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LONG BEACH, Calif. -- The most powerful and fastest jet transport ever to be flown, the first J-75 powered DC-8 Jetliner, today completed its maiden flight.

Powered by four Pratt & Whitney JT4A (J75) turbojet engines, the gracefully-proportioned aircraft climbed easily off Long Beach Municipal Airport and headed over the Pacific Ocean to perform a series of shakedown maneuvers.

The big, 585 MPH Douglas Jetliner then turned shoreward to land at Edwards Air Force Base, where subsequent proving flights will originate.

At the controls of the glistening white jet, with blue and red trim, was A. G. Heimerdinger, Douglas pilot who also flew the first domestic DC-8 on its initial test last May 30. With him in the flight compartment were J. G. Armstrong, co-pilot, and Bill Smith, acting as systems operator.

Designed for a gross take-off weight of 265,000 pounds, the DC-8 can carry a normal payload of 135 passengers, plus cargo. Its external dimensions are identical to ship number one, which is equipped with JT3C (J57) turbojets.

Span of the 30-degree swept wings is 139 feet 9 inches; length is 150 feet 6 inches; and the slanting tail rises 42 feet 4 inches from the ground.

The more powerful J-75 engines for the newer version do not

require water injection, and give improved takeoff performance and increased speed.

E. F. Burton, Douglas engineering vice president for transport aircraft, announced coincident with today's flight that testing will be greatly accelerated in December when ~~three~~ <sup>two more</sup> Jetliners will be added to the program.

Production DC-8s number three and number four, both domestic models, are expected to join number one and number two in flights leading to certification by the Civil Aeronautics Administration. Official certification flights are scheduled to start during January.

A total of nine DC-8s, including models powered by Rolls-Royce Conway jet engines, will eventually be used in the C.A.A. test flights, Burton said. Airlines will also receive additional Jetliners for pilot training and operating experience prior to start of passenger service.

Domestic operations of the DC-8 have been programmed for the final quarter of 1959.

Since the maiden flight of the first transport, the DC-8 has accumulated a total of 131 hours in 45 flights. It has demonstrated excellent handling characteristics up to a speed of 600 MPH and an altitude of 39,000 feet, Flight Testing Director R. L. Hoskinson said.

"When we fly any new airplane," he added, "we expect the tests to show us some ways of improving the performance and reliability. In this respect the DC-8 has been no different than various models of the DC-6 and DC-7."

Hoskinson explained that first flights of DC-8s number two,

three and four had been purposely delayed in order to incorporate some of these improvements and, particularly, to await completion and installation of Douglas' advanced type of noise suppressor.