AIR TRANSPORT

UK airlines

to serve

Falkland*?
LONDON

An already existing and a
proposed British carrier are
showing strong interest in
serving the Falkland Islands
on a regular basis following
the cessation of hostilities.

Th e rapidly diversifying
UK carrier British Air Fer-
ries was the first to become
interested in a Falkland Is-
lands service. The airline—
which owns 19 Vickers Vis-
counts and several Handley
Page Heralds, which it uses
for charter work and lease
contracts all over the world
—applied to the UK Civil
Aviation Authority to oper-
ate "not more tha n tw o
daily services" between Port
Stanley and Punta Arenas in
Chile from October 1.

BAF's sales manager Mike
Kay tells Flight that the air-
line would base two Vis-
counts at Port Stanley. BAF
believes that there is a good
deal of potential for trade
between the Falklands and
Chile.

BAF thinks that the daily
Port Stanley-Punta Arenas
run would be "a cost-effec-
tive, commercially soun d
operation". There will be a
lot of development—includ-
ing oilfield exploitation—in
the Islands over the next
three years, Kay says, and
with a British forces garrison
of at least 2,000 based there,
there may be a considerable
amount of freight, medical
evacuation, and troop-carry-
ing work for the airline as
well as local trade develop-
ment and charter work.

The airline says it is not
relying on a Ministry of De-
fence contract to make the
service viable, but is looking
for "a realistic subsidy" from
the MoD in terms of a regu-
lar commitment for seats
and/or cargo space: it says
the MoD has expressed in-
terest in the proposed ser-
vice.

BAF has now lined up the
Falkland Islands Company
as its general services agent
at Port Stanley and Chilean
flag carrier LAN-Chile as its
GSA at Punta Arenas. Kay
notes that LAN-Chile is hop-

IwlWPlittiP!1

McDonnell Douglas says that now, less than two years after its entry into airline service, DC-9 Super 80 makes more than 500 flights a day for 16 airlines, and has a despatch relia of over 99 per cent

ing to extend its Paris ser-
vices on to London later this
year. The Falklands Islands
Company ha s guaranteed
BAF supplies of avtur at
Port Stanley and hotel ac-
commodation for its crews.

A new company known as
British Atlantic Airways has
applied for CAA permission
to operate a weekly London
Gatwick-Port Stanley return
service using a DC-10-30,
routeing both ways via
Ascension Island for fuel and
technical stops. The new
company estimates a jour-
ney time of 16 hours for the
8,000 mile one-way trip.

British Atlantic Airways
has been formed by lawyer
Randolph Field s and ex-
Laker operations manager
Capt Alan Hellary. Fields
has visited McDonnell Doug-
las with the intention of try-
ing to lease one of the ex-
Laker DC-10-30s now stored
at Yuma in Arizona. The
lynchpin of the British At-
lantic Airways plan would
be to obtain a deal from
MDC and the US Eximbank
(the co-owners of the air-
craft) to pay hire charges
only for the hours actually
flown.

"They have been fitted out
to CAA certification stan-
dards, so a British airline
could operate on e righ t
away, whereas it would be
an expensive process con-
verting them to FAA stan-
dards," points out Hellary.
"There isn't much prospect
of them doing anything else
in the near future: they'll
probably just sit in the desert

for the nex t coupl e of
years."
Britis h Atlantic's plan
seems rather more depen-
dent on MoD support than
does BAF's, although it has
proposed fares considerably
lower than British Caledon-
ian's pre-iuvasion fares to
Buenos Aires. Hellary says
that British Atlantic has car-
ried out extensive costing
and thinks the service could
uphold 150 seats a week,
plus cargo plus mail. The
MoD "seems reasonably in-
terested" in the idea, he says.

Ultimately British Atlantic's
proposal depends on it ob-
taining a UK operator's li-
cence. This will require proof
of financial and operating fit-
ness. Although British Atlan-
tic says it can draw on the
resources of a consortium of
British investors, it plans
to raise a proportion of its
equity by public subscription.
British Atlantic has no con-
crete plans for other ser-
vices at the moment, and this
will probably count against
it. And so far it has not con-
sidered logistic arrangements
nearly as fully as has BAF.

The two companies will not
object to each other's li-
cence application. Capt Hell-
ary believes the two services
could co-exist and comple-
ment each other. BAF's Mike
Kay expresses the doubts of
others in the industry as to
the British Atlantic proposal
by saying "Why should we
object? We'd only need to
object for the first week of
their operation. It wouldn't
matter after that."

Accidents...

Air-India Boeing 707 (VT-
DJJ) skidded on landing at
Bombay Airport during a
monsoon at 4.30 a.m. o
June 22. The aircraft over-
ran the end of the runway,
hit a ditch and the hull broke
in two. This accident killed
two of the aircrew and 1
of the passengers.
A T a b a Airlines FH.227B
(PT-LBV) with 44 persons
on board hit an illumination
mast at Tabatinga Airport
(north-wes t Brazil) and
crashed next to the airport
killing all on board. This
happened in the morning of
June 12, and airport person-
nel allege that the weather
and visibility was too bad
for the aircraft to have com-
pleted a landing safely.
Brazilian domestic carrie r
VASP has suffered two seri-
ous accidents within the last
two months, one of them the
most serious in Brazil's avi-
ation history. On June 8 a
Boein g 7 27 (PP-SBK)
crashed into a 2,500ft hill
while on approach to Pinto
Martins Airport, Fortaleza,
en route from Sao Paulo. All
137 people on board died.
The aircraft was reported to
have hit the wooded high
ground 5 n.m. away from
the airport while on approach
in heav y rai n at three
o'clock in the morning. The
other VASP accident, in
which two people died, hap-
pened on the evening of May
24. A Boeing 737 landed very
heavily in severe rain at
Brazilia and broke in half.

4 FLIGHT International, 3 July 1982