

11 MORE FLYING-BOATS

To Cost £1,000,000

War Cabinet approved yesterday the purchase from the U.S.A. of 11 more PBY flying-boats, complete with spares, at a cost of £1,000,000.

Seven such boats are already on order from America to replace the Empire flying-boats with which No. 11 Squadron is equipped.

Announcing the decision yesterday, Mr. Menzies said the additional 11 boats would enable another flying-boat squadron to be formed, and provide reserves for both squadrons.

The decision of the War Cabinet, Mr. Menzies said, was in pursuance of the Government's announced intention to expand the Air Force for home defence to the extent to which supplies of aircraft could be obtained.

The PBY flying-boats were produced by the Consolidated Aircraft Corporation of U.S.A., and similar types were in use with the Coastal Command of the Royal Air Force. They had a considerable radius of action, which was an important consideration in coastal reconnaissance work on which they would be employed in Australian waters.

[A PBY flying-boat has a loaded weight of 27,080lb. and a maximum speed of 190 miles an hour at 10,500ft. In tests it has reached 25,000ft. With a wing span of 104ft., a length of 65ft., and a height of 18½ft., the PBY carries a crew of between five and nine, according to the duty on which it is engaged. It is powered with two 1,000-h.p. radial air-cooled engines mounted above the hull in the centre of the single high wing. Fuel tanks are built into the centre section near the engines, and it has floats that are recessed to form the tips of the wings when mechanically retracted.]

18-9-40 THE ARGUS

R.A.A.F. FLYING-BOATS

May be Flown From U.S.A.

SHIPMENT COSTLY.

BY OUR AVIATION CORRESPONDENT.

Because of the cost of shipment, the 18 PBY 5 flying-boats recently ordered for the Royal Australian Air Force, may be flown from San Diego to Sydney by the Pacific islands route. The Commonwealth Government is considering the situation.

Captain P. G. Taylor, the famous pilot and navigator, who interested the Government in this type of flying-boat for defence, is the only Australian pilot with experience of long-distance ocean flight in the type. He has already flown the Pacific.

There should be no difficulty in delivering the flying-boats by air, provided that they are under the full control of an experienced ocean flier.

The PBY 5 flying-boats are an improvement on the Guba, in which Captain Taylor surveyed the Indian Ocean air route last year for the British and Australian Governments. The Guba had a still-air range of 4,000 miles. At one stage of the Indian Ocean flight it was in the air for 22 hours, but had a safe margin of fuel in its tanks when it alighted.

When they reach Rathmines, the Consolidated flying-boats will be capable of reconnaissance flights to Suva and return, and non-stop flights from Darwin to Singapore. Over shorter distances they can carry huge bomb loads, capable of blasting a ship out of the water. They will provide Australia with a far-seeing eye.

Britain has been confronted with the same delivery problem. When I was in the United States recently, final organisation was being prepared for flying Consolidated flying-boats and Lockheed Hudson and Glenn Martin bombers to the R.A.F. from Botwood and Gander Lake, in Newfoundland.

26-9-40: SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

R.A.A.F. Flying Boats

Work has begun at the Consolidated Aircraft factory at San Diego, California, on the first of 18 twin-engined PBY5 flying boats ordered for the Royal Australian Air Force.

These ships, recommended by Captain P. G. Taylor as ideally suitable for Australian defence, can be operated from the numerous waterways around the coastline, and are capable of reconnaissance flights of 2000 miles over the ocean. It is understood the first PBY5 will be ready for delivery early in January, and the total shipping costs alone for the order will be about £40,000.

At least twice the number of these flying-boats ordered by Australia have been requisitioned by the Netherlands Indies, in addition to large numbers of Curtiss Hawk and Brewster fighters.

The first Australian-made De Havilland Gipsy Major engine to be used in training machines has been tested at the General Motors-Holden works in Victoria. Pending the construction of 500 of these engines, the Australian Government has secured a sufficient supply from Great Britain. In Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide 40 manufacturers are busy producing parts, and, with the exception of carburettors and magnetos, the whole of the Gipsy Major engines will be made here.

