

Smoke Plumes Partially Eliminated From Wien Consolidated 737 Jets

The long black plumes of smoke trailing from jet engines will soon become a thing of the past as a result of a program now underway throughout the nation to modify the offending engines.

This should help to clear up some of the confusion at airports around the state served by Wien Consolidated's twin-jet 737 aircraft.

Ground observers have noted recently the telltale smoke being emitted from only one of the engines of Wien 737's during takeoff and landing operations leading them to believe that the aircraft are being flown on one engine.

The reason is that the company is presently "retrofitting"—or modifying—its jet engines with new combustors, or burner cans, which are designed to burn off most of the carbon previously spewed out into the air.

The modification is made at the factory in California when Wien ships its engines for routine overhaul and reconditioning. Not all of the engines have been returned to the factory for retrofitting, which explains why some of them smoke and others don't.

The retrofit program resulted from an agreement which was negotiated last January by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and FAA's parent, the Department of Transportation to eliminate offensive smoke trails from 727, 737, DC-9 and other aircraft using Pratt and Whitney JT8D engines.

Target date for completion of this program is the end of 1972. "However," says Ralph Brumbaugh who heads Wien's maintenance activities, "we'll have all of our engines modified well in advance of this deadline."

Engines which power the new breed of wide-body jets also are considerably cleaner than previous jet engines. In fact, they leave virtually no visible exhaust trail.

Anyone who has spent any time around an airport and has seen the smoke billowing out behind some of the jets currently in service can appreciate what this means.

Although pollution from aircraft accounts for only about one per cent of the national total, FAA recognizes fully that this percentage can be considerably high in the vicinity of airports and beneath the approach and departure paths.

"So we are very much encouraged by these developments," comments John H. Shaffer, Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, "and we expect a significant improvement in the situation as more and more of the wide body jets enter the airline inventory and engine retrofit programs are completed."



THIS WIEN 737 is not flying on one engine. The familiar black plume of smoke is coming from an unmodified jet engine. Smoke from the modified engine on the left is barely visible.