

BOAC SERVICES: WEST AFRICA SERVICE including UK-EGYPT

bold items are additions, not in the original ledgers. Red S indicates classification Secret

Information was entered into ledgers in manuscript in the Air Ministry Civil Aviation Department Intelligence Section from signals, memos, news items in magazines and minutes of meetings.

- 01/01/41** Question of using 3 Boeing Clippers on W Africa route, preparation of bases at Freetown, Lagos and Bathurst. Proposed that Kelly Rogers should take a Boeing out to Lagos to examine suitability. BOAC to send crews to USA to be trained on Boeings. IC47400 Min from DDOSI (**no date**)
- 08/02/41 Permission granted for WAN 11 (leaving Lagos 11/2) to call at Las Palmas and for further flights. Spaniards refuse permission DH95s to land at Las Palmas because it is a military aerodrome. Ifni offered as alternative. IC47515 note by DOSI
- 19/03/41 Eire authorities well disposed to proposals to use Foynes on W Africa route. IC47888 Notes of visit by DG to Dublin, 19-21/3
- 01/04/41** W Africa route -ground organisation **S** R586 (**no date**)
- 01/04/41** Proposed service via Foynes, leaving Poole Fridays and Lagos Thursdays, night stops at Lisbon, Bathurst and Freetown. In favourable conditions Lagos-Bathurst will be operated in the day and a nightstop made at Bathurst instead of Freetown. IC58058 undated sent to DG by BOAC IC **S** 393
- 01/05/41** Normal schedule for UK-W Africa air service. Foynes is being introduced as a stop in order to allow a larger payload to be carried. IC47962 OS Nav (**no date**)
- 29/05/41 Mentions survey of a new route to W Africa CIL1030 from Foynes to Edinburgh
- 31/07/41 It is proposed that the following aircraft should be flown to Bathurst via Lisbon:- G-AFZU "Everest" end of August. G-ADSR "Ensign" 1st week in September. G-AFZY "Enterprise" end of October. G-ADSW "Eddystone" early in November. Tentative dates. IC48930 from ADO (ferrying) to DDOSI
- 20/08/41 Possibility of a service between Leopoldville and Loanda. **S** R617

24/09/41 Direct flights by "Guba" (G-AGBJ) between Poole and Lisbon have ceased. "Guba" and "Catalina" (G-AGDA) are now working with S30 flying boats on the Poole-Foynes-Lisbon-W Africa service	IC49335 OS Nav
08/10/41 Boeing 314 flying boats can't use Freetown because of the swell there.	IC49436 DDOSI from BOAC
13/10/41 Whitchurch-Collinstown = feeder service to meet the Boeings - irregularly operated with Frobishers.	From DDOSI
01/10/41 Re air mail to UK, impossible beyond a limited amount. A possibility of increasing capacity of service is being considered.	IC S 1105 from Sec of State for Colonies to West African Governors Conference (no date)
01/10/41 Owing to reduced air activity in Central Mediterranean and urgent need on military grounds to speed up communications between UK and \middle East, BOAC flying boats (except Boeings) will be routed to Egypt through Mediterranean via Gibraltar and Malta. S30 flying boats as well as "Guba" and "Catalina" will be diverted to West African route. Boeings will continue to serve W Africa but will proceed for their periodic maintenance overhaul to Baltimore USA after every 120 flying hours. In absence of through air connection from W Africa to UK priority traffic for UK originating in W Africa hitherto carried by W Africa-UK service should in future be routed via Middle East for onward conveyance by the Mediterranean route.	IC S 1213 Letter from AM London 2410 HI. Also in Summary 124
20/10/41 No further services will be operated to Freetown. Freetown closed but ready to re-open. Engineers and S30 spares to be shipped to Lagos.	CIT1902 from BOAC Lagos to BOAC Freetown
02/02/42 Transfer of S30 flying boats from Mediterranean to West Africa. UK-Lisbon-Bathurst-Freetown-Lagos in addition of W African 3 Boeing service (on way to USA)	S R1012
17/03/42 S30s to turn round at Bathurst instead of Lagos. Two Ensigns to be released from M.E. To carry on loads from Bathurst to Lagos. Frequency estimated at 1 weekly then.	Meeting on air communication in ME
01/03/42 North is leaving in near future for W Africa to act as Civil Aviation representative.	IC S 3186 to RAF Washington from AM Whitchurch. (no date)
16/03/42 Bathurst being prepared as a terminus base, preparations going ahead for accommodation when S30s and Boeings turn round there instead of Lagos.	38th Progress Meeting

