

# Police Aviation News

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# LAW ENFORCEMENT



## AUSTRALIA

**VICTORIA:** In 2020 the Victoria Police Air Wing will re-equip with three Leonardo AW139 and Beechcraft Super King Air 350ER.

The four new aircraft will be delivered in 2020 and will replace the existing fleet of four helicopters.

©VPAW



Acting Superintendent Mark Arneil said the new fleet will increase police capabilities and roles in emergency management, search and rescue, extended offshore marine safety and law enforcement, public safety and operational policing duties.

The aeroplane represents the return of a capability for Victoria Police. It will have more than double the endurance and range of the helicopters, what is new is that they will be providing the option of a valuable, uninterrupted observation platform that can support police across the state in addition to transportation.

The contracts will see Victoria Police procure three Leonardo AW139 helicopters from StarFlight Victoria and the King Air from Skytraders. It will be fitted with a daylight and infrared camera and mapping and image detection systems. It will be used for aerial observations, searches, training and public reassurance.

The aeroplane contract includes contracted pilots, while the helicopters will be flown by existing police officer pilots.

Air Wing has been in operation since the mid-1970s and responds to more than 5,000 missions a year. It has operated fixed wing twins before but they were primarily in the transportation role.

**COVER:** Boston MedFlight provides critical care air medical transport for Boston-area and other Eastern Massachusetts hospitals, has ordered three new Airbus H145 helicopters as part of a comprehensive plan to upgrade its fleet with more modern and more capable aircraft.

The new aircraft will replace Boston MedFlight's H145 predecessors, two EC145s, and a BK117. Boston MedFlight has flown Airbus helicopters since the consortium's founding in 1985.

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## BRAZIL

**CEARA STATE:** Airbus Helicopters has delivered the first two H135 helicopters with Helionix in police configuration to its Brazilian customer Ciopaer. The two delivered helicopters will be used to reinforce public security in Ceará State, as well as providing support for aeromedical operations in other regions of the state.



Designed with up to three large electronic displays on the H135, the cockpit is night vision goggle compatible and includes a first limit indicator which highlights the appropriate engine instrument data for the pilot in one indicator. The H135 family of helicopters are used by police forces all around the world, with more than 200 helicopters in-service in this segment. To date, more than 1,270 helicopters of the H135 family are in operation around the globe with more than 4.7 million flight hours.

## IRELAND

**GARDA AIR SUPPORT:** A Garda Síochána, Ireland’s national police service has awarded a parts support contract worth up to €2.2M to Airbus Helicopters UK for the support of its pair of EC135T2 helicopters in providing 24/7 air support to the Irish Republic.

The contract, announced on 2 October, states that the OEM will provide support by the hour (SBH) services to the Garda Air Support Unit (GASU). SBH is often seen as an efficient way for operators to manage costs and maximise availability when it comes to maintenance.

The unit currently comprises two helicopters, one EC135T2 and one EC135T2+. The unit took delivery of its first EC135T2 in 2001, and the second EC135T2+ was delivered in 2007 to replace an existing AS355N Ecureuil. They also operate a BN2 4000 fixed wing.



©James Lloyds

According to the parts-supply contract notice, the maximum utilisation of the EC135T2+ and EC135T2 per year is 1,000 hours and 800 hours, respectively. Availability rates of over 85% are desired over the full course of the year.

The aircraft are maintained on the Irish Military Register, while the Irish Air Corps provides pilots and maintenance facilities on behalf of the country's Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform. The helicopters remain under contract to Babcock International based at Staverton, Gloucestershire for the actual maintenance operations. [TED 2018/S 189-427965]

An advertisement for Airborne Technologies. The top section has a dark background with the text "Your Mission – Our Business" in white. To the right is the Airborne Technologies logo, which includes a stylized white airplane icon above the word "AIRBORNE" in a bold, sans-serif font, with "TECHNOLOGIES" in a smaller font below it. Below the text is a photograph of a large group of people wearing black hoods, standing in a line on an airfield. The bottom section of the advertisement shows a close-up, top-down view of a military aircraft's nose and propellers. A yellow banner across the middle of this section contains the text "Tailor-made police ISR solutions" in black. Below this banner is a black box with the website address "www.airbornetechnologies.at" in white. In the bottom right corner, the text "Designed for Precision" is written in white.

## UNITED KINGDOM

NPAS: Almost November and still no sign of the Minutes of the more recent meetings of the NPAS Strategic Board – specifically June and September. There is news out there, the move from Filton to Almondsbury should be worthy of significant and ongoing information but all there has been in recent weeks is derived from Twitter scraps. The move was made in the third week of October and no doubt the wreckers’ ball will be swinging at the old site.

Rumour on North Weald Airfield is that this month construction will start on the replacement for NPAS London [aka Lippitts Hill].

Last month NPAS were advertising for new pilots to fill vacancies in North Wales [NPAS Hawarden located near Chester]. As the advertisement stated, “The ideal candidates will have a minimum of a Commercial Pilot’s Licence (Helicopter) and Class 1 Medical, plus an EASA Single Pilot Instrument Rating.” A team player and self-starter, ... a minimum of 1,500 hours total flying time which must include 50 hours flying at night (20 hours PIC) 500 hours PIC overland under VMC and significant low flying experience.”

Contrast that with earlier advertising for similar line pilots and it is clear that the numbers are tumbling. A decade ago – and for many years before and after that - most UK air units favoured a minimum of 2,000 hours, 1500 PIC, 500 twin turbine, 500 hours PIC overland under VMC, 100 hours night with 50 hours PIC. The minimum numbers were set by some long-deceased Home Office Police Liaison officer in consultation with the CAA.

The long-standing guideline minimum is 1,500 hours, the lowering of the required number of hours to the minimum demonstrates the difficulties being experienced in attracting pilots in what is increasingly an employees market. I doubt anyone worried too much about terms like ‘team player’ or ‘self starter’ a few years ago.

In the UK Parliament Louise Haigh the Shadow Minister (Home Office) (Policing) asked the Home Secretary what representations he has received from the NPAS on force contributions to that Service.

On October 26 she received a short reply from Nick Hurd that simply stated that NPAS is a collaboration of police forces. The level of financial contribution made by individual forces to the service is a matter for Police and Crime Commissioners and the NPAS Strategic Board. The long overdue minutes from those very people can hardly have been more pertinent!



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# UNITED STATES

PENNSYLVANIA: The State Police aviation unit was put in some disarray after one of its helicopters flying over a crowd to make 'Sky Shout' dispersal announcements caused damage with its downdraught. The helicopter was responding to "numerous law violations, including serious threats to officer safety within a disorderly crowd."

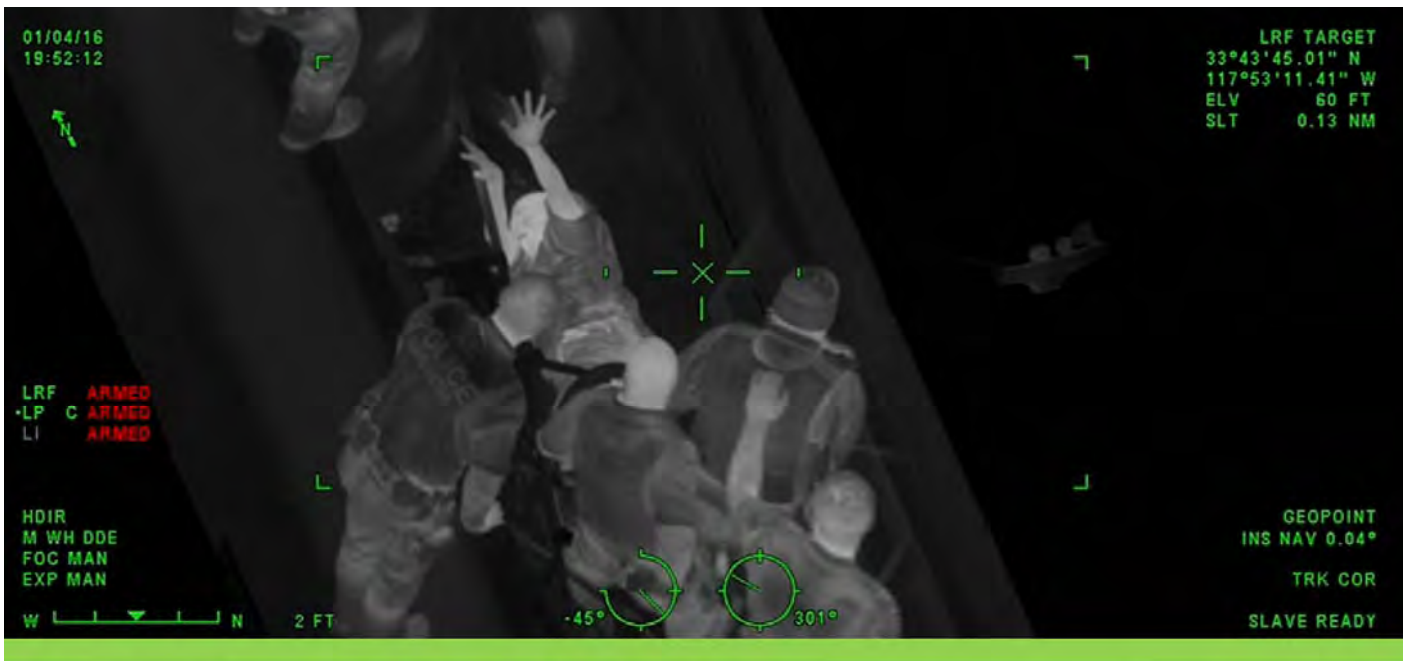
Days after the incident Penn State announced that it had temporarily stopped using helicopters to make announcements outside the football stadium after the helicopter sent flew so low over a crowd that it sent tents and other items flying. A complaint was made to the FAA about the incident that occurred before a football game against Ohio State.

