

Police Aviation News

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Issue 305

September 2021



SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE WOES
FLYING MAN - a day out
DRF GO ONE MILLION
EUROPE BURNS
AMAZON PAST ITS PRIME
DOVER PATROL - revisited



EDITORIAL

In this issue there are three stories of governments cutting the finance to airborne emergency services to the point where the service no longer works adequately. Unfortunately, they will not be the only ones.

One relates to a firefighting service in Turkey and another two relate to police services, South Africa and of course the never-ending tale of the downward spiral of the England and Wales National Police Air Service. All have a common thread of governments blindly cutting finance aided by poor management decisions.

Meanwhile on the English South Coast money is being poured into the waters of the English Channel. Despite initial doubts on this side of the English Channel/La Manche it appears they are having some success over there. But the numbers seem to rise by the day. At what cost? There seem to be no checks and balances in place to ensure the money is well spent.

Certainly, there has been a less than perfect management infrastructure in place in the oversight of the migrant project as well. The common threads appear to be the Home Office and senior police officers. NPAS doesn't work well with senior police officers in charge, there may be some doubt whether either the HM Coastguard aviation or the Border Force ships will fare very well with fully grounded landlubber policemen who normally navigate desks for a living.

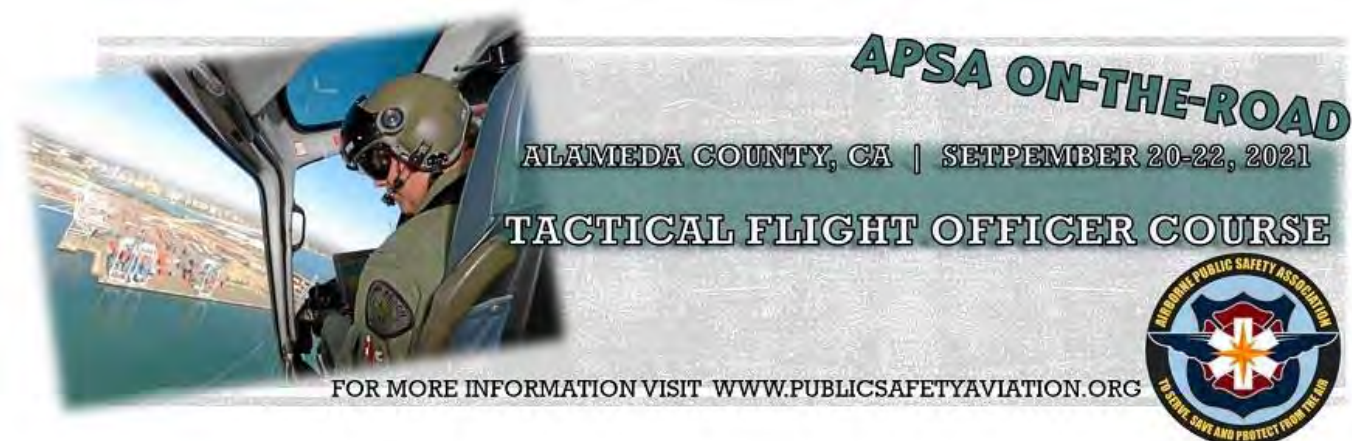
A Home Office civil servant had been leading the operational response to addressing the problem of cross-Channel migrants but with the numbers arriving at increasing rates the response has been less than electric. The lead civil servants are now leaving that post, and one headed for a leadership role in quality control. Good luck with that one!

Three senior police officers are vying to replace the Home Office team at the front line of migrant sea traffic but none of them appears to have previous knowledge of flying or sailing. Despite recent acquisitions, the Royal Navy bringing back an old ship from the dead and the Border Force acquiring a new vessel, far too much reliance is being placed at the door of the RNLI charity for the rescue of the migrants. Autumn is not far off and someday soon there will be a disaster when a group sets forth in weather that suddenly changes. No doubt when the weather changes and the traffic across the English Channel slows some politician or head of service will claim victory.

The cost cannot match what has recently been abandoned in Afghanistan but what has been spent so far on failing to secure the borders? A never-ending fountain of money to bolster the French response, new vessels, new technology and new people.


Meanwhile no-one has found any money to ensure that the British police have the tools of the trade they need. Equipment is relatively cheap to acquire (and apparently leave behind in foreign lands) but having the most expensive element – people - sitting around waiting for a helicopter that works is downright wasteful.

Bryn Elliott



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COVER IMAGE: Wildfires have grabbed the headlines in the Northern Hemisphere in the past month. The USA is in its usual spot as the most predictable region to burn out of control, this year though Europe has joined in with widespread fires—and a sense of unpreparedness very evident.

This marketing image of a water drop role equipped Airbus Helicopters Dauphin was provided by DART TALON

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Police Aviation News is published monthly by **POLICE AVIATION RESEARCH**,
7 Windmill Close, Honey Lane, Waltham Abbey, Essex EN9 3BQ UK.
Contacts: **Cell:** +44 7778 296650 **Skype:** BrynElliott or +44 20 8144 1914
E-mail: editor@policeaviationnews.com and policeaviation@hotmail.com



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LAW ENFORCEMENT

AUSTRALIA

VICTORIA: Last month an item on attempts to preserve an Aerospatiale Dauphin helicopter VH-PVF for the state of Victoria claimed that the Dauphin was the first airframe owned by police in Australia. Subsequent research shows that it should have been stated that it was the first helicopter owned by the police.

By October 1979 the \$1.3M helicopter was in service over Melbourne. Prior to that New South Wales Police had owned and operated a war surplus Avro Anson from 1946-50. [PAR]

CANADA

ALBERTA: For over two decades, the Air 1 helicopter has been an integral part of Edmonton Police Service [EPS] operations and an invaluable investment in community safety. Since 2001, Air 1 has responded to more than 50,000 events, the helicopter is often the first police vehicle on scene and usually within 60 seconds of being dispatched. The helicopter's unique vantage point has aided police in accurately assessing the resources needed for events and has helped to create more cooperation and coordination between first responders in greater Edmonton.

"Air 1 has taken policing to new heights in our city," says EPS Chief Dale McFee. "The helicopter was a game changer 20 years ago, and continues to help us reduce crime, apprehend criminals and improve public safety today. Investments such as these align with the EPS vision of innovation and working smarter, allowing us to deal with the complexities of crime in the safest manner possible."

EPS began looking at the possibility of purchasing a helicopter back in the 1990s to help reduce the dangers of criminal flights. Besides the safer handling of pursuits, a helicopter could reduce response times, enhance officer and public safety, and utilise its infrared camera technology and powerful searchlight to fight crime at night. A dedicated team of EPS employees, who would later become the first flight crew, conducted extensive research and recommend purchasing a police helicopter to the Edmonton Police Commission (EPC) in 1995 and again in 1998.

Although these proposals were not approved, community interest remained strong. In November 2000, the Spotlight on Safety campaign kicked off, and through the efforts of Bob Layton, Harry Mann, Ed Bean, Harry Hole and numerous other supporters and volunteers, \$1M was raised to lease the first police helicopter and prove its worth. These same volunteers would later go on to raise an additional \$1M to pay for the helicopter and keep it in the sky.

Encouraged by this outpouring of community support, and the strength of the latest EPS proposal, the EPC approved the acquisition of a police helicopter on February 28, 2001, for a one-year period to evaluate its performance. With much anticipation, the new Airbus EC-120 helicopter designated as Air 1 made its public debut at Heritage Days in August. 5, 2001, and approximately 3,600 visitors stood in line to have their picture taken with the helicopter. A few days later, Air 1 took off from the City Centre Airport for its

first patrol flight. All eyes were on Air 1, which was one of only two municipal police helicopters operating in Canada at the time, but the helicopter quickly proved its value in preventing property damage and saving lives. Within the first four months of operation, Air 1 attended 832 events.

In September 2009, EPS added another Airbus EC-120 helicopter designated Air 2, which would allow one helicopter to be serviced while the other continued to fly. When the City Centre Airport closed at the end of November 2013, EPS Flight Operations relocated to Villeneuve Airport, and began looking for another helicopter that could fly faster, farther and remain on scene longer without having to refuel so often.



EPS chose to purchase a next generation Airbus H-125 helicopter that met those needs, and the new Air 1 helicopter was unveiled to the public on February 23, 2018, followed by the addition of a new back-up helicopter in November last year.

With the two new helicopters in service, the original Air 1 helicopter was decommissioned, and the original Air 2 will soon be sold. However, this is not the end for our city's first police helicopter, as plans are now underway to donate the aircraft to the Alberta Aviation Museum to honour its place in Edmonton's history.

[Edmonton Police Service]



Editor: How refreshing. The management of a police helicopter operation praising the operational worth their two helicopters and the people who made it happen, for all it does and means to officers across the force area.

It is worth a trip to the Edmonton Police web page. They claim to be an early user of the aeroplane—in 1919 and there is an informative cartoon story of the incident. <https://www.edmontonpolice.ca/AboutEPS/LegacyOfHeroes/Issue2> The aircraft involved in that slice of police aviation history s already preserved.

SOUTH AFRICA

CAPE TOWN: Budget cuts, declining personnel numbers and helicopters that don't work are issues that handicap the capability of the South African Police Service (SAPS) Air Wing.

In a report to Parliament the Commissioner Khehla John Sitole and Police Minister Bheki Cele briefed Members of Parliament (MPs) on stability in the SAPS. The police committee heard how billions in budget cuts over the years had negatively impacted the service. The SAPS is unable to meet all their policing obligations and has been in that position for some time.

The SAPS has had to deal with up to R15 billion (approx. \$1,024,976,000) in budget cuts over recent years. The cuts resulted in some helicopters and armoured vehicles not functioning properly. The Air Wing operates fixed and rotary wing and states that they cannot get more than five helicopters operational nationally. Ten years ago, they would expect to fly up to 14 at any given time. Currently nine are grounded, most have been grounded more than three years.

Minister Cele also had to address reports that he was not working well with Sitole, which also affected police performance. Cele admitted that

"The national commissioner and I, let me repeat it, we are not friends. We don't drink coffee together but let me assure you that we work together."