- 11/04/42 Bathurst to be W African terminus for Boeings and S30s as soon as Bathurst is ready and as soon as onwards conveyance to Lagos by landplane is available - possibly by PAA. If we provide onward conveyance a stop at Fisherman's Lake in Liberia on the Freetown Takoradi sector would be asked for. We may ask Americans if if we have use of Marshall drome (?) Fisherman's Lake in Liberia. Bolama is to be emergency alternative to Bathurst. IC S 4113 to RAF Washington from AM Whitchurch
- 12/04/42 Re Liberators, discussion whether they could be more profitably employed between UK and Bathurst only S R985 Encl. 44A to AM Whitchurch from RAF ME
- 12/04/42 Re Liberators flying to Bathurst, possibly via Lisbon, on service to Cairo. Maybe PAA would carry on from Bathurst to Cairo. IC S 4136 from AM Whitchurch to RAF ME
- 09/04/42 Loads brought by S30s and Boeings to Bathurst would necessitate 8 Ensigns to carry on a 3 times a week return service to Cairo. Assuming use of Marshall Lake in Liberia and maintenance at Asmara. 39th Progress Meeting
- 21/04/42 AM concerned at lack of progress at Bathurst re buildings for accommodation of staff, urge speed and wish for reply re present state of affairs. CIT2493 from London to Bathurst
- 25/04/42 Re change round at Bathurst, expected to be early in June, pending completion of accommodation. It is hoped Boeings will maintain a once weekly or 3 fortnightly service and S30s ditto. PAA and BOAC to carry on to M East from there. Landplanes will also duplicate the Boeing and S30 service. IC S 4244 from Sec of State for Colonies to W African Govs.
- 23/04/42 Re turn round at Bathurst, maintenance there to be reduced to a minimum so as to offer a small target only to attack from Vichy possessions. Boeings to be maintained at Baltimore to save Bathurst. S30s and Whitleys to be maintained at Bathurst. 41st Progress Meeting
- 13/05/42 1st AW Whitley V G-AGCH left UK 13/5 on a direct flight to W Africa via Gib. This is first of a number of Whitleys which have been allotted for operation on this route. IC S 4326 and 4333 Movement reports (also 14/5/42)
- 06/05/42 Arrangements made for conveyance of surcharged air mail from W Africa to UK. S R680 from Sec of State for Colonies
- 07/05/42 Re Bathurst progress, date of completion to be 31/7. Marshall Airport (USA) could be used by BOAC with consent of Liberian Govt. (US authorities agree). 42nd Progress Meeting
- 21/05/42 US of S has recommended Boeings to continue to Lagos but that S30s should turn round at Bathurst. Hoped that PAA will carry on loads of S30s. 43rd Progress Meeting

