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BASIC AIR STUDY - FRANCE

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I. French Civil Air Policies

Civil aviation in France is regarded as an instrument of national policy, an instrument over which the government exercises complete control. The extent of this control is reflected in the nationalization of the principal French air carrier (Air France), and the major manufacturers of aeronautical equipment. The external air policy of France has been patterned after that of the US in that the nation's bilateral air agreements have been based largely on the principles established by the US and UK at Bermuda in February 1946. (1)

France took part in the Chicago Convention of 1944, and has been an active member of the ICAO. Air France is a member of the IATA.

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II. Governmental Organization and Civil Aviation (2)

A. Governmental Organs:

National Assembly (Supreme Transport Council);

Ministry of Public Works and Transports (Secretary General for Civil Aviation);

Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

Ministry of National Education;

Office Francais d'Exportation de Materiaux Aeronautiques (OFEMA);

Air Ministry

B. Functions of Above Bodies:

National Assembly -- shapes aviation policy through legislation, and implements that policy through appropriations.

Ministry of Public Works and Transports -- is responsible through the Secretary General for Civil Aviation for policy-making, the economic and safety control of civil air transport, both scheduled and non-scheduled private flying, and in cooperation with the Air Ministry, is responsible for aircraft procurement for Air France. The Ministry of Transport is also responsible for the construction of airports and the installation and operation of communication facilities.

Supreme Transportation Advisory Board -- was established by the National Assembly in August 1947. The Board is established under the Minister of Public Works and Transport, advising the latter on all transportation matters as well as making recommendations on its own initiative. The Board's immediate mission is to present, within one year, plans for the coordination of rail, highway, inland waterway, air and ocean transportation. The Supreme Transportation Advisory Board consists of 69 members, including representatives from various government agencies, members of Parliament, specialists from the large transport organizations, employee representatives from the operating companies and public organizations such as tourist travel agencies. Seven permanent commissions are established under the Board, charged with examining questions of transport coordination.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs -- deals with all civil aviation questions involving relations with foreign countries.

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The Ministry of National Education -- controls the State schools offering aeronautical training.

The Air Ministry -- is responsible for the aircraft manufacturing industry and directs research activities and aeronautical education.

The OFEMA -- is responsible for promotion of export sales of aeronautical equipment.

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Government Activities in Connection with Civil Aviation

Activities undertaken by the French Government in connection with civil aviation include the following: (1) training of civilian pilots, navigators and other technical personnel at flight and ground schools (but only in sufficient numbers to satisfy the needs of the "chosen instrument, Air France); (2) training of personnel in airport management and traffic control techniques (US technicians have supervised such training in the past); (3) rate making, based largely on economic and competitive considerations (rates on international routes are fixed with due regard for the minima established by the International Air Traffic Association); (4) promulgation of safety rules and regulations (patterned largely after ICAO recommendations); (5) establishment of standards for the inspection of equipment and personnel (now conforming with ICAO standards), and the conducting of accident investigations; (6) setting up of airport traffic control and communications regulations; (7) examining the operating and financial statistics of Air France, and collecting reports prescribed by the ICAO; such reports are submitted to the Secretary General where they are coordinated and utilized in the shaping of new policies and the modification of existing regulations; (8) awarding of airline routes by the Secretariat General, all major routes being awarded to Air France and secondary routes being granted to private operators on much the same basis as the CAB determines route allocations in the US. (It should be noted that Air France is required to operate certain Empire and national prestige routes which are not economic and which the company's management might well prefer to discontinue); (9) subsidation of Air France to the extent of making up the difference between the company's operating expenses and its total revenue income. (3)

SECRETIII Air Transport Companies

Scheduled air transport, except for secondary lines, is performed by the government-controlled corporation, Air France. The corporation was nationalized as of September 1944 by an ordinance which legalized the transfer of Air France stock ownership to the State. The government owns 60% of the capital stock, 35.74% is owned by government subdivisions, corporations and associations, and foreign interests control the remaining 4.26% of the corporation's capital stock (this 4.26% held in its entirety by the Czechoslovak Government).⁽⁴⁾ The government promotes the development of Air France's services through the granting of subsidies when necessary to meet deficits. This development is promoted to the extent required by Empire considerations, national prestige, and (on self-sustaining routes) by existing traffic demands. On occasion, the Minister of Transport has restrained expansionist tendencies on the part of Air France until convinced that the organization has gained sufficient experience to assume the increased service in a safe and satisfactory manner.

Non-scheduled air carriers are not financially supported in any way by the government. Such private operators must secure permits from the Secretary General for Civil Aviation, and are permitted to operate as long as their services are not in conflict with the best interests of Air France. In most cases such permits are subject to cancellation on short notice.⁽⁵⁾

Independent French airlines

Air France and seven independent French airlines have organized to coordinate air transport services and timetables in the French Union, and to establish standard passenger fares on services which will be rated as luxury-class, first-class and second-class or tourist. The airlines represented in ATAF (Accord de Cooperation entre Transporteurs Aerien de l'Union Francaise) are: Air France, TAI, UAT, Air Maroc, Air Transport, Aero Maritime, Air Atlas, and Tunis Air (6-89)

Esso Aviation News Digest, May 1950.

