

# Lockheed to offer UAE delta-wing F-16

LOCKHEED IS preparing to supply data to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on an extended-range, delta-wing, F-16U. The Arab nation has a requirement for some 80 long-range strike aircraft and the F-16U is being offered in a competition which includes the McDonnell Douglas F-15E and Sukhoi Su-30MK.

Data on the proposed F-16U will be presented in October, Lockheed says, and a decision is expected "in the next six months". The aircraft represents a "bigger change" than the extended-range F-16ES offered unsuccessfully to Israel against the F-15E, the company admits. The UAE requirement calls for a greater payload/range capability than even the F-16ES, Lockheed says.

The F-16ES was basically a two-seat F-16D with overwing conformal fuel tanks. The two-seat F-16U is likely to have a stretched fuselage, delta wing and internally mounted infra-red navigation and targeting sensors. Lockheed confirms that the UAE's initial interest was in the arrow-wing F-16XL, but the company says that it has devel-

oped an improved delta-wing planform in the 15 years since the F-16XL was flown.

Lockheed is offering customers the basic single-seat F-16C at a firm price of \$20 million and says that its lower price compared with the \$50 million F-15E will enable the company to develop the F-16U and still produce a cheaper aircraft.

The UAE requirement is included in the potential market for between 500 and 800 additional F-16s identified by Lockheed. The company has a firm-order backlog of 550 aircraft and sees the potential for sales of 50-80 more in Europe, 150-270 in Latin America, 200-350 in the Middle East and 170-190 in the Far East.

In Europe, Norway is conducting a long-range study into replacing its Northrop F-5s with additional F-16s, Lockheed says. Approval for sales to South America will "...need effort with the US State Department, but we believe it will happen", it says.

■ Lockheed has completed a year-long study into integration of the Matra MICA medium-range missile on to the F-16. The programme will proceed if there is sufficient customer interest. □



Volga-Dnepr's An-124s may be flown with Roll-Royce engines

## R-R may re-engine Ruslan

RUSSIAN CARGO airline Volga-Dnepr approached Rolls-Royce at the show with a proposal to re-engine the Antonov An-124 Ruslan transport aircraft with RB.211-524G turbofans. The cargo airline has involved Antonov in discussions and hopes to generate interest in a feasibility study.

Volga-Dnepr operates six civil-certificated An-124-100s on outsize-cargo charter services and is increasingly concerned with the low overhaul life and high fuel consumption of the aircraft's four Progress D-18T turboprops. Boroscope inspections are required every 300h, the airline says.

Volga-Dnepr is operating its aircraft at less than the maximum payload to preserve their fatigue life and expects to keep the An-124s in service until 2010-15, based on the current utilisation of

about 1,000h a year per aircraft. The RB.211 was selected as a re-engineing candidate because of earlier studies performed by Antonov and Rolls-Royce.

Airline president Alexei Isaikin would like re-engined An-124s in service within 18 months, but this prospect seems unrealistic. No thought has been given yet to how the project would be financed, although Volga-Dnepr is proposing that An-124s operated by Antonov and Air Foyle be re-engined, along with two aircraft belonging to the Russian Presidential flight and now used for commercial services.

This would mean re-engineing 12 to 15 aircraft, which would be more economically feasible, the airline says. Re-engineing is expected to cost around \$30 million per aircraft, Volga-Dnepr estimates. □

### NEWS IN BRIEF

■ **BOMBARDIER SUPPORT**  
Shorts Support Services division is setting up a logistic-support operation at Bournemouth airport to support parent-company Bombardier's civil and military aircraft in Europe. It has a contract from Canadair Regional Jet operator Air Littoral and will eventually maintain Learjet, Canadair and de Havilland aircraft.

■ **AEROSPATIALE CAPSULE**  
Aerospatiale is to lead the development of an Atmospheric Re-entry Demonstrator spacecraft for the European Space Agency.

## Bell plans European tour with Griffon

BELL HELICOPTER Textron is to tour four European nations immediately following the show with the CH-146 Griffon transport helicopter developed for the Canadian Forces from the commercial Bell 412EP.

The second CH-146 is on dis-

play and this will be demonstrated in Austria, Germany, Portugal and Spain before being returned to Canada.

Civil certification of the CH-146 is imminent and will be followed by Canadian Forces military-airworthiness and tacti-

cal-utility testing at CFB Cold Lake, Alberta.

Bell Helicopter Canada is producing 100 Griffons for the Canadian Forces under a commercial contract which, Bell says, is creating interest among other military operators which are keen to cut costs.

The first CH-146s are scheduled to enter service in March/April 1995.

The Canadian Forces is expecting a major reduction in operating costs over its present Bell UH-1N Twin Hueys because it is adopting commercial maintenance and logistic-support practices, including the extended overhaul-intervals of the civil-certificated 412 when compared with the UH-1. □



After Farnborough, Bell is taking the Griffon to four European countries