

**PEOPLE**

++ Canada's **Bombardier Aerospace** has appointed **Robert Gillespie** president of its business aircraft division, and **Steven Ridolfi** president of its regional aircraft division. Both will report to president and chief operating officer **Michael Graff**. ++ **Barrie Mair** has been named executive chairman of **Cranfield Aerospace**, the commercial arm of the UK's Cranfield College of Aeronautics. ++ **Michael Wisbrun** starts work as executive vice-president of **KLM Cargo** on 1 September, succeeding **Jacques Ancher**, who is to retire. ++ **Bell Helicopter** has appointed **Micke McWherter** president and general manager of its recently acquired Tennessee-based subsidiary, **Edwards & Associates**, which specialises in aviation customisation and helicopter completion. ++ **Lamar Durrett** retired as chief executive of **Air Canada** on 31 August after three years in the job. He is succeeded by **Robert Milton**. ++ **TRW** has appointed ex-US Air Force Lt Gen **Patrick Caruana** vice-president and manager of its Space-Based Infrared System Low programme after its joint bid with Raytheon won a \$275 million programme definition contract. ++ **Frontier Airlines** of Denver has named **Steve Warnecke** its new chief financial officer and vice-president. ++ **AirNet Systems**, which runs US express-cargo carrier AirNet Express, has named **Stephen Lister** acting vice-president of operations. ++ **BFGoodrich** has appointed **Kenneth Luczaj** president and general manager of its **Chandler Evans Control Systems**, a supplier of aerospace fuel pumps and fuel control systems. ++ **Edward Mc Nerney** has resigned as president and chief executive of US jet engine components specialist **EDAC Technologies**. Chairman **John DiFrancesco** will stand in until a successor is appointed. ++ Executive jet interiors specialist **ERDA** of Wisconsin has appointed **David Ladd** general manager of its aircraft products division.

# Kamov is key to merger moves

**R**USSIAN rotorcraft specialist Kamov is to form the basis of an integrated helicopter company, with its design bureau combined with production plants at Kumertau and Arsenyev, in accordance with a government directive. The move is likely to mean the demise of Kamov's alliance with VPK MAPO.

The Kumertau factory produces the Kamov Ka-32 multipurpose helicopter, while the Arsenyev plant manufactures the Ka-50 attack helicopter. Suppliers of major airframe components may also join the



*Kamov is to sit side-by-side with suppliers*

new company. Kamov general designer and general director **Sergey Mikheyev** indicates that these could include the Voronezh Mechanical plant, which makes main rotor gearboxes, and the Stupino plant, a producer of rotor bushes.

About 49% of Kamov shares are held by the state, with 51% distributed between employees and company managers.

A new umbrella company will initially be state-owned, but investor attention may be attracted by Kamov's bid, in tandem with Israel Aircraft Industries, to win a \$4 billion contract from Turkey for 145 attack helicopters.

Mikheyev says that the merged company will generally focus on export programmes because "the internal [Russian] market has ceased to exist". □

## Comsat shareholders give thumbs up to merger

**S**HAREHOLDERS in US satellite communications service provider Comsat have approved its proposed merger with Lockheed Martin, removing one barrier to the complex deal. Regulatory approval and legislation are still needed before the merger can go ahead, but the move has been helped by a recent US Senate vote to deregulate the international satellite telecommunications industry.

Legislation would pave the way for the rapid privatisation of Intelsat, in which Comsat is the US stakeholder and largest shareholder,

and would update the country's 1962 Communications Satellite Act to enable the merger with Lockheed Martin to proceed. Intelsat is due to be privatised in the first quarter of 2001.

Comsat is also the largest shareholder in New Skies Satellites, a global system of five satellites spun off from Intelsat as a commercial venture last year. The US company is the largest shareholder in Immarsat, which was privatised fully in April.

Lockheed Martin plans to acquire 49% for cash in the first phase of the merger, subject to US

Federal Communications Commission approval of the company as an "authorised carrier" under the Satellite Act. The acquisition also requires anti-trust approval.

In the second phase of the transaction, Comsat would merge with Lockheed Martin's new Global Telecommunications subsidiary in a stock-swap deal. This would require legislation to remove existing ownership restrictions on Comsat voting stock, and although the Senate's satellite reform legislation would accomplish this, it still has to be approved by the full Congress. □

## Fokker cash will finally flow to ordinary creditors

**T**HE TRUSTEES of bankrupt aircraft manufacturer Fokker expect to make initial payments to ordinary creditors in September – more than nine months later than originally planned – following settlement of a legal dispute with the Dutch tax authorities.

Trustees have also reached agreement with American Airlines and US Airways over large disputed claims, so that payments to acknowledged ordinary creditors will be higher than expected, with most receiving 60% of what they

are owed. A total of DF1860 million (\$415 million) will be paid out.

Large single beneficiaries will include former Fokker parent DaimlerChrysler (DF117 million), US Airways (DF117 million) and Lufthansa CityLine (DF113 million). Banks and other financial institutions that have bought claims from creditors since the bankruptcy will receive DF1337 million between them.

The tax authority, which had demanded DF1560 million, has agreed to limit its claim to a maxi-

mum of DF1140 million, allowing payments to ordinary creditors to proceed. Preferred creditors, entitled to have their claims settled in full, were paid last year.

The trustees warn that Teleflex Control Systems, which recently submitted a \$500 million claim relating to the crash of a TAM Fokker 100 at Sao Paulo in 1996, could lodge an objection to the latest distribution. But they say the product liability insurance of Fokker Aircraft "offers adequate cover" should it be required. □