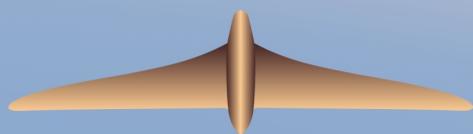


# TARKINE TRANSGLOBAL



## STREAMLINE MODERNE



CERULEAN  
GLOBAL CLIPPERS

AN AMAZING AEROSPACE SHORT STORY BY RUPERT W BROWN

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“Amazing Aerospace” is a project where Rupert reimagines aircraft of the past and imagines what the future holds for human space exploration. These short stories (the burning line series) are to illustrate how people interacted with and will interact with these airships, aeroplanes and space craft. This story focusses on the Tarkine Transglobal, an aircraft capable of reaching any point on Earth in a single flight, active from the mid 1930s into the 1940s.

This short story is hosted on <https://www.rupert-writing.com>  
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# STREAMLINE MODERN

His vision, his fantasy and ultimately his nightmare. A constant infatuation can torture a man. He saw it in his dreams. He flew with it through clouds and into sunsets. He rode thermals on its back, drove through storms and endured the pain as lightning lashed and exploded around him. During the day he would study its lines. The shape had to be pure. The shape had to express true purpose. The shape had to be carved from intent, from function without decoration. Decoration would not be needed. The shape would be beauty itself. After all this time, the sheer act of will made real. As it stood on the flight line, the first light of dawn turned Tarkine crimson, the hidden colour of his obsession.

His dream was born out of Streamline Moderne; a desire to redefine the aeroplane, to push its capabilities far beyond expectations, to create a flying work of haute ingénierie that could reach any point on the Earth in a single uninterrupted voyage, transporting its passengers in comfort, in safety, in an environment for people to live in the clouds. The Toulousian factory of the great aerospace company Cerulean had been tasked with developing the initial concepts for a transglobal clipper, to do nothing less than revolutionise world travel. Up to this point, aeroplanes had been built by entrepreneurs and engineers using common sense, gut instinct and some basic physics. With its new mathematics, materials and techniques, Cerulean felt ready to take a leap forward.

Everybody in aircraft group had been offered the chance to submit a concept. The Chief Ingenieur, Monsieur Ader, required the collective genius of his workforce to deliver the revolution he desperately wanted. In turn his design, his “Streamline Moderne”, went before the committee of investigation.

“Your design is quite unusual. Please, describe the principles behind your design.”

“Thank you Sirs, for this opportunity. Streamline Moderne has one principal philosophy, that only clean lines, lines formed by the environment itself, will deliver the performance we want to achieve – and can achieve. Streamline Moderne has clean wings, wings that have a lift to drag ratio we have never seen before. Those same wings give the craft stability and thus comfort, and a reassuring feel for our passengers.”

“What of the canards, the tailerons? An unusual configuration is it not?”

“Yes, but one necessary to deliver that performance we want. Conventional tails can actually reduce lift. The canards and tailerons produce lift, and balance the aircraft around the main wing, enhancing its flight characteristics.”

“Conventional thinking is to position the engines in the wings. You are suggesting the engines are contained within the fuselage. Why?”

“To keep that main wing as clean as possible. To create a strong structure that is defined by a single purpose. Also we require Streamline Moderne to be airborne for a couple of days. If we have an engine problem, and the engine is out on a wing, we have no choice but to shut it down and fly without its power, or land for repairs. With the engines accessible during the flight we can analyse problems and may even be able to effect repairs in the air.”

“You’re serious?”

“Of course. Many problems are caused by failures that can be corrected by simple maintenance procedures. Four engines means we can safely shut down one for work and only suffer a small reduction in speed.”

“Our test pilots have expressed some concern over the positioning of the cockpit.”

“We seek to deliver a unique customer experience. Always the pilots get the best view of the world. With Streamline Moderne we give the passengers some of that excitement as well – an experience akin to flying the plane. The pilots still have the best view in the house. In addition they can oversee the entire structure of the aircraft – a unique proposition in modern aircraft design. The periscope gives them a clear view of the underside of the aircraft, important for landings and take-offs. I believe they are very well served.”

“You’re suggesting that every cabin gets its own washing and toilet facilities. Isn’t that being over-generous? We could fit two more cabins with shared facilities.”

“Your point is well made. The internal layout can of course be adapted to suit all kinds of mission objectives. I have presented the luxury clipper configuration, our own flying Train Bleu.”