30-9-40 THE AGE

FLYING BOATS FOR NORTH

30.9.40 THE HERALD

PATROL SEA ROUTES

The new P.B.Y. long-range flying boats which the Commonwealth has ordered from the United States will patrol sea routes leading from the north of Australia to Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.

Announcing plans for the boats today, the Department of Air stated that the new seaplane base on the New South Wales coast would be headquarters for the P.B.Y. squadrons. Good progress has been made there with a cantilever hangar, and the addition of other smaller buildings. Original estimated cost of the base was £450,000, of which about £300,000 would be spent by the end of October.

A spokesman for the department said that long-range reconnaissance was to have been the home defence task of the Sunderland Flying Boats of the R.A.A.F. squadron, at present operating so efficiently with the R.A.F. coastal command, but Australia had altered its plan to meet the wartime requirements of the United Kingdom.

Besides allotting the Sunderlands to important war duties, Australia had manned them with Australian-trained crews. To bridge that home defence gap, the Government had increased its original order for P.B.Y. flying-boats.

These long-range machines would add to the already impressive mileage built up since the outbreak of war by R.A.A.F. reconnaissance control.

Since September last year general reconnaissance squadrons had flown more than 1,700,000 statute miles, and searched 22,500,000 square miles of Australian coastline and sea.

PBY FLYING BOATS

For R.A.A.F. Patrols

The sea route between Melbourne and Brisbane will be regularly patrolled by the R.A.A.F. with new PBY flying-boats, which will arrive shortly from the U.S.A.

The PBY squadron will have its headquarters at a new seaplane base that is being completed on the N.S.W. coast at a cost of £450,000. A large cantilever hangar and administrative buildings are nearly ready, and there will be equipment for servicing machines based on warships, and for training land plane pilots in the handling of flying-boats.

Long-range reconnaissance was to have been a home defence task for Sunderland flying-boats, but these were allocated to important war duty, notably with the R.A.F. Coastal Command in Britain, so the Commonwealth ordered a number of big PBY flying-boats from the U.S.A.

With these machines, which have a cruising range of between 4,000 and 5,000 miles, the fine record of the R.A.A.F. patrols will be enhanced. Since September, 1939, general reconnaissance squadrons have flown more than 1,700,000 miles and searched 22,500,000 square miles of coast and sea.

1-10-40 THE ARGUS

Air-Boats For Sea Patrol

MELBOURNE, Monday.

The 18 PBV flying-boats ordered from America will patrol sea routes off the east coast.

The routes they will patrol lead from the north of Australia to Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne.

Delivery from the United States is expected at the end of this year.

An Air Department spokesman said today that the PBV's would bridge a home-defence gap.

Long-range reconnaissance was to have been the home-defence task of the Sunderland flying-boats of the Australian squadron sent to the Royal Air Force's coastal command.

Australia had altered its plan to meet Britain's wartime requirements, and had manned the Sunderlands with Australian-trained crews.

Progress With Base

The new seaplane base at Rathmines, on the New South Wales coast, would be the PBV squadrons' headquarters.

Good progress had been made with a cantilever hangar and smaller buildings. The estimated cost of the base was £450,000, of which about £300,000 would be spent by the end of October.

The Minister for Air (Mr. Fadden) said today that production of De Havilland Moth trainers in Australia had reached the rate of two a day.

