



FIG. 1—WESTLAND WESSEX H.A.S. MK. 1 BEING 'TURNED ROUND' DURING INTENSIVE FLYING TRIALS AT CULDROSE. IN 18 MONTHS THE UNIT ACHIEVED NEARLY 3,000 FLYING-HOURS WITH A STRENGTH OF SIX AIRCRAFT (EIGHT INDIVIDUAL AIRCRAFT WERE INVOLVED)

THE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF NAVAL AIRCRAFT

BY

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Introduction

This short note is intended to bring up to date the article under the same heading which appeared in Vol. 11, No. 3 of the *Journal* in December, 1958. The Author was at that time serving as a Development Project Officer at the Ministry of Supply (now the Ministry of Aviation) and after two years in the field is now in the Maintenance Development Section of the Director-General Aircraft's Department at the Admiralty. 'M.D.' is the Section within D.G.A. which deals with aircraft development up to the completion of Intensive Flying Trials.

The Wessex I.F.T. has recently been completed and the I.F.T. of the Buccaneer is now in progress. Development of the P.531 helicopter, which is to be flown from frigates, is proceeding and the Intensive Flying Trials of the Army version of this aircraft are in progress.

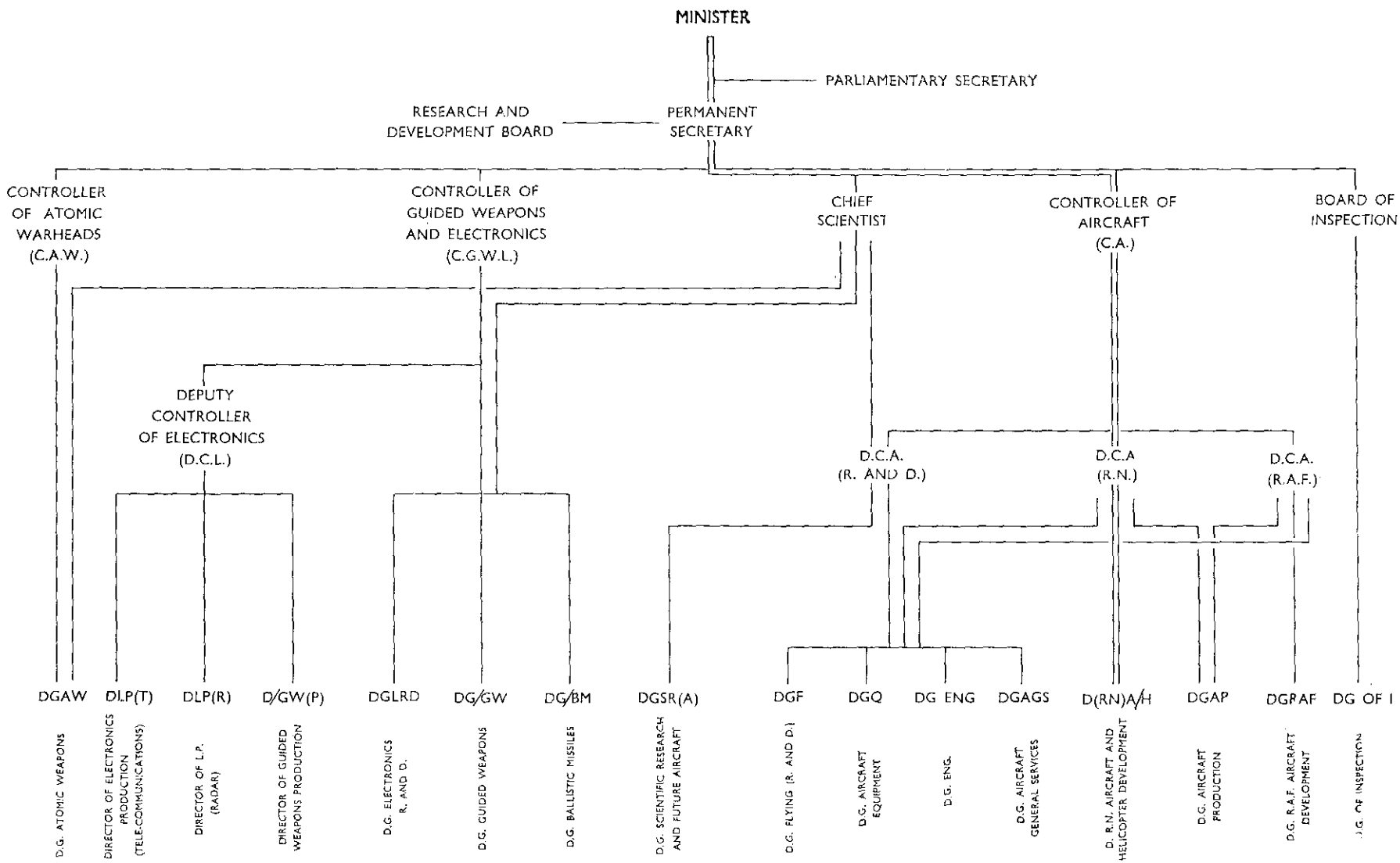


FIG. 2—MINISTRY OF AVIATION TOP LEVEL ORGANIZATION CHART
 (The chart shows lines of responsibility only and not relevant status of posts. The double line shows chain of responsibility for naval aircraft.)

