actual productive work in the Colony. However, sooner or later this difficulty will have to be faced, and there appear to be two solutions. Firstly the work could be entirely abandoned, and all pretence of carrying out the duties concerned given up; secondly a staff to deal with it could be arranged, by borrowing a clerk from another department for work on perhaps five days every month, which would enable much if not all of this work to be carried out.

(d) Communications.


A serious interference to office routine is occasioned by the telephone and the R/T set. An average of perhaps fifty calls per day may be expected upon the former, especially on a flying day when interested persons ring up to enquire what time the aircraft will arrive or depart, and the R/T set provides a constant background noise when the aircraft is away from Stanley, since the aircraft safety channel is on the same frequency as the normal camp R/T set. In addition to the disturbance thus caused, it is also necessary to call the aircraft at half-hourly intervals during flight and the "Philomel" three times daily while she is at sea. It is fair to say that the R/T set in the office losses at least an hour of clerical work to the department on every flying day, which is two out of three working days. This is an additional duty assumed by the department since its inception.

GENERAL COMMENTS.

It is still too early to say conclusively that the principle of combining the two departments under a separate head is successful or not, but on the whole it is felt that the new department has justified itself during the past two years by dealing more expeditiously with the transport requirements of the camp than was previously possible.

Like all new ventures, some teething troubles have been encountered, and these have been particularly noticeable in the clerical and accounting side, where it is hoped some improvement will be possible in the future. Much of this original trouble was occasioned by the new Harbour Master who was more interested in doing things than explaining what he was doing or accounting for them! There was undoubtedly a great call for an increased use of the equipment available to the department at the time of the changeover, but the lessons learnt in 1951/52

when accounting was sacrificed for the sake of actual operations should not be forgotten. In this respect it was found that an Acting head of the department, who did not possess detailed technical knowledge of either aircraft or ships, was more successful in keeping an unbiased view of the relative values of work and accounts than one with technical knowledge, who could never resist the temptation of personally taking part in all activities rather than directing operations from the office.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J.P. Oliver". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Harbour Master,

(For J.P. Oliver, Acting Harbour Master.)

(1953/54).

1. HARBOUR.

(a) M/V "Philomel".

This proved a difficult year for the "Philomel" in that Government policy covering her operations had of necessity to be flexible to meet the improving coastal shipping conditions in the Colony. At the start neither "Protector III" nor the "Garbler" were fully operative, and in consequence there was justification in continuing "Philomel's" commercial sailing to the settlements. As the year progressed however, these demands for her services became fewer, and after the arrival of the first of the charter vessels in the Falklands it became obvious that to continue cargo carrying any longer would be detrimental to the best interests of the new private concerns.

The "Philomel" was then switched to purely Government work, making two voyages to Fox Bay with materials for the new power station there, and later making two voyages with mails for the West Falkland. These latter allowed every settlement in the islands to receive both letter and parcel mail before Christmas after the arrival of the mail on December 8th.

In the New Year plans were drawn up for the conversion of the "Philomel" into a mobile X-ray unit for the Chest Specialist to visit all settlements, with the establishment of an X-ray ward, darkroom and dressing room in the hold of the ship. These alterations were carried out very economically, if somewhat slowly, by the ship's crew, thus saving the already scarce P.W.D. labour. Before the end of the period under review the "Philomel" sailed on the first of these voyages with the Chest Specialist, and proved to be a complete success.

This X-ray tour, which has earned the vessel the pseudonym of the "T.E. Battleship" will carry the vessel through the next three months, and it has been suggested that before the alterations are stripped a similar tour should be carried out by the Camp Dentist, as the accommodation in the hold can easily be converted to his requirements.

Spare parts for the vessel have now become available in reasonable quantities from the United Kingdom, and it is noticeable that a considerable improvement in the vessels running efficiency has resulted, very few days being lost through mechanical failures during the year. It is now two years since the last overhaul of the vessel's stern gear in Punta Arenas however, and consideration should be given to another visit there during the coming year. Preliminary inspection on the beach in the Colony shows no serious defects but it would be a wise precaution to fit the new stern gland bearing and propeller shaft as soon as possible, for without them the vessel should not undertake further towing operations.

(b) Harbour Craft.

The new Lister diesel engine for the M/L "Alert" arrived in the Colony during the year and the refit of the launch was undertaken by the Harbour Department personnel, assisted by a carpenter from the P.W.D. This work took longer than was originally estimated, the boat being out of commission for three months, but at the end of this period the "Alert" was once more in perfect condition, with the new engine giving a most satisfactory improved performance. It is interesting to note that this engine is of the same type as the winch engine aboard the M/V "Philomel", so only one set of spare parts need be carried by the department, it being considered unlikely that

Simultaneous breakdowns of any one port will occur.

