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Swissair plan cargo expansion

WHEN it ordered four Boeing 747s with stretched upper deck last year Swissair left open the option to specify two of the aircraft in the combi-version. The airline's management has now decided in favour of this version and the two 747 Combis are due for delivery in early 1983.

The decision follows the recommendations of an internal study group forecasting a steady growth of air cargo in the years ahead. For Swissair, the long-term growth rates, assuming suitably market-oriented capacity, may well be 2 to 3 per cent above the equivalent figures for passenger traffic.

In Europe the 10 Airbus A310s currently on order have the pallet capacity to ensure that the market potential will in the longer term be tapped effectively. The Boeing 747 Combis are intended to fill the same role on long-haul routes.

The new Combis differ from the standard 747s in having a cargo compartment in the rear

of the main deck, accessible from a side cargo door three to four metres wide. The compartment can accommodate six to 12 pallets.

With six pallets seating capacity on the Combis is reduced to 269 from 393 in the normal version. The number of first class seats remains the same at 44. The aircraft can also be operated in a normal passenger configuration.

From Swissair's viewpoint, the chief advantage of the Combis lies in the increased commercial flexibility and thus in the improved overall risk distribution, both of paramount importance in times of uncertain traffic and tariff developments.

They will provide a better opportunity of balancing the cargo and passenger capacity on offer and tap cargo potential

without impairing passenger traffic. Overall, it is hoped that they will optimise load factors and thereby improve the financial results of the regions where they are employed.

The Combis' advantages well outweigh the few practical drawbacks involved, such as less straightforward loading procedures, a slight deterioration in punctuality or regularity and reduced operational flexibility.

The order for the two 747 Combis demonstrates Swissair's commitment to air freight and the company's conviction that the significance of cargo in air transport generally and for Swissair in particular will increase in the future.

While it does not signal a radical change in the company's basic philosophy which sees cargo as playing a complemen-

tary role to passenger traffic, it does herald a shift in emphasis in the overall Swissair product in response to the predicted trend in the air freight sector.

Fares code

SWISSAIR'S timetables and fares are now displayed on Prestel. The dialling code is 350439.

The Swissair information contains schedules of flights between London and Basle, Geneva and Zurich, as well as Manchester-Zurich, and fares from London and Manchester with an explanation of fare conditions.

In addition, connecting timetables can be displayed for flights to Africa, the Middle East, Far East, South America and Eastern Europe.

A reservations request page enables the caller to specify outward and return reservations required on the London-Switzerland and Manchester-Zurich routes.

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14056 Swiss people in Britain. And no-one wants to return?

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ONE of the most distinguished figures in the Swiss textile industry, Dr Hans Locher, head of Zellweger Uster, this month becomes president of the Manchester-based Textile Institute — the first non-British president in the 70-year history of this international body.

Dr Locher's election is the culmination of many years' devoted service to the Institute, which he joined about 30 years ago. He was made a Fellow of the Institute in recognition of his achievements in the development of textile technology.

Knowing Hans Locher's dedication, his Institute colleagues say he will be no figurehead president. His two years in office promises to be an invigorating period.

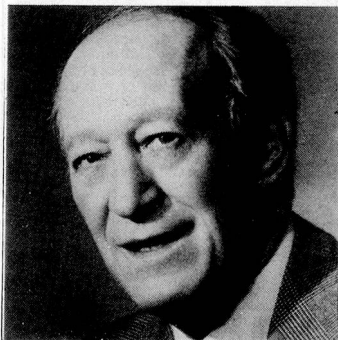
Despite a declining textile industry in Britain, the 9,400-member Institute is growing, both in numbers and in importance. Its overseas membership is rising rapidly, and new sections are being formed in different parts of the world.

Dr Locher was in Hong Kong recently talking to leading textile figures in the Far East, and intends to do a lot of travelling to promote the prestige and development of the textile industry.

At the end of last year he received another well-deserved honour when he was awarded an honorary doctorate of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology for his "distinguished accomplishments in inventing and developing electronic textile testing procedures".

The citation said he had "set new standards on an international level for the application of electro-technical methods to

A Swiss president for the Textile Institute



Dr Hans Locher

textile technology".

He has spent all his working life with Zellweger Uster, near Zurich, which he joined on completion of his studies in 1944. His first job was as development engineer for military radio stations, but he soon moved into a field of activity that was to be his life's work — textile electronics.

He devised new instruments for the laboratory testing of yarns, and made his name with the invention of the Uster evenness tester, which became an outstanding international success.

There is no doubt that the growth of Zellweger Uster owes much to the many patents taken out by the company on the inventions of Hans Locher.

Today he enjoys worldwide recognition as a top textile technologist. He is in great demand as a lecturer, and has advised numerous technical

societies and specialist groups.

He is one of the leading figures behind Technorama, the Winterthur technical museum. He is also a member of the research commission and committee of the textile machinery group of the VSM (Swiss Association of Machinery Manufacturers) and of the Swiss Electro-Technical Committee.

Water from the sun

FOR certain countries, and in particular certain remote regions, the production of fresh water supplies from sea water is of vital importance. The same applies to the future development of large deserts.

In view of the fact that

shortages of fresh water occur most frequently in very sunny regions the use of solar energy for the production of the thermal power needed for the evaporation - condensation cycle is a promising solution for the future.

A Swiss firm, working in close cooperation with the Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne, has produced an entirely new system with several evaporation stages, running on solar energy.

Even with big variations in the temperature of the heat source the operation remains stable, thanks to an original concept of passive adjustment.

The research work was backed by the Swiss Commission for the Encouragement of Scientific Research.

Ciba-Geigy loss

UNAUDITED figures for the Ciba-Geigy group of companies in the United Kingdom show 1980 consolidated sales of £425 million, an increase of 6 per cent over the previous year.

But a group spokesman admitted: "Despite this increase in sales an unsatisfactory result is expected. In addition, very large restructuring costs were incurred or provided for during 1980 particularly in respect of Ilford Ltd. and Ciba-Geigy

Plastics and Additives Company.

"Taking these into account, the UK Group will show a very large loss. These restructuring costs must, however, be regarded as an investment in the future of the business."

Export sales rose from £148 million in 1979 to £168 million last year. Capital expenditure during 1980 was in the region of £28 million.



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