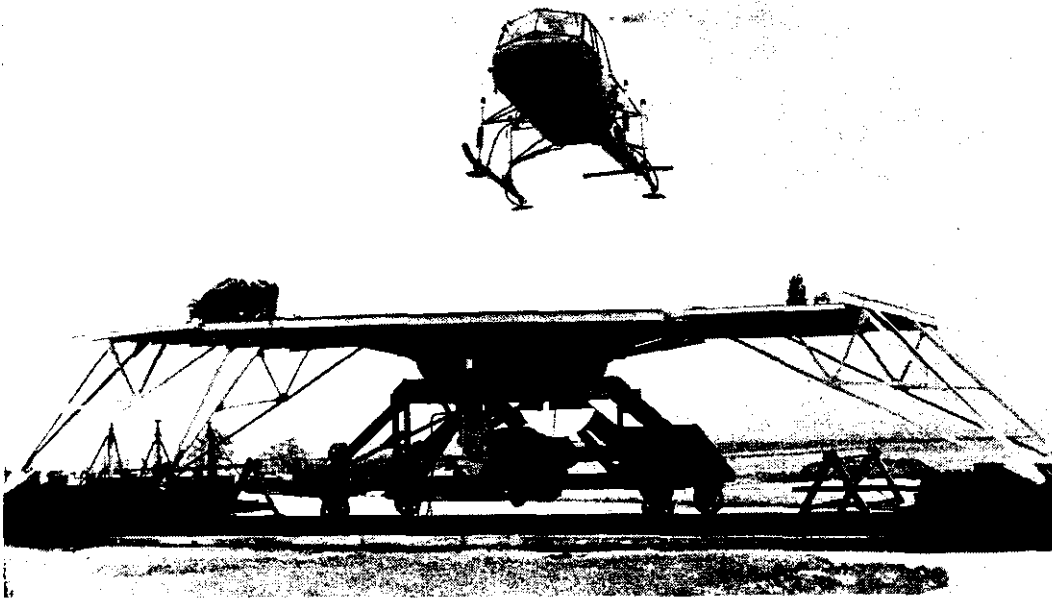


FIG. 3—WESTLAND (SAUNDERS ROE) P.531 HELICOPTER DURING LANDING TRIAL ON THE ROLLING PLATFORM AT R.A.E., BEDFORD. NOTE THE FOUR SUCTION PADS ON THE LANDING SKIDS. THE ROLLING PLATFORM IS USED TO SIMULATE THE MOTION OF THE LANDING AREA OF A SMALL SHIP

Ministry of Aviation

The major organizational change in the last three years is the return to the Army of the responsibility for the supply of munitions and consequently the substitution of the word 'Aviation' for 'Supply'. This very logical step has not in any way affected the functions of the remaining Ministry of Aviation. The possibility, however, of the Navy ever becoming directly responsible for the supply of its own aircraft is still negligible in these days of 'integration'. The compromise remains that the Directorate of R.N. Aircraft and Helicopter Research and Development (D.(R.N.)A/H) is staffed largely by naval officers. Incidentally, this new title, including reference to helicopters, is also a change which has occurred in the last three years. An up to date list of D.(R.N.)A/H staff is shown on page 323. This list also gives an idea of the current projects, which emphasizes the swing towards helicopters.

The revised chart showing the top level organization of the Ministry of Aviation (excluding the Secretariat) is shown in FIG. 2. This indicates other detailed changes, in particular a rearrangement of the responsibility of the Deputy Controllers, naval and R.A.F. aircraft becoming the sole responsibility of the respective Deputy Controllers. (The Rear-Admiral was previously 'Deputy Controller Military Aircraft'.) The exception to this is D.C.A.(R.N.)'s responsibility for helicopters.

Director-General Aircraft

No major change in the organization for dealing with the development of new aircraft has taken place within D.G.A. in the last three years. However, on 1st August, 1961, D.G.A. took over from the Director of Naval Air Warfare the responsibility for 'watching research and progressing developments and production carried out by the Ministry of Aviation on naval aircraft, their weapons and equipment'.

The current list of naval officers on D.G.A.'s staff appears on page 325.



BLACKBURN BUCCANEER TOUCHING DOWN ON H.M.S. ARK ROYAL DURING
DECK TRIALS