He endured many such meetings, always trying to sound calm and reasoned. It was exhausting, and on more than a few occasions he felt like giving up. But the belief he was right burned brightly within him and Amélie was always there to sooth away troubles and ultimately give him the strength to carry on. Streamline Moderne was one of four designs to be worked up into detailed concept plans. Then it was one of three designs to be built into scale models for flight and wind tunnel tests. Then it was one of two that was put forward for final evaluations eventually emerging victorious. Cerulean was going to build a Streamline Moderne prototype.

Detailed design and wind tunnel work proceeded in parallel with the construction of a massive assembly building on a site next to the machine shops at Montaudran. A young engineer, Nicolas Payen, embraced the canard wing design. Payen wanted to push the design to an extreme configuration of canard and a dramatic delta wing. He argued that that would be a step too far. Already the design had radical elements that would bring significant benefits but only if the technical challenges could be overcome. He won the argument, but in hindsight

was pleased with Payen's intervention. It had demonstrated that while Streamline Moderne was a radical design, it wasn't as radical as it could have been.

The factory built a small flying proof of concept vehicle based around a Caudron racer airframe. Once trimmed properly, the Caudron model was successful in demonstrating the merits of the design. It wasn't long after that the factory started to cut metal for the first Streamline Moderne prototype, and within a year it was sitting assembled in its new building, ready for the test flight programme. When a person saw it for the first time invariably they would be struck dumb. Nothing like it had existed on Earth before. It was sleek and silver, it was big, but even stationary it just looked fast. As he had hoped, the shape expressed true purpose. The shape was an unambiguous statement of intent. Streamline Moderne was stable, smooth, fast and transglobal.

As an aside he had been wondering about the name. He was so used to Streamline Moderne but was told it was a bit much for the general public. It was the name of a design movement, not really an aeroplane. Did he have any better ideas? Amélie, who was fascinated by geography and where the plane might be able to take them, had been whimsically reading about Tasmania. It seemed about the furthest place from Toulouse. In the north of the island there is a place called the Tarkine. It was an untouched wilderness, a cool temperate rainforest full of rivers, waterfalls, old trees and ancient spirits. In her mind it became the perfect destination to escape to in the Streamline Moderne. Leaving the old world in a new ship, flying into an uncharted paradise. Amélie mentioned the word Tarkine to him. He had never heard of it. It wasn't a French word. But a new unusual name for an extraordinary aeroplane made sense, and there was a certain rhythm to Tarkine Transglobal, something distinct that transcended language. He liked it and it wasn't long before Cerulean accepted it as the official name for their project.

The flight test program progressed well. Good outcomes meant the company felt confident enough to start building prototype two. This was the plane they would now put to the ultimate test. The plan was to fly this plane to Melbourne. Despite the confidence he had in Tarkine, based on the flight test results, he was still very reluctant to take Amélie on the trip. She however, had different plans and was determined to go. She even went to Ader and suggested the idea of her being keen to fly Tarkine would give potential customers a confidence boost. Plus she knew how good a tight skirt, stockings and heels looked on boarding stairs. They would make the papers, and they did. Despite the dawn start, the small terminal building at Montaudran was packed with the Tarkine project staff, Cerulean management, a smattering of local dignitaries and the press. Monsieur Ader praised the project team, their vision and

dedication, and described Tarkine as an achievement for the whole of France. He introduced the pilot and navigation team, the engineers who would be flying on the aircraft, and then the designer and his lovely Amélie. He blinked like a rabbit caught in headlights. She blew the cameras kisses, pouted, creased her hip and posed so they could get the best photos of her Schiaparelli-Cocteau surrealist creation, complete with oversized Tarkine brooch and “flying ecstasy” motifs.

Once aboard they stowed their luggage. All the engineering personnel had specific stations. He made sure that Amélie was safely strapped to a chair in the Sky Lounge. Immediately, one of the joys and unique features of Tarkine became apparent. Amélie, herself dressed beautifully in the Streamline Moderne style, sat on a red leather chair, sipping a glass of Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin with a view forward of the front fuselage and runway. Up to this point, that outlook had been the reserve of pilots. She was going to be the first to experience it as a passenger. He left her, and then turned to look again. This dream he had had, and the love he had found made real in a single moment.

