

Police Aviation News

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Issue 256

August 2017



NORWAY ORDERS AW169

HUNGRY FOR THE MD900

PC-12 1,500 FOR THE DOCTOR

EDITORIAL

This month Police Aviation News will appear in two editions. In a few days a report on this year's ALEA Expo will appear. This is important because it is the last such event. To find out why you will have to read the report....

Times are hard in the industry and many have been dismayed on how weak the helicopter industry is at the moment and they are equally worried at the effect the crash in the oil and gas industry has had on the sector. A great deal of faith was placed in the Asian market and the emergency services sector to carry the industry through.

It is clear from the overall production figures of completed airframes by the MRO's and the failures of small suppliers that neither has been enough.

Bryn Elliott

LAW ENFORCEMENT

CAYMAN ISLANDS

POLICE SERVICE: The RCIPS has been given an undisclosed wind-fall from the UK's Conflict Stability and Security Fund towards "state-of-the-art night vision equipment" for the police helicopter that will allow the crew to see in the dark. The upgrade will involve modifications to the eighteen-year-old EC135T1 and the provision of night vision goggles for the helicopter crew.

"This is an important step in enhancing our ability to operate safely and effectively at night in challenging weather conditions," said Police Commissioner Derek Byrne. "The upgrade provides us with the latest technology, which significantly boosts our ability to manage search-and-rescue and crime operations after dark."



Once the equipment is fitted, a training programme and crew certification programme will also be carried out to enhance the police pilots' existing experience and skills using similar technology.

The early July announcement coincides with the arrival of the British naval vessel, RFA *Mounts Bay*, for disaster and security related exercises in Cayman. The ship has a Wildcat helicopter on board that is equipped with night vision capability for use in any night-time search-and-rescue or enforcement operations during its deployment to the Caribbean.

Since the government purchased the RCIPS helicopter in 2008, it has been the source of some controversy due to the number of enhancement it has had fitted and their effect on the limited local funds. The government has also claimed that it was misinformed about the operational capabilities of the eighteen years old ex-UK police machine when it was recommended to them by the police commissioner at the time, Stuart Kernohan.

Later that same year, it was the subject of a report by the Office of the Auditor General, which found that no comprehensive and detailed analysis of what the RCIPS wanted from the helicopter was ever completed.

Despite the cost and inevitable down-time being maintained and upgraded off the islands in the USA the number of enhancement added has softened the negative attitude towards it. The crime-fighting helicopter has been modified to help with medical emergencies as well as search-and-rescue on land and sea.

GERMANY

HAMBURG: Early last month Germany hosted a noisy and violent G20 Summit of the worlds heads of state. There were plenty of instances where the politicians were clearly fractious in words if not deeds. Out on the streets of Hamburg it was far worse with pitched battles taking place between around 8,000 hard-core and often heavily disguised protesters and similarly identity shrouded police. The weapons of choice were at best vocal but often including sits ins and civil disobedience all through to brute force. At the latter

FRONT COVER: Its high summer in the northern hemisphere so this is a very suitable image for the time of year. It shows the only UK HEMS Bell 429 as operated by the Wiltshire Air Ambulance G-WLTS in the ripened oil seed rape crop as it assisted the Western Counties EC135T2 air ambulance at a vehicle accident at Meysey Hampton [page 16]

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end of the scale were thrown missiles, fire and hand-to-hand contact. The police reaction was observation, water cannon and hand-to-hand contact. Hundreds of police officers and an unfathomed number of protesters were injured.

It was an event that was centred on Hamburg and therefore the Hamburg Police and their limited air support resources of two EC135s was heavily committed. In the background, the Bundespolizei Fleigergruppes provided logistic support observation and transportation of the heads of state. Being a G20 the effort was significantly heavier than the more regular G8 events. The VIPs to be protected were assessed as 6,500 leaders, officials, journalists and other guests and some 20,000 police were on hand to provide that protection.

Two pilots of the 'Libelle 2' [Dragonfly 2] EC135P2 D-HTWO reported that they were had their eyesight affected by lasers shone at them from the ground. Another officer was hospitalised with an eye injury after a firework exploded in his face.



Police claimed up to 8,000 extremists, some armed with home-made weapons, are targeting the summit, which is surrounded by a ring of steel. [media]

Ed: When the Bundespolizei pulled out of this year's PAVCon in the UK early in the planning stage on the grounds that they had a G20 to police a month later I must admit I was sceptical. Clearly the degree of public unrest faced by the police in Germany [let alone what it may have grown into] was way beyond my expectation. With the high level of aviation resources available to Germany compared with other nations it brings into question how other European nations might fare if faced with a similar or escalated situation with their limited resources.

Perhaps we can rest assured that some of those other nations already bask in the sure and certain knowledge that they know it all and do not need to learn from others? Perhaps not.

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ERRATUM: The editor wishes to apologise for getting his Geography wrong once again. Last month there was an item on the Sarawak Police listed under Indonesia. A correspondent has confirmed that it is still in Malaysia

JAMAICA

DEFENCE FORCE: Air support to the police in Jamaica lies entirely with the military and it is they, rather than the civil police, who have to fend off any calls of heavy handedness or simply noise nuisance. Law enforcement is struggling in the nation.

A heavy helicopter presence over certain communities has been explained by Col Jamie Ogilvie, the man in charge of operations at the Jamaica Defence Force, as a method for deterring, detecting, and defeating criminals in their endeavours, especially as the security forces await the go-ahead to enter designated zones of special operations.

This heavy presence is meant to convey a message to both criminals and the wider society that the Up Park Camp based JDF is sticking to its mandate to support the police and to work with them to ensure that criminality does not present a threat to the rule of law and public order. The police are struggling with their task and the army and JDF are helping them. To that end the soldiers have been granted police powers.

The media are asking if the action will “finally rid Jamaica of criminal elements” but clearly the police do not yet see that as an end game to be achieved soon. Containment is the name of the game. [Gleaner]

NORWAY

POLITIE: Scandinavian regional publication Nordic Rotors led with the story early in July and the final version came out at the ALEA event in Reno. The plan for the police in Norway to replace their current Airbus EC135T2 helicopters with an initial contract for three Leonardo AW169s to operate from a new base.

Nordic Rotors state that the contract is scheduled to be signed this month and that the Police Directorate will not provide further comment until that time. The consequent announcement at the ALEA event confirmed the dateline for the signing and added that the contract will include three aircraft, with an option for a further three units, and a 10 year maintenance package. The specific layout of the Norwegian Police’s helicopters will allow the transport of six people plus crew. [Nordic Rotors/Leonardo]



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AIR GUARD: Four Leonardo AW139 helicopters operated by the Air Guard and used in anti-crime operations have been grounded as the Cabinet has decided to discontinue a multi-million-dollar maintenance contract. It was announced by the Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley that the nation could not afford a due payment in the current economic climate. They are parked up in a hangar at the Piarco International Airport.

With the four modern helicopters now grounded there are proposals to again rely on the helicopters of the National Helicopter Service who were undertaking the police and SAR role prior to the arrival of the four AW139s.

In 2010, AgustaWestland, announced the sale to the Trinidad and Tobago's Air Guard (TTAG) for search and rescue, surface surveillance, law enforcement, drug interdiction and disaster relief operations. The contract, comprising the aircraft and support package, was valued at US\$348 million. It is said that there are no plans to sell off the grounded airframes.



The package was aimed at making the TTAG a stand-alone operation, which is yet to happen and is now overdue. The AOC and training development for the operation is currently with Cobham and the latest payment of just over \$28M is presumably due to them. [HeliWeb/The Nation]

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UNITED KINGDOM

NPAS: There is not much positive news that comes out of Wakefield, despite them being nominally well served by a recently expanded PR department. There is not much news coming out of Wakefield full stop.

True that news seeps out of the organisation via such as Twitter and Facebook but it is clearly locally fed and not collated or focussed from on high – which may well be a very positive thought to hold on to.

The latest 'leak' via the Social Media that some might suggest would have been better directed by the Wakefield PR office is that the office people have been busy with the issue of two Official Journal of the EU [OJEU] tenders via the UK 'Blue Light Portal.'

