renewal plans

As well as the Fokker 100s, American has just placed firm orders with Boeing for an additional 25 757-200s and ten 767-300ERs. These Boeing orders, which are part of a flexible 757/767 deal involving firm orders for 85 and options on a further 85, "complete the task of preparing American for the 1990s". Crandall explains that "The net effect of all aircraft coming to us is to increase our fleet size despite the dispatch of the 727s.

Rolls-Royce shares Fokker's delight at American Airlines' recent choices because, not only are the Fokker 100s Tay-powered, but RB.211-535E4-Bs power the 757s.

British Aerospace and Airbus Industrie are the visible losers. "The first six Fokker 100s will replace our Bae 146s," Crandall tells Flight. His aversion to the 146 is well known. He did not order the six he operates, but acquired them with AirCal and continues to operate them, he says, "only because of Orange County noise requirements.

"It is an utterly unsatisfactory aircraft", insists Crandall mercilessly, claiming that "it costs us more for maintenance than a [DC-9-80 Super 80]." Beyond the 150 Fokker 100s which American has agreed on, Crandall says that he foresees potential applications in his fleet for up to 200 of the type.

Crandall sees American's end-1988 fleet of 468 aircraft expanding to about 642 by the end of 1994, despite the disposal of about 160 727s.

What does Crandall think about the state of the market for the 727s? "We are a novice in that marketplace. We have to go out there and find out. However, we believe there is a market."

The request for the A320 stretch nears

by Gilbert Sedbon
in Toulouse

Within the next few weeks, Airbus Industrie is expected to launch development of a stretched, 185-seat A320 to enter commercial service in 1994.

Henri Marte, chairman and chief executive officer of Airbus partner Aérospatiale, admits there are still "a few technical and financial problems" to settle, but says that key airlines have shown interest and there is a definite market.

The partners will need to raise "a few hundred million dollars" from their own funds or the capital market to develop the aircraft, says Marte. Airbus sees a market of up to 450 stretched A320s, in addition to 800 more of the basic 150-seat A320.

The proposed A320 stretch has a range of around 2,500 n.m., 500 n.m. less than that of the current A320-200, and a maximum take-off weight of 178,600lb, up from 162,000lb. Two fuselage plugs with enlarged emergency exits will be inserted forward (162in) and aft (147in) of the aircraft's strengthened wing.

Other changes include the introduction of double-slotted flaps, the adoption of stronger main undercarriage, and an upgrading of the engines (CFM International CFM56-5 and International Aero Engines V2500) by 10 per cent, to around 28,000lb thrust.

Argentina hopes to buy Israeli-built Kfir fighters in a deal which includes the sale of Argentine-built Pampa jet trainers to Israel. The proposed deal will be discussed when Argentina's defence minister visits Israel in a few weeks time.

The Kfirs would have to be re-engined to avoid a US veto on their sale, however, as the aircraft are presently powered by General Electric 179 turbojets. This could prove a major obstacle to any sale, say Israeli sources.

Israel Aircraft Industries has evaluated the possibility of re-engining the Kfir with the French Snecma Atar 9K50, which powers the Mirage F-1 and 50. Israel also worked closely with South Africa on the conversion of Mirage IIIIs to Kfir standard, but retaining the Atar engine.

The sale of Kfirs to Argentina could solve a problem created in 1983, when the USA vetoed the sale of 12 ex-Israeli McDonnell Douglas A-4 Skyhawks to the South American country. The US embargo was imposed at the request of the UK Government, following the 1988 Falklands War with Argentina.

Israel has already received nearly $100 million for the Skyhawks, which are still cocooned (with some 20 others) at IAF's Ben Gurion factory. The sale of Argentina's FAMA IA.63 Pampa trainer to Israel to replace Air Force Fouga CM.170 Magisters is a separate deal, and less likely than a Kfir sale to Argentina, according to Israeli sources.

GPA buys Dash 8s

GPA Jetprop, a partnership between GPA Group and PWA, has announced a record order for 38 Boeing de Havilland Canada Dash 8-300 turboprop regional airliners.

The $425 million order ensures GPA's position as one of the largest leasing companies for turboprop aircraft, and brings Boeing's total sales of the stretched Dash 8, including options, to 86 aircraft worth more than $1 billion.

Deliveries of the GPA -300s begin in the last half of 1990 and extend through to 1999. GPA has already placed orders for nine Dash 8-100s and taken options on five more, to bring the total number of Dash 8s in its portfolio to 52.

GPA Jetprop announced a $475 million order for 50 Aérospatiale/Aeritalia ATR42/72 regional airliners as Flight closed for press, taking its turboprop orders for last week to $900 million. The order, for 35 ATR42s delivered between 1991 and 1996, and 12 stretched ATR72s for delivery between 1993 and 1996, adds to GPA's existing order for 20 ATR42s and five ATR72s. ATR orders now stand at 380 aircraft.

Airbus reorganisation detailed

Airbus Industrie has released details of its long-awaited reorganisation, intended to turn the European consortium into a profitable concern.

Under new statutes which take effect on April 1, the company retains its present corporate status, but the Airbus supervisory board now has five members. Chairman Dr Hans Friderichs is joined by Aérospatiale chief executive Henri Marte as vice-chairman, and boardmembers Hans-Arnt Vogels of MBB, Sir Raymond Lygo of British Aerospace, and Javier Alvarez Vara of Casa.

Airbus Industrie's new senior management structure is headed by a managing director—Jean Pierson—with increased responsibilities to integrate the commercial needs identified by Airbus Industrie with the economic and industrial capabilities of the four partners.

The newly created function of chief operating officer replaces the previous position of executive vice-president and general manager. Heri-bert Flosdorff has been nominated for this position. The officer will be responsible for running the company's day-to-day business.

British Aerospace's Robert Smith has been nominated to the new financial director's position (Flight, March 11), and a seven-member executive board has been set up. The board will be chaired by Pierson, and will include Jacques Plenier, Hartmut Mehdorn, and Sydney Gillibrand, plus Flosdorff and Smith.