

# Cascade to put new plane into service soon



This Brazilian commuter plane being purchased by Cascade Airways will go into service Jan. 1

U.S. photo by Mike Campbell

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The first of three new Brazilian commuter airplanes being purchased by Cascade Airways will begin flying out of Walla Walla Jan. 1.

The new 18-seat planes will replace the airline's Metroliners, which they have been leasing for the past year.

The new planes feature larger cabins with three seats across, instead of two. The cabins are not pressurized.

While it is not as fast as the sleek Metroliner, the new airplane, called the Bandeirante, has better lift capabilities, and is considered a more rugged aircraft.

"The best thing about it, it's going to be rugged and reliable," said Larry Stotts, vice president of engineering and maintenance.

"It's not the prettiest plane in the world, but it's built for work."

Embraer, based near Rio de Janeiro, has sold several of its commuter model to U.S. airlines. Mountain West of Boise, Idaho, owns three of them, Stotts said.

The plane's record is very good. He said the plane was built well, and for the \$1.2 million purchase price, it ought to be.

Stotts said Cascade was convinced to buy the plane because it will be easier to maintain. He said the airline expects to spend less than one man-hour of maintenance for every hour of flying time.

The Metroliner requires three man-

hours of maintenance. The airline's Beechcraft 99s, which make up most of its fleet, require about an hour of maintenance also.

Stott explained the manufacturers designed the plane for easy access to working parts. Knobs and switches were built extra large to handle heavy use, he said. Electrical and other systems have been simplified in the design, almost to the point where a layman could understand them, Stott said.

"You'll probably see a lot of these airplanes around," he said.

The second new plane should be delivered in January, and delivery of the third has not been scheduled.

The two turbo-prop engines, rated at 750 horsepower each, were built by Pratt and Whitney of Canada. They are the same engine, only slightly larger, as the ones on the Beechcrafts, Stott said.

The Bandeirante comes equipped with a portable restroom, but Stott said the airline has not decided whether to use it, as the airline runs into a problem with weight restrictions. The Federal Aviation Administration is expected to approve the plane for 12,500 pounds maximum weight, Stott said.

Recently, the FAA changed its weight restrictions on commuter airlines. If Cascade can get approval to fly the plane at 14,000 pounds or more, it will put the restroom on board, Stott said.