AIR TRANSPORT

Seahawk 727

This Alaska Airlines Boeing 727 has been painted to reflect the airline's sponsorship of the Seattle Seahawks football team, resident at the airline's home base.

Air Inter

counter-

attacks

TGV
PARIS

Air Inter, the French domes-
tic airline, has launched a
major counter attack against
fierce competition from the
TGV (Train a Grande
Vitesse) which captured a
significant slice of the Paris -
Lyons market last year and is
gaining in new markets as it
extends its network across
France, reports Gilbert
Sedbon.

"The TGV syndrome is
dead as far as Air Inter is
concerned, and I shall see that
it remains so," says Air Inter
chairman Pierre Eelsen. "We
are now launching a counter-
offensive with new ratios and
schemes to halt growing rail
competition and make sure it
is no longer a threat to air
travel."

The airline is also looking
forward to receiving the
150-seat Airbus A320 in 1988,
which Eelsen describes as
"our future combat aircraft".
Air Inter carried 10-2
million passengers in 1984, a
mediocre 2-2 per cent
increase in traffic which was

300,000 passengers short of
target, and with profits not
exceeding one million French
francs (£917,431), Eelsen
says. For the first time in the
airlines history, the turnover
reached Fr5,060 million,
allowing a cash-flow of Fr390
million (8 per cent of sales)
for a special fund for fleet
renewal and expansion over
the next ten years. Altogether
Air Inter plans to invest
Fr2,000 million a year this
decade, compared with Fr650
million in 1984.

"We have embarked on
an unprecedented aggressive
sales drive aimed at not only
capturing new markets on the
whole network, but particu-
larly at recovering part of lost
traffic on the Paris-Lyons
route with a series of
promotional schemes," Eelsen
says.
Competition from the TGV
in 1984 meant a loss of
870,000 Air Inter passen-
gers—550,000 passengers on
the Paris to Lyons, Grenoble
and Saint Etienne stretch of
the central-eastern France
network, and 280,000 passen-
gers on the extended lines to
Marseilles, Montpellier, and
Nimes, in the south-western
leg.

Eelsen says that Air Inter is
hoping to carry 700,000
passengers more in 1985, an
increase of 7 per cent over
1984.
"Should we succeed, we will
strike a balance, but we
expect to do better and make
real profits," he says.

757

celebrates

two years'
service
SEATTLE

As the Boeing 757 enters its
third year in commercial
service operators have re-
ported their on-time reli-
ability figures for the type
over the past two years.
To date the 47 757s in
service have made more than
83,663 revenue departures
and amassed 140,388 flight
hours, with dispatch reli-
ability averaging 97-9 per
cent with a 15min criterion.
West German charter airline
LTS achieved the highest
despatch reliability rate at
99 • 7 per cent, closely followed
by Delta, (99-5 per cent).

Boeing 757 operators have
been flying the type an aver-
age of 7 • 4hr per day over the
past two years. Air Europe's
757s were in the air the
longest at 10-2hr a day. A
Monarch 757 was the high-
time aircraft, having logged
6,126hr, while an Eastern
example made a record 3,561
landings.
Fleetwide, 12 of thetwinjets
have completed at least 3,000
landings. Eastern, British
Airways, Monarch, Air
Europe, LTS, SIA, and Delta
are flying the 757.

NEWS SCAN

Delta Airlines will introduce
nonstop services from Atlanta
to Paris on April 1. Delta
president R. W. Allen says
that it will serve the route five
times a week with TriStar
500s offering 241 seats.

A British Airway s Con-
corde on charter to Good-
wood Travel, UK, will make
its first flight to Moscow on
April 12. A trip to the USSR's
capital on the supersonic
aircraft plus hotel accommo-
dation, a city tour, and an
evening at the Bolshoi ballet
costs £995 per person.
Contact Goodwood Travel;
telephone Canterbury (0227)
65967.

Highland Express has been
given High Court approval to
challenge the UK Civil
Aviation Authority's rejection
of its application for a licence
to fly scheduled services from
London Stansted, Birming-
ham, and Maastricht to
Newark and Toronto via a
Prestwick hub. The CAA
turned down the application
on the grounds that it was not
satisfied with the airline's
financial status. The court
will hear the case next week.

Swissair has won an $11
million contract from Kuwait
Airways to overhaul the
Middle East carrier's Pratt &
Whitney JT9D-7R4 engines,
which power its eight
Airbuses. Kuwait is the third
airline to make use of Swiss-
air's engineering facilities;
already Saudia and Braathens
JT9D-7R4s are overhauled by
the carrier.

The Greek ministry of
foreign affairs has char-
tered a Boeing 707 from
flag carrier Olympic Air-
ways to fly foodstuffs and
clothing out to famine victims
via Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
The Government department
plans a total of 12 relief
flights, four of which have
already been performed.

Pan American will begin
serving the southern French
holiday resort Nice Cote
d'Azur on a daily basis from
New York from April 28. The
service, to be operated by
Boeing 747s, will extend from
Nice to Rome, thus offering
two daily departures from
New York to the Italian
capital.

FLIGHT International, 23 February 1985