AIR TRANSPORT

Airbus launches

A320 sales drive
Airbus Industrie is starting a
major sales push for the latest
version of its planned A320,
the short-to-medium-haui
150-seat twinjet, reports
David Learmount from
Toulouse. Airbus is con-
vinced that a completely new
aircraft of this size will be
badly needed by 1988, the
projected year for delivery to
the airlines, and that by then
carriers will be clear of the
recession's effects.

The Airbus sales team will
start visiting prospective
customers in March, and the
consortium hopes to have
sufficient "quality" to launch
the A320 by mid-summer.
The programme must be given
momentum before 1983's end
if the 1988 delivery date is to
be met.

"We realise that we have set

ourselves a very difficult
task," says Reinhardt
Orthmann, managing director
of marketing services. He
acknowledges that "we are in
the eye of the recession", but
says that Airbus must move
now to have the aeroplane
ready for the sales that should
• come when the European
economy improves. He admits
' that the Boeing 737 and
«McDonnell Douglas DC-9
Super 80 derivatives are good
* products, but points out that
r the A320 has developed since
its conception and that plans
* continue to develop.
, The A320's fuel burn will be
at least 20 per cent lower than
*that of the derivative aircraft,
.Airbus claims. The marketing
team will not quote prices or
'fine detail, saying that poten-
tial purchasers should hear
these facts first. But it points
'out that "technological
'advances have as much
impact on production costs as
on operating costs. Price
•increases compared with
current single-aisle aircraft
will not be very great",
t The A320 will seat 158-162
passengers in a European
'single-class layout, and about
'150 with a US mixed-class
cabin. Airbus makes much of
the A320's wider fuselage
* cross section (143in interior
r

cabin width compared with
139in for the 757). The wider

1

aisle reduces loading and thus
turnaround times, claims
FLIGHT International, 26 February 1983

Airbus, increasing aircraft
utilisation. The manufacturer
says it also allows for more
comfortable seating and for a
deeper wing box, giving it "the
opportunity for an improved
thickness-chord ratio Boeing
would have liked with the
757".

The latest A320 plans
would have the aircraft incor-
porating a composite horizon-
tal tail-plane as well as a
composite fin, and would have
fly-by-wire primary controls
for all control surfaces except
the rudder. The engine would
be a GE/Snecma CFM56-4,
although any newer engines
would be fitted as soon as they
became available.

All the lessons learnt from
A310 development would be
incorporated into the A320,
including cockpit design and
digital flight management
systems. Modular systems
design and electronic diagnos-
tic equipment would make the
aircraft cheaper to maintain
than the present generation
aircraft, Airbus says.

Airbus acknowledges the
inherent difficulty of breaking
into the US market with any
of its products, but says that
50 per cent of the market for
this type of aircraft is outside
the USA. But, says
Orthmann, the A320 will
come closer to Delta Air
Lines' new single-aisle speci-
fications than anything else
on the market, and Delta is
high on the list of airlines to
be visited.

Airbus is currently flying
a Swissair-liveried A310
through the Middle and Far
East on a demonstration tour.
The company's marketing
department says that it
believes there is a good chance
that the trip may result in the
first sale of the extended
range A310-300, which will be
on the market by 1986.
Countries visited during the
journey include the Yemen
Arab Republic, Jordan,
Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, the
United Arab Emirates, Qatar,
Japan, and the Republic of
Korea.
• Certification of the A310 to
Cat 2 landing standards by
both French and German
authorities is now expected on
March 11.

Japan to
partner

Boeing?
TOKYO

According to Japan Economic
Journal, Boeing is expected to
sign with Japan at the end of
March on "a joint devel-
opment of the next-
generation civil airliner", the
150-seat YXX series.

The three Japanese aircraft
companies involved, accord-
ing to the report, would be
Mitsubishi, Kawasaki, and
Fuji. The Japanese would bear
25 per cent of the cost, Boeing
70 per cent, and some
prospective West European
partner 5 per cent. The
aircraft would be developed,
produced and sold on a
complete full-partner basis.
Aeritalia and "a newer engine
of the Japanese-British XJB
type" are associated with the
reports.

FLIGHT

wrrewMnwMi

NEXT WEEK

In a period when new
military helicopter orders
are hard to find, we look at
manufacturer's approaches
to the market.

Following the Helicopter
Association Interna-
tional's convention, the
latest civil helicopter de-
velopments are surveyed.

Italian share in A320?

PARIS

France and Italy hope to
extend their ATR42 co-
operation to the future Airbus
A320 jet airliner.
After talks with French
President Francois Mitter-
rand in Paris, Italian Prime
Minister Amintore Fanfani
said that Italy was keen on
joining the A320 project.
Talks between the three
main aircraft manufacturers-
Aerospatiale, British Aero-
space and Messerschmitt-
Bolkow-Blohm—on final

definition of the new aircraft
and work-sharing are nearing
completion.
French Transport Minister
Charles Fiterman has said
Aeritalia of Italy, de
Havilland of Canada, and
Fokker of Holland could join
the A320 programme with a
total industrial participation
of as much as 20 per cent.
Mr Fanfani said Italy was
also studying the possibility of
buying more A300s. An order
for five from Alitalia is quite
probable, he said. Alitalia
already has eight.

The first Embraer Brasilia wing is seen under the fuselage ready for joining. Maiden flight of the prototype is scheduled for July

507