

# Seabee

## Bulletin

FROM PERSONAL PLANE DIVISION OF REPUBLIC AVIATION CORPORATION

DEALER BULLETIN #15

February 26, 1947

### THE SEABEE APPROVED FOR SKIS IN CANADA

Good news to all our friends in the north! The department of Transport at Ottawa has officially approved ski operation of the Seabee in Canada<sup>1</sup>. This is said to be the first approval ever given in Canada to an amphibian.

Credit for this good news that comes so promptly on the heels of first delivery of Seabees into Canada goes first to Leavens Brothers Air Service Ltd. of Toronto, who as Seabee distributors for Ontario, arranged the performance tests. Sales Manager James B. Hardy did the actual flying and his report reproduced to go with this bulletin is a wonderful story in itself.

We are grateful to the Department of Transport and especially to Test Pilot D. D. Murphy for their complete cooperation.

Our thanks go also to the Federal Aircraft Works of 3456 North Mississippi Drive, Minneapolis, for their foresight in securing months ago technical data from our engineering department that lead to their developing of Model 3500 skis suitable for the Seabee.

Finally, an orchid to the Seabee engineers at Republic who so designed the plane itself that our own CAA certified to the Canadian authorities that the Seabee is structurely suitable for ski use.

Approval of the Seabee for ski operation in the U.S. waits only flight test by CAA pilots. The snow storm of this past weekend gives us opportunity for those tests so expect further news soon.

### RAINBOW PRODUCTION DEFERRED

By mutual agreement between Republic and American Airlines, production about to begin on the great fleet of 20 giant Rainbow transports ordered by American last year will not go forward.

How this will affect orders of Pan American Airways for a lesser quantity will need to be determined by negotiation as at the present contract price only quantity production of this 400-mile an hour luxury liner would seem to be practical.

The rainbow as the world's fastest, high altitude, long range transport comes from development of the XF-12 for the United States Army Air Forces. Delivery of the Army's initial order for two of these great photo reconnaissance ships is expected in the next few months.

<sup>1</sup> Report attached to the end of this bulletin

Indefinite deferrment of further work on the Rainbow as a commercial transport will permit greater concentration on production on the Seabee and the P-84 Thunderjet.

#### SEABEE PRODUCTION

Visitors at Farmingdale marvel at the changes from week to week in Seabee output - the long months of tooling are about over - the original concept of an absolutely new and original type of personal plane - simplified in design and tooled not as aviation knows tooling, but as the automobile industry knows it, is about to be realized.

It took longer than expected and the initial cost is higher but the principle of simplified design coupled with production from hard dies is still a combination that may startle the aviation world when it is fully demonstrated.

Production now at eight a day is expanding by easy stages - costs are falling steadily as new tools and dies go into operation.

Morale in all departments is very high. Final assembly has been moved to the huge main building made famous by Thunderbolt production during the war. There motorized Seabee engine and fuselage lines now parallel those of Republic's new P-84 Thunderjet.

The all powerful Seabee Change Board meets every other Thursday and its members from Sales, Service, Flight Test, Engineering, Planning, Procurement and production all pool their ideas or recommendations for improving Seabee design or performance. There are read the letters and reports that you send us from the field and it is from your practical suggestions that many of the most important improvements have come or are now under way.

Come see for yourself the extent to which Republic is concentrating its engineering and production resources in the development of the Seabee for world wide markets. If the editors of Fortune Magazine were to bring themselves up-to-date by visiting Republic, their faces would be deservedly red for questioning either Republic's interest in the Seabee or the extent of its market.

#### SPEAKING OF SALES

It's funny how different people are. Some are so busy looking at the trees that they can't see the woods. They look so hard at the price tag they miss the tremendous appeal of the Seabee. They reason that if they can't sell other planes now they can't sell the Seabee and if asked to take a demonstrator, they want to cancel their franchise. Think of it!. Three weeks before spring!

Now I'll agree that when ice and snow cover airports and the lakes and rivers are frozen, it isn't the best flying weather but it is good selling weather.

Have you stopped to think how people mob sportsman and motorboat shows months before the fishing or the boating season opens or how many thousands of people attend flower shows in winter?

It's because half the fun of living is anticipating our pleasures, in just thinking and talking about things we want to do some time in the future.

That's why the time to sell Seabees is right now -- on a cold or windy airport but in your prospect's home or office where you can make his eyes shine planning all the places he can go and all the fun he can have with a Seabee when spring comes.

You have time to do this kind of selling now and you may not have it later. Most of you need no help in planning sales for 1947 - most of you have sizable backlogs of Seabee orders already on hand but for any who do want help, I have a dozen definite ideas I'll give you on request.

#### REPUBLIC'S RETAIL ORDER FORMS

It took the automobile industry many years to draw a satisfactory retail sales order that gave a square deal to both buyer and seller and that also ended the plague of misunderstandings and lawsuits that used to arise.

Republic took its Retail Order forms from the older industry and now supplies them to you as promised in your Republic Franchise. Please use them for all your sales and please note that you keep the white copy, you give the customer the yellow copy. The other two copies you forward to your distributor who sends the orange copy to us.

