

five others. These ocean stations provide essential weather reports for inclusion in the North Atlantic weather network. They serve as air navigation check and relay points for aircraft flying across the Atlantic and, when necessary, perform search and rescue duties. Two other agreements provide for the financing of a LORAN (long range radio navigation aid) station in Iceland and of meteorological and communications facilities in that country. The fourth agreement, with the Government of Denmark, makes provision for the financing of weather stations in Greenland and of a LORAN station at Skuvanes in the Faeroe Islands. The costs of these services are borne by a group of nations, with ICAO administering the scheme and providing technical assistance where required. The joint support programme has thus far been confined to projects associated with the North Atlantic area.

Economic Aspects

In the economic field the first major effect was an attempt to draw up a multilateral agreement to govern the exchange of commercial air rights. At present these commercial air rights—the rights of the airlines of one nation to fly to the airports of another, for example—are exchanged by a process of bilateral agreements. These bilateral pacts are at the economic basis of international air transportation, and it is ICAO's hope that their large number will be replaced by one multilateral agreement acceptable to all members. For several years ICAO has worked toward this end but so far the best that has been achieved is the clarification and embodiment of certain basic principles in the majority of the bilateral agreements now in effect.

International Standards Adopted

In another economic field some achievements have been reported. ICAO has devoted its attention to the multiplicity of restrictions, which hinders the free flow of traffic across international borders. A set of international standards has been adopted on the facilitation of air transport, which is a major step toward the elimination of much of the time-consuming formalities and of the amount of documentation required each time passengers or freight are carried by air from one country to another. Important among the provisions are standardized forms for passengers, crew and cargo manifests, embarkation and disembarkation cards and baggage declarations; a limit is placed on the number of such forms which any state may require. It is significant that these standards and recommendations have been accepted so readily by the International Air Transport Association, the organization of international airline operators which has worked so closely with ICAO in this and in many other fields.

ICAO is co-operating closely with the Universal Postal Union on the questions of the cost and charges related to the transportation of airmail, an important element in the sound and economic operation of airlines. The organization is studying such subjects as burdensome insurance and multiple taxation of international airlines, and charges for the use of air navigation facilities.

International Air Agreement

Finally, in the legal field, there has been one outstanding achievement: the adoption and opening for signature of the Convention on International