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Air France Statistics: 1947 (S)

Air France flew 20,194,600 miles over its 132,041 miles long route network against 14,664,400 miles in 1946.

Passengers	428,000
Freight, lbs.	15,718,900
Mail, lbs.	11,089,300
Passenger - miles	375,743,000
Ton - miles, mail and freight	9,772,200

Utilization rose from 78% (1938: 58.4%) to 79%. At end 1947, Air France had a flying staff of 946 and a ground staff of 8,646.

The following information is contained in "Societe Nationale Air France" included in the subsequent pages of this report:

- Brief History of Air France
- Economic Analysis of Territory Served
- Routes Flown, Frequencies, Route Miles
- Connecting Airlines
- Competing Airlines
- Tariffs
- Personnel
- Flight Equipment
- Safety Record
- Flight Statistics
- Traffic Statistics

International Routes (7)

Air France developed considerably its network of airlines during 1947; it now covers 212,595 km., connecting 160 different stages, located in 73 different countries. In analyzing the network of Air France, a certain functional division of routes can be noted; these routes may be broken down into the following networks:

- (1) European network includes the French domestic system, and the routes which link important French cities with the capitols of the principal European countries;
- (2) North African network which is based at Algiers and has two categories of airlines: (a) a transversal line from Morocco to Egypt via Casablanca, Oran, Algiers, Bane, Tunis, and Tripoli; and (b) the direct liasons with Tangier and the large commercial cities of Southern Europe;
- (3) Central African network, based at Dakar, covers the vast territories of West and Equatorial Africa with its 32,000 km. of lines;
- (4) Madagascar network includes 35 stages over a territory about the size of Metropolitan France;
- (5) Far-Eastern network based in French Indo China and providing direct connections with China, Thailand, and Malaya;
- (6) Central American network, based at Martinique, and providing connections with Guadeloupe, Trinidad, French Guiana, Columbia, and Venezuela;
- (7) Inter-Colonial and Inter-Continental network which provides Paris with long-distance connections with the centers of the French Union and foreign capitols located outside the European Continent.

International Carriers Operating Into France (8)

BEA (British)

DNL (Norwegian)

SABENA (Belgian)

SWISSAIR (Switzerland)

CSA (Czechoslovakia)

PAA ((US)

TWA (

AER LINGUS (Irish)

KLM (Dutch)

ABA (Swedish)

DDL (Danish)

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French Air Facilities

Civil airport development is the joint responsibility of the Direction des Bases of the Secretariat General for Civil Aviation and the Bureau des Ponts et Chaussees of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport. The extent of airport development is limited to such provisions as are made in the government budget for this purpose. (9)

Navigation facilities are installed and operated by the Direction de la Navigation Aerienne of the Secretariat General for Civil Aviation. These activities depend on budgetary considerations and the availability of foreign exchange (most navigational aids and radio communication equipment must be purchased abroad). (9)

France has assumed the control and operation of many navigation, communication and weather facilities established by the US on French territory during World War II. The transfer of the control and operation of such facilities was agreed to in a US-French Air Service Agreement signed 18 June 1946. (10)

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IV Bilateral Agreements Concluded by FranceBermuda Type:

United States	Mar. 27, 1946
Turkey	Oct. 12, 1946
Brazil	Jan. 27, 1947
Ireland	May 16, 1946
United Kingdom	Feb. 26, 1946
Greece	May 5, 1947
India	July 16, 1947
Sweden	2 Aug 46

Temporary Arrangements:

Iran
Iraq
Italy
Poland
Philippines
~~Denmark~~
Egypt
China
Norway

Division of Traffic Type:

Portugal	April 30, 1946
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Inter-Company Type:

USSR JNH - Air France	9 Apr 47
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Other

Belgium

Unknown:

Rumania	April 8, 1947
Sweden	August 2, 1946
Czechoslovakia	August 1, 1946
Switzerland	July 30, 1945
Denmark	17 Nov 45
Netherlands	15 July 48

V. Aeronautical Industry, Research and Education

French Aircraft Production

The French Government nationalized the greater part of the aircraft manufacturing industry after the liberation of Paris in World War II. Therefore, most production of aeronautical equipment is subject to direct government control and financing through the budget. There remain but two outstanding exceptions: the privately-owned Hispano-Swiza and Breguet Corporations. (11)