We want to receive our copy immediately as it is the basis of all our production plans and our allocation of deliveries.

A set of order forms is enclosed. Ask for more from your distributor or from us, if necessary. Be sure to imprint your name in the box at the top.

#### A SAGA OF COURAGE

As a great treat for some of you who like adventure stories, I'm enclosing with this bulletin an unsolicited letter from William McLeod<sup>2</sup>, a bush pilot in British Columbia, who tells what he thinks of the Seabee. I hope some of you will write him for he has what it takes when it comes to meeting danger with skill and courage.

#### HOW TO INSURE DELIVERIES

Any dealer who can make spot delivery of a Seabee on an agreed date will out sell ten to one any dealer who can't do it. Republic's contract with its distributors now permits them to make definite commitments with dealers insuring deliveries up to 60 and 90 days ahead.

Briefly, on the first of each month Republic tenders each of its distributors a definite number of Seabees for delivery in the second month ahead, the allotment being based on the percentage of the distributors annual sales quota to Republic's annual production quota. If the distributor accepts all or any part of this allocation he sends a firm order accompanied by a 15% deposit and Republic then schedules definite production for the month promised, for account of the distributor.

The distributor now offers the same protection to each of his dealers, asking that they cover minimum requirements 60 days ahead by firm orders and equivalent deposits. Dealers, in turn, can assure customers of delivery within a closely bracketed date and so are entitled to ask for the same deposit.

Completing the delivery plan, Republic now notifies distributors approximately ten days in advance of actual delivery, giving NC and serial numbers so that they in turn can give dealers time to collect final payment from customers and for them to arrange insurance or financing.

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<sup>2</sup> Bush pilot report attached to the end of this bulletin.

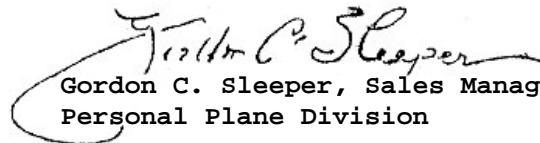
Thus the cycle of complete cooperation from distributor and dealer selling 60 days ahead of actual production permits Republic to undertake controlled guaranteed production schedules.

HEADING WEST

Fred Eaton, Assistant Sales Manager, has just returned from two week's swing through Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, and Indiana, travelling most of the time by Seabee with Jess Gaugh, our Mid-West Sales Representative and George Doughty of our Field Service Division.

Now I'm heading further west expecting to leave for the Coast next Monday or soon thereafter to pay my first visit to our dealers in California, Oregon, Washington and Idaho. My schedule will be arranged by Bob Norswing at Tulare and by Jim Lund, who directs Rankin Aviation Industries in the Northwest from Vancouver, Washington.

Enroute to Tulare where I'll go first, I hope to stop off to see Les Bowman at Fort Worth. Any messages for me can be sent next week care of Rankin Aviation Industries at Tulare, California, and the next week to Vancouver, Washington.

  
Gordon C. Sleeper, Sales Manager  
Personal Plane Division

M E M O R A N D U M

Refer to File 1-3

February 4, 1947

TO: MR. W.T. LEAVENS

RE: SKI TEST ON REPUBLIC "SEABEE"

This is a full report of the actual flight test of the "Seabee" on Federal 3500 skis on Saturday, February 1, 1947. The "Seabee" was fully approved on skis after exhaustive flight tests by Mr. D.D. Murphy, Inspector for the Department of Transport in Ottawa, Canada.

REPORT:

The skis were fitted by Leavens Bros. Engineers in Toronto, and, although limited time and adverse weather prevented other than short Taxi tests, we were convinced the "Seabee" would do a good job on the Federal 3500's. The wing floats were removed and covers put over the float strut channels in the wing. I took off from the hard packed runway at De Havilland with a full tank of gas in a surprisingly short run and arrived in Ottawa 2 hours and 10 minutes later. The cruising speed with skis minus floats was still 103 - 105. The runways at Uplands Airport, Ottawa had been sanded so it was necessary to land on the parallel taxi strips which were packed ice rather than snow. Although slightly out of a 10 m.p.h. wind, the "Seabee" handled very easily without any tendency to slide; credit for part of this stability should go to the "U" shaped runner on the tailski.

Mr. Murphy's first opinion upon examining the ski installation was that the skis were too small for the aircraft, but prepared to test it regardless. We spent considerable time prior to the flight checking load factors, relative position of the C. of G. and generally making Mr. Murphy conversant with the flying characteristics of the "Seabee". The next step was to load the "Seabee" to a maximum gross weight of 3150 lbs. which required the use of several airline ballast weights in addition to ourselves and a full tank of gas.

Climbing into the "Seabee", Mr. Murphy took the left hand seat and I the right from where I explained the cockpit procedure, boost and pitch settings for takeoff, climb and cruise, relative airspeeds, stalling characteristics and maximum dive speed with oleos extended. Mr. Murphy has had considerable experience on all types of aircraft and I might mention here that he became at home in the "Seabee" very quickly, experiencing little difficulty doing a good job of flying.