He went through the crew door situated to the right of the Sky Bar. The cockpit area was already full with two full flight crews squeezed into the space. There was no way he was going to be able to squeeze in with the pilots so he slipped onto a crew bunk and chatted to the Flight Engineers and Navigators. They listened as the pilots talked to Montaudran control. There was a tremendous roar as the Hunter engines fired up. The pilots matched their rpms and the roar turned into a powerful growl. Brakes off, and they felt movement as Tarkine taxied from the flight line to the start of the runway. Brakes on again, and the aircraft swayed just a little on its undercarriage. He could hear the pilots going through a final series of checks, he heard Montaudran control give them clearance, and then there was a pause. A moment of stillness. It was only for a second or two, then the pilots opened the throttles and Tarkine sprinted down the runway. The acceleration was breath taking. He could hear Amélie whooping with joy in the Sky Lounge. He sensed the angle of the climb. He knew Cerulean had a built a beauty. The performance was amazing. They reached cruising altitude and the pilots levelled the plane. They were underway with a simple plan. A great circle route, non-stop to Melbourne. The only deviations would be for bad weather and to avoid the high mountains. In the meantime everybody had their specific jobs. This was a dress rehearsal for a commercial flight. That meant the food should be excellent and the bar would definitely be open.

He left the flight crew cabin and joined Amélie in the Sky Lounge. When she saw him approaching she leapt out of her seat and gave him a hug.

“C’était fantastique, incroyable mon chéri.” She kissed him. They sat together on the window seat bench. The steward delivered more Veuve Clicquot. They clinked glasses and he turned to the view. They were skirting the cloud layer. Beneath them lay the ancient walled city of Carcassonne. Soon they would pass over Narbonne and strike out over the Mediterranean flying over Corse and the toe of Italy. They sat there for an hour saying nothing, just watching as the sunlight sparkled on the blue water of the Mediterranean, and Tarkine powered its way forward.

One important part of the flight was to test how the menu worked. On a “routine” flight, Tarkine would be in the air for just over 42 hours. That is the actual time passengers would spend in the aircraft. But the local time at the aircraft’s position on Earth was different. Tarkine would take off in the morning on day 1 and arrive in the evening of day 3. Aircraft time therefore moved faster than real time, and in an attempt to keep everybody aligned, Cerulean had planned a menu that provided three meals a day over those three days. Now it was the first lunch time. They were trying the “London” menu, that meant the Mediterranean lunch of charcuterie and green salad, followed by a fromage platter. They made their way to the dining room for the first sitting. They dined on a rustic pork terrine and Bloc De Foie Gras D’Oie, sharing half a bottle of Huet Vouvray, while watching the cool blue water slip away beneath them. He felt very pleased with the meal. The dining room could be best described as cosy, but where the weight limits allowed, had been decked out with elements to resemble a Parisian restaurant. Amélie had eaten a good meal. She smiled at him. He sensed she was up to something.

“We must do some testing mon chéri.”

“Testing? What did you have in mind?”

“It’s very important that the cabins are prête pour l’amour.” She winked, then rose from the table. He was not going to argue and closely followed her back to their cabin. Amélie was very thorough in her endeavours as they moved between chairs, the top and bottom bunks and even the small occasional table. Eventually they collapsed together into the bottom bunk.

“J’approuve ton salon d’amour monsieur,” whispered Amélie, and he felt the middle finger of her right hand twitch, which always happened just as she fell asleep. He followed, falling into a deep and peaceful sleep, serenaded by the powerful but soothing throb of the Hunter engines.

After a couple of hours they woke and made love again. He reluctantly left the bunk and tried out the shower cubicle. This had been one of the more problematic parts of Tarkine’s interior design. They were expensive in terms of space and weight, but necessary given the 42 hours in the air and the luxury nature of the aeroplane and the proposed ticket price. A shower means water and water is heavy but they had worked out a system where water could be captured

from the air and heated by the engines. So the only real limitation was the amount of hot water. He was going to be quick. He knew Amélie wouldn't be. Her blond bob, although relatively short, seemed to require a huge amount of maintenance.

He dressed and left Amélie in the bunk, making his way through the night lounge, up the spiral staircase to the Sky Bar. The crew were gathering before dinner and enjoying aperitifs apart from those who were technically on duty. The Captain called for reports on Tarkine's performance. Each of the section officers answered in turn. Engines performing well, fuel consumption as expected, hydraulic pressures all nominal, and slight drop in voltage recorded on one of the buses. The radio operator indicated that the weather forecast was good for tomorrow's planned route. The Captain was pleased. They had their dinner in turns – steak frites or Salmon Meunière – and then retired to the salon to listen to one of the Ingenieurs play a recital on the piano. After a digestif they retired to bed again to keep in step with Tarkine's shortened days.