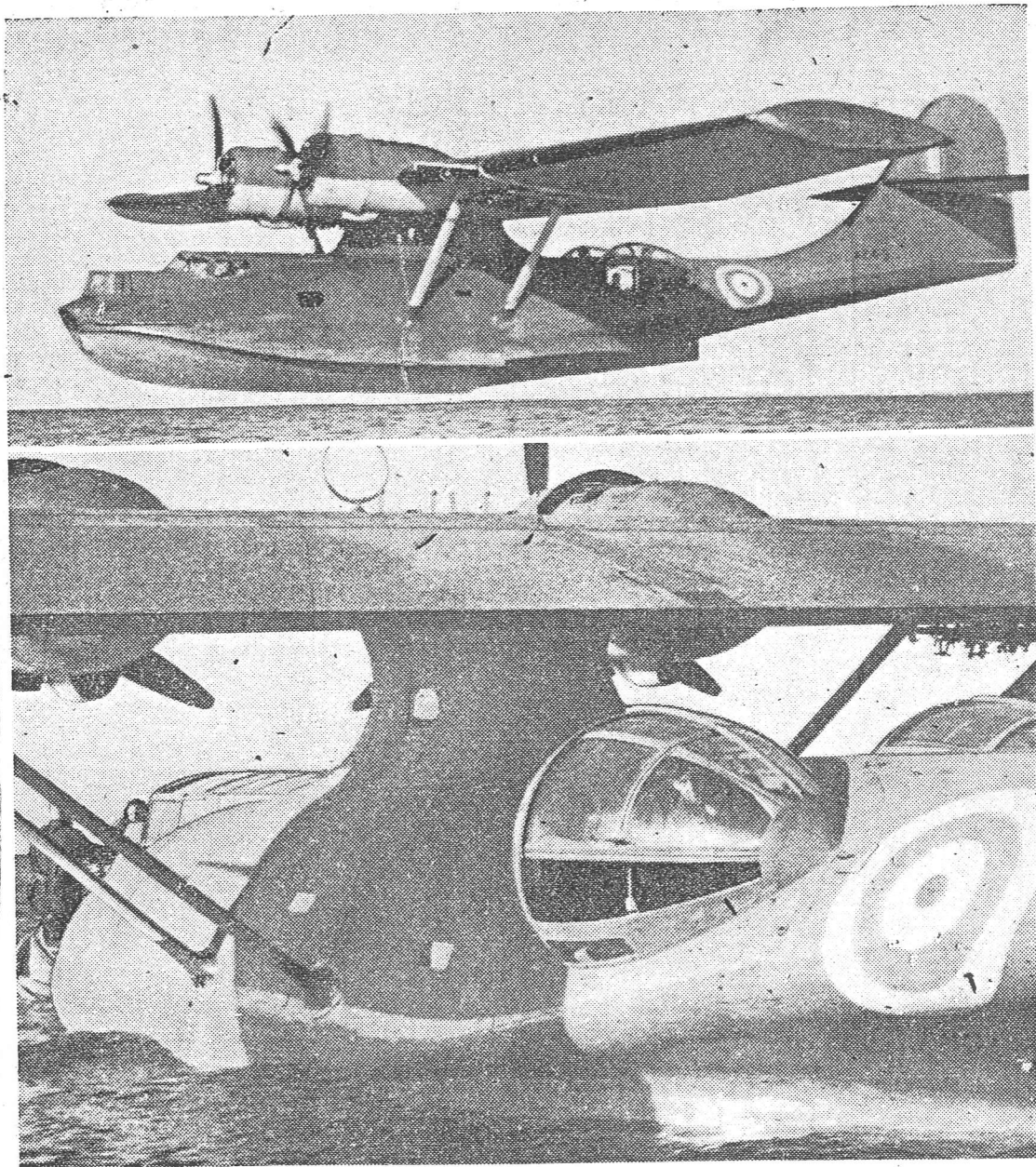
"The industry is filling overseas orders, in addition to meeting all local requirements," Mr. Fadden said.

"It will not be necessary to tap overseas supplies for our elementary training types. We have informed the British Air Ministry that local production is adequate."

1. 10. 40

DAILY TELEGRAPH (SYDNEY)

R.A.A.F. CATALINA FLYING-BOAT TESTED



A new Catalina flying-boat, which has been ferried across the Pacific for the Royal Australian Air Force, photographed at a base in Australia. These Consolidated PBY5 flying-boats have a range of thousands of miles. Top: The flying-boat leaving the water. Lower: The gun "blister" amidships which houses the armaments.

