

A VERY BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TATA AIR LINES

On October 15 1932, the Tata Air Lines began operations. Mr. J.R.D. Tata flew the de Havilland Puss Moth VT-ADN from Karachi to Bombay and Madras carrying air mail. This route connected with the Imperial Airways England-India service. In the first year of operations 7,567 lb. of mail was carried with 100% regularity. The fleet consisted of two Puss Moths and the staff was composed of two pilots, one licenced ground engineer and two mechanics.

In January 1935, the frequency of this service was doubled and the route was at that time Karachi-Bhuja-Ahmedabad-Bombay-Hyderabad-Madras. This year also saw a new route inaugurated between Bombay and Trivandrum - operated weekly outside the monsoon period.

Christmas Day 1936 was the occasion of the first Ceylon - United Kingdom air mail flight. The Tata Air Lines flew the mail from Colombo to Karachi to connect with the Imperial Airways service.

In the first five years of operations, the Tata Air Lines flew one and a half million miles and carried 328,000 lb. of mail with 99.4% regularity.

Mr. J.R.D. Tata again inaugurated a service himself in 1938 when he flew a Waco YQC-6 biplane on the first Delhi-Bombay passenger service.

On 28 February 1938 with the extension of the Empire Air Mail Programme to include India, Burma and Malaya, the Karachi-Bombay-Madras service was extended to Colombo and operated four times a week in each direction. This frequency was increased to five each way in August of the same year.

Operations were maintained during the war - although the shortage of suitable airliners was acute. All of the Company's multi-motor airliners were requisitioned. Waco biplanes later supplemented by some three-motor Stinson Model A monoplanes kept the services going until some Beech Model 18 and some two-motor Douglas transports were loaned by the Government.

The Tata Air Lines became AIR-INDIA LIMITED in 1946 and it was in this year that the Company introduced the first air hostesses in India.

In 1947 most of the Company's Douglas DC-3s were used to evacuate civilians from the Punjab and later to carry troops and ammunition to Kashmir. Flying the flag of India for the first time an AIR-INDIA DC-3 left India on 3 August 1947 for Moscow carrying Mrs. Pandit, Indian Ambassador to the U.S.S.R.

In 1948 AIR-INDIA INTERNATIONAL LTD was founded to operate Indian overseas air services. This Company is operated for the Indian Government by AIR-INDIA LTD. The shares are held 51% by AIR-INDIA LTD. and 49% by the Government of India. The Chairman of both Companies is Mr. J.R.D. Tata.

Mails
~~Atlantic Coast Air Services. Began Monday - Barnstaple April 1935~~ Sept
~~any changed to Sunday and Atlantic Coast Air Lines Ltd. Service suspended 1/1939~~

1919. Feb. London - Edinburgh Air Ministry Ex. flight

14/3 Special London - Bournemouth flight by Minstrel Nightingale with telegrams & mail

1/5 Lympne - Manchester flight & newspaper flight

" Hornsloo - Bournemouth newspaper flight wrecked at Portland

5/5 HP a/c with 1500 lb of Daily Mail & 10 passengers. Flew 370 miles non-stop
to Manchester - Carlisle - Dundee - Aberdeen - Montrose - Edinburgh. Papers
dropped by parachute.

6/5 HP pilot Maj. Frost. flew Cricklenood - Bristol - Exeter - Plymouth papers dropped
at each town.

12/5 Newspaper a/c forced down at Carlisle en route Manchester - S. Scotland.

June Leeds - Scarborough daily air express service for parcels by
North Sea Aerial Navigation Co.

29/9 RAF. Kenley - Newcastle. Mails flown during Rly strike.

30/9 Leeds - London mail by North Sea Aerial Nav. Co. in Rly strike

1-6/10 Rly strike. Services between London & Bristol, Birmingham, Newcastle,
Manchester, Glasgow. Mail 2/- per oz.

1923 Feb 19 - 2 March. Birmingham, London & Manchester air service by Daimler.
during B.I.F.

24/9 - 4/10 - 1928 Liverpool - Belfast ex. mail service by Calcutta

1930 July 22. Glasgow - Twice Special copies of Glasgow Evening Times,
Herald & Bulletin carried on occasion of Annual Gala on twice

1933 12/4 GWR began daily service Cardiff - Halden (for Torquay & Tregunna) -
Plymouth. Air Stamp used 15/5.

22/5 service extended to Birmingham. 17 & 27 July mail
accepted to & from Newton Abbot. Ceased 30/9.

1933 Aug - Sept International Airlines Ltd. "The Western Air Express" Plymouth -
Stamfordham - Plymouth. 1st flight from Plymouth to 20/8 till 25/8. Duration made 1st
flight 24/8. mail carried.