



Dash 8 stretch launched

BOMBARDIER HAS launched the stretched de Havilland Canada Dash 8-400 regional turboprop, following an order for 12 aircraft from Great China Airlines of Taiwan. A formal announcement is expected at the show.

The Taiwanese domestic carrier is understood to be one of several launch customers for the 70-seat aircraft, including at least one other Asian airline. The Great China deal alone is thought to be worth \$316 million.

Bombardier has been seeking around 40 orders to launch the

Dash 8-400. The company's board of directors gave the go-ahead in April for the aircraft to be officially marketed. It had previously delayed launching the stretch variant because of poor market demand.

The -400 is a stretched and more powerful development of the earlier Dash 8-100/200/300 series. It will feature a 4.6m-longer fuselage, new forward baggage door, aft cargo door and a strengthened wing/fuselage joint. It will be powered by twin 3,670kW (5,000hp) Pratt & Whitney Canada PW150

turboprop engines, and have a cruising speed of 350kt (650km/h).

The first Dash 8-400 is scheduled to have its maiden flight in the first quarter of 1997, with the aim of achieving airworthiness certification in the final quarter of 1998. The first delivery is expected shortly afterwards.

Great China expects to receive its first Dash 8-400 in 1999. The 12 aircraft will replace seven Dash 8-300s and four smaller Dash 8-100 turboprops. The aircraft will be employed on Great China's 58 domestic routes in Taiwan. □

Pratt & Whitney sets thrust-vectoring-nozzle flight date

PRATT & WHITNEY'S multi-directional thrust-vectoring nozzle is due to be flown on a modified McDonnell Douglas (MDC) F-15 at Edwards AFB, California, in September.

The thrust-vectoring pitch yaw balanced beam nozzle (PYBBN), will be flight tested at NASA Dryden on the modified F100-229-powered F-15 short take-off and landing/manoeuvre technology demonstrator. The tests are part of the joint NASA/US Air Force/MDC/

P&W programme known as ACTIVE (advanced control technology for integrated vehicles).

P&W, which is demonstrating a working PYBBN at the Paris show, is also expected to reveal more details of development work on its fourth-generation nozzle, the spherical convergent flap nozzle. Although it shares the axisymmetric, 360° vectoring capability of the PYBBN, the newer nozzle will be more responsive and have improved thrust-reversing capability. □

First customer close for An-38

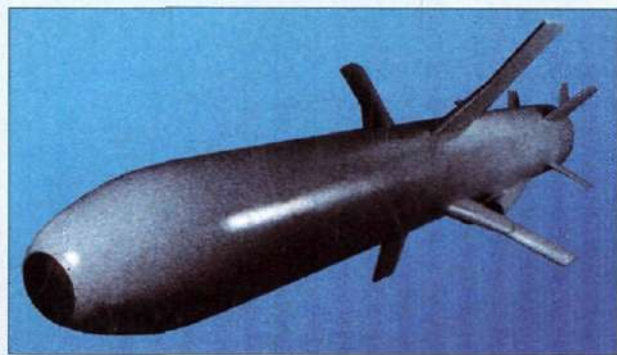
VOSTOK AIRLINES, of Khabarovsk, Russia, is expected to be named as the first customer for the Antonov An-38 regional airliner.

The 27-seat An-38 will be delivered to Vostok in October 1996. The twin-turboprop was developed by Ukraine's Antonov design bureau from the earlier An-28, but includes extensive Western-supplied equipment. It is built by Russia's Novosibirsk Aircraft Production Association, and is the region's first aircraft to be designed and built with Western engines.

Antonov anticipates 600 An-38 sales in airline, cargo and special utility versions. AlliedSignal, which supplies the aircraft's TPE331-14 engines, and which integrates the entire propulsion package, believes that up to \$1.6 billion in revenues could be generated over the life of the twin turboprop.

Antonov says that nearly 90 test flights have been completed, and 112 of the 250 flight hours needed for the projected flight-test programme accumulated. The aircraft is scheduled to be certificated by the Russian authorities in the first quarter of 1996.

Antonov is to give more details at Paris of renewed efforts to speed up US Federal Aviation Administration approval, stalled by difficulties in achieving US-Russian bilateral-certification agreement. □



Transformed Popeye unveiled

RAFAEL HAS UNVEILED ITS radically revised derivative of the Popeye stand-off missile being offered to meet the Royal Air Force's Staff Requirement (Air) 1236 for a conventional stand-off missile. While retaining the Popeye front-end, the airframe has mid-body pop-out wings, a reconfigured tail and a lower rear-body engine intake. See *Paris First News*, P15

The Paris air show opened on 10 June with the promise of providing considerably more of interest than some of its recent predecessors. Several aircraft and helicopter launches are expected to be announced by the end of the show on 18 June — pointing to an industry where confidence is returning. Douglas Barrie, Andrew Chuter, Arie Egozi, Paul Lewis, Ramon Lopez, Guy Norris, David Learmount and Gilbert Sedbon contribute to this report.