Video of the helicopter posted on social media showed the Bell 407 flying low over a crowded parking area where people were holding so called 'Tailgating Parties' [pre-game picnics largely based out of the rear of motor vehicles]. The first pass appears to be without a significant problem but after a turn and return the effect of the main rotor downdraught appears to have been magnified and lead to significant damage to the picnic area and various temporary structures – numerous items were blasted into the air.

Whether this was because the Bell was slightly lower or the different effect direction of flight had on the wind is unclear. State police have said the pilot was trying to get low enough so people could hear a dispersal order over the helicopter's loudspeaker, and increased altitude after seeing debris go flying.

FAA regulations on minimum safe altitudes for aircraft say pilots should remain at least 1,000 feet (304 metres) above congested areas or above open-air assemblies but the Bell was way lower than that and arguably too low to be able to land without harming people or property if a power unit failed.

The police subsequently stated that 'all other warnings from the mounted police unit and officers on the ground were ignored' after an earlier arrest. State police troopers on the ground were pulled back to de-escalate the situation before the helicopter was called in.



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# AIR AMBULANCE

## PORTUGAL

INEM: In April this year a tender was issued for the provision of air medical services for HEMS operated as INEM in Portugal for the Instituto Nacional de Emergência Médica, I. P. The contract is for the rental of air assets and acquisition of operating services, continuing airworthiness management and maintenance for the emergency medical helicopter service of the National Institute of Medical Emergency, I. P.

The result of this approx. €38.75M tender covering a 62-month period was announced last month. Babcock MCS Portugal, the holders of the existing contract since 2013 has retained the contract alongside its provision for a range of services including civil protection operations, firefighting and aerial work again two other contenders. The company has a team of 83 people, mostly pilots and maintenance technicians. Its headquarters is in Salemas heliport, the first to be certified for 24-hour operation by Portuguese Civil Aviation.

Babcock MCS Portugal is specialised in medical emergency and civil protection, operating since 2000 for the National Health Service (INEM). With a fleet of 13 aircraft, they operate four annual bases, four Agusta A109 Power, based at Salemas Heliport or Loulé, Macedo de Cavaleiros, Évora and Santa Comba Dão.

In 2013, the company was awarded a new contract for INEM due to its extensive experience in H24 emergency medical services and its technical capacity. The new service has four HEMS bases available 24 hours a day, reinforcing the existing emergency medical operation in Portugal. [2018/S 198-448969]

## UNITED STATES

NATIONAL: This year the Air Medical Transport Conference (AMTC) was held late October in the Phoenix Convention Center, Phoenix, Arizona. In terms of grabbing the headlines it was therefore somewhat face-to-face with the Helitech event in Europe. It is clear from the number of consequent news releases that AMTC won hands down.

AMTC is very much an educational event. It is specifically designed to provide leadership, to educate, to inform, to cultivate friendships and to supply up to the minute information on the latest techniques and innovative approaches to emergency medical transport practice from the experts in the field through over 150 education sessions covering topics in a variety of disciplines including safety, core clinical, specialty clinical, management, aviation, research, and communications.

All this training activity is backed up by an exhibition area featuring over 120 companies displaying products and services directly applicable to air and critical care ground medicine who hope to attract the attention of more than 2,000 delegates.

The event is very important in the US aviation and medical supplies calendar. Unlike other apparently similar events such as the HAI the attendees tend to be only on the floor between the conference and classroom sessions which makes the exhibition floor activity either frenetic or deadly quiet. Attracting and keeping the attention of the attendees during the busy periods is of primary importance.

For the aviation company's most are still playing catch up to the market leader, Airbus Helicopters Inc. Each of them has advantages but often the more modern offerings are perceived as too large, heavy or expensive to consider. Bell has a strong legacy hold on the single-engine market with its 206 range but it needs to improve the position of newer models to ensure ongoing success against the larger capacity cabin Airbus Helicopters models. The 429 twin is selling well in the limited twin HEMS market but again Airbus has dominance with the H130 and H145 despite their legacy origins.

Sikorsky, Leonardo and MD can look to their successes in the sector but several factors – including a perception of poor support – hold them back. If you contrast the differences between the rate of success of the various AW models between Europe and the USA it makes you wonder what might happen if ever the US air medical market 'discovers' [and can afford] the AW169.

This year Airbus Helicopters Inc. was promoting across its range of air medical suitable aircraft including the H125, H130, H135 and H145. A significant percentage of HEMS helicopters sold in the United States were produced by Airbus Helicopters. Today, more than 90 EMS operators in North America rely on more than 1,230 Airbus helicopters for their emergency care transport needs.

In highlighting its role as the U.S. market leader for air medical transport rotorcraft it took two of the most

powerful and modern aircraft used by air medical transport providers, the twin-engine H145 and a single-engine H130, for display.

The featured H145 is the third aircraft from the proven H145 family to be operated by Avera McKennan Hospital and University Health Center, a South Dakota-based integrated health system offering the Care-flight service.

The H130 on display was promoting the ability of the type to accommodate up to three medical crew and specialty team equipment required to care for complex patients. The display example was equipped with a LifePort EMS interior allowing full-body patient access as well as efficient entry and exit to the cabin through the large sliding doors. Considered the global reference for single-engine, critical care air ambulance missions, the H130 is redefining single-engine critical care air transport by combining a twin-engine size cabin with single-engine economy.

Following AMTC, the displayed H130 went on a Western U.S. demo tour to demonstrate its outstanding performance in high and hot conditions.

Life Flight Network, the largest not-for-profit air ambulance service in the USA mainly serves the Pacific North West with a pay for service membership air ambulance. It grew from a handful of locations in Oregon to 25 bases with 550 employees across the State of Washington as well as Aurora, Oregon, the site of Life Flight's headquarters, Idaho, and Montana.

When Life Flight began 40 years ago, it was named Emanuel Life Flight after its operator, Emanuel Hospital in Portland (Oregon). At the time, Life Flight was only the fourth hospital-based air ambulance service in the country, had one helicopter and undertook around 120 - 150 flights in a year.

Emanuel Hospital became Legacy Emanuel Medical Center after a merger with Good Samaritan Hospital in 1989. Four years later, Life Flight dropped the "Emanuel" and assumed its current name after joining forces with Providence Health & Services' Aircare program.

The helicopter fleet usually fly between 40 and 50 hours a month. It is a mixed fleet including the Leonardo A119 and Airbus Helicopters EC135 with four crew members, a patient and whatever medications the paramedics bring aboard. In addition to the helicopters there are eight fixed-wing aircraft and ground ambulances. Twenty-three of the twenty-five locations have aircraft based.



Leonardo announced at the AMTC that Life Flight Network has logged over 40,000 flight hours with its fleet of 21 Leonardo AW119Kx helicopters. Life Flight was the launch customer for the glass-cockpit outfitted AW119Kx in 2013, a feature that has contributed to the strength and success of the aircraft. Each Life Flight Network AW119Kx is equipped with a state-of-the-art Garmin G-1000H cockpit, Night Vision Goggle capability, satellite weather, and the capacity to transport two patients or a specialty team, with unencumbered full-body access.



Leonardo also publicised that EMS provider Life Link III has logged over 15,000 flight hours and transported over 8,000 patients from eight helicopter bases in Minnesota and Wisconsin with their fleet of 10 Leonardo AW119Kx helicopters.

Leonardo continues to grow their presence in the North American EMS helicopter market which now totals more than 110 across a fleet of AW119s, AW109s, and AW139s.

## FIRE INDONESIA

At the completion of what is now a third year providing for a Fire Fighting Contract VNH South's two Mi-172 helicopters VN-8428 and VN-8427 were ferried from Indonesia back to Vung Tau Airport, in southern Vietnam.

This season VNH South provided the aircrafts, pilots, technicians, maintenance and insurance for fire-fighting, passenger and cargo transport in Indonesia from late June through until mid-October is often difficult operating and weather conditions. [Helihub]

## UNITED KINGDOM

**NORTHUMBERLAND:** In early October a multi-agency wildfire exercise organised by Northumberland Fire & Rescue Service [NFRS] and called Pennine Way brought together elements of the Scottish FRS, mountain rescue teams from and air assets of the Civil Air Patrol.

The Civil Air Patrol in the North East of England agreed to provide a 'spotter' aircraft to practice air to ground photography and air to ground radio communications with the ground assets.

