

time 03—the first production aircraft—joined the programme it would be 120 hours. Production aircraft, he said, would be "second generation" from the maintenance standpoint because of experience from the use of genuine prototypes.

BAC was meeting its reliability aims by, among other things, developing "on-condition" maintenance, by making the lower-life equipment more accessible and by pursuing collaboration with customer airlines. BAC's reliability and maintainability (R&M) group had become active at an early stage in development of Concorde, and British and French airworthiness authorities and the appropriate elements of the airlines' SST committees were already involved.

Successive maintenance design studies had been carried out to assess costs and to highlight potential trouble, said Mr Wearen. Two studies had been made based on data from full-scale mock-ups, component manufacturers' test rigs, and current airline experience on existing fleets (suitably factored for SST operations). A third study was under way which would benefit from the results now available from the flight test programme.

Examples of improvements arising from the R&M programme included the variable-geometry engine intake system which should, said Mr Wearen, result in "a large reduction in equipment and complexity." Production Concorde would have double-acting auxiliary inlet/dump doors replaced by single-acting devices with free-floating flaps for auxiliary inlet air. Complex actuators would be replaced by simple hydraulic jacks. Hinge-change locks, actuators and connecting mechanisms, aft spill-flaps and associated pneumatic jacks would also be removed.

REVIEW FOR THAT DISCOUNT

THE US Civil Aeronautics Board is to review an initial decision by its examiner that the elimination of the 5 per cent round-trip discount on IATA fares is against the public interest. A review of the same examiner's finding in favour of the IATA contract-bulk inclusive-tour fares is also to be conducted by the board. Elimination of the round-trip discount, agreed at the IATA traffic conference in Dallas last January, in effect raises the cost of a return journey to equal the sum of the two single fares (see *Flight* last week, page 979).

Taking this action off its own bat, the CAB points out that a review would probably have been sought in any event, both by the IATA-member airlines on the issue of the discount elimination, and by the supplemental carriers because of the approval given by the examiner to CBIT. The CAB says that it is acting without waiting for these parties to file petitions for review because of the urgency and importance of the case.

FOULNESS HAS ATC ADVANTAGES

FOULNESS has a marginal but significant advantage relating to air traffic control over the other three sites being considered for London's third airport. This conclusion has emerged from the report of General Precision Systems, submitted to the Roskill Commission, who published their own report last week.

In the report evaluating the timing, need and siting of the airport there apparently emerged no significant difference in the complexity of the control task in any of the route structures associated with the four sites—Foulness, Nuthamstead, Cublington and Thurleigh. These route structures, prepared by the National Air Traffic Control Service, were checked against a traffic sample prepared by the commission's team and were considered representative of the demands on airspace at the turn of the century.

Foulness showed significantly well in terms of air traffic control delays at the airports, and of the sites it was the only one compatible with the continuing use of Luton as a major airport. Certain small advantages in terms of aircraft route mileage and flying times also showed up in favour of Foulness.

The commission, under the chairmanship of Mr Justice Roskill, has stressed that despite the conclusions reached by its research team and consultants it would retain an open mind and would not take any final decision until all evidence had been heard, and until the proposed public hearing on the siting of the airport had taken place in April.

The air traffic consultants were asked under a secondary brief to study the operational problems which would result

in the unlikely event of the third airport not coming to fruition. Gatwick would in this case be given a second runway, and Luton would be expanded. They found that "a feasible route structure could be designed, capable of handling a traffic sample prepared by the commission's research team, which contains sustained high air transport movement rates at Heathrow, Gatwick and Luton."

NOW A -30 HERCULES

A GO-AHEAD has been given for the production of a new commercial version of the Hercules. Known as the L-100-30, it will have 15 per cent more volume than present -20s, giving a claimed 7 per cent reduction in ton-mile costs. The cargo compartment will be 7ft 1in, 2.16m longer than that of the -20, and 15ft 5in, 4.7m, longer than that of the original Hercules. Maximum payload should be 50,000lb, 22,680kg. Up to seven pallets (one more than in the present aircraft) may be accommodated within the hold, with another on the ramp. Available volume for carrying palletised cargo will be 4,445 cu ft, 126m³, an increase of almost 600 cu ft, 17m³. Two 8ft x 8ft, 2.4m x 2.4m, containers of 20ft, 6.1m, length may be carried, together with one unit 10ft, 3m, long. Powerplants, range and cruising speeds will remain the same as those of the -20.

Saturn Airways, the US supplemental, has placed the first order for three of the -30s (worth £5.4 million) to be delivered in mid-1970, and will use them for carrying Rolls-Royce RB.211s for the Lockheed TriStar. This £4 million contract covers the transport of 1,050 engines, three at a time, from Belfast, where Shorts fit them into their pods, to Palmdale, California. Saturn received the contract following the cancellation of an earlier one with Pacific Western, who were unable to obtain the necessary British and American Government approval.

The first of three BAC One-Eleven 400s for Cambrian Airways has been delivered and will be used for crew training in Seville in the near future. The aircraft, traded in by Court for new series 500s, have been refurbished by BAC

