Italy's aerospace industry

the helicopter relying on
small size, speed and
manoeuvrability for sur-
vival.

Licensed production of
the Martin Marietta mast-
mounted sight is one of the
major tasks scheduled for
OMI—the newly acquired
Agusta electro-optics manu-
facturer—although the
market is uncertain with
the demise of the US re-
quirement for the scout
version of the A.129.

Whether the Italian
forces will require both
scout as well as attack heli-
copters is an open question.
One thing that is looking
more certain, however, is
the retention of the Rolls-
Royce Gem as the standard
powerplant. Piaggio will
licence-assemble the Gem in
Italy, as it does the Viper
for the MB.339A. The Ly-
coming LTSlOl is still very
low in the popularity
ratings around Milan. Mockup of the Agusta A. 129 Mongoose for the Italian Army

IN BRIEF

Agusta helicopter pro-
duction Agusta builds
the world's largest range
of helicopters, with the
yearly production rates
split as follows: light
helicopters {A.109 and
AB.206)—110-120; medi-
um helicopters (AB.205
and AR.212) — 90-100;
and heavy helicopters
(SH-3 and CH-47)—16.

AB.205 Widespread sales
have been made in
Africa, the Middle East,
and the Mediterranean
area. Basically a UH-1H,
it followed the AR.204
(UH-1B) into production
after 1971.

CH-47 Agusta has sold
more Chinooks in export
markets than Boeing
(nearly 190).-Recent con-
tracts are with Egypt
(15), Greece (10), and
Tanzania, whose aircraft
are still to be delivered.
Agusta does not expect
to build the 234 civil
Chinook, but is likely to
replace the CH-47C with
the improved D model at
the end of 1982.

Composites

767 carbonfibre

experience
attracts other

offers

Naples — Aeritalia is pro-
ducing 2-3 shipsets a
month of Boeing 767 com-
ponents, and the produc-
tion rate will increase next
year. The company has a
15 per cent share in 767
design, development, and
production, covering fin,
rudder, elevators, wing

leading-edge slats, trailing-
edge flaps, ailerons, and
radome. Each shipset is
worth $750,000.
Composites compris e
about 25 per cent by weight
of Italian 767 components—
rudder, elevators, ailerons,
outboard flaps, and spoilers
— making Aeritalia one of
the largest users of aero-
space carbonfibre. The
rudder, 9m high and with a
maximum chord of 3m, is
the largest all-composite
structure in production to-
day.
The Italian Government
has pledged $1,500 million
support for the 767 pro-
gramme, covering research,
development, and produc-

Carbonfibre components for the Boeing 767

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tion facilities. This money
is only now becoming avail-
able, Aeritalia having had
to finance the buildup of
production to meet Boeing
deadlines. Payment for the
components will begin
when Boeing delivers the
first 767 to its customer in
1982.

Aeritalia's transport air-
craft group is centred on
Naples, and has an impres-
sive range of facilities built
specifically for the 767. The
main plant at Pomigliano
d'Arco houses 55 numeric-
ally controlled machines, 19
installed for 767 work, par-
ticularly for the all-metal
fin. There is a new semi-
automatic chemical milling
facility, mainly for 767, but
also for G.222 components
and McDonnell Douglas
DC-9 and DC-10 fuselage
panels.
Particularly impressive is
the bonding facility, recently
doubled in size. There are
two clean rooms, one for
carbonfibre and one for
hybrid composites, such as
the Kevlar-skinned out-
board flap trailing edge.
Layup is manual, although
Aeritalia has ordered a
Gerber automatic cloth-
cutting machine: Boeing
has specified woven cloth
rather than unidirectional
tape for 767 carbonfibre

1256 FLIGHT International, 24 October 1981