He woke with a start. He listened. Something was wrong. He heard Amélie breathing gently in the bunk above him. He focussed, and then it came to him. The engine vibration was off. Something was out of kilter. He scrambled out of bed and pulled on a pair of trousers, then stepped out of the cabin. Standing in the passageway he listened again. He turned through a hundred and eighty degrees. The front, whatever was happening was coming from the front engines. He ran through the dining room and kitchen and into the service crew quarters. Alain, one of the stewards was standing by the door to the engine room.

"What's happening?" he asked.

"I'm not sure, Louis is in there."

"Let me see," and he passed Alain. The noise from the engines was overwhelming. The engine room was dark and there was the distinct smell of hot oil. He saw Louis crouched down beside the port engine. He joined him. Louis looked up then shone the torch and pointed at the red cylinder of the oil filter. He motioned that they should leave to talk. Free from the din of the engines Louis explained "there is an oil leak at the filter. I'm hoping it's a fault with the filter, not a crack in the case. Whatever, we have to shut down that engine and make checks. We have one spare filter and the oil is new. We can reuse it if we can collect it. It will be very hot."

"OK, I'll speak to the pilot about shutting the engine down. It's the front port engine, correct?"

"Yes," said Louis, "the other seems to be fine."

Louis went back into the engine room with Alain. He ran back through the passageway and up the stairs to the cockpit.

"Note to self," he muttered, "install some crew telephones when we get back to Montaudran."

The pilot looked up in surprise. He explained the situation.

“Shut down an engine, wow! We have done this before. OK, we need to disengage the engine from the prop shaft using the clutch, and at the same time throttle back the rpm, then kill it. It will be obvious to Louis when the engine has stopped.”

The pilot and navigator took out their checklists and ran through the procedure. He dashed back to the engine room. By the time he got there the engine had stopped. Louis was cursing like a trooper.

“What’s the problem?”

He needs to drain the oil, but the pan we have doesn’t fit. Some genius gave us one that is too tall,” explained Alain.

“I have an idea,” and he disappeared into the kitchen. There he found chef’s large roasting tray. He grabbed it and rushed back to Alain.

“Here, pass him this, see if it is any better,” and then to himself added “another note to self, make sure we have drain trays that actually fit!”

Alain passed the tray into the engine room. After a minute or two he came back with a thumbs up. It didn’t take Louis long to drain the oil and unscrew the filter. He passed it through to Alain. Sure enough there was a crack in the screw thread. Thankfully the engine casing itself was fine. With the new filter fitted it took a little while to get the oil back into the engine. The aircraft carried a little stirrup pump which turned out to be a bit weak and feeble but did the job of getting the oil out of the tray and back into the engine. He climbed up the cockpit and told the pilot they were ready to start the engine again. The pilot consulted his checklists again. When he got back to the engine room he found Amélie talking with Alain. The pair of them were so incongruous he couldn’t help but smile. There was Alain in rough trousers, bare feet and an old white vest stained with oil, and Amélie in peach silk pyjamas complete with Dali’s lobster motif, wearing fluffy slippers with pompoms on the toes.

“Don’t worry,” Amélie was saying, “when the engine is started I have a plan. It will be OK. Chef is still fast asleep. I saw him as I came here.”

“Yes,” said Alain “that man could sleep through a tornado.”

Very soon the they heard the engine turn over and then fire into life. It’s rpm increased till it sounded like it matched that of the starboard engine. There was a clunk as the clutch engaged, a dip in revs and then a unison as both engines matched each other for speed. Louis stayed a little while to watch the new oil filter, but after ten minutes he emerged from the engine room with the oil soaked roasting tray and a big smile on his face.

“All good!”

As he left the engine room, Amélie took the tray from him and went into the engine room. Then the whole place filled with steam.

“How did you know to do that?”

“You’re not the only one that reads plans you know,” said Amélie. Her blond bob had been frizzed and her hair stuck up in wild directions, but she looked as gorgeous as ever.

“I knew there was a steam relief valve in the hot water system, and it was the only way I was going to get Chef’s tray clean, and I didn’t want him upset in the morning. I know how important breakfast is.”

