

Police Aviation News

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SPECIAL

August 2017



ALEA EXPO 2017

RENO, NEVADA

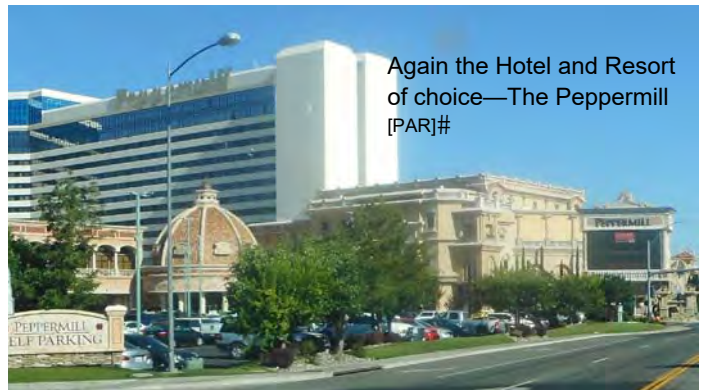
This year the prime annual Public Safety Aviation event was held in the Reno-Sparks Convention Center and Peppermill Spa Casino Resort, Nevada. Often the venues for the annual ALEA event are co-located but the action in Reno started off in the hotel and moved a mile down the road to the Convention Center for the finale. It is not an ideal set up in the eyes of every exhibitor but it seems acceptable to most.



ALEA Expo is a week of events and training held in the heat of the deserts of Nevada. Reno is no Las Vegas, the city of marriages, Reno has fame for its divorces. Both are gambling towns but by any measure Reno is in the shade of Las Vegas which makes it far cheaper to run the ALEA event. There is no direct and worthy equivalent of Las Vegas Strip with all its glitz but there is a nice breakfast café and a couple of worthy steak houses just down from the Peppermill Hotel. Sadly, that's about it but tastes vary and it is supposed to be a gathering centered on learning with a bit of optional gambling thrown in. The timing in the peak holiday month of July is to facilitate families to accompany the police officers in training – holidays are far shorter in the US than in other parts of the world. Most things are therefore undertaken with a clear reason.

Although it is nominally the last of its kind – *see later!* - ALEA EXPO 2017 aims to set the standard in the field of US public safety aviation knowledge. Filled with education and training, the event offers some of the best conference courses and classes in the public safety industry, presented by the experts drawn from the industry and the companies that service it. It's not NPAS so thankfully not everyone thinks they know it all and the numbers reflect that.

Class sizes in the ten three-day pre-event courses are impressive. Jack Schonely, a well-regarded speaker on tactics, attracted 60 officers who were paying good money to listen to his multi-day course that is designed for pilot, TFOs and ground officers alike. Kevin Means also runs a complementary course for TFOs on the use of the EO/IR turret. The other options include water training, unit managers, safety management and even the use of unmanned craft. Unsurprisingly, not an English policeman on campus.



Again the Hotel and Resort of choice—The Peppermill [PAR]#

Most of these industry sponsored courses cost significant money, in the region of \$350pp, but most were attended by numbers approaching the 60-70 maximum class size. This payment was mostly put up by agencies but many individuals pay for themselves, that level of dedication tends to underline the perceived worth.



A lot of the material put out by these courses can appear obvious, but the trouble is they appear obvious to the older and wiser who should be perhaps leading the discussions rather than sitting in on them and wondering why they know the content from experience. After all that is what the classes are – the knowledgeable informing the inexperienced. I have come across far too many senior officers who have blocked junior staff access to training and conferences simply because they who should know better know the answers. A senior officer faced with any event that fails to challenge, inspire or inform them clearly should be sending others in their place.

Three days in the action moved along the road to the Sparks Convention Center where the Expo was further enhanced by a set of less formal courses, many of them tasters for the pay courses, and offered free to all attendees. Although free some have a tendency to attract patchy audiences. Mind you with a massive choice of over two-dozen subjects spread over 12 tracks in three days it is difficult for the limited number of delegates to decide which ones to take in.

FRONT COVER: One of the handful of Bell aircraft at the show was a Bell OH-58A N376SD on the Cobham booth supporting that company's new Cobham RT-700 tactical radio system. The Bell is the latest airframe for the Pinal County Sheriff in Arizona. It did not cost a great deal to acquire the 44-years old ex-DoD airframe [73-21869] but the refurbishment included new paintwork and radios.