- The first will be to NVIS modify and certify the six EC135 (T2+) airframes to ground level.
- The second is to install and certify CVFDR (cockpit voice and flight data recorders) to the entire fleet of EC135 and EC145 helicopters.

This leak coincided with the June 29 publication of Contract Notice 2017/S 124-252385 by the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire with documents available via the Blue Light Portal. This dealt with the CVR contract only and was projected to cost in the region of £800,000.

It is noteworthy that this follows on from the Police Scotland accident in November 2013 and the UK CAA proposal to fit cockpit voice and flight data recording systems into aircraft. The bids need to be in place by August 2 with work to start in October with an end date of March 31, 2019. Well over six years after the accident that precipitated the requirement.

There is no official word on the NVIS upgrade – just the Social Media statement. It would seem that any such upgrade would also need to be fleet wide rather than just confined to the yet to be completed Babcock upgrade airframes. Time will no doubt explain that.

Whilst on that subject it has emerged that a key supplier to the NPAS fleet is in administration. Britannia 2000 was selected and contracted by Babcock International and Airborne Technologies for the supply of their Compact Airborne Mission Computer (CAMC) for the EC135T2 upgrades and the new fixed wing fleet.

Apparently, there has been an attempt to rescue the company by a purchase but that failed and the administrators were called in. The situation is ongoing but could be difficult for the completion of the new aircraft or future product support if either a new owner or an alternative manufacturer of the equipment is not found.

Meanwhile after months of silence on the subject it seems that Specialist Aviation Services [aka PAS/MAS] have bought up the majority of the remaining ex-NPAS MD902s including G-BXZK (900-00057), G-CMBS (900-00111), G-GMPX (900-00122), G-SUSX (900-00065), G-SYPS (900-0104) & G-YPOL (900-00078). Change of ownership on these all went through on July 17 and 18 but a number of the airframes were reported at Staverton long before then.

Ed: The question that quickly sprang to mind was whether the purchases were in support of operations in the UK or elsewhere and whether in the manner of spares or for a customer as airframes. Nothing of the sort it seems. The sale does not actually involve SAS greatly, they are just the agent looking after the airframes while the real purchasers get their act together.

These ex-police airframes and the two sold by Yorkshire Air Ambulance [G-SEMS and G-SASH] are reportedly being purchased by a group fronted by an American and a Czech for supply to the Hungarian HEMS operation. I expect they will remain where they are so they can be flown and kept airworthy until delivery to the new owners.

The police in Hungary bought a fleet of former German police MD900 helicopters some months ago.



CHESHIRE: Thanks to the blog of the NPCC Aviation Lead we know that two men were sentenced for their part in attempting to use a drone to get a cocktail of illegal drugs into Risley prison.

On 23 June 2017 Paul Dunn, from Risley Prison was sentenced to 50 months at Manchester Crown Court after being found guilty of two counts of conspiring to bring an article into the prison and conspiracy to supply psychoactive drug at an earlier hearing. Umar Hamid, 26, from Lydia Street, Accrington was sentenced to eight months after being found guilty of supply supplying a psychoactive drug at an earlier hearing. Andrew Walch, 27, from Risley Prison was sentenced to 54 months in prison after admitting two counts of conspiring to bring an article into the prison and conspiracy to supply psychoactive drug at an earlier hearing.

Another man Renelle Carlisle, 24, was sentenced in October 2016 to three years two months for pleading guilty to two counts of possession with intent to supply class A drugs, two counts of possession with intent to supply class B drugs and one count of possession with intent to supply Class C drugs.

The drone was forfeited along with the drugs back in 2016.

DS Mark Naylor said: "The two latest convictions show that whether you're inside or outside and involved in arranging items to be brought into the prison, you will be dealt with robustly and we will continue to find those responsible so that we can put them before the courts. This result reflects the severity with which the Courts treat offences such as these. "[Simon Byrne NPCC Aviation Lead]

DEVON & CORNWALL: After testing the use of drones with Dorset Police since 2015 the two forces have set up a permanent unit with three full-time staff and six-drones and held a high-profile launch event at which numerous capability scenarios were promoted.



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The joint force unit is aiming to have 40 officers complete their Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) drone training and up to 18 drones in operation by the start of 2018.

Some of the drones have a police livery and are equipped with zoom cameras and thermal imaging others are covert.

As well as crime scene and road searches, the drones will be used to patrol 600 miles (900km) of coastline and extensive woodlands to help combat wildlife crime.

Chief Supt. Jim Nye, who leads the new unit, hopes the team will be able to shape how other forces used drone technology in the future.

Ed: Looking good already, here comes an empire. Talking of an aim to have 40 trained officers should ring alarm bells. Standard helicopter units have a staff of about ten and here we have the 'cheaper' version talking of having four times as many. Let us not notice the costly dedicated support vehicles and that Chief Superintendents salary!

There were no obvious signs that the street police that set this up were in the least bit interested in any feedback or user advice that NPAS may have wished to offer them on how to operate or procure unmanned craft. As ever the maxim that you should never claim a capability you may never have trained for applies.

The same day as this story appeared a local news media, Devon Live, disclosed that the [former Devon & Cornwall Constabulary] Airbus Helicopters EC145 was unavailable for service in the south-west due to it being heavily involved in air support to the London EC145s flying over London in conjunction with the Grenfell Tower high rise fire. In recent months availability of the high time London EC145s has been a cause for concern.

At the recent PAVCon it was stressed that NPAS operate the worlds high time airframes for both the EC135 and EC145. It is illustrative of the work they do but for many of these airframes it shows. There are higher time airframes out there in the oil industry and law enforcement but these generally built up the hours over a greater number of years and less stressfully. Things are breaking. Even the 'new' rebuilds show significant corrosion [on the parts reused in the renewal] but money is short for fleet renewal.



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AVALEX TECHNOLOGIES

NORTH YORKSHIRE: Showing signs that some police organisations in the UK accept you can learn from others is news that North Yorkshire Police are embracing a scheme that was started by Cheshire Police.

A project which provides local young people with the chance to go behind-the-scenes and gain work experience at their local police force went through a pilot week in June. The five-day programme included a visit to one of the NPAS bases.

Sixteen young people aged 14-15 years-old were nominated by their schools to experience a taste of uniform and plain clothes policing including forensics, dogs, firearms support, control room as well as air support.

The scheme was initially inspired by one established by Cheshire Constabulary in seeking to formalise a means by which students get a real insight into what it's like to work with the police without putting them at risk. The broad spectrum of workshops offered gave students the chance to better understand the workings of the organisation.

Pictured: Successful participants on the pilot North Yorkshire Police Work Experience programme enjoying an afternoon visit to NPAS.



Ed: Nothing really new but it does allow youngsters to learn about the subject in a structured manner. All too often in the past police embracing of work experience simply resulted in the youngsters being dumped in their local police station for a few days where they were either poorly instructed, simply got in the way or otherwise wasted their time.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE: The trial has started of the police officers accused of being involved in the use of the former MD902 Explorer G-SYPS police helicopter role equipment to seek out, photograph and record the sexual activities of several people on the ground.

Lee Walls, Malcolm Reeves, Matthew Lucas and Matthew Loosemore are all accused of participating in the filming of naked sunbathers while employed as members of a South Yorkshire Police helicopter crew. A fifth ex-police officer, Adrian Pogmore, 51, has admitted to being involved in the making footage on July 28, 2008 as well as three other surreptitious videos taken of five naked or semi-clothed sunbathers, one of whom was only eight-years-old, across the South Yorkshire area between 2007 and 2012.

Pogmore pleaded guilty to four charges of misconduct in a public office. But four of his colleagues - two civilian pilots and two police constables - have denied involvement in the making of the recordings.

In one instance, the couple involved were aware they were being recorded but they 'relished' being filmed. In video footage shown to the court the naked woman can be clearly seen waving to the camera before initiating the sexual activity with her partner.

The organisation that operated the helicopter has long ceased to exist but the successor organisation, NPAS, has been drawn into the case because two of the suspects became NPAS employees. In addition,



Ollie Dismore the Director of Flight Operations was called in as an expert witness on interpreting the operational aspects of the flights as suggested by the flight data embedded in the images that are central to the case.