04/06/42 Whitley service suspended owing to overheating of engines (temporarily only).	44th Progress Meeting
25/07/42 Not known yet whether flying boats will operate as far as Lagos, depends on report of Capt. Also S30s still to go to Lagos, no turn round at Bathurst yet as proposed.	S R1048 from Jones
09/05/42 Re West African routes and trans African routes	IC S 4917 from North to Under Sec of State for Air
08/10/42 Air Staff have sent instructions to Lyneham to make available by 10/10 to BOAC a hangar for Liberator IIIs. BOAC propose to operate these aircraft from Lyneham on the UK-W Africa service.	IC S 5153 from DOCA
30/10/42 A new aerodrome at Lisbon, long concrete runways, would make practical the use of 4 motor landplanes by BOAC on its African routes.	Aeroplane
15/11/42 Re necessity of withdrawal of large proportion of BOAC aircraft from W Africa. Hope to relieve congestion by use of Khartoum/Kano shuttle. Grateful if Liberators allowed to proceed to Kano.	IC S 5418 to RAF W Africa from RAF ME
18/11/42 Liberator III experimental flight to Lisbon ETD 20/11 (went 21/11/42).	Aircraft movements
26/11/42 Several difficulties to overcome in N Africa after expulsion of enemy before UK-W Africa boats could call there. DG would take up question of obtaining air bases in or around Casablanca.	55th Progress Meeting.
01/01/43 Proposed that BOAC Ensign (one more only to go to ME) should go to ME via Marrakech in French Morocco.	IC S 5722 from AM Whitchurch to US Air Force.
01/01/43 BOAC wish to fly over land from Bathurst-Lagos, permission not obtained yet therefore they must continue via coast at present.	IC S 5723 to AM Whitchurch from AHQWA
04/01/43 BOAC Ensign aircraft now landing at Casablanca, not Marrakech, on its delivery flight to ME.	IC S 5726 from AM Whitchurch to Air Force USA
31/12/42 Possibility of using Port Etienne in North Africa as a flying boat base. If Liberator IIs could use Casablanca or Marrakech payload would probably go up by 1000 lbs.	57th Progress Meeting
04/01/43 RAF to make a permanent flying boat base at Lagos.	IC S 5879 from Edwards BOAC to Burkett
16/01/43 Use of the aerodrome at Algiers for BOAC services to the ME. Maison Blanche aerodrome may be used. Re routing of Liberator III (to W Africa) to Algiers and Cairo is a possibility.	IC S 5786 from OS Nav

14/01/43	Military authorities in N Africa have agreed to BOAC using any suitable flying boat base on the Atlantic coast of Morocco and between and including Casablanca and Algiers. Port Etienne and Maison Blanche desired by BOAC. BOAC cannot yet fly over French W African territory.	58th Progress Meeting (also IC S 5851 see next page) (below)
25/09/42	Possible use of Ensigns and Warwicks from Bathurst in connection with flying boat turn round there.	S R1048 from Burkett
11/01/43	Turn round idea at Bathurst to be dropped at present. BOAC buildings at Bathurst to be repaired after RAF plane crashed in them. As long as flying boats operate to W Africa at all Lagos will be turn round base.	S R1048 from Edwards BOAC to Jones and from Burkett 19/1/43
16/01/43	Aircraft may overfly French W A territory, must observe routes instructions. Aircraft can land in emergency.	FN833/LA, FN389/UP, FN61/JP from BOAC
25/01/43	Re routing procedure from Dakar not received yet re flying over French territory.	IC S 5839 to AM Whitchurch from W Africa
30/01/43	BOAC asked permission to re-route Liberator IIIs (now on UK-W Africa) through to Cairo thus UK-Lisbon-Tafaraoui-El Adem-Cairo.	IC S 5875 from AM Whitchurch to HQ E Africa
01/02/43	Propose to agree to above idea of Liberators flying via N Africa to M.E.. Propose however route to be UK-Lisbon-Gibraltar-Maison Blanche-Biskra-Tripoli-El Adem.	IC S 5887 to RAF ME from E Air Comm Africa
16/01/43	BOAC may use aerodromes in French African territory and also flying boat bases.	IC S 5851 to Achimota from Sec of State Colonies
06/02/43	BOAC will follow coastal routes in W Africa therefore important these instructions be sent with least possible delay so that payload be increased.	IC S 5911 to Air HQ W Africa from AM Whitchurch and 59th Progress meeting 4/2/43
05/02/43	"Egeria" (G-ADSS) last Ensign departs UK 5/2 for W Africa via Casablanca.	Movement reports
11/02/43	First Sunderland will shortly be ready for W African trip. Query re facilities at Port Etienne, only available for mooring and then once a week only.	IC52427 from Collins to BOAC
10/02/43	Facilities at Port Etienne available on or after 12/2/43.	IC52437 from A HQ W Africa to AM Whitchurch
28/01/43	French in agreement re our use of a flying boat base in French Morocco and aerodromes on air line Casablanca-Algiers for duration of war.	IC S 5948 from Min of State Colonies
24/01/43	Re petrol supply in West Africa and statement of petrol storage requirements.	IC S 5892 from DDO2