Amélie had blasted the oil away with the steam, then rinsed the tray in the kitchen. She went on to whip up Cognac laced cocoa for everybody. They were enjoying theirs at the little table under the spiral staircase in the Night Lounge.

They sat in silence for a while and stared at the moonlight on the clouds. Every now and then there was a little light flash in a cloud.

“Angels.”

“Angels?” replied Amélie, “what are angels?”

“The first pilots believed those little flashes were spirits or angels in the cloud, given that they were that bit closer to Heaven.”

She looked at him and reached out for his hand. “What’s wrong, you suddenly looked troubled?”

“Soon the Tarkine project will come to an end, for me anyway. I’m thinking of what the future holds.”

“Don’t be troubled,” she replied, “it will be our future, together.”

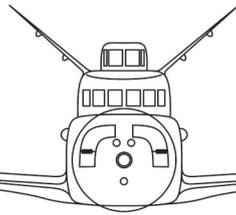
Six months later he was lying on his back on the bench in his little garden in Toulouse. He had been watching the butterflys and was confounded by the fact they looked so un-aerodynamic while at the same time being so beautiful as they gently flapped about. A copper coloured butterfly landed on his nose. He stopped himself from brushing it away, instead closing his eyes and letting his mind wander. They had made it to Melbourne without further incident, and of course a picture of Amélie disembarking from Tarkine had made the front cover of *The Argus*. They had had a very busy couple of days entertaining the press and representatives of Australian National Airways. There was talk of further flying demonstrations, of potential orders, and he was very relieved to get back on Tarkine for the journey home. Cerulean had announced that Tarkine was ready for service, with an initial build planned for twelve aircraft. He worked to modify plans for the production aircraft, but he felt his time on the project was coming to an end. He also knew that it was a troubling time for Europe. Germany had showed its hand in the Spanish Civil War. They had armed the Condor Legion with the Messerschmitt Bf 109, a fighter that was way ahead of everything else. France had nothing like it. He worried that France was weak. He wondered about where he could go – the UK, or even America? He had met Geoffrey de Havilland who had been most impressed with Tarkine, as he had been with the DH88. The most important thing in his life was to keep Amélie safe. Perhaps they

could make a life in this place Hertfordshire with de Havilland? He opened his eyes. His copper butterfly had been transformed into the smiling face of Amélie. Her eyes giggled at him. He grabbed her and she let out a little squeal. He wasn't going to let her go. There would always be a burning line between himself and Tarkine, but that line was now in his past. The release meant he felt reborn. The new line joined him to Amélie and disappeared into the future, made brilliant by their love for each other.