His evidence to the court stated that in one instance the helicopter was about 600 feet away from the people being recorded and this was “within the pilot’s operational range of view”. He also noted that there were times during the recordings that the aircraft was showing an altitude of 162 feet and therefore flying lower than is allowed over housing unless there was a definite policing purpose in place.

Asked about the view the pilot would have had, compared with that of the high specification 15-inch EO/IR camera, he told the jury that it would be within the pilots view and that he would have to be aware of the focal point of the orbit to undertake the manoeuvre.

The case continues [Media reports]

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: It has recently been confirmed that there will be an American Heroes Air Show at Hansen Dam Sports Complex, Lakeview Terrace, Sylmar, California on Saturday 4th November. The one-day free entry family event is open from 9am to 4pm. The venue is a Park featuring a playground, swimming facility & sports areas, plus a lake for fishing & boating. The event will provide the customary line-up of emergency services helicopters added to recently confirmed military machines. There are expected to be various promotional and recruiting sideshows designed to attract families. The contact for this event is JD Paules, PO Box 5188, West Hills, CA 91308 call +1 (818) 631-8132 or write info@heroes-airshow.com Entry is free. www.heroes-airshow.com

There is an interesting article on the California Highway Patrol in the June/July edition of the Rotorhub magazine. The five-page article penned by Barry D Smith gives a broad outline of current CHP operations, crewing and equipment. The main focus is the newly arrived Airbus Helicopters H125. It is worth of seeking out either in hard copy or in its digital edition.

In March 2015 Airbus Helicopters announced that the CHP has taken delivery of the first of three AS350B3e’s ordered as part of a five-year contract to upgrade their entire helicopter fleet to what is now marketed as the H125, the latest evolution of the AS350s they have been flying for 30 years. The new craft were completed by Hangar One Avionics of Carlsbad, CA and the article is the latest update in the story.

OHIO: The Hamilton County Sheriff’s Office based in Cincinnati, is to have its 1989 MD500E N510HC up graded by the manufacturer to an FAA-certified MD 530F model helicopter. The E-model aircraft will be overhauled and re-certified as an F-model (Type Certificate 369FF) in just a period of a few weeks. The FAA-approved factory recertification takes place at MD Helicopters’ manufacturing facility & completions centre in Mesa, Arizona.

The enhancements include:

- an engine upgrade from the Rolls Royce 250-C20B to the more powerful RR250-C30,
- replacement of the blades and stabilizers,
- installation of the Garmin G500H dual-screen electronic flight display,
- addition of a Fargo Auxiliary Fuel Tank.



The Hamilton County Sheriff’s Office Aviation Unit has operated their MD 500E since 1989. The Air Unit, staffed by two full-time pilots and two TFOs, also includes an MD 520N; a derivative of the proven 500-series airframe that features MDHI’s exclusive NOTAR® system for anti-torque and directional control. The Hamilton County Sheriff’s Office will take delivery of their newly certified MD 530F later this summer.

[MDHI]



AIR AMBULANCE

AUSTRALIA

FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE: Pilatus handed over the 1,500th PC-12 to its loyal customer of many years, the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia (RFDS). The PC-12 has become a Pilatus bestseller, and is used all over the world.

Just under 2,000 Pilatus employees and guests took part, watching with pride as the 1,500th airframe with its special livery was handed over by Oscar J. Schwenk, Chairman of Pilatus. The anniversary aircraft had been earmarked for the RFDS as a symbolic thank you for its longstanding loyalty. Pilatus employees were invited to write 'thank you' messages to the customer, these were displayed on the PC-12.

An RFDS delegation led by John Lynch, CEO Royal Flying Doctors Service Central Operations, accepted the aircraft.

"We are very proud of our partnership with Pilatus and would like to say how honoured we are to accept this anniversary PC-12 today. No other aircraft in the world compares to the PC-12. The PC-12 is perfectly tailored to the rigorous conditions in the Australian outback: we appreciate its special characteristics and recognise the indispensable role it plays in enabling us to meet the challenges of our mission as it is defined today. "

Back in 1994, the RFDS was amongst the first customers for the type and currently operates 33 to provide medical assistance to people living in the remotest areas, right across the continent. The RFDS transports around 18,000 patients yearly, operating in and out of short and unmade bush strips.

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The handover celebration was combined with the inauguration of a new assembly hangar. The versatile assembly hangar provides a further 10,000 square metres (107,639 square feet) of space and was used for series production from July onwards. The self-supporting construction was built using local timber from sustainable resources.

NEW SOUTH WALES: In mid-July SW Ambulance Commissioner Dominic Morgan officially opened the new \$5.5M NSW Ambulance & Westpac Rescue Helicopter Base at Belmont.

Located at Lake Macquarie Airport, 864 Pacific Highway, Marks Point, Mr Morgan said the 24/7 base enables the NSW Ambulance and Hunter New England Health medical team on board to deliver faster and further coverage across regional, rural and remote NSW communities.

Built by local contractors and partly funded by a \$2.3 million contribution from the NSW Government's Restart NSW Hunter Infrastructure Investment Fund, the new base is designed to further improve safety, training capacity, responsiveness, work and communications processes between operational teams at new bases at Newcastle, Lismore and Tamworth.

QUEENSLAND: Babcock Mission Critical Services Australasia has won contract extensions to provide helicopter emergency services for RACQ CQ Rescue Helicopter Service in Mackay and RACQ Capricorn Helicopter Service until "at least" 2024 with Bell 412 aircraft. It has been working with the two organisations since 2013.


Babcock Mission Critical Services Australasia, provides EMS, search and rescue, surveillance operations, law enforcement, aerial work and marine pilot transfer services with a fleet of helicopters based in Queensland, South Australia and Victoria, was previously known as Australian Helicopters before it re-branded in June 2016.

Hervey Bay Hospital's new helipad is now available to receive patients as part of the first phase of a \$44.2M Emergency Department redevelopment.

The next phase of the redevelopment project includes the building of six new ambulance bays – an increase from the current two – and excavation and site preparation work for the construction of the new three-storey main building. The building would allow the ground-floor ED to almost double its current capacity from 19 to 37 beds.

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HUNGARY

NATIONAL EMERGENCY & AMBULANCE: In a storyline that is largely based on unconfirmed rumours from several sources it appears that the Hungarian National Emergency & Ambulance Service (OMSZ) are about to give up their fleet of EC135 helicopters and replace them with a fleet of MD902 helicopters sourced second-hand from the United Kingdom.

The fleet of five remaining EC135T2 [one was lost in an accident] have been in service for around ten years and most were previously operated as air ambulances in Austria.

As mentioned on page 6 there has been a wholesale purchase of a number of spare UK police and air ambulance MD902s, their use in Hungary remains unconfirmed by any individual but not denied by most.

UNITED KINGDOM

ESSEX & HERTS: The charity continue crew training throughout July and entry into service is imminent. The training, primarily conducted from the North Weald base, has been interspersed with flag flying and attending local fund-raising events to boost fund-raising.

The crews are apparently conscious that the AW169 is a very different type to the MD902 and will significantly alter past practices. It is larger and that will inhibit its ability to let down onto urban streets, as will the much more aggressive footprint of the rotor downdraft. It was noteworthy that crews were asking on-lookers at North Weald to stand further back than had been normal with the earlier airframe. The AW169 will be based at North Weald as that currently offers the only hangar large enough to house the type. The back-up MD902 will be able to use either base.



KENT, SURREY, SUSSEX: Despite limited opposition from neighbours Kent Air Ambulance is set to move back to Rochester Airport at Chatham.

Planning permission to move the charity's base was approved by Medway Council in mid-June but it was put on hold after an objector called for the government to intervene over concerns about noise, traffic, safety and pollution. It was subsequently rejected.

Eleven people objected to the relocation plans, compared to 235 letters in support. The charity will aim to start work on building a new office, which will house up to 60 staff from the air ambulance trust's management, administration and fundraising teams, as well as visiting pilots.

It was hoped the work would be complete by the autumn, when the trust takes delivery of the larger AW169 helicopters which are too large for the long-term helipad at Marden.