11/02/43	Re route of Liberator III to Cairo. Between Lisbon-Gibraltar may fly over Portuguese territory not round. KLM do likewise. Re direct flights with no stops at Lisbon, then route round coast still to be followed.	IC S 5965 from ADOCA to AA Lisbon (and vice versa) 16/2/43
25/02/43	Request made for use of Fisherman's Lake in Liberia as this would increase the payload to Lagos.	60th Progress Meeting
08/03/43	Ensign service of the future to be UK-Lisbon-Algiers (Blida)-Castel Benito-El Adem-Cairo West. The trans Africa Ensign service will then cease.	IC S 6063 from OS Nav
15/03/43	"Corridors" for flights from west to east of North Africa	IC S 6065 AM Kingsway, AM Bristol
15/03/43	Ensign service of future to be between UK-Cairo via N Africa. Sunderlands would be transferred to Durban to operate Cairo-Lagos service when Ensigns transferred to UK-Cairo.	IC S 6067 5th Planning Committee
17/03/43	Proposal that Aeromaritime should help BOAC between Bathurst-Lagos.	IC S 6072 from Jones
23/03/43	AM glad to use Aeromaritime services between Bathurst-Freetown-Lagos during war.	IC S 6111 to Achimota from Sec of State Colonies
30/03/43	Liberator IIIs not to continue UK-Cairo. ETD UK-W Africa 8/4/43.	IC S 6148 from DG and DOCA 2/4/43
05/04/43	Up to six passengers may in future be carried by Sunderlands operating through Port Etienne.	IC52703 from ADOCA
07/04/43	Pending decision on Summer Russian routing the Liberator IIIs are to continue UK-Cairo via N Africa. Thus cancelling decision to put them on UK-W Africa.	IC S 6160 from ADOCA
12/04/43	Proposed BOAC route Port Etienne-N of Dakar-Rufisque-Bathurst-Lagos, French concurrence necessary (and route for flying over only OS Nav 20/4).	IC S 6190 to A HQ W Africa from AM Kingsway; IC S 6338 to AM from A HQ W Africa 14/5
12/04/43	BOAC has been refused operation over following route: Port Layautey-Oran-Algiers and eastwards.	IC S 6213 to AM Whitchurch from Medit. Air Command
25/04/43	Re refusal to allow American companies to operate across N Africa because also banned to BOAC.	IC S 6250 from Tedder to AM Whitchurch
14/04/43	It is now proposed to send all sea air freight via Casablanca to be picked up by the RAF which might do away with operations via W Africa.	IC52861 from Poland
03/05/43	Liberator IIIs may be used between UK and Lagos instead of the 6 Sunderlands which may be based on Durban for Congo service. 5 Sunderlands in service now. RAF have given permission for 2 services weekly through Port Etienne (each direction). Guba (G-AGBJ) now unserviceable for routes, possibility of offering her to QEA for training.	8th Planning Committee

