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AIR TRANSPORT

payload of about 3,500 n.m., the aircraft would be able to fly long sectors across Russia. It might also be attractive to other TriStar operators; British Airways still has three options and1

could use a 250-seat aircraft with a London-
Chicago range.
The present round of discussions between Russia and the US aerospace industry (see Flight for December 12, 1974, page 819) covers more than the purchase of aircraft and air traffic control equipment. Aeroflot needs an in-fusion of airline operating technology in subjects such as route planning, scheduling, maintenance and ticketing and the US industry can supply this expertise. Aeroflot appears to be on the point of ordering ten 747SPs from Boeing, but this will not affect a possible purchase of the TriStar or DC-10. If the 747SPs were to be ordered with the RB.211 it would be a good omen for Lockheed. The Russians, how-ever, appear to want early delivery of the 747s and this may rule out the RB.211 as a 747 powerplant for Aeroflot. An order for the JT9D-powered 747 would not, on the other hand, exclude either the JT9D- or CF6-powered DC-10 or the RB.211-powered TriStar.

CONCORDES HOM E T O ROOS T

THE British Aircraft Corporation is claiming to have made considerable progress towards Concorde certification with the completion of trials in the United States and Cas-ablanca by Concordes 01 and 202 respectively.
The first pre-production aircraft returned to BAC's Fairford, Glos, flight-test base on December 13 after five weeks of icing trials at Grant County Airport, Moses Lake, Washington. In 50hr flying Concorde met the requirements of the US Federal Aviation Administration by .accumulating and dispersing a 2irt deposit of ice.
On December 18 the second production Concorde landed at Fairford from Casablanca, where unobstructed ground near the airport is suitable for accurate measure-ments of noise levels and the low stratospheric tempera-tures over the South Atlantic are within reach. The air-craft had spent seven weeks and lOOhr flying evaluating take-off and climb patterns and supersonic cruise in cold air.

YX—LESS MONEY AVAILABLE?

THE Japanese Finance Ministry is tightening its purse-strings in preparation for next year's budget and may cut off all but minimal funding for the proposed YX 200-seat airliner. One reason for this is the continuing lack of progress in talks between Boeing and the Civil Transport Development Corporation. It seems likely that the contin-uing existence of the Boeing-Aeritalia 7X7 project, which is directly comparable with the range of designs worked on by CTDC and Boeing, is the main stumbling block. As no firm proposals have been put to the Finance Ministry it is reluctant to approve continuing development. The Japanese are also' understood to be unwilling to pay Boeing $200 million for "goodwill."

U S AIRLINE PROFITS

THE US airline industry made an overall profit of $350 million-$375 million in 1974, up from $220 million in 1973, according to Mr Paul R. Ignatious, president of the Air Transport Association of America. Last month he told the Wings Club in New York that the 1974 profits repre-sented an eight per cent return on investment, well below the 12 per cent "norm" suggested by the Civil Aeronautics Board. Traffic was up by two or three per cent.
In 1975, "the industry will have to do a little reaching
to get a no-growth position," and profits will be less than 1974. Traffic will be sluggish and will decline in the first half of the year but the ATA president expects an upturn in the second half. The ATA intends to press the Federal Aviation Administration to remove the eight per cent user taxes now collected by the airline industry for the Airport Development Aid Program. It seems unlikely, however, that the tax will be removed.

FLIGHT International, 2 January 1975

Proposals for a ALF 502-powered version of the HS.748 are still under consideration, according to Mr Alan Troughton, chief designer, develop-ment, HSA Woodford, writing in the "Aeronautical Journal." The oyerwing arrangement has the advantage of allowing the retrofitting
of the turbofan engine to existing aircraft

AVIATIO N PREMIUM S T O RISE?

AVIATION insurers are now preparing their plans for 1975 on the basis of the safety record of the past twelve months. The value of hull total losses in the past year is likely to be about £60 million. This is in line with rising costs, and compares with loss levels around £45 million in 1970. The figures cover hull total losses for jet aircraft, and exclude unreported casualties from some Iron Curtain countries.

For several months of 1974 there was a remarkably clear run in the airlines' safety record. There were no total losses between April, when there had been ten major losses, and September, when two more were reported. The break in the pattern gave underwriters cause for hope that the increased cost of aviation accidents might be offset by some reduction in the number of casualties. However, five total losses, including the JAT DC-9 crash at Belgrade ($3 million), the Lufthansa 747 at Nairobi ($26-5 million), the TWA 727 at Washington DC ($6-4 million), the Northwest Airlines 727 near New York ($5-7 million) and the Martinair DC-8 in Sri Lanka ($6 million), came in quick succession.

Hull total losses in this period rose to some £20 million with nearly 300 fatalities. Passenger claims in the pipeline may add at least £20' million for this period alone.
Mr W. C. Corbett, chairman of the British Aviation Insurance Offices' Association, who is now surveying trends, believes that premium competition may be better disci-plined in 1975. Some insurance sources, which have been keeping rates unduly low in the hope of deriving benefit from an expanding income, are now reconsidering pre-miums in the light of the fact that the rate of growth of the air transport industry is now slowing down. This, says Mr Corbett, will make "them review their position if they decide that aviation is no longer the growth industry they hoped it would be when they first entered the insurance market aggressively." After a period of improv-ing safety, he feels that the "safety factor" of commercial operations is showing signs of levelling off.

RELIABILITY OF THE BIG FANS

THE FIGURES given below show the in-flight shutdown rate for the three "big-fan" engines (CF6, RB.211, and JT9D) for August and September 1974, taken from data supplied by the Federal Aviation Administration. The data is for the total fleet of each engine and actual shutdown rates vary widely from airline to airline. For example, Overseas National had a shutdown rate of zero in August but 1-91 per l,000hr in September with its JT9D-powered DC-10s; American had a rate of 0-523 in August against zero in September on its JT9D-powered 747s. (See also Flight for October 17, 1974, page 504).

IN FLIGHT SHUTDOWN RATE FOR BIG-FAN ENGINES

Total fleet Shutdown rate
Aircraft/ engine hours Shutdowns per1,900hr
engine Aug Sept Aug Sept Aug Sept

DC-10/CF6 63,904 55,961 15 10 0-235 0-179
L-10I1/RB.211 38,054 33,623 23 15 0-604 0-446
747/JT9D 127,010 113,846 44 44 0-346 0-386