IN THE MEETING ROOMS

The side show presentations were a distraction from what was to be presented on the exhibit floor. One in particular immediately outgrew its surroundings. As with the presentations that had gone before at the hotel there was an expectation of no more than sixty might wish to sit in on any given subject and seating was placed accordingly. Often the audience was far less.

When Corporal Mark Colborn, a Bell 206 pilot with the Dallas Police Department, set up for a focused presentation on the July 2016 cop killings in Dallas he can have had little expectation of a major crowd turning up.

Last year saw a sequence of cop deaths in the USA and that naturally focused the attention of all lawmen in the country. That year saw a temporary peak of deaths. On the evening of July 7, 2016, Micah Xavier Johnson ambushed and fired upon a group of police officers in Dallas, Texas, killing five officers and injuring nine others. A matter of weeks later the ALEA Expo 2016 took place in Dallas. Readers may recall that the finale of the 'shoot-out' was the use of a robot ground vehicle to explode a device near to Johnson in the early hours of July 8.

Perhaps because of that link with the previous event the Colborn presentation – given from the viewpoint of an officer who was flying over the scene of the shootings on the night – caught the imagination. The room quickly filled beyond capacity. The normality of an audience of sixty quickly passed as was one hundred.



A pertinent presentation that caught the imagination of attendees [PAR]#

The presentation was raw and close to the action. Colborn as an individual was undoubtedly too close to the action – those were his colleagues being killed below him – and it regularly showed. That factor perhaps damaged the whole but he gained a well-deserved round of applause from an appreciative audience of equals.

Although there was no criticism in the presentation, at the core of this story is a long-understood flaw with the Dallas PD air unit. It is, and remains, grossly underfunded. At one time, the operation had three helicopters and suitable serviceable EO/IR sensors. Seven years ago, the hierarchy had sold off a Bell 407, the best and most modern helicopter and then failed to maintain the equipment of the two Bell 206's that remain.

Although there was a clear need for the DPD helicopter to have access to serviceable EO/IR units there is none. It is doubtful whether having a unit would in any way have tipped the balance of the ground police effectiveness on the night but it is clear that the air support on the night was severely hampered in its effectiveness to a level we thought we had last seen in major cities thirty years ago.

Both the air crews and command and control on the ground were robbed of a significant tool in gaining an overview of the drama being played out below. To compensate for the lack of capability the crew were forced to fly lower than necessary to get an eyeball on the action. Not a situation that meets the employers 'Duty of Care' in any book.

The DPD have obsolete Wescam 12 units but can no longer obtain spares for them. There are similar 'dead' units out there with air operations units [for instance in Bonn, Germany and Bilbao, Spain] and together they could bring to life some of the units. Unfortunately, there is no realistic way the disparate units can be brought together. It has been tried before within Europe and the distant Texan aspect simply adds to the difficulties.

This brings us back to the oft repeated mantra of units not making claims to a capability they cannot support. The most expensive day-to-day element of air support is the police officer pilot and yet he is not being given the tools of his trade. The bosses that finance Dallas Police should be hanging their heads in shame. No doubt they will claim they are unaware of the real situation.



By the time the official ceremony of opening was undertaken most visitors had already seen the exhibition. There is now a design competition underway to replace the logo featured in the entrance carpet [PAR]

EXPOSITION

In the vast, but not full, hall exhibitors were showcasing their products and services to aviation unit decision-makers and end users in a co-located exhibition hall. Pricing is keen with a basic booth space priced at a few hundred dollars. To add to that is a required bit of flooring (carpet and underlay) costing another \$350 or so, tables and chairs etc. It all adds up but it is relatively cheap for industry compared to many of the top-notch aviation shows.

Overall the show was somewhat smaller than the last Reno event five years ago. This was partly due to the show floor having less exhibitors but also there was a lack of space using airframes – last time there was a large 45 feet wingspan Quest Kodiak as a centre-piece and there were other fixed wing aircraft that helped in filling the space.

There were a few ‘no shows’ among the pre-booked but these appear to have been balanced out by late bookings. These remain difficult times.



