BUSINESS AVIATION

Seastar

CD.2 nears

first

flight
OBERPFAFFENHOFEN

Claudius Dornier is preparing
to fly the Seastar CD.2
amphibian later this month,
following the roll-out of the
prototype on March 19 at
Oberpfaffenhofen. A company
marketing study indicates a
potential for 460 aircraft sales
over ten years. Some 240
would be to private sector
organisations and the remain-
der to public utilities and
government bodies. The pre-
diction assumes a selling price
of DM5 million ($2-73
million).
"These numbers are the
result of direct discussions
with important and decision-
making individuals in several
countries," says managing
director Conrado Dornier.

First flight is planned for
the middle of April. The
aircraft is expected to appear
at the Paris Air Show in June.
Claudius Dornier says that
West German certification
should be accomplished by the
middle of 1988 and certifica-
tion in the USA at the end of
next year.
Production is planned to
start at the end of next year
and is targetted at 20-30
aircraft per year. Claudius
Dornier says that an

"essential" part of the enter-
prise is to take advantage of
"existing" resources in the
aircraft industry and develop
a risk-sharing partnership.
Staff stands at 100. Firms to
have contributed help so
far include Dornier and
Lufthansa.

Break-even production is
100 units, says the company.
This is claimed to be lower
than the 300 typical for a
similar metal-structured air-
craft because of the choice of
glassfibre-reinforced plastic
(GFRP) as the structural
material. Claudius Dornier
claims that the Seastar is the
first civil transport built in
GFRP. A major benefit of
GFRP on an amphibian is the
lack of corrosion. Structure
life expectancy is predicted to
be 30,000hr, based on
continuing tests at the
Industrie - Anlagen - Betriebs -
Gesellschaft in Ottobrunn.
The results of the tests
will be made generally avail-
able.

Five versions of the aircraft
are planned: passenger trans-
port with nine seats and
optional lavatory; VIP trans-
port with six seats, lavatory,
and furniture; corporate
version with 12 seats; air
ambulance with facilities for
six stretchers, two attendant
seats, and medical equipment;
and cargo variant with a
usable volume of 353ft'',
maximum payload of 3,2191b,
maximum length of 18-03ft,
and front and rear loading
doors.

Predicted performance
figures include: 600 n.m. range
with 2,0001b payload; maxi-
mum speed at maximum take-

Top men are joint managing directors Conrado Dornier and Hannes Lucas (left and rightj and Camilo Dornier fcentrej

The Learjet 55: investors are fighting for the Gates subsidiary

off weight and 10,000ft of
180kt; maximum single-
engine cruise speed in the
same condition of 122kt;
service ceiling at maximum
take-off weight of 28,200ft.
Aircraft data: standard
empty weight 5,2191b; maxi-
mum payload 3,2191b;
maximum take -off/landing
weight 9,2591b; span 50 -84ft.
Power is from two Pratt &
Whitney PT6A-112 turbo-
props each rated at 500 s.h.p.
and driving four-bladed
McCauley constant-speed
propellers.

Suitors

wrangle
over Learjet
TUCSON ~

Gates Corporation was still in
dispute late last month over
the future ownership of sub-
sidiary Gates Learjet. Hours
after Gates had announced an
agreement to sell Learjet to a
partnership between invest-
ment firms Cobey and Bear
Stearns, rival bidder AVAQ
International claimed that it
had already forged a "binding"
agreement for rights to
purchase the business jet
manufacturer and aerospace
sub-contractor.

AVAQ claims that its
alleged agreement had been
valid until March 13, and that
it will pursue its bid for
Learjet. Gates says that no

agreement was made, and
claims that Learjet will belong
to the Cobey partnership
within around 45 days of an
agreement. Cobey and Bear
Stearns would have to arrange
finance, pay off a $23 million
loan from Gates to Learjet,
and receive Gates directors'
final go-ahead.
Cobey and Bear Stearns
have offered $6-50 per share
for Gates Learjet's remaining
common stock, comprising
7,840,585 shares, or 64-8 per
cent of the company. The rest
is owned by Learjet manage-
ment and institutions. AVAQ
says that it has matched this
offer.

Gates Learjet was losing
money heavily during much of
last year. It makes two models
of executive jet, primarily at
Tucson (Arizona), is building
up an aerospace sub-contract-
ing business at Wichita
(Kansas), and operates a
profitable line of fixed-base
operators.
Cobey was involved in
another attempt to buy
Learjet last year, when it
offered $8 per share. M. J.
Rosenthal and Associates,
another potential suitor,
agreed to buy Learjet early in
1986, but Gates terminated
the proposed deal in Decem-
ber after the investment firm
"failed to meet deadlines" for
financing. A third bid for
Learjet stands: Interconnect,
a US investment firm, is pre-
pared to pay a higher price for
shares than AVAQ or the
partnership, but is offering to
pay off only $13 million of the
$23 million loan, Flight under-
stands.

FLIGHT INTERNATIONAL, 4 April 1987