The gathering took place in a remote area of Northumberland, in the Cheviot Hills, on the Scottish Border, on the 3 October 2018.

Although a common feature in other countries, for example Australia, North America and Spain, the use of 'spotter' aircraft in England & Wales to locate and report wildfires is a new initiative. On this occasion, the crew of the aircraft were, after arriving on scene, able to immediately identify and report the location, together with the direction of travel, of an area of controlled burning in an area adjacent to the exercise area. A set of high definition digital images, of the exercise in progress, were subsequently forwarded to the Wildfire Team Leader and Project Officer at Northumberland FRS.



# SEARCH AND RESCUE INTERNATIONAL

*In 2017, 335 natural disasters affected over 95.6M people, killing an additional 9,697 and costing around \$335 billion. The disasters were not evenly distributed, Asia seemed to suffer the brunt, with 44% of all disaster events, 58% of the total deaths, and 70% of the total people affected.*

The Americas reported the highest economic losses, 88% of the total.

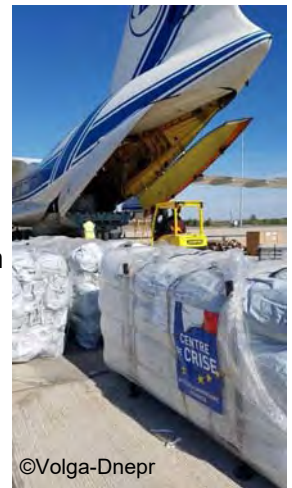
Compared to the previous decade (2007-2016), there were fewer natural disasters, deaths, and total people affected in 2017, but with a higher price tag. Number of natural disasters in 2017 were like the annual average of 354 events, below the average of 68,273 killed per year. [Torch Marketing]

## INDONESIA

Volga-Dnepr Airlines has delivered generators and a water purification system to Indonesia to support the international humanitarian mission dealing with the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami that struck Sulawesi Island at the end of September 2018.

The flight was performed by one of Volga-Dnepr Airlines' modernised IL-76TD-90VD freighters from Châlon Vatry Airport in France to the Indonesian city of Balikpapan on request of the Crisis Centre of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Following their arrival in Indonesia, the generators and water purification system – weighing 29 tons in total – will be transported to the worst-affected areas. The equipment will provide much-needed electricity and clean water for the local population.

The operation has on call a unique fleet of 12 giant An-124-100 freighters and five



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modernized II-76TD-90VD provide numerous options in setting up humanitarian missions. These aircraft are self-sufficient in remote locations or where local infrastructure has been damaged, provide both nose and rear ramp loading capabilities, and meet all ICAO requirements for international flight operations in compliance with the latest noise and emissions standards. With its expertise and experience in operating charter flights, Volga-Dnepr is always among the first responders to support victims of natural disasters.

## CANADA

**CORMORANT REPLACEMENT:** In a recent “pilots view” comparison assessment of the CH-149 Cormorant compared with the modern version of the airframe lined up for delivery to Norway, a pilot familiar with both types was impressed at the scale of development improvements displayed by the newer machine.

Leonardo has proposed to the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) as an upgrade for Canada’s fleet of CH-149 Cormorant SAR helicopters that will transform them into significantly more modern and capable craft.

The CH-149 entered RCAF service sixteen years ago and it is already obsolete in many areas of operational capability. New proposals involve both rebuilding the airframes to a standard like that of the Norwegian airframes and setting up a training facility with a modern full-mission simulator in Canada.

The proposals take advantage of the nine former VH-71 Kestrel airframes from the cancelled US Presidential Helicopter project that Canada acquired in 2011. The hope is that the additional airframes would allow the increase of the current fleet size from 14 to 21.

The offer includes new, more powerful, full-authority digital electronic-controlled (FADEC) General Electric CT7-8E turboshaft engines; a more modern Rockwell Collins cockpit and avionics; improved aircraft management system; and a newly designed, four-axis dual-duplex digital automatic flight control system (AFCS). This encompasses improvements to the radar fit, a cell phone detection and tracking system; and marine transponder receiver. [Full Article in Vertical 911]



## PHILIPPINES

**COAST GUARD:** The Coast Guard has placed an order for one H145 helicopter, making it the first H145 parapublic operator in the Philippines.

The new 4-tonne-class twin-engine helicopter is specially equipped with high frequency radios, emergency flotation gear, fast roping, cargo sling, search light, and electro-optical systems to perform critical missions including search and rescue, medical evacuation, maritime patrol and law enforcement. The latest contract will also encompass on-site technical support and continuing airworthiness management organisation services, fully supported by Airbus’ team in the country.

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## UNITED KINGDOM

Four helicopter crew members have been honoured for their role in rescuing 14 people trapped up a south coast viewing tower.

Thirteen visitors, including an 11-week-old baby, and a staff member spent up to seven hours 53m (174ft) up Weymouth's Jurassic Skyline tower. The Jurassic Skyline tower is an observation tower on Weymouth Pier in Dorset. It is situated next to Weymouth Beach and the Weymouth Pavilion, it overlooks the town, the beach, the Pavilion, the Old Harbour, Nothe Gardens, the Nothe Fort, and Portland Harbour. It opened on 22 June 2012.

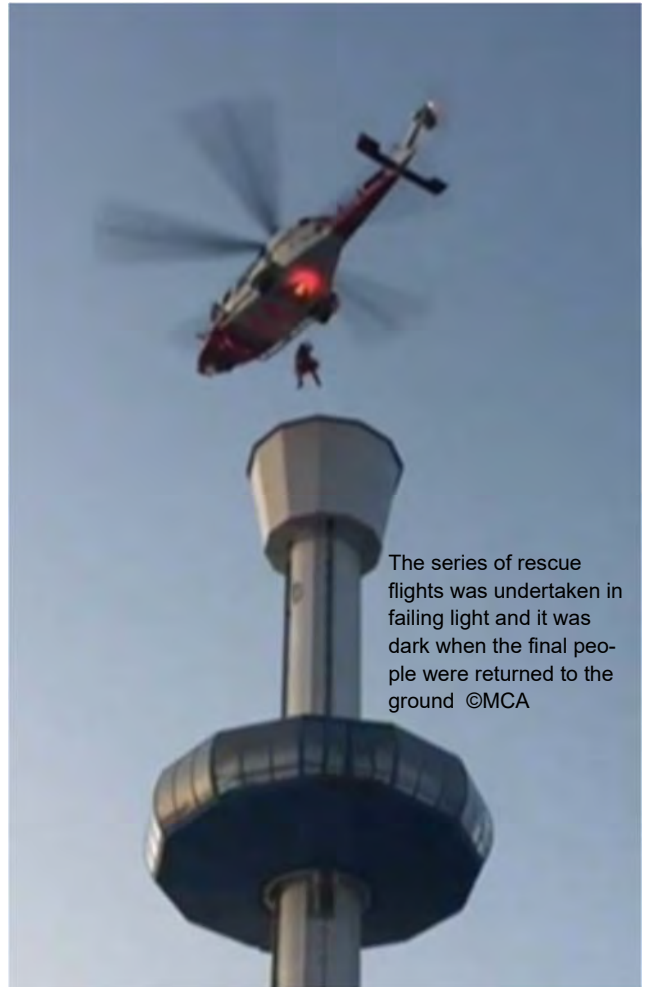
The air rescue, lasting almost four hours, saw the crew member team, Simon Tye, Simon Hoare, Chris Hughes, and Alf Kitwood cope with a challenging set of circumstances that led them to receive the Goodrich Hoist Award.

Chief crewman Nick Horst, who nominated his colleagues based at Lee-on-the-Solent in Hampshire for the award, said: "There was a very high degree of skill involved in this rescue.

"The team had to cope with a very high hover and winching height, in fading light, for almost four hours."

The men were presented with the award at helicopter aviation event Helitech International in Amsterdam.

Following the breakdown, on 5 September 2017, the doughnut-shaped seafront observation capsule now has a specialist rope recovery team.



The series of rescue flights was undertaken in failing light and it was dark when the final people were returned to the ground ©MCA

Weymouth's Skyline Tower with its observation platform working correctly ©WST



# INDUSTRY

For many years the fuel system in the EC135/H135 has been considered one of the major weaknesses in the design. Its failings has led to deaths and, after more than two decades Airbus Helicopters have set to remedy its inherent faults with a redesign.

**Airbus Helicopters** has announced that the new fuel sensors are now available for H135.

The new design embraces high quality electronic components to avoid probe drift and prevent trapping of water in probe if fuel contaminated and is interchangeable with old sensors and can also be used in mixed configuration. The same improvement applies to the main tank and supply tank fuel sensors. The part numbers are P/N L284M30C1007 for the main tank and P/N L284M30C1008 for supply tank sensor. Airbus state that there is no need for SB to perform the exchange of fuel sensors. The interchangeability is secured on a part number level and the new sensors are delivered with an interchangeability note, pending IPC update. The price of the upgrade will be the same as the old and will represent a discount for the remainder of 2018. The old fuel sensors are no longer available and the repair solution will be phased out soon.