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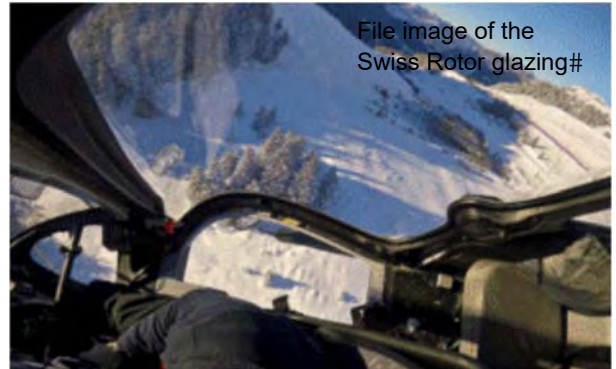


The Downlink Experts

It is a measure of the difference that in a quick review of the images of Reno 2012 I find that there were fourteen airframes on the Expo floor and another at the airport flightline. That makes the ten airframes and a few Drones this year very meagre indeed. It was probably made more noticeable because most were helicopters taking up less space than the four fixed wings of 2012 and of course in those days drones were still dreams or nightmares for the future.

Stories from the exhibition floor included that Swiss Rotor Solutions Ltd., have teamed up with AeroBrigham LLC to present the Maximum Pilot View Kit (MPVK), the next generation safety and visibility solution for the hundreds of airframes in the Airbus H125 / AS350 helicopter family.

MPVK has received Supplemental Type Certification (STC No. 10060578) from the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) in December 2016 and the FAA validation is expected to be closed shortly.



It has been around for years now and regularly featured within the pages of PAN complete with illustrations of its features. The MPVK revolutionizes pilot visibility and operational safety via a completely new design, providing the pilot with an uninhibited field of view below and to the RH side of the aircraft. The modification adds a new single piece bubble door to the aircraft, offering a significant increase in lateral visibility, and pilot headroom when leaning to the right, even when wearing a helmet. A large lower viewing aperture and transparent fuselage window fairing significantly increases the vertical field of view forward, aft and directly underneath the aircraft greatly improving safety margins in a range of roles.

Unlike the likes of the bigger shows [Heli-Expo and Helitech] the Reno exhibit did not include hardware, nor much in the way of supporting illustrations but that does not in any way devalue the message. Aero-Brigham LLC based in Decatur, Texas, are to offer complete turn key installations of the MPVK to the US market which is seen to include the law enforcement community but no specifics of the sector have been announced.

To date, Swiss Rotor Solutions has already completed 9 MPVK installations on EASA registered AS350 / H125 with 28 MPVK kits now on order for EASA aircraft.

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There may be many examples of the AS350 in service but in recent months production of the type has plateaued with Airbus Helicopters reporting disappointing numbers down by two-thirds on last year. A single example of the H125 graced the hall and it was a popular exhibit but on sheer numbers the hall belonged to Bell. There was a modern Contra Costa 407 along with an Eagle 407 conversion both supported elsewhere in the hall by a couple of Vietnam era stalwarts – a Huey and an OH-58.

Some disappointment was expressed by some delegates that the Las Vegas PD had not sent its new H145. Months after its appearance at the 2017 HAI Heli-Expo it is still not in police service. That HAI showing was something of a cobbled together ‘completion’ but since it has been properly finished and has finally joined the unit in southern Nevada for training. It may finally enter service this month.

New leak proof fuel tanks for the AS350 family remain a priority. Vector Aerospace Corporation teamed up with Robertson Fuel Systems (RFS), in producing a Crash-Resistant Fuel Tank (CRFT). It has now successfully completed its first flight.



This second major milestone toward Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certification of the retrofitable CRFT comes shortly after the successful completion of an FAA-certified 50-foot drop test that demonstrated the tank’s ability to withstand impact without any leakage, thereby helping to prevent post-crash fires. That tank was on display at the event [left]. The unique design features a robust crash-resistant fuel bladder, and uses several innovations including a magneto-resistive fuel quality transmitter to keep the tank from being compromised in the event of an accident. It was an interesting exhibit – the real thing in an important certification process.

The new CRFT has since been installed on two flight test aircraft, an AS350 B2 and an AS350 B3, with both undergoing extensive ground-testing. The flight testing will continue on both

aircraft over the next few weeks, as Vector and RFS work towards a late 2017 FAA certification.

Although there was no physical presence on the floor in Reno, Robinson Helicopter Company ensured they put out a press release to coincide with the event. The company have added the TB17 Lithium-ion battery to its R66 options. TB17 by True Blue Power, a division of Mid-Continent Instrument, offers substantial weight savings, improved starter performance and longer life.

At 16 lb., the TB17 is significantly lighter than the R66’s standard battery which weighs 42 lb. and the optional high-capacity battery which weighs 52 lb. Lithium-ion chemistry holds a higher charge voltage and provides a more constant discharge rate than lead-acid delivering consistent, more reliable turbine starts. The battery’s internal heater enhances functionality in cold temperatures as low as -40°C. Typical battery life is 8 years with minimal required maintenance (visual inspection and capacity check) every 2 years.



