TECHNICAL: DEFENC E

Cheney continues to back B-2 programme

Cheney backs building five B-2s in FY 1991, but will Congress approve?

U

S defence secretary Dick
Cheney's "commitment to
the B-2 is unequivocal," says the
Pentagon, following the
announcement that Cheney will
continue with plans to build five
of the Northrop stealth bombers
in Fiscal Year 1991.
The Pentagon adds: "Our
entire arms control strategy re-
volves around [the B-2]".
Cheney, previously believed to
be considering stretching out or
scaling down the programme, is

thought to have overruled re-
ported United States Air Force
proposals to stretch B-2 produc-
tion as a means of cutting the
budget. The question of long-
term funding has been left open,
the Pentagon says.
Escalating costs mean that it is
almost certain that the planned
fleet of 132 B-2s will be cut back.
Cheney's FY 1991 B-2 decision
will now be put before Congress,
where considerable opposition is
expected. •

Military EH101 makes maiden flight
T

he prototype military utility
version of the EH. 101 heli-
copter, PP7, has flown from
Agusta's Cascina Costa factory.
The maiden flight lasted 30 min-
utes and will pave the way for the
first flight of the civil heliliner
prototype PP9 later this year.
Both pre-production heli-
copters feature a rear ramp and
are fitted with the standard
EH. 101 glass cockpit. The PP8
being produced at the Westland
factory, however, will be a stan-
dard civil variant without the tail
ramp. EH Industries is expecting
to deliver its project definition of
the military utility variant to the

United Kingdom Ministry of De-
fence by early this year. The
Italian Army and Air Force are
continuing to examine the utility
variant.
Agreement over the produc-
tion standard for the Royal
Navy's EH. 101 Merlin is still
awaited. It had been scheduled to
be completed by the end of 1989.
The Merlin prototype PP5 has
now flown over seven hours and
was recently fitted with the GEC
Avionics AQS-903 acoustic
processor. Over 350 flying hours
have now been amassed from
450 separate missions in the
EH. 101 test programme. •

Investigation follows ALARM failure

T

he third firing of the Bayern
Chemie-powered British
Aerospace ALARM is being in-
vestigated following the missile's
failure to separate from the
launch aircraft. Two earlier
firings of the missiles at the
Aberporth, UK, range were
successful. The third firing at the
US Navy's China Lake test range
was the first in the United States.
At Aberporth the missile was
tested with a dispersal round and
then in the second test with a
seeker head fitted. In both cases

the missile separated perfectly
from the Panavia Tornado IDS
launch aircraft. The trials moved
to the USA to allow the missile's
full flight and electronic en-
velope to be explored.
The test programme will not
resume until the cause of the
separation problem has been
identified. BAe is still confident
of being able to start deliveries to
the UK Ministry of Defence for
evaluation later this year. The
missile's entry into service is still
scheduled for the mid-1990s. •

Matra launches two Mistral systems Matra has announced Albi

and Atlas, two new air-
defence systems using the Mis-
tral anti-aircraft missile.
Albi is a lightweight two-
round launcher mounted on a
retractable turret aimed at the
light armoured vehicle market
for support defence missions.
The system has two Mistrals
ready to fire and uses the same
firing control system as the

Manpads portable single-round
two-crew tripod launcher. Albi
can be equipped with an identi-
fication friend or foe (IFF)
interrogator.
An Albi derivative, Atlas, com-
prises a portable two-round
launcher operated by a seated
firer. It can be used autono-
mously and can be deployed on
the ground, on oil rigs or on light
vehicles. •

Matra's Mistral missile is launched from the Atlas system.

Bendix orders Cossor ISLS amplifier
C

ossor is to develop an
interrogator side-lobe sup-
pression (ISLS) amplifier,.; for
Mark XV airborne interrogators,
under a $700,000 contract with
Allied-Signal's Bendix Commu-
nications division.
This is the second order that
Cossor has received from Bendix
on the Mark XV programme, the
first being for an engineering

support contract under which
Cossor systems engineers are
providing support to the Bendix
team in the USA.
The ISLS amplifier will be an
all-solid-state unit and will be
produced at the company's new
RF and Microwave Centre.
Cossor is also involved in
orders with parent company
Raytheon. D

FLIGHT INTERNATIONAL 3-9 January 1990 17