

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology.

AVIATION WEATHER REPORTS IN EUROPE

The broadcasting of radio weather reports is carried out on a more elaborate scale in Europe than in any other part of the world, and it is only by a strict adherence to time-tables and a systematic allocation of the wave-lengths employed for these reports that hopeless chaos is avoided. A large share of this radio traffic consists of the frequent reports required for aviation.

The system of aviation reports has recently been revised. According to the new scheme Europe is divided into several regions, within any one of which the same wave-length is employed for the transmission of aviation messages. Three wave-lengths are provided for this service and they are distributed in such a way that two regions employing the same wave-length are never adjacent. Each region is divided into six sub-regions, which transmit reports successively according to a fixed time-table.

At the hours of 7 a.m., 10 a.m., 1 p.m., 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. full meteorological observations, including upper-air observations, are made at all stations on the airways, and the transmission of the results successively from the sub-regions in each region occupies nearly a full hour. During the intermediate hours each sub-region transmits a report every half-hour. The half-hourly messages contain, normally, the results of a weather observation made at the principal aerodrome in the sub-region, and also, once an hour, reports for certain other stations that are especially important from the pilots' point of view, together with reports of any important changes that may have taken place in weather conditions affecting flight since the last report transmitted.

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21st and B Sts.
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