[Robinson]#

The TB17 battery passed rigorous manufacturer and FAA tests to ensure safety. A cockpit indicator warns the pilot if a battery fault is detected. During fault conditions, the battery automatically takes itself off-line. Built-in circuitry prevents overcharge and/or overheating, and the TB17’s advanced Nanophosphate® chemistry is much less susceptible to thermal runaway than many other Lithium-ion batteries. It is now available on new aircraft - \$6,900. www.robinsonheli.com.



The Sikorsky presence was muted but at least they attended! There was no sign of Enstrom and Robinson was only present by default.

One of the latest H125s for San Bernardino took centre stage on the ample Airbus Helicopters booth. There was plenty of space for another airframe [perhaps the Las Vegas H145] but it was not to be!

During the exhibition days there were classrooms away from the hall and two in among the exhibits. [PAR]#



ALEA EXPO 2017
RENO, NV JULY 24-29

Exhibit Hall Classroom #1
Reno-Sparks Convention Center
Reno, NV

Thursday, July 27, 2017

Time	Class/Vendor	Technical Briefings	Instructor
1100 - 1145	Introduction to EastWest's Seats and Master Crane		Joe Spinoso, EastWest Industries, Inc.
1200 - 1245	The Mission Wireless Intercom Systems		Brett Gardner, AXNES, Inc.
1300 - 1345	Bell 407 and UH-1 "Huey" Training Programs		Randy Rowles, Bell 407 Training.Com
1400 - 1445	MDHI Product and Program Enhancements to Ensure a Safer, More Effective Airborne Operation		Randall Schaffer & David Dolener, MD Helicopters, Inc.
1500 - 1545	The Benefits of Flying with the Paraclete Helmet and Aeronox		Kevin Radigan, Aviation Specialties, Unlimited
1600 - 1700	Corporate Council Meeting		Ed Van Winkle, ALEA Corporate Representative

THE EMERGENCY SERVICES SHOW

HALL 5 | NEC | BIRMINGHAM | 20-21 SEPTEMBER 2017



Cessna N535EM was displayed with all the mounting options exhibited—regardless of whether the aircraft could fly so equipped! [PAR]#



Airvan attended the last ALEA Reno seeking orders. Now owned by an Indian company the Australian manufacturer can look back on successful sales into the US law enforcement market with this example of a number of the type sold to the California Highway Patrol. [PAR]#



Just to clarify, there was a Robinson helicopter at the show but it was not brought by the manufacturer, it was on the Night Flight Concepts LEASE booth.

Troll Systems were present though and they were demonstrating air-to-ground Ethernet data link and LTE video streaming as used for CPD (Columbus Police Department) during the annual Red White and Boom.

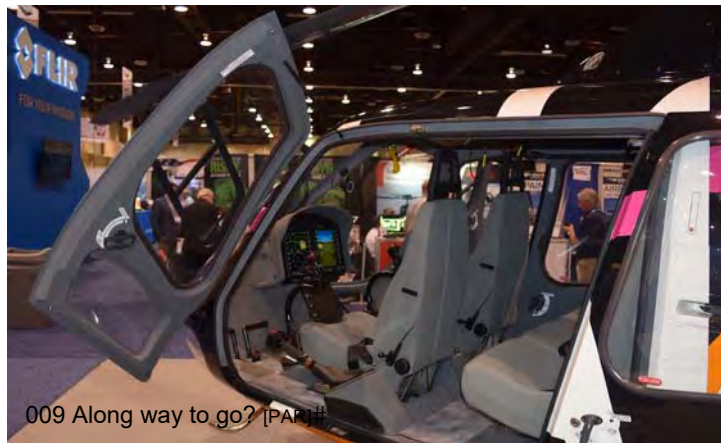
Columbus Ohio's Independence Day Celebration has grown to become the most recognized fireworks display in the Midwest and this year the operator chose to evaluate Troll Systems' air-to-ground, Ethernet data link and Cloud Video Streaming system. This year over 400,000 people gathered downtown to celebrate Red, White & BOOM making it the perfect place for CPD to test Troll's system.

The system allowed CPD to broadcast live video simultaneously to smart devices in tactical environments and to CPD's local command complex.



The minimalist Leonardo booth space was occupied by the Polish SW-4 single-engine helicopter that is now marketed as the 009. This, yet to be successful, import was duly equipped with a high specification, high value 15 inch FSI 380HLD turret that surely is out of place on an 'economy' airframe. And that disregards the potential C of G issues of the mount.