The **Royal Norwegian Air Force** has decided that their 14 NH90 helicopters will be used for both naval and coastguard operations. This came after a study performed by Norway's FFI defence research institute. They are aiming to use the aircraft for both operations by 2022. This should generate 5,400 flight hours per year in support of border protection and ASW operations.

One of the senior officers in the London Metropolitan Police, Deputy Commissioner Sir Craig Mackey, has admitted that belief that the replacement for the Airwave radio system will ever enter service is waning in the Metropolitan Police.

The 4G based **Emergency Services Network (ESN)** system was due to enter service last year but currently looks unlikely to supplant Airwave before 2022 – if then.

A year ago figures from the National Audit Office suggest that a 12 month nationwide delay in the time taken to transition from Airwave to ESN would cost £475M. This means that every day of delay to transition is costing approximately £1.3M and it is not a 12-month delay; so far it looks like at least a 5 year delay if they do not abandon it completely.

*Ed: The implementation team for the new system appears to be beset with leadership troubles. It seems that it is decision by committee and that has produced meeting after meeting where the project makes no discernible progress.*

*The 4G technology works – it is there in everyone's hands in mobile phones on a day-to-day basis – so it seems the fault lies in governance.*

*An aircraft specific system is even further down the list of priorities and may simply be a version of Airwave that will work with whatever comes next.*

*Once again it seems that such important stories only get an official airing after those in power free themselves of the shackles of office. In July Craig Mackey announced his intention to retire from policing in December after more than 34 years of service.*

*Unfortunately this particular officer blotted his copybook within hours of the ESN story. On 22 March 2017, when he was Acting Commissioner, he was on the scene of a terrorist attack took place outside the Palace of Westminster and saw the unarmed PC Keith Palmer stabbed to death from inside his official car. There was a furore over his inactivity, a Knight of the Realm, hiding in a limo as one of his men was slaughtered.*



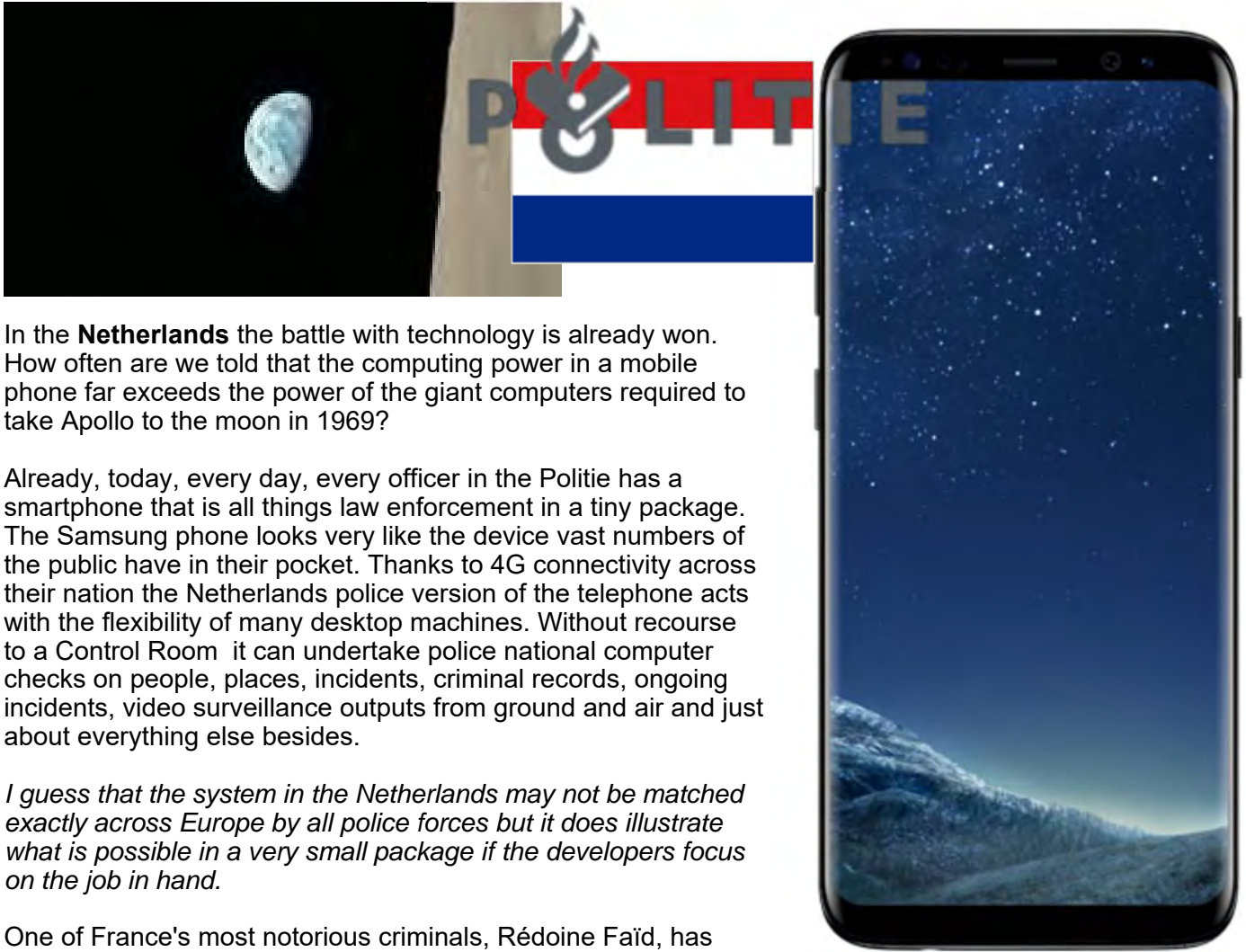
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## THE COMMERCIAL UAV SHOW

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In the **Netherlands** the battle with technology is already won. How often are we told that the computing power in a mobile phone far exceeds the power of the giant computers required to take Apollo to the moon in 1969?

Already, today, every day, every officer in the Politie has a smartphone that is all things law enforcement in a tiny package. The Samsung phone looks very like the device vast numbers of the public have in their pocket. Thanks to 4G connectivity across their nation the Netherlands police version of the telephone acts with the flexibility of many desktop machines. Without recourse to a Control Room it can undertake police national computer checks on people, places, incidents, criminal records, ongoing incidents, video surveillance outputs from ground and air and just about everything else besides.

*I guess that the system in the Netherlands may not be matched exactly across Europe by all police forces but it does illustrate what is possible in a very small package if the developers focus on the job in hand.*

One of France's most notorious criminals, Rédoine Faïd, has been captured three months after he made an astonishing escape by using a hijacked Sud Alouette helicopter from a French prison in Réau, south of Paris, **France**.

Faïd was apprehended north of Paris, near where he grew up. He had at least one close call with capture prior to this but managed to escape after a high-speed car chase in Sarcelles, a commune in the northern suburbs of Paris.

Immediately prior to his capture police were drawn to a person in a burqa who was picked up by a female in Creil, a commune in the Oise department in northern France and just 30km from Sarcelles. The person in the burqa appeared to be a man. The police descended upon the building where Faïd was staying, arresting him and several others in the apartment. The place he was apprehended was just 100km from the prison he escaped from.

Faïd had been serving a 25-year-sentence for a botched armed robbery in 2010 that killed a policewoman. And, he had previously escaped from another prison in 2013, that time using explosives.



©L3Wescam years.

It may well be a bit of news that has little direct relevance to the airborne emergency services but nonetheless congratulations to **L3 Wescam** for securing the award of an indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity (ID/IQ) contract valued at up to \$454M from the U.S. Army for the next-generation Wescam MX™-10D electro-optical, infrared and laser designator (EO/IR/LD) sensor suite.

The modernised ISR systems are to operate from the Army's Tactical Unmanned Air Systems Shadow UAV (RQ-7Bv2) and provide an advanced capability to collect information.

This is a five-year contract with option for the U.S. Army to extend to an additional five

L3 will continue to invest in research and development as the U.S. Army will be evaluating options for their next generation Future Tactical Unmanned Aerial System (FTUAS) program, the replacement for Shadow targeted for 2025. That technological investment [and that of their competitors] will have a direct and positive bearing on the quality and performance of future EO/IR turrets offered to the emergency services.

L3 Wescam state that there are over 4,400 MX systems operating worldwide in over 80 countries. These systems operate across air, land and maritime domains and have been the eyes of over 190 different platforms. Check out the video: <https://youtu.be/Hm3LfDRxoig>

With the withdrawal from the **European Union** just a few months away much may well change and among the potential unknown elements is Air Certification.

It is assumed that Britain will continue to adhere to the directions given by EASA (there seems no real alternative) but at this moment in time nothing is settled and the wider talks on what will apply and what will not appear to be going down to the wire.

Nonetheless most officials are assuming that the transition will be less traumatic than some would have it and take the view that it is business as usual. NPAS were at the EASA HQ in Cologne early last month to take in a briefing on the New Basic Regulation which underpins all EU aviation regulation and sets the standard for safe operations. The agency was only created in mid-2002, and took another 6 years to reach full functionality. The new document sets out the rules upon which it is now working.

Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2018 sets out common rules in the field of civil aviation and establishing a European Union Aviation Safety Agency, amends and consolidates existing regulations and directives of the European Parliament and of the Council that have been created over the last 16 years.

The official document is a modest 122 pages but it is translated into the two dozen languages favoured by the European Union and those that choose to align themselves with EASA Certification. There are two references to the airborne emergency services and they simply state that they have a choice of opting in to EASA Regulation or staying outside as Public Aircraft.

To meet a 2018 budget provision of around \$313,000 the **Nevada Division of Forestry** has acquired a new helicopter hoist system for rescuing injured wildland firefighters and other people lost or injured in remote areas that are hard to reach by ground.

The budget for the one-off purchase was agreed in March 2017, the State of Nevada paid for the hoist and a U.S. Forest Service grant paid for accessories including harnesses and a lift basket.

The unidentified system has now been delivered and crews have commenced training on it. [E353]

In Spain the Dirección General de la Agencia Estatal de Administración Tributaria has awarded an operating and maintenance contract to **Babcock Mission Critical S. España, S. A.** U based in Alicante, Spain. The value of the European Union funded deal is just under €10M.

It includes air services for the Sociedad de Salvamento y Seguridad Marítima (SASEMAR)

Nearly a year after its December 2017 first flight from land, the Chinese-developed large amphibious aircraft **AG600** completed its first water take-off and landing in Jingmen in the central province of Hubei last month.

The aircraft taxied on its land wheels down a slipway into the sea and then took-off and landed from water leading to the Chinese President Xi Jinping sending congratulatory messages to the developers.

The aircraft can carry up to 50 people and collect 12 tons of water in 20 seconds for firefighting, with a transport capability of up to 370 tons of water on a single tank of fuel.

Communications launched a special week celebrating the extraordinary work of emergency services call handlers and dispatch teams.

Taking place from October 22-28, **International Control Room Week** raised awareness of the life-saving and life-changing work of staff in emergency services control rooms who deal with harrowing and distressing situations daily.

APD supplies critical, life-saving software to blue light organisations across the UK and supports vital operations internationally. Building on those links, APD is attempting to bring together Control Rooms across the UK and Europe to back the new campaign and help to establish it as an annual event. To that end the company provided each participant with a 'celebration box filled with balloons, bunting, sweet treats, badges and stickers for employees.' The event also supported a national programme by mental health charity Mind offering mental health support to emergency services personnel and the public.

## ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

**2 October 2018 Airbus Helicopters H135 N135CP.** Air ambulance operated by Mission Hospital (MAMA) Canton North Carolina. Made an emergency landing between Pisgah High School and Canton Middle School after the patient on board became combative. He left the helicopter and ran off. The police arrested the man but he was released to a regular ambulance. [Media]

**27 October 2018 Bell OH-58A N1032F** Washoe County Sheriff's Office. The operational experienced an inflight wire strike and subsequent precautionary landing to open brush terrain in Lakeview, Nevada. There was no apparent damage and no injuries. A brush fire resultant of the wire separation was contained without injury. [ASN]

# FLIGHT SAFETY

Pilots call for tougher drone laws in the wake of a serious near miss.

The British Airline Pilots' Association (BALPA) says the Government should bring forward its programme of drone education and registration in the wake of a near miss over London that could have had disastrous consequences.

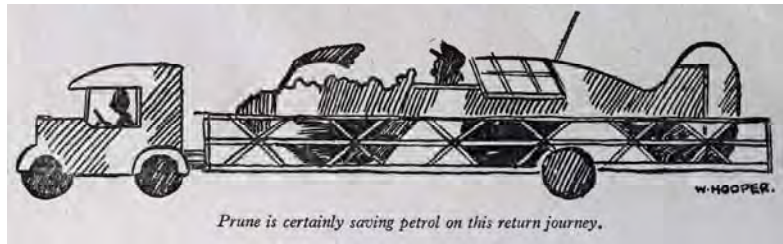
The Heathrow-bound B787-9 Dreamliner aircraft, which would have been carrying as many as 264 passengers, was performing its descent above Clapham Common in June this year, when the drone was seen passing just three metres (10ft) below its right wing. There is significant evidence to show that a drone colliding with an aircraft could cause catastrophic damage to the aircraft and BALPA are urging the Department for Transport to tighten urgently the laws to make it illegal to fly a drone within five kilometers of an airport without permission from Air Traffic Control.

The aircraft was at around 3,200ft when it came in to conflict with the drone which was flying at more than eight times the maximum legal drone height.

In the field of Flight Safety some profess to know it all, regardless of the source or opinion of others. Many are always open to the knowledge and opinion of others freely and openly given. Then there is Pprune, the Professional Pilots Rumour Network, an on-line forum greatly loved by the industry but not trusted. The writers there expound opinion but no-one listens with confidence because the writers there will not or cannot reveal who they are.

There was an earlier Prune, a flight safety training tool published by the RAF in war. It worked well and its text and cartoons still have a message useful today.

The graphic art of the 1940s captured both the mountain of paperwork of the hierarchy and [especially for the would be fixed wing operator] the result of getting the 45 minute reserve figures wrong...



'Pilot Officer Prune' of 'Tee Emm' was replaced by 'Wing Commander Spry' in the RAF flight safety magazine, 'Air Clues'. Always a good read in the past and now just as readable. 'Air Clues' is still published and complements the activities of the Regional Airspace User Group (RAUG) which meets alternately at RAF Linton on Ouse and RAF Leeming every 6 months. Strangely, even though it is on their doorstep,


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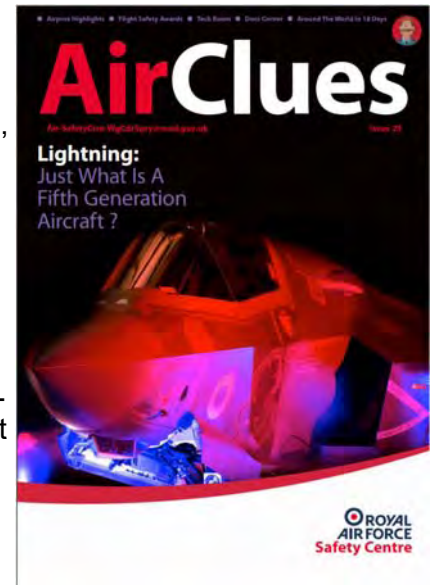
[trakkasystems.com](http://trakkasystems.com)



NPAS are not reported to be either prominent or regular attendees. It was always 'Restricted' circulation in my memory. But that was a long time ago. Today the modern 'Air Clues' includes lots of flight safety advice as far as it relates to the RAF of today. The latest edition, available on-line, includes reports of several Airprox incidents between military and civil aircraft so that includes the emergency services. It is daunting to note that the same old safety issues reappear. In one instance an RAF fighter was launched without a transponder and then continued to suffer other failures that included the radar that might have alerted the pilot to traffic ahead. [UK Airprox 2017117]

<https://www.raf.mod.uk/our-organisation/units/raf-safety-centre/documents/air-clues-issue-25/>

Is it relevant? Well yes because many years ago, in 1997, a UK police helicopter was struck and nearly brought down when a Tucano trainer without a transponder and an AS355 met over Cheddar near Bristol. Here we are two decades later and the peacetime RAF is still launching aircraft without the protection of a transponder.



## LETTERS

### NPAS - Work in progress, or a failed experiment?

In November 2017 Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC) published a critical, some would say a scathing, report on the UK's National Police Air Service (NPAS). Now, following more recent announcements by NPAS, the stakeholders, the 44 police forces in England and Wales, together with the public, are entitled to know if the national police air service for England and Wales is a matter of 'work in progress', one that will eventually succeed, or has it proved to be a failed experiment that cannot deliver a satisfactory service? A service that, according to HMIC, does not have a sustainable future in its current form.

A new announcement, by NPAS, is that the introduction of fixed-wing aircraft into the NPAS fleet, due to be operational in 2018, will now be delayed until 2020, even though the aircraft, the Vulcanair P68R was first tested by NPAS in 2014. This delay is not surprising as the NPAS clearly identified the P68R as their chosen aircraft in their invitation to tender for the supply of 4 bespoke aircraft whilst, it would seem, ignoring the fact that many of the key numbers, payload and flight endurance, just didn't add up! Moreover, the P68R was, at the time it was selected by NPAS, not cleared for flight in known icing conditions. This important feature was also part of the original NPAS specification! More capable aircraft, those aircraft with a proven track record and already in service with other agencies, were rejected because one, the BN Islander, has fixed landing gear and the other, the Diamond DA42 Guardian, now joined by the larger DA62 Super Guardian, has a low wing. Both aircraft can carry the larger, more powerful MX-15 EO camera turret whilst the P68R is restricted to carrying the smaller, less capable MX-10 turret; to save weight, one presumes.

