

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN AVIATION MUSEUM

SIGNIFICANT AVIATOR & AVIATION EVENTS PROFILES

AIRLINES OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA – DOUGLAS DC-3 OPERATIONS 1960 to 1971

BACKGROUND

On 17 December 1935 the prototype Douglas DC-3 (DST) X14988 took to the air for its first flight piloted by Carl Cover from the Santa Monica Airport, in Los Angeles USA. This aircraft was a further development of the DC-1 and DC-2 types.

The first DC-3 in Australia arrived in November 1937 for 'Airlines of Australia' and others later for ANA, TAA, Guinea Airways, MMA, Butler, East-West and the RAAF.



*Airlines of SA DC-3 VH-ABR
at Adelaide 26 Sep 1971
Photo – Nigel Daw collection*

Guinea Airways, the predecessor of Airlines of South Australia (ASA), was established in 1927 for operations to the goldfields in New Guinea. It was formed by a group of Adelaide SA businessmen and at one stage in the 1930s flew more air freight by weight than the rest of the world's airlines combined. It also started operations on the Adelaide to Darwin air route in 1937 and in 1939 around South Australia. The New Guinea section of the airline, which was virtually destroyed in Japanese air raids in 1942, was not allowed to return after the war ended in 1945. As a result it became based solely in Australia.

In March 1959 Ansett Transport Industries Ltd (ATI - the owner of Ansett-ANA) offered to buy Guinea Airways Ltd and, after several further offers, gained control on 23 October 1959. As a result the airline's name was changed to Airlines of South Australia Pty Ltd, trading as 'Airlines of South Australia' (ASA).

ASA START

Airlines of SA formally commenced operations on 18 January 1960 with a fleet of 5 DC-3s, 1 Auster and one Convair 440. The airline's base was Adelaide, the capital city of South Australia. Being a subsidiary of ATI, its routes were restricted to SA other than Broken Hill in NSW.

The initial routes were:

Adelaide/Port Lincoln
Adelaide/Port Lincoln/Minnipa/Ceduna
Adelaide/Cowell/Cleve/Kimba
Adelaide/Radium Hill/Broken Hill
Adelaide/Kangaroo Island
Adelaide/Port Pirie/Whyalla

Adelaide/Renmark/Mildura.

Services Adelaide/Woomera were also operated, but on a charter basis, and flights to Naracoorte/Millicent commenced on 13 October 1962 using a Piaggio P166.

Initially, the DC-3s operated all routes but were supplemented by the Convair 440 to Port Lincoln (four flights per week), Whyalla (two flights per week), Broken Hill (Sunday only) and Woomera (charter flights). The DC-3s operated eighty four sectors per week.

The first DC-3 to leave the fleet was VH-INB, which was replaced by a second Convair 440.



*The Daws under VH-ABR's starboard side on 13 March 1971
(L-R Paul, Mrs S Daw and Nigel)
Photo – Sunday Mail via Nigel Daw*

The run-down of the DC-3 fleet became a reality when an order for a single Fokker F27/200 Friendship was announced in September 1965. Delivery of the aircraft VH-FNP occurred on 16 September 1966 and that saw the loss of another DC-3. By May 1968 the DC-3 fleet was reduced to two.

On 15 March 1969 I had the pleasure of enjoying a 'Mystery Flight' (cost \$8.00 return) on the DC-3 VH-ABR (21 seater) on GJ1134/1133 Adelaide/Whyalla/Adelaide. The crew were Captain John O'Hagan, F/O Grant Mason and Hostess Heather McInnes, and there were six passengers to Whyalla and fifteen on return to Adelaide. Cruising level was 6,500 feet so barley sugars were handed out by the Hostess. (See Propliner No. 39 for the full story.)



I also had the pleasure, with my brother Paul and our mother, of flying on the last scheduled flight (we thought) of the DC-3 on 13 March 1971 when the DC-3 VH-ABR operated Flight No GJ1104 Adelaide/Kingscote. The flight was crewed by Captain John O'Hagan, F/O Tony Mooy and Hostess J. Greaves. Sector time was 35 minutes.

Overnight bad weather came in over SA and as VH-ABR had insufficient fuel to reach its alternate of Broken Hill, the Daw family returned to Adelaide on 15 March at 0600 in F27 VH-FNI.