The company released a press story on the sale of the AW169 to Norway to coincide with the yet-to-be signed contract but had no follow up material on site. Indeed, when I asked the staff admitted they knew nothing about the detailing in the contract.



As part of its sponsorship of the Members Breakfast Leonardo announced and promoted the selection of the AW119Kx helicopter by the New York City Department of Environmental Protection Police for operations in support of water supply protection. Delivery of the aircraft is expected in 2018. As the largest single source water supply in the United States, the New York City water supply system is protected by ground and air to prevent terrorism, pollution and crime. The AW119Kx will feature a searchlight, FLIR, external loudspeakers, rappelling and cargo hooks, expanded fuel system, a foldable stretcher, and high visibility crew doors on both sides of the aircraft. The aircraft also includes provisions for a Bambi Bucket to be used for firefighting operations.

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The new AW machine will replace in service a leased Bell 206L. The operator has been successfully using leased helicopters for seventeen years and have been putting together a business case for ownership for some time.

Over 280 AW119 helicopters have been ordered to date in 35 countries by nearly 120 customers. Of the A119 there was precious little.

MD Helicopters, Inc. (MDHI) occupied perhaps the most imposing stand at this year's event. The display used the latest iteration of the company colours to good effect but unfortunately centred upon the MD 6XX Concept Helicopter in a custom law-enforcement configuration rather than a 'real' machine.

MD Helicopters team are primarily tasked with selling their most successful current law enforcement product, the MDHI-exclusive FAA-approved E-to-F conversion based on the many 500E helicopters still in market alongside customer support.

In addition to the airframe upgrade there is the new glass cockpit coming along with customer orders already in a queue. MDHI expects to have type certificate modifications for its full range of single-engine aircraft, including the MD 500E and MD 520N, by mid-2018.

MDHI also unveiled a new, all-glass cockpit for its MD 902 Explorer at this year's Heli-Expo. The flight deck, featuring three Genesys Aerosystems IDU-680 6" x 9" LCD primary displays remains on track for certification by the end of 2017.

MD 6XX Concept Aircraft introduced earlier this year at HAI in a single-patient EMS configuration, and previously displayed at the company's Mesa, Arizona headquarters as a light scout attack/special operations helicopter, continues to be refined in both the mission configurations and projected performance of what is expected to deliver true multi-mission capability and best-in-class performance. Although it is constructed from original structures the 6XX presented was simply a variation of the mock-up that appeared at HAI with a bit of new paintwork. Like the Leonardo, carried some debatable extras that might raise issues with C of G ranges!

Subsequent news from Mesa is that MDHI has ceased development of its MD 540A armed reconnaissance and light attack rotorcraft, in favour of offering its current MD 530F and MD 530G models and its planned MD 6XX platform instead. Whether this proves to be a sensible track remains to be seen. The original MD600N, and with it NOTAR, seems to have been side-lined once again.

In stark contrast to the Leonardo staff and their scant knowledge of other projects, MD could knowledgeably address the matter of the MD900 helicopters being bought up in significant numbers in Europe. They may have been held back in imparting their knowledge to me by commercial considerations but at least they knew that the buy up of the Explorer's for the Hungarian HEMS operation was taking place at a time when the matter was effectively sub-judice. I award many points for that.



