



Our new training center (foreground) is the first of three buildings, totaling 300,000 square feet, to open at the CLT complex. The large center core (steelwork rising at back) will include a hangar which will accommodate six aircraft from our existing fleet simultaneously. It will have a three-level support and shop area on the front side, facing the street. The facility is scheduled for completion in early 1990. A stock distribution center (far left) will be fully operational by year end.

CLT facility takes off with can-do spirit

The project was mammoth and speed essential. Three cockpit simulators, located at the T.H. Davis Training Center in Winston-Salem, had to be moved to and reinstalled in the new Charlotte Training Center as quickly as possible. The simulator cabs alone weigh over 12 tons each, and to move the entire apparatus for each one required four tractor trailer loads.

"We received bids from several companies, and the best came with a high price tag plus a 90-day-per-simulator down time," said Captain C.D. McLean, staff vice president-flight training, who has had overall responsibility for the new facility.

"But a talented group of Piedmont employees—our simulator technicians headed by Dave Gupton, manager-simulator maintenance—came to the rescue. They suggested handling the move themselves. Knowing their skill and ability in other areas, we gave the go-ahead."

Twenty days later, in early May, the first simulator was running and fully re-certified for operation by the FAA—at one-fifth the vendor cost. The remaining two simulators soon followed suit. In addition, the group supervised the installation of a new 737-300/400 simulator, the first of its kind in the world. All four were operational by July 1.

"They did an incredible job," McLean emphasized.

Tom Schick, Piedmont's president, fully agreed. In a letter to these employees, Schick wrote, "Your effort showed not only the skill and expertise which you bring to your career, but it showed the professionalism and pride with which you approach a challenge."

The kind of can-do spirit—characteristic among Piedmont employees—was exhibited by many people who put in long hours ensuring the success of the Charlotte project.

Among those responsible were Captain Danny Williford, who supervised the opening of Piedmont's F28 training center in Tampa in 1985 and has headed its operation for the past three years. He served as coordinator for the new training center at CLT. Bill Hall, director-ground training, orchestrated the startup of the new ground school along with Larkin Hubbard, manager-ground training. Charlie Cross, director-flight attendant training, has provided expertise in his field, and Jim Gibbs, supervisor-Boeing training, has been instrumental in setting up pilot training programs.

In addition to the four simulators, the 80,000-square-foot facility, located directly across the runway from the terminal and next door to the Flying Tiger hangar, includes:

- nine large classrooms, each with rear screen projection and an overhead speaker system
- a 767 flight attendant training area
- office space for simulator technicians and instructors
- a computer room, supporting the simulators
- pilot briefing areas
- a cockpit procedure trainer (CPT)
- student break areas
- a fifth simulator bay

"Originally, we planned for the facility to be a supplement to the T.H. Davis Training Center," McLean explained, "and had designated space on the lower level of the building for ground service equipment maintenance. With the impending merger, we've seen a need to use this space to house more classrooms, training offices, and briefing areas. So the plan now is to build a separate facility for

ground service equipment maintenance at the airport.

"Additionally, the new facility, which is almost twice the size of the Winston-Salem building, is built so that it can be expanded with little difficulty in the future. The T.H. Davis Training Center continues to be an integral part of our training program with all classroom and office space being fully utilized."

McLean added, "As the plans for a new airline are resolved, I believe this modern facility will prove to be a vital element in our future growth."

USAir has a total of 11 simula-

tors, 9 of which are located in Pittsburgh: 2 DC-9-30s, 727-200, 737-200, 737-300, BAC 1-11, Fokker 100, and a 727-100 and FH 227 which are used for contract training. An additional 737-300 simulator is on order. MD-8 and BAe 146 simulators are located in San Diego.

Transportation is readily available between the terminal and training center. A special van departs from the transportation level at the terminal at 15 minutes and 45 minutes past each hour during the day. Return service is provided on the half hour and the hour.



Captain C.D. McLean, staff vice president-flight training who has had overall responsibility for the new training center, stands on the walkway overlooking the simulator bay area. At left is the new state-of-the-art 737-300/400 simulator, the first to include color day and night scenes.



Dave Gupton, manager-simulator maintenance, illustrates how easy it is to operate the 737-300/400's instructor panel, which shows a graphic presentation of the fuel system. "It's an excellent training tool," Gupton said. "Any system on the aircraft can be quickly called up. Also new is the weather system control which, among other things, trains pilots in wind-shear avoidance. In addition, an instructor can easily designate cold fronts, warm fronts, thunderstorms, and so forth, and whatever weather is put in, you automatically get the turbulence that goes with it."



Maryann Condon, a flight attendant instructor, demonstrates first aid techniques to a class of flight attendants taking a two-day recurrent training course. Two classes, each with 40 flight attendants, are held each day, six days a week, at the new center.



Piedmont's service to Charlotte dates back over 40 years to February 20, 1948, the day the airline began operation. But major growth at what has become our largest hub didn't really begin until after the airline industry was deregulated in 1978. At that time, Piedmont offered just 17 flights daily. The above photo, taken just seven years ago, shows our CLT hub a year before the current terminal was completed. By late 1981, we had 70 daily departures at CLT, by late 1984, 149, and today, our departures have soared to over 260.