

Bess, Henry David, 1939-

The Honolulu International Airport: economics and management. Los Angeles, 1967.

xi, 281f. illus.

Thesis (Ph.D.) - University of California at Los Angeles.

Photocopy of typescript. Ann Arbor, Mich., University Microfilms, 1970.  
Vita.

Bibliography: leaves 273-281.

1. Airports - H.Is. - Honolulu. 2. Airports - Management. I. Title. ul 1375

Oct. 1971

*HS*

REFERENCE

This dissertation has been  
microfilmed exactly as received 68-7456

BESS, Henry David, 1939-  
THE HONOLULU INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT:  
ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT.

University of California, Los Angeles, Ph.D., 1967  
Business Administration

University Microfilms, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan

## A Brief History of the Development of Aviation in Hawaii

The story of the growth of aviation and airport facilities in the islands is the story of the growth of aviation itself. In 1911 the first flight in Hawaii was recorded, and in 1917 the army first brought planes out to Hawaii. The first attempted flight to Hawaii from the mainland was made in August, 1925--two years before the Lindbergh flight to Paris. The flight, made by Commander John Rodgers in a navy seaplane, was not successful due to a lack of fuel, but a safe landing was made at sea and the crew sailed the plane to Nawiliwili, Kauai. (Subsequently the airport at Honolulu would be named after Commander Rodgers, and the name of the present terminal building in Honolulu bears his name.) In 1927 Ernest L. Smith and Emory Bronte attempted the first land plane flight, and flew from Oakland to Molokai, where a lack of fuel forced them to land. On June 29, 1927 Lts. Maitland and Hagenberger made the flight to Oahu and landed at Wheeler Field after a flight of twenty-five hours and fifty minutes. In the same year a plane race from the mainland to Oahu called the "Dole Derby" was held. Five planes competed, but only two finished. The winner's time was twenty-six hours and eighteen minutes.

In May, 1928 Capt. Kingsford-Smith landed at Wheeler Field in route to Brisbane, Australia via Honolulu and Fiji. After the Kingsford-Smith flight there was a lull in

trans-Pacific flights until 1934 when the navy conducted a flight of six seaplanes from San Francisco to Pearl Harbor. In November of 1934 Kingsford-Smith made the first East-West passage from Hawaii to the mainland on his trip back from Australia. His time for this last leg to Oakland was fifteen hours. In January of 1935 Amelia Earhart made the first solo flight between Hawaii and the mainland with an elapsed time of eighteen hours and seventeen minutes. In April of the same year Pan American started survey flights to Hawaii. Commercial service between the islands had commenced in 1929 by Inter Island Airways using Sikorsky amphibians. Pan Am initiated regular service to Hawaii on November 22, 1935. This same year also saw the inauguration of the San Francisco-Manila air service. At this same time the only scheduled trans-oceanic flights were taking place only in the Pacific. The Atlantic had only been crossed by experimental flights.

On the outbreak of war the facilities of Pan Am were taken over by the navy (The Pan Am base was at Pearl City, located on the shore of Pearl Harbor). In November, 1945 Pan Am resumed commercial operations between Hawaii and the mainland. In 1947 there were ten airlines operating through Honolulu from the Orient, the Philippines, Australia and the mainland for a total of 2,729 arrivals. In May of the same year United Air Lines inaugurated daily service between Honolulu and San Francisco. In June of



1948 Philippine Air Lines initiated the first sleeper service across the Pacific.

Since 1948 there has been a steady increase in the amount and quality of air service serving Hawaii and the rest of the Pacific. Today Hawaii is served by American and foreign air carriers using the most modern equipment available. Due to the distance between Hawaii and the other ports of call around the Pacific, it appears very likely that the Hawaii run will be one of the first to be served by the new jumbo and supersonic planes presently on the drawing boards or on test runs.

#### History of the Development of the Hawaiian Airport System

The following sections of this chapter present a running account of the development of the airport system of Hawaii. The focus will be on the major physical developments and acquisitions of the airports and airport property and the sources of funds for such undertakings.

#### 1911-1932

Although the Territorial Legislature showed interest in aeronautics as early as 1915, all legislation up to 1925 dealt with operation of airplanes, sovereignty of space, damage to land, and licensing of aircraft and pilots. Act 176, Session Laws of Hawaii 1925, appropriated \$45,000 for the acquisition and improvement of an airport and/or landing

field on the island of Oahu...within a reasonable distance of Honolulu. The amount so appropriated not to be expended until the sum of \$20,000 had been raised by private subscription and paid into the Territorial Treasury."<sup>7</sup> Of the money raised and appropriated, \$27,410 was spent to acquire 119.3 acres of land, and 786 acres under water from the S. M. Damon Estate. The site, located approximately 3 3/4 miles from Honolulu, was dedicated on March 21, 1927 as the John Rodgers Airport. (It was later renamed, and today is the Honolulu International Airport.)