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD 10.7.41

Flying-Boat Beats "Smithy"

The first R.A.A.F. Catalina flying-boat ferried from America to Australia created an east-west South Pacific crossing record of four days.

It made the trip faster than Sir Charles Kingsford Smith and Mr. Charles Ulm in the Southern Cross in 1928.

Qantas Empire Airways, commissioned by the Department of Civil Aviation to ferry Catalinas to Australia, announced the record yesterday.

The Catalina was brought to Australia last February by the operations manager of Qantas Empire Airways (Mr. Lester Brain), Captain P. G. Taylor (navigator), and Captain G. U. ("Scotty") Allen.

A Qantas official said yesterday in Sydney:—

"The Catalina was only the second plane to cross the South Pacific Ocean, The Southern Cross was the first."

"Each of the trips by Catalinas has been most successful, and without incident. The pilots have brought all the flying-boats in on time."

Qantas has also supplied radio operators and engineers for the crews.

The Catalina is a high-winged monoplane, built for long-range ocean patrol work.

It has a range of 4000 miles, cruising speed of 130 miles an hour, and top speed of 165 miles an hour.

The Air Minister (Mr. McEwen) announced last week that Catalinas would be used for Australian defence.

(SYDNEY) DAILY TELEGRAPH

8.7.41

PLANE FERRY SERVICE

Trans-Pacific

Australian airmen, experienced in long-distance ocean navigation, inaugurated the trans-Pacific ferry service which is bringing U.S. Navy flying-boats to Australia.

The Minister for Air, Mr. McEwen, revealed that the service was operating when he announced last week that long-range Catalina (PBY) flying-boats were being used by the Royal Australian Air Force coastal command for reconnaissance.

Catalina flying-boats, built by the American Consolidated Aircraft Company, are reputed to be the world's best ocean reconnaissance aircraft, possessing a cruising range of between 3,000 and 4,000 miles. They are identical with the Catalina machines which located and shadowed the Nazi battleship Bismarck in the Atlantic.

The Federal Government asked Qantas Empire Airways to institute a regular flying ferry service, using Australian pilots, engineers, and radio operators, to bring these machines to Australia.

The task was even more difficult and hazardous than the Atlantic ferry service. Whereas American bombers flying the Atlantic had to cross 2,500 miles of ocean, the Catalinas flown to Australia had to cover 6,500 miles of ocean, refuelling at many lonely islands in the Pacific.

BEST FLYERS CHOSEN

Qantas Empire Airways selected its most experienced ocean flyers for the job. They included Captains L. J. Brain, G. U. Allan, H. B. Hussey, Orme Denny, and W. Crowther. They were assisted by Captain P. G. Taylor, well-known associate of the late Sir Charles Kingsford Smith.

The first flight, from San Diego to Sydney with an all-Australian crew, was made last February. It was the second complete crossing of the Pacific since the epoch-making flight of the late Sir Charles Kingsford Smith and C. T. Ulm in 1928.

Other crossings followed in quick succession. As soon as the men entrusted with the job brought a Catalina safely to Australian waters they flew back across the Pacific by Tasman Empire Airways and American Clipper flying-boats to bring another machine out.

