

## New Managers Position

# A Closer Look at Customer Care

While many if not most businesses are giving their customers new or additional computers to talk to, Piedmont's idea is to give them a better listener than a machine can ever be — a person trained to listen to their problems and to understand those problems from the customer's point of view as well as from the Company's point of view.

"Empathizers". For a one word description, that hasn't yet made the dictionaries, this seems like a good choice to define Piedmont's Managers — Customer Service. Empathy is actual identification, both intellectual and emotional with other people, in this case Piedmont's customers.

With a new program conceived last summer and recently inaugurated by the traffic department, the needs of the Company's customers are getting closer attention than ever before. Formulated by Division Station Supervisor Don Shanks, Piedmont's Customer Service Training Program is well underway. Two classes have been held and 15 new Managers — Customer Service are now working in the Company's larger stations. The combined locations of these managers cover some 70% of the system boardings.

In organizing the training program Shanks studied the methods of several carriers and drew largely on similar plans originally devised by United and Delta Air Lines. Eventually all agents and station managers will participate in the course. The initial training is done through conferences, rather than being taught by an instructor. This approach requires total involvement of all personnel and is proving tremendously successful. The newly trained managers will go back to their stations and hold the same type of classroom sessions they have attended under Shanks' leadership.

In the 40 hour course the new managers learned, and in turn will help other personnel to understand that a passenger's problem solved to the Company's satisfaction may not be solved at all. It may, in fact, be further complicated in the customer's eyes. Solutions must be mutually acceptable to achieve any degree of success.

The customer service managers will work closely with the station managers but will be directly responsible for handling all the customer complaints involving their individual locations.

Those who've recently been promoted to Manager — Customer Service include Jeannie Dial — Washington National, Pete Gray — Norfolk, Bill Hamilton — Tri-Cities, Tom Rorick — Charlotte, Bob Johnston — Atlanta, John Queen — Asheville, Rodney Bowers —

Roanoke, Ron Kelly — Cincinnati, Norris Smith — Winston-Salem, Don Knight — Greensboro, Dick Morgan — Louisville, John Lasater — Fayetteville, Maurice Booth — Raleigh-Durham, Jim Birthisel — Charleston, West Virginia and Kent Moses — Richmond.

Among the first group of trainees in the Customer Service Training program were, clockwise, Jeannie Dial, Pete Gray, "Professor" Don Shanks, Bob Johnson, John Queen and Rodney Bowers.



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### Year End Figures Show Traffic Was Up

Airline's traffic figures for 1971 showed gains in all categories.

The total number of passengers who flew Piedmont increased 5.50% to 2,843,019 for the year. The passenger load factor was 47.57%, an increase of 6.28% over 1970. This is among the highest load factors posted by any of the nation's airlines, regional or trunk.

Piedmont's revenue passenger miles for 1971 totaled 785,272,212 representing an increase of 5.42% over 1970. The available seat miles showed an actual decrease of 0.81% meaning that the substantial increase in number of passengers carried was achieved without an increase in capacity.

Mail carried by air was up 2.12% over 1970 to 15,900,365 pounds. Air freight increased 2.58% to 32,992,903 pounds.

In commenting on the results, President Davis said "We are delighted with the gains we've made in 1971 despite the generally depressed economic situation in our country and particularly in the aviation business. Piedmont and the industry in general is looking forward to a vastly improved traffic and profit picture for 1972."

The 1971 financial statistics for the Company will be published in mid-March in the annual report to stockholders.

### Piedmont's Passengers Post No Complaints For Second Time In 10 Months

The Office of Consumer Affairs of the Civil Aeronautics Board has, for the second time in the past ten months, received fewer passenger complaints about Piedmont Airlines than any other carrier in the continental United States.

The Office reports monthly on the number of complaints per 100,000 passengers carried for the twenty-six U. S. airlines. In December, 1971 the Board received no passenger complaints about Piedmont. In March of last year Piedmont also led the industry in happy passengers.

The December report also included statistics for the first full year of operations by the Board's Office of Consumer Affairs. The number of Piedmont complaints was among the lowest of all the carriers for the year as well.