In addition to the work on the engine, repairs were effected to the hull of the boat and the canopy was altered to make the cockpit more comfortable in inclement weather. Trials proved these alterations to be more successful than was originally estimated, and it was found that the launch is now capable of venturing out if need be in the roughest weather. It is hoped in the future to use the "Alert" for more ambitious ventures than simply harbour runs - there is a call for a small craft to bring regular supplies of fish into town from Berkeley Sound for instance, and small scale surveys could be undertaken, with or without naval assistance.

During the year the steel ex-lifeboat was exchanged with the I.T.C. for a sixteen foot motor dinghy. For some time I.T.C. had hired this lifeboat from the Harbour Department, largely because it was the only means available to the company to shift sheep in large numbers from places where no jetty was available, and in view of the deterioration occasioned by this work, it was considered a more fair solution to all concerned to make a straight exchange. The motor dinghy will prove of much greater use to the department than the lifeboat, and is already being used by "Philomel" to assist the Chest Specialist in his tour.

The hull of a F.I.D.S. dory has been obtained from the Antarctic free of charge; this hull was in very poor condition, but is to be used as a pattern to make two new dories for the "Philomel" to use as raft boats. They will greatly facilitate landing operations when the new lighthouse parts are being disembarked.

Other boats remain in the same condition as in the previous year: one ten foot dinghy at the aircraft slipway; one at the Government jetty for use in conjunction with the "Alert"; a motor dinghy retained in the davits for ultimate use by the Air Service; and the old fourteen foot dinghy remaining still unrepaired by the boatshed.

A new colour scheme has been introduced for the Government boats - green hull, with a black gunwale and a white flash on the side - this is proving easier to keep clean than the old black and white colours, and also gives the boats a smarter appearance.

(c) Coastal Light Beacons.

It is to be regretted that no improvement in this sphere can be reported: all the lights are still in operating order, but are still found to be difficult to retain in working order, principally due to the shortage of cylinders and "Philomel" having too little time to visit the camp lights as frequently as is necessary. It is submitted that no further lights should be established until a satisfactory system of maintaining the present beacons can be devised.

(d) Registration of Shipping.

A start has been made to regularise the position of shipping registration in the Colony. During 1952/53 the Acting Harbour Master took some action in this matter, but unfortunately through insufficient knowledge of the duties involved this led to even more mistakes being made. As a first step, amendments to the Instructions to Registrars have been obtained from the United Kingdom, the copy held in the Colony having been left unamended since 1929. These amendments have now been received, but unfortunately they are so numerous (approximately 350) the work will take some months to complete. Meanwhile, there are still several local craft desiring re-registry, and their requirements cannot be met until a solution of the surveying problem is reached.

(e) Personnel.

The complement of the Harbour Department at the end of the year was as follows:-

Office.	Harbour Master. Clerk.
Philomel.	Master. Mate. Engineer. Engineman. Cook. Deckhand.
Alert.	Coxswain. Mechanic.

The "Philomel's" crew, which had proved to be a constant source of difficulty at the end of the previous year was finally stabilised, and only one change has been made in her complement during the year, while one deckhand has been declared redundant. It is hoped to reduce the crew still further early next year by making the cook combine his duties with those of deckhand. A crew of five is considered to be amply large enough for a vessel of this size when not engaged upon commercial cargo operations.

On the other hand, the department generally is noticeably short of labour, particularly now the "Alert" is capable of undertaking more ambitious voyages. Prior to the formation of the new department labour could always be made available from the P.W.D. for such items as clearing up the jetty, minor repairs etc. Also, until 1949, the crew of the "Alert" was always three men - a necessary number if a long run is to be attempted. At present the Coxswain of the "Alert" has not only his own craft to attend to, but also such things as the maintenance of Government flagpoles, repairs and maintenance of other boats in the department, maintenance of the jetty and various other small chores. The only method it is possible to send the "Alert" out on a long run at all is by either the Harbour Master or the Clerk accompanying the boat to take a trick at the wheel. This is not a satisfactory solution, and consideration should be given to the re-employment of the redundant deckhand from the "Philomel" as a labourer in the Harbour Department.

(f) Office.

