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BA lops Swiss services

BRITISH Airways is discontinuing its routes from Manchester to Zurich and Geneva as part of its dramatic economy measures. Altogether, the airline has announced the closure of 17 routes and seven overseas stations.

The action, part of BA's fight to become profitable, follows a detailed review of the UK flag carrier's operations.

BA's deputy chairman and chief executive, Roy Watts, said the closures were caused by "unrelenting worldwide recession in our markets."

They will save BA around £10 million a year, it is estimated.

"Some sensible pruning now in markets where recession has hit us worst will ensure that the vast bulk of our network will be safe for the future," said Mr Watts.

"The routes we have selected for elimination are those on which, after detailed scrutiny, we can foresee absolutely no prospect of adequate profitability and which do not contribute to the success of other routes."

Balair back with a profit

RATIONALISATION and economy measures helped Swiss charter airline Balair to make a gross operating surplus of Sfr. 818,000 in the first half of this year, compared with a loss of more than Sfr. 3 million in the same period last year.

In a letter to shareholders, president Dr Otto Niederhauser and chief executive Heinrich Moser said that although turnover was actually down by nearly eight per cent, the surplus had been achieved by cutting spending by Sfr. 10 million, or nearly 13 per cent.

"The positive effects of the measures introduced two years ago are now becoming apparent," says the letter.

"Of the greatest importance to us was the redimensioning of our

fleet - sale of a DC-8-62 and the adjustment of our offer to changed market conditions."

Deficit-making long-haul traffic was cut by 24 per cent and short-haul capacity increased by 21 per cent with the help of a DC-9-81 leased from Swissair.

The Balair bosses say that although it is too early to predict the year's results, figures for the third quarter point to further improvement.

UK reps for Swissotel

THE London-based Supereps International is taking on UK representation for the four-strong Swissotel chain.

Swissotel, founded in 1981, is aiming to win management of 10 to 15 top class properties within the next 10 years.

Its acquisitions to date include the Drake in New York, the Hotel President in Geneva, the Hotel International in Zurich and the Bellevue Palace in Bern.

Swissotel, a joint Swissair and Nestlé venture, has announced a Sfr. 50 million facelift for the four hotels. The modernisation and improvement schemes are due for completion by 1987.

Record for Mövenpick

MOVENPICK Holding, the Swiss-based hotel and restaurant group, made a record net profit of Sfr. 4,820,000 in its last financial year - a rise of 6.7 per cent.

Board chairman Ueli Präger says in the 1981/82 annual report that total turnover topped Sfr. 500 million for the first time. The board is recommending an unchanged 15 per cent dividend.

Mr Präger reported that in Germany turnover increase greatly exceeded the inflation rate

despite the recession, and he revealed that three more hotels will be built there in the coming year.

Swissair awaits

SWISSAIR has yet to receive full approval for its proposed Airbus A310 routes to London and other European destinations next year.

The carrier has filed to operate services from Zurich to London, Paris, Frankfurt, Istanbul, Athens and Lisbon and out of Geneva to London, Paris, Lisbon and Athens.

The first Swissair version of the Airbus, the A310-220, will go into service next April or May. The air-

line will take delivery of three further models later in the year.

In all, Swissair has 10 Airbus 310s on order with another 10 on option.

The carrier will maintain its two-class system, seating 22 first class and 190 economy class. Seven flight attendants will work the A310s. A cabin mock-up of the aircraft will be installed at Swissair's training centre in Zurich.

Modifications to airport facilities in Zurich are already underway to accommodate the wide-bodied jet.

The introduction of a larger craft to the Swissair fleet meant apron space at Zurich had to be extended. Construction is also underway on a new pier at the airport.

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