

Surplus DC3s for Cambodia

CANBERRA, Wednesday. — The Cambodian Air Force will receive two surplus RAAF DC3 freighters from Australia at a cost of \$12,875 including \$8,675 for their refurbishing.

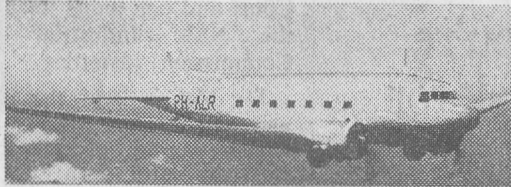
This figure compares with the Government's purchase of six Jetair DC3 aircraft for Cambodia in early 1971 for \$275,000.

A Foreign Affairs spokesman said today that refurbishing the two surplus RAAF DC3 freighters was being done by East-West Airlines at Tamworth Airport.

He said the two aircraft had been acquired from the Department of Supply after they had been declared surplus by the RAAF.

Their acquisition had resulted in a book entry between Supply and Foreign Affairs.

They would be handed over to Cambodia as freighters, and would not have to be brought up to the exacting civil standards insisted on by the Department of Civil Aviation



A DC3

in the case of the six Jetair aircraft.

These aircraft were equipped to carry passengers at either VIP level or normal passenger carrying standards in use on Australian commercial airlines.

They were destined for Cambodian civil airlines.

This meant that their engines had to be brought back to zero service hours, a major task in itself, apart from strict structural tests.

These standards certain-

ly did not apply to freighter aircraft.

The spokesman said that transport aircraft were one of the most useful gifts Australia could make to Cambodia in the circumstances where many of the main trunk roads were liable to be out of use.

The majority of the airstrips in Cambodia could take DC3 aircraft and the Cambodian Air Force had used them for a long time.

It was expected that the two DC3 freighters would be ready to be handed over to Cambodia by the end of the year.

The Leader of the Opposition, Mr Whitlam, moved a censure motion against Mr McMahon on October 19 in the dying days of the last Parliament, over the handling of the purchase of these planes.

Knowledge of the vast difference in the prices of the two DC3 freighters and the six Jetair DC3s would certainly have provided him with greater ammunition than he appeared to possess on October 19.

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD
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