Since the nationalization of the industry after liberation, aircraft production has been low and irregular. (12) The French airplane producers have been unable to supply the transport aircraft needed for the development and expansion of the civil aviation industry. Air France, therefore, has been forced to purchase in foreign markets needed aircraft and aeronautical equipment. However, the shortage of foreign exchange (chiefly dollars) has seriously curtailed the purchase of such foreign equipment, and it is the aim of the government to develop domestic production to the point where it can supply French needs. In this connection, Air France has ordered 45 Languedoc's; these airplanes are now replacing the older American types in use on lines in Europe and North Africa. (13)

Reliance on US-built commercial aircraft during the interim period has forced the French to manufacture out of necessity standard US replacement parts, and thus unwittingly fit themselves, at least partially, into the US-UK standardization program. (14)

There has been a considerable amount of criticism in France of the manner in which the nationalized aviation industries have been directed. Premier Ramadier in January 1947 named two government investigators, Marcel Pellenc and Albin Chalandon, to examine the status of France's aviation industry. The findings of these investigators, when released in January 1948, created quite a furor in the French press. The reports gave the following production figures for the French aviation industry: (15)

1944	95
1945	1071
1946	1959
1947	1445
1948	800 (predictions)
1950	230 (predictions)

The reports revealed that no commercial aircraft in France are equipped with French engines; those equipped with American engines are no match for those built in the US. Aircraft types produced were found inadequate for the purpose for which they were built. The Gnome-Rhone 14N engine, the report added, stands up for only 35 or 40 hours of usage. The reasons given for this poor showing are: confused planning, attempting to do too many things at the same time, lack of coordination of effort, constant revision of plans, mismanagement including poor administration, political proselytizing, overstaffing, and financial mismanagement. (15)

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However, neither investigator recommended denationalization of the industry. Both reported that under Tillon's administration as Air Minister, the old management of the industry was replaced by Communists, and that two billion francs were lost through duplicating supervision during this Communist turnover. The drive for increased production disregarded all standards for quality and economy. Some factories were overstaffed to the extent of 13 times the necessary workmen, while still other factories were undermanned. It was found that government factories took two to three times as long in man-hours to overhaul an airplane as private industry. As increased costs developed, books were balanced by increasing the price of delivery to the government, hence few scandalous deficits developed. (15)

As a result of the above criticisms of the nationalized aircraft manufacturing industry, the government issued a decree February 7, 1948, which established a "Committee For the Reorganization of the Aeronautical Industry". This committee was to present its findings to the President of the Council by March 15, 1948. (16)

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French Aeronautical Research

It is the policy of the French Government to promote aeronautical research through government-controlled and financed institutions. The Service Technique de l'aeronautique of the Air Ministry, and the recently created Office National d'Etudes et de Recherches Aeronautiques (which enjoy a certain restricted autonomy) are the principal organizations engaged in aeronautical research. The extent of their activities depends on government appropriations. Much importance is attached to the development of aircraft prototypes, propulsion units, guided missiles and helicopters. (17)

Private companies, such as Brequet, are likewise working on new developments. Brequet has long been interested in helicopters, and at present is receiving government assistance in the development of a large cargo prototype. (17)

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Flying Schools and Aeronautical Education

Private flying is virtually non-existent. Though private type aircraft are produced in a limited quantity, they are very expensive and do not compare favorably with American types. The Aero Club de France, active before the war in promoting private flying, has had difficulty in reviving its activities due largely to the lack of dollar exchange required to purchase light American aircraft such as the Piper Cub. (18)

As mentioned before, the government undertakes the training of civilian pilots, navigators and other technical personnel at flight and ground schools, but only in sufficient numbers to satisfy the needs of the "chosen instrument", Air France. (18)

The government promotes aeronautical education to the extent possible under budgetary limitations. The Ecole Polytechnique, and the Ecole Centrale are state-supported and are the principal institutions giving instructions in aeronautical engineering. (18)

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SOURCES

- (1) ORE 68
- (2) ORE 68
- (3) ORE 68
- (4) Societe Nationale Air France; Foreign Air Transport Division,
Economic Bureau, CAB, Sept. 24, 1947
- (5) ORE 68
- (6) Interavia, Jan. 29, 1948, Feb. 24, 1948.
- (7) WDGS, R-36-48; MA Paris, Jan. 15, 1948; B-2; Restricted.
- (8) Air France, Timetables, Winter 1947/48.
- (9) ORE 68
- (10) State #6658, Paris; November 14, 1946.
- (11) ORE 68
- (12) CMIN 1380, MA Paris, Jan. 6, 1947.
- (13) WDGS, R-48-48, MA Paris, Jan. 19, 1948, B-2; Restricted.
- (14) CMIN 2728, MA 16 Paris, Jan. 15, 1947.
- (15) WDGS, R-85-48; MA Paris; Feb. 4, 1948; B-1; Confidential.
- (16) State #231, Paris; Feb. 16, 1948; *Unclassified*
- (17) ORE 68
- (18) ORE 68

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