The transfer of a clerk from the Post Office upon the resignation of Mr McPhee has proved most successful, and his work in clearing up the outstanding accounts for the Harbour Department has been most successful beneficial. With a head of department who is away from the office more often than he is in it, it is essential that the clerk should be capable of acting upon his own initiative and continuing his duties without instructions.

B. AVIATION.

(a) Aircraft.

The Norseman aircraft was replaced during the year by a De Havilland Beaver Seaplane, which, although carrying a smaller payload than the Norseman, was found to be much more suited to the type of operation prevailing in the Colony. The assembly and test-flying of the Beaver was assisted by De Havillands staff sent to the Colony for the purpose, and the results of the first six months of operation are encouraging. The remnants of the Norseman have been purchased by the Colony for use as spare parts.

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The Auster seaplane has undergone a C. of A. overhaul and is now in perfect working order once more. This aircraft, which was one of the original Auster landplanes to be used in the Colony, appears to stand up very well to conditions, and proves most useful for short hauls with one passenger up. It is easy and quick to launch - when necessary this can be done by the pilot without assistance - and in consequence can be utilised for early morning emergency flights to good effect.

The Auster landplane has been relegated to spare parts, as there seemed to be no call for her services and neither pilot considered the aircraft safe to fly in the Falklands for anything other than emergency medical calls.

(b) Installations.

A considerable amount of work has been carried out for the Air Service during the past year. Royal Naval assistance was obtained to remove dangerous rocks off the head of the seaplane slipway, and it is now possible to launch and slip the aircraft at all states of the tide, although some smoothing off of the slipway end is still desirable to make this a simpler operation.

A stores shed has been constructed near the seaplane hanger to provide weather proof storage for spare parts; this was made from the ex-Marine Fitting Shop and undertaken by contractors. Work is progressing with fitting racks and shelves in this shed, which will also house a small log book office to avoid these documents becoming contaminated by oil in the hanger.

The hanger workshop has been weather proofed, while a drainage system has been installed around the hanger to prevent rain water from flooding the floor. Work has started upon the construction of a toilet for the use of the staff and passengers - a very necessary convenience, which it is hoped can be completed in the near future.

(c) Operations.

The closing months of the year have been the most successful the Air Service have ever had, three factors contributing to this. Firstly, with two aircraft and two pilots available it was possible plan flights more efficiently, by leaving the short hops with one passenger to the Auster and concentrating the Beaver upon the longer West flights with a full load each way. Secondly the greater serviceability of the Beaver meant that very few flying days have been missed through maintenance or the tides. Thirdly, an old favourite, early morning flying was made to work with at least partial success. It was still found impossible to operate long Beaver flights early in the day, but short Auster flights were attempted to an increasing extent in the later part of the year with considerable success.

The passenger potential in the Colony appears to be mounting steadily, and despite this increased scale of flying which has probably reached nearly the maximum possible without a further increase in the size of the organisation, the demand for flights still far exceeds the actual number of passengers carried every month. The most pressing need in this respect is for some system of sorting the sheep from the goats - in other words, deciding which passengers to fly first, for obviously it is in the best interests of the Colony that urgent business flights should take precedence over purely social visiting, but as yet there is no method of ensuring this. It is not an easy problem to tackle, since it cannot be left to the discretion of any one individual, and if a committee is to be formed it will entail its sitting daily to arrange flights for the next day.

A committee was formed during the year to study F.I.G.A.S. operations in general. The results to the members must have appeared disappointing, as it was found impossible to reach any definite conclusions. However, it is hoped that they did not

feel unduly discouraged, for their deliberations allowed the Air Service at least to see other points of view, some of which later proved of great value.

(d) Personnel.

The complement of the Air Service remained the same as the previous year, with the exception that the Learner Mechanic was replaced upon his resignation by a handyman, designated Coxswain as he was intended to operate the Air Service crash tender. So far however, he has been required to be in attendance at the hangar upon all occasions when flying has taken place, and it is doubtful if he will ever be spared in fact for this duty. With a total complement of six men (two of whom have other duties in the Harbour Department) the Air Service is greatly understaffed if it is intended to keep two aircraft in continuous operation. However, ways of alleviating the strain upon personnel by giving time off in lieu on non-flying days are proving a limited success, and the labour shortage is not at present a dominating factor in limiting operations, although it may become so if and when early morning Beaver flights are attempted.

(e) Office.

Outstanding Air Service accounts have been cleared to a great extent, there now being less than thirty persons owing accounts older than three months. But there is still difficulty in dealing with I.C.A.C. documents and other circular questionnaires, where progress will be virtually impossible without the employment of at least a part time clerk.

