

Transatlantic Air Service.—The work done to establish an air service between Canada, the United States and the British Isles via Newfoundland up to the outbreak of war is described at pp. 705-707 of the 1940 Year Book.

Pre-War Civil Aviation and the Defence Program.—An article describing the developments of importance in civil aviation prior to the outbreak of war in 1939, and also the contribution that civil aviation has made to the air defence program, is given at pp. 608-612 of the 1941 Year Book.

Administration.—The 1942 Year Book, at pp. 638-639, outlines the administrative arrangements for the control of civil aviation. Later developments are given in the Section on Wartime Control of Transportation, at pp. 640-644.

Subsection 2.—Recent Developments

Transition Problems—War to Peace

The cessation of hostilities in Europe in May, 1945, and the somewhat unexpected collapse of Japan in August brought an avalanche of problems in civil aviation. Immediate steps were taken to dismantle whole sections of the vast structure erected for war purposes and at the same time restrictions, which had necessarily been imposed on civil flying, were removed. Airports, airways, communications systems, aids to air navigation together with their operation, control and maintenance were turned over to civil administration as fast as circumstances would permit.

Disposal of Airports.—One hundred airports declared surplus to Royal Canadian Air Force requirements by the end of the year were turned over to the Crown Assets Allocation Committee who, in turn, turned them over to the Department of Transport. If after investigation it appeared that a site had no continuing value for civil aviation purposes, the Crown Assets Allocation Committee was so advised and the property was turned over to the War Assets Corporation for disposal. Of the sites declared surplus, 62 were retained and 38 handed over to War Assets Corporation.

Screening of the buildings on surplus airports did not await a final decision regarding the airport proper, and such as would obviously be surplus to future use were returned as quickly as possible to the Crown Assets Allocation Committee so that they could be made available to alleviate housing and material shortages. However, many such buildings were required in their present locations for War Assets storage warehouses.

The retention of the sites for civil purposes postulated but did not solve the problems as to who was to be responsible for their administration. In selecting these sites, steps had been taken to locate them, so far as military requirements would permit, in areas where there was reason to believe they would have continuing value to the communities in which they were located. It was found, however, that in a large number of cases the communities had not had an opportunity to give much thought to the problem involved in operating and maintaining these airports and had not set up the necessary organization or made financial provision to do so. The Department, therefore, was faced with the necessity of engaging personnel and taking other steps to maintain these airports in operation, or place them on a caretaking basis for a brief period.