

3rd March, 1949.

J. K. Jensen, Esq.,  
Secretary,  
Ministry of Supply & Development,  
339 Swanston Street,  
MELBOURNE .. C.I.

Dear Sir,

Work for the Aircraft Industry.

In a letter to the Director, Division of Aircraft Production dated 24th March, 1948, I drew attention to the situation in the aircraft industry caused by lack of decision for a follow-on programme to succeed the fast waning contracts on which we have been subsisting and continue to subsist on a declining scale. I made constructive proposals to remedy this position, and for some time it appeared that progress being made would lead to a solution. During the last twelve months I have repeatedly urged realisation of this important matter.

It now appears that indecision is still making it impossible to finalise any new programme, and meanwhile, we continue to deteriorate at an alarming rate.

With this preamble, I request you to peruse my graphical chart of the situation in regard to continued employment of the essential personnel (in the Aircraft Factory at C.A.C.) who must be held together if we are ever to build fighter aircraft on a sufficiently large scale to be of any use as a defence asset.

Perusal of this chart will show that in spite of a marked decline in the number of men employed in aircraft work, the total number employed has been maintained as substantially constant over the last six months. This, however, has been done solely by building upon other than aircraft work, such as Bus Bodies, development of the "Nene" sheet metal work, Wirraway overhauls, etc.

We draw your attention to the fact that these subsidiary projects have either reached maximum tempo or are now on the decline, so

that they can no longer compensate for the rapid rate at which aircraft work is declining.

In consequence, as you can see from the curves, a disastrous decline in our total staff of skilled personnel is now imminent. We ask that you use this incontrovertible evidence to bring about some positive action in determining an aircraft programme without further delay.

We would also like to be advised whether your Department can countenance any policy by which the vitally essential personnel can be retained for any future programme, by permitting their services to be held without adequate work to fully employ them, pending the development of schemes now being investigated.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) L.J. Wackett,  
Manager.

LJW/MW.