The development comprises a two storey, prefabricated, headquarters office building and the provision of 9 car parking spaces. The site area is 0.17 hectares and includes vacant land immediately to the south of the hangar formerly used by AV8 Helicopters on the southern part of the airport. An existing temporary building, portacabin and fencing south of the hangar are to be removed.

KSSAAT expects to take over the lease on the existing hangar to the north, following the closure of AV8, and this will house its air ambulance helicopter and be used for unplanned maintenance and storage if required. iPad will help to optimise the effectiveness of its operations. The AV8 Helipad and Hangar was built during December 2005 and February 2006, operational from March 2006 and is therefore established in use for over ten years.

The Kent air ambulance was operating from Rochester and a small portable building years ago and continued to use Rochester Airport as a "satellite" airfield to its main Helicopter Emergency Medical Service bases at Marden in Kent. The flying will now centre on Redhill Aerodrome where maintenance will be available but Rochester will still feature for either more effective operational response, or to meet weather needs.

KSSAAT envisages that the frequency of helicopter visits to the airport is likely to increase. There are no planning restrictions on the number of emergency helicopter movements allowed at the airport.

It was not that long ago that there were apparently firm rumours that Rochester was to be closed and demolished but the ebb and flow of fortune is apparently going in the reverse direction at the moment and Rochester Airport Ltd has stated its intention to proceed with the proposed development of a lit paved runway with parallel grass runway, the formation of a grassed bund, the re-siting of helipads, the development of a hub building with control tower and associated building and a family viewing area.

LINCS & NOTTS: In addition to receiving their new AW169 helicopter the charity has invested in a brand-new Clearview Modular Building for its HQ at RAF Waddington - designed, supplied and installed by Portable Building Sales.

The new, bespoke modular building will act as a central base for the HEMS team and replaces small, old building.



The new 13 section Clearview Modular Building includes a wide range of facilities, including an operations room, board room, training room, mess room, reception room, toilets, showers, study room, drying room and sluice room.

The exterior was designed to fit in with the existing air force station buildings, with a dark green cladding, in addition to a brighter yellow roof to match the Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance branding. It features large, full length windows, designed to maximise natural light inside.

The building was delivered and installed in a single day with the Portable Building Sales team spending a further 3 weeks to complete the project, including the creation of a free decking area that can be accessed from the rest room. [MENAFN]



NORTH WEST: A new £1M helicopter landing pad at Aintree University Hospital in Liverpool received its first visitors as part of an inaugural test flight by the North West Air Ambulance.

The helipad will save vital minutes when transferring trauma patients from air ambulance into the hospital, which is part of the regional major trauma centre together with neuro specialists at the Walton Centre. Until now air ambulances have had to land on the playing fields on Lower Lane, after which a road ambulance is sent to transfer patients to Aintree's £35M Urgent Care and Trauma Centre. This can add up to half an hour to the journey but with the new helipad it will take just a few minutes.

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The helipad was funded by the HELP Appeal, which has been providing significant grants to fund life-saving helipads since 2009.

THAMES VALLEY: Helicopters from Oxfordshire's ambulance, police and RAF "soared in unison" across the county skies in a celebration of unity between the three services.

An air ambulance, police helicopter and RAF transport which all operate from RAF Benson near Oxford flew a circuit around the area early in July.



The special event, a first for the south Oxfordshire base, included a flypast of the Airbus Helicopters UK HQ at Oxford Airport in Kidlington.

Group Captain Hamish Cormack said: "We work in such close proximity to our National Police Air Service and Thames Valley Air Ambulance colleagues on a daily basis that it's imperative we work effectively as a team.

"While we perform different roles, essentially we all do the same thing: delivering helicopter support where it is needed the most.



"It was fantastic to see the three aircraft flying together to celebrate our team work and to reinforce the Team Benson spirit."

The RAF Puma HC Mk2, flown by the Puma Force currently operating in Afghanistan, was joined in the Oxfordshire skies by the Airbus EC135T2 of the National Police Air Service and Thames Valley Air Ambulance's Airbus H135. [MOD/Crown copyright]

WESTERN COUNTIES: A crossroads accident between two cars at the Meysey Hampton crossroads on the A417 – described as “the most horrific accident I have ever witnessed” by a motorist at the scene – left two people injured. They had been returning from Cirencester on the A417 and were waiting to turn right into the High Street of the village. The other car was travelling through the village and did not stop at the cross roads hitting the waiting car and led to it summersaulting into a field of crops.

The woman driver aged in her 60s was taken from the scene by the Great West EC135T2 Air Ambulance with life-threatening injuries. She died in Southmead Hospital two days later. The male passenger from the same vehicle, her husband, suffered chest injuries and was also taken to hospital. [Media/PAR/Alan Norris]



©Alan Norris

YORKSHIRE: A TV company based in York has won two Royal Television Society awards held at the Royal Armouries Museum in Leeds on July 7.

Air Television, which created Helicopter ER for UKTV's Really channel, beat BBC Four and More 4, for the best low-budget series, and senior shooting researcher Joe Foley was voted best newcomer in the One To Watch award.

The company is based at the University of York and was founded by former BBC executives Ian Cundall and Andy Joynson. Its film crew was trained up to Paramedic level and was embedded with the Yorkshire Air Ambulance to enable them to film the action and yet be available as crew members.

<https://www.rts.org.uk/award/rts-yorkshire-programme-awards-2017>



Lee Greenwood (Paramedic), Chris Attrill (Pilot), Matt Richards (Series Producer) and Matt Syrat (Paramedic)

UNITED STATES

TEXAS: Apollo MedFlight in Childress has unveiled a new emergency transport helicopter, an Airbus Helicopters EC135T1 N892T. With bases in Amarillo, Guymon, Borger, Childress and Lufkin, Apollo offers rapid response throughout the region.

The Airbus may be new to Childress but it is relatively old, being a 1998 Eurocopter owned by Helifleet and the 52nd off the production line. As they say there is no such thing as an old helicopter and it will help Apollo meet the needs of Childress and surrounding communities with rapid response emergency medical transportation. [KFDA]

Rico Aviation recently announced its partnership with Air Methods, expanding its critical care reach with the addition of a seventeen years old Bell 407 helicopter air ambulance N470RA. The addition of rotor-wing capabilities to the fleet of three fixed wing aircraft enhances access to lifesaving care for residents in the Texas Panhandle, Southern Colorado and Eastern New Mexico.

The helicopter is equipped with a variety of critical care supplies and medications such as oxygen, airway resuscitation equipment, heart monitor/defibrillator, suction, IV pump and fluids, specialized monitor/testing equipment, ventilators, and emergency medications.

The year-round air medical base is located in Dalhart, Texas, and is staffed by Rico Aviation clinicians — flight nurses and flight paramedics — and Air Methods emergency medical services (EMS) pilots and mechanics, creating 15 new jobs.

FIRE CANADA

BRITISH COLUMBIA: Difficult times in the Canadian north-west province as fire rage and place the dispersed population in danger. By mid-month as many as 37,000 people had been forced from their homes by the fast-moving flames whipped up by strong winds. The matter is further complicated by the fires numbering 160 and predicting their behaviour very difficult.

In the ongoing hot and dry summer, the problem will continue and thousands more are at risk of being called to evacuate. The losses in terms of human infrastructure have been massive as illustrated by such as a trailer park in Boston Flats BC being almost completely destroyed on July 10. Across the region more substantial homes have been destroyed as fire arrived at short notice and a helicopter lifting water was wrecked although the pilot survived. The military provided three Griffon, two Chinooks and one Sea King to bolster the civil resources. [CTV]



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UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: Even as more than 50 large wildfires were scorching land across the western US, it was revealed that the largest aerial firefighting tool has been rejected because the US Forest Service [USFS] refuses to let it fly.

The converted Boeing 747 SuperTanker, can drop almost twice as much fire retardant as the largest air-tanker currently in service but that is not swaying decision makers in the USFS. The aircraft is virtually worthless unless the USFS gives it permission to fight fires -- something the agency has yet to do, even though the plane was certified by the FAA last September, and has since fought fires in Chile and Israel.

In May, the Forest Service issued a request for new airtankers, but said it would only give contracts to planes with a dispensing capacity of between 3,000 and 5,000 gallons. The 747 can drop more than 19,000 gallons of water or retardant at a time. The capability comes at a price though and it is suggested that it costs \$250,000 a day to operate.