Editor: Within memory the SAPS Air Wing, formed as such in 1985, was one of the most successful in Africa if not in the southern hemisphere. South Africa is less than twice the size of Texas, five times bigger than the United Kingdom. Their main helicopter fleet is based on the survivors of 15 AS350B3 and dates back around 20 years. The most recent purchase was ten years ago. In addition, they were recently (2018) noted as operating six Robinson R44, two MD500, a BK117 and nine Pilatus PC-6 fixed wing. There are a few other fixed wing but clearly day-to-day availability is a major issue across the fleet of perhaps 34 airframes. The SAPS employed 54 pilots and 309 support staff in the air wing. The 2020/21 operating budget for the air wing is R86.7M (\$5.8M) and the total 2020/21 budget for maintenance of aircraft is R68.7M (\$4.6M/£3.3M).

The fleet is widely spread across the country though the main base at Pretoria has a number. The number of operations annually is reported to be in the region of 2,000 so individual aircraft are not worked intensively.

This whole story resonates with the situation in so many other places where politicians cut the budgets to the bone but still expect the resource to magically appear on demand.

UNITED KINGDOM

NATIONAL:

As the last edition of PAN closed news came in that NPAS were commencing a new shift pattern in several bases that were newly being reduced to 12 hours operational.

It seems not that long ago that NPAS were planning to put all its units on a 24-hour shift pattern but, like many plans before it, that idea does not seem to have lasted too long. Plans at NPAS are seemingly plucked from another world and as quickly discarded.

The latest plan, initially put forward in December last year, went sour very quickly. It seems that they failed to consult the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) before finalising the edict. I suspect, taking the HMICFRS report as a guide, they may not know who the CAA are and what they do. It was additionally asking for trouble when they appear to have left consultation with the CAA until July – just as the scheme was to be launched.

The few remaining 24-hour bases operate two 12 hour shifts based around 0700 – 1900. The new shift planned for the reduced availability units was set at 1500 - 0300 daily and after a suitable period of consultation the police staff, the TFOs, work those hours and the base managers 0900 - 1700. The intransigent CAA decided that the pilots were not going to be working the 3 o'clock shift, the pilots would not be changing their hours. They would continue to arrive at work as usual at 7am or 7pm. However, in a fast moving storyline it seems that they have managed to finally negotiate a face saving change of hours for the 12 hour units of 1300-0100, to commence this month.

So, the police officers at 12-hour units were faced with an unsupportable situation but the goodwill of the pilots and the individual police officers may have saved the day. If the base has enough pilots, and that is

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a bit of an ask in itself, the TFOs and pilots were faced with spending half a day doing very little together as an integrated crew. If this new accommodation goes ahead, it still looks as if the air support will close down just after midnight, surely the most important time of day for some areas. NPAS had agreed with police forces that they would all be covered until 0200 but that has apparently been scrapped until the mess can be sorted out. It appears this situation looks likely to continue until at least October, officially the NPAS Management have to go through a staff consultation process to retract the changes they brought in. With the apparent actions of the front-line staff saving the day the management are increasingly looking to be an irrelevance.

Nonetheless, duty hours look likely to be wasted. Where is the sense in getting staff at some units to constantly work unsociable hours - 1500-0300hrs - when they will often have no aircraft to fly in. Only management people located in their lofty Wakefield palace 9 to 5 could dream that up. As my old sergeant used to say, "you need to get out more lad - NOW."

Nothing is written in stone, last month I understood that Carr Gate the helicopter base at Wakefield, West Yorkshire was to be reduced to 12-hours. This month I understand that edict/plan has been discarded, permanently/temporarily/whatever and they will be staying as before (whatever that was). Please keep up!

Epistle to Wakefield

A letter of complaint, or at least protest, was sent to the Temporary Assistant Chief Constable Scott Bisset, Chief Operating Officer, in the middle of July, it was quickly replied to at the end of the month. Surprisingly, pleasingly, prompt.

The letter to NPAS asked about the missing Strategic Board Minutes, the missing Annual Report and requested details on the troubled fixed wing programme. The latter subject was totally ignored.

It appears that after nearly a decade NPAS now believe that there is no pressing need to publish the minutes because the meetings are not open to the public. The content is not suitable for publication into the public domain due to the number of operational and commercial confidential items covered. It seems that, although only 10% was ever redacted, having someone outside the organisation reading and commenting on them is an embarrassment. Now it seems that, after 9 years of publishing, and several occasions where the matter has been highlighted as a Freedom of Information (FOI) enquiry NPAS are "reviewing" the process of publishing redacted minutes. When they decide they will let me know? In view of those earlier FOIs, they should have decided long ago. Perhaps they did not think of it then.

As for the Annual Report, despite promising to publish them last summer, again a statement of intent elicited through FOI activity, NPAS management have decided that there was little demand for it. Then some drivel about not producing the report to save money. As for "Police Forces do not publish such documents either, predominantly due to budgetary constraints." Well, a simple Internet search produced piles of them, some are covered by their local Police and Crime Commissioner, but the reports are still there. No explanation there about how NPAS report their performance to staff, the NPCC, local funding sources and the government of the day. A PDF is a cheap and easily transportable information vehicle (as PAN ably demonstrates). As for other smaller organisations there are reports to be had from HMICFRS, NPCC, the Home Office, Border Agency etc., why do NPAS management believe they alone exist in an elitist stratum above those worthy organisations? The managements over egged belief in self-worth tends to reinforce the repeated complaints about overbearing conduct towards their subordinates.



For "its only public money" attitude you can easily read "they are only our staff" as a typical arrogance led bad management equivalent.

Minutes

As if by paradoxical magic, in mid-August I discovered that four sets of missing minutes had appeared on the NPAS website. The minutes posted online are almost up to date, and only lightly redacted.

They cover the virtual meetings in January, February, March and June and cover a period when a lot of decisions were being made about the future of the fleet composition and in the latest minutes, future management of the Strategic Board. The devil is in the detail (not all of which is in the minutes) but clearly some far reaching decisions have been considered even if not yet resolved.

Although it has barely got going, the under-resourced fixed wing operation appears to be taking the brunt of the criticism and sways between dead in the water and much reduced. The minutes confirm that the

four aircraft at Doncaster are only being operated as a two aircraft fleet at the moment. The Strategic Board are split on whether to abandon the programme completely or to operate much as they are now with a reduced fleet. There is talk of disposing of the surplus fleet and making use of the capital but unless they can find a suitable buyer for the fully equipped airframe (a buyer that meets the requirements of the US International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) the airframes will soak up so many deactivation costs as to be useless financially. Nowhere does there seem to be an option to use the only four new aircraft that NPAS operate to their fullest extent.

Although the detail is redacted it appears that NPAS are talking to the MCA about the form of future UK SAR and how that might fit in with police operations. Are they suggesting that future fixed wing needs are to be met by a contractor such as 2Excel their near neighbours at Doncaster Airport? They supply fixed wing aircraft to the MCA/UK Coast Guard. Another element of that is that NPAS are continuing to explore BVLOS drones as a future technology that is also a feature of the future SAR.

If the plans in the earlier minutes have been adhered to, the Strategic Board minutes for July should include a decision on who might run NPAS from next year. There are rumours of course and they say that West Midlands and The Met will undertake the task but, notwithstanding the various past rumours that have turned into fact, we should not wish it on anyone.

The composition of the Strategic Board has altered significantly. The former Chairman of the 'Board Mark Burns-Williamson OBE, the West Yorkshire PCC, has gone and the new Chairman is another PCC, John Campion the PCC for West Mercia. There might be a link between his appointment and the rumours, there is not a great deal of difference in words between West Midlands and West Mercia, the two areas abutt each other. For the moment there is no public announcement of which force is to take over NPAS, but no-one argued with John Campion when he proposed himself as the leader of the pack.

That first virtual meeting in June saw a larger than normal attendance at the meeting, time enough for the group to find a working number – especially if they give up the electronic meetings. There is an odd shift in the pecking order in the attendees list. Previously the first three people featured were from West Yorkshire Police but in the June listing T/ACC Scott Bisset the Chief Operating Officer for NPAS was removed from third place to 22nd behind several chief constables, and representatives from West Yorkshire Combined Authority – the new bosses. It may just be an anomaly, but it might indicate the side-lining of West Yorkshire Police. Something for the next set of minutes to clarify.

Will it be audited?

As part of the seemingly never-ending campaign to return effective air support to England and Wales, in July the editor wrote to the National Audit Office.

They replied that they do not have a remit to examine the operations of bodies such as NPAS. They did explain their position though, "police accountability is exercised at a local level, in West Yorkshire this is through the Mayoral Combined Authority." From recent developments we may have an opinion on what short shrift the new mayor gave NPAS when she entered power.

But and I have no great expectation, the NAO case is not closed and they are exploring whether other bodies or agencies may have the ability to look at the issues raised. I wait with bated breath.

Ed: Foolishly I believed that my limited exposure to operational police flying counted against me. Recent research now tells me that my miniscule hands-on experience of police flying far exceeds that of all the NPAS management team combined. It appears that most of them have no operational flight experience at all and yet they are making day-to-day life and death decisions that detrimentally affect the well-being of their pilots and TFOs and the operational efficiency of the aircraft operated. It seems that although the flight crews have to jump through many hoops to get their jobs, and many more obstacles, training and testing to get and retain their jobs The Management are wholly untrained. Looks like it might be a good idea if they at least got extended dunker training. Little wonder then that they fell into the basic error of not understanding flight hours and the role the CAA plays in ensuring its staff, the pilots, are not abused in a manner that degrades flight safety.

Meanwhile, I have again written to TACC Scott Bisset the Chief Operating Officer challenging some of the



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points raised in his reply to me.

As for the rest of the journalists and politicians who might be interested, they are terminally distracted by developments in the English Channel, France and Afghanistan. Or so it seemed!

It was an event bound to attract both senior police officers' members of the National Police Chiefs Council and the hacks at the Daily Mail. They were both probably there for the cucumber and salmon sandwiches but that suited the host inventor. There is no evidence that anyone with a working knowledge of air support and operational need was even invited to view the futuristic £500,000 flying suit.

Senior police and government officials got to see a human jet suit in action at a demonstration of emerging science and technology that allegedly could help fight crime and terrorism in some far off la-la land. In this instance la-la was closer to home at the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) based at Porton Down, near Salisbury, and the would-be police pilot swooping on the escaping criminal was the inventor of the equipment.