GENERAL COMMENTS.

This department has undoubtedly had its fair share of the Colony's revenue during the past twelve months, but the results of the improvements made are already becoming manifest.

In addition to the improvements made in the Air Service installations already mentioned, and the alterations to the M/V "Philomel" and the M/L "Alert", the Government Dockyard jetty has been rebuilt and a crane established thereon for the removal of heavy lifts from the "Philomel" or from lighters. A large oil storage tank, capable of holding twenty tons, has been established on the jetty for the use of the "Philomel", and a new building constructed on the T piece to house the Harbour Master's Office, a warehouse, the Marine Fitting Shop, "Philomel" spare parts shed and eventually, a toilet.

It can therefore be said that the end of the year finds this department very well equipped for its duties, with only minor improvements scheduled for the future. The only sphere in which little improvement has been effected is in the staff, for although existing members are become progressively more efficient in their duties, they are still few to satisfy all the demands made upon them by the public and the Government. It is felt that even more could be achieved with the Air Service and the "Alert" were more labour available, and it is hoped to be able to produce concrete proposals at the end of a further twelve months running to achieve this. It should be remembered that the more work obtained from the equipment, so is the maintenance and accounting increased in proportion, and in the past it has generally been found that an increase in operational efficiency has not coincided with an increase in accounting efficiency. Rather does the opposite tend to become the case, because one or other of the members of the office staff become involved in the actual operations. So the popular clamour to keep things moving results generally in a corresponding in drop in office routine efficiency - this is particularly true when the head of the department happens to be more interested in running boats and aircraft than sitting at an office desk.

for [unclear]

Am.

we spoke.

You want this file for the inclusion of a para. on the met. service in your Report.

B
11/2.

hal hal

A.C.S.

Didn't anyone read my first page? There are no deletions!

Met inclusion:-

" During the year the Senior Meteorological Officer & his staff have made a considerable effort to improve the forecasting services provided for the pilots which has been of great assistance in enabling the Air Service to utilise the maximum possible amount of flying weather. In particular it is hoped that the experiment of having a trained observer with pilot balloon equipment stationed at Fox Bay may be continued, as this will enable early morning flying to extend further afield with safety."

X | Further to my original report, before printing you will require Appendix A' mentioned at the bottom of 35. This graph is at present hanging in my office wall.

B

Met.

Am's. para. on met. for appx. re.

2. Ref. x Am. will discuss with Met. & straighten out any possible printing errors.

As you propose.

B
11/2.

B
14/2

Office - design the queries on 34 & 35 & the para to Paris.

B
14/2.

PPS 33-39 to JF 14/2/55

BW 15/3/55

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AIR SERVICE STATISTICS FOR FEBRUARY, 1955.

Total Number of passengers carried	218
Total Revenue.....	5760
Number of days on which flying took place..	20
Total number of hours flown.....	74½
Number of miles flown (straight tracks)...	7500
Number of movements (take-offs & landings)	334 *
Number of settlements visited	25
Gallons of petrol consumed.....	1400

* This number of movements is very considerable, considering that only two pilots are involved. It averages out at nearly 17 per flying day of twelve hours. London Airport, the busiest in Britain, has 135 per flying day of twenty-four hours. On this basis, London airport is only five times as busy as the Falkland Islands!

*See his name
Dini vba*

*0225/3/55
4/4
1/10*

0270/F. 0

44

AIR SERVICE NEWS.

Passengers carried during past week.....	54
Settlements visited.....	10
Flying days.....	3

Reed to etc

$\frac{1}{10/4}$

804/4

511.14/4

Part

10/4

FALKLAND ISLANDS.

Harbour and Aviation Department Annual Report, 1954.

General Review.

The main emphasis of the work of the department this year has again been centred on the operation of the *M.F.V. "Philomel"* and the *M.L. "Alert"* on the marine side, and the Beaver and Auster seaplanes on the aviation side. In both spheres the results obtained during the year have proved to be the most successful to date, and although it has been found impossible for any one section of the department to become self-supporting, it is felt that the benefit to the community at large amply justifies the loss sustained.

It is interesting to note that the staff of the whole department consists of only fourteen men at present, and throughout much of the period under review has, through leave and undermanning aboard the "*Philomel*" been reduced to twelve effectives. This comparatively small number have operated both vessels and aircraft, only one member of the department not being actually engaged in active operations - the clerk. From time to time even he has been called upon to act as co-pilot with the Beaver and more frequently to assist the crew of the "*Alert*" on long voyages for which the two man crew is inadequate.