COLORADO: A recent meeting at the Garfield County Airport outside Rifle considered tactics and technology in making the task of fighting fires at night.

The meeting was between Elbit Systems and representatives of Colorado's Center of Excellence for Advanced Technology Aerial Firefighting, and centred around the company's system for dropping clusters of liquid-filled pellets of retardant and other suppressants on fires. The main benefit claimed was that the delivery is more accurate and less affected by wind drift, allowing the drops to be made from a higher altitude - which is safer at night.

The Center of Excellence for Advanced Technology Aerial Firefighting was set up in Rifle after a competi-



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tion decided that the level of local support was high and the airport already was home to an Upper Colorado River Interagency Fire Management Unit facility that includes federal, state and local agencies; proximity to the Colorado Army National Guard High Altitude Aviation Training Site in Eagle County; and accessibility to open lands, uncontrolled airspace with a variety of terrain, and high-risk wildfire areas. All these were positive aspects that would allow the Center to research, test and develop new techniques.

The Elbit pellets are just one thread in broad research and sit alongside studies in the use of drones, in public safety applications such as firefighting, search and rescue, accident reconstruction and crime scene documentation.

Australian fire managers have come to Colorado to research and learn, and France is working on a similar organisation with a view to working with them. The Center will speak on night aerial firefighting operations at the 15th Aerial Fire Fighting Conference in Nimes, France. Supported by the Ministry of Interior, Securite Civile this Tangent Link produced event takes to Europe debate, learning and new skills and lessons-learned for safe aerial firefighting on October 17-18.

Night operations can court controversy but not all have strong opinions against them. Non-flying fire chiefs is one thing but the actual fliers may have stronger opinions that need courting. There is a lack of cost-benefit data on night aerial operations that fail to contrast a fire in an isolated area and another in an area where infrastructure and homes are at risk. [Sentinel]

SEARCH & RESCUE IRELAND

SAR: The tender issued by the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport in mid-June for the renewal of the SAR helicopter contract for Ireland mentioned recently closed on July 25. The tender is for the continuance of the helicopter SAR and is currently served by CHC. The Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport document places a rather confusingly low annual value of 140,000.00 Euros on the contract.

Meanwhile it has been revealed that there are no plans to replace the helicopter lost in the accident off the west coast of Ireland earlier this year. The Irish Coast Guard has still not acquired a replacement helicopter after the loss of R116.

The current Coast Guard contract put in place four helicopters and crews on permanent standby at its stations in Dublin, Sligo, Shannon and Waterford with access to a fifth reserve to cover when others are out of service. The Dublin-based Sikorsky S-92, crashed off the Mayo coast with the loss of all four crew members on board on March 14.

The reserve helicopter that was available to provide back-up for occasions when other aircraft in the fleet were undergoing maintenance is now a prime airframe.

The Department of Defence [DoD] on behalf of the Irish Air Corps (IAC) has issued a requirement for the purchase of three new Fixed Wing Utility Aircraft. The aircraft are for use in intelligence, surveillance, ISTAR and other utility role. There is also a requirement that they operate in the Medevac/air ambulance role, and SAR support.

Ed: This second tender appears to be the replacement of the two existing 1994 vintage CASA CN235 aircraft in use with the IAC. That airframe remains available to the tender as an Airbus model 235. These airframes have been pressed into air ambulance and SAR support roles but noticeable are unavailable in times of crisis. The March 14 crash Sikorsky was supposedly only airborne in unfamiliar terrain because the authorities were unable to put up a CN235 to cover the west coast.



UNITED KINGDOM

PORTLAND: With the closure of the Portland SAR base last month CHC has now departed from the provision of UK SAR. The AW139 G-SARO has been withdrawn from service.

The Portland search and rescue helicopter base began operating as a civilian service in 1995, providing a 12-hour search and rescue capability that served the western end of Hampshire through to South Wales. It has survived numerous attempts at closure in the past thanks to vociferous public support but this was the final curtain after 22 years.

The new contract awarded in 2013 to replace the mixture of military and civilian arrangements did not include this part time operation.

The HM Coastguard search and rescue (SAR) helicopter base in Prestwick started flying the new Leonardo AW189 helicopter for SAR operations on July 1.

The new £20M AW189 helicopters are operated by Bristow Helicopters Limited on behalf of HM Coastguard. The Coastguard base at Prestwick is the second base in the UK to fly this new model of helicopter for SAR missions, following Lee-on-Solent on the south coast, which began operating with this aircraft in April.

The two new AW189s operating from Prestwick will can work in all weathers and in the UK's most challenging terrain. The base has just reached the 500 taskings mark since going live in January 2016 which is an indication of how busy the location is.

The change from the S92 to the AW189 has involved moving teams away to train onto the AW189 while backfilling with S-92 and AW189 transition teams specifically set up to ease the change of airframes.

The Leonardo AW189 is designed to meet long-range, high endurance requirements for search and rescue missions in the most demanding operational and environmental conditions. Over the next 18 months the AW189 helicopter will be introduced at Coastguard SAR helicopter bases at St Athan, Lydd and Inverness, as part of the £1.9 billion investment by the UK Government in this vital frontline emergency service that rescues or assists around 2,000 people a year.



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INDUSTRY

The heavy twin **Airbus Helicopters** H215 helicopter, a member of the world-renowned Super Puma family, was in China demonstrating its multi-mission capabilities for firefighting, power line missions, law enforcement, and passenger transportation during July.

Kicking off a two-week long tour with demo flights in Zhuhai, the H215 then undertook a ferry flight to both Shenzhen and Lijiang covering more than 2,000 km across China, and demonstrating its long-range capabilities, power, speed, and large useful payload.

The H215 also showcased its firefighting capabilities, performing a series of flight demonstrations using a Bambi Bucket to extinguish fires.

The newly available optional increase of the Alternate Gross Weight (AGW) now allows H145 operators to take off with up to 100 kg more useful load. It brings additional benefit especially for law enforcement, para-public or military missions offering the possibility to carry for example more fuel, mission equipment or passengers.

Axel Humpert, Airbus Helicopters Head of H145 Programme says: "Since the entry-in-service of the new H145 in 2014 Airbus Helicopters has continued its efforts to improve the power and performance of the aircraft according to our customers' needs. The new Alternate Gross Weight of 3,800 kg is a significant increase for a light-twin helicopter and offers real added value for H145 operators."

The AGW of 3,800 kg is linked to a temporary restricted flight envelope until 100 kg of fuel are consumed after approximately 20 minutes. It requires a logging of AGW times with a slight impact on Direct Maintenance Costs. The AGW does not apply to Cat. A flights where performance with one engine inoperative is relevant.

Thales and its Canadian partner, **PAL Aerospace**, used the recent Paris air show to promote their collaboration on a special-mission development of the Bombardier Dash 8 Q300.

The companies were promoting their "on-demand" intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) development, which introduces the Thales Searchmaster maritime radar and Amascos mission system onto the Q300 airframe.

This plan enables nations to access a useful ISR capability without owning, operating and maintaining the aircraft and equipment. The resource is available on an hourly basis, enabling operators to experience the use of such equipment, and support personnel training activities prior to making future acquisitions.

The platform is currently being integrated and is due to appear at the Dubai air show in November at which time additional details of the concept to be made public

[Flight]



In March, the vessel Aris 13 was the first merchant vessel to be taken by pirates operating from Somalia since May 2012. Many other major vessel attacks have been reported in its coastal waters since and questions are now being asked as to why there has been a return to attacks on shipping passing through the Gulf of Aden.

Somali piracy dropped away five years ago after risks to the attackers outweighed profits. They simply found some other way to raise funds when the governments of the world put significant naval resources in the region. In some cases, the larger groups diversified into drug and arms smuggling and people trafficking. The piracy did not stop but the targets shrank in size down to local fishing vessels offering far smaller financial returns – a trend that seems to have undergone a small but significant reversal. [Shephard]

The **University of Arizona** is proposing what it claims is a new solution for undertaking surveillance of national borders without necessarily having to invest in major league wall building. The proposal uses smart technologies instead.