Earlier in the same year Act 18 of the Session Laws of 1925 created the Hilo Airport and appropriated \$10,000 for the expenses of transportation, housing and feeding of territorial prisoners to be used in developing an airport at Waiakea, Hawaii (District of South Hilo). This appropriation did not, however, provide for the purchase of equipment. Act 277 of Session Laws of 1927 remedied the problem by appropriating \$25,000 to continue work on the Hilo Airport. Materials and equipment were purchased from this sum. The attorney general had control over the expenditure of these funds.

Although Act 176 of 1925 was a major step forward in the development of the HIA and the airport system, 1927 saw the birth of real interest in the development of airports

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<sup>7</sup>Hawaii Aeronautics Commission, Annual Report, Fiscal Year July 1, 1947 - June 30, 1948 (Honolulu: Hawaii Aeronautics Commission, 1948), p. 8.

and aviation in the territory. On April 27, 1927 Gov. Farrington approved Act 238, Session Laws of Hawaii 1927, which created the Territorial Aeronautical Commission. The powers and duties of the commission were:

1. "Preparation, promulgation and enforcement of rules and regulations governing aviation and allied activities. When approved by the governor [these rules and regulations were] to have force and effect of law.
2. "Examining and licensing of aeronauts and aircraft...
3. "Establishment and chartering of airways...
4. "Exclusive control and operation of all territorially owned or leased airports."<sup>8</sup>

The Act also appropriated \$10,000 for the expenses of the commission for the period 1927-1929. On May 2 of the same year Governor Farrington approved Act 257, Session Laws of Hawaii 1927, appropriating \$75,000, \$25,000 and \$5,000 for airport development of John Rodgers, Hilo and Molokai airports, respectively, in addition to \$15,000 for the acquisition of land for an airport site on Maui. The superintendent of Public Works was charged with the acquisition and development of airports on Molokai, Kauai, Oahu and Maui, and the attorney general was charged with the construction of the Hilo Airport. Both authorities worked closely with the commission.

As of the end of the first complete year (fiscal 1928)

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

of operation of the Aeronautical Commission, the following airports and landing fields were in operation, under construction or proposed:

1. Kauai - Barking Sands Field was under the control of the commission by Executive Order 331 (May 12). The area of the field was 550 acres, and it was 13,728 feet long and 2000 feet wide. It was a hard level sand runway, but being eleven miles from the nearest town (Wainea) it was not suitable for a commercial airport.

The Port Allen Airport was comprised of two sections. One was under the jurisdiction of the U. S. Army and was sixty-seven acres. The other adjoining section of 29.35 acres was under the control of the commission by Executive Order 330 (April 24).

In the Lihue District, the commission controlled a 113 acre field at Wailua via Executive Order 302 (November 22), but due to safety and convenience it was not deemed desirable for development.

2. Oahu - John Rodgers Airport comprised 885 acres (766 of this was under water) and was located at Keehi Lagoon and was under the commission by Executive Order 283 (August 2). There was one runway 250-350 feet wide and 2050 feet long.

3. Molokai - Executive Order 307 of December 15 placed a 204.8 acre field at Hoolehua and Palaau under the jurisdiction of the commission, and was the only

governmentally owned landing field on the island.

4. Maui - Two sites had been tentatively selected and one at Wailuku of 54.49 acres had been deeded to the territory by the Wailuku Sugar Company.

5. Lanai - The Hawaiian Pineapple Company provided and marked an emergency site at Leinukalahua, Kaa.

6. Hawaii - On May 18, 1928, by Executive Order 334, 41.43 acres was added to the original 100 acres for the Hilo Airport (dedicated February 11, 1928) to change the direction of the field due to adverse winds. The runway was 300 feet wide and 1675 feet long, and the work was provided by prisoner labor. The army also had fields on Hawaii. One at Upolu Point (improved) and the other at South Point (unimproved but safe).

At this juncture it should be noted that the developing of these fields showed much foresight on the part of the Territory of Hawaii and the commission, and in a letter dated May 3, 1928 the commission was commended by the director of Aeronautics for such foresight.<sup>9</sup> The 1928 report of the commission stated, "The past year shows very little commercial and private flying within the territory..."<sup>10</sup> Instead of awaiting the growth of flying before building airports, the commission recognized the importance of flying to the

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<sup>9</sup> Territorial Aeronautical Commission, Annual Report, Fiscal Year July 1, 1927 - June 30, 1928 (Honolulu: Territorial Aeronautical Commission, 1928), p. 20.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

1. aids and fostered it by the development of the airport

On January 16, 1929 Executive Order 350 made possible an eighty-six acre addition to the Hilo Airport, bringing the size of the airport up to 227.45 acres. During the year the army added a field on Hawaii at Kilauea on property under the jurisdiction of the National Parks Bureau of the Department of the Interior. January 1929 also saw the formation of Inter-Island Airways (later to become Hawaiian Air Lines), a subsidiary of Inter-Island Steam Navigation Company. Air service commenced on November 11, 1929 with service from Honolulu to Molokai, Maui, Hilo and Kauai. During the first year of operation the company carried 10,355 passengers and 18,680 pounds of express.

