

WORKSHOP

++ Lufthansa Technik is carrying out post-delivery modifications to 14 **Germania** Boeing 737-700s to bring them up to the latest production standard. The work, which takes five days for each aircraft, is covered by the manufacturer's warranty and involves the replacement of wiring bundles inside the leading edge of the wing between the engine and the fuselage. The German charter carrier was one of the earliest customers for the Next Generation 737 and its first aircraft was the fifth off the production line.

++ Monarch Airlines has contracted **SR Technics** to perform C-checks on a pair of Rolls-Royce Trent 700-powered Airbus A330-200s. The work will be carried out by SR at its Zurich base this month. **++Continental Express** has awarded **Rolls-Royce** a 10-year contract to support 400 AE3007s powering its fleet of Embraer RJ-135/145 regional jets. The contract covers services and spare engines worth £450 million (\$710 million). **++ Eaton** has been awarded a \$1 million, two-year contract by the **US Federal Aviation Administration** and the **US National Transportation Safety Board** to provide technology to better protect electrical systems aboard US civil and military aircraft. The award follows the September 1998 crash of a Swissair MD-11 near Halifax, Nova Scotia, in which an electrical fire is suspected. **++ FLS Aerospace** has been contracted by **Virgin Express** to undertake all overhaul requirements (C and D checks) on its 22 Boeing 737s. FLS has also secured a two-year contract from **Martinair** for C and D checks on the airline's six Boeing 767-300ERs. Both contracts will be undertaken at FLS' Dublin, Ireland, facility. Meanwhile **Ryanair** has signed a long-term, €32 million (\$30.7 million) contract, which will run until the end of 2004 and cover heavy maintenance of its Boeing 737-200/800s. The deal is an extension of Ryanair's initial five-year contract and, over the life of the new contract, Ryanair's 737 fleet will double to 46 aircraft.

Southern Winds warms up Aerolineas with codeshare

GUY NORRIS/CORDOBA

SOUTHERN WINDS, a fast-growing Argentine regional based in Cordoba, is to begin its first codesharing flights with Aerolineas Argentinas this month as part of plans to expand its fleet to include up to 18 Bombardier Canadair Regional Jets (CRJs).

Christian Maggio, general manager of the four-year-old carrier, says: "The market is changing fast with the restructuring of Aerolineas. It wants Southern Winds to fly certain routes that are not good for it. We are going to begin working with Aerolineas under a codeshare and should be flying under that arrangement by the end of March."

The airline plans to work more closely with international carriers to connect with flights to the international airport at Buenos Aires.

The new connections could spur growth of the

fleet, which includes six 50-seat CRJs and six Bombardier Dash 8-200 turboprops. "As CRJs are difficult to get, we will still consider acquiring more Dash 8s if we need to grow faster. We are studying the [70-seat] Q400, for example," he says. The potential fleet requirement for the 50-seat CRJ is 18, depending on the success of the Aerolineas codesharing arrange-

ment and other potential ventures.

Southern Winds is also examining the 70-seat CRJ700 and stretched 90-seat 900. "We are interested in having the 70-seater, particularly as it has perfect performance for quite a few of our routes," he adds. New services, typical of the long thin sectors in the airline's network, will include Catamarca to La Roca and Jujury

to Viedma, as well as new sectors to Formosa and Santiago in Chile. "We also have other new routes to Brazil, Chile and Uruguay," says Maggio.

With the new routes, Southern Winds will operate almost 100 flights a day to more than 20 destinations from its main hubs at Buenos Aires and Cordoba. Depending on the success of these newer routes, plus the trunk services, Maggio believes that the potential CRJ fleet (including stretched models) could eventually reach "up to 30, at least". □



Bombardier products will power Southern's expansion

African cargo flights are world's 'most dangerous'

AD HOC CARGO operation in Africa is the most dangerous commercial aviation activity in the world, according to a report by the Netherlands National Aerospace Laboratory (NLR).

The study revealed a rate of 17 hull losses and/or fatal accidents per million flights in Africa. This, says the NLR, is "dramatically unsafe", at seven times the world average rate for scheduled passenger operations.

In a detailed study of cargo flights of all kinds, the NLR concludes that the accident rate in the cargo operations of major carriers

is three times that for their passenger operations, and that the worst regions for freight operator safety, apart from Africa, are South America and Asia, with accident rates per million flights, respectively, of 9.02 and 6.16.

When the NLR examined the causes of freighter accidents they almost precisely followed the causal distribution for passenger operations. The difference is not in the kind of accidents that freighters have, the NLR reported, it is that they have them more often. The NLR notes that half of all cargo flights are at night. □

FANS-A datalink tested on A340-300

AIRBUS Industrie's A340-300 testbed has demonstrated datalink communications between pilot and air traffic controllers as part of round-the-world trials of Airbus' FANS-A (future air navigation system) avionics (*Flight International*, 8-14 September, 1999).

The aircraft features an air traffic services unit manufactured by Aerospatiale Matra Aerospace Airbus, Smiths Industries' digital control and display unit and a Honeywell flight management system. Datalink communications were conducted using satellite communications and high-frequency radio on the Toulouse-Johannesburg-Sydney-Papeete-Los Angeles-Toulouse flight. □