HEADLINES

,17 future,

twinjets

filling the fOO- to 240-seat mar-
ket now covered by the 737 and
757. Few details have been re-
vealed but it is known that it
looks at single-aisle, low-wing-
configuration powered by ad-
vanced ducted-propulsor pow-
erplants. "Twin-aisle develop-
ments cannot be economically
justified," says Baseler. "Our
studies show this market is
driven by schedules. It's not
what you fly, it's when."
Fresh impetus for Boeing's
look at the future of the 737 has
come from "changing market
conditions" which have forced
the company to cut production
by a third to 14 a month from
October 1992. Boeing's Renton
division intends to deliver 223
737s in 1992 and Renton's vice-

CFM International (CFMI)
and International Aero Engines
(IAE) are working closely with
Boeing on the study. CFMI,
which powers the 737 family
exclusively, is anxious to hold
on to its lead.

CFMI market development
manager Richard Schaffer says:
"The CFM56-3X is a generic
term we use as we work with
Boeing for an improved aircraft
if Boeing decides to go ahead
with it." The engine will be
targeted at the 81-104kN
(18,000-23,5001b) thrust range
and "...will have a solid 10%
growth margin in thrust."
(Flight International, 20-26
November, 1991)." "We are
also having ongoing discus-

sions with Boeing on a whole
potpourri of engine types for a
brand-new family of aircraft.
These are more exotic types
like propfans and ducted
props," he adds.
IAE says it is in "...regular
discussions with Boeing on ap-
plying the V2500 on their 737
derivative products. We are
packaging together a group of
responses one of which is an
89-97kN-thrust variant with a
reduced fan diameter for a
block change 737. For the pos-
sible future family we are offer-
ing the V2500 range."
IAE adds: "We are looking at
it on a business case with
Boeing in which we share mar-
ket studies." •

president and general manager,
Ron Woodard says: "We remain
optimistic about demand for the
737 over the long term. Even at
the 14-a-month rate, the 737
twinjet has the highest produc-
tion rate of any commercial jet."
The company had intended to
cut the rate from 21 to 17 a
month. The order backlog for
the type stands at 745. D

Boeing considers how to bridge the 737 technology gap

US industry pleas

for policy change
U

S industry leaders are urg-
ing the Department of De-
fense (DoD) to change its new
policy of prototyping weapons
but not putting them into pro-
duction. They advocate low-rate
production as an alternative.
Electronics Industry Associa-
tion president Peter McCloskey,
testifying to Congress, warns
that the defence industrial base,
once converted to commercial
technology, might not be able to
reconstitute its weapons-produc-
tion workforce in time to meet
a military threat. Aerospace In-
dustries Association president
Don Fuqua says that low-rate
production of new weapons
would allow the maintenance of
a cadre of skilled professionals
around which a surge capability
could be built. D

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ANTI-TANK PLANS
UK Defence Procurement Minis-
ter Alan Clark is expected to
receive the results of a review of
plans to buy two major anti-tank
weapons in the next few days.
The Ministry of Defence will
have to choose between the Brit-
ish Army's multi-launch rocket
system (MLRS) updated with a
terminally guided munition and
the Royal Air Forces recently
rewritten Staff Requirement
(Air) 1238 air-launched anti-
armour weapon.

Turkey revises its helicopter needs T

he Turkish Government is
asking bidders for the na-
tion's lucrative utility helicopter
contract to resubmit their offers.
The five bidders had expected
one contractor to be invited to
further negotiations, following
the election of new prime minis-
ter Suleyman Demirel in Novem-
ber 1991.

A US industry source says the
Government now wants options
involving the procurement of

completed machines followed by
co-production.
Previously, the contract,
worth some $1.5 billion initially,
envisaged only co-produced air-
craft. It is not certain why there
is a new request but it could
stem from the heightened -ten-
sion in the area since negotia-
tions and flight tests began.
Aerospatiale's Super Puma and
Sikorsky's Black Hawk are seen
as the leading candidates. •

French deliver

UK ASRAAM ace

BY SIMON ELLIOTT '

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he French Government is
set to fund 20% of the
development costs of the
Matra/GEC Marconi MI-
CASRAAM short-range air-to-
air missile if it is selected for
the UK Ministry of Defence's
(MoD's) advanced short range
air-to-air missile (ASRAAM)
requirement.
The French defence minis-
try has expressed interest in
MICASRAAM for what offi-
cials describe as certain spe-
cific missions for the French
air force. Officials in Paris say
that a UK Government deci-
sion in favour of MI-
CASRAAM would most likely
see the French air force follow
suit — providing up to 20%
of the development. France is
already buying the medium-
range Matra Mica.
Matra/GEC are bidding
their missile for the UK's
ASRAAM requirement in
competition with British Aer-
ospace/ Hughes with a system
also designated ASRAAM, and
Germany's BGT with a Side-
winder variant. Best and final
offers were submitted by 31
January.
Potential French funding of
some MICASRAAM develop-
ment costs could have a pro-
nounced effect on the UK
competition.
If selected for the UK MoD,
MICASRAAM would be built
by the UK companies' new
missile division, expected to
be called GEC Marconi Dy-
namics (Flight International,
5-11 February).
The announcement of the
winning contractor, is ex-
pected by the end of March.
Meanwhile, BAe Dynamics
has highlighted that, if the
ASRAAM decision goes in fa-
vour of its competitors, the
ability of the company to bid
for major contracts would be
damaged. Dynamics added
emphasis to its problems on
6 February by announcing
that the division is to lose 450
jobs by May. •

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