VH-ABR and ANW were ferried to Melbourne/Essendon on 15 March 1971 having been replaced by a further F27. However, the DC-3s returned on 28 March (ANW) and 1 April (ABR) as an Ansett F27 had been burnt out in a hangar fire at Essendon. On return to

Adelaide the ASA timetable effective from 29 March 1971 showed the only DC-3 flight scheduled was:

Monday

GJ1122 Dep ADL 0945, Arr Cleve 1050, Dep Cleve 1100, Arr Minnipa 1155, Dep Minnipa 1205, Arr Ceduna 1300;

GJ1121 Dep Ceduna 1325, Arr Minnipa 1415, Dep Minnipa 1425, Arr Cleve 1515, Dep Cleve 1525, Arr ADL 1630.



*Airlines of SA DC-3 VH-ANW
at Adelaide 5 Sep 1971
Photo – Nigel Daw collection*

In addition to these flights the DC-3s were used as backups to the Convair 440 and Fokker F27 types. Being only a minor type in the fleet, retirement was inevitable with the delivery of a further F27/200.

The last flights undertaken by the DC-3s were as follows:

VH-ABR - 3 October 1971 - Charter B Adelaide to Bathurst NSW departed at 0230 (for the Bathurst 1000 Car Race) flight time 4 hours 40 minutes. The aircraft returned to Adelaide the same day arriving at 2350.

VH-ANW - 4 October 1971 - Spec 'A' to Woomera departing Adelaide at 0720 and returning to Adelaide arriving at 1150.

Both aircraft were then retired with VH-ANW ferried to Melbourne on 4 October 1971 and VH-ABR following the next day. This was the end of another era in commercial aviation history in S.A.



*Nigel Daw giving a regal wave from the steps of VH-ANW 31 Oct 1970
Photo – Nigel Daw collection*

FLEET

C/N 2029 VH-ABR (DC-3-202A) 1/10/61 to 14/3/71, 1/4/71 to 3/10/71. TT 67,224 hours.

C/N 3272 VH-ANN (C-49-DO) 18/1/60 to 16/04/66 (was VH-GAH 17/8/58 to 25/1/60)

Total time 47,329 hours

C/N 4096 VH-ANP (C-49B-DO) 18/1/60 to /10/61 (was VH-GAI 17/8/58 to 25/1/60)

C/N 6010 VH-ANS (C-47-DL) 18/1/60 to 12/66 (was VH-GAJ 17/8/58 to 25/1/60)

C/N 9285 VH-INB (C-47A-20-DL) 18/1/60 to 26/4/60 (was VH-GAL 17/8/58 to 25/1/60)

C/N 9559 VH-ANZ (C-47A-30-DL) 16/4/66 to 5/68

C/N 13624 VH-ANW (C-47A-25-DK) 18/1/60 to 12/3/71, 28/03/71 to 04/10/71

(Was VH-GAK 17/8/58 to 25/1/60) This aircraft spent time on a children's campsite at Chain of Ponds from 1972 until 1985 when it moved to Western Australia)

NOTE; For further information on Airlines of South Australia refer to: www.airlinesofsa.com
or e-mail: skyways@adam.com.au

Nigel Daw

History Group

The South Australian Aviation Museum

July 2017

FLIGHT SCHEDULES

• ADELAIDE—PORT LINCOLN

Flights	1112	1113	1120	1124	1124
	DC3	Myrta	DC3	DC3	Myrta
ADELAIDE	Dep. 17.30 a.m.	Tue, Thu, Fri, Sat	Mon, Fri	Daily ex Sat, Sun	Sun
PT. LINCOLN	Arr. 8.00 a.m.	*17.30 a.m.	*12.00 noon	4.40 p.m.	4.25 p.m.
Flights	1111	1111	1129	1123	1113
	DC3	Myrta	DC3	DC3	Myrta
PT. LINCOLN	Dep. 18.25 a.m.	Mon, Wed, Tue, Thu, Fri, Sat	Mon, Fri	Daily ex Sat, Sun	Sun
ADELAIDE	Arr. 10.35 a.m.	*9.55 a.m.	*1.25 p.m.	*5.00 p.m.	*4.45 p.m.

