Dassault's full-size ACX model is notable for large single fin and jowl-type inlets with traditional "souris" (mouse) shock bodies

Dassault

unveils

ACX
Dassault's Avion de Combat
Experimental (ACX) 1990s
fighter-technology demon-
strator is unveiled at the Paris
Show. The black and gold full-
scale mockup is shown prac-
tically alongside the British
ACA, first seen at
Farnborough.
Dassault President Benno-
Claude Vallieres says that
ACX will fly in 1986, powered
by two General Electric
F404s. The Turbo-Union
RB.199 is "not an air-to-air
engine". After ACX has
proved the high-agility
concept it will be developed
into two variants, both
powered by the 7-5-tonne
thrust Snecma M88. The
version for the French Air
Force will be Avion de
Combat Tactique (ACT). A
second version, the Avion de
Combat Marine (ACM), will
be developed as a successor to
the Super Etendard, ACX
R&D funding will total
Fr 1,800 million (£160

million).
ACX is a canard delta with
compound-sweep leading
edges. The large anhedral
canards are shoulder-
mounted behind the cockpit,
and the single fin bears a
marked resemblance in size
and shape to that of the
Mirage 4000. The intakes are

different from those of the
Mirage 2000 and 4000, and
have been moved down and
are almost under the fuselage.
"The intakes will allow for
greater speed and better
payload," says Vallieres.
The ACX, which, like ACA,
is a technology demonstrator
and not a prototype will have
a digital fly-by-wire system
developed from that of the
Mirage 2000, but with
"improved techniques". Dass-
ault will not give any
performance figures, except to
comment that "ACX will be
more advanced than anything
now planned".

Vallieres says that Dassault
favours co-operation with the
United Kingdom and West
Germany, "but Dassault must
have the leadership, as we
have the most delta
experience".

BAe gets
ACA

go-ahead

On the show's opening day
British Aerospace announced
a firm UK Government
contract to build and fly a
prototype of the Agile Combat
Aircraft (ACA), present at the
show in full-scale mockup
form only a stone's throw
from Dassault's ACX model.
This first step in the UK
Experimental Aircraft Pro-
gramme (EAP) is being taken
without German and Italian
cash support, for the time
being, but with the full

industrial participation of
MBB and Aeritalia, BA's
partners in the Panavia
Tornado.
The first of what could be
up to five ACA prototypes will
fly at Warton in 1986, using
two Turbo-Union RB.199s for
power. This first aircraft will
be dedicated to handling, fly-
by-wire assessment, and
performance. Avionics and
weapons testing will follow, in
a development programme
akin to the Dassault
approach—"working towards,
rather than starting with, a
total weapon system" to quote
one BAe engineer.

Despite the British general
election impending, the EAP
contract was signed by the
Government on the eve of the
show to demonstrate to
potential partners—including
Dassault—Britain's deter-
mination to base co-operation
negotiations on something
more than feasibility studies.
But BAe acknowledges that
the French are unlikely to
surrender ACX or the issue of
programme leadership in a
European fighter programme.
The French Government is
pressing Bonn to join the
ACX programme, and MBB
has had talks with Dassault.
But an MBB executive says
that there is no sign of any
pressure on the company to
withdraw or play down its full
commitment to the EAP/
ACA, into which MBB, like
the other partners and
vendors, is putting its own
money. British Government
support for the EAP is unoffi-
cially stated to be about £70
million.

British Aerospace has brought the ACA mockup it unveiled at Farnborough, but now wearing a warlike pain
scheme and all-British weapon fit

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