

AIRCREW INTAKE FOR THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH AIR TRAINING PLAN

<i>Service</i>	<i>Trainees</i>	<i>Graduated</i>	<i>Casualties</i>
R.C.A.F.....	91,113	72,835	469
R.A.F.....	48,576	42,110	291
R.A.A.F.....	10,350	9,606	65
R.N.Z.A.F.....	7,575	7,002	31
	<u>157,614</u>	<u>131,553</u>	<u>856</u>

One significant development of the Plan was the introduction in October, 1941, of scientific tests to determine "ability to learn" of aircrew applicants, rather than, as previously, to judge them by formal educational standards. Selection of trainees was further modified a year later by making the classification into specific categories at Manning Depots instead of on enlistment. In 1943, use of the visual Link Trainer was adopted as an aid in the primary classification of trainees at the Depots. Recruits provisionally selected for pilot, navigator or bomber were then sent to Initial Training Schools before final selection for one of these trades.

Mention should be made of the contribution to the success of the B.C.A.T.P. of the medical service of the R.C.A.F., especially in the study of nutrition, medical selection, treatment of mental and physical stress and fatigue. In specialized medical research units the Franks flying suit and other aids to high-speed flying were developed.

Training.—The original Plan provided for the training of three categories of aircrew—pilot, observer, and wireless operator-air gunner. Pilots, after a preliminary course at an Initial Training School, received *ab initio* instruction at Elementary Flying Training Schools which were operated, under direct R.C.A.F. supervision, by civilian flying clubs. The R.C.A.F. provided the airfields, buildings and aircraft, while the clubs supplied instructors (many of whom were graduates of the B.C.A.T.P. on leave without pay from the R.C.A.F.), mechanics and maintenance staff. The first intake of pilot trainees entered No. 1 I.T.S. on Apr. 29, 1940—zero day—and passed thence to an E.F.T.S. for an 8-week course on light aircraft. Throughout the lifetime of the Plan the basic E.F.T.S. syllabus underwent relatively little change, except for an extension of the course to 10 weeks to allow more Link instruction, the introduction of night flying, and an increase of flying time from 50 to 60 hours.

On completion of the Elementary Flying Training School stage the trainee proceeded to a Service Flying Training School for instruction on heavier single-engined or twin-engined aircraft. At first the course was 12 weeks, providing at least 100 hours flying, 10 hours Link, and 235 hours ground instruction. The urgent need for pilots late in 1940 caused a temporary reduction in the course to 10 weeks, but thereafter the course was progressively lengthened from 12 to 20 weeks, and eventually in June 1944, when there was a surplus of pilots overseas, to 28 weeks. With the extension of the course, greater emphasis was placed upon navigation, Link training, instrument flying and night flying. New subjects, such as aircraft recognition, night cross-country exercises, bombing and gunnery and beam approach training, were added to the syllabus. A total of 49,808 pilots were graduated from the B.C.A.T.P., including 25,747 R.C.A.F., 17,796 R.A.F. (of whom 2,629 were Fleet Air Arm), 4,045 R.A.A.F. and 2,220 R.N.Z.A.F.