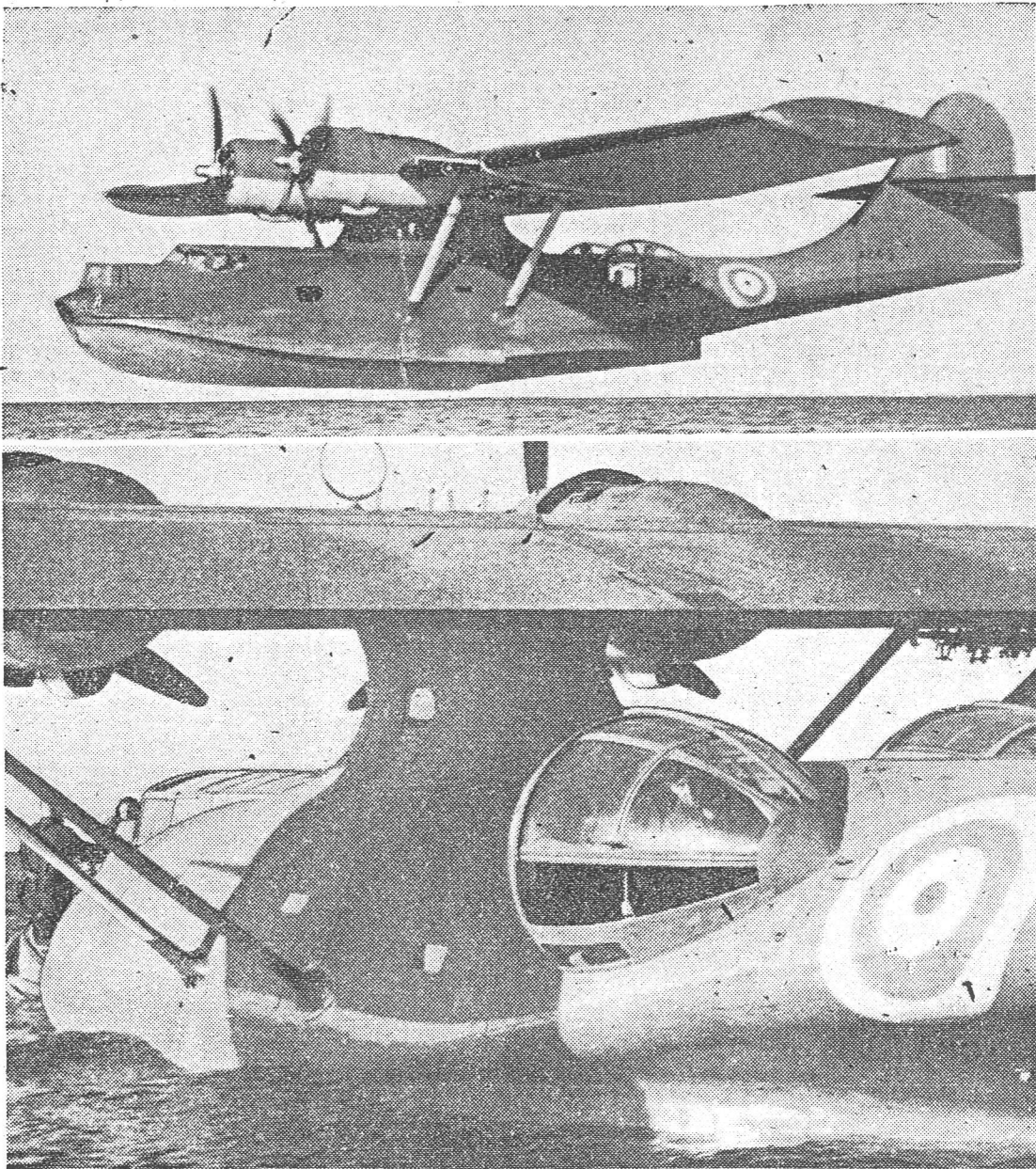
One Catalina, piloted by Captain Brain, operations manager of Qantas Empire Airways, broke the speed record for an east-west crossing of the Pacific. The journey was accomplished in less than the seven days occupied by Smith and Ulm.

It had become an everyday job for these men, said an experienced airman yesterday. They thought no more of it than they would of a regular airline service to Brisbane or Singapore. However, it was one of the greatest aviation exploits of this war.

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

8.7.41

R.A.A.F. CATALINA FLYING-BOAT TESTED



A new Catalina flying-boat, which has been ferried across the Pacific for the Royal Australian Air Force, photographed at a base in Australia. These Consolidated PB5Y5 flying-boats have a range of thousands of miles. Top: The flying-boat leaving the water. Lower: The gun "blister" amidships which houses the armaments.

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