

This week

NEWS

Headlines

- 4** GE unveils 'intelligent' engine plan. Italy could follow Turkey as 737AEW&C system buyer
- 5** US Airways secures time on loan. FAA to keep ground navigation as GPS back-up
- 6** Airbus studies A300 replacement. Raptor setbacks fail to dent USAF confidence

Air Transport

- 8** P&W offers to power quiet 747. Vietnam Airlines considers A340-300 proposal
- 9** Embraer alliance seeks go-ahead. Chile's Sky Airline adds flights
- 10** Airbus set to finalise risk sharing roster for A380. Germans query Linate crash report
- 11** MHI considers stake in GP7200. South Africa's Nationwide to start long-hauls to Europe
- 12** Hainan gets go-ahead for Cambodian joint venture. UK CAA chief calls for action on Single Sky

Defence

- 13** Tactical Tomahawk trials to start. Eagle tests focus on military and scientific uses
- 16** More countries to sign up for F-35. Australia hangs fire on JSF decision
- 17** RAAF extends search as time runs out on C-130J options. Mil expects revenue boost from upgrade order
- 18** PAC-3 in doubt after tests end with semi-successes. L-159B takes flight

Business

- 19** Bombardier could build bigger 728. Czech Airlines joins profitable elite
- 20** Three more airlines to join Star. Loral may enter Lockheed Martin's space orbit
- 21** Jeannot slams "ill-prepared" airlines. MAS aims to raise \$1bn with aircraft sale and lease-back

Business & General Aviation

- 22** EJ22 turbofan starts flight testing. NetJets adds Falcon 50s in Europe
- 23** JAA backs single-engine IFR flights. Execujet's new division targets Mexican market

Technology

- 26** United to look at cameras in cabin. Pathfinder readied for demonstration

Spaceflight

- 27** Budget limit focuses ESA's vision. Odyssey unearths Mars soil hydrogen



JAA gets behind single-engine IFR flights - P23

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COVER STORY

Patriot games 28

A string of failures in operational tests have cast doubt on the US Army's latest Patriot missile upgrade, PAC-3. The weapon is scheduled for use in the MEADS air defence system and the same hypervelocity hit-to-kill technology is designed to be the basis of the THAAD air defence system. Stir in some cost problems – the PAC-3 is more expensive than the PAC-2 – and the result is a recipe to give US defence planners some sleepless nights. So how confident are they of extending the Patriot's service life? Our analysis of air defence missiles also looks at short-range systems designed to protect troops against threats from helicopters and unmanned air vehicles, and we examine the European situation, where the clean-slate approach taken 13 years ago by France, Italy and the UK is beginning to pay off.

LATIN AMERICAN AIRLINES

Feeling the pain 32

Air transport in Latin American countries is not in a good shape. Political unrest, economic instability, government interference and a poor safety record have all contributed to the woes of the region and some flag carriers, including AeroPeru and Viasa, have gone bankrupt, while others are on the edge of financial collapse. But it is not all gloom. Initiatives in co-operation taken by LanChile have been hailed as one successful model, while Copa and TACA, two small airlines in poor nations, manage to remain financially robust.

Next week

Farnborough preview

With a month to go to the Farnborough air show, we look at the issues and aircraft likely to be making the news. There is an exhibitors list and tips on planning your visit to the show. Plus: a focus on aviation insurance, nine months after 11 September.



FLIGHT INTERNATIONAL/MARK WAGNER