DEFENCE

Austria extends deadline
VIENNA

Austria has delayed its deci-
sion on a new fighter until
mid-January while the Minis-
try of Commerce and the
Federal Chancery sift through
the commercial tenders of the
four competitors.
Technical evaluation has
already been completed, the
Austrian Ministry of Defence
tells Flight. As yet no results
of performance comparisons
have been released, and are
unlikely to be publicised until
the more complex commercial
issues are processed.
Four aircraft are chasing
the Austrian order. British

Aerospace has offered 24
secondhand Lightnings, pos-
sibly bought back from Saudi
Arabia as an offset to a
Tornado sale there.
Dassault and Saab-Scania
are also proposing second-
hand aircraft with the Mirage
III and the J35 Draken
respectively. Both are offering
24 aircraft for the ASch500
million (£56 million) replace-
ment fighter contract.
Northrop alone is offering
a new aircraft, the F-5E
Tiger II. Because it is new,
the F-5E is more expensive
and Austria can only afford 16
(12 F-5Es and four two-seat
F-5Fs).

Grumman to fly conformal radar
BETHPAGE

Grumman has received a $14
million US Navy contract to
flight-test a conformal radar
antenna. The US Naval Air
Development Centre at War-
minster, Pennsylvania, is
sponsoring the programme,
which will lead to a three-year
flight-test programme sched-
uled to start in 1986.
Conformal radar substi-
tutes a micro-processor
controlled, electronically
scanned phased array for the
usual electro-mechanical
scanning system used in
airborne radar. The advan-
tage is that the conformal
radar antenna could be part
of the aircraft structure—the

wing leading edge for
instance. This has two advan-
tages. An airborne early warn-
ing aircraft would not need a
separate radar antenna, thus
lessening the drag penalty of a
large radome or rotodome,
and the radar antenna can
be bigger, enhancing radar
performance for a given trans-
mitter receiver performance.

In the test programme
Grumman will modify an
E-2C with conformal radar
antenna in the wing leading
edge. The passive wing array
will be assessed as an
advanced electronic counter-
countermeasures system, in
conjunction with the active
radar antenna in the roto-
dome.

TRACER

Moscow has increased the
interest rate on loans to buy
arms. Many Third World
nations are to be told that
interest rates will be raised
from 2 per cent to 5 per cent
a year, while the repayment
term is cut to ten years from
the usual 15.

Lockheed has signed a no-
cost contract with the US Air
Force to evaluate the
rewinged C-5A Galaxy. Tests
will check in-flight per-
formance at heavy gross
weights of up to 920,0001b,
and ground backing
manoeuvres. The testbed
C-5A will be powered by the
improved General Electric GE
TF39-1C engine.

Selenia is to supply an
unspecified number of Aspide
surface-to-air missiles to the
Royal Thai Navy. The
missiles will arm the RTN's
recently ordered corvettes,
due to enter service in 1986.

Northrop has been awarded
a $41-2 million US Air Force
contract to produce ground-
support equipment for the
Advanced Inertial Reference
Spheres, which provide crit-
ical guidance information to
the Peacekeeper (MX)
missile's flight control system.

Zimbabwe is understood to
be negotiating with the
People's Republic of China
for up to 24 Xian F-7s
(MiG-21s).

Dutch Starfighters retire
The last five Royal Netherlands Air Force Lockheed F-104G Starfighters are readied for their final flights before retirement. They have been purchased by US secondhand dealers for resale.

CASUALTIES

• A Royal Air Force Panavia
Tornado GR.l of 27 Sqn, RAF
Marham, crashed near
Schweinfurt, West Germany,
on November 8, while the
aircraft was flying from RAF
Laarbruch. Pilot and naviga-
tor ejected safely.

• A Royal Norwegian Air
Force General Dynamics
F-16B Fighting Falcon was
written of after an engine fire
on take-off from Rygge AB on
November 13. The two-man
crew aborted the take-off and
evacuated the aircraft safely.

• A Royal Air Force Boeing-
Vertol Chinook HC.l from
240 OCU at Odiham crashed
on November 14, 9 n.m.
south-west of Basingstoke. Of
the seven on board, two were
taken to Basingstoke hospital
for treatment, one with
serious injuries and one
slightly injured. The remain-
ing five escaped without
injury. No reasons for the
crash have been released, but
it is believed to have been
caused by a mechanical
problem.

• A Swedish Air Force Saab
J35F Draken of F10 Wing,
Angelholm, crashed 25 n.m.
east of Halmstad on Novem-
ber 22. The aircraft was
manoeuvring at high level
when it "superstalled" and
control was lost. The pilot,
Cdt Sgt Per Liedberg, stayed
on hoard below 10,000ft, the
minimum recovery height laid
down by the SAF, and
regained control at 2,000ft but
too low to recover. Liedberg
ejected safely.

• Two French Air Force
C.160 Transalls crashed after
a mid-air collision near
Castres in southern France on
November 23. Fourteen crew-
members were killed; the two
aircraft had just dispatched 60
paratroops each.

• A Royal Navy British
Aerospace Sea Harrier FRS.l
from HMS Illustrious crashed
near Fort William, Scotland,
on December 1. The pilot
ejected safely.

• A United States Army Bell
OH-58 Kiowa of the 2nd
Infantry Division's 7th
Cavalry crashed near Camp
Casey, 15 n.m. north of Seoul,
South Korea, on December
10. The pilot was killed.

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