

Aerodrome management

314. The proper operation and development of an aerodrome requires that there should be unified control of the administration and all activities of the aerodrome. The need for this has been proved in most countries, and we find a lack of such unified control in New Zealand. The administration and operation of State civil aerodromes should be the responsibility of the Director of Civil Aviation, and in the organisation we have proposed it is the particular responsibility of the Director of Air Routes and Aerodromes. This requires that, at every aerodrome, there should be one person in charge of the aerodrome who should be responsible for its management, the control of the public, and generally for the co-ordination of all the activities which are carried on at an aerodrome. In some countries a cadre of aerodrome officers has been established, which provides the staff both for air traffic control and aerodrome administration. An aerodrome officer of senior rank in charge of a large airport has his staff of air traffic controllers and others engaged on administrative duties. At smaller aerodromes, one officer may have to combine all the duties. While providing for specialisation in air traffic control, this has the merit of providing a wider field and greater scope within the cadre. In the United Kingdom, airport commandants have been appointed for all the major aerodromes, and they are responsible for the co-ordination of all services on the aerodrome, including its administration, business management, and technical services. In other countries, particularly where aerodromes are provided by municipal authorities and technical services by the State, airport managers without any technical responsibilities are employed by the aerodrome authority.

315. It will be necessary for New Zealand to develop its own particular system, but the need for appointing one officer to be in charge of each aerodrome of any importance will be essential. At the major aerodromes, a whole-time officer will be needed. At other aerodromes of less importance and activity, it will be necessary to appoint one of the officers of the Civil Aviation Directorate as officer in charge. The most appropriate officer would be the senior air traffic control officer.

Aerodrome revenue and charges

316. It is well appreciated throughout the world that, in the present state of development of aviation, the cost of providing and operating aerodromes, with their expensive ancillary services, far exceeds the revenue which can be derived from their operation and the ability of the limited number of users of the aerodrome to meet the cost. The high capital cost and comparatively low revenue-earning capacity is one, but not the only, factor in reaching the conclusion that the responsibility for providing aerodromes must be mainly that of the State. There are only a few aerodromes in the world where revenue covers a