The bright and cheery MD booth [PAR]#

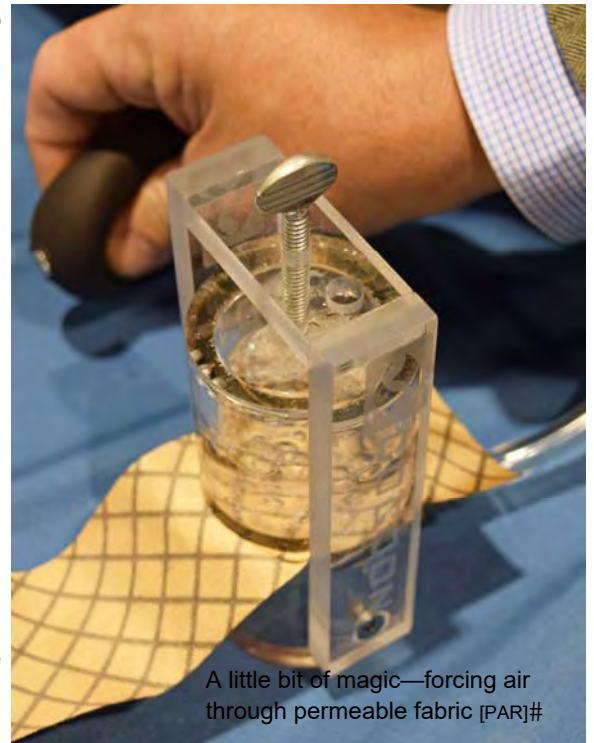


[PAR]#

Cocoon, Inc., out of North Hampton, New Hampshire were new to the event. Their usual market is the military but the product, aircraft and system covers and hangars might have a similar following in the emergency services arena. Indeed, it transpired that they have links to Rubb Building's a hangar construction company with recent strong connections to airborne law enforcement.

They worked with Cover Systems to co-develop a patented expanded polytetrafluoroethylene (ePTFE) fabric membrane that is air permeable, waterproof, durable and lightweight. The unique composition of the fabric allows it to perform its functions at the highest level. The fabric provides HEPA-quality particulate filtration, reduces condensation and moisture build-up and provides excellent UV and wind protection. The booth display included an item of equipment that sought to clearly illustrate the air permeability by forcing air through the cloth.

The three-layer fabric includes a middle layer of ePTFE, a membrane that keeps moisture out and lets water vapour escape allowing the system to survive wide temperature extremes with a fabric that reflects UV and does not allow heat to be trapped. Fine sand, dirt and dust cannot penetrate the membrane and the face material is tested against windscreen abrasion. Clearly this a military grade protection but when you have an expensive airframe every measure you can take is important.



A little bit of magic—forcing air through permeable fabric [PAR]#

Rubb Building Systems the US arm of the UK company that is currently building structures for UK NPAS is based in Sanford and works in conjunction with Cocoon on similar building projects in the U.S.



Indian company Mahindra now own the Australian GippsAero GA8 Airvan single-engine utility aircraft manufactured by GippsAero (formerly Gippsland Aeronautics) of Victoria, but it does not seem to have unduly hindered the success of the type. Already popular with such as the Civil Air Patrol and California Highway Patrol there are hopes that the upcoming larger ten-seat turbine powered GA10 will further interest the American market. In the long-term it is hoped that the combination of the 8 and 10 will result in all current CHP Cessna singles making way for the Australian type.

Left: Pall filter for the AS350 series and Right Luminator now market the former Thommen searchlight as their own. [PAR]#



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The refurbishment of the OH-58A Kiowa cockpit has transformed it from a Vietnam era warhorse to a craft with all the appearance of being modern. However, it remains something that has been around for more than four decades. [PAR]#

One of the prominent aircraft at the show was a Bell OH-58A N376SD on the Cobham booth supporting that company's new Cobham RT-700 tactical radio system. The Bell is the latest airframe for the Pinal County Sheriff in Arizona. The cost of the 44-years old ex-DoD airframe [73-21869] will have been minimal, the investment in the refurbishment and new radio system will never be recoverable but is likely to serve the Florence, AZ based operator well.

This radio system is the same as being installed in the LAPD Air Support Division (ASD) fleet. The LA ASD is claimed to be the largest municipal airborne law enforcement operation in the world. The fleet consists of fourteen Eurocopter AS350B2 and five Bell Jet Ranger B3 helicopters, as well as one King Air fixed wing aircraft. Their mission is to provide city-wide air support to patrol units in their efforts to reduce crime and enhance officer and public safety.

Cobham's new RT-7000 panel-mount tactical radio embodies an evolutionary software-defined radio (SDR) design, with a modular architecture that may be configured and upgraded as an operator's requirements and mission evolve. The aircraft will remain current and ready for action with AM/FM VHF/UHF, and P25 today, and TETRA, LTE, SATCOM, HD video, and more in the future. The design ensures that hardware investment is preserved as operational needs evolve.

RT-7000 Features include: Tactile and touchscreen interface, 29.7 - 960 MHz AM/FM P-25; Trunking: P-25 Phase I and Phase II, SmartZone, SmartNet Connectivity for 2 external handheld radios, up to 3 embedded internal transceivers, TSO/ETSO* COM and display; NVIS compliant - MIL STD 3009, embedded, relay, simulcast, and relay/simulcast.