12/05/43 BOAC aircraft must avoid 9 mile radius from Dakar and Theis corridor is closed.	FN366LA, FN546 UP no 3 from BOAC S. Leone
24/05/43 Future of Liberator IIIs possibly UK-Lagos or preferably UK-Cairo via Bathurst, Kano and Khartoum.	9th Planning Committee
08/06/43 Route of Liberator III to be Lisbon-Castel Benito-Cairo and time table.	CIL7739 from BOAC Lyneham to Portugal
30/06/43 Target date for delivery of Sunderland (ER) (G-AGER) to Durban is approximately 3/7.	Daily report of aircraft movements IC S 6496
22/06/43 Sunderlands based on UK for operation to W Africa, eg Port Lyautey if Transport Command carry loads on from there.	Planning Committee
13/07/43 Sunderlands to call at Abidjan as from approximately 12/7/43 - extra pay load.	COI and IC S 6544 to AM Bristol from AM Whitchurch
09/06/43 British aircraft may not fly over Biss Gos Island (off Portuguese Guinea)	Cypher message A393 to A HQ WA from AM Whitchurch
26/06/43 Air Transport Command's aid to Malta during blitz of same. Fine work.	Modern Transport
19/07/43 Service to West Africa may be discontinued when UK-Cairo service starts. Plans to intensify the Trans-Atlantic route when the UK-Cairo service starts and to discontinue the West Africa service via Lagos.	Planning Committee, 11th meeting
07/07/43 Complaints about the conditions at Pultney Street Freetown, as a result the RAF have now handed this building back to BOAC as from 1/5/43, but in view of the impending move to Jui it is undesirable to spend a lot of money on it. Very shortly it should be possible to make Maiduguri a fairly comfortable night stop. The position at Bathurst and Fajara continue to improve. SABENA's operations should be more regular now that they have received a second new Lodestar. New timetables agreed, they will standardise the days of operation between Lagos and Cairo regardless of whether Lodestar or Junkers aircraft are being used.	R S 1419 enc 13A BOAC
19/08/43 BOAC will not be calling at Port Lyautey as the US Naval authorities will not give us permission to call there.	Miss Hemmings CO2
20/08/43 Is "Imperia" in condition to provide first class nightstop accommodation Djerba end of Sept. If required, how many passengers can be accommodated?	Cypher message L0072/O/AZ
31/08/43 Djerba ought to be ready in about 3 weeks time. "Imperia" is due at Djerba 6th or 7th of Sept.	Planning Committee, 12th meeting

31/08/43 Djerba survey satisfactorily completed Aug 11/12 and the aircraft continued on the Horseshoe flight.	CIL8143; CIL8116 Technical Director BOAC Cairo
29/09/43 Owing to the destruction of their house boat at Lagos by fire BOAC Sunderlands will for the time being have to be maintained at Bathurst. This will involve two days wait at Bathurst on the southbound journey and an additional day on the northbound journey from Lagos to Bathurst thus the complete schedule will be three days longer than in the past.	IC53761 Major Jones
23/09/43 Djerba is now ready. "Imperia" (BOAC steam yacht) is in position. Reply awaited from Air Chief Marshal Tedder about the operation of BOAC Sunderlands through the Mediterranean, meanwhile they will continue to operate to West Africa. Alternative routes to be considered and the possible adoption of the C.C. Commission device here also.	Joint Air Transport Planning Committee, 13th meeting
01/10/43 Information received from AM Rep. That Sunderland operations are to cease 23/10, request for confirmation.	CIT3811 NZZ 132 29 19 2035 LA426/O/LO
22/10/43 Temporary withdrawal of Sunderlands from the UK WA services coincides with the switch of the Boeings to Winter route, the latter provides a once weekly service from the UK to West Africa but does not give a service from West Africa to UK. Arrangements made with Transport Command to introduce as from 24/10 a once weekly Dakota service between Accra and Rabat connecting with BOAC at Rabat. This service started 25/10/43.	IC53880 ADOCA
26/10/43 Sunderlands to continue to operate on the UK West Africa route and when the Djerba Xmas mail service ceases after 5 weeks Sunderlands will operate to West Africa and to the Middle East. (Note. This report was later reiterated by Major Jones). The Sunderland UK West Africa service <u>will</u> cease later on, but is to carry on for the present.	Spoke CO2 Mr Rosenberg
23/10/43 Transport Command to start service Lagos-Rabat consequent on withdrawal of 19W 20W (UK-WA Sunderland service). No details available but presume calls at Freetown and Bathurst.	CIT3817 Cypher message BS2681
01/11/43 Service Rabat (Sale)-Accra scheduled to start 25/10 presumed operating frequency once weekly with Dakotas	Spoke Transport Command by phone