Fiscal 1930 saw a great deal of development in the Hawaiian airport system. At John Rodgers Airport a start was made on a cross-wind take-off strip, and additional clearing and grading was done at a cost of \$23,950. Water and electricity were provided at a cost of \$3,481 and \$3,819 respectively. Inter-Island Airways, Ltd. and Hawaiian Airways Co., Ltd., were given authority to erect hangars. The plans were approved by the commission, and the property reverted to the territory in twenty years or it could be purchased by the territory at any time. An additional building also was constructed at a cost of \$5,609. Due to the need to expand the area of the airport, prison labor was used as of December 23, 1929 to quarry coral for



this use, and as of July 31, 1930, 6,000 cubic yards had been removed and sections of the field most needy of repair were surfaced.

At this time the Hilo Airport was the most advanced in terms of construction. The runway was 400 feet wide and 3,000 feet long and was surfaced in coral. Additional areas were being constructed by prison labor. Executive Order 417 of June 7, 1930 set aside a 200 foot strip of territorially-owned land on which Inter-Island Airways was to erect a terminal building and an airplane shelter. Upolu Point also was used by Inter-Island as a way station on trips to Hilo. The license to do so was granted to the territory by the War Department.

As of January 1930, several sites had been investigated, but no selection had been made for an airport on Maui. Lahaina was not deemed to be a good location, but the Pioneer Mill Company agreed to clear a field so that a runway suitable for forced landings would be available. Several sites near Wailuku and Kahului were investigated, but in the end it was the positive action of Inter-Island that decided the site. Inter-Island stated that they would construct an airport at Maalaea no matter what the commission decided. Through independent investigation on their part, they convinced the commission that the site was suitable, and the commission entered negotiations through the commissioner of Public Lands with the parties concerned.

(Inter-Island by this time had acquired a lease on the land from Hawaiian Commercial and Sugar Company.) The result of this was the acquisition of the airport developed with a macadam runway at a price of \$38,860. "This price represented the appraised value of the land plus the amount expended by Inter-Island Airways, Ltd., in the development of the field. On May 28, 1930, by Executive Order No. 412, this area was set aside as Maalaea Airport and placed under the jurisdiction of the commission."<sup>11</sup>

As of fiscal 1930 Inter-Island had been using the Federal Government Field at Hanapepe, Kauai. In December 1929, negotiations started to have both Hanapepe and Upolu Point airfields transferred back to the territory.

Molokai had two airfields: one at Hoolehua (which had been formally named Molokai Airport) and one at Kalaupapa, the world famous Leper Colony.

"In July 1930, the U. S. Weather Bureau established weather reporting stations at Hilo, Laupahoehoe, Kukuihaele, Maalaea and Port Allen. This step constituted the first expenditure of federal money in Hawaii in the interest of commercial aviation."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Territorial Aeronautical Commission, Annual Report, Fiscal Year July 1, 1929 - June 30, 1930 (Honolulu: Territorial Aeronautical Commission, 1930), pp. 17-18.

<sup>12</sup>Hawaii Aeronautics Commission, Annual Report, Fiscal Year July 1, 1947 - June 30, 1948 (Honolulu: Hawaii Aeronautics Commission, 1948), p. 10.



In fiscal 1931 John Rodgers Airport continued to develop through the grading and surfacing of additional runway areas. During the year, 40,000 cubic yards of coral were placed for this purpose; 7,500 of them placed by prison labor. The main runway now had attained a length of 2,200 feet.

#### 1932-1947

The Territorial Aeronautical Commission was abolished and its duties were transferred to the superintendent of Public Works by Act 17 of the Second Special Session of the Territorial Legislature and approved by Governor Judd on April 22, 1932. Although construction and maintenance continued over the following years, reports of the Department of Public Works are very sketchy as the exact work done on the airport system. There was a definite lack of territorial funds for work other than routine maintenance, and much of this was provided for by prison labor. However, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) was very active in the territory during this time period (1932-1942) and much of the development was provided by this agency.

In 1937 Mr. Robert L. Campbell, District Advisor, Airport Section, Bureau of Air Commerce, Department of Commerce, visited the islands for an inspection of the airport system. To bring the fields up to proper standards, \$200,000 was appropriated to the Department of Public Works for the purchase of material, equipment and supplies to

carry out his recommendations. The 1937 legislature also set up a Territorial Airport Fund, the monies of which came from the tax levied on aviation gas, to be used to improve and maintain the system. (The estimated revenues from taxes were \$13,000 per year.)

As of 1937 there were eight airports owned by the territory. The following is presented to show the degree that the WPA participated in the construction of the airport system.

1. Hawaii - From September 1, 1936 to June 30, 1937 the WPA spent \$7,055.49 for material and \$27,093.23 on labor for Hilo Airport, and \$13,708.21 for material and \$7,221.72 for labor on the Upolu Point Airport.

2. Mauai - The airport at Maalaea was deemed to be dangerous due to its close proximity to the mountains and short runways, and hence a minimal amount (\$672.48) was spent on it for maintenance by the WPA from September 1, 1936 to June 30, 1937. The Hana Airport, on the other hand, was acquired by the territory and the WPA labor cleared, graded and fenced it.

