



Raymond E. Purves, founder of the Australian Fairey organisation, managing director and chairman of the board. He keeps a watchful eye on developments both at the Aircraft Division, Bankstown, and Special Projects, Salisbury.



Air Commodore C. B. Wincott, CBE (seated) came to Australia from the parent company on appointment as general manager in October, 1950. He is seen here with R. Sainsbury, the company secretary since January, 1951.

Of major importance in our Naval Aviation establishment is Fairey Aviation Company of Australasia. Here is the Bankstown story.

FAIREY AUSTRALASIA ARE "SHIPSHAPE"

SINCE the Fairey Aviation Company came to Australia in 1948 it has established a tradition in keeping with that of the parent company in England. It does things the "Navy way" — quietly, unobtrusively, but thoroughly.

Its main job is to repair and recondition the Royal Australian Navy's aircraft. The demand on it has stepped up as Naval Aviation here has expanded, and today it is "bursting at the seams" with activity.

At the start it operated as "the Fairey-Clyde Aviation Company" — a "marriage" with the Clyde Engineering Company — but late last year the English parent company took over the shareholding of Clyde Industries, and the firm was renamed and registered as the Fairey Aviation Company of Australasia Pty. Ltd. Its affairs here are, however, still being directed by the present managing director of Clyde Industries, Mr. R. Purves. The general manager, Air Commodore C. B. Wincott, took over in November, 1950. (See AIRCRAFT April issue for profile on Air Commodore Wincott.)

Currently, many battle-scarred Fireflies and Sea Furies from HMAS SYDNEY are going through Fairey's shop for reconditioning — a graphic reminder of the carrier's recent service with the United Nations' Forces in Korean waters. The company carries out both airframe and power-plant reconditioning, though engine overhauls now go to the CAC plant at Lidcombe.

Though the RAN will gradually build up its own repair and overhaul base at Schofields during the next two years there is no intention to depart from the existing policy of "farming out" engineering work to the civil industry. It will, in fact, be extended.

In addition to the Sea Venom now on order, it is expected that the RAN will equip with the Fairey Gannet three seat anti-submarine aircraft. It is possible that the first Gannets will be brought here in the new fleet carrier HMAS MELBOURNE and Fairey's are naturally considering the provision of servicing facilities. If the Gannets come into service here, they will naturally find their way to the company's works at Bankstown for repair, reconditioning and overhaul as necessary.

Production manager at both Bankstown and Salisbury Divisions is F. O. Walker (left) pictured with A. Talbott, works manager. At right N. R. McNicol, chief estimator, and P. F. Grogan, progress engineer, are in conference.

The Double Mamba engines powering the Gannet will probably go to Armstrong-Siddeley's when this firm is established in South Australia. In this allotment of work the Navy does not itself issue contracts. It operates through the agency of the Department of Defence Production.

As a matter of general policy the Navy considers it both essential and also economical to keep the Service operational with the background of a strong civilian aircraft industry. It has been found in Britain that, in wartime especially, civilian backing for repair work is essential. Navy personnel operate from forward bases; work at main bases is best done by civilian experts. In peacetime the Navy must keep the civilian industry in being because of its wartime potential.

An AIRCRAFT representative was present at Bankstown recently when the first of two "flying classrooms" for the RAN took the air for its first trial. This Dakota conversion, entirely planned by Fairey's to the Navy's requirements, took 18 months to carry out.





L. C. Williams, an Australian with 20 years' design experience, of which 12 years were spent with Fairey in England, is engineering manager controlling design/technical sections.



Detailed works supervision is the responsibility of (L-R) F. Fox (chief of works inspection), C. Dandy (chief electrician), G. Lowther (foreman), C. R. Bailey (supt.).

It is fitted with all the latest "hush-hush" gear, including vertical and oblique cameras, radio, radar and sounding devices to spot underwater raiders, and will be handed over to the Joint Anti-Submarine School at HMAS ALBATROSS, the naval air station, Nowra, as soon as the Navy's test pilots and technical men have finished their checks on it. There it will perform valuable work in the training of RAN and RAAF personnel who will be engaged on anti-sub. operations.

The Navy is so pleased with the general arrangement of the new flying "schoolroom" that few alterations will be made in the second conversion job.

Another interesting development now well under way at Bankstown is the prototype Firefly Mark V dual trainer. This is a simple modification of the orthodox Firefly, containing only duplicate flying controls and dual mechanism for the "other devices," which will later include some of the latest anti-submarine detection gear.

Initial orders have been placed by the RAN for three of these dual trainers, which Fairey officials rate the most advanced of its type ever turned out in Australia.

The advantages of this tandem trainer in teaching attack techniques, and the use of armament are obvious. But they will also be invaluable in teaching basic deck landings, and in periodic checks of experienced pilots to eradicate any faults in technique.

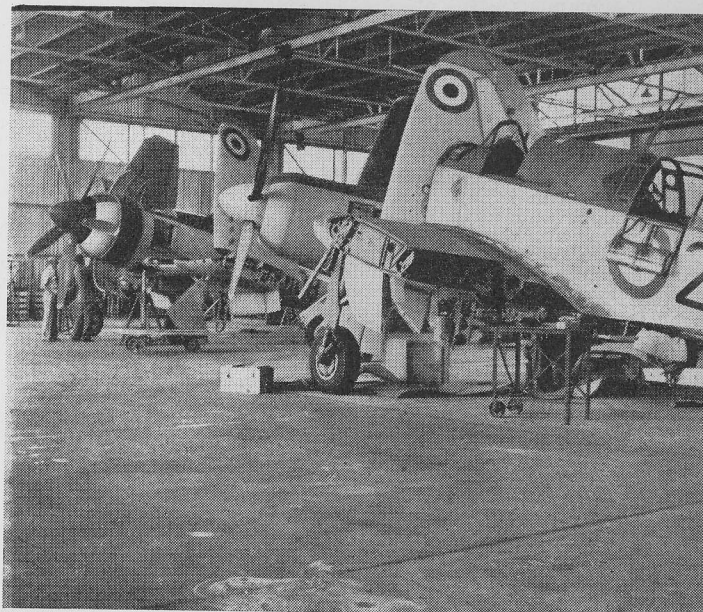
Fairey's claim that training time for RAN pilots will be cut down considerably once appreciable numbers of the dual trainer are in service.