A thousand horsepower jet system, called Gravity, was founded by Richard Browning, who is also the test pilot of a system being marketed as a means to outrun the feeling criminal.

Apparently, it is not thought there are any immediate plans to buy and use the kit, but the chairman of the National Police Chiefs' Council Martin Hewitt was goaded into seemingly intelligent comment on the ungainly gear. Apparently, the event presented some 'important and exciting opportunities' to 'identify where that could be used in the policing world'.

Editor: A bit of fun no doubt but the day may have been better spent in sorting out the finances and future of NPAS. I do not recall many instances where the device has been flown by other than the inventor so it will be interesting to learn what the training regime amounts to.

The headline was as predictable as the futuristic cartoons from 1906 – "Police could don jet suits to fly through the air and catch criminals in the years to come..."



The media generated similar "ideal for the police" headlines for the one-man Hiller XRO Rotorcycle [see left] in 1958 and seemingly similarly promote an autogyro or airship every leap year. It fills column inches in the newspaper but does not have a secure link to any sort of reality.

The headlines are usually rubbish of course, as proven by the lack of airships and autogyros in police service.

It appears that the NPCC needs reminding that they (or at least their best forgotten previous identity of ACPO) long ago decided that no British police officer would be employed as a pilot under any circumstances. I should not need to point out that a single seat police air vehicle – including the suit - necessarily carries only one person... So, clearly, Mr Hewitt was only there for the sandwiches.

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AIR AMBULANCE

FINLAND

FinnHEMS Oy, 100 % owned by the State of Finland, is a non-profit organisation for providing the HEMS bases and related infrastructure and processes for the University Hospital Districts.

FinnHEMS Oy is seeking the best solution for HEMS services for two (2) new bases in Finland, this being the dry Lease of Helicopters, Maintenance and Training. The procedure has now entered that of final quotations with a view to making a procurement decision September 2021 leading to contract signature next month.

The lease for the operation expects that the helicopters will perform air ambulance, inter-hospital transport missions of severely injured and/or intensive/critical care patients under VFR and IFR conditions. The type offered must offer at least a 245nm range with maximum crew composition (4 x 104 kg), one patient (104 kg), HEMS- kit and 150 kg role equipment. The maximum age of the helicopters is limited to be six years (2015 or later).

The repair and maintenance services of the helicopters and the training are being considered as separate lots. The maintenance but must be based in Finland and cover air frame, engines and components and be covered by a PBH contract. [TED 2021/S 136-360081]

GERMANY

ADAC: Europe's biggest Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (HEMS) operator has taken delivery of its first two five-bladed H145s. The German HEMS operator will upgrade its current fleet of 14 four-bladed H145s to the five-bladed rotor system in coming years.

ADAC Luftrettung, the German motoring club operation, has more than 50 Airbus helicopters flying from their 37 stations throughout Germany. In June, an ADAC H145 was the first HEMS helicopter to fly with sustainable aviation fuel.

The new version of Airbus' best-selling H145 light twin-engine helicopter was unveiled at Heli-Expo 2019 in Atlanta. This latest upgrade adds a new, innovative five-bladed rotor to the multi-mission H145, increasing the useful load of the helicopter by 150 kg. The simplicity of the new bearingless main rotor design will also ease maintenance operations, further improving the benchmark serviceability and reliability of the H145, while improving ride comfort for both passengers and crew.

DRF LUFTRETTUNG: On August 19, DRF Luftrettung and its subsidiaries conducted their millionth air rescue mission. Every one of these missions aims to provide medical care to people in need as quickly as possible. The historic figure, which was reached at the Munich base on behalf of all mission crews.

When the alarm sounded at the Munich base just before 5 p.m. on August 19, the mission crew took off as usual within a few minutes and headed for the deployment destination. A 27-year-old woman needed to be transported to a specialist hospital for further medical care as quickly as possible as she was experiencing premature labour. The three-person crew collected the patient from the ground-based emergency services and flew her straight to the Grosshadern hospital.

It all began with a single helicopter, which first took off to provide rapid medical assistance to a person in need on 19 March 1973. Together with its subsidiaries, DRF Luftrettung now flies around 40,000 missions a year – an average of about 110 missions per day.

In terms of the numbers of missions undertaken by individual bases, a few days earlier, Christoph 37, the DRF Luftrettung helicopter serving the region around



DRF H145 with five-blades at night ©Frank Jaenke_Quelle DRF

Nordhausen turned in 20,000 missions on August 13.

Christoph 42 based at Rensburg since July last year has now moved to a new location at Schachtholm airfield and responsible for covering the whole of Schleswig-Holstein. In 2020 the station celebrated its 45th birthday operating an H145. [DRF]

ITALY

SARDINIA: The emergency services of the large Italian island in the Mediterranean Sea, Azienda regionale dell'emergenza urgenza della Sardegna, are procuring a renewed €1.2M HEMS service using European Union finance.

After receiving three tender replies the contract was concluded on July 7 and awarded to Airgreen s.r.l. The company has extensive experience in helicopter rescue activity. Since 1995, it started working for the Valle d'Aosta Region in Northwest Italy. In 2003 it started providing its services to Piemonte Region and Sardinia, especially in summertime. The helicopter rescue is performed mainly during daytime, from dawn to dusk.

SWEDEN

The former Airbus Helicopters EC145 G-SASN, c/n 20025, supplied by Babcock Mission Critical Services to the Scottish Air Ambulance Service left Staverton on a low loader some time ago. It has now remerged as SE-JSM for operation by Babcock Scandinavian Air Ambulance AB, Frösön. The owner of the airframe is now TVPX Aircraft Solutions Inc., North Salt Lake, UT, USA. [MJ]

UNITED KINGDOM

EAST ANGLIA: EAAA has revealed that July was the charity's busiest month on record in over four years and EAAA's busiest ever July.

The air ambulance charity, which has two teams covering Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire, was tasked 266 times across the region in July. This was 38 times more than in June, where the charity was tasked 228 times, a 16% increase month on month. In comparison, in July 2020 the charity was tasked 247 times and in July 2019 235 times, making July 2021 EAAA's busiest ever July.

With more people obliged by Covid 19 to stay in the UK this summer the demand on resources like the air ambulance is expected to increase. In addition, this period covers the charity's first month of 24/7 flying, making the medical teams available to more people by helicopter during the early hours of the morning. The top three reasons for calling out the air ambulance teams in July were medical emergency, cardiac arrest and accidental injury.

Matthew Jones, CEO of EAAA, commented: "It's not surprising that our teams have been particularly busy in July with the number of people staying in the UK this summer, and choosing to holiday in this part of the world, much higher than normal. We're only a few weeks into August and already it's feeling like a very busy August, too. On 30th June we also started flying throughout the night for the first time, making our operation 24/7 by air and by road. This is certainly adding to the number of missions we can now attend overnight and is part of the reason for the increase we're seeing here.

"We need to raise £15 million a year to deliver and develop our life-saving service and 266 taskings in July provides a stark reminder of why we do what we do. To be there for those people in the most life-changing or life-threatening circumstances. It's only thanks to the generosity of people throughout the region that we're able to take enhanced critical care to the scene of accidents and emergencies to help save lives and we're incredibly thankful for every donation we receive."

LINCS & NOTTS: The new Leonardo AW169 destined for the Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance has been noted flying on test marks as I-RAIM.

MAGPAS: England may well be in recovery mode but there is no mass charge to come out the other side and some pandemic measures remain in place. On August 9, Magpas Air Ambulance hosted a live Zoom event for Wisbech Society, with an exclusive video base tour, a talk from CEO Daryl Brown and Shelly Green followed by a Q&A session. Magpas is based at RAF Wyton some thirty miles from Wisbech and under normal circumstances a group visit that distance and through RAF security would not be possible.

The charity provides HEMS to much of East Anglia and into the Midlands, a region including the town of Wisbech, Cambridgeshire. The event was set up by aviation writer and trustee Paul Eden in the wake of the health restrictions. They had been forced to cancel popular winter lectures and summer outings, so resorted to Zoom to offer an extended monthly lecture series lasting through the summer. The platform presented options to reach further afield than might normally have been usual, and the link to Wyton is the result.

Covid did have the last laugh on the event though. Although it was not proceeded with an early option was for Paul Eden to present 'live' from Wyton. It was fortunate that the plan was parked because the would-be presenter was 'pinged' and, under government health regulations, had to self-isolate for that week.

Magpas Air Ambulance is one of the UK's oldest emergency medical charities, established in 1971. The charity was founded by two GPs from Cambridgeshire, Dr Neville Silverston MBE and Dr Derek Cracknell MBE.

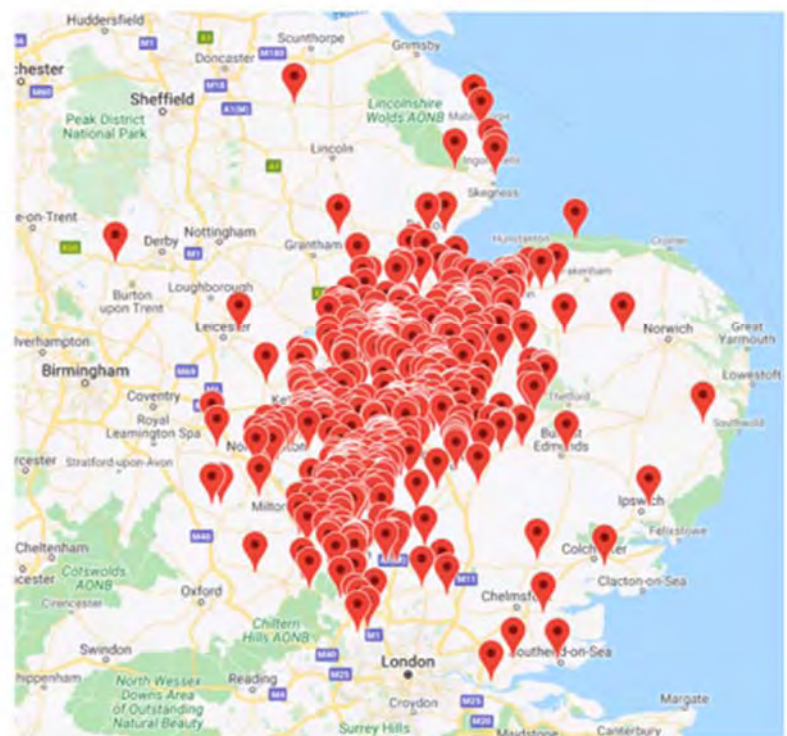
Following a visit to see a similar service in North Yorkshire, Dr Silverston had been inspired to create a voluntary service of family GPs in Cambridgeshire who could support the ambulance service in helping the victims of road accidents. Several other similar groups formed across the country at this time.