3. Molokai - The Molokai Airport at this time consisted of three runways of 4000, 2600, and 2600 feet long and 300 feet in width. "The WPA has granted approximately 50% of the runways at a cost of \$5,982.15 for materials,

\$8,328.75 for labor or a total of \$12,311.90."<sup>13</sup>

4. Kauai - Port Allen Airport was still under construction, and up to June 30, 1937 the WPA had expended \$14,233.69 for materials, \$36,277.16 for labor, for a total of \$50,510.85. A second field on Kauai was under proposal at this time.

5. Oahu - John Rodgers Airport had gone under considerable work by the WPA in lengthening the runways at a cost of \$8,733.14 for materials and \$24,973.33 for labor.

Greater progress was seen for the airport system from 1937 onward due to the fact that the \$200,000 mentioned above had been appropriated. This money was used for the supplying of equipment while the WPA provided the labor for the majority of the work.

In 1938 Mr. E. L. Yuravich, Chief Inspector, Bureau of Air Commerce, Washington D.C., ordered the abandonment of the Wailua Airport on Kauai due to dangers to aviation. The Maalaea Airport on Maui was given restricted usage for the same reason and replaced by Maui Airport (Puunene) as the major airport on Maui. During fiscal 1938 the WPA expended \$191,093.38 on airport construction in the islands; \$165,724.38 of this was for labor. At this time, and for the previous few years, there had been very little work done on the John Rodgers Airport, and was then rated as being in -

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<sup>13</sup>Department of Public Works, Report of the Superintendent, Fiscal Year 1937 (Honolulu: Department of Public Works, 1937), p. 15.

the worst condition in the islands. Just a few years before it had been rated number one. This was largely due to the debate as to whether or not to put in a seaplane basin at Keehi Lagoon (located on the Diamond Head side of the airport). The problem arose from the fact that if the basin was constructed, the dredged material could be used as fill for the airport at a much lower cost than having to bring in the material from some other location, thereby reducing the cost of both projects.

The situation in 1939 was very discouraging. The legislature had not appropriated any money for airport construction so the only funds available were those from the gas tax, and these only amounted to \$13,599.43. During this year the remainder of the \$200,000 appropriation was spent. During fiscal 1939 the WPA spent \$158,067 on airport construction, \$124,945 of it for labor. Inter-Island Airways spent \$13,307.57 for construction and remodeling of facilities at Port Allen, Maui, Hilo and Molokai airports.

In 1940 the picture was much the same. Maintenance was carried on with the \$11,877.88 from the gas tax, and the WPA spent \$19,826.10 on airport construction on the Hilo and Maui airports. The U. S. Army contributed \$600 to the construction of the Maui Airport, and Inter-Island spent \$12,885.74 on improvements of various property. During the year the army and navy traded 91.133 acres of land at Hickam Point (for the future development of John Rodgers

Airport) for 548.48 acres of Mana Airport (Kauai), 14.11 acres of Maui Airport (Maui), .868 acres of Upolu Point Airport and 15.98 acres of Hilo Airport (Hawaii), and 14.695 of Molokai Airport (Molokai).

Table II-VI presents the total cost of the Territorial Airport System from its inception in 1927 to July 1, 1940.<sup>14</sup>

In 1938 Governor Poindexter had asked that the Department of Air Commerce send an engineer to Hawaii to advise in the development of the territorial airports, and in 1939 R. L. Campbell returned to the islands to work with the U. S. Engineers on the Keehi Lagoon seaplane project. A federal appropriation of \$9,000,000 had been authorized for the development of the territorial airport system (including Keehi Lagoon), and in 1940 \$3,300,000 was authorized by Congress for dredging Keehi. In 1941 \$1,900,000 was authorized for the development of John Rodgers Airport in connection with the seaplane project. "Layout for this combined airport and seadrome as submitted by Mr. Campbell in July, 1941, was carried out by the U. S. Engineers and the navy in the war development of John Rodgers Airport."<sup>15</sup>

In 1941 Hawaiian airport construction started to

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<sup>14</sup>Department of Public Works, Report of the Superintendent, Fiscal Year 1940 (Honolulu: Department of Public Works, 1940), p. 44.

<sup>15</sup>Hawaii Aeronautics Commission, Annual Report, Fiscal Year July 1, 1947 - June 30, 1948 (Honolulu: Hawaii Aeronautics Commission, 1948), p. 12.