The End – 4089 words

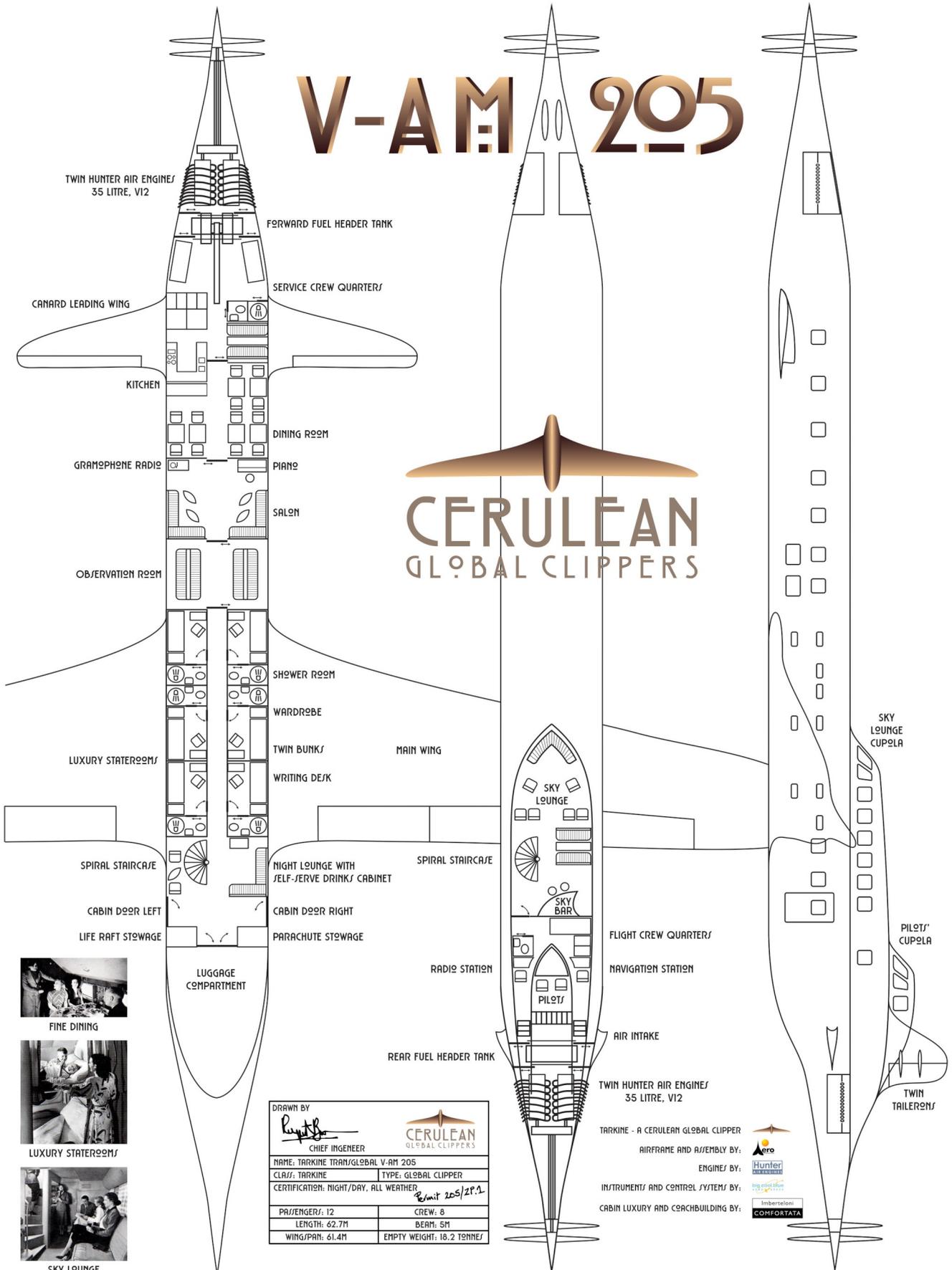
# TARKINE

# TRANSGLOBAL



## V-AM 205

### CERULEAN GLOBAL CLIPPERS



FINE DINING



LUXURY STATEROOM

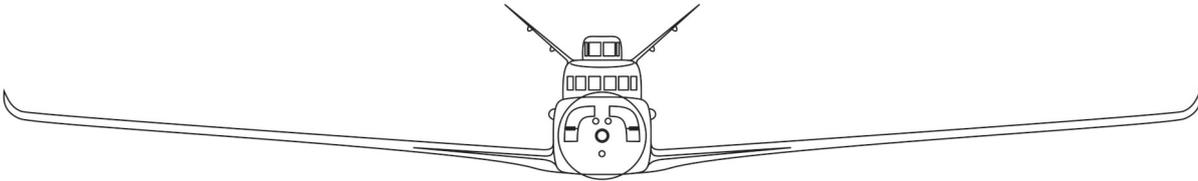


SKY LOUNGE

DRAWN BY 	
NAME: TARKINE TRANSGLOBAL V-AM 205	
CLASS: TARKINE	TYPE: GLOBAL CLIPPER
CERTIFICATION: NIGHT/DAY, ALL WEATHER	
PASS/ENGRS: 12	CREW: 8
LENGTH: 62.7M	BEAM: 5M
WING/PAN: 61.4M	EMPTY WEIGHT: 18.2 TONNES