The University researchers have been working on an autonomous artificial intelligence framework that uses data to work out how best to deploy various resources that include ground vehicles and drones.

In the case of the 1,900-mile-long border with Mexico it is a complex undertaking from a computer science perspective. Working out when to send a person out on foot, a truck, or an unmanned aerial vehicle depends on factors ranging from weather and terrain to the likelihood that a target might be armed.

To build the system, the university received a three-year, \$750,000 grant from the Air Force Office of Scientific Research. The project began in March and will run through 2020.

At present, the work is still being carried out through computer modelling and simulation to help the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection unit gain a deeper understanding of how it will lead to swifter, better-coordinated border strategies. [Digital Trends]

There has been a management buyout of **Resource Group's Aviation and Aerospace Resourcing** business (including Contractair Ltd) and its Aviation Technical Training business.

The management buyout team has been led by Stephan Hickman who has 19 years of experience running various businesses in the group and who has assumed the role of CEO. Joining Stephan as part of the senior management buyout team are Jonathan Price (COO) and Ian Fitzpatrick (Group Managing Director for Training Services) both of whom have a wealth of experience within aviation and aerospace and as part of Resource Group. A new CFO has been recruited who will be joining the business in due course. Under the MBO these businesses have been acquired by a newly incorporated company (Resource International Group Investments AG), which is registered in the canton of Zug, Switzerland. Financial partners in the transaction include Capital Transmission SA (Virginie Fauveau and Frédéric Tixier, Geneva, Switzerland) for the equity and leading bank, Credit Suisse (Switzerland) Ltd, for the financing.

DAC INTERNATIONAL INC. (DAC), a subsidiary of **Aero Precision Holdings LP**, has signed a distribution agreement with Thommen Aircraft Equipment Ltd. to promote and sale its products.

Thommen is a manufacturer of Mission Equipment, Displays, Air Data Displays, Air Data Computers, Digital Clocks and Chronographs for Helicopters, Fixed Wing Aircraft & UAV's.

DAC International distributes avionics, test equipment, data converters and aviation supplies. The company has an FAA approved manufacturing and development facility, holding several STC's, PMA's and TSO's. www.dacint.com.

Veritas Capital Fund Management LLC ("Veritas") has entered into an agreement to acquire **Vector Aerospace Corporation** (www.vectoraerospace.com). New York-based Veritas is a leading private equity firm, whose current portfolio includes StandardAero.

The acquisition is subject to customary conditions, including securing regulatory approvals, and is expected to close by the fourth quarter of 2017 or early 2018.

Airbus spent the past year and a half reviewing its strategic alternatives relating to Vector as part of a broader business review, Vector having been part of Airbus since its acquisition in 2011. When considering the possibility of selling Vector, Airbus has always stated that this would have to be a 'triple win' to be pursued: a win for Airbus, for Vector, and for Vector's customers.

After receiving and reviewing expressions of interest in Vector from numerous prospective financial and industrial buyers, Airbus decided to accept the offer from Veritas, which meets the criteria required for a sale to be undertaken. The Veritas purchase proposal, which includes all of Vector's sites and divisions, offers development opportunities that are envisaged to bring growth to Vector.

South Korea's Board of Audit and Inspection has reported that South Korea manufactured KUH-1 Surion helicopters have their shortcomings including a lack lightning protection and an adequate anti-icing capability and have yet to certify the engines. They also reported that the type has a water leakage problem. The BAI is seeking a prosecution probe into Chang Myoung-jin, chief of the Defense Acquisition Programme Administration, and other two officials for breach of trust. Chang declared the KUH-1 as operationally ready in December 2016 even though they failed to meet airworthiness qualifications. The audit agency ordered Chang to halt delivery of the Surion's until their problems are fixed and the DAPA to file damage claims against **Korea Aerospace Industries Ltd.**[KAI].

South Korea started the programme in June 2006 and the project was completed in July 2012 after it was approved for combat-use. The South Korean military has been using 60 Surion's in the field against an order for 245. The type, also seen as a potential emergency services helicopter, has suffered some engine problems with its licence built GE T700. These are said to be icing related and the Surion failed some of type trials in both cold and hot weather.

The type was designed and built with the help of foreign manufacturers with the intention of production being undertaken locally but some items including the Airbus Helicopters transmission are still built outside Korea. It would appear that the transfer of the engine technology has not been without problems and

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the BAI is moving towards seeking compensation from KAI and the engine maker Hanwha Techwin Co.

(Yonhap/Korea Herald)

Ed: The National Police Agency has four examples of the Surion, three delivered and one due this year.

Safran Helicopter Engines has launched a new online technical publications service for its entire engine range. Known as Web IETP (Interactive Electronic Technical Publications), the service is available 24/7 on all PCs and tablets, via iOS, Windows and Android device, through its Customer Portal (tools.safran-helicopter-engines.com). It has been developed to improve both access to technical documentation and the overall customer experience.

Every helicopter equipped with a Safran engine comes with a complete set of technical publications covering first and intermediate level maintenance tasks. It includes, amongst others, the maintenance manual, troubleshooting book, spare parts and tools catalogues, and service bulletins.

The main advantage of this new, user-friendly service is that it offers at any time the latest versions of each document. It also comes with an intuitive 3D graphic interface and enhanced functionalities such as advanced search, notes, a listing of all parts and tools needed to perform each task and new cart options. As part of a continuous improvement strategy, the Safran Helicopter Engines Customer Portal has also been improved with a new customer-centric interface to improve navigation. A personalized dashboard to track assets repair process and a wide range of training courses are now available. New health monitoring solutions will be launched in September.

ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

25 March 2017 Airbus Helicopters EC135T2 G-SCAA vs unidentified motor glider. Scotland Charity Air Ambulance. The 135 was returning to its base at Perth Airport, Scotland when it was forced to manoeuvre to miss a motor glider. The two aircraft came within 200m of each other. The motor-glider had been invisible to the pilot due to being obscured by the windscreen pillar, flight crew situational awareness was assessed as "ineffective" because there was no information available to the pilot to warn him about the motor-glider. They were in uncontrolled airspace without a collision warning system and therefore reliant on see and avoid at a time when the pilot was conducting arrival checks and had understandably reduced capacity for an effective look-out. [UK Airprox]

1 July 2017 MBB BK117B-1 N150KF. Air ambulance of St. Louis Children's Hospital operated by Air Methods. Five occupants on board the medical helicopter was treated for minor injuries after it crashed near County Road 234 near Interstate 55 in Perry County, Perryville, Missouri, when heading to St. Louis Children's Hospital. The 29 years old helicopter came down in a field of young crops and toppled over on to its right side with low damage. There were four crew members and one child aboard when it went down. Three crew members were quickly released from the hospital. [media]

2 July 2017 A fire helicopter crashed near the Tahtali water reservoir in western Turkey, as it was attempting to refill with water. Five crew members of the helicopter were rescued by the staff of the reservoir protection service. One of them was slightly injured. [media]

2 July 2017 Airbus Helicopters AS365N Dauphin, Indonesian National Search & Rescue Agency [Basamas]. The helicopter carrying eight people crashed while on the way to help with evacuations near a volcano, the Sileri Crater in Dieng Plateau, that erupted on the main Indonesian island of Java injuring at least ten people. The helicopter was carrying four crewmen and four rescuers when it crashed near Candi-rotto village in Central Java province's Temanggung district, Heronimus Guru. [media]

4 July 2017 Hindustan Dhruv Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) 305. Indian Air Force. Crashed while deployed for lifting stranded persons hit by road blockages in Arunachal Pradesh. Three crew members on board, was deployed between Sagalee and Arunachal capital Itanagar. It was found the next day in a ravine in the mountains of north-eastern Arunachal by rescue teams from the Indian Army, the Indo-Tibetan Border police, and the local police. [media]

4 July 2017 Mil Mi-17 Border Security Force, India. Bad weather forced the BSF Mil carrying Union minister of state for home, Kiren Rijiju, flying from Guwahati, and scheduled to land at the helipad at Raj Bhawan in Itanagar had to make an emergency landing at a polytechnic playground in Itanagar due to heavy rain and poor visibility. The stopover was temporary and it later flew out and landed at the Raj Bhawan helipad. [media]

