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Cover picture:

Pictured on the cover is the first
of a new batch of eight Westland/
Aerospatiale Puma helicopters for
the RAF, seen on a test flight at
Westland Helicopters, Weston
Division, where it is produced.
One of the major modifications in-
corporated in this new batch of
Pumas is the replacement of all
metal main rotor blades with com-
posite blades. This enables the
aircraft to fly at a higher all-up-
weight of 7000 kg, an increase
of 600 kg on earlier Pumas. Also
the blades are more reliable, have
a longer life and are easier to
make. Mr. R. J. Wilson, in his
paper on composite rotor blades
(see pp 183-187) looks at the
design requirements, manufacture
and testing of these blades.

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