However, what may yet prove to be a critical disadvantage for the P68R is that, unlike the BN2B-20 Islander and both Diamond aircraft, where the maximum take-off weight (MTOW) and the maximum landing weight (MLW) are the same (6,600 lbs for the BN Islander), for the P68R the MLW is some 220 lbs less! Is this important? Absolutely, if you find that a police request for air support is cancelled shortly after take-off, which is not uncommon. In these circumstances the P68R cannot land until the excess fuel is consumed. Without any means to dump fuel this could take up 1 hour 45 minutes of unproductive flying at a nominal burn rate of 20 USG per hour! The only alternative is to restrict the take-off weight to the MLW which then places a severe restriction on the total time available for the operational mission, inclusive of transit time,

A more recent announcement, also by NPAS, is that there will be a further reduction in the number of police air support bases. In 2012, when NPAS was formed the plan was to have 25 helicopters at 23 bases, the '23 Base' model. This would replace the former 31 police air support units with 33 aircraft that existed before NPAS was formed. In 2015 this was reduced to 15 bases with 23 aircraft, one of which, at Doncaster, would support a fleet of 4 aeroplanes, the P68R, which is not now expected to be operational until 2020. Furthermore, we are now informed that the NPAS base at Boreham in Essex will close immediately and its helicopter, together with its crews, will relocate to NPAS London, at Lippitts Hill, near Waltham Abbey, just inside the M25 London orbital motorway. In the longer term both units will then move to North Weald, near Harlow on the other side of the M25. This may suit NPAS London, but Norwich, in Norfolk, will then be some 80 miles away! Today there are just 13 operational bases, a reduction of almost 60% from the pre-NPAS total of 31 police air support bases in England and Wales! As was pointed out by HMIC, savings have primarily been made by cutting the service provided to forces, rather than increasing efficiency. It is also unclear, according to HMIC, if NPAS is less expensive than the former terri-

torial police air support service!

Is there an answer? Yes, most, if not all of the answers are provided by HMI Matt Parr CB in his report, **'Planes, drones and helicopters - An independent study of police air support'** dated November 2017. Other answers are available from the past. One success story, from the past, is that of the North East Air Support Unit (NEASU) which was formed in 1995 and which provided the police forces of the North East of England, Cleveland, Durham and Northumbria, with an exemplary air support service with an aeroplane, a BN islander and a helicopter, first a Twin Squirrel followed by an EC-135, based 30 miles apart. In 2005 the BN Islander was replaced with a second EC-135 helicopter. Then, in 2007, it was decided that 2 helicopters were unaffordable and that one helicopter would remain at Newcastle airport. As a result, in 2009, Cleveland Police withdrew from the consortium. This break-up of a police air support service, one that actually worked, was totally avoidable. It was the result of a significant increase in operating costs when the aeroplane was replaced with a second, much more expensive helicopter. Moreover, with the NEASU (regional) model the police officer on the ground knew that his call for assistance would be received directly, at the air support unit, or in the aircraft if the aircraft was already airborne. This, in turn, provided a sense of ownership of air support by the individual police officer as well as the individual forces. Both aircraft, fixed-wing and helicopter, had an average response time, to arrive at the scene of an incident, of 20 minutes after being called. The NPAS average is to **despatch** a helicopter within 22 minutes to a crime in action. On 40 % of occasions the helicopter is then turned back during transit as it will not arrive until after the incident is over!



Britten-Norman BN-2  
Islander G-NESU of the  
NEASU ©PAR

If an aeroplane is both less expensive to purchase and to operate than a helicopter, which it is, they can also fly faster and stay airborne for longer, then it begs the question as to why the police don't purchase more aeroplanes and fewer helicopters? In the case of NEASU, the statistics show that in the case of vehicle pursuit and crime in action, those occasions when the speed of reaction is all important, the aeroplane was just as successful and sometimes better than the helicopter. Also, the aeroplane, which was certified for flight in known icing conditions (the helicopter wasn't) could, in the winter, get airborne faster than the helicopter which was parked inside a hangar on its trolley! Also, in the late 1990's, some 15 years before NPAS was formed, NEASU was in action 24/7 and providing a 'borderless' police air support service across the North East of England and into Cumbria and North Yorkshire. Once we come to accept that a national police air support service in England and Wales, for the 43 'territorial' police forces, plus the British Transport Police, doesn't work, then the very obvious alternative is to establish regional air support units, using the former NEASU as the model, with a mix of aeroplanes and helicopters. As an aside, in the USA there are more police aeroplanes than there are police helicopters!

James A Cowan MBE BA FRIN

#### NOTE:

The author, after completing his education at Grangefield Grammar School, joined Durham Constabulary prior to joining the RAF for pilot training. Most of his operational flying was on the BAe Nimrod, during which time he was commended by Admiral Sir John Fieldhouse for long range maritime patrols during the Falklands conflict. In 1998 he was made a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) and a Fellow of the Royal Institute of Navigation for services to aviation. He was also awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree by the Open University. After retiring from the RAF to join the North East Air Support Unit, where he became the senior fixed-wing pilot, he continued to fly with the RAF as a member of the reserve forces. In 2009 he was awarded a Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowship to study air support operations in the USA. During his time in the USA he was hosted by the US Civil Air Patrol, an auxiliary of the US Air Force. He also met several other agencies including the US Coast Guard Auxiliary (Air), the police, State parks departments and the US Department of Justice (DoJ). The latter encourages those smaller police forces, those that cannot afford helicopters, or complex aeroplanes, to use light sport aircraft for simple air observation duties, including the search for missing persons. On the recommendation of the author, the DoJ agreed to include autogyros, imported from Germany, in their light aircraft police air support programme.

## PEOPLE

The Board of Directors of Airbus has selected Guillaume Faury as future Airbus Chief Executive Officer. Faury, 50, who currently serves as President Airbus Commercial Aircraft, will succeed Tom Enders, 59, who remains CEO until the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 10 April 2019, when the appointment of Faury as executive member of the Board will be submitted to shareholders.

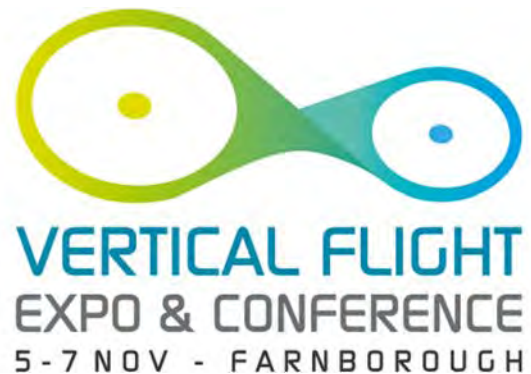
## EVENT – HELITECH R.I.P.

A tiny piece of history took place in the hall at the Amsterdam RAI in mid-October.

I suspect there were a lot of disappointed people who learned that the Helitech name is about to pass into history very soon. The show was fine and there were lots of positive comments on the business done even if it ultimately failed to deliver on airframes shown but that was a detail.

Helitech the event became its own news. This year at the RAI was it seems the last Helitech ever. It may be true that future event may well be promoted as the event that used to be called Helitech but that is sheer ignominy to the brand many have cherished.

There were press notices put out that highlighted the fact but very few noticed the full-page message on page 17 of the catalogue. There is a split between EHA and the organisers, Helitech International from Reed. The latter are going off on their own to do a thing called Vertical Flight in November 2019 at Farnborough and EHA are doing their own thing [an event with no name] in Europe during 2020. It is unlikely to be at the RAI, Cologne has been mentioned. Whether the new plans and the loss of identity will work remains to be seen. At times it seemed that as many attendees were unhappy about the loss of the name as were upset at the loss of Duxford as a venue. Rumour has it that industry may be forced to choose between events and that does not bode well for either party.



There may have been a divergence of opinion but if there were loud words in anger it was not immediately obvious. That said there are clear signs of petulance over the name change. The whole event is effectively having to start again marketing a new brand.

At times Helitech may have been smaller than billed, ramshackle and therefore not worthy of comparison with HAI Heli-Expo but throughout its 22-year existence from 1986-2018 Helitech International, was usually the largest civil rotorcraft show in Europe and held events in several countries with mixed success.

Before all this came to notice Reed were promoting the Helitech brand in a positive manner right up to opening time. It is true that the mooted 17 aircraft static was [as ever] an illusion by opening day but, even

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if it was a shadow of last years line-up - there was a good selection of representative airframes and mock-ups to provide a backdrop to the stands and meeting places that are the real meat of such events.

### THE SHOW

Their crown may have slipped a little in recent years with Leonardo snapping at their heels but Airbus Helicopters maintained their market leader grip on the event in terms of their broad marketing, airframe presence and ultimately in terms of order numbers announced at the show.

There were notable absentees from the show but in their place over a dozen companies were sampling the event to see if their product fitted the demographics. It was not a really busy event but the majority of the exhibitors say they saw the right people and were happy with being there. As ever there was some argument over whether it would have been better as two days rather than three - the third was quiet – but overall it worked for exhibitors.

Airbus highlighted a wide range of products and digital services in Amsterdam. Special focus was given to the still buoyant Emergency Medical Services (EMS) mission market, a segment the company leads with a claimed 60% of the in-service fleet.