- 04/11/43 Schedule Rabat(Sale)-Agadir-Port Etienne-Bathurst-Freetown-Marshall-Takoradi-Accra. To IC7055 HQ TC filed HQ RAFTC folder CA1 connect with BOAC service to Rabat (13M/14M). Freight and passengers will be dispatched from Lyneham on Tuesdays BOAC service to Rabat from next week onwards. The first southbound service (ATC) actually left Rabat on 29/10/43 but this was really a trial flight and did not operate to the schedule given above.
- 31/10/43 Sunderlands diverted from West Africa to carry troops mail for Xmas to Djerba. It is hoped CIL8411 Regional Director Cairo that these operations will continue after the carriage of the Xmas mail is completed.
- 31/10/43 Liberators not yet diverted from Lisbon to Rabat (Sale) where they would give a better CIL8411 Regional Director Cairo through pay-load. Proposal to extend the UK-Rabat Dakota service to Algiers. Service will probably go on to Cairo later. Flying boat base at Kasfareit. Layout has been agreed and work is starting immediately. There is already available a slipway and large hard standing.
- 11/11/43 Complaints from Achimota re service from UK to West Africa. Since the Sunderlands have IC S 7218 Achimota to S of S Colonies been diverted to the Djerba service and the Boeings only operate one way. RAF Rabat-Accra service is inadequate. It is necessary to provide services from Port Etienne to Banana, sea communications reduced throwing extra load on air transport. Freight and mail accumulation.
- 30/11/43 Proposed extension of Rabat service to West Africa. Calls at Agadir and Robert's Field Planning Committee, 14th meeting would not be essential if there was any difficulty in securing American permission. Service to run parallel with Transport Command service Accra-Lagos. Interruptions on the West Africa service and accumulation of loads. Cancellation of two Dakota services, frequency not maintained and accumulation of loads from trans Africa route and inter-Colonial loads.

- 11/11/43 ATC services Rabat-Accra. Loads carried:- Nothbound into Rabat. NSL 2 3/11/43 CIL8478 BOAC
 Passengers 2 Gib., 1 UK. Freight 220 lbs UK; Mail 223 lbs UK, diplomatic mail 30 lbs UK.
 NSL 4 6/11/43 Passengers 3 UK. Freight 0. Mail 520 lbs UK. Diplomatic mail 57 lbs UK.
 Special survey 27/10/43 passengers 5 UK. Southbound ex Rabat NSL 1
 29/10/43 Passengers 2 to Accra, Mail 104 lbs. NSL 3 7/11/43 Passengers 1 to Accra.
 Freight 179 lbs to Port Etienne. Definite schedule Friday Rabat, Agadir, Port Etienne,
 Thursday. Saturday Port Etienne, Bathurst, Freetown Wednesday. Sunday Freetown,
 Robertsfield, Takoradi, Accra Tuesday.
- 20/12/43 BOAC are satisfied that Abidjan is suitable all weather for Dakotas and propose to make IC S 7324 AM to 114 Wing Accra
 regular calls there if and when the UK-West Africa landplane service becomes civil
 operation. In anticipation BOAC are to seek formal permission for regular landings, before
 doing so confirmation is requested whether existing permission to use Abidjan for
 Sunderland applies also to landplanes.
- 27/01/44 BOAC to operate a through landplane service weekly UK-West Africa over the route UK- R S 1762 1A West African War Council. 1)
 Lisbon (or Gibraltar)-Rabat-Port Etienne-Yundum (Gambia)-Waterloo (Sierra Leone)-Accra CIL8960 BOAC; 2) IC S 9708 AM to HQ 114
 and Lagos. When this service starts the temporary RAF service will cease. When the
 Boeing Summer schedule is resumed it is possible there will be a Boeing service both
 ways, although the bulk of the capacity will probably be taken up by M.E traffic. 1)
 Landplane services terminating at Lisbon to be operated by KLM alone thus releasing the
 Dakotas for a once weekly landplane service UK-Lagos via Lisbon, Rabat and the West
 Coast of Africa (Note. 5L/6L ceased 14/3). 20 Target date 15th April has now been fixed
 for BOAC UK-West Africa landplane service. Only outstanding point is formal French
 permission for calls at Rabat, Port Etienne, Dakar and Abidjan, it is hoped to receive this
 before 15th April. Hastening action is being taken with Resident Minister, Algiers.