

AIR TRANSPORT

Colombia's mountainous terrain has favoured the development of air transport, and for this reason AVIANCA is the second oldest airline in the world. There are about 485 public use airports in Colombia of which 71 are owned by the central government's National Aeronautical Fund and an equal number by local governments. Some 278 are privately owned, and the rest belong to special purpose government organizations.

The principal hub airports (Bogotá, Medellín and Cali) plus the secondary hub of Barranquilla account for 65 percent of national passengers. Bogotá's El Dorado airport accounts for just over half of national air cargo and 75 percent of international air cargo. There are more than 2200 fixed-wing aircraft in use in Colombia and 173 helicopters.

Colombia has been an important market for deHavilland's Twin Otters. In addition, the national coal company CARBOCOL operates two deHavilland DASH 7s. In regard to airport equipment, the chief suppliers have generally been from the United States, France and Italy. Nevertheless, many Colombian officials travel to Canada to attend ICAO meetings in Montreal and therefore have some exposure to developments in the Canadian industry, a situation which Canadian companies could capitalize upon. As of 1989 no Canadian airlines had direct scheduled flights to Colombia, although tourist charters to Cartagena grew rapidly in the mid 1980s.

■ A major new airport maintenance and expansion plan was drawn up under a technical assistance agreement with the U.S. government in 1988-89. This plan calls for ongoing purchases of radar, navigational aids, communications systems, training and meteorological equipment, and microwave landing systems. The Civil Aeronautics Administrative Department prepares annual procurement plans for this type of equipment. Its priority purchases are strongly influenced by the availability of foreign financing.

KEY PLAYERS:

CIVIL AERONAUTICS ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT (DAAC)

DAAC is the national agency responsible for all civil aviation matters, including airport construction, procurement of aerial navigation aids and other equipment, and system planning.

CENTRE FOR AERONAUTICAL STUDIES (CEA)

The CEA is the training branch of DAAC and is located near Bogotá's El Dorado Airport. The CEA purchased training equipment worth more than \$400,000 from Canada in 1989.