On the stand was an EMS-configured H145 PH-HOW, in operation with Royal Dutch Touring Club ANWB as an inter-facility transport [rather than a HEMS machine with a full medical crew]. Along with the H135 the H145 remains one of the company's best sellers for such demanding missions thanks to its performance and spacious cabin. Airbus Helicopters and ANWB, have signed a framework contract for up to six H135s with Helionix. A first batch of three aircraft is to be delivered in 2019 and 2020 to replace earlier model 135s currently in service with the air rescue operator.

The other airframe type represented was a full size mock-up of the H160 fitted in an EMS configuration. With the largest cabin in its class, wide opening sliding door and roll-in stretcher capacity, the H160 is being promoted as 'all things to all men' for the next generation buyer. At the show it was as a high intensive care helicopter ideal for long distances critical patient or incubator transport. Significantly larger than the H145 it represents a future growth option. Not so many years ago HEMS was 'happy' to undertake their work in a machine the size of the BO105 and Bell 206 and few would have envisaged growth into such as the H145 and AW169 so the H160 may well play a significant part in the future.

The static display was very much an Airbus Helicopters location. Waypoint Leasing (Ireland) Limited, the largest independent global helicopter leasing company, brought the H225 D-HTPN operating on lease to Global Helicopter Service GmbH, to use as a demonstrator and display aircraft for all three days. The airframe was unmarked but apparently has Norwegian origins. It was prepared for transport and aboard a road transporter near to a H175 equipped for oil & gas missions and operated by Heli-Holland as PH-OSF. In a difficult market there are now 29 H175s in service, they have accumulated 40,000 flight hours with 14 oil companies across the world and it is starting life with Hong Kong's Government Flying Service for a difference slant on its future market.



The Kopter and an Airbus Puma as the show was being set up ©Helitech



Out of step. In the streets leading to the RAI Exhibition area the organisers had placed several of these footprints that suggested the event was all about helicopters and drones. In the event drones were virtually non-existent. ©PAR



A bit quiet. Although it looks like the show is closed in this view of the H160 it was not ©PAR



Bell 429, in Swiss marks as HB-ZOP is for operation in Andorra for Mitjans ©PAR

It was perhaps the poorest Helitech static in memory, a large area that the catalogue suggested was marked up as 15 aircraft spots was a lonely place occupied by a road low loader, two helicopters and the familiar engineering mock-up from Airborne Technologies.

Other than these airframes Airbus Helicopters was promoting services and projects. There was an update on the Airbus' Skywise cloud-based open data platform, and they were promoting its capability of storing data from airlines, helicopter operators, manufacturers and suppliers, with a view to providing information aimed at improving operational and maintenance glitches and increasing flight safety.

After a period where the company damped down interest in the Racer (Rapid And Cost-Efficient Rotorcraft) technology demonstrator, they were again promoting it via a scale model and VR headsets.

The helicopter industry is slowly recovering from the downturn that was led by the Oil & Gas industry and in many ways temporarily sustained by some buoyancy in the growth in HEMS. The main rivals to larger Airbus types in Oil and Gas are invariably from Leonardo and in the form of the AW139 and AW189. In the past the former has had a significant effect on police sales but the AW189 is too large for most law enforcement operators. In the early days Airbus could take the threat from the AW types as little more than a nuisance; the Italian types were often poorly supported and mechanically labour intensive. Recent developments have suggested that Airbus may have been a little too laid back about the threat and are paying a high price in market share.

On the Leonardo stand taking pride of place and attracting more than its fair share of sales announcements was an example of the AW169 D-HHTJ operated by Heli-Service. The mainly orange airframe was configured as a passenger transport but did feature a hoist over the right hand door.

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The Leonardo AW169 was attracting a lot of attention  
©PAR

Recently most high-profile sales of the AW169 have been channelled through Specialist Aviation Services based at the Gloucestershire Airport, Staverton, and their HEMS sales activities do not look likely to diminish anytime soon. SAS were as usual adjacent to the Leonardo stand for impact. In recent weeks the company has revised the corporate image with their other brands Police Aviation Services (PAS) and Medical Aviation Services (MAS) taking a lesser role in future. Some of the existing contracts are strongly linked to the PAS/MAS names but this will become less obvious in future. The new European group base in Genk, Belgium will be strongly branded as an SAS operation.

There were announcements of orders but Helitech was short of real news which resulted in Leonardo's announcement at Helitech that SAS has been appointed an Excellent Service Centre for the AW169 light intermediate and AW139 intermediate twin engine helicopters in UK and Ireland with raised status.

As an established service centre for the AW169 and AW139 and a prime AW169 customer itself with 12 units ordered in the last six years dedicated to Emergency Medical Service (EMS) nationwide and first entry into service in early 2016, SAS has now been ranked 'Excellent' under Leonardo's guidelines. This ranking is assigned by Leonardo to selected Service Centres focused on maintaining third party fleets and having the largest scope of service capabilities.

SAS carries out its primary support service activities at its base at Staverton Airport on the edge of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. A second base in Redhill, Surrey is now on-line having been refurbished from hangars previously used by Bristow. Eight AW169 helicopters are already in service with UK air ambulance charities comprising Kent Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance (2 aircraft), Children's Air Ambulance (2 aircraft), Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance, Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance and Essex & Herts Air Ambu-

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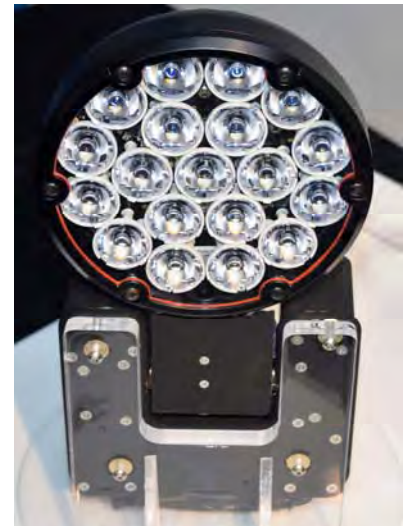
lance, as well as providing a helicopter passenger service to the Isles of Scilly for Skybus. Cornwall Air Ambulance and Magpas Air Ambulance were added earlier this year as the most recent new operators choosing the type. The first four AW169 air ambulances to enter service in the UK in their first year of service have performed approximately 3,000 lifesaving missions and have flown more than 2,200 hours.

SAS will maintain its links with MD Helicopters and sees continuing interest in the proposed 969 development of the MD902 despite the manufacturer continually putting back the launch date due to the heavy work load on meeting military manufacturing commitments. Meanwhile SAS has plenty of work in hand supporting its existing Explorer's and in supporting others using the type in Europe.

The expectation that there would be an announcement of further European Police orders for the AW169 were not realized. Meanwhile the Norwegian Police order for the AW169 for law enforcement operations will mean Leonardo focusing on the preparing of the new type in its new law enforcement role for service entry next year.

Trakka Systems announced that Leonardo had selected the new TrakkaBeam TLX high-intensity, high power searchlight for the AW169 helicopters chosen by the Norwegian Police Directorate as their new law enforcement helicopter type following the recent tender for their helicopter service modernisation programme. The contract will include three aircraft, with an option for a further three units, and a 10-year maintenance package.

The aircraft will enable the Norwegian Police to enhance its capabilities and readiness to counter threats including terrorism, performing a range of tasks including observation, surveillance, special operations team transport.



The theatre presentations were generally well attended and covered an array of subjects

Euroavionics/Hendsold provided the only drone on site ©PAR



To the Wales Air Ambulance Charity (WAA) must go the prize for the 'Photograph of the Year.' There is no such competition nor is there a prize as such. The photograph was good though for no less than three publications appeared at Helitech sporting the one image on their front covers and Trakka designed their stand around it. Quite an advertising coup and prize enough I suspect!



The controversial aspect of the sale is that this is the first purchase is of the optional dual sensor TI/CCD camera payload. This unique option supplements the enhanced functionality of the TLX searchlight, by providing multispectral situational awareness and has been designed for simple aircraft installation and operator usage. Integrated High resolution colour CCD camera with excellent sensitivity allows remote viewing and recording of scenes, whether by day or by night (illuminated with the searchlight) Integrated High resolution uncooled LWIR thermal imager provides remote 360° viewing of the scene in the thermal band, whether by day or night in conjunction with illumination or stand alone.

In addition to the AW169, Leonardo Helicopters were promoting its range of modern helicopters including the AW139 and AW189 alongside its other older types including the single engine SW-4 and AW119Kx helicopters and twin engine AW109 Power, AW109 GrandNew and AW109 Trekker helicopters for a wide range of passenger transport and public service missions.

**KOPTER**

It will be some time before Kopter will be able to sell their project to willing buyers. The appearances in the USA have shown clear interest in the type of current operators of the H125, as have civil European operators of singles. All regions can still be a rich market for the SH-09 if the buyers are happy with the specification and capabilities it offers when the final specification is available, hopefully next year.

In the law enforcement field there are two lines of opinion. One states that the use of singles is at an end and the other says not. In effect both are true. Those units that select the EASA rules following [i.e. UK, Germany] are obliged to operate twin engine machines. Those that choose to embrace the public aircraft route and to follow military rules [i.e. Belgium] are able to use singles and to underscore that they are refurbishing and upgrading the singles they still have.

