

# The Drover Under Test

Successful first and subsequent flights of the Australian-made Drover indicate a payload performance in excess of preliminary estimates.

**T**HE de Havilland Drover, the Australian company's first design effort on power-driven aircraft, made its first test flight on January 23. Tests are still in progress but Brian Walker, de Havilland's test pilot, reports that with regard to the handling of the aircraft he is particularly pleased with its stability and the lack of vibration, fluttering and buffeting throughout the normal speed range. It appears from these preliminary tests that the benefit of the centre engine far outweighs its disadvantages. At the time of writing, Walker had not done very much "engine off" flying but had completed sufficient to show that there is relatively little change in the handling characteristics of the aeroplane when one engine is stopped.

We hope that the tests will be sufficiently advanced to allow a more detailed report in our next issue.

For the present it would appear that de Havilland's are acting conservatively in regard to payload estimates, which are re-published below together with other brief particulars:—

#### APPROXIMATE WEIGHT

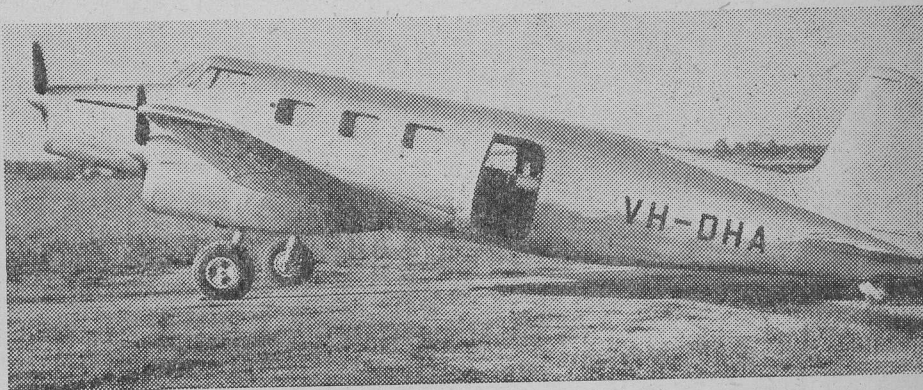
One pilot, 170 lb.  
Crew equipment, 20 lb.  
Fuel, 85 gallons, 614 lb.  
Oil, 9 gallons, 81 lb.  
Pay load and radio, 1400 lb.  
Tare weight, 4215 lb.  
Weight full load, 6500 lb.

#### PERFORMANCE

Cruising speed, 135 miles per hour.  
Fuel consumption, 22½ gals. per hour.  
Air miles per gallon, 6.  
Range in still air, 500 miles.  
Rate of climb at 6500 lb. A.U.W. with one engine inoperative, more than 200 ft. per minute at sea level.  
Rate of climb at 6500 lb. A.U.W., 800 ft. per minute at sea level.

SPAN, 57ft.; LENGTH, 37ft.; HEIGHT (Top of Fin), 9ft. 9in.; WING AREA, 325 sq. ft.; WING LOADING, 20 lb. per sq. ft.; POWER PLANT, 3 145 h.p. Gipsy Major X's; PROPELLERS, fitted with VP propellers, which are operated electrically from the cockpit—no automatic governors will be fitted.

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These Drover views show that Dove features have been introduced wherever possible. Designed to meet the requirement of many Australian operators.

