NEWS IN BRIEF

• MD-lls for American?
American Airlines is reportedly
close to ordering up to 50
McDonnell Douglas MD-lls.
American is said to prefer
the trijet to 'Boeing's 747
because it is available earlier.
Aircraft ordered by British
Caledonian and inherited by
British Airways are available
for lease.

• Voice recorder readable
The cockpit voice recorder
recovered from the South Afri-
can Airways Boeing 747 Combi
(Flight, January 21) is readable,
says the South African Direc-
torate of Civil Aviation. Based
on information derived from the
recorder, the Directorate wants
to recover the cargo bay floor.
The wreckage is at a depth of
14,500ft, 134 n.m. north-east of
Mauritius. A large section,
together with cargo door, has
been located. Cargo items

showing signs of fire or heat
damage are also being sought.

• GE chooses Delta II
GE American Communications
has chosen a McDonnell
Douglas Delta II booster to
launch its Satcom C-5 commer-
cial communications satellite.
MDC's eighth commercial con-
tract for Delta, the satellite will
be launched in mid-1991 to
replace Satcom V.

• CAA tightens pilot rales
British airlines face further
delays this summer as the
UK Civil Aviation Authority
tightens its rules on pilot
duty hours. The Authority
feels that airlines took
liberties with the existing
rules during the 1988
summer peak. Although the
new rules do not change the
existing basic crew duty
maxima of lOOhr a month
and 900hr a year (fixed-wing),
and 30hr a week (helicopters),

airlines will have to relax
their rostering or have
more crews on standby to
avoid delays.

D RAF looks to women
The Royal Air Force is consid-
ering recruiting women as
pilots and navigators. The
Service, which has female
C-130 air loadmasters and E-3
fighter controllers, is looking
at broadening the role of
women. Current policy bars
women from being used in
combat roles, but the RAF is
facing an aircrew shortage as
the UK's declining birthrate
begins to bite.

• Portugal receives Epsilon
The Portugese Air Force has
received the first of 18 Aero-
spatiale TB.30 Epsilon trainers.
Although the first aircraft was
built by Aerospatiale, final
assembly and testing of the
remaining 17 will be completed
in Portugal.

• IHI joins RB.211
Rolls-Royce has signed a risk-
and-revenue-sharing agreement
with Ishikawajima-Harima
Heavy Industries (IHI), under
which the Japanese company
will take a 5 per cent share in
the RB.211-524 family of large
turbofans. Kawasaki Heavy
Industries already has a 4 per
cent stake in the engine, includ-
ing the latest, and largest,
RB.211-524L.

D Valsan near 727 coup
A major customer for Valsan's
noise-reducing Boeing 727 re-
engining programme may
soon be announced. Flight
understands that Federal
Express may soon place an
order with Valsan to re-engine
up to 100 727s with new Pratt &
Whitney JT8D-217s. Valsan
will not confirm or deny the
report. The re-engining
company now has 32 orders
and 91 options for its conver-
sion.

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