TABLE II-VI

## EXPENDITURES ON THE TERRITORIAL AIRPORT SYSTEM: 1927 - July 1940

<u>Airports</u>	<u>Federal</u>	<u>Territorial</u>	<u>Inter-Island Airways</u>	<u>Total</u>
John Rodgers	\$ 51,300.54	\$191,237.59	\$113,407.31	\$355,954.44
Port Allen, Kauai	111,066.23	44,392.11	4,749.40	160,207.74
Hana, Maui	21,881.94	1,839.66	.....	23,761.60
Maui	77,240.28	44,079.23	16,964.39	138,284.10
Molokai	75,014.22	69,183.73	1,403.88	145,601.83
Hilo, Hawaii	155,475.56	125,243.02	16,188.37	296,906.95
Upolu, Hawaii	<u>75,056.54</u>	<u>38,619.73</u>	.....	<u>113,676.27</u>
	\$567,035.91	\$514,595.07	\$152,713.55	\$1,234,343.93

boom. The territory collected \$18,078 in gas tax and the WPA, CAA and U. S. Engineers all spent or committed money on Hawaiian airports as shown in Table II-VII.<sup>16</sup>

In fiscal 1942 during the five months preceding the attack on Pearl Harbor, construction, expansion and improvement of the airport system was stepped up due to the National Defense Program. The territory collected \$20,692.52 in gas tax, and spent it on maintenance. Dredging operations on Keeshi Lagoon seaplane project commenced in October 1941, and the dredged material was placed in the low areas lying around John Rodgers.

The 1942 report of the superintendent of Public Works has the following to say about the construction and development of the airport system after the outbreak of war. "The details of this construction and enlargement, as well as its exact location and cost are of a highly strategic nature and, as such, may not be divulged until victory has been attained.

"Upon the outbreak of the war, all airports were taken over by the armed forces of the United States. Such of these airfields as were considered vulnerable to attack were rendered unusable, and the others were placed under strict control of either the army or navy, or both.

"Civilian flying has been suspended for the duration

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<sup>16</sup>Department of Public Works, Report of the Superintendent, Fiscal Year 1941 (Honolulu: Department of Public Works, 1941), p. 21.



of the war and commercial airlines were allowed to continue operations in a restricted degree under military and naval supervision.

"Under present conditions, it is not likely that any improvements to territorial airports will be made, excepting those of military necessity constructed by the federal government, for the duration of the war."<sup>17</sup>

Due to the above, from this report in 1942 until the 1946 report, the story of airport growth in Hawaii is very sketchy. The only news of development during this period is the statement that in 1943 the landplane area at John Rodgers had been filled with spoil from the seaplane dredging and that three runways had been completed. During this year the navy began joint use of John Rodgers with the army and an extensive construction program was started.<sup>18</sup>

#### 1947-1956

During the war the majority of the maintenance of the Hawaiian airports was done by the military with the exception of Hana, Maui, and Port Allen, Kauai airports which were maintained by, and under the control of, the territory. On October 1, 1946 the John Rodgers Airport was returned to the territory for operation and maintenance except for the

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<sup>17</sup>Department of Public Works, Report of the Superintendent, Fiscal Year 1942 (Honolulu: Department of Public Works, 1941), p. 21.

<sup>18</sup>Hawaii Aeronautics Commission, Airports at the Crossroads (Honolulu: Hawaii Aeronautics Commission, 1955), p. 3.



seaplane area which remained under the control of navy. In fiscal year 1947 only these three airports were under the control of the territory, with Maui, Molokai, General Lyman (Hilo), Haleiwa, and Upolu Point airports under some form of permissive use agreements with the military.

During 1947 two noteworthy acts with respect to the airport system were passed. The first, Act 31, Session Laws of Hawaii, 1947, officially changed the name of John Rodgers Airport and the Keehi Lagoon Seaplane Harbor to the Honolulu Airport. This change was made to keep in step with the mainland practice of changing airport names to that of the city where they are located in order to eliminate confusion of passengers and the airlines throughout the world. The second act, Act 32 of the 1947 Territorial Legislature, transferred the operation and maintenance of the territorial airports to the Hawaii Aeronautics Commission (HAC) as of July 1, 1947. Construction remained under the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Works. The creation of the HAC was the start of the development of the modern airport system in Hawaii. Once again the system was in the hands of a body concerned with the airport system as its sole responsibility, not as just one fragment of its scope of duties. This happened at a very opportune time, for the start of the post-war aviation expansion had begun, and the door was about to open to the development of modern day Hawaii.

1947

At this time the Honolulu Airport was one of the largest airports in the United States. It consisted of four paved landplane runways 200 feet wide and from 6,200 to 7,650 feet in length, and three seaplane runways 1000 feet wide and an average length of 2.7 miles. The latter were used only by the navy for mainland flights of Mars type seaplanes. The terminal facilities were temporary buildings constructed by the navy during the war, and were located on the south side of the field. The terminal building was remodeled and landscaped, and various concessionaires occupied lobby space. On April 1, 1948 a lease was entered for the operation of a restaurant, coffee shop and cocktail lounge. The lease agreement included the expenditure of at least \$40,000 for the improvement of the building. (The HAC contributed \$15,000 to these improvements.) These terminal facilities were for overseas passengers only. The inter-island firms had to provide their own facilities.

For the sake of completeness, the following is a list of the other airports in the system as of fiscal year 1947.

#### Oahu

1. Bellows Field - This field was owned by the air force but was partially opened for private fliers as of April 4, 1948.
2. Haleiwa Airport - Located on privately owned land and used extensively by the army and navy during the war,

this field was being leased to the territory by the army at no cost for the use of small plane operators.

