

AIR NEWS

Slow motion films, taken at an Ohio research station, show an aircraft with engines at full throttle being guided towards destruction by fire. Scientists have staged the accident to study means of reducing the normally heavy death rolls which result from plane crashes, for it is not the crash itself, but the fire which follows, that is responsible for most casualties.

Under the same conditions, an aircraft equipped with fire preventive devices is crashed. Immediately the plane's fuel supply and electrical system are shut off; a fire extinguishing agent is injected into the engine, and water is sprayed onto the hot metal parts to create steam. In controlled research crashes like this, the devices have proved themselves almost 100% efficient. Soon it is hoped they will be adapted to give greater safety to both combat and commercial aircraft.

Dorset

A giant American "Flying Tanker" takes off from Tarrant Rushton Airfield in Dorset. Three R.A.F. Meteor jet fighters are already airborne waiting to refuel simultaneously from the tanker in mid-air. Three separate drogues, located in the fuselage and on each wing tip, supply the fuel through probes fitted to the nose of the jets. Until recently only one aircraft could refuel at a time, but this new British development makes it just as simple for three as for one.

Three minutes later the fighters disengage with their tanks full, ready to continue their flight. Fighters which previously could stay airborne for no more than an hour-and-a-half, can now keep going almost indefinitely without landing, and thus can give protection even to long distance bombers.

This system is the only one that allows the receiver pilot to control the intake of fuel. Because of this (and the fact that it is still the only method of triple refuelling while airborne), the American Air Force has now decided to adopt this all-British invention.

CRASH FIRE TESTS

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Remarkable slow motion films reveal a "ghost" plane -- with engines at full throttle -- being guided toward fiery destruction in a sacrifice to science. At Ravenna, Ohio, research scientists for the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics have staged the spectacular accident on purpose to study plane crash fires and ways ~~of~~ to prevent them. In the carefully-planned smashup, the doomed craft's wings and undercarriage buckle -- tearing open the gas tanks. A cloud of fuel mist envelops the plane and reaches the engines, where the exhaust flames touch off a spectacular fire. The death toll in accidents can be reduced or even ~~minim~~ eliminated, the scientists report, if disastrous fires following the crashes ~~can~~ are prevented.

CRASH FIRE TESTS

X Here is a crash under the same conditions, but with an aircraft equipped with fire-preventing equipment devices and techniques. After the crash, this equipment shuts off the ~~fuel~~ plane's fuel supply and electrical system; injects a fire extinguishing agent into the engine, and sprays ~~water~~ water on the hot metal parts to create steam. In controlled research crashes like this one, the devices and techniques have a perfect safety record. The Defense Department is studying the developments to see how they could be adapted for greater air safety ~~in~~ in combat operations and someday, perhaps, they may help blaze a trail of safety in commercial aviation.