The list of equipment operated by the department is formidable: there is the 75 ton *M.F.V. "Philomel"*, the 3 ton launch "*Alert*", two motor boats, three dinghies, three light beacons in the camp, three harbour lights, four navigational beacons, and, on the aviation side the Beaver and Auster seaplanes with their associated equipment. It is therefore hardly surprising that although the improvement in the operation of the equipment of most service to the public has been maintained, little has been done during the year to improve the efficiency of the other departmental duties, namely those of Registrar of Shipping, Receiver of Wrecks and Naval Reporting Officer. Favourable mention should however be made of the particularly capable work of the clerk in attending to the accounts of the "*Philomel*", "*Alert*" and the Air Service, where a great change for the better may be seen.

M.F.V. "Philomel".

The year under review started with the "*Philomel*" but recently withdrawn from the coasting trade in order that Government operations should not embarrass the newly established private ventures the Inter-Coastal Trading Company and the "*Gambler*". This withdrawal gave the engineer an opportunity to overhaul the vessel's engines and auxiliaries, many vitally required spare parts at last being available in the Colony. This overhaul has subsequently proved its worth by nine months' trouble-free operation of the "*Philomel*".

After this refit, which included alteration of the hold to form a mobile X-ray department, the vessel was controlled for three months by the medical department carrying out a T.B. survey of the settlements. This survey was most successfully completed, and indeed were it not for the availability of the "*Philomel*" for this task, it is difficult to visualise how this work could have been done either as expeditiously or economically. The actual cost involved to the Government in fuel, wages, victualling and sundry charges amounted to little more than £1,000 altogether, and by this means it was possible for over 800 persons to be examined in the camp by the Chest Specialist, 35 settlements in all being visited in a voyage of 1,522 miles.

At the completion of the survey it was hoped that the ship could be used exclusively for the maintenance and erection of the coastal lights which have, since the outbreak of the war, been sadly neglected. A start was made on this work, but before it could be completed the "*Philomel*" was again called upon to take part in the coasting trade when the Inter-Coastal Trading Company operating the "*Protector III*" suspended their traffic *sine die* at the end of September. Since that date it is satisfactory to note that the "*Philomel*" has been able to help the farmers considerably with coastal voyages, particularly in so far as Christmas mail deliveries were concerned, and has also been able to fit into some very full itineraries the maintenance of the coastal lights, only one of which now requires attention.

With a system of accounting which does not charge other Government departments for work carried out, the revenue figures for the year appear disappointing at first sight. But the only fair way to judge these now is to review the work carried out, and I feel confident that the majority of the settlers in the camp will confirm the vessel's utility to the Colony.

One last point of interest concerning the "*Philomel*": the vessel earned a poor reputation at one stage for the manner in which the crew (with a few exceptions) was constantly changing. These alterations in the crew naturally detracted from the efficiency of the vessel as a whole, and it is encouraging to note that under the present conditions of service only two changes have occurred during the past twelve months, one caused by dismissal. This new found stability is the more surprising in view of the high wages paid to seamen in certain other vessels, and the retention of a full crew of good quality by the Government may be attributed in large measure to the personal qualities of the Master of the "*Philomel*".

M.L. "Alert".

Here again the work achieved during the twelve months has been most encouraging. The "*Alert*" was completely refitted by the department at the end of the previous year, and among the alterations was the installation of a new Lister diesel engine - the first production model to be fitted in a boat - and the improvement of the cockpit canopy. Both caused considerable controversy and have fortunately completely vindicated themselves. The new engine has given perfect service since its installation, which is much to the credit of the mechanic who undertook the fitting without external assistance. The spare parts for this engine are interchangeable with those for the "*Philomel's*" winch engine, making for economy in spares holdings.

The first major duty for the "*Alert*" after her refit was a survey of the entrance to Salvador Waters, which was successfully carried out by a Royal Naval party from *H.M.S. "St. Austell Bay"*. By using the chart produced the frigate was able to visit settlements in these waters shortly afterwards - the first time a warship has ventured through this confined channel for many years.

The "Alert" has also made many voyages to settlements in Berkeley Sound during the past year - generally in an effort to cut out some of the short distance passengers from the Air Service waiting list. In all over one hundred passengers have been carried in this way, not always in comfort, but at least more quickly than other means of transport would allow, and the fact that frequent visits by ministers of the Roman Catholic Church have been possible at Johnson's Harbour has been greatly appreciated by that settlement where nearly all the residents are of that persuasion.