#### Kauai

1. Port Allen Airport - Due to short runways this airport was not deemed usable by the army and was plowed under so it could not be used by the enemy. At the end of the war it was regraded and opened for small craft operators. Act 23, Session Laws of Hawaii 1947, matched \$17,500 put up by the army (in lieu of restoration) for developing it into a usable small craft field. The work was completed on May 22, 1948.

#### Molokai

1. Kalaupapa - This strip was under the control of the territory for the use by the settlement.

2. Molokai Airport - This airport was leased to the army during the war and the majority of the development was done by the military. The only terminal facility belonged to Hawaiian Airlines.

#### Lanai

1. Lanai Airport - The reconstruction of this territorially owned airport was started on April 12, 1928. The former field on Lanai was privately owned by the Hawaiian Pineapple Company.

#### Maui

1. Maui Airport - Construction on this airport commenced in 1938 by the Department of Public Works. Further

construction by the U. S. District Engineers under the CAA-Territory airport program, a joint army and navy program, and final completion by the navy was the construction history of this airport. The land ownership rested with the territory, army, navy, and the Hawaiian Commercial and Sugar Company and at this time was leased to the navy.

2. Kahului Airport - This was a naval air station considered desirable for commercial use, and later became part of the territory's airport system as the major commercial airport on the island.

3. Hanao Airport (at Hana) - This was in operation since May 1934 but only used by small private and charter planes.

4. Hana Airport (proposed) - Act 153, Session Laws of Hawaii 1945 appropriated \$150,000 for the construction of a new airport at Hana, the amount matched by the CAA. The land was already largely owned by the territory.

#### Hawaii

1. General Lyman Field (Hilo) - This airport was owned by the territory, leased to the Army Air Force, but used for commercial operations as of September 30, 1946. Operational control was still with the air force.

2. Kamuela Airport - Located on private land at the Parker Ranch, this airport was constructed by the marines during the war. In 1947 the territorial legislature appropriated \$60,000 for the development of the field, but

even then it could not be used for large commercial aircraft.

3. Upolu Point - This was the only airport on the north tip of the island usable for commercial operations. It was used regularly by Hawaiian Airlines one trip per day on the Honolulu-Hilo run.

4. Morse Field - An army field was located on the southern tip of the island under the control of the territory on a temporary permit basis. It was maintained mainly as an emergency landing strip.

At the time plans were underway for two additional airports:

#### Kauai

1. Lihue Airport - Act 153, Session Laws of Hawaii 1945, provided \$115,000 for the acquisition of land, and Act 23, Session Laws of Hawaii 1947 provided \$270,000 for the construction of this airport. The CAA matched the construction fund and 25% of the land acquisition costs.

#### Hawaii

1. Kailua (Kona) Airport - The territory allocated \$140,000 for the construction, matched by the CAA, for this airport. Act 35, Session Laws of Hawaii 1941 provided \$7,500 for the acquisition of land and the CAA donated \$2,500 to this.

Four major changes in the airport system took place in fiscal year 1949. On July 12, 1948 the Lanai Airport

was accepted by the HAC and the CAA, and was the first Hawaiian airport to be completed under the joint administration of the territory and the CAA. The total cost was \$231,858 of which the CAA paid \$114,947. On July 23 Kipapa Airstrip (Oahu) was opened for private and student fliers. The land was leased from American Factors, Ltd., agents, Oahu Sugar Company, Ltd. On August 3, Haleiwa Airport was discontinued as a territorial airport and on December 31 Maui Airport was returned to the territory. Fiscal 1949 also was a year of growth of air operation to and within the islands. Northwest Airlines, Pan American Airlines, British Commonwealth Pacific Airlines, and Trans-Pacific Airlines completed survey flights, inaugural flights and/or increased operations to the islands (or within the chain in the case of Trans-Pacific). Henceforth new operations and services to and within the territory by these and other operators increased to make Hawaii one of the busiest air centers in the nation.

In February 1949 the navy announced it would cease to provide the firefighting equipment and personnel at the Honolulu Airport. This was not a total surprise since the navy had been training civilian personnel since early 1947 and had turned over some equipment to the HAC in October 1946. These provisions were not sufficient, however, and the announcement brought about the passage of Act 336, Session Laws of Hawaii 1949, providing funds for personnel

over some equipment to the airport since it anticipated moving operations there. To continue the trend of military pulling out of the civilian airports, the remaining air traffic control functions were removed from Hickam Air Force Base and located at the Honolulu Airport as of this year.

