Boeing chooses UDF for 7J7

SEATTLE

The Boeing 7J7 is to be powered by the General Electric Unducted Fan (UDF). The decision was made after Boeing had completed what it refers to as one of its most exhaustive specific technical comparisons ever between the UDF and International Aero Engine's SuperFan (Flight, January 31, page 2).

Overall the UDF offered better weight, fuel efficiency, maintainability, and lower noise, Boeing says. The postponed launch of the SuperFan engine did not play a part in the study, but "obviously reinforces our decision," according to James Johnson, 7J7 programme vice-president. The UDF, a 25,000lb thrust engine, will give a 9 per cent saving in fuel over a 500 n.m. trip compared with the SuperFan, he says.

The design of the 7J7 is now established with the two counter-rotating fans on the aft fuselage. The 150-seat aircraft, if launched, will have twin aisle six-abreast seating (2-2-2) in a two-class configuration, but can rapidly be rearranged to suit airline requirements, Boeing says. The manufacturer hopes to have solid orders by the end of this year and see the airliner into service by 1992.

767 completes altitude tests

A 767-200 destined for Brazilian carrier Varig takes off from La Paz, Bolivia, during high altitude tests. At 13,350ft La Paz is the second highest airport in the world, beaten only by Lhasa in Tibet at 14,300ft.

CAI in $1.2 billion 767 deal

SEATTLE

Canadian Airlines International (CAI), Canada's newest airline, has ordered six Boeing 767-300ERs with options on eight more. The total contract value is worth over $1.2 billion including spares and training.

The airline was formed last month with the merger of Pacific Western Airlines and Canadian Pacific Airlines, and is to receive the first of the new 5,723 n.m. range aircraft in April 1988. They will have a three-class 210-seat layout and will be powered by General Electric CF6-80C2-B6 engines.

US mergers proceed unchecked

WASHINGTON D.C.

A recent cartoon shows an air traveller looking at an electronic display board with three video screens: Arrivals, Departures, and Mergers.

At a recent Congressional hearing into airline deregulation problems, Senator Howard M. Metzenbaum said that nine airlines now control 94 per cent of the airline market in the USA.

Sen Metzenbaum, chairman of the Senate antitrust subcommittee, said that since 1985 Muse, Frontier, People Express, Republic, Ozark, Western, Continental, Eastern, New York Air, PSA, and now Piedmont, have been acquired by other airlines.

"The mergers have proceeded at a breakneck pace with barely a whimper being uttered by the Department of Transportation," he said.

The so-called "father of deregulation", Alfred Kahn, told Sen Metzenbaum's sub-committee that the success of deregulation depends on vigorous enforcement of the anti-trust and consumer protection laws.

Delays in air travel, over-scheduling, and other complaints heard from the travelling public are not the fault of the airlines, Kahn said.

"They are behaving exactly the way we want and expect them to behave under the pressure of competition—trying to give the public what it wants. The failure instead lies with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the airports: they are not pricing the scarce slots and air channels correctly."

CFM matches SuperFan performance

TOULOUSE

CFM International has signed a contract with Airbus to supply CFM56-5S3 engines for the A340 which will meet the payload/range performance of the delayed SuperFan powerplant.

The General Electric/Snecma CFM56 was always an option for the A340-200, but did not have the thrust to power the larger -300. Now that it has been uprated to 30,600lb it gives the 262-seat A340-200 a range of 7,650 n.m. and the 295-seat A340-300 a range of 6,850 n.m., a negligible 150 n.m. short of that offered by International Aero Engines with its proposed 30,000lb thrust SuperFan.

The new CFM engine is lighter than the V.2500 SuperFan, and takes several tonnes off the weight of the aircraft. This, combined with a 4 per cent improvement on fuel burn over the earlier CFM version, has brought it in line with Airbus' direct operating cost criteria. It is still less fuel efficient than SuperFan but, as a derivative engine, will have a lower ownership cost.

The 56-5S3 is "very close to what we were being offered by IAE", Airbus says. The design improvements achieved on the engine will also enhance the performance of the A320 which is powered by the CFM56-5 or IAE's V.2500.

· General Electric has agreed to provide an improved version of the CF6-80C2 for the A330, with 64,000lb thrust and a 3 per cent lower fuel consumption.

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