7 July 2017 Bell 407 N650HP. Law enforcement operated by Kansas Highway Patrol. Two Kansas Highway Patrol troopers escaped serious injury when the patrol helicopter they were occupying struck a hangar and made a hard landing on the west ramp of Philip Billard Municipal Airport in Topeka, Kansas. The

tail rotor was damaged but the airframe remained upright with the skids fully splayed. The FLIR 8500, BMS downlink and searchlight will have been damaged or w/o. The pilot, 54-year old patrol Captain and OIC of the unit, Gregory S Kyser, was taken to a hospital for observation and possible treatment. A passenger, 36-year old state trooper Ryan F Nolte, was treated at a hospital for slight injuries. [media]

11 July 2017 Alenia C-27J Spartan. US Coast Guard. After taxiing to a runway at San Francisco International Airport preparing for takeoff, one of the propellers of the plane hit the runway. A wing of the plane was also damaged. There were no personal injuries. [ASN]

15 July 2017 Helicopter. Operating as a water bomber in the Chilcotin are fires in British Columbia, NW Canada when it crashed under unknown circumstances. The pilot suffered non-life-threatening injuries [Twitter]

16 July 2017 Helicopter. A helicopter combating forest fire in Alijo, Vila Real district in northern Portugal crashed when it was performing bucket tests for water over a dam before heading for a fire in the district. The pilot survived. [Xinhua]

16 July 2017 Bell 407 N242MT Air ambulance of Eagle Med, Kansas. Helicopter called to a fatal motor cycle accident of US54 east of Cole Creek, El Dorado, Butler County, Kansas. On arrival, it was unable to fly the patient due to a mechanical issue. The helicopter blocked the road for some time until mechanics came on scene and towed the helicopter off of the road. It was eventually taken back to Wichita. [Media]

FLIGHT SAFETY

Cornwall Live has reported on a number of 'hair-raising' reports of near-misses by aircraft in the skies above the south-western corner of England.

The reports include airliners taking action out of Newquay Airport, incidents involving the police and Cornwall Air Ambulance and a frightening near-miss between a navy helicopter and Hawk fast jet after a mishap by air traffic control.

In one case, a navy Merlin helicopter crew flew less than 50 feet below a mystery object - which they spotted seconds before.

In total, since the year 2000, there have been 20 reported Airprox incidents in that corner of England.

The Cornwall Air Ambulance Eurocopter EC135T2 helicopter and white C172 light aircraft passed each other with a separation of 100 feet in 2014.

The helicopter was flying to Penzance at 12,000 feet when the pilot suddenly spotted a small light aircraft flying 100 metres away and coming towards him out of the sun.

The light aircraft banked right and passed the helicopter on its left side just 50 metres away.

The helicopter pilot said he had no idea the aircraft was there and had no time to take avoiding action. A paramedic in the back of the helicopter reported that the light aircraft 'filled his window' as it came past.

The light aircraft was on a training flight and the pilot said he took avoiding action as soon as he could.

In 2012 a red microlight flying from Newquay was flying at 1,900 feet in hazy conditions when the pilot saw a Police BK117C-1 helicopter G-D CPA pass him on the right-hand side, 100 feet away.

It emerged that the Newquay air traffic controller had attempted to radio the helicopter twice but it had not answered.

The Devon and Cornwall Eurocopter police pilot said afterwards that he was responding to an emergency call, had seen the microlight and was passing on the correct side. He changed course slightly to the right and rose above the aircraft as he passed.

Read more at www.cornwalllive.com

UNMANNED

The British Airline Pilots' Association (BALPA) has responded to the July 22 publication of the independent test results of drone collisions with aircraft. The project was jointly funded by BALPA, the Department for Transport and the Military Aviation Authority.

BALPA believes the results of the tests are a robust verification of the Association's warnings over several years that drone impacts on aircraft windscreens and helicopter rotors can be catastrophic, even at relatively modest speeds with small drones, and that the industry and regulator cannot rely on bird-strike data and certification for drones.

BALPA content that the report clearly shows that readily-available drones which can be flown by anyone can shatter or go straight through an aircraft windshield or shatter a helicopter rotor. And those impacts would have catastrophic consequences.

BALPA is calling for:

Compulsory registration of drones and drone users, to improve traceability, and promote adherence to existing regulations.

Mandatory geo-fencing around airports to reduce conflict with aircraft.

Investment in technology to allow air traffic controllers to "see" drones when a conflict with a manned aircraft is possible.

Resourcing the police and the CAA to enforce the law and ensure safe skies.

High-profile prosecutions to highlight the problem and make people aware that flying drones dangerously could lead to five years in prison.

Immediate introduction of air traffic control procedures to reduce aircraft speeds to safe levels when a drone is reported as a possible threat.



The picture, taken during the testing, shows a larger hobbyist-class drone penetrating an aircraft windscreen at a closing speed of 340kts, representative of a scenario routinely encountered when aircraft are leaving the hold before landing.

The report is available in full at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/628092/small-remotely-piloted-aircraft-systems-drones-mid-air-collision-study.pdf
Statistics on near misses with drones are available from the UK Airprox Board here: <https://www.airproxboard.org.uk/Topical-issues-and-themes/Drones/>

The report is not without its challengers. Ian Povey a well-regarded UK expert in the field stated in his reaction to the report ...

"I am a huge supporter of increased drone regulations and registration for private owners, but I am appalled by the low standard of research this study presents."

His full reaction can be read on his web site at <http://clearvisionsecurity.co.uk/drone-collision-study/>

LOST AND NOT FOUND

It seems that the long-predicted problem of consumer class drones has struck the Ontario Provincial Police [OPP]. They are cheap and almost expendable but the embarrassment may yet kill the programme. Various glitches in the programming can send the craft off and away out of the control of the operator to fall somewhere unknown to man when the battery is exhausted.

OPP say they've lost a drone and now they're asking the public for help in finding its exact position. Officers say they were test flying the drone in Southwold township, a rural community south of London. They had just updated the drone with new software before losing it. It may well be a manufacturers problem but do that too often and people will be asking questions of the police operator. Hit someone or something sensitive and there will be many red faces.



GPSdome Ltd., has announced that it has performed successful airborne tests of its Cyber device for protection against GPS jamming and spoofing. Tests conducted jointly with Bluebird Aero Systems Ltd., a specialist in unmanned aerial vehicles.

A GPSdome was fitted in a small Bluebird drone to test its GPS protection during a flight under jamming conditions with a result that it continued functioning under jamming attacks and retained its GPS reception, while an unprotected drone lost the GPS signal.

The company now claims that its GPSdome is a perfect solution for small UAV and other unmanned vehicles, which require a miniaturized solution that doesn't reduce their range of action.

The US department of Homeland Security (DHS) operates autonomous drones patrolling over the USA–Mexico border, which suffer jamming attacks by border smugglers, mainly the drug cartels and is prioritising lightweight anti-jamming solutions. The GPSdome is the only commercially available solution that weighs less than 150 grams and consumes power less than 0.75 Watt.

Meanwhile US military authorities are getting somewhat annoyed by the intrusion of small drones into their air space. Small, civilian-owned drones can easily penetrate barbed fencing and ditches designed to repel both terrorists and the general public take an elicit image or two and then run back to the owner. In time of peace there is no legal way to deal with them.

Recently the USAF went on record to say that twice in one week it had counted two reports of small drones interfering with operations at one of their bases. In one incident, a Lockheed Martin F-22 almost collided with a small drone during its final approach and during another, a gate guard watched a drone fly over the top of a gate and tracked the vehicle as it flew over the flight line.

General Mike Holmes told an audience in Washington DC

"I have no authority given to me by the government to deal with that, imagine a world where somebody flies a couple hundred of those and flies one down the intake of my F-22s with just a small weapon on it." Despite the availability of the technology there is no legal authority to disable or track UAS but the air force's nuclear sites are working on getting government approval to deal with perimeter incursions by drones – if they get that they will try to extend it. The problem remains in that the rules applying to drones are exactly the same as those relating to a civil aircraft in that interference with them is a criminal offence. If it was a civil aircraft the pilot could be traced and admonished, finding a drone pilot is more like looking for a needle in a haystack and the range of punishments available are very limited. [Flight Global]

BZ Media LLC has announced that Michael P Huerta, administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, will give the Grand Opening Keynote address at InterDrone, September 6 at 10:00 am. He will be joined at InterDrone by a high-level lineup of commercial drone thought leaders who will frame the state of the industry at the conference, being held September 6-8 at the Rio Hotel in Las Vegas.

