

Alpha plans to expand PC-12 share scheme

THE US OPERATOR of a Pilatus PC-12 fractional-ownership programme plans to expand the scheme to additional locations. Alpha Flying has added a third single-turboprop PC-12 to its two-year-old PlaneSense programme, which is operating in the north-east USA, and a fourth aircraft has been ordered, says Alpha Flying president George Antoniadis.

The Norwood, Maryland-based firm sells one-eighth or one-quarter shares in the PC-12. A quarter-share costs \$727,500 and gives the owner 175 flight hours a year, for \$510/h. Alpha Flying says that it is accumulating 900h/year per aircraft, on trips averaging 900km (490nm) and has achieved 100% availability within the guaranteed 8h, and 70% within 6h. □

Sikorsky adds HUMS

SIKORSKY HAS delivered the first health- and usage-monitoring system (HUMS) for the S-76C+ helicopter following certification by the Norwegian and UK authorities. The HUMS, manufactured by GEC-Marconi, was delivered to Norway's Norsk Helikopter, which operates an S-76C+ on offshore-oil services.

GEC's HUMS, developed for the S-76A+ and S-76C, has been tailored for the Turboméca Arriel 2S1 turboshafts and full-authority digital engine-controls of the S-76C+. New capabilities include trending of automatically acquired power-assurance data.

The HUMS includes a British Aerospace Systems & Equipment solid-state cockpit-voice/flight-data recorder. □

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ BELL 427 FOR HAINAN

Samsung Aerospace has signed a letter of intent to sell three new Samsung-Bell 427 eight-seat helicopters to Hainan Airlines of China. It is also negotiating similar agreements with China Ocean and China Southern's Zhuhai Helicopters for another ten.



General Avia appoints Dutch distributor for F-22 range

ITALY'S GENERAL AVIA has appointed Transal Aero Service of the Netherlands as a distributor for its F-22 range of two-seat single-engine trainers. The company will take delivery of a \$109,000 Textron Lycoming IO-320-D2A-powered F-22B Penguin by the end of this month, with the second aircraft, a \$149,500 F-22C, scheduled for delivery at the end of November.

TAG wins Farnborough lease

KATE SANSFIELD/LONDON

TECHNIQUES d'Avant-Garde (TAG) Group is to convert the UK's Farnborough Aerodrome into a dedicated business-aviation airport following the decision by the UK Ministry of Defence to award the Luxembourg-based holding company a 99-year lease.

The aerodrome, which will continue to be the venue for the biennial Farnborough air show, will become a dedicated business-aviation airport. "We are keen to develop Farnborough as a top quality, state-of-the-art, business-aviation centre," TAG says.

The news has been welcomed by the European Business Aircraft Association and the UK General Aviation Manufacturers and Traders Association (GAMTA),

which have been calling for the UK Government to take a more active role in promoting this increasingly neglected sector of aviation. "It is a vital step to recognising the importance of business aviation to the UK economy," says GAMTA chief executive Graham Forbes.

TAG says that it will start work on the airfield "...once two major steps have been climbed". The company must satisfy UK Civil Aviation Authority licensing requirements and resolve planning and environmental issues set by the local authority. "These two big events are crucial to the way things will pan out at Farnborough," says TAG. "We and the local community will have to agree an appropriate balance between the economy and the preservation of the environment." Consultation is scheduled to begin in April 1998.

TAG will not be drawn on specific plans for the airfield, but admits that the company is looking at the possibility of developing a business aviation terminal and a maintenance hangar. "Farnborough will become a globally renowned business airfield, and it is perfectly situated near to London's Gatwick and Heathrow airports." TAG anticipates that some operators will divert their business to Farnborough, as the two major London airports continue to restrict access to business and general-aviation aircraft.

The company says that British Aerospace subsidiary Farnborough Business Aviation Services will continue to operate the resident business-aviation centre. TAG, which acquired Swiss executive charter operator Aeroleasing in July, is "actively pursuing" a similar acquisition in the USA. □

Night single-engined operations ban gets closer

NIGHT COMMERCIAL operations by single-engined aircraft will be banned in all European Joint Aviation Authorities (JAA) member nations if the Joint Aviation Requirements (JARs) go into force as they are drafted, according to the UK Civil Aviation Authority.

The relevant JARs are not

finalised, however, but are due to become effective from April 1998.

The CAA has just won the final stage in a legal battle initiated to establish whether it had the right to ban such operations in UK airspace by a Norwegian-registered airline (*Flight International*, 25 June-1 July).

Norway, which is a member of

the JAA and the European Civil Aviation Conference, permits such flights, as does France. Meanwhile the CAA has published a letter of intent to make its rules watertight.

A JAR study group, however, is still considering whether single-engine night operations may be allowed in special corridors over sparsely populated areas. □