

STATEMENT ISSUED FROM THE  
PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT  
HATFIELD, HERTS. ENGLAND  
TELEPHONE HATFIELD 2345  
CABLES HAVILLAND TELEX HATFIELD



Hatfield, Friday, January 22, 1954.

COMET 2 FOR TESTS IN TROPICS

Non-stop Flight to Khartoum May Set Up New Record

*SAME CREW RETURNED*

At 07.30 hours to-day Comet Series 2 G-AMXA is due to leave Hatfield for hot-weather performance tests in Africa. This aircraft, the first Comet 2 off the production line, will be flown by Mr. John Cunningham, de Havilland chief test pilot, non-stop from Hatfield to Khartoum, capital of the Sudan, a distance of 3,080.6 statute miles, for the last phase of its tests before delivery to B.O.A.C. in the Spring. The equivalent distance from London is 3,064.28 statute miles, and the flight, due to take about 7 hours, is expected to break the London-Khartoum record at present held by an Avro Lincoln with a time of 14 hours 23 mins. 10 secs. (S/Ldr. J. C. T. Downey, DFC, October 20-21, 1950)

The fast flight, an incidental part of routine trials, is being made in order that the Comet 2's performance tests may be completed without delay.

The flight is an interesting indication of the Comet 2's commercial capabilities; the aircraft will take off at its maximum all-up weight (120,000 lb.) and the payload on board will be 10,500 lb. about 80 per cent. of normal capacity load. About 6,900 gallons of fuel will be carried.

Those on board are as follows:-

- Mr. John Cunningham, de Havilland chief test pilot (captain).
- Mr. P. O. Bugge, de Havilland test pilot.
- Mr. R. W. Chandler, de Havilland chief radio officer.
- Mr. E. Brackstone Brown, de Havilland engineer.
- Mr. F. J. Reynolds, de Havilland engineer.
- Mr. A. J. Fairbrother, de Havilland aerodynamics observer.
- Mr. J. Marshall, de Havilland instrument specialist.
- Mr. J. Crombie, de Havilland inspection department.
- Captain H. J. Field, B.O.A.C.
- Captain A. M. A. Majendie, B.O.A.C.
- Mr. H. G. Radlett, A.R.B.
- Mr. T. E. R. Burden, A.R.B.
- Mr. A. M. Stephens, Rolls-Royce.

While in Africa the Comet will carry out performance tests at Khartoum, where the daytime temperature in January is about 100°F, and other tests from Jan Smuts airport,

Johannesburg, which is about 5,000 ft. above Sea Level. The aircraft is expected to be away for about two weeks.

The Comet 2 is the type now in production at Hatfield, Chester and Belfast, and the first customer to take delivery will be B.O.A.C. The Corporation is to have a fleet of 12, delivery being due between the coming Spring and the Spring of 1955. Other airlines due to receive Comet 2's are Canadian Pacific Airlines (3), Union Aeromaritime de Transport (France) (3), British Commonwealth Pacific Airlines (3), Panair do Brasil (4), Japan Air Lines (2), Air France (3), Linea Aeropostal Venezolana (3).

The Comet 2 differs from the Comets of Series 1 and 1A, production of which was completed last June, in having Rolls-Royce Avon 503 axial-flow turbojets of 7,000 lb. thrust each, compared with the 5,000 lb. thrust of de Havilland Ghost centrifugal-flow engines of the previous Comets. The 40 per cent. increase in power enables the new airliner to carry heavier payloads with improved economy and at a higher cruising speed. For example, with full allowances for headwinds, stand-off, and diversion, the Comet 2 will be capable of operating stage lengths of up to 2,200 miles - 50 per cent. more than the Series 1. The Comet 2 is three feet longer in the fuselage, and accommodation is for 44 passengers, two stewards, and an operational crew of four. A prototype of the Comet 2, a Comet 1 with Avon engines, has been on test since February 1952.

The prototype Comet Series 3, a larger airliner intended for the longer world stages of up to 2,600 miles, is due to fly this summer. This is the 1956 production model, orders to date including B.O.A.C. (5), Pan American World Airways (3), Air India (2).

Total orders for Comet of all Series now amount to 66 aircraft and about 100 Comet 2's and Comet 3's are the subject of serious negotiations.

SIRGEON

D & H AV SWANSEA WINDS. WATT. JC

PETER BUAGE CO-PILOT

LADY D.H. being interviewed.

Mr REYNOLDS I/C GROUP

Mr J. CONNOR W/CO SERVICING

Peter Buage co pilot

J.C. & P.B.

CYAS INTERVIEWED