In addition to Mr. Huerta's grand opening, keynote addresses will also be presented by:

- * Greg Agvent, Senior Director of News Technology, CNN
- * Michael Chasen, CEO, PrecisionHawk
- * Biren Ghandi, Distinguished Strategist, Corporate Strategy, Cisco
- * Brian Krzanich, CEO, Intel
- * Wahid Nawabi, CEO, AeroVironment
- * Deepu Talla, Vice President, General Manager, Tegra Unit, NVIDIA
- * Mike Winn, CEO, DroneDeploy

As Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, Mr. Huerta is responsible for the safety and efficiency of the largest aerospace system in the world overseeing a \$15.9 billion dollar budget, and over 47,000 employees. The FAA is responsible for setting the legal requirements for the use of commercial drones in the United States.

PEOPLE

Gary Clayton the Chairman of the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Systems Association [UAVS], has announced that the UAVS is to cease operations.

Billed as the world's oldest Trade Association for the unmanned industry he was Chairman for nine years, and a member of its council for five years before that. He decided to step down but following an extensive no volunteer could be found to continue its work.

Clayton has negotiated with ARPAS-UK that UAVS members will receive free membership of ARPAS-UK until December 2017 so that their representation is continued. ARPAS-UK was originally born from the UAVS sub 20Kg Special Interest Group.

The CEO of Great Western Air Ambulance Charity (GWAAC), providers of the air ambulance service for the people of Bath and North-East Somerset and the surrounding area, is set to retire at the end of July. John Christensen helped to set up the charity in 2008, after it was recognised that an air ambulance service was required to serve the region.

The cause, which undertook 1735 missions in 2016, relies on the support of the local community to meet

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Image credit: Future Aerial Innovations



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—George Gorrill, Structural Engineer, Thomas Engineering Group

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its £2.6million annual running cost.

At the start of August, Anna Perry will take over the role of CEO from John. Anna started her career in the public sector before moving into charity management, and worked at a senior level for a national learning disability charity before taking up the post of Chief Executive with a social care charity.

MOVE ALONG THERE

London is in the throes of an epidemic of moped crime. Teams of two, mainly youngsters, are whizzing in a snatching phones, bags and many other items, including other mopeds. There is a growing threat from these attackers spraying noxious fluids and acid at victims, resulting in many injuries and engendering a great deal of fear. Nothing really new in the crime just in the regularity of it at the moment. Clearly it is important that all resources are thrown into deterring this current crime trend.

Which then takes me back to a conversation I had with a senior officer at NPAS around the time they were embracing the Metropolitan Police helicopter unit. For years the mantra has been stop chasing road vehicles with cars – leave it to air support, it is safer for everyone. But the incoming management were not died-in-the-wool air support personnel, most knew more about cooking than aviation tactics but had opinions that held sway.

This man was incredulous that ‘The Met’ were chasing mopeds and bikes using their helicopter. “Why” he asked, “would they use an expensive helicopter to chase people on bikes?”

The Met were duly stopped from chasing bikes. Well fortunately in recent days when there has been a spate of vicious bike mounted attacks there seems to have been a volte face on the part of NPAS because last month one of their helicopters was on hand to record the death of a 16-year old biker as he and a companion slammed into the rear of a police car. No matter which way the investigation goes at least it was overseen with video proof.



It was a standard press release and apparently nothing to do with the airborne emergency services. I read on to the end.

The story was that Airbus Foundation and Thai Airways International (THAI) had organised a goodwill flight to transport school supplies for underprivileged children aboard the airline’s latest Airbus A350 XWB. The aircraft left Toulouse carrying a consignment of 1,000 kits comprising backpacks and classroom stationery destined for the three most southern provinces in Thailand, where school supplies have been negatively affected by *ongoing conflict*.

It was only on reading those last words that I sought out an Internet explanation. It seems that throughout the last decade the southern parts of this idyllic holiday destination have been seeing some significant unrest resulting in well over 4,000 deaths.

If that had been the case in a European country fear would be heightened and we are unlikely to be taking holidays and getting married there!

EVENTS

PAvCon 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 fairly 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.

16-22 July 2018. Farnborough International Airshow [FIA]. Farnborough, Hampshire UK. The organisers of the world-famous Airshow, have announced record bookings during the month of June 2017. With Farnborough International Airshow 2018 exactly one year away, participation is already tracking way above previous editions of the Airshow, which has been held in Farnborough since 1948. In June, 76 companies confirmed their participation at the Airshow next summer comprising 25 first-time exhibitors. The team also saw 17 returning exhibitors increasing their space, bringing the June total to 17,138sqm and 39 chalets confirmed.

She also added "The biggest change our exhibitors and visitors will see in 2018 will be the new permanent Hall 1. A huge investment in the show and the venue, the new hall will offer a major advancement in facilities at the show for years to come." www.farnborough.com

NEW EVENTS

On September 12 2017 the Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance Trust will be running a one-day medical conference HEMS 2017 in Surrey. The event has been planned as a pay-for attendance [under £80 pp] but sales have now closed.

HEMS 2017 is being run on Tuesday September 12 08:30 – 19:45 BST in the Rik Medlik Lecture Theatre on the Stag Campus of the University of Surrey [Guildford, GU2 7XH].

A conference for doctors, nurses, paramedics and students interested in trauma and emergency medicine, from point of injury through to definitive hospital care.

Building on the success of recent KSSAAT conferences, this is an event in caring for the critically ill and injured. Examples of lectures include Professor Charles Deakin talking about adrenaline – 'friend or foe?' - and Colonel Alan Kay, military burns expert, discussing best practice burns management and how we can do better. Dr Anthony Hudson and Dr Malcolm Tunnicliff will share their pre-hospital and hospital experiences dealing with the recent Westminster terror attack. Following a fully-packed day programme and an early evening reception, Professor Richard Lyon will give his inaugural lecture entitled "Surviving sudden death: lessons from the Emergency Medicine frontline"

On October 3-4 Clarion Events are launching a new venture in Manila, Philippines. Clarion were approached by the National Security Council (NSC) Office of the President and the National Coast Watch Council Secretariat (NCWCS) to organise an event that falls at the same time as the Association of South-east Asian Nations & EU High-Level Dialogue on Maritime Security Cooperation.

This event will cover Maritime Security and Counter Terrorism, Enhancing Border and Maritime Security, Critical Infrastructure Protection and Border Port Security, Interagency Interoperability in Joint Operations, Security for Economic Development focussing on fisheries. Contact Clarion Defence & Security +44 20 7384 7788 or +44 7518 915 709 E: daniel.mortimer@clarionevents.com

THIS MONTH

7 August 2017 CIISCM Conference, Connexion@Nexus, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The Chartered International Institute of Crisis Management is making its inaugural appearance in Malaysia. The organising Committee has put together an all inclusive security agenda befitting security professionals. MESCOT ASIA SDN BHD 5B Persiaran Greentown 9, Greentown Business Centre, 30450 Ipoh Perak Malaysia Tel: +60 5 2552290 Email: Sales@MescotAsia.com.my www.CIISCM.org

EXCEL PARKING FEES: Having been to ExCel recently for another event I noted that the operators of ExCel have really gone to town on ramping up their car parking charges. Last Helitech I seems to recall it being £15 a day to park and last time there is was up to £16. None of which excuses the sudden leap to £20 I found today. What country are they in that excuses a 25% hike in rates during a period of low inflation? Was it the exchange rate perhaps? Enquiries have been made over whether there is an intention to have any control over the car park charges. For exhibitors it is a hidden tax [remember Duxford was free] and exorbitant at that and for multiple visitors like the media the same applies.



In 2011—the last time Helitech was at Duxford—L3 Wescam were showing images of London City Airport beamed in from above the ExCel Exhibition Centre along side it. Try though they may the organisers have failed to get and maintain the same high level of interest in the event since leaving Duxford.