Lights and Beacons.

As has been mentioned earlier a considerable effort has been made during the past year to square up the position regarding coastal lights - a situation which has required attention for a considerable time, but which, like much other maintenance work in the Colony, has had to give place to more urgent tasks. Belatedly this work has now been undertaken and the position is that all but one of the established lights and beacons are in operation and have received attention such as chipping and painting. If no further difficulty is experienced in maintaining these lights, the establishment of further coastal lights will be undertaken during the coming year provided this adequate maintenance can be assured.

The Air Service.

F.I.G.A.S. has now operated for six years, and during this time problems have arisen which tended to detract from the efficiency of the service provided to the public. It is only during the past twelve months that the solutions to many of these have been found, and it is now possible to say with confidence that the Air Service has passed from the experimental to the permanent stage. The late Governor, Sir Miles Clifford, stated early in 1954 "the Air Service has come to stay". So far as popular demand was concerned that assertion was as true then as it is today, but it must be admitted that in the minds of some of the more professional critics there were at the time doubts concerning the handling, servicing and flying of the aircraft which still required solution before the service could be regarded as permanent in the full sense of the word. These solutions have now been reached, or are at least in sight, and the public can look forward with confidence to a steadily improving Air Service.

Appendix 'A' to this report presents in tabular form the progress made since the inception of the service six years ago, and as can be seen, the results obtained since December 1953, have considerably exceeded those in any previous year and it is worth noting that whereas in the previous five years a total of more than one hundred passengers per month was only achieved twice, during the thirteen months December 1953 - December 1954 this figure has been reached eight times.

Examining the reasons for this rise in efficiency in detail it is found that on the operational side the utilisation of two aircraft simultaneously, better flight planning and to some extent early morning flying have been the main contributory factors. The training of the Harbour Master as a pilot has enabled the Beaver and the Auster to fly at the same time, and more than that, it has released the pilot from many comparatively unproductive flights such as mail dropping and 'of the route' medical calls. Unfortunately it is impossible to calculate exactly what difference there would have been in the final total had there been only one pilot available, but it can be confidently stated that there would have been a drop of at least 35% in the number of passengers carried. Tied in with aircraft utilisation is flight planning, to which more thought was given in the past year than previously, resulting in a better 'load/mileage flown' ratio. Some improvement is still necessary in this sphere and the subject is reviewed continuously in the light of widening experience. Early morning flying has to some extent increased the volume of traffic, although during the past year it was essentially only an experiment with the Auster to check the theory that the early morning weather was more suitable for flying operations. In all, early flights were made on sixty five days during 1954: none resulted in the aircraft becoming weatherbound, and on eighteen days flying was impossible later in the day. This experiment has now been extended to the Beaver, and although positive assertions are inadvisable on the meagre evidence available, it appears that it will prove most useful.

One retrograde step, if it may be called such, has occurred in the flying operations: this concerns the payload of the Beaver seaplane when compared with that of the Norseman. Strictly speaking the carrying capacity of the Beaver is only half that of the Norseman, so that in the same number of hours flying only half the number of passengers can be carried with the new aircraft. Fortunately this reduction is offset by the easier maintenance of the Beaver which has considerably increased its availability, and it must also be remembered that it was often impossible to utilise all the seats in the Norseman during a flight owing to the number of stops this would entail.

Improvement in the system of maintenance has also contributed to the achievements of the Air Service. Less time is now lost than ever before through breakdowns and lack of spare parts, although this will inevitably continue to happen as the cost of carrying complete spares would be prohibitive. Inspections of the Beaver and Auster are carried out now after 25 and 50 hours flying respectively and are rigidly adhered to in order to eliminate salt water corrosion. The use of lanoline to protect susceptible parts has proved invaluable, and after a slight amount of superficial corrosion soon after the Beaver was assembled, this problem has practically ceased to exist.

The Certificate of Airworthiness overhaul of both aircraft has been satisfactorily undertaken and that of the Beaver completed. As this involves both aircraft in turn being laid up for an appreciable period and the reasons are not always understood by the public, some explanation of the work involved is felt to be necessary in this report. In the United Kingdom, whose legislation in aeronautical matters is followed by the Colonial Empire, an annual overhaul of an aircraft is obligatory to ensure its compliance with the safety regulations. This overhaul requires an almost complete strip-down to the component parts, and the inspection is made, not only by the maintenance staff of the company concerned, but is checked by a qualified representative of the Air Registration Board, which is a Government department responsible for the constructional and maintenance regulations governing aircraft and also the licensing of ground staff and pilots in these subjects. It is outside the jurisdiction of, but works in close conjunction with, the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation. This independent check by a Government department safeguards against the unscrupulous operator neglecting essential repair work during the overhaul.