Aviation operations and schedules continued to increase in fiscal year 1950. Noteworthy are Canadian Pacific Airlines' inaugural flights from Vancouver, B. C. to Sydney, Australia via Honolulu, and on March 29, 1950 Canadian Pacific announced that Canadians flying to Hawaii did not need passports. All other nationals faced this requirement. The airport system also continued to grow. On July 10, 1949 Kona Airport was officially opened, and on August 1, Kahului Airport was accepted by the HAC from the navy on a revocable permit basis. On September 1 the HAC and CAA accepted the Lihue Airport, as well as the Hana Airport on October 5. On the eighteenth of the same month Governor Stainback signed Act 18, Special Session of Hawaii 1949, appropriating \$1,641,770 for airport purposes; \$442,570 of this went to the Honolulu Airport. On April 12, 1950 President Truman signed an executive order transferring the ownership of the Honolulu Airport from the navy to the Territory of Hawaii and in January 1950 the navy turned over to the airport some seventy-five buildings of



the naval air facility on the north side of the airport, which later proved to be a large source of noise for the airport. At this time the importance of having a master plan for the territorial airport system was recognized, and on January 6, 1950, Clark M. Kee, a nationally known airport designer and engineer, commenced work as a consulting engineer for the HAC. In May of 1951 he was appointed by the commission as airport engineer and maintenance director.

In July 1950 the police action in Korea was having a impact on the Honolulu Airport. Landings increased from 6,900 in June to 8,600 in July and the terminal building was taxed to capacity. During fiscal 1951 the Honolulu Airport was third in the nation in aircraft operations. Act 3, Session Laws of Hawaii 1951, signed in April of the year, changed the name of the Honolulu Airport to its present name, the Honolulu International Airport (HIA), and in May, Hickam Air Force Base completed 5,417 feet of runway to form a continuous runway of 13,087 feet. This jointly owned runway was the longest commercial runway in the world and was capable of handling any plane in use at that time.

The only major change in the airport system in 1952 was the transfer of airport operations on Maui from Puunene to Kahului Airport--the former Naval Air Station. The cost of revamping Kahului for commercial usage was \$150,000. Due mainly to a spectacular eruption of



Halemaunau (Kilauea) on Hawaii, a new one month record of 74,713 inter-island passengers was set in August 1953. During the same year the plans for the new terminal building complex at the HIA suffered a setback due to a conflict of interests between the territory and the navy, and a whole new set of plans was started. Although this was a dark note at the time, Dr. Francis K. Sylva, chairman of the HAC stated at the ground breaking ceremony in 1959 that this delay was a "blessing in disguise" for the commission was "able to avoid making the mistakes of other airports..." He stated that "the new terminal facilities will be the first in the nation to be built for the commercial jet-age from the ground up."<sup>19</sup>

There was a steady increase in the amount of passenger traffic during these years. In 1954 the increase was 12.7%. This increase was due in no small part to the inauguration of tourist class fares. In spite of this increase, and the fact that the HIA was fourth in the nation in total aircraft operations, fuel tax receipts fell 28.6%. This partially was due to the decrease in operations of the Korean airlift, and partially due to a decrease in the fuel tax from 4 to 3½ cents per gallon. The tax decrease was effective July 1, 1953 via Act 213, Session Laws 1953.

In March 1954, the preliminary plans for the HIA

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<sup>19</sup>Hawaii Aeronautics Commission, Annual Report, Fiscal Year July 1, 1958 - June 30, 1959 (Honolulu: Hawaii Aeronautics Commission, 1959), p. 7.

terminal complex were approved by the HAC. The estimated cost was \$4,500,000. In 1955, however, all work was discontinued on the planning, again due to a conflict of interest between the military and the territory, pending a joint master plan of the composite area of the HIA, Hickam Air Force Base, and Keahi Lagoon.

Starting in 1954 the HAC made use of the Governor's Employment Program to help relieve the unemployment problem in the territory. The labor was used at the HIA and other airports largely for landscaping purposes. In 1955, \$38,174 of this fund was used by the HAC in the airport system.

Air traffic decreased again in fiscal 1955, but overseas passenger traffic increased 24.1%. In 1955, 76% of the passengers arriving in the islands arrived by air. This increase again was largely attributed to the introduction of tourist class travel. Two other organizations played a major role in the increase in this and in the inter-island travel. First was, and is, the Hawaii Visitors Bureau. This organization advertises Hawaii through various media and is probably the source of initial contact with the majority of the prospective travelers to the islands. The second organization was Hawaiian Airlines. November 11, 1954 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of its founding, and twenty-five years of flying with a perfect safety record. This was the first American airline

to achieve this distinction.

### 1958-1963

Fiscal year 1958 can be said to be the start of the development of the present HIA. During the year an "Agreement for Mutual Transfer of Real Estate" was signed by representatives of the following agencies: 1) United States Air Force, 2) United States Navy, 3) United States Army, 4) Territory of Hawaii (HAC), and 5) the CAA. In general this agreement allowed for Hickam Air Force Base, the HIA, Honolulu Naval Air Station Facility, and Fort Kamehameha to be used as a single airport complex, and set the basis for the only major joint-use airport facility in the United States.

After conferring with representatives of the airlines serving Hawaii, the Department of Public Works, the CAA, and other airport users, the HAC approved the new Master Terminal Site Plan for the HIA in September 1958. The plans located the terminal on the north side of the field (opposite the existing facilities) and called for four separate units: the overseas departure section, the domestic overseas section, the foreign arrivals section, and an inter-island section. The overseas departure section tied in with the administration building to form the main unit.

