VG10 refuelling

FLIGHT REFUELLING has delivered the first two pre-production hose-and-drogue refuelling pods intended for Royal Air Force VC10 K.3 tankers. Each of the nine VClOs now under-going conversion at British Aerospace Filton will carry two underwing Mk32 refuelling pods, and a single Mkl7 high-flow-rate hose reel unit in the rear fuselage. FR will build 19 pro-duction pods.
The Mk32 refuelling pod has a maximum flow rate of 350gal (2,8001b) a minute. Unlike the existing Mk20 pod, which must be removed from the tanker for maintenance, the Mk32 is modular, with extensive built-in test equipment for fault detection and isolation. Modules are removed and replaced with the Mk 32 still attached to the wing.
The Mk32 has completed 16hr of

AH-64 Apache

decision delayed
BUDGET problems have delayed a production decision on the Hughes AH-64 Apache attack helicopter until February 2. The US Army had plan-ned to buy 14 aircraft in 1982, but rising costs have forced a rethink. Hughes is now producing three costed proposals for production of between six and 12 helicopters. Planned pro-duction may be cut back from 596 to 456.

The Defence Systems Acquisition Review Council (Dsarc) was pushed back from early December to early February to give Hughes time to present the new proposals. The com-pany is confident that the Apache will pass the Dsarc and be approved for production. The AH-64 has already passed the Army review and has been recommended strongly for production.

pods delivered
flight-tests under the wing of a Sea Vixen. The hose reel demonstrated its ability to cope with a 15kt over-taking speed: FR would have attempted higher speeds, but flight-testing was curtailed to save money. Phantom and Buccaneer aircraft were refuelled at up to the maximum 50gal a minute possible with the Sea Vixen, limited by aircraft fuel capacity, not pod transfer rate.
FR has teamed with Grumman to offer a Mk35 refuelling pod for US Navy A-6 Intruder "buddy-buddy" tanker duties. The Navy is expected in the near future to issue a request for proposals to replace more than 300 Sargent Fletcher pods. The Mk35 is based on the Mk32, but with an additional fuel tank between the power unit and the hose reel.

Bell planning to
demonstrate XV-15

to US forces

BELL has "bailed-back" on^. of the two Nasa/Army-owned XV-15 tilt rotor research aircraft under a two-year, no-cost agreement, to conduct a series of military demonstrations. The XV-15 will be demonstrated to the US Army at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, and Fort Rucker, Alabama, will operate from US Navy ships, and will be shown to the US Air Force at Nellis AFB, Nevada.

Besides the demonstrations, Bell plans selected modifications to the air-craft, including vibratory-load sup-pression based on flight-test results to date. Under consideration is replace-ment of the 1,500 s.h.p. Lycoming LTC1K free turbine engines with more powerful units and an uprated trans-mission.

CX selection due

"mid-January"
A FINAL DECISION on the CX out-size transport for the US Air Force is not expected before mid-January, says Pentagon spokesman Henry Catto. A decision was expected mid-December, but additional analysis is now going on, says Catto, adding "that any time I give you a date it is subject to change without notice."
CX options include the McDonnell Douglas C-17, winner of the design competition, the McDonnell Douglas KC-10 Extender, Lockheed C-5A Galaxy, and Boeing 747. Only the C-17 can meet all the CX require-ments for payload, narrow/rough-field operation, and maintenance, but it is the most expensive option including life-cycle costs.

Tracer...
Rockwell will deliver the first three B-1B bombers to the US Air Force in 1985, 21 in 1986, 48 in 1987, and 28 in 1988, according to the schedule just released.

Liberia is negotiating with India to buy Kiran basic jet trainers and Indian-built Alouette Ills (Chetaks).

The last Indian Air Force Tu-124 has been withdrawn from service. The VIP Tupolevs have been replaced by Boeing 737s after 15 years service.

Construction of the Nimitz - class nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN-71) is to be accelerated by 14 months. The ves-sel is to be delivered to the US Navy on December 31, 1986, instead of Feb-ruary, 1988. If the ship is delivered on time, builder Newport News will receive a $21 million incentive pay-ment, and will save the Navy $53 mil-lion on the estimated $2,600 million cost of Roosevelt.

Royal Australian Air Force P-3C Orions of 10 Sqn, RAAF Edinburgh, New South Wales, are now equipped with McDonnell Douglas Harpoon anti-ship missiles.

Helicopter Services, a Westland com-pany, has received a £5 million con-tract from the Egyptian Air Force. The deal covers spares, repair, and overhaul for the six Westland Sea King and 28 Commando helicopters bought in the 1970s.

Chev aline warheads will be opera-tional on Royal Navy Polaris sub-marine-launched ballistic missiles before the end of 1982, marking the end of a ten-year, £1,000 million de-
velopment programme. Chevaline is a
manoeuvrable re-entry vehicle de-
signed to thwart Soviet anti-ballistic
missile defences ringing Moscow.

Mk32j2800 refuelling pods on Flight Refuelling's de Havilland Sea Vixen testbed

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