When Bell launched the subsequently cancelled the Honeywell HTS-900 powered Model 417 they were marketing it specifically at the law enforcement community. Several key engine design features, including a highly efficient twin centrifugal compressor and cooled, single-crystal gas producer turbine blades, offered a significant reduction in fuel burn and a reduction in direct maintenance because of its on-condition maintenance approach and rotating component service life of 15,000 hours/cycles. It was a new generation engine replacing the 1960s Allison / Rolls-Royce 250 but the 417 remained in the relatively narrow confines of the 206 fuselage. Bell did not proceed with the combination but never publicly explained why.

Eagle took up the project, removing the 250 engines and substituting the Honeywell engine that Bell intended for the 417. Little surprise then that the conversion - the Eagle 407HP - is also being promoted as ideal for Law Enforcement missions. Ten years after Bell pulled the project, sales have yet to see a realisation of this.



The Eagle 407 is a conversion [PAR]#

The Artworks, based in Denver, promotes stealth or ghost graphics for police vehicles and commercial users. They have been working with clients since 1986 and have become well regarded for creative excellence and superior installation. The primary new law enforcement product is Mirage™ a government restricted, thermal graphics vinyl. It's only available to official government entities throughout the world. The Artworks is the sole distributor for this product for use in the USA and Canada but they do work in conjunction with distributors in the UK, and central Europe for use in those areas.

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How many cops can you get into an H125 cockpit? [PAR]#

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Friday was the inevitable quiet day when all of the vendors were asking where the customers were and resorting to talking among themselves. [PAR]#

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TALKING OF THE FUTURE

The ALEA event sits in a very different scenario to its regional spin off that we know as PAVCon in Europe. The USA has less rigid certification, need less engines to fly and can sometimes get away with flying by the seat of their pants thanks to having access to being 'Public Use.'

Some across the seas in the 'old country' see this flexibility as sign of weakness and they reject any notion that the Americans may know stuff. Many, most, do not and they embrace the learning that is offered and mostly their units find time and resources to make it happen. That still leaves those attendees that are self-funded enthusiasts. A significant sector of US airborne law enforcement is made up of volunteers and they are accepted if not embraced.

At the start of this report I mentioned that this year marked the 'last' ALEA Expo. That is the case, things are to change.

For some time now the ALEA Board have worried about the failure of the organisation to attract a broader membership beyond law enforcement to overcome an ongoing perceived drop in membership numbers. As part of the remedy elements have been cut back and expansion opportunities sought in Europe and South America.

The latest tactic is to push the central focus on law enforcement to one side and rename the organisation with a name that incorporates and promotes Public Use rather than Law Enforcement from next year.

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There is an assumption that people from fire, rescue and other airborne emergency services are waiting to joining as soon as the term 'law enforcement' is removed from the organisation name. ALEA, as a name, is about done but that fact is not yet wholly embraced by a membership that only had it confirmed to a section of them in late July at the Thursday Members "Opening Breakfast."

The mid-October Public Safety Drone Expo 2017 in New Orleans is aimed at the police fire and search & rescue sectors is to be the first event aimed at the sector, this was launched prior to the Reno announcement without a clear ALEA branding and therefore led to the announcement being a foregone conclusion so no-one was exactly shocked about the decisions made for the future.

There is a competition, announced at the meeting but not yet published, for members to design a new logo to replace the now familiar one featured on page 4.

At this time, to use an American term, there has been no general announcement to the membership – I looked – but the change does not take place until December so it is no major issue. So, anyone missing from that July 27 members breakfast and AGM probably remains unaware of the future this side of the publication of the next edition of the house magazine *Air Beat*.

The question remains, has membership been falling because of the name of the organisation? Or is it just a modern malaise?




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AWARDS

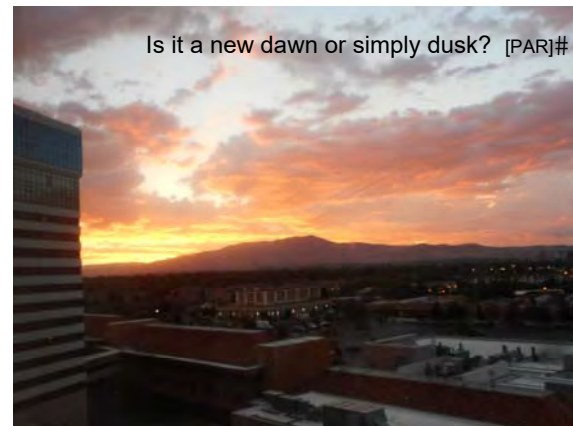
The Friday night was the two-hour long Awards Reception at the Peppermill Resort. James A Di Giovanna, formerly the chief of the Los Angeles County Sheriff Aero Bureau received a well-deserved Robert L Cormier Award for his services to ALEA and the industry.

