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INSIDE...

• Embraer offers Super Tucano to Turkey

Embraer has responded to Turkey's request for proposals for a new military trainer by offering its Super Tucano. The requirement is expected to result in 36 firm orders and 19 options. The Brazilian jet has also been technically approved for Singapore's trainer RFP. **Page 7**

• Europe goes it alone on AESA radar

Selex and the other members of the Euro-radar consortium are about to enter the AESA sweepstakes with the ambitious design of several active-scanning radar sets, including Caesar, which is specifically designed to fit into the Eurofighter Typhoon. Euro-radar partners will now be free to offer this technology to any customer without asking for permission from Washington, which is a goal that has long been sought by portions of the UK and European defense industry. **Page 8**

• Retrofit provides lifeline for MD-80

The Comtran jet nozzle retrofit shown here on a MD-82 of Romanian airline Jetran Air makes the airplane compliant with Stage 4 noise regulations and reduces fuel consumption. A further significant reduction in fuel burn will be achieved with the soon-to-be-certified winglets. The two modifications are said to effectively relaunch the McDonnell Douglas twinjet. **Page 18B**

• Youthful DAE raises industry profile

Launched only four months ago, Dubai considerable interest which is reflected in the high participation here at Farnborough. As well as sponsoring the flying display, DAE is also sponsoring Friday's International Youth Day when 1,200 young achievers will attend the show. DAE is now building a \$15 billion global aerospace, manufacturing and services corporation. **Page 19**

• Mitsubishi enters RJ market

The Japanese government is funding initial development of a proposal by Mitsubishi for a family of regional jets, designated the MJ-70 and MJ-90. Provided the company can find suitable partners, the program could be launched by the end of 2007. **Page 35**

Comtran retrofit could extend life of MD-80s

by Bernard Fitzsimons

The Comtran jet nozzle retrofit showing here on the Jetran Air MD-82 in the static display makes the airplane compliant with Stage 4 noise regulations, reduces fuel consumption by 1.5-2 percent and extends time between overhauls by lowering the exhaust gas temperature by 10 degrees. And the soon-to-be certified winglets sported by the Bucharest-based twinjet cut fuel consumption by a further 5 to 5.5 percent.

According to Comtran chairman and CEO Douglas Jaffe, the two modifications effectively amount to a relaunch of the McDonnell Douglas narrowbody. "As a 140-160 seat airplane it competes with the Boeing 737-400 and Airbus A320," Jaffe said. "But we can demonstrate that when you take the capital cost into account it costs considerably less than both to operate."

Both American Airlines and Delta Air Lines still have big fleets—150 and 325 respectively—and here in Europe, Jaffe said, Scandinavian Airlines has confirmed that it will continue operating its MD-80s until there is a next generation narrowbody to replace it. In fact, more than 1,000 of the 1,160 units built are still flying, and Jaffe sees a 25-year future for them.

As the MD-80 and its contemporaries age, he maintained, the McDonnell Douglas product will prove the most durable aircraft in its class. "The airplane should be around until we get the disrupter," he said, referring to a new product that would affect the narrowbody end of the market in the way the Boeing 787 has the widebody segment.

Douglas demonstrated that the airframe is good for 103,000 cycles, he elaborated, yet the highest time example has only 53,000 cycles after 25 years' service. And when the disrupter does arrive, he suggested, the MD-80 is likely to find a new lease on life with second tier airlines.

Comtran is discussing the upgrades with Alitalia as well as American, Delta and Scandinavian, Jaffe said.

In Europe reducing noise is the main concern, since it enables operators to avoid around \$300,000 per aircraft per year in fines for breaching noise limits. It also increases the flexibility with which they can operate the aircraft.

"We've built a better mousetrap," said Jack Anderson, CEO of the firm that designed the nozzle, Jet Engineering. It adds less than 70 pounds total weight, can be installed in ground time of just five hours and costs \$895,000. Pricing for the winglets has yet to be determined, but customers for the nozzle will get priority for the winglets when they are certified.

Ed Swearingen, Jaffe's partner in the SJ-30 business jet that is also on the ramp here this week, added that overhauling the MD-80's Pratt & Whitney JT8 engines costs less than \$1 million, compared with well over \$2.5 million for the V2500 and CFM56 that power the A320 and 737. And, he said, Scandinavian's figures show the airframe maintenance costs are only 82 percent those of the 737 and A320. □



Comtran's jet nozzle and winglets add up to a new lease of life for the MD-82 shown here in the colors of Romania's Jetran Air.