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US Navy freezes FEWSG programme
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he US Navy's • Fleet Elec-
tronic Warfare Support
Grou p (FEWSG) airborne
trainer programme has been
"put on ice", according to offi-
cials.
The programme was intended
to provide aircraft capable of
simulating an electronic warfare
environment, giving naval per-
sonnel training in combating
electronic warfare.
According to sources, there is
no funding for FEWSG this year
with only study funding being
made available nex t year.
Sources at Gulfstream, one of

the leading contenders for
FEWSG with its SRA-4, a sub-
stantially modified business jet,
confirm that the project is on
"hold".
Next year's funding will only
be for a study re-examining the
FEWSG concept. The future of
a similar NATO project, the
Multinational Electronic War-
fare Support Group (MEWSG),
is also thought to be unsure.
MEWSG, because of its re-
quirements, needs a larger
airframe than the US project, in
the class of the DC-8, rather
than the Gulfstream IV. •

Gulfstream's SRA-4 FEWSG contender has been "frozen"

GE shrinks GE90 for Airbus A330

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eneral Electric (GE) is of-
fering a smaller-fan version
of the 422kN (95,0001b)-thrust
GE90 for future Airbus A330s.
Unveiling a mockup of the
engine, GE Aircraft Engines
chief executive Brian Rowe re-
vealed that the company is de-
veloping the new GE90 core
with a smaller fan "for aircraft
like the A330".
GE says that it could offer a
2.90m-diameter version of the
3.10m composite fan, which
forms the basis for the engine to
power the still-to-be-launched
Boeing 767X. This might solve
the installation problem pre-
venting consideration of the
GE90 for the A330 - which has
an undercarriage too short to
accommodate the GE90's un-
precedented diameter.
Airbus Industrie has given the
idea a cool reception since the
new engine would increase the
aircraft's range to the point
where it might become a com-
petitor to the longer- range
A340. A senior GE executive
noted, however, that the A340

itself was likely to grow, saying:
"We're working with Airbus to
see where we fit into their
overall strategy". A refanned
version of the GE90 would
mean developing a different
low-pressure turbine and would
involve two or three years' fur-
ther work ibefore certification.
The A330 is powered by the
General Electric CF6-80E1.
Lack of orders for the 767X
means GE will have time to
develop the GE90, says Rowe.
"We're spending between $3
million and $5million per
month now on the engine...the
delay has benefited us by allow-
ing us to optimise the design".
GE90 flight testing will be
aboard a Boeing 747. The en-
gine will be certificated at
378kN thrust, and then derated
to 320kN for the initial version
of the Boeing 767X (to be called
the Boeing 777 when it is
launched).
Core testing of the GE90
begins in the second quarter of
1992, with the first full engine
test later in the year. •

MBB main rotor

for First Team

MBB is to design and pro-

duce the main rotor for
the Boeing/Sikorsky First Team
entrant in the US Army's Light
Helicopter (LH) competition.
First Team says that MBB was
invited to join because it would
otherwise have had to duplicate
the West German company's
development work on bear-
ingless main rotors.
Data provided by MBB is in-
cluded in the First Team pro-
posal which has now been sub-
mitted, along with the compet-
ing SuperTeam offer, to the
Army. The MBB unit would be
similar to the system in the
BO. 108 which has been flying
for two years.
First Team explains that the
BO. 108 BMR has a 9.5% equiva-
lent-hinge offset, similar to that
of its proposed LH, giving it
high agility, crisp response and
high control levels.
It says: "MBB's participa-
tion...reduces development risk
and cost, may lead to interna-
tional applications of LH design
elements and could make avail-
able MBB's extensive experience
in other helicopter technologies,
including design and fabrication
of composite components and
structures".

MBB says: "All the talking
about a two-way street seems to
be finally happening. This is the
first time that a US combat

Buckley debates production options

helicopter could be using Euro-
pean technology."
Sikorsky says that it has de-
termined the percentage share
of the programme that MBB is
gaining but is not revealing it
until or unless it is selected.
The Army's decision is now set
for February next year.
US defence secretary .Dick
Cheney's reduction of the
planned LH purchase to 1,292
means that First Team at least
would now definitely build the
helicopter on a single produc-
tion line.
Sikorsky president Gene
Buckley says: "The prototypes
will be built at Sikorsky. There
are discussions under way as to
whether the production phase
will be at Sikorsky or at Boeing.
"The first phase of the pro-
gramme will have single lines
split between Boeing and
Sikorsky and in production we
would offer a single set of lines
but with options depending
on what the governmen t
wants to."

Buckley says different areas of
the aircraft would be assembled
at different plants but with a
single final assembly line. D

AIMING FOR AMERICA

Emphasising its bid for the US Joint Primary Air Trainer System
QPATS) requirement, Agusta showed its S.211 at Farnborough in US
training colours. For the JPATS bid Agusta has teamed with Grumman.
Another candidate unveiled at the show was Romania's IAR.99 Soim,
teamed with Jaffe Aircraft to bid for the 600-aircraft requirement.

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