# TARKINE

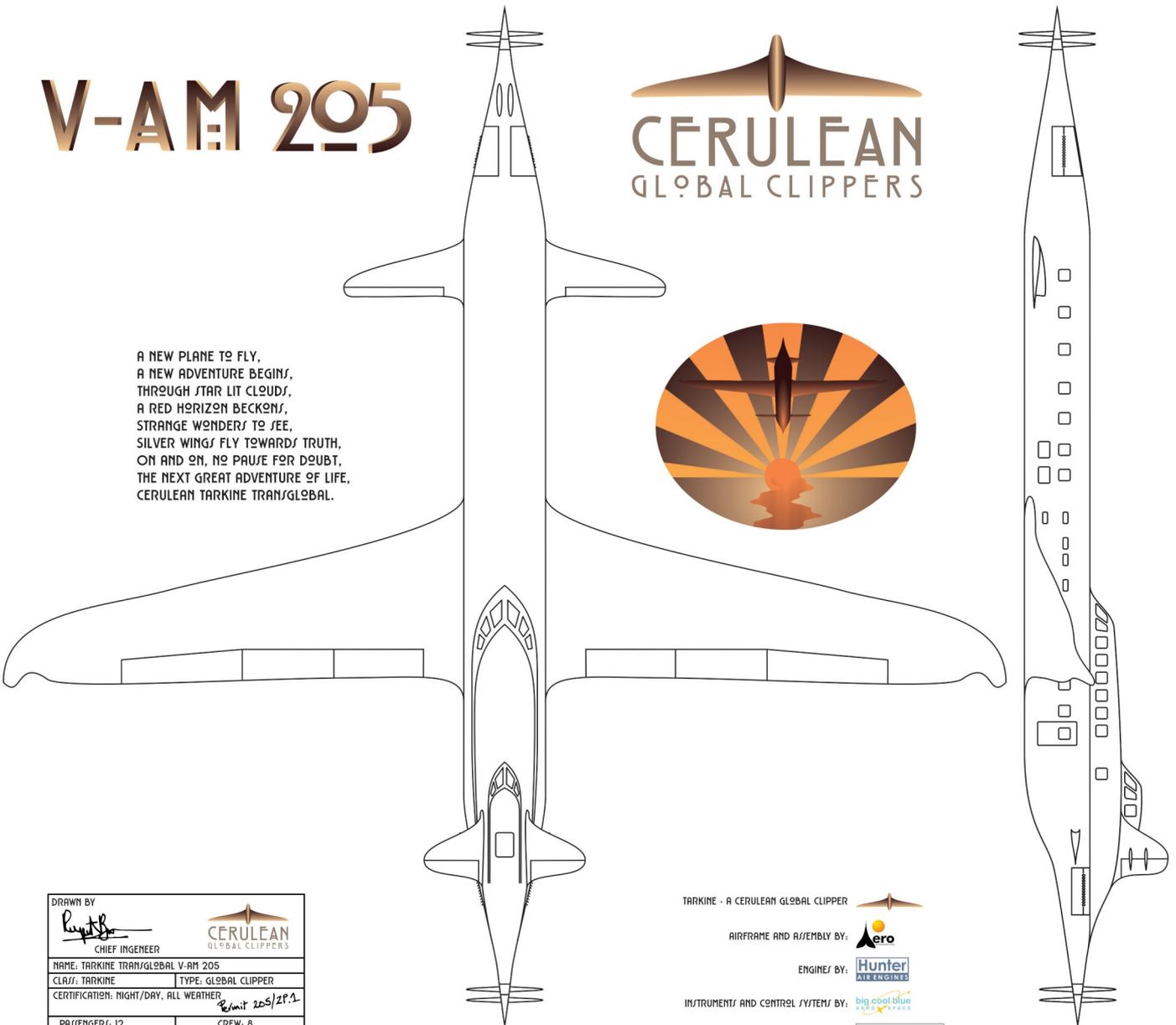
## TRANSGLOBAL

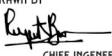


### V-AM 205

CERULEAN  
GLOBAL CLIPPERS

A NEW PLANE TO FLY,  
A NEW ADVENTURE BEGINS,  
THROUGH STAR LIT CLOUDS,  
A RED HORIZON BECKONS,  
STRANGE WONDERS TO SEE,  
SILVER WINGS FLY TOWARDS TRUTH,  
ON AND ON, NO PAUSE FOR DOUBT,  
THE NEXT GREAT ADVENTURE OF LIFE,  
CERULEAN TARKINE TRANSGLOBAL.



DRAWN BY  CHIEF INGENIEER		
NAME: TARKINE TRANSGLOBAL V-AM 205		
CLASS: TARKINE	TYPE: GLOBAL CLIPPER	
CERTIFICATION: NIGHT/DAY, ALL WEATHER <i>Permit 205/2P.A</i>		
PASSENGER: 12	CREW: 8	
LENGTH: 62.7M	BEAM: 5M	
WING/PAN: 61.4M	EMPTY WEIGHT: 18.2 TONNES	

TARKINE - A CERULEAN GLOBAL CLIPPER



AIRFRAME AND ASSEMBLY BY:



ENGINE/ BY:



INSTRUMENTS AND CONTROL SYSTEMS BY:



CABIN LUXURY AND COACHBUILDING BY:



# TARKINE TRANSGLOBAL



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