In this Colony no supervisory inspection is possible: for this reason the maintenance staff err, if error it can be called, on the side of safety and in cases of any doubt repair or replacement is effected.

And the fact that the pilots are on the spot to see for themselves the condition of the aircraft components does to some extent provide the independent check as there can be no one more interested in an aircraft's safety than the pilot who is flying it.

These annual overhauls will without doubt contribute greatly to the safety and operational life of the aircraft: without them the Norseman became unserviceable and a total loss after a mere three years during which it flew barely 750 hours. Ten years of life is not an over-ambitious target for the Beaver, during which it is hoped to fly at least 4,000 hours. When more adequate equipment is available in the Colony, these annual overhauls will be speeded up to some extent.

In addition to the normal routine operations of F.I.G.A.S. outlined above, one or two specialised items of work have been undertaken during the year and are worthy of brief mention: the Royal Naval survey of the entrance to Salvador Waters was greatly assisted by a mosaic of some thirty aerial photographs of the coastline taken from the Auster flying at 5,000 feet, and without these the ground party would have been involved in at least a fortnight's extra work to attain the same degree of accuracy. These photographs were taken after the party was established in Salvador Waters and their exact requirements were known, and after processing in Stanley proofs were available to the party in the field 48 hours later. A similar operation was when the Auster carried the manager of Fitzroy Farm on an inspection flight over the ditches used for draining the camp. The value of these ditches can best be appreciated by aerial observation, and it is not only the results to date that the farmer is able to evaluate, but aerial reconnaissance is useful for planning future ditching policy.

The personnel of the Air Service now consists of the Pilot, Engineer, Second Engineer and Coxswain while the Harbour Master and the Clerk also take part in the activities. Mr. Devrell completed his contract in September, his relief, Mr. Kerr, having arrived by the previous "Fitzroy" sailing. The relief was carried out smoothly without any undue interruption in the passenger services and Mr. Kerr has now settled down to his duties in the Colony with complete success. The Engineer has been placed in the permanent establishment (he was previously employed on contract) and his management of the maintenance work during the mechanic's seven months leave deserves considerable praise as extremely few flying days have been lost owing to inspections and breakdowns during the year.

Mr. Jones qualified for his engineer's licences ('A' & 'C') while on leave and has now been re-designated "Second Engineer". He is also on the permanent staff, so stability in the aircraft maintenance staff is assured for some years ahead. During his leave Mr. Jones also undertook a short welding course as it was considered desirable that one of the engineers at least should have qualifications in this subject.

Despite the failure of the apprenticeship scheme for an engineer the Government has now embarked upon a scheme to train a pilot for the Air Service from local aspirants. Past experience has proved that to obtain pilot replacements for F.I.G.A.S. is neither easy nor reliable. When the Air Service was started Mr. Spencer was obtained through the Crown Agents at a time when ex-service pilots with civil licences were finding it difficult to obtain posts in the United Kingdom since commercial flying had not then recovered from the chaos of war. By the time his three year contract had expired however, this position had radically altered and there was a growing shortage of commercial pilots in the United Kingdom. Despite attractive offers to renew his contract, Mr. Spencer left the Colony and his successor, Mr. Halls, could only be engaged for twelve months as the Crown Agents were unable to discover any pilot willing to except a longer term contract. Halls' failure here as a pilot due to medical unfitness is too well known to reiterate, and the Air Service remained virtually without a pilot until Mr. Devrell was obtained, and after a short seaplane conversion course in Norway, arrived out here. The available pilots were still strictly limited and Mr. Devrell also could only be persuaded to engage for twelve months, although he later extended his contract for a further twelve months.

A replacement for Mr. Devrell was not quite so difficult to obtain as the acute pilot shortage in Britain has been eased temporarily by the dismissal of 250 instructors employed by the civilian contract training establishments of the R.A.F., thus releasing this number of pilots onto the commercial market. Despite this temporary surplus, F.I.G.A.S. received only one suitable application for the final interview, and it should be remembered that the gross salary now offered is almost double that advertised when Mr. Spencer's services were obtained six years earlier.