Other awards went to Eric Bashta and Jerry Osterloh with the Riverside County Sheriff’s Department, Mike Broderick with Trace Worldwide, Jennifer Potocki Delaware State Police Aviation Section and Glen Wagner of the FBI.

Perhaps the most unfortunately timed award was to the Ontario Provincial Police [OPP] for their UAS Program. In my mind, it seems a little early in the development of UAS/Drones to be giving out ‘awards’ so regularly but that is for other minds to wrest with. It just strikes me that the UAS Award, Sponsored by Aeryon Labs Inc went slightly awry this time out because within days the OPP were reporting that they had lost a drone. Not just any drone either.... It was a manufactured by Aeryon Systems – and it was a good one, not a cheap and cheerful consumer level DJI. The company doesn’t list prices online, but police in Durham recently shelled out \$132,000 for an Aeryon Sky Ranger, the same model the OPP lost.

Aeryon pitches itself as the safe option compared to consumer level tech such as DJI which it says can’t be trusted because of security issues. The result was that in August they are still looking for it and had to ground over £500,000 worth of kit and now are restricted to the four remaining drones that are not of that manufacture.

We should know much more about all things by the time the newly constituted organisation meets up next July in Louisville, Kentucky. You may remember Louisville from the 2016 HAI, one of the quietest of its ilk. I was easily able to get the hotel of my choice in the town just two days before the event.



Is it a new dawn or simply dusk? [PAR]#



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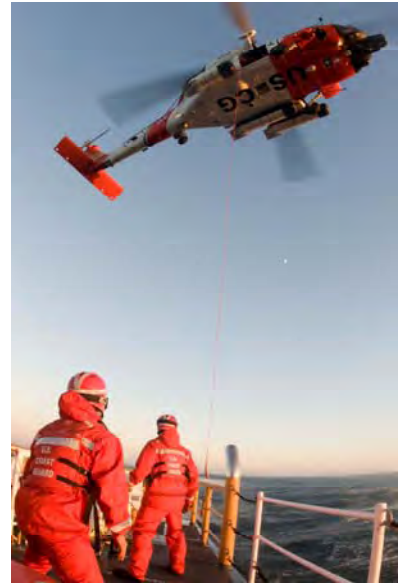
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UPCOMING EVENTS

30 September-1 October 2017 The UTC Aerospace Systems (UTAS), Hoist & Winch Business Unit first annual Europe Rescue Hoist Operators' Conference, Hilton Hotel London Canary Wharf, South Quay, Marsh Wall, London E14 99SH. Register using the following link: <http://www.goodrichhoistandwinch.com/company/operators-conference-europe/>. UTC are seeking nominations for 2017 Rescue of the Year. Please submit nominations by email to michelle.matthews2@utas.utc.com Please include a brief description for the nomination. UTC will be announcing the winner on Day 2 of the conference. Video uploads can be submitted to the Hoist and Winch Website at <http://www.goodrichhoistandwinch.com/>



16-19 October 2017 Public Safety Drone Expo 2017. New Orleans Doubletree. The event will offer a combination of interactive public safety specific UAS courses, classes and general sessions focussing on law enforcement. Details via www.alea.org

17-18 October 2017 15th Aerial Fire Fighting, Nimes, France. Supported by the Ministry of Interior, Securite Civile. Tangent Link brings the 15th Aerial Firefighting Conference to Europe to debate, learn and acquire the skills and lessons-learned for safe aerial firefighting. The provisional conference programme covers Interoperability of EU aerial firefighting resources, Training & Simulation, Aerial Demonstration, Suppressant & Retardant Technology breakthroughs and Aerial Surveillance Aircraft & Systems. <http://tangentlink.com/event/aerial-firefighting-europe-2017/#programme>

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PAvCon Europe 2018. There is a long way to go yet but current plans are that the next edition of this popular annual event will be held near Warsaw in Poland. A provisional date for your diary is 21-24 May 2018 but nothing is yet set in stone so if you know of a date clash we may still be able to adjust the date. The next meeting on the subject is in October at which time the date and venue will harden.

As you are aware PAVCon is evolving and will be moving operations to Europe and the Euro in the next few months. Things are moving slowly on the PAVCon Accounting side as we confirm that our vision of an 'Association' is legally acceptable. Overall the only visible change will be the currency, the long-standing exhibitor fees of £1,000 will now morph to 1,250 Euros.



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