With the help of Dr Cracknell, together they founded the Mid Anglia General Practitioner Accident Service (MAGPAS), named after the geographical area covered by the Mid Anglia Constabulary (now Cambridgeshire Constabulary).

Dr Silverston and Dr Cracknell recruited a network of over 100 GPs around Cambridgeshire who could be called upon, day or night, to treat patients at the scene of road accidents in their private cars. At the time, the ambulance service offered little medical treatment and primarily only sought to get the patient to hospital as quickly as possible. By Magpas bringing medical care to the scene of an accident, the patient had a much better chance of survival and impact of their injuries was reduced – an idea which remains at the heart of today's service.

In later years the Magpas team joined with the police in Cambridgeshire to offer a helicopter service, originally based on their AS355F2 operating from RAF Wyton. They had the aircraft type from 1997. Later, in 2006, they changed to a new police MD902. The emergence of NPAS in 2012 put that highly successful cooperation under threat and as a result Magpas had to alter their fundraising model at relatively short notice to enable them to support the hire of their own MD902. This, along with the halting of similar arrangements in Sussex and Wiltshire, was yet another unwelcome element of NPAS. Although there were some traumatic times, Magpas survived the transition in funding and was able to fundraise enough to acquire its current leased AW169 airframe through SAS at Staverton.

Day Activations (07:00-19:00)





Prime aircraft, Leonardo AW169 G-MGPS at MAS Staverton ©James Lloyds

Magpas remain at RAF Wyton although there are plans to move to a new £7.6M base located on land that was on the former USAF base at RAF Alconbury by 2023, the current site is destined to be housing. The new site has been cleared in the last three months, construction will start at the turn of the year with an expectation that they can move into it in late 2022 or early 2023.



A deserted RAF Alconbury in 1997. From the Cambridgeshire Police AS355 ©PAR

UNITED STATES

NEW YORK: Mercy Flight Central, a medical provider located in western New York, has signed a contract for four IFR- certified AW119Kxs for EMS transport missions. Delivery of the first aircraft is expected in 2022.

These new IFR capable aircraft will allow in-flight critical care and the transport of patients within Mercy Flight’s 150-mile service radius. The AW119Kx in its latest variant is the first single engine helicopter in decades to meet current IFR requirements, which will allow Mercy Flight pilots to operate the aircraft safely during low visibility and the challenging weather conditions common in this region, due to advanced avionics from Genesys Aerosystems and redundant flight systems.

The IFR-capable AW119Kx is an ideal entry point for commercial and public service operators who seek the highest level of safety and performance while operating in demanding conditions but keeping single engine economics. This combines with the AW119’s unique light-twin like multiple redundancies of critical systems and cabin spaces, while delivering outstanding reliability and safety.

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FIRE CANADA

NEW TANKER: Viking Air Limited and PAL Aerospace Canada have announced the establishment of a contract to support the Twin Otter Fire Attack System. The agreement's scope includes the design, manufacturing, installation, and certification of the Aerial Firefighting System for the Twin Otter DHC-6 300 and 400 aircraft. It is anticipated that the Aerial Firefighting System will be certified in 2022 and an international customer will receive the first converted aircraft.



This undertaking is a progressive effort between Viking and PAL Aerospace to build additional capabilities for the already versatile DHC-6 Twin Otter Series 300 and 400 aircraft. The Aerial Firefighting System will allow the Twin Otter to transition effortlessly between global firefighting missions and its more traditional mission profiles, including transporting passengers and cargo. The airtanker-configured Twin Otter aircraft will help mitigate and fight wildfires with the ability to drop up to 700 US gallons of water or retardant in challenging environments.

Viking is the current manufacturer of the world-renowned Twin Otter Series 400 and Guardian 400 Twin-engine turboprop aircraft. Viking is the Type Certificate holder for all out-of-production De Havilland Canada aircraft (DHC-1 through the DHC-7) and all Canadair amphibious aircraft, including CL-215, CL-215T and CL-415 aerial firefighter aircraft, and the Shorts Skyvan, 360, 330 and Sherpa family of aircraft.

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EUROPE

The whole of the eastern Mediterranean section of Europe is again being ravaged by fires. Aircraft from every nationality can be seen fighting the fires – often in what appears to be a vain attempt to dampen the maelstrom of flames driven by extreme heat – the cause glibly put down to Global Warming. Most countries pre-planned their likely response to the annual problem but in this instance found that the usual measures were insufficient.

GREECE

The authorities in Greece were wrong footed by the extreme heat of this summer, but at least they had a firefighting system in place to build upon.

The unprecedented wildfires that have been raging in Greece since the beginning of August, causing enormous damage, requiring, among other things, the immediate use of as many firefighting aircraft and related equipment as possible, to stop their catastrophic spread.

From the first moment that the magnitude of the disaster became apparent Greek industrial giant Mytilineos SA decided to seek help in the most appropriate way. In collaboration with the Government and the General Secretariat for Civil Protection, the Company offered to source firefighting helicopters, which were most needed by the Fire Department.

After a great deal of effort, they found Bell 214 BI helicopters operated by the American company Erickson Inc were available and located in Australia. They were acquired, fully equipped with flying and with a supporting staff consisting of more than 20 pilots, engineers and translators. These helicopters, after being approved at operational level by the General Secretariat for Civil Protection, were handed over to the State of Greece, to contribute to the efforts directed at putting out the fires in the country.

The four helicopters are to remain in country for 60 days, with the cost being met by Mytilineos at a cost of € 3.3M. [Mytilineos]

TURKEY

The heat of summer was just as extreme in Turkey and the situation equally difficult but the foundations of the aerial firefighting system were not in place.

As August started coastal holiday resorts in Turkey were evacuated as fires raged out of control. The hard-pressed authorities were looking far and wide for equipment to supplement firefighting capabilities including the option of equipping locally based C-130 aircraft with temporary equipment. The phone even rang in the PAN office as guidance was sought into finding spare equipment.

The root of Turkey's problems lay in politics. The countries aerial firefighting resources lay idle, the amphibious firefighting Canadair CL-215 planes were sitting idle at an airport outside Ankara while Turkey's worst ever wildfires ravage its southwestern coast. The repercussions look set to haunt the alleged architect of the problem - President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

For decades, the Turkish Aeronautical Association or THK, established by the country's founder Mustafa Kemal Ataturk in 1925, has fought back the forest blazes that sporadically took hold in hot and dry Mediterranean summers.

The THK had for much of its history been financed by tithes worth millions of pounds levied on Turks sacrificing sheep during Eid festivals, but President Erdogan halted the tithes in 2013 without substituting government funding in its place. The THK found its income stream cut off and it was effectively abandoned. A further blow was when, in 2015, aviation authorities barred the THK's Polish built PZL-Mielec M-18 Dromader a 1970s single engine agricultural aircraft that is used as a crop duster or firefighting machine from missions, citing safety risks. The agency took loans from banks to buy nine second-hand Canadair aircraft for the Gökçen Aviation element of THK to operate. It was obliged to sell land to raise funds and pay debt to banks. A further blow arose the following year when the authorities required aircraft fighting fires to carry 5,000 litres of water, just beyond the 4,900 litres the CL-215s hold. An additional problem affecting the fleet has been poor maintenance leaving the fleet unflyable just at the time it faced its greatest and most urgent call for service. Apparently useless for the role, the piston engine CL-215s have been out of service since 2019. The newer turbine variants of the design carry significantly more water.



The vintage Dromader may be unwanted in Turkey but the type was still serving Greece in its time of need. ©File

The title income was diverted to Islamic charities, they now dominate the lucrative business. Meanwhile more than 50,000 hectares of forest burned and around 12,000 buildings were damaged, power plants were under threat and thousands of residents and holidaymakers fled before the authorities had time to bring in outside contractors to stem the fires.

With its own aircraft out of action, Turkey has leased aircraft and helicopters from countries including Russia and Iran at short notice in the face of a Mediterranean region that is already desperate for firefighting aircraft – at the same time other parts of the world were also hiring aircraft from a limited pool.

Last month Columbia Helicopters signed a contract partnering with CMC Savunma Sanayi A.S. to provide two Boeing “Columbia 234” Chinooks for firefighting and external load operations in Turkey.

The contract encompasses the fire season and marks Columbia’s first operation in the country. CMC Savunma Sanayi A.S. is the original awardee of the contract with the Turkey General Directorate of Forestry and is subcontracting with Columbia to provide the aircraft, crew, and maintenance support.

The 234 can operate with Columbia’s 2,800-gallon Fire Attack System (FAS) internal tank, the aircraft on this contract utilise the 2,600-gallon Bambi Bucket for precision water and retardant drops. The 234 Chinook is fully certified to civilian transport category standards, allowing it to transport internal cargo and passengers. Originally certified by Boeing, the aircraft certificate is now owned and supported by Columbia. Columbia provides all sustainment, training, and MRO capabilities to support the aircraft around the globe.



UNITED STATES

WEST COAST: The situation in eastern Mediterranean maybe grabbing more of the headlines simply because the situation is more unusual but the deadly annual fires in the USA continue.

Even as Europe burned it was reported that one fire in California – The Dixie Fire -exploded by more than 97,000 acres in 24 hours, becoming the third-largest wildfire on record in California.

The fire, which erased the town of Greenville in Northern California became the largest blaze in the United States this year, having burned 432,813 acres.

The Bootleg Fire in Oregon had previously been the largest wildfire in the US this year, at 413,765 acres.

The dramatic growth of the Dixie Fire fits into a trend of rapidly expanding fires fuelled by severe drought, driven in part by a warming climate. The number of fires has not gone up, but the amount of burned areas since the 1980s in California has more than doubled. This year Fire Season started earlier, the Dixie Fire ignited in mid-July, about two weeks before California typically experiences its biggest fires.

