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## Air Transport



### De Havilland DHC-8 to Make First Flight This Month

First flight of the de Havilland of Canada DHC-8 commuter transport aircraft is expected this month from the company's facility located at Downsview, Ont. Taxi tests with the aircraft began on May 22. Progress made during the taxi trials and evaluations of the powerplant may allow the manufacturer to advance the DHC-8's first flight from the originally scheduled June 30 to a new target date in mid-June.

## Paris Air Show

# Airframe Makers Review Options

## Depressed market leads Boeing, Fokker to discuss 100-seat derivatives, possible postponement of A320 project seen

Paris—Airbus Industrie is facing a key decision on its 150-passenger aircraft program, while two other manufacturers are considering aircraft with fewer seats in response to a depressed market.

Unless firm new orders for the A320 surface in a market survey to be completed this month, at least one Airbus Industrie partner is considering reducing its development effort. The cutback could delay the A320 launch by a year or more.

Boeing and Fokker, meanwhile, have begun discussing 100-seat derivatives with customers. Boeing is considering a 100-seat version of the 737, which would be equipped with new-technology engines and would be called the 737-250. Fokker's project, called the F28 P332, is a re-engined, stretched version of the F-28.

Other developments include:

- Singapore Airlines signed contracts in Singapore for the purchase of four Boeing 757-200s, six Boeing 747-300s and six Airbus Industrie A310s, in a buy valued at about \$1.4 billion including spares.

- Boeing is nearing a company commitment to replace aluminum in aircraft

structures with a new aluminum-lithium alloy called Alithalite. The alloy, developed by Alcoa, would allow about a 10% weight reduction without requiring new tooling. Boeing said its aircraft will have a "high content" of Alithalite within five to seven years.

- Boeing began marketing a modification of its 707-300C to make it suitable for aerial refueling applications.

- British Aerospace will decide later this month whether to go ahead with full-scale development of its 60-passenger advanced turboprop (ATP) aircraft.

- De Havilland of Canada has begun discussing an 80-seat version of its DHC-7 turboprop with customers.

Boeing and Airbus said the Singapore orders were breakthroughs for their aircraft sales in the Far East.

The A310s will be configured in a mixed class of 218 passengers. The 757-200s will be outfitted for 190 passengers and the 747-300s for 422 passengers. The 757s are to be delivered in 1984 and 1985, the 747s during 1985-88 and the A310s during 1984-86.

Engine manufacturers predicted Singapore Airlines would select engines for the aircraft by late July. Candidates for the 757 include the Rolls-Royce RB. 211-535C or -535E and the Pratt & Whitney PW2037. For the 747-300, the candidates are the JT9D-7R4, the General Electric CF6-50 or -80 and the Rolls-Royce RB. 211-524. A310 engine candidates include the CF6-80 and the JT9D-7R4.

Singapore ordered the JT9D for its first eight 747-300s, and Pratt & Whitney believes that sale will give it the edge for the additional 747s and the A310s.

The Boeing 757s will be financed partially through the U. S. Export-Import Bank, but the 747s will have standard financing, Boeing said.

Pierre Pailleret, senior vice president-marketing, Airbus Industrie, said Airbus has agreed to accept three used A300B4s in trade as part of the sale. He said this will pose no problem because they will be the only used aircraft in the current Airbus inventory.

However, Airbus will have about 10 whitetail A300s within the next 10-12 months if no additional aircraft are sold.

"We are confident more orders will come in," Pailleret said. "We see a defi-

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