Since the runways at Uplands were all plowed, the edges of the runways were piled so high with snow that it was difficult to get on to the infield where the hard packed snow was about two feet deep. However, on our way out to the takeoff position Mr. Murphy did get the "Seabee" on to one part of the infield and proceeded to groundloop the little amphibian first left, then right just as hard as she would go. The skis broke through the hard crust, but kept the "Seabee" riding well on top of the deep snow. Mr. Murphy's first exclamation was one of amazement at the excellent stability and maneuverability of the amphibian on the skis.

However, he intended to see what she would do in a looser, deeper snow which was to be found at Carp Airport, an ex RCAF field about 10 miles away where the snow was three feet deep and unbroken.

We took off easily even with the full load and climbed up into 3,000 of below zero air, which, fortunately, was very smooth under the bright blue sky. Mr. Murphy trimmed the "Seabee" for straight and level and then proceeded to see how quickly she would resume level flight, hands off, from various attitudes. Steep turns followed this and next came a stall, then finally a dive at 145 to see if there was any oleo flutter. All of these tests were passed 100% and Mr. Murphy expressed his admiration for the excellent stability and handling characteristics of the "Seabee".

The final test was the landing at Carp in the three feet of snow followed by another series of groundloops to see if we could get her stuck. At the completion of a groundloop the "Seabee" was allowed to stop sliding, leaving the edges of the skis wedged under the crust in such a manner as to stick them if it were at all possible in these snow conditions. Application of throttle, a little rudder kicking and the "Seabee" climbed right out on top raring to go. When we arrived back at Uplands and taxied in on the icy runways, I gave Mr. Murphy another pleasant surprise by showing him what an excellent brake the reversible pitch propeller proved to be in close quarters.

Needless to say, the "Seabee" was licensed on the 3500 Federals with Mr. Murphy expressing his thorough enjoyment while flying the tests and stipulating before departing that we had a date this spring to let him see what a swell job the "Seabee" does in the water.

We frankly admit that the weather conditions were ideal for the "Seabee" to show her stuff, but have since flown her in Toronto in winds up to 30 m.p.h. It is difficult to turn downwind in such strong winds and you do require the assistance of a man or two on the leeward side holding fast to a rope attached to the tie down bracket. Once you get the "Seabee" downwind you can hold it there with engine and rudder. A good suggestion for a pilot caught out by himself in strong winds would be to use the anchor and turn slowly until the "Seabee" is directly downwind, release the anchor, stow it and proceed downwind to his takeoff point. The undercarriage certainly appears rugged, is smooth operating and the "Seabee" has no tendency to keel over sideways or nose over. Outside of sticky snow, the amphibian gets off as fast on snow as wheels, this is not surprising when you realize the drag you have eliminated with removal of the wing floats. A remarkable aircraft, the "Seabee" now truly represents "Landings Unlimited".

JBH:JB/os

Jas. B. Hardy  
Sales Manager

From the office of:  
Gordon C. Sleeper  
Personal Plane Division  
Republic Aviation Corporation

The following letter written from New Westminster,  
B. C. under date of February 13, 1947 by bush pilot  
Wm. McLeod is a Seabee story to quicken the pulses of  
anyone who likes flying adventure stories.

"Dear Sirs:

I am a pilot employed by "Queen Charlotte Airlines", a charter bush flying operation here on the west coast.

Recently we acquired a Seabee to operate for the winter. I was chosen as the first pilot to be checked out in it so we would be able to work it into our business. With only two hours on it, the other day a job came in to fly two passengers a short distance to one of the nearby Islands. With barely an hour of daylight left I took off and flew to my destination. Upon landing in a fairly heavy chop which the Seabee took very well I was informed by my passenger that his dock was a quarter of a mile further up the coast. So I proceeded to taxi this distance. Before I had gone half the distance the wind had increased to a point that a landing at his exposed dock was impossible.

I tried to take off again but the waves by this time were too large to affect this with safety. The nearest shelter being a cove some 8 miles further up the rocky coastline I decided to try to taxi up to this point to make shelter for the night.

For the next two hours I fought seas that reared to 8 or 9 ft. breaking over the cabin and engine of the little ship. With the exception of leaks through the vents and around the doors the ship never gave a quiver to indicate any weakness structurally.

I finally got into shelter with the aid of searchlights from two boats tied up in the cove. Examining the ship afterwards we could not find as much as one strained rivet, nor had she leaked any more than had come in through the upper parts and through my small bad weather port.

But I must say that when I had that little ship tied up and soaked though I was thankful it had been the Seabee I had used to battle that gale, and not one of our pontoon equipped ships. I afterwards found that the wind velocity had exceeded 45 miles per hour.

The only complaints I had were one that due to wind and torque with no rudder trim one foot was almost paralyzed trying to hold the ship straight. The other that if I had hit driftwood or in some way sprung a leak I had no way of pumping my bilges out.

I remain most sincerely,

Wm. McLeod"