It turns out that the wildfires are also wrong-footing the politicians. The forests that are burning are those set aside by governments and global corporations to offset their carbon emissions! [NYT/G]

NATIONAL: TVU Networks, the market and technology leader in cloud and IP-based live video solutions, has partnered with DroneResponders Public Safety Alliance to promote the use of UAVs with real-time video transmission by public safety agencies for assessing wildfires. The partnership has already resulted in the authoring of a new white paper, which is available on the TVU website.

The white paper, "Tactical Live Video Streaming Adds Missing Ingredient for Effective UAV Wildfire Assessment," details the advantages of using drones to assess wildfires, as well as the challenges of transmitting video from UAVs in remote areas where many wildfires occur. It also includes a detailed case study of California's Fremont Fire Department, which uses a TVU solution with its UAV program to transport live video to the command centre and first responders on the scene. TVU's broadcast system provides real-time situational awareness that can substantially improve tactical decision-making during incidents. To access the white paper, visit <https://bit.ly/3hjrole>

United Rotorcraft, a division of Air Methods Corporation, has awarded Sikorsky a contract for five S-70™ Black Hawk® helicopters. The bulk order will enable United Rotorcraft, as the only company authorised by Sikorsky to modify Black Hawk aircraft to the Firehawk® configuration, to quickly deliver new production aircraft for aerial firefighting in support of public agencies battling increasingly destructive wildland fires.

Sikorsky will produce the five S-70 Black Hawk aircraft at Lockheed Martin's PZL Mielec manufacturing line in Poland. Deliveries to United Rotorcraft's completions facility in Colorado are expected between early 2022 and mid-2023. The first aircraft received will be configured as a Firehawk helicopter for the State of Colorado, which announced its contract with United Rotorcraft on August 16.

The configuration of the Firehawk sees the installation of a 1,000-gallon (3,785-litre) external water tank system to the aircraft's belly. Fingertip controls allow pilots to drop the precise amount of water with high accuracy and refill the tank via a retractable snorkel in 60 seconds or less while hovering 10 feet over a water source.



The Firehawk is now the fire fighting helicopter of choice @file

Thirteen S-70 Firehawk helicopters currently fighting fires across California are operated by CalFire, Los Angeles County Fire Department, and San Diego Fire Rescue Department.

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SEARCH & RESCUE



HAITI

EARTHQUAKE: Royal Navy support ship RFA Wave Knight has been supporting the international relief following Haiti's devastating earthquake – this time assisting the French Navy. As with US Army helicopters flying constant missions to the disaster zone, the tanker has helped sustain the Marine Nationale's relief effort, providing their frigate FS Germinal with much-needed fuel to keep it on mission.

The Germinal has been operating off Haiti along with Wave Knight and HMD Medway with specialist teams ready to deliver aid. She loaded essential goods, including more than 30 tonnes of fresh water, working together with many French donors (Red Cross, Bernard Hayot group, Carrefour, authorities in Martinique).

As well as refuelling the Germinal and US Army Black Hawk helicopters of Joint Task Force Bravo – using the tanker's flight deck as a 'lily pad' to spare them long trips back to base and spend more time delivering aid and assisting Haitians.

The sorties the tanker's Wildcat helicopter is flying over the Tiburon Peninsula which was hit by the 7.2 magnitude quake provide crucial imagery and film footage, plus analysis from specialist commando engineer Captain Jake Lott RE, helping to guide relief efforts on the ground to where it is needed most.

A helicopter from support ship RFA Wave Knight has been in the air since Friday, flying over parts of the Tiburon Peninsula – epicentre of the quake which struck on Saturday August 14 – to locate villages, towns and infrastructure urgently in need of help.

The Wildcat – callsign Knightrider – is embarked in Wave Knight for such missions, but can also be used for moving supplies, aid and personnel around if required.

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NETHERLANDS

SEARCH & RESCUE: The current operator of the SAR helicopters in the Netherlands, the NHV Group, went to court to challenge the award of the new contract to Bristow from July 2022, but on August 11 a judge rejected their complaint.

If no further lawsuits are filed against the award, Bristow will provide the SAR helicopter services to the Netherlands from 1 July 2022, from Den Helder Airport and Central Zeeland Airport.

UNITED KINGDOM

MIGRANTS: On the English South Coast money continues to be poured into the waters of the English Channel. Records are being broken, as on some days, more than 800 people successfully make the journey across one of the busiest shipping routes in the world. As more money is pumped into stopping the migrants it seems that the whole plan is working like a world beating advertising programme. They just keep coming.

There are management changes as long-term civil servants pull back into other less stressful roles. Their places appear to be going to former senior police officers. Tyson Hepple had been leading the operational response to addressing the problem of cross-Channel migrants but with the numbers arriving at embarrassing rates he is now leaving that post.

The candidates lined up to take on the challenging role are Tony Eastaugh CBE, a former Metropolitan Police Commander, and borough commander for Barking and Dagenham, he became the UK Director of Operations for the Home Office, Immigration Enforcement in 2013. He is neither a sailor nor an aviator, neither are the other figures applying for a part in the unenviable task. They are former chief constables, Paul Crowther (British Transport Police) and Gareth Wilson (Ministry of Defence Police). No one seems to have considered using a sailor for the post.

That is not to say there has not been investment in the sea defences, The Border Force have their new catamaran hulled Hurricane and recently the Royal Navy recalled HMS Severn to the coastal fleet – albeit nominally in the fisheries protection role. Then there was the £80M+ to the French.

Ed: Even when the bosses are selected and in place it will take weeks if not months to turn the current situation around. No doubt there will be an opportunity for self-congratulation when the weather turns and the numbers making the journey plummet due to poor crossing conditions.

Meanwhile the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) will send a team to Lithuania to help counter the influx of migrants entering illegally and with the aid of the Belarusian government.

Some 4,000 migrants, mainly from Iraq, have crossed into Lithuania from Belarus illegally over the past three months, 50 times more than in all of 2020. Critics say the arrivals are part of Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko's strategy to retaliate over European Union sanctions against his government because of his crackdown against pro-democratic opposition. It seems strange that the British have not made a similar application for aid.

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INDUSTRY

Early last month, August 4, **Leonardo** celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Agusta A109 helicopter, an iconic product which represented a revolution in the life of the company. The type enabled Italy to become one of the world's only nations with an OEM capable of autonomous design, development, manufacturing of helicopters, which became highly successful in both national and export markets. Best-in-class performance and speed, a sleek design for superior aerodynamics, in-house modern main gear box and transmission design and development, mission versatility and high level of customisation.

All these characteristics enabled winning, distinguished features and core capabilities at what is now Leonardo and played a significant part to its growing multirole and dual-use helicopter range over the coming decades.

The first flight of the A109 was in 1971. The project request originated from the designer Bruno Lovera to the-then top management and a A109 prototype was taken to the skies by pilot Ottorino Lancia for the first time in the summer of 1971. The new model featured a four-blade articulated main rotor, a semi-rigid two-blade tail rotor and retractable landing gear, delivering unique handling and overall flying qualities. The 2.4 tonne 8-seat type was certified both in Italy and US four years later and entered the market in 1976.

The new model also allowed the company to enter the highly competitive US market, where it facilitated the establishment of a logistics centre in Philadelphia set to become, over the following decades, home to Leonardo's helicopter industrial presence in the US for manufacturing, support and training services.



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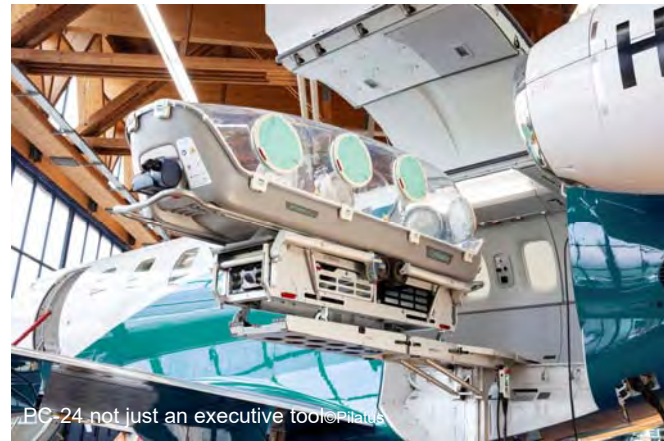
The global COVID-19 pandemic has driven a growing demand for air transport solutions for infectious patients. To prevent in-flight transmission of viruses to cockpit and cabin crew, infected individuals are transported in the now familiar EpiShuttle. With its large cargo door and complete air ambulance equipment, the PC-24 is ideally suited for these missions.

Having worked with **Aerolite AG**, Pilatus now offers the EpiShuttle in the PC-24 which features a reclinable backrest, transparent hard-top and excellent patient access.

In 2015, during an outbreak of Ebola in Africa, Norway's Epi Guard developed the modular isolation system which is now in use for Covid missions. The modular reusable design features eight medical airlocks to ensure safe patient handling.

The work with Aerolite AG has brought to market a system including a universal transport trolley allowing transfer movements on the ground and positioning in the cabin. Loading is performed with the unique loading device, which automatically transfers the EpiShuttle unit plus patient into the cabin. The completely flat cabin floor and rollers on the transport trolley ensure the unit can be freely pushed into the desired position, where it is then secured directly to the seat rails using retaining devices.

Patient monitoring is ensured by medical equipment placed on a cradle right next to the EpiShuttle and powered by the on-board power supply. As with regular patient transport operations, medical personnel occupy cabin seats in the immediate vicinity of the EpiShuttle, and can attend to the patient at any time.



SPX Corporation completed the acquisition of **Enterprise Control Systems Ltd** ("ECS"). Headquartered at Wappenham, near Northampton, UK, in early August.

ECS is a leader in the design and manufacture of highly-engineered tactical datalinks and radio frequency (RF) countermeasures, including counter-drone and counter-IED RF jammers.

Colin Bullock, founder of ECS, commented "We are very pleased to be part of SPX, as it creates numerous opportunities for employees and customers to continue our growth journey. Combining ECS's expertise in RF countermeasures and encrypted data links systems with SPX's strengths in RF detection and location systems, as well as its global infrastructure and resources, is a great opportunity to further advance product development and extend the reach of our combined, high-value solutions to a broader customer base."

