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SWISSAIR ADOPTS BRITISH NAVIGATIONAL AID.

Swissair is now utilising the new automatic navigation device Dectra on one of its Douglas DC-7Cs between Switzerland and New York. It is one of the first carriers to use this device in scheduled service on the North Atlantic.

Dectra is a radio system designed to indicate automatically the position of aircraft while flying long over-water sectors. It is a development of the Decca Navigator system, produced by the Decca Navigator Company of London. Decca is already used by over 4,000 ships and aircraft in Europe.

With Dectra, two transmitters in Newfoundland and one in Scotland emit radio waves producing a grid comparable to the geographical degrees of longitude and latitude. A radio receiver aboard the aircraft receives these waves and automatically plots the aircraft's course on a chart, thereby providing the crew with a constant check on their position and showing any deviation from the planned route.

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SWISSAIR'S OPERATIONS IN 1957.

A sizeable increase in fleet capacity and a large extension of the route network brought Swissair a strong traffic increase in 1957. Nearly one million passengers were carried — 992,911 to be exact, an increase of 28 per cent over the 1956 figure of 773,956.

Offered capacity increased by 53 per cent to 115,874,330 short ton-miles from 75,618,430 in 1956. The number of miles flown was 18,106,530, compared with 13,716,620.

Air freight carried rose to 12,373 metric tons from 10,421 tons, or by 19 per cent. The volume of air mail showed an increase of 21 per cent, totalling 4,353 tons, compared with 3,608 tons in the preceding year.

The overall load factor on the scheduled services was 61.6 per cent; for 1956 it was 66.5 per cent.

The unduplicated length of Swissair's route network rose in 1957 to 71,450 miles from 36,103 miles in 1956, mainly because of the opening of a new route to the Far East, new North Atlantic services through Cologne and Lisbon, and the extension of the South America services to Buenos Aires.

SWISSAIR'S FREIGHT TRAFFIC IN 1957.

Swissair achieved in 1957 a 33 per cent increase in freight traffic over 1956. Freight tonne-kilometres performed totalled 15,812,244 against 11,852,095 in 1956. The 1957 figure was slightly more than the total for the six years 1948 to 1953.

The volume of freight carried amounted to 12,372,622 kilos, an increase of 19 per cent over the 1956 figure of 10,421,496 kilos. North Atlantic freight traffic accounted for 1,144,483 kilos, or 14.5 per cent more than in 1956.

Within Europe the volume of freight carried by Swissair rose by 37 per cent and to and from the Middle East by 39 per cent. Freight and mail together accounted in the past year for over 20 per cent of total traffic.

The expansion in freight traffic was made possible by the sharp increase last year in Swissair's offered capacity. This amounted to 53 per cent over 1956, largely because of the opening of the Far East route, the extension of the South America flights to Buenos Aires together with the doubling in frequency, and higher frequencies on the North Atlantic and in Europe.

To cater for the continuing heavy demand for cargo space between Europe and North America, Swissair has ordered a DC-6A freighter with maximum payload capacity of 13.6 tons. From next autumn this aircraft will operate two return services weekly on the North Atlantic.

* * *

Swissair's Board of Directors also propose an increase in the company's share capital from 42 to 63 million Swiss francs. This will be put to the Annual General Meeting of the company, due to be held on 2nd April, 1958.

The increase would take the form of a rights issue at par of one new share for every two shares held.