From this it can be seen that the problem of pilot replacement is a very real one, which is liable to become even more acute in the future since the annual wastage of pilots in Britain exceeds the supply from the civil training establishments. A scheme was therefore drafted to train a Falkland Islander as a pilot, which had the following advantages:-

(a) by undertaking to train a local recruit the Air Service could engage the candidate on a contract for a considerably longer period than has proved possible with United Kingdom candidates. In fact, with his roots in the Colony there is an excellent chance of his remaining as a permanency and thus saving much anxiety about replacement;

(b) by establishing continuity in this way, disruption of the Service while a new pilot "feels his way" is eliminated, and it was also hoped that because he was brought up to endure the rather severe weather of the Colony a local recruit would prove less susceptible to the nerve strain of flying here than a pilot from the United Kingdom, all of whom in the past were adversely affected by this to a greater or lesser extent before the termination of their contract;

(c) the scheme accorded with the policy of training local recruits for senior Government posts.

(a) and (c) above are unquestionable: (b) remains to be proved by the success of the scheme now in hand. The cost to the Colony is negligible - the total additional expenditure necessary amounting to little more than £200 per annum for three years.

Little remains to be said about the Air Service: the reorganisation of the stores is now completed, and the accounting system is improved sufficiently to reach the standard required by the Auditor. Some useful modifications have been made to the installations during the year: a toilet for the use of the hangar staff and passengers has been provided at the hangar: petrol tanks are in the process of being sunk in the ground to the eastward of the slipway to obviate the dangerous necessity of storing high octane petrol in the hangar: with Royal Navy assistance many rocks have been blasted from the approach to the slipway, making it possible to be used at all states of the tide, although the final six feet of concrete still requires

attention. A further aid to slipping and unslipping has been the provision of waist-length waders which enable the beaching gear to be quickly put on even in the roughest weather without the ground crew getting soaked. A small electric power pump has been mounted in the hangar to provide quicker and better facilities for washing the aircraft with fresh water at the end of a days flying. A landrover has been provided for the use of the staff, but it is unfortunately not always appreciated that this is intended primarily to speed up actual flying operations and not to provide a public taxi service.

During the year the Senior Meteorological Officer and his staff have made a considerable effort to improve the forecasting services provided for the pilots which has been of great assistance in enabling the Air Service to utilise the maximum possible amount of flying weather. In particular, it is hoped that the experiment of having a trained observer with pilot balloon equipment stationed at Fox Bay may be continued, as this will enable early morning flying to extend further afield with safety.

Although this is a report of past activities, some mention should be made here concerning future policy as much time and thought has been given to this matter during the past year. Basically the Air Service is faced with the problem that the present demand for passages exceeds the facilities that can be offered by the existing staff and equipment, and even those services at present provided are carried out to the detriment of various other departmental duties.

To satisfy the present demand for passages, it is probable that two Beaver seaplanes will be required with possibly two full-time pilots and the Harbour Master acting as stand-in for leaves, sickness and other occasional duties. With this establishment it is believed that the service required by the public could be provided. The operating loss would be further increased by approximately £1,000 per annum.

However before any further extension of the existing service takes place, it would be necessary to assess more accurately the effect on the Air Service of two outside factors :-

- (a) the effect of the proposed camp tracks upon the demand for passages.
- (b) the effect of a private aircraft being operated.

JOHN HUCKLE.

Harbour Master.

APPENDIX 'A'.

	Passengers Carried	Revenue £	Flying Days
1948 (December only)	1	10	1
1949 First Quarter	1	10	2
Second Quarter	4	45	10
Third Quarter	0	0	0
Fourth Quarter	27	195	23
1949 Total	32	250	35
1950 First Quarter	90	450	42
Second Quarter	234	820	44
Third Quarter	254	1100	45
Fourth Quarter	169	670	47
1950 Total	747	3040	178
1951 First Quarter	156	730	47
Second Quarter	226	925	32
Third Quarter	235	800	33
Fourth Quarter	293	1200	38
1951 Total	910	3655	150
1952 First Quarter	90	315	19
Second Quarter	1	5	2
Third Quarter	45	195	23
Fourth Quarter	206	575	42
1952 Total	342	1090	84
1953 First Quarter	229	800	41
Second Quarter	117	450	30
Third Quarter	160	625	37
Fourth Quarter	236	905	35
1953 Total	742	2780	143
1954 First Quarter	398	1535	47
Second Quarter	323	1150	48
Third Quarter	313	1120	38
Fourth Quarter	260	985	36
1954 Total	1294	4790	169