The tie up will provide an increasingly customer-tailored solution for COMINT and RF countermeasures. Hardware and software integration across offerings from both companies will optimise signals intelligence, paint a clearer picture and facilitate threat interdiction. One example is counter-drone operations, pairing

TCl's Blackbird for detection and location of drones and controllers with ECS's Claw for jamming them. These synergistic solutions will provide domestic and allied government agencies enhanced capabilities to deal with the threats posed by asymmetric warfare, non-state actors and near-peer adversaries.

SPX Corporation is a supplier of highly engineered products and technologies, holding leadership positions in the HVAC and detection and measurement markets. Based in Charlotte, North Carolina, SPX Corporation had more than 4,500 employees in 15 countries. www.spx.com.

Enterprise Control Systems Ltd is a leading designer and manufacturer of highly engineered communications intelligence systems, including RF inhibitors (RF jammers) and encrypted data links.

www.enterprisecontrol.co.uk.

The company is best known for its involvement in an anti-drone system with such as Blighter. The system – expected to be on display at this month's DSEi event in London Docklands recently went through cold weather trials with the US DoD as Claw. It has been globally on active service since 2016.





After a successful two-weeks flight trial back in 2019, Andøya Space ordered one DA62 MPP with a customised state-of-the-art mission system.

Norwegian surveillance tool ©Diamond/Andøya

The factory new **Diamond Aircraft DA62 MPP** was ordered at the end of 2020 and delivered in July 2021. The DA62 MPP will support all Andøya Space’s business areas within research, development and experimentation in the years forward. The delivery of the DA62 MPP makes Andøya Space more independent from hiring third party aircraft for their missions and hence increases their flexibility significantly. The modular set-up of the mission system will allow upgrades with additional sensor capability whenever needed.

The Andøya Space Centre is located at Andøya in northern Norway, and is the northernmost permanent rocket range in the world with decades of experience in launching sounding rockets for atmospheric research. ASC supports sounding rockets and balloon operations both at Andøya and Svalbard. They also use drone technology to expand the capabilities of national emergency services and other professionals.



In 2019, **Fisheries and Oceans Canada** announced a five-year, \$128M contract with PAL Aerospace located in St. John’s, to deliver a new fleet of four aerial surveillance aircraft, including two long-range maritime patrol aircraft. When they are all operational, the planes will fly out of three bases of operation: St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador; Halifax, Nova Scotia; and a brand new hangar facility in Campbell River, British Columbia.

Early last month the first of the long-range maritime patrol aircraft—the Dash-8—commenced operations. The Dash-8 aircraft will allow fishery officers to expand their range of operations, providing them with essential tools to combat illegal fishing and enhance Canada’s maritime security.



©PAL Aerospace

This new fleet of aerial surveillance aircraft will also be a crucial tool for the enforcement of measures put in place by the Government of Canada to protect endangered whales. This includes monitoring the Gulf of St. Lawrence for compliance to fisheries management measures for North Atlantic right whales, as well as monitoring critical habitat areas for Southern Resident killer whales.

The De Havilland Dash-8, retrofitted by PAL Aerospace in St. John’s Newfoundland replaces a smaller Beechcraft King Air that found range

challenging, they had to stop a lot for fuel, to the detriment of the mission. The King Air could only fly for about 4 hours where the Dash-8 promises 8 or 9. Fishery officers flew over 700 hours in 2020 patrolling the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Aside from more time in the air, the new plane is full of modern surveillance equipment, cameras and radar that can see better than before. The overall 2019 contract includes two King Air 200 that have been in use for a year now and the two Dash-8-100 maritime patrol aircraft.

In a further move **PAL Aerospace** and De Havilland Aircraft of Canada Limited announced the establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding to jointly pursue the development of a fully missionized Dash 8-400 aircraft, called the “Dash 8 P-4” for maritime patrol (“MPA”), intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (“ISR”), as well as other applications. Modified with auxiliary fuel tanks, the Dash 8 P-4 will have superior range, endurance, and time on-station.

PAL Aerospace and De Havilland Canada believe there exists a significant global market for missionized turboprop aircraft, especially in the MPA and ISR market. The unique capabilities the Dash 8-400 platform, in combination with PAL Aerospace’s demonstrated global capability as a full-service provider of specialized aircraft modification, technology integration and special missions operation, delivers a unique value proposition for clients looking for leading edge MPA and ISR programs. PAL Aerospace and De Havilland Canada are currently working together to offer a comprehensive Dash 8 P-4 MPA solution for the Royal Malaysian Air Force’s ongoing maritime surveillance aircraft procurement.

Britten-Norman have purchased a fleet of nine BN2T-4S Islander/Defender aircraft from the UK MOD. They are due to go through a process of factory refurbishment and remarketing.

The BN-2T-4S Defender 4000 is an enlarged and enhanced version of the standard airframe intended for the aerial surveillance role. Compared to earlier Defenders, it has a stretched fuselage, the enlarged wing from the Trislander, a new nose structure capable of accommodating an EO/IR sensor and radar, and an increased payload. The prototype Defender 4000 first flew in 1995 and entered production from 1997. The British Army acquired its first four examples for use over Iraq in 2004 and it later went to Afghanistan which the west has recently pulled out from. It also saw service with the British police in Hampshire and Greater Manchester.

Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI) has secured an order for two additional KUH-1CG “Whitesuri” helicopters from Seoul for coast guard use.

Korea Aerospace Industries said Tuesday it has signed a 49.7 billion-won (\$43.2 million) deal with the Public Procurement Service to supply two Surion helicopters to the Korea Coast Guard.



According to the nation’s sole aircraft manufacturer, the two units of KUH-1CG, a police version of the multi-role utility helicopter Surion, will be delivered to the Korea Coast Guard by July 2024.

“The contract includes Osprey 30, a new radar that can detect 1,000 targets simultaneously. The new radar will boost KUH-1CG’s capabilities in policing and accident prevention missions,” a company official said.

This is the third order of KUH-1CG from the Korea Coast Guard, which previously acquired two units in 2016 and one unit in 2018.

The Korea Coast Guard in February dispatched a KUH-1CG No.1 and successfully rescued five fishermen who were stranded on rocks off Jeju Island after their boat sank.

Of 120 state-owned helicopters, roughly 40 percent of them are more than 20 years old and need to be replaced for safe operations, according to the company. [Herald]

Erickson Inc. developed a more resilient, and cost-effective composite rotor blade for its S-64 Air Crane® helicopter with materials from Toray Advanced Composites. A six-blade heavy-lift helicopter certified in the 1960s, the S-64's existing aluminium blades used expensive, antiquated WWII extrusion equipment that required time-intensive hand shaping and twisting in manufacture.

Erickson partnered with Toray Advanced Composites to develop a cost-effective composite rotor blade with lower maintenance costs and higher performance than legacy blades. At the time, FAA-approved composite materials for blades and their processes continued to be cost-prohibitive. Toray Advanced Composites helped Erickson identify and receive qualification for materials and processes to develop higher performance rotor blades with significantly reduced manufacture and maintenance costs.

Partnering early in the process with Toray Advanced Composites saved Erickson time, resources, and money. Toray's resin system was identified as the ideal candidate for Erickson's design. Toray provided both carbon and glass reinforced composite materials in uni-directional and woven reinforced formats of the resin system for comprehensive NIAR testing and qualification. Key to this approval was demonstrating out of autoclave (OOA) processability, considerably reducing cost, tooling, and manufacturing time.



Lockheed Martin is to close the Sikorsky helicopter plant in Coatesville a city in Chester County, Pennsylvania, USA, with the loss of some 240 local jobs.

Not surprisingly, many of the elected officials who brokered a deal to keep the plant open in 2019 expressed anger and frustration at the decision.

In a statement, the Maryland-based company said that, despite working with customers and federal, state and local officials, it could not find enough additional work to sustain operations at the Coatesville plant.

At an early August event in Leeds, Yorkshire, **Gemstone Aviation** showed the new single-engine Diamond DA50 RG at the Private Flyer event at Leeds East Airport. This was the first public showing of the DA50 RG in the UK. The 5-seat DA50 RG fits well into the UK market, and with a maximum take-off weight under 2,000 kg it weighs in just under the threshold for paying Eurocontrol charges. This will give the DA50 RG the lowest operating costs in its class."

The DA50 RG with its superb new livery will be on display in the UK again at the Private Flyer event at Wycombe Air Park 17 – 18 September.

The new Hill HX50/HC50 helicopter, a ground-up new design, for a 5-seat, turbine-powered, 500-horsepower rotorcraft, is now being offered with skid landing gear. It becomes the only single turbine helicopter to offer purchasers the option of wheels or skids. The only other models currently offered with these options are the twin-turbine Leonardo AW109 and the Bell 429.

Hill Helicopters unveiled the modern, sleek fixed skid landing gear design last month. The standard HX50 design incorporates retractable wheeled landing gear but the new option is to meet the needs of customers who requested the skid gear to offer flexibility and robustness off-airfield.

Offered at the same price as the standard retractable gear, Hill's fixed landing gear maintains the HX50's streamlined aesthetic lines while delivering greater landing capability on unprepared surfaces.

Crafted from composite and aluminium with steel wear shoes, the landing gear features a wide skid heel, allowing for easier landing in snow, mud, and loose gravel, and implements the latest vibration tuning technology to avoid ground resonance. Slightly lighter than the wheeled landing gear, the fixed skid undercarriage is expected to decrease cruise speed by 15 knots. Either landing gear option works seamlessly with the Hill pop-out emergency float system, which is in the aircraft's belly.



Ampaire's Electric EEL technology demonstrator, a modified six-seat Cessna 337, runs on battery power and a conventional combustion engine. The aircraft recently completed an overwater flight from the Orkney Isles to John O'Groats [around 20 miles of the Pentland Firth]. The actual flight was from Kirkwall airport on the Orkney Isles to regional airport Wick John O'Groats airport in the north of mainland Scotland, nearer 50 miles.

The trials, the first to operate on a viable regional airline route, are part of the Sustainable Aviation Test Environment (SATE) project, which is being led by Scottish airport operator Highlands and Islands Airports Limited (HIAL).

Funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) through the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, SATE is based at Kirkwall airport in Orkney, which is also home to the UK's first operationally based low-carbon aviation test centre. SATE forms part of the UKRI's Future Flight Challenge, created to test low-carbon aviation technologies, as well as investigate the airport infrastructure necessary to support sustainable aviation.

With the completion of flight trials through the SATE project, the Ampaire aircraft will travel on to south west England where it will perform further demonstration flights between Exeter and Cornwall, around 100 miles.



