

104. In the absence of agreed I.C.A.O. Standards and Recommended Practices on Air Traffic Control, it falls to each country to institute such systems of air traffic control as are most nearly in conformity with the measure of international agreement reached and as are most suitable for the conditions of that country. Such a system has been introduced in New Zealand, and we believe the standard of the air traffic control system to be good. Such troubles and difficulties as are experienced are natural to the formative stage of any organisation, when personnel are being recruited and trained and the stations equipped. We draw attention in Chapter 14 to the need for initial training and the maintenance of air experience by the air traffic control staff.

105. In the operation of air traffic control there is a need for close co-ordination and centralisation of the air traffic control, meteorological, and radio services. These, with the pilot-briefing organisation, should be conveniently housed together in the control building. This calls for the construction of properly planned terminal buildings at the main aerodromes.

106. Our attention has also been called to a problem of long standing which has been experienced in many countries. It is desirable that the relative responsibilities of the commander of aircraft and of the air traffic control should be as clearly defined as the problem permits. The responsibility of Air Traffic Control is to advise the pilot as necessary to secure safe operation in dangerous weather conditions, to regulate air traffic in congested areas, and to maintain contact with all aircraft in flight. The pilot is responsible for compliance with all regulations and relevant standing instructions and procedures, and with all instructions of Air Traffic Control where the safety of other aircraft is involved. Subject to compliance with these, the final responsibility for the safety of his aircraft rests upon the pilot.

Search and rescue

107. We observe that, while I.C.A.O. has not yet produced acceptable Search and Rescue Standards and Recommended Practices, New Zealand has rightly appreciated the proper principles to be applied in the development of such an organisation and system in peacetime. The initiation and co-ordination of search and rescue action has been made the prime responsibility of the air traffic control, while the Royal New Zealand Air Force provide aircraft and personnel for air search and rescue. The system is rightly based on the mobilisation of all available resources in the area concerned and the prior organisation of these local resources, including shipping, with the aid of the Police Department and the Marine Department. We are informed that no arrangements have yet been made for the use of civil aircraft for search, although the flying clubs and others, as elsewhere, have participated voluntarily. Since aircraft