Future projects for the company are necessarily still in "wait-and-see-how-it-develops" stage, and the works will be up to the eyes in jobs for some time to come. But Fairey executives say they will be ready and prepared for RAN developments as they come along.

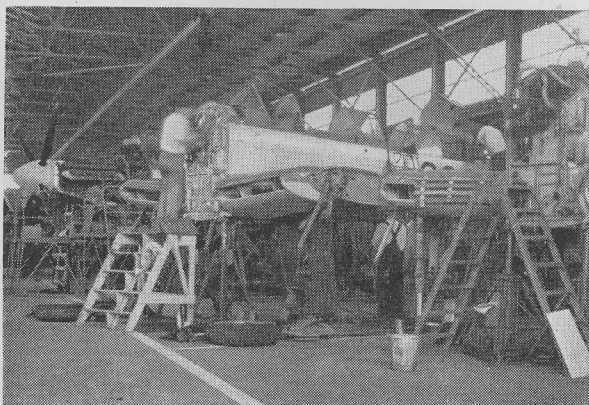
Greatly increased staff has been employed in the last two years.

Fairey's engineering manager, Mr L. C. Williams, told AIRCRAFT "We couldn't squeeze another man

(Continued on page 51)



Above: Sea Fury and Firefly aircraft under a work survey before transfer to the repair line. Below: Sea Fury aircraft under repair and modification. Left: Firefly Mk.5 aircraft under conversion for the RAN to Mk.6 standard.



FAIREY AUSTRALASIA ARE "SHIPSHAPE"

continued from page 25.

into the place because he wouldn't have room to work." However, this will soon be overcome by the opening of a large new hangar, now almost complete, which will enable Fairey's to add to their staff.

Mr. Williams said the company was not affected as acutely as most aircraft plants by the shortage of skilled technicians, and staff turnover was low. The consistent overtime which the company had been working was an inducement to employees. Amenities which the company had added recently included locker and shower facilities, and a staff dining hall.

"We are very satisfied with the degree of skill which we have found among locally recruited staff," said Mr. Williams.

Though a number of key technicians have come to Bankstown from Fairey establishments in England, most of the Bankstown staff are Australian recruited.

Mr. Williams was Melbourne born, but he has spent more than 20 years in English aviation, and was with Fairey's at Stockport, Lancashire, before returning to Australia.

Mr. A. Talbott, works manager, had Belgian experience with Fairey's Topsy factory before being transferred to the Australian subsidiary.

Mr F. O. Walker, as production manager, and secretary R. Sainsbury, complete the executive team. Mr Walker was transferred from the parent company over 18 months ago, where he held the appointment of company chief estimator for nine years, having previously spent a considerable number of years in the Technical Cost Division of the Air Ministry and later, Ministry of Aircraft Production.

The activities of the Special Projects Division of Fairey Australasia—based at Salisbury, SA—cannot be discussed to any extent in this article. It is, of course, generally known that they are closely associated with guided missile research and production. The Fairey organisation was the first British manufacturer to enter the "rocketry" field in Australia, and today, under the management of Colonel R. T. Elvish, the Salisbury section is a very active and important contributor to the Long Range Weapons Establishment programme. We hope to be able to relate something of this work in an early issue.

END.

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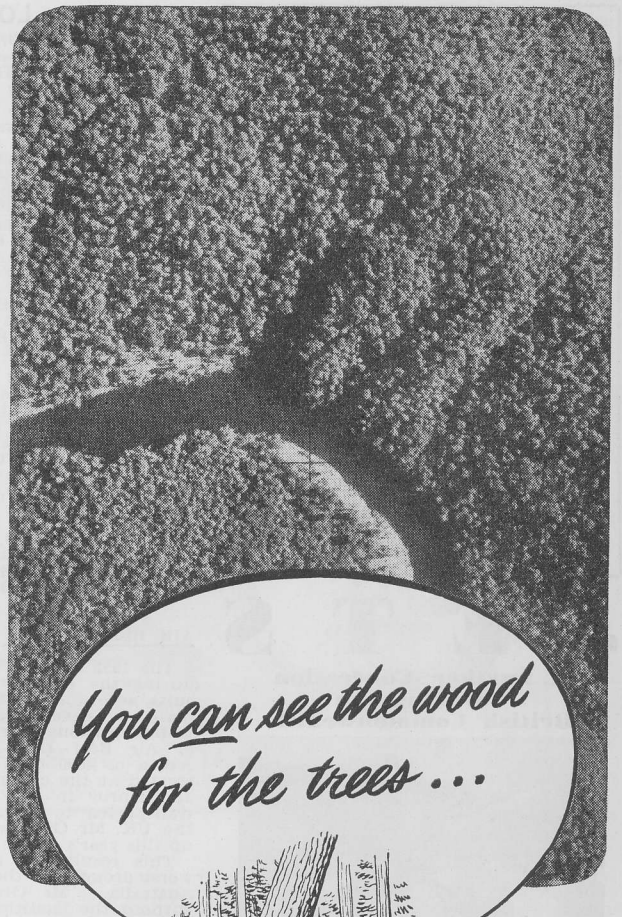
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