Trials of the Cessna 337 are taking place in the United Kingdom but the registration remains US Norwegian surveillance tool ©Ampaire Electric

If anyone thought that the Vietnam era Bell UH-1 Huey was due to disappear from the operational scene by virtue of its age and a lack of spares will find their opinions set aside by the latest news from **Dakota Air Parts International Inc.**

Late last month the company announced that it was taking delivery of a massive amount of spares sourced from all round the world relating to various models of the Bell UH-1 Iroquois and AH-1 Cobra helicopter parts, components, and related equipment, plus material from other aircraft platforms.

The shipments consists of thirty-nine 40-foot Conex containers which include 859 pallets of aircraft parts, components, and related equipment. In addition to the primary concentration of UH-1 and AH-1 parts, many other aircraft and turbine engine parts platforms include PT6, OH-6, OH-58, CH-47, 204, 205, 212, CH-47, J85, A37, T53, T55, along with many other OEM aircraft and engine platforms. Most of the material is new and serviceable.

After nearly 55 years of UH-1/AH-1 continued active service around the world, these last great inventories from Vietnam and the Middle East will further the continued operation and support of these aircraft platforms for many years to come.



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ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

28 July 2021 Sikorsky UH-60L Blackhawk PNC0609 Police National Colombia. Helicopter carrying 19 persons landed awkwardly in a gully alongside a field at Ituango, Antioquia, Colombia causing substantial damage but no injuries. [Elpais]

29 July 2021 Bell OH-58 Kiowa N Hernando County Sheriff's Office, Florida. Aircraft on task as 'Air 1' searching for a wanted person broke off from the flight and made an emergency landing after issues were reported. The pilot also stated that his goggles had fogged up. The night time emergency landing was into a field near Brooksville Elementary School, Broad Street, Brooksville, west Florida. [Media]

4 August 2021 Mil Mi-8 Tajikistan Border Service. Crashed and written off under unexplained circumstances when trying to land near the Poi Mazzor, Khirson Glacier, Tajikistan, trying to rescue Russian alpinists. One killed and four seriously injured. [Asia Plus]

8 August 2021 PZL-Mielec M-18B Dromader/Pezetel 128. Hellenic Air Force. Written off when impacting terrain while flying a fire fighting mission at Machairado, on the island of Zakynthos, Greece. Aircraft was destroyed when it impacted trees but it was a relatively slow impact and the pilot was not seriously injured. No fire. [ASN]

14 August 2021 Beriev Be-200 RF-88450. Fire fighting Russian Navy amphibian named Alexander Mamkin. Operating over rising ground near Kahramanmaras, southern Turkey, dropped water load and crashed and burned killing all eight persons aboard. Believed five Russians and three Turkish citizens. [ASN]

23 August 2021 Kazan Ansat RA-20059 air ambulance. The helicopter suffered a heavy landing at Ivano, Russia. The airframe remained upright with the skids fully collapsed, the main rotor blades had separated. Two occupants, no reports of injuries or fire damage. [ASN]

SAFETY

Leonardo and EASA have issued an Emergency AD relating to the fitment of Breeze Eastern hoists on the AW139 series of helicopter. Certain hoist installations with specific part numbers and installation criteria need attention.

An RTC on a Breeze hoist assembly was introduced in the AMPI Issue 39, dated 7 June 2021. The RTC is intended to verify the integrity of the hoist assembly and efficiency of the hoist system operation. This check is included in the hoist manufacturer (Breeze) Flight Line Operation and Maintenance Manual and is required whenever the hoist cable is replaced, or a hoist is stored for more than 12 months. As the requirement for RTC has been only recently published in the AW139 AMPI manual and is limited to the replacement of the cable, the RTC may not have been accomplished on all affected parts. This condition, if not detected and corrected, could lead to failure of an affected part, possibly resulting in loss of external human cargo during helicopter hoist operations. (AD No.: 2021-0186-E / 06/08/2021)

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UNMANNED

Schiebel Aircraft and Areté Associates, successfully showcased the CAMCOPTER® S-100 Unmanned Air System (UAS) combined with Areté's Pushbroom Imaging Lidar for Littoral Surveillance (PILLS) sensor to the US Navy's Office of Naval Research (ONR).

In a combined demonstration sponsored by the US Office of Naval Research (ONR) on a commercial vessel off the coast of Pensacola, Florida, Schiebel and Areté demonstrated the CAMCOPTER® S-100 and its capabilities, as well as Areté's Push-broom Imaging Lidar for Littoral Surveillance (PILLS) system. PILLS enables hydrographic mapping of ocean littoral spaces with a low size, weight, and power (SWaP) sensor that easily integrates into the S-100. PILLS has multiple military and commercial applications.

The future may be on hold. Most readers may recall the hype surrounding the plans for Amazon to deliver products right to your door by drone. That was around five years ago and in time promotion of it tapered off.

Readers may not have noticed that the initial news stories have not been followed up lately by continued progress. It is a bit like the lack of further progress in the field autonomous sense and avoid flight by the BAE operated Jetstream, it is proving harder to bring about than the hype suggested.

It is claimed that well over 100 employees at Amazon Prime Air have lost their jobs and dozens of other roles are moving to other projects abroad as the company shuts part of its operation in the UK. Sources claim that the operation, which launched in 2016 to help pioneer Amazon's global drone delivery efforts, is now uncertain.

There are reports that the project was "collapsing inwards", "dysfunctional" and resembled "organised chaos", run by managers that were "detached from reality" – people that did not know what they were doing.

Five years ago, the operation were at the core of a high profile PR campaign. There were tours of the drone delivery test facility and a new facility in Cambridge. Importantly the UK regulators were also said to be onside.

Now the tours have stopped, new updated promotional videos dried up, and most of the rhetoric silenced. Meanwhile, despite being one of the first big companies to show interest in drones, other smaller companies are now quietly operating in developing the concept with a view to seeking US regulatory approval. [PAR/Wired]

Ed: No doubt a variation of it will happen in time, but not just yet. The move to the United States may be to take in the potentially easier regulatory oversight of the FAA – although in recent years such as the lax oversight at Boeing over the 737MAX and the 787 may make things tougher there too. Perhaps the UK CAA was asking far too many questions.



PEOPLE

USA NATIONAL: Helicopter Association International (HAI) has announced the award of nine scholarships for 2021. Available to aviation students around the world, these scholarships support HAI's mission to educate the next generation of helicopter professionals. HAI makes up to 15 scholarships available each year, funded through donations and other fundraising events. This year the list all relates to US based recipients.

This year's awards comprise one scholarship for students in helicopter maintenance technician programmes, one for pilots working toward earning their CPL(H) rating, one for safety professionals, and six for established maintenance professionals seeking training for specific helicopters or components.

The nine scholarship recipients this year are:

Hanna Santamaria of Denver, Colorado, who was presented the \$5,000 Commercial Helicopter Pilot Rating Scholarship. Hanna, who is studying at Leading Edge Flight Academy in Bend, Oregon, holds a private license and is working toward earning her CPL(H) rating to pursue employment as a helicopter pilot. William Teigan of Rocky Mountain House, Alberta, Canada, who received the \$2,500 Maintenance Technician Certificate Scholarship, which is awarded to students studying to become aviation maintenance technicians. William is a student at Southern Alberta Institute of Technology in Calgary, Alberta.

Jessica Meiris of Colorado Springs, Colorado, recipient of the Michelle North Scholarship for Safety. This scholarship provides the recipient with full tuition to attend a safety management system (SMS) course as part of HAI's Professional Education programme.

Six individuals who were awarded the Bill Sanderson Aviation Maintenance Technician (AMT) scholarship, with stipends up to \$1,600 each. Supported by Airbus, Leonardo, MD, PWC, Rolls-Royce, and Safran the recipients are:

Jeffrey Davis of Louisville, Colorado (MD Helicopters)
 John Doherty of Lebanon, Pennsylvania (Safran)
 Beth Elliott of Knoxville, Tennessee (Pratt & Whitney)
 Laura Fisher of Nepean, Ontario, Canada (Airbus)
 Lillianna Sorensen of Cedar City, Utah (Leonardo Helicopters)
 Teeratouch Triemasanchai of Los Angeles, California (Rolls-Royce).



Management line up in the 1980s ©Metropolitan Police

John W Savill [pictured right] one of the early leaders of the London Metropolitan Police Air Support Unit at Lippitts Hill died on August 21, he was aged 87. John was an Inspector and deputy to Chief Inspector Peter Street [centre] in the 1980s.

BOOKS

A reminder of some of the books on police aviation published in the UK this year..

A long and Winding Beat by Brian Allinson is available from the author. The book ISBN No 978-1-5272-8608-5 charts the police service of one of the leading promoters of UK police aviation in the 1990s and the effect of the dreaded NPAS. Illustrated. Cover price £11.99. Contact brian1002allinson@icloud.com

Above The Law: Adventures in a police helicopter written by **Adrian Bleese**, a former RAF electronics operator turned police civilian control room operator and then police helicopter service civilian observer. This jovial memoir offers a good operational overview of what police helicopters do and how they operate and, depressingly, how they have been squandered due to poor management and cuts. Yes, NPAS again. The initial print run ran out but its available again on Amazon and direct from the author. Paperback £9.99 or Kindle £2.59.

Still available is the fully illustrated **Haynes Police Helicopter Manual** compiled by Richard Brandon. Check out the taster PDF at <https://files.elfsight.com/storage/0077dba8-d8ea-4cae-834f-22cc500b099e/6ead6f2b-f28e-499e-9786-7fc2425c6ded.pdf> or visit www.haynes.com List price £25 but usually on offer around £19 from the publishers.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hi Bryn,

Hope all's well with you. I continue to enjoy reading your magazines and I read with interest the article in the August 2021 issue about What3Words. In Devon & Cornwall, W3W (well, the English language database that it uses at least) has been integrated with our command and control system gazetteer. As a control room op of 12 years, W3W is low priority on my list of "where on earth is this person calling from" tools, but it has proven useful from time to time. I think the knowledge and understand of OS is getting poorer especially amongst young people who have grown up with GPS/Google Maps, etc., so W3W has been used to good effect when dealing with lost youngster on Dartmoor, for example.

