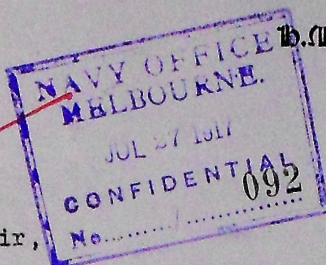




In reply please quote
No. 05/17

Confidential



H.M.S.

"Brisbane"

at Fremantle

18th July

1917

Sir,

I have the honour to report as follows, on the subject of seaplanes acting as lookouts for patrol cruisers.

1. A ship of "Brisbane" class can carry two ^{large} Sopwith seaplanes. They can be stowed one on each side on a temporary platform, just before the mainmast and abaft the break of the boat deck.

It is necessary to fit two derricks, one for each seaplane, because the derricks must be sufficiently long to clear the ship's side and one derrick could not be used because it would be too long to clear the main stays.

2. These seaplanes can, of course, only be used in fair weather; they would not be able to rise from a rough sea. Nevertheless they are so small that they are not in the way if stowed on board as indicated above and so could be made use of whenever the state of the sea permitted.

3. The following is a list of ratings which would have to be carried for two planes:-

1 Petty Officer Air Mechanic
1 Leading Air Mechanic
2 Air Mechanics.

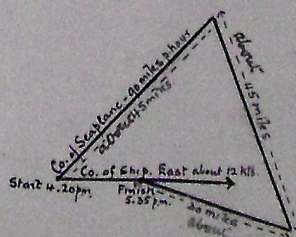
The same number of mechanics would be required for one plane, ~~but only one Flying Officer.~~

4. Each flight would be of about one hours duration, over a triangular course of 20 minutes sides in time. This would cover an area of visibility of about 60 miles radius with an imaginary centre during flight.

A typical flight would be as under:-

	Time	height in feet.	Observations.
(1)	4.20 p.m.	Airborne	Course N 45 E
	4.50 p.m.	about 3000 feet	a/c S 45 E
	5.05 p.m.		a/c South
	5.15 p.m.		a/c Westerly to return to ship.
	5.35 p.m.	Waterborne	

02 (2) as shown
in sketch



One day's work in fine weather would be as follows:-

Ship steaming about 12 to 15 knots. At full daylight, stop, hoist out seaplane, proceed course and speed as arranged. Seaplane carries out flight of about 1 hour as indicated previously. At end of hour, when seaplane is seen approaching, stop, hoist in seaplane, proceed until about 4.0 p.m. and repeat flight.

By this means a track of about from 120 to 150 miles in width and about 200 miles in length can be examined daily.

6. The Clerget Sopwith Baby Seaplane is good for 15 flights of one hour's duration each before it is necessary to take down and examine engine.

Owing to the small size of these planes, only one pilot can be accommodated without an observer, so that the strain on the pilot is very great, as he has to be observer as well as pilot. It is therefore necessary to have at least two pilots, who should work alternate flights.

7. The machine I was using, in spite of its light construction, stood up to its work well. Its weakest points are main and tail floats which become leaky at the seams. It would not be difficult to arrange for more ^{strongly} constructed floats however.

8. For Coastwise work, the twin 250 H.P. Rolls Royce Flying Boats would be of the greatest value as they have a vastly greater radius and carry two pilots, wireless, etc. They are able to keep the sea moreover, if obliged to descend, in practically any weather.

Flying stations at selected spots around the coast would be required and they would work with, but not from, patrol cruisers according to a pre-conceived plan. This matter, however, does not I suppose come within the scope of the report you desire me to make.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

David Cumby
Captain.

The Naval Secretary,
Navy Office,
Melbourne.

25 (11/28/17)
1st 11/28/17 MAR 30.7.17
2nd 11/28/17
Minister

Notes. Remark at & presumably refers to hostile conditions under fire. The number of air mechanics stated to be necessary for one machine appears to be excessive.

W.H.D.
26.7.17

28/3/17

This very interesting report stops short just at the vital point - the pre-conceived plan - in other words the general organization of an Australian Air Service. Good 2/8/17