AIR TRANSPORT

«« iHMnHHMmWinM^nHH^HHI^fflHHIi iilmhW\ Q'^ i'''h'l''iTflBifT^ iii^Wffliiifitil'ili1

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77ns i.s- fa>u> the MD-100-20 will look. It is a 27ft stretch of the MD-100-10

New Dutch airline brings confusion
ROTTERDAM

A decision by Holland's high-
est legal authority to license a
new airline for charter oper-
ations has caused controversy
in the Dutch travel industry.
The Legal Council of
Holland—which has more
authority than even the State
High Court—overturned a
decision by the Dutch Trans-
port Ministry not to license
proposed new carrier Air
Holland for charter oper-
ations. The move has caused
glee among many of the coun-
try's travel agents but anger
among the country's three
other major international
airlines and their unions.

The three airlines are
considering legal action to get
the licence revoked: they are
currently studying the word-
ing of the decision handed
down by the Legal Council.
The travel agents are hope-
ful that the new low-cost
carrier will break an unofficial
tariffs agreement in force
among the other three
airlines, which all have close
ownership ties. The three
airlines—KLM, Martinair,
and Transavia—all believe the
Dutch market will not sustain
another carrier, and that the
new competition could hurt
them badly. In this view they
are supported by the airline
trade unions.

The travel agents strongly
hope that Air Holland's cost
structure will allow it to
charge lower charter rates
than the other three. It has

been widely reported in the
Dutch press that the three
have agreed a minimum base
for their rates, although the
airlines have not confirmed
this officially and are reluc-
tant to talk about it.

But the travel agents them-
selves are not confident about
the new carrier's chances of
survival. In a market which
has shrunk about 20 per cent
in the past few years, the
Transport Ministry's decision
not to let the new airline
operate from Amsterdam's
Schiphol Airport is seen as a
major setback.

The new operator—set up
by John Block, a man with a
long history in the Dutch
air transport industry—is
restricted to flying from
Rotterdam and Maastricht
Beek Airports. The Transport
Ministry licensed Air Holland
to operate only from these
airports when faced with the
Legal Council's decision.
According to Dutch indus-
try sources, Block's airline
faces several problems in
operating from these airports.
Perhaps the biggest one is
that there may not be enough
of a market in their catch-
ment areas to sustain it.
Although Rotterdam is a big
city, Dutch industry sources
say, Schiphol dominates the
public imagination.

This shortcoming could be
offset, however, if Air Holland
does charge lower rates, in
which case travel agents could
give it a great deal of business.
The airline already has the

implicit support of one of the
largest travel agencies in the
Netherlands, the West
German-owned Neckermann
group.
But another problem for
Block is that there will not be
enough technical and spares
facilities at the two airports
for quick repairs if his aircraft
becomes unserviceable. He
will have to set up his own
spares holding at considerable
expense to prevent this.
The third problem is the
length of Rotterdam Airport's
runway—only 2,000m. In
certain conditions his
aircraft—he plans to operate
Boeing 727-200s—will be
unable to take off with full
passenger loads on long-range
operations.
Block is planning to begin
services on April 1, 1984, with
one 727-200. He is currently
evaluating several sale offers.
If the operation goes well,
another would be acquired. He
is planning to keep the costs
of the operation right down by
employing foreign pilots in
the free market.
Block was one of the
founders of Martinair's prede-
cessor Martin Air Transport
in the early Sixties. He moved
from there to found Trans-
avia, and eventually sold out
his interest to a Dutch ship-
ping company. He then tried
his hand at a business
aviation venture.

Air Holland's postal
address is: PO Box 23, 2110
AA Aerdenhout, The Nether-
lands; tel Amsterdam 419294.

Nordair back

in profit
MONTREAL

Nordair, which suffered the ill
effects of a strike last year,
has reported a C$2-1 million
(£1 • 1 million) net profit for
the first six months of 1983,
recovering from a £290,000
net loss in the corresponding
period last year.
The sale of one of its four
Boeing 737-200s for £1-
million helped towards
Nordair's net figure, while
revenues rose from £41
million in the first six months
of 1982 to £43 million in the
first half 1983. The carrier
reported an operating loss of
£277,000 in the period—a
decline from the £500,000
operating loss recorded in the
first six months of 1982.

Nordair president Jean
Douville said that "in light of
the substantial drop in
passenger traffic experienced
during the period operations
results were better than
anticipated".
Nordair is currently con-
centrating its efforts on boost-
ing its charter business to
Florida. Between August and
December the carrier is offer-

ing C$10 vouchers for Florida
flights to all Nordair
passengers flying between
Ottawa and Toronto.

Quick Cat
for BA 757
LONDON

British Airways has obtained
approval for Cat 3A ba
weather landings for its
Boeing 757s only seven
months after the aircraft's
entry into service with the
airline. This is by far the
quickest Civil Aviation
Authority award of such a
category to a new airliner.
The 757 has made over 500
fully automatic good weather
landings with BA so far.
Cat 3A allows the aircraft to
land in visibility 300m and
cloudbase 50ft. BA intends to
have the aircraft certificated
via Cat 3B (75m/14ft) even-
tually to 3C (Om/Oft). The
carrier's TriStars are certifi-
cated to Cat 3C, Tridents to
3B.

FLIGHT International, 3 September 1