The example on their stand, one of the prototypes in the colours of SAS – Systematic Aviation Services - is off to Malaysia and wore a Malaysian flag on the tail.

**BELL**

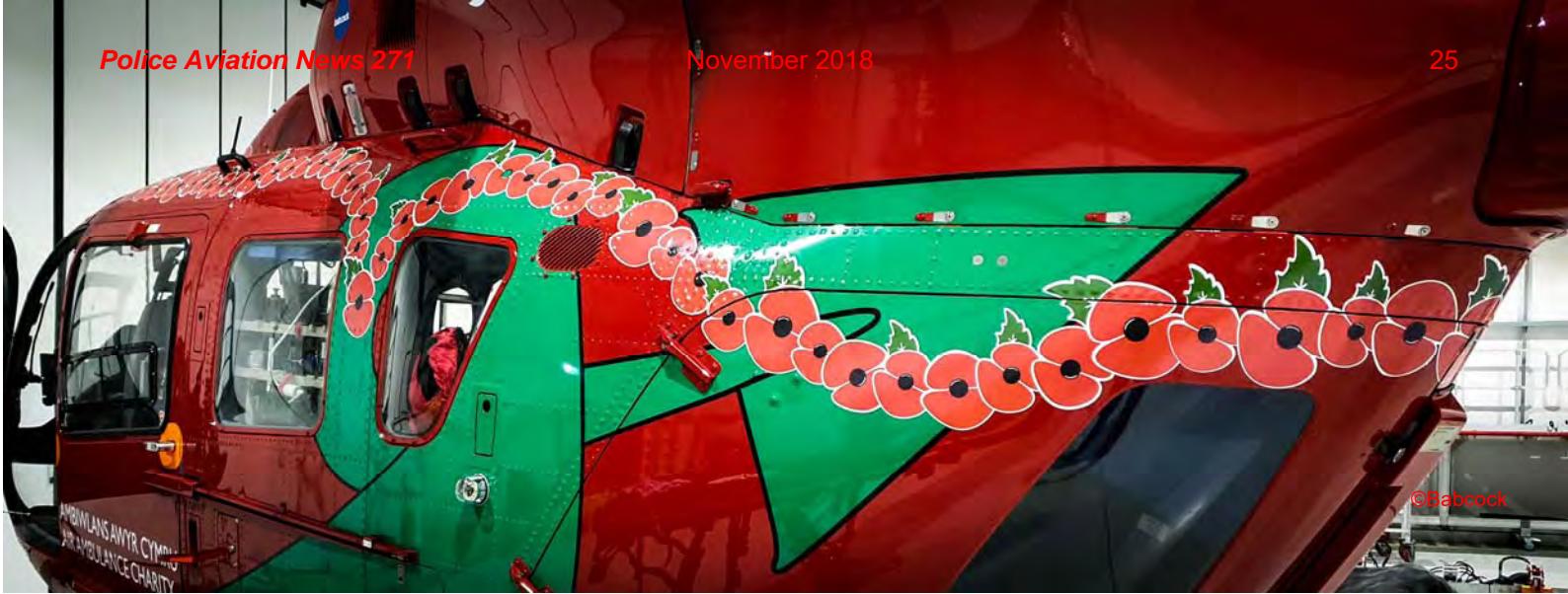
The two helicopters that represent the company’s light helicopter future graced the Bell stand and were attracting a great deal of interest.

The bright yellow winch fitted Bell 429, in Swiss marks as HB-ZOP is for operation in Andorra for Mitjans Aeris, Govern d’ Andorra. Currently operating in the region in the rescue role is a Spanish EC135.

It is still relatively early days for the Bell 505 as customers start to take delivery and give feedback on the type. On the booth was a French example F-HJRX.







By way of further promoting the Wales AA brand, Babcock International has emblazoned one of its life saving air ambulance helicopters with a spectacular garland of exactly 100 poppies – one for each year since the guns in the First World War fell silent. Babcock supplied and continue to maintain the Wales AA fleet from its Staverton, Gloucestershire facility.

The dramatic new livery, designed to help mark the centenary of the Armistice, stretches all around the aircraft and sits alongside its usual branding of the WAA. The aircraft also features the words '100 years' in English and Welsh on its nose.

The idea for the powerful new paint job came from Babcock pilot Grant Elgar, himself an ex-military pilot, who has been flying for the Wales Air Ambulance Charity for the past ten years.

Grant said: "Marking the Armistice is incredibly important to me –and even more so on this, the 100th anniversary. I spent 23 years in the armed forces and I'm proud to always wear a poppy on my flight suit at this time of year, and several of our aircraft feature one too, but for the centenary I wanted to do something more."

With help from the charity and the Babcock team Grant's idea to cover the aircraft in 100 poppies quickly became reality. The 100 poppies on the aircraft are all individual specialist stickers and took some time to fix to the H145 helicopter. It is a unique flying artwork dedicated to the act of remembrance.

The poppy design will remain on the aircraft beyond the Remembrance Day [November 11] to serve as a useful reminder to everyone who sees us of the sacrifice made by so many in the First World War and many other conflicts since.

*Today, remembrance **poppies** are mostly used in the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand—**countries** which were formerly part of the British Empire—to commemorate their servicemen and women killed in all conflicts. They are used to a lesser extent in the United States. The prime act of Remembrance is to mark the 11th hour of the 11th day of 1918 the date the Great War ceased or the nearest Sunday.*



With all this Wales/Airbus content the Editor feels he should perhaps now point out that "Other air ambulances are available" ©SAS



## LATE NEWS

With the UK air ambulance community being one of the largest operators of the type, there will be much speculation about what brought down the Leonardo AW169 G-VSKP owned by Foxborough Ltd at the King Power Stadium in Leicester on October 27. Lots of speculation among those that might have an inkling.

The helicopter was being used by Leicester City Football Club's (LCFC) owner and contained five people when it impacted an empty car park just outside LCFC's King Power Stadium after taking off from the pitch. Some of the fatal flight was captured on a far from clear nearby CCTV camera. The helicopter climbed to several hundred feet in apparent full control as it went out of sight of the camera before returning to view clearly spiralling and out of control losing height rapidly. The helicopter came to rest on its left hand side and a post impact fire occurred. All the persons on board perished. The dead were two pilots and three passengers including the Club Chairman and benefactor Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha.

The ferocity of the post-crash fire in an impact that left the airframe largely intact has surprised many industry observers. It is known that the airframe was not initially burning as two police officers made an attempt to break open 'the doors' before being beaten back by the flames. Not sure how that might work.... the doors were either buried under the side or high up on top. Maybe they were attempting to break the impact resistant windscreen [which would seriously make the task even harder].

In the CCTV footage the helicopter displayed classic symptoms of loss of tail rotor effectiveness but how that came to be will be a long process of elimination by the AAIB. There was a flight data recorder fitted to the AW169 but we currently do not have information on how comprehensive the parameters of it were.

The AW169 apparently cleared the ground and stadium safely so there is no suggestion that it struck ground based objects. If it turns out to be a mechanical failure related to the tail rotor the main options would appear to be failure of an aircraft part or a collision with another object that was also flying above the stadium..... was there a drone up there?

The aircraft owning company Foxborough is a Private Limited Company based in Oxfordshire but Flight Global states that the operator on the night was a specialist charter organisation Amadeus Aviation Ltd.



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13-15 November 2018 APSA Safety Seminar. San Antonio, Texas [www.publicsafetyaviation.org](http://www.publicsafetyaviation.org)

14-15 November UAV Show ExCel London Docklands

28-29 November 2018 International Security Expo. Olympia London. Collocated with International Disaster event. Hear the latest security updates from world's leading industry experts, with over 350 exhibitors expected, over 1,000 product launches, inspiring features plus a series of FREE conferences. The Protecting Crowded Places Conference features Police Response to Crowded Place Incidents, Mark Scoular, Head of Protect and Prepare, Home Office and -Resilience for Crowded Places, Beverley Griffiths, Director of Resilience, Cabinet Office Emergency Planning College. There is a Drone Zone. Event run by Nineteen Events, Tuition House, 27-37 St. George's Road, Wimbledon, SW19 4EU. +44 (0) 20 8947 9177 [www.internationalsecurityexpo.com](http://www.internationalsecurityexpo.com)

17-19 December 2018 APSA Tactical Flight Officer Course, Tampa, Florida, USA [www.publicsafetyaviation.org](http://www.publicsafetyaviation.org)

26 February – 3 March 2019 Airshow Avalon, Geelong, Australia. The major show in Australia just along the coast from Melbourne. The 2017 show attracted 664 companies from 25 countries, 33,000 trade visitors, 634 aircraft including over 60 from the Royal Australian Air Force and 367 members of the media. There were 158 delegations and 44 conferences and symposia associated with the event. Contacts with the Avalon Sales Team: PO Box 4095 Geelong, Victoria 3220, Australia +61 (0) 35282 0500 [ex-po@amda.co.au](mailto:ex-po@amda.co.au) [www.airshow.com.au](http://www.airshow.com.au)

