

It will be clear from the above that an offer was made by the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited for Avro 4-6 with certain modifications proposed to be carried out and that the Indian Airlines had replied in clear terms that the Avro aircraft with the modifications proposed by the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited were not acceptable to it.

I would like to know what the Minister has to say in the matter.

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM & CIVIL AVIATION (DR. KARAN SINGH) : Sir, On 23rd February, 1973, in reply to Starred Question No. 61 I had informed the House that Indian Airlines had taken delivery of three HS-748 aircraft from Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd., against their latest order of ten, and that the remaining seven had not yet been offered to Indian Airlines.

The factual position is that during the months of April, May and June, 1972, Indian Airlines took delivery of three aircraft after HAL had obtained the appropriate airworthiness certificates in respect of these planes from the Director General of Civil Aviation. HAL, however, ran into some production problems with the 4th, 5th and 6th aircraft for Indian Airlines, and wrote to them suggesting the incorporation of certain modifications and enquiring whether these would be acceptable. Indian Airlines replied that the proposed modifications would increase their operating costs and were, therefore, unacceptable. They also made certain alternative suggestions. Such mutual consultations between HAL and Indian Airlines regarding important changes in aircraft specifications cannot be considered unusual or abnormal, and the correspondence exchanged between them cannot be interpreted as an offer of sale of an aircraft or as a refusal to accept delivery on the part of Indian Airlines.

It is the responsibility of HAL to obtain a transport category airworthiness certificate for the aircraft from the Director General of Civil Aviation and each aircraft, at the time of its delivery to Indian Airlines, must meet the Director General's requirements for airworthiness certification. None of the three aircraft in question, namely the fourth, fifth and sixth, has been produced before the Director General of Civil Aviation for the issuance of the appropriate certificates. Until such certificates have been applied for and obtained, the aircraft cannot be offered for delivery to Indian Airlines by HAL, and the question of Indian Airlines refusing to accept delivery also does not arise.

In the circumstances, I submit that my replies to Starred Question No. 61 and the Supplementary Questions following it were correct.

13.04 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. APPOINTMENT OF EVALUATION TEAM FOR AVRO

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (DR. KARAN SINGH) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in my statement in this Hon'ble House on the 20th March I had indicated that Government had decided to institute a high-level examination of all aspects of the AVROs, and that I would announce the details shortly. I would like to inform the House that the evaluation will be conducted by Dr. Satish Dhawan, Director, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. He will be assisted by technical advisers drawn from the Indian Air Force, Air-India, Indian Airlines, Department of Defence Production and the National Aeronautical Laboratory.

The evaluation will cover all aspects of the AVRO, with special reference to its safety under various operating conditions. The report will be submitted within 60 days from the date the Evaluation Team starts its work.