

Executive Airlines to fit GPS to ATRs

PUERTO RICO-based American Eagle carrier Executive Airlines is equipping its ten ATR 42s and 72s with global-positioning systems (GPS) to allow cost-saving direct routing.

Executive has selected Universal Avionics' UNS-1M GPS-based navigation-management system for its aircraft.

The airline's decision follows a six-month proof-of-concept programme which demonstrated reductions in flight times, with GPS allowing the carrier to fly more direct routes.

GPS also proved more dependable than Caribbean ground-based navigation aids, which suffer outages in the hurricane season, says vice-president, flight operations, Jose Machado.

The UNS-1M has been interfaced with the ATR 42/72's electronic flight-instrument system, providing the crew with a moving-map display of the route. The unit is also interfaced with the aircraft's autopilot and generates pseudo-instrument-landing-system signals enabling the crew to fly coupled non-precision GPS approaches, Universal says. □

NEWS IN BRIEF

747 ASSESSMENT

China Airlines (CAL) may have to scrap a Boeing 747-200, which crashed while attempting a three-engine take-off from Manila Airport. The 13-year old aircraft, worth an estimated \$40 million, is in a borderline condition. Repair work would require a complete replacement of its lower section 41 and, possibly, lower section 42. Its No 3 Pratt & Whitney JT9D-7Q engine suffered major damage, with fan blades sheared off at the root and fan and cone casing wrecked. The No 2 engine incurred minor foreign-object damage and foam ingestion, and an outboard had been damaged earlier.

Airlines win battle to delay noise controls

KEVIN O'TOOLE/LONDON

THE AIRLINE industry has won a reprieve from the threat of a stringent new set of noise and emission controls, which risked wiping billions of dollars off the value of the world fleet.

The immediate threat receded as the Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP), the environmental arm of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), emerged from ten days of discussions on 15 December with a recommendation to retain existing noise standards.

A definitive decision on changes to existing standards on nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions will also now be postponed until a meeting of the ICAO Council in mid-1996.

The CAEP recommendations received a broad welcome from



Existing standards will be kept

the International Air Transport Association (IATA), which has been lobbying hard against any hurried decisions on costly new environmental rules.

It had calculated that adoption of the most stringent proposals being put in front of CAEP, which would essentially have amounted to a Chapter 4 noise regulation,

could have cost the airline industry as much as \$50 billion (*Flight International*, 30 June, 1995).

IATA argues that current technology could only offer "minimal environmental benefit at disproportionate cost". It adds that the scientific case for the benefits of NOx reduction, in particular, has yet to be proved.

"IATA's policy is that there is no justification on environmental, technical or economic grounds, to increase stringency at this time," says IATA director-general Pierre Jeannot, adding that "...much more work needs to be done".

The Association admits, however, that pressure for tighter noise and emission controls will remain on the agenda, with the threat of regional legislation within Europe or the USA a potentially more damaging possibility. □

Bus company aims to start air service

BUS COMPANY Greyhound Lines of Canada is in "advanced discussions" with a Canadian operator interested in providing low-cost air services under the banner Greyhound Air.

Calgary-based Greyhound says that the planned air service "...would be operated by a Canadian-controlled company unrelated to Greyhound and experienced in providing air services in Canada". Greyhound would not own, lease or operate the aircraft, instead it would provide marketing, scheduling and ticketing and compensate the operator for providing the air service.

The Canadian bus operator says that it plans to provide services linking Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Ottawa, Toronto and Hamilton, with Winnipeg as the hub, at air fares "comparable to Greyhound's bus fares". □

Pilot performance records may be disclosed in USA

THE WORK records of commercial pilots would be open to inspection under proposed US legislation designed to keep sub-standard pilots out of the cockpit.

The new rules would permit the transfer of relevant pilot employment and training records between airlines. When a transfer of information is requested and complied with, both the current or past employer and the prospective employer would be immune from lawsuits related to the information exchange.

At the moment, the US Federal Aviation Administration requires airlines to determine whether an applicant has a pilot licence, and to verify an applicant's employment for the five previous years. The applicant's driving record is also checked for

evidence of alcohol- or drug-related suspensions.

Airlines are not required to confirm flying experience or past performance. The FAA urges full disclosure of pilot records, but it says a number of valid concerns need to be aired before action is taken regarding transfer of pilot records.

The US National Transportation Safety Board has called for a national database for flightdeck crews. It says that the FAA should require all US scheduled airlines and flight-training operations to maintain and provide the FAA with pilot performance and training records. Airlines would check the database to weed out bad pilots.

The aviation agency says that US carriers should bear the database responsibility instead. □