• ADELAIDE—PORT LINCOLN—MINNIPA—CEDUNA

Flights	1118	1118	1112	1112	1112
	DC3	DC3	DC3	DC3	DC3
ADELAIDE	Dep. 18.20 a.m.	Tue, Fri	CEDUNA	Dep. 12.15 p.m.	Tue, Fri
PT. LINCOLN	Arr. 9.30 a.m.		MINNIPA	Arr. 1.00 p.m.	
MINNIPA	Dep. 9.45 a.m.		PT. LINCOLN	Dep. 11.25 p.m.	
CEDUNA	Arr. 10.45 a.m.		ADELAIDE	Arr. 12.30 p.m.	

• ADELAIDE—KANGAROO ISLAND

Flights	1104	1104	1108	1108	1108
	DC3	DC3	DC3	DC3	DC3
ADELAIDE	Dep. 17.15 a.m.	Tue	CEDUNA	Dep. 1.15 p.m.	Tue
KANGAROO IS.	Arr. 12.00 noon		MINNIPA	Arr. 3.00 p.m.	
Flights	1103	1103	1101	1101	1101
	DC3	DC3	DC3	DC3	DC3
KANGAROO IS.	Dep. 12.20 p.m.	Tue	CEDUNA	Dep. 3.25 p.m.	Tue
ADELAIDE	Arr. 1.05 p.m.		MINNIPA	Arr. 3.00 p.m.	

Flights 1104 and 1103 daily except Sunday connect with Ground Transport to and from Kingsgate, American River and Pennington.

Flights 1104 and 1103 Sunday Flights 1102/1101 connect with Ground Transport to and from American River and Kingsgate only.

• ADELAIDE—COWELL—CLEVE—KIMBA

Flights	1122/1121	1122/1121	1122/1121	1122/1121	1122/1121
	DC3	DC3	DC3	DC3	DC3
ADELAIDE	Dep. 11.45 a.m.	Mon, Wed, Fri	COWELL	Dep. 12.45 p.m.	Mon, Wed, Fri
COWELL	Arr. 3.45 p.m.		CLEVE	Arr. 3.30 p.m.	
CLEVE	Dep. 3.50 p.m.		KIMBA	Arr. 4.30 p.m.	
KIMBA	Arr. 4.30 p.m.		ADELAIDE	Arr. 5.35 p.m.	

• ADELAIDE—RADIUM HILL—BROKEN HILL

Flights	1144/1143	1144/1143	1144/1143	1144/1143	1144/1143
	DC3	DC3	DC3	DC3	DC3
ADELAIDE	Dep. 12.20 a.m.	Tue, Thu	RADIUM HILL	Dep. 9.05 a.m.	Tue, Thu
RADIUM HILL	Arr. 9.05 a.m.		BROKEN HILL	Arr. 9.45 a.m.	
BROKEN HILL	Dep. 9.45 a.m.		ADELAIDE	Arr. 11.55 a.m.	

• ADELAIDE—PORT PIRIE—WHYALLA

Flights	1122	1124	1124	1124	1124
	DC3	DC3	DC3	DC3	DC3
ADELAIDE	Dep. 17.15 a.m.	Mon, Wed, Fri	PORT PIRIE	Dep. 18.15 a.m.	Mon, Wed, Fri
PORT PIRIE	Arr. 3.30 p.m.		WHYALLA	Arr. 4.20 p.m.	
WHYALLA	Dep. 4.25 p.m.		ADELAIDE	Arr. 5.45 p.m.	

• ADELAIDE—REMARK—MILDURA

Flights	1141	1141	1141	1141	1141
	DC3	DC3	DC3	DC3	DC3
ADELAIDE	Dep. 18.20 a.m.	Tue, Fri	REMARK	Dep. 10.25 a.m.	Tue, Fri
REMARK	Arr. 11.40 a.m.		MILDURA	Dep. 12.30 p.m.	
MILDURA	Arr. 13.50 p.m.		ADELAIDE	Arr. 2.40 p.m.	

• ADELAIDE—WOOMERA

Charter flights operate Monday to Friday inclusive, except Public Holidays. By arrangement with the charterer, passenger requirements and freight charges are accepted from the general public through our normal channels. Seats are made available to the charterer on charter flights, as available, and timetables are shown only when in service.

* Refreshments served daily between this and the next port.
* A meal is served daily between this and the next port.

GENERAL INFORMATION

CHARTER SERVICES

Light and heavy aircraft are available for special charter. Assistance flights arranged at short notice. Details will be provided on application.

AIR AIRLINES OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
Flights connect with ANSETT-A.N.A. interstate services. Principal Booking Agents — ANSETT-A.N.A.

Airlines of South Australia Timetable 18 January 1960