Fiscal 1958 was a year of acquiring the land and money for the new airport. First, "the territory and the

federal government exchanged land parcels whereby the territory was granted 25-year leases for 248 acres required for the master plan development of the jet-age airport. In return, the territory granted 25-year leases on 172 acres of land and 344 acres of submerged land to the federal government for naval aviation purposes."<sup>20</sup> The territory also acquired 67,288 acres from the Damon Tract through eminent domain proceedings. The land was obtained by the territory in October 1958 at a cost of \$4,850,000.

Joint Resolution 32, Session Laws of Hawaii 1957 authorized the sale of \$14,000,000 of Series A Aviation Revenue Bonds for the development of the HIA. The sale of the bonds had to be approved by congress (PL 85-534). The bill was signed by the president on July 18, 1958, and the bonds were sold in New York on March 31, 1959. In addition to these funds, the FAA contributed \$2,875,000 to the project.

On February 5, 1959 the ground breaking ceremony took place at the HIA and on February 11, work began on the first stage of the site preparation. The site preparation for the terminal buildings was completed in December 1959, and construction of the terminal buildings was started in March of 1960. Throughout this construction process the old terminal facilities were pushed to their limit. Airport operations

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<sup>20</sup>Hawaii Aeronautics Commission, Annual Report, Fiscal Year July 1, 1957 - June 30, 1958 (Honolulu: Hawaii Aeronautics Commission, 1958), p. 4.

increased 1.4%, and passenger traffic increased 33.3% in fiscal 1960. This latter increase was due mainly to two factors. The first was the inauguration of jet service to Hawaii. Quantas began Boeing 707 service in August 1959, Pan American in September and United with DC-8's in March 1960. The second factor was Hawaii's becoming a state in August, 1959.

Although the period starting in 1956 was one of major concern with the HIA, the rest of the airport system was not standing still. In December 1957, the title to Kahului Airport was officially transferred to the territory via Quitclaim Deed authorized by Public Law 377, 82nd Congress. The 1,335 acres of land was acquired by the navy for \$467,000 and the cost of development was \$28,000,000. The HAC also accepted 19.8 acres of land from the Hana Ranch Co., Ltd. for the expansion of Hana Airport. The terminal building for Molokai Airport was put into operation in June 1957, the cost of construction being \$220,000.

In 1958 the Puunene Airport was released by the CAA to permit the HAC to sell the land and use the proceeds for aeronautical purposes. During this year operations at the HIA increased by 14.1%, but inter-island passengers decreased, mainly due to a four-month sugar strike. In 1959 the territory and the Lihue Plantation Co. exchanged land parcels for the future development of the Lihue Airport.

Beginning in 1953, extension or relocation of the

Kona Airport was held up in litigation and controversy. Act 224, Session Laws of Hawaii 1959 appropriated \$235,000 for the extension of the existing runway. The construction was dependent upon the availability of general obligation bonds and the outcome of the injunction against such extension. In 1961, \$47,681 was spent for a study for the relocation of this airport. During the same year approximately \$22,000 was spent in improving Lihue Airport and \$100,000 in extending the runway at General Lyman Field (Hilo). Section 1(a), Act 23, Budget Session of 1960, 1st State Legislature authorized general fund appropriations of \$691,000 to be used by the commission for improvements and additions on Hawaii, Maui, and Kauai.

The major change in the system for this period was an organizational one. As of July 1, 1961 the HAC was abolished and all of its duties were taken over by the Department of Transportation.

Fiscal 1962 saw the passage of three acts concerning the airport system. Act 192, General Session of 1961, authorized the issuance of General Obligation Bonds up to \$4,000,000 for the development of the airport system. Act 195 appropriated \$300,000 of General Obligation Bonds for the extension of runway 8-26 at General Lyman Field to accommodate jet service. (This amount was to be matched by the federal government.) The same act also appropriated \$1,000,000 for the development of Kahului Airport. The



Airports Division was not required to reimburse the state for the funds for Act 195, but was required to do so for Act 192.

Act 23 of the Budget Session of 1962 decreased the fuel tax from 3½ cents to 1 cent per gallon, effective May 21, 1962. This same act instituted the Airport Use Charge (described in Chapter 5) which is the basic source of revenue for the airport system today.

The John Rodgers Terminal of the HIA was dedicated on August 22, 1962, and at midnight, October 14, 1962 all operations ceased at the old terminal and commenced at the new one...Honolulu had caught up with the modern age of jet transport. During the calendar year of 1962 the aircraft movements at the HIA equalled 266,561, and according to the FAA, placed the HIA as the ninth busiest airport in the nation. For fiscal 1963, passenger traffic increased 14.1%. Passenger traffic to Kahului increased 21.47% in a six-month period due to the opening of the Kaaanapali resort area on Maui.

#### The Present Hawaiian Airport System

The history of the Hawaiian Airport System, not to mention that of the HIA, has been one of constant change and development, and this process is continuing today. Even now there is talk of further development of the HIA