I see a lot of criticism about W3W whenever police forces plug it on social media, usually from people who have never taken a 999 call from a lost, panicked, cold, and disorientated individual in the middle of the night. The ability to pop three words into the system and generate a search area at least is a good start. I've not heard of any major gaffes since we integrated W3W at Devon and Cornwall, but there's always time I suppose!

Keep up the good work,

Mark Rothwell [Devon & Cornwall Police/PHS]

MOVE ALONG THERE

No Money

In future maybe politicians will have a harder time refusing funding requests without an argument. As we know the US pulled out forces of Afghanistan, it was the one thing that Donald Trump and Joe Biden agreed on.

After so much hard work and so many deaths, the UK wanted to stay but could find no-one else in NATO that wanted to join them in this 'policing the world' role. So they pulled out with everyone else – incidentally saving a whole lot of future money and many potential deaths among its army. In spite of the massive savings they seem to be reticent on paying for a few Afghan Interpreters to come to the UK to save their lives. Otherwise for these men and their families the future is bleak and likely bloody.

Then of course the politicians shut down the world, nearly everyone stayed home to work and others were put on furlough [a paid holiday by any other name]. That cost a lot of money, money that politicians have told us for years does not exist. Not so it seems.

Then of course the shores of southern England are besieged by thousands of would be migrants. If Adolf Hitler had realised that all it took was a few thousand rubber beach toys rather than unwieldy river barges maybe Operation Sea Lion [the proposed 1940 invasion of Britain] may have been viable after all. 10,000 troops on the beaches would have been a problem. To try and counter the one-way traffic the government of the day have increased fixed wing air patrols, bought more border patrol ships and given the French £82M to expand its own coastal defences. All with money that does not exist.

The UK National Police Air Service needs around £100M to completely revise its capability. But, guess what, there is no money.

Perhaps the problem is a lack of joining up thinking. One of the latest Social Media adverts for NPAS states that "Our pilots are trained in-house at NPAS. As an Approved Training Organisation we can ensure they receive the specialist skills unique to police aviation" that apparently is a #FridayFact. It is unfortunate that the image used featured the unloved fixed wing. The last lot of new pilot interviews for fixed wing was cancelled at the 11th hour by NPAS Management. Clearly they do not want any more fixed pilots even though the aircraft is new, in service and working quite well albeit with too few pilots and some stupid basing limitations.

The P68 is now so "out" of favour that no-one is now thinking it through.

It may not be the best in class, but it does its job, and its new and presumably reliable – when compared to the 20,000 hours Airbus helicopters. Getting rid of it is not now the sensible option, too many cancellation charges (to Gama for maintenance) and removing the £2M of role equipment to reduce the aircraft from their apparent £10M cost to their street value of perhaps £800,000 is criminal. With the sales record of the P68 is the market even ready for four FIKI capable P68s for sale at one time?

#



The NPCC, the architects of NPAS, they of many letters before and after their names, and the management teams clearly need a picture book entitled "Ridiculous police aviation projects 1905-2020" to help them in their decision making. I think we had better leave out the difficult bits... the words. It should make a good building block for the new police university course they are all sold on.

You rarely see a live policeman in the United Kingdom these days. Even if you do he has just whizzed past you at 30mph or maybe there is one in the helicopter flying over you at 100mph. Yes a rare breed indeed. They used to inhabit the motorway [Freeway/Autobahn] network but now they are as rare as hens teeth there as well, replaced by cameras and civil patrols. As if to underline the scarcity a report issued recently lists big numbers but when you boil it down they amount to nothing.

Before NPAS was created it was not unknown for local police aviation resources to undertake speed traps and traffic surveillance. At least the signs on the road suggested that they did. Now no-one will believe that NPAS aircraft have the time and inclination to undertake anything like a local speed trap. They struggle to meet crime mission needs. There are around 2,250 miles of motorway in Britain and yet surprisingly in the past five years just 18,000 motorway rule specific penalties have been issued. That is a big number but only adds up to about 3,000 a year, not even ten a day.

The most common offence was making an unnecessary stop on the hard shoulder or in a refuge area, with 6,821 penalties issued. There were 165 instances of motorists caught driving in the wrong direction on a motorway, and another 204 did the same on a slip road. Some 270 drivers were reprimanded for reversing along a carriageway. And that of course is the ones they caught...

Interesting numbers if you happen to be going in one direction at 70mph and you encounter someone in your lane going in the other direction but, fortunately, nearly as rare as finding a police person walking down your high street!



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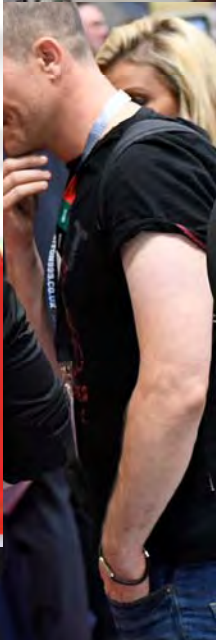
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THE DOVER PATROL - continued

Commentary on a persisting problem by Tony Cowan

INTRODUCTION

The report that the British Home Secretary, The Rt Hon Priti Patel MP is planning a network of reception centres in England, to house 8,000 migrants, those who have entered the UK illegally by crossing the English Channel in small boats, sends the wrong message, many will agree. This message gives a clear indication that it's the criminals, the people traffickers who are winning the 'Battle of the Channel'! Moreover, rather than sending millions of pounds to France, £28M last year, £54M this year, to stop the surge of migrants crossing the English Channel, a plan that has clearly failed, many will also agree that it would be better to use the money to build the proposed reception centres, to process asylum applications, in France rather than in the UK. Detaining the migrants in France rather than releasing them to try again. This would provide a safe haven for the migrants and, at the same time, dissuade them from risking their lives by crossing one of the world's busiest shipping lanes in a small, overloaded inflatable boat, often at night.

In the meantime, in Belgium the West-Flemish governor, Carl Decaluwe is calling for a network of infrared cameras to be installed along the Belgian coast to frustrate the people traffickers. He argues that the problem of migrants venturing out into the North Sea and the English Channel, to get to Britain, should be tackled thoroughly: *"It is very dangerous. The problem is getting worse."*

Reception centres in France, safe havens, would dissuade migrants from crossing the English Channel in small, often overloaded, inflatable boats.

With 4 months to go, the number of migrants arriving in the UK in 2021, now close to 13,000, has increased by over 50% since 2020 when 8,428 entered the UK illegally.



INCREASING NUMBERS

In an earlier report (PAN, May 2021) it was reported that the number of migrants who entered the UK illegally by crossing the English Channel in small boats in the previous year, in 2020, totalled 8,428. In the first quarter of 2021 a further 1,363 migrants made the same crossing and it was forecast that some 10,000 migrants would make the crossing in 2021. Now, at the beginning of September the numbers have soared to almost 13,000 in just 8 months. An increase of more than 50% on the previous year, with another 4 months to go! Many of these migrants now come from Vietnam, as well as Iran, Iraq, Syria and North Africa.

How is it that despite all the technology, patrol boats, aeroplanes, helicopters, drones, together with volunteers in lifeboats, thousands of migrants can cross the English Channel in a small boat, a distance of just over 20 miles, with impunity? Armed with no more than a smart 'phone these hapless people purchase their ticket, costing thousands of pounds, and then head north from a deserted beach somewhere between Dunkirk and Boulogne-sur-Mer. Then, once they've passed the half-way mark, they call HM Coastguard, declare an emergency, and wait to be 'rescued' by either the UK Border Force, or the volunteers of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

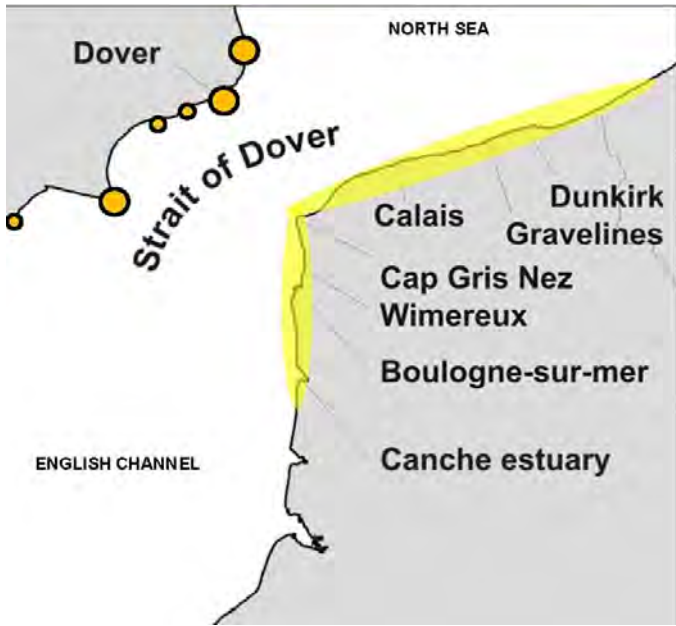
In August, on the same day that a migrant died after being rescued from a boat that was sinking near Dunkirk, 592 migrants were also 'rescued' in British waters and taken to the English port of Dover whilst 420 were, at the same time, intercepted by the French. On Saturday, 21 August a further 828 migrants arrived in the UK following 30 Channel 'crossing events'. A new record for a single day.

Without any record of migrants setting sail from a French, or a Belgium beach, often at night, there is no way of knowing how many men, women and children may have perished at sea since the previous Home Secretary, The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP declared that the rising number of migrants, those crossing the English Channel in small boats, was a 'major incident'. This was in December 2018. Since then the number of migrants crossing the English Channel have increased year on year: 1,840 in 2019; 8,428 in 2020 and now, in the first 8 months of 2021, almost 13,000.

The casual observer may be forgiven for believing that the British Government is paying the French Government millions of pounds to send more migrants to the UK in small boats, from Calais to Dover, rather than addressing the problem at source, on the beaches of northern France. Nevertheless, the French have stepped up security on the coast with additional foot patrols, with patrol boats and, on occasion, light aircraft. However, the view that they, the French, cannot intervene once the migrants have set sail per-

sists within the ranks of the French police. This means that the French Government is, in fact, condoning an illegal, highly dangerous commercial enterprise. An enterprise where the people traffickers sell 'tickets' for the journey between France and England. It could be argued that the UK Government should now follow the example of Lithuania who have called on the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) for support to counter the influx of migrants from Belarus. As the UK, France and Belