DEFENCE

Italians

fly EAP
tests
WARTON

Two Aeritalia pilots have
become the first non-Britons
to fly British Aerospace's
EAP (Experimental' Aircraft
Programme) technology
demonstrator from BAe's
Warton airfield in Northern
England.
Aeritalia's chief test pilot,
Ed Nappi, and test pilot
Napoleone Bragagnolo each
flew two working sorties as
part of EAP's continuing
flight test programme. Ed
Nappi took the first two
flights, during which the EAP
reached 36,000ft and Mach
1 • 3, and was extremely enthu-
siastic about the aircraft. "I'm
very impressed," he said, "the
aircraft is finished to a very
high standard, which is
unusual for a one-off experi-
mental aircraft. The cockpit,
with its multicoloured dis-
plays, is excellent, and gives
a feeling of great confid-
ence.

"I used the first ten minutes
of the flight to familiarise
myself with the aircraft, and
from then on started to work
on the specified test, looking
at both aircraft and engine
handling in order to extend
the flight envelope. This was
not just a joy ride, and
I am very pleased to have
contributed to this pro-
gramme."
Napoleone Bragagnolo
echoed Ed Nappi's enthusi-
asm: "Very good flying quali-
ties for an aircraft at this
stage of development, and
very easy to fly. At low speed
it is very precise in its
handling. I was able to place it
on the runway exactly where I
wanted it."

Aeritalia played a major
role in EAP, sharing the
design and manufacturing
development work on the
carbonfibre cobonded wing,
and providing some of the
advanced avionics in EAP.
Both Aeritalia and British
Aerospace will use the lessons
learned from these and other
advanced technologies on
EAP in development of the
quadrinational European
Fighter Aircraft.

The smile that says it all—Aeritalia's Ed Nappi after his first flight in the EAP demonstrator

New Zealand upgrades Skyhawks
WELLINGTON

In spite of the increased pres-
sures on the New Zealand
defence budget following the
country's dismissal from the
Anzus pact, the NZ$140
million programme to
modernise the Air Force's
McDonnell Douglas A-4
Skyhawks is to go ahead.
However, New Zealand's
exclusion from Anzus has
resulted in procurement
programmes being deferred,
and in the operational effec-
tiveness of New Zealand's
armed services being called
into question.
The 22 A-4 Skyhawks in
service with the Royal New
Zealand Air Force will be
fitted with the Lear Siegler
Navigation and Attack
System (NAS). Lear Siegler
will be acting as the integrat-
ing contractor for the NAS
avionics suite, which com-
prises integrated weapons
delivery, stores management,
radar altimeter, inertial navi-
gation system, communi-
cations & navigation radios,
and sensors and advanced
weapons. The programme,
which is scheduled for
completion in May 1989, calls
for Lear Siegler to be
responsible for the develop-

ment, integration, installation
design, flight testing, and
production installation.
The development of the
systems requirements specifi-
cation is being carried out
with a RNZAF team at Lear
Siegler's Grand Rapids facil-
ity in Michigan. The avionics
installation design is being
conducted at RNZAF Wood-
bourne with engineers from
Lear Siegler, the RNZAF, and
selected New Zealand com-
panies dismantling an A-4
Skyhawk. By September 1987
this aircraft will have been re-
equipped and rewired ready to
act as a prototype and to
provide the experience neces-
sary to modernise the other
aircraft.

Although the A-4 Skyhawk
update will proceed as
planned and the AIM-9 Side-
winder missile purchase has
already been finalised, the
defence budget is going to be
squeezed in other areas
following the Anzus split. The
proposed replacement of the
RNZAF's ageing Bell 47 Sioux
helicopters has now been
deferred until after the com-
pletion of the defence review
and the 1987-88 financial
year.
Contenders for the replace-
ment programme include the

Aerospatiale Gazelle, MBB
BO.105, AS.350 Squirrel, Bell
Jet Ranger, LongRanger and
406 Combat Scout, McDon-
nell Douglas 530 MG, and the
Agusta A. 109.
However, it is in the areas
of operational effectiveness,
training, and the provision of
spares that the effects of leav-
ing Anzus are beginning to be
felt. The United States has
excluded New Zealand from
its supply of intelligence
information. The maritime
defence commander no longer
has a complete picture of ship
movements within his area of
responsibility, and the loss of
exercise experience involving
up-to-date tactics for land
forces, fighter/attack, and
tactical transport operations
is also a major concern to the
Army and the Air Force.
In the field of training,
advanced courses in aviation,
telecommunications, logistics,
and administration held in
the USA are no longer avail-
able to New Zealand person-
nel. Alternative courses in
Australia and the UK do not
always meet the needs of New
Zealand.
The time taken to obtain
spares and other logistic
support from the USA has
also increased significantly.

10 FLIGHT INTERNATIONAL, 6 December 1986