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AIR TRANSPORT

Martinair

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shows its teeth

JOHN BELSON reports from
Amsterdam

" IT' S twice as hard to make a profit now as it was two
• years ago," according to Martinair president Mr Martin Schroder. Yet after reporting a "better than expected" record profit of $3-84 million for financial year 1975, the Dutch supplemental carrier handled as much cargo tonnage in the first half of this year as it did in the whole of 1975.

Turnover last year was up $13 million to almost $70 million even though production figures were actually down two per cent compared with the spectacular 29 per cent recorded for 1974.
Martinair currently fields a fleet of two DC-10-30CFs, two DC-8-55Fs, two DC-9-33RCs, a single DC-9-32, two Fokker F.28s and a Cessna 402. Martinair's D&10-30 upper-deck freight operation is unique within Europe. A third DC-10-30 will be delivered before Christmas—a DC-8 is being traded as part of the deal—and until May the carrier will operate all three DC-lOs as freighters. Schroder is confident that the airline will carry at least 30,000 tons of freight during 1977.
Earlier this year Martinair found that inclusive-tour traffic was about 20 per cent down. By re-configuring
one of its two under-utilised DC-10-30s to freight in order
to supplement the two DC-8-55Fs, the airline doubled its

available freight capacity but set itself a hard marketing task. Martinair's salesmen rose to the occasion, and 18,50 tons of cargo were carried during the first six months of 1976.

Explaining Martinair's supplemental role, Schroder tells Flight that about 40 per cent of his company's revenue comes from work for some 30 International Air Transport Association carriers. Although not itself a member of lata, Martinair believes in working closely with national airlines, and its practical methods have won the respect of th lata carriers. Recent third-party work includes regular freight runs to Africa for UTA, Hadj pilgrim flights for Saudia and Garuda, Portuguese repatriation flights from Angola for TAP, and both freight and VIP service for Iran Air.

No Hadj work this year
This year, after planning 900hr flying for the two DCrlOs

on the Hadj, circumstances changed and only 5,000 pilgrims will now travel from Indonesia, so Martinair will not
be involved. Schroder's answer to this unexpected setbac involves carrying European exports from Amsterdam to the Middle East, followed by empty trips south to Nairobi, where the airline has a long-term winter contract to carry flowers to Frankfurt, or eastwards to Hong Kong for tex-tile loads to Lagos and then back to Nairobi for more flowers. Even when flying empty from the Middle East to Hong Kong, the DC-10 can be operated profitably, Schroder says. The airline has an office in Hong Kong and flies there on average four or five times a week.
By way of contrast to the semi-permanent configurations of the DC-lOs, Martinair's DCr9s fly inclusive-tour passengers by day, and freight—very often cattle or chickens—by night. "Continuing ATC delays in Spain are sure to lead to a decline in IT passengers next year," say

Schroder, but he is confident that his 1977 DC-10 transatlantic programme (about 200 round trips carrying affinity-
group and advance-booking charters) will flourish and bring in about $16 million revenue.
Utilisation of Martinair's two DC-10-30s is running at 3,800hr a year. The D08s are suffering competition from the DC-lOs (shippers now prefer the volume of the wide-body) and their utilisation has fallen to about 3,500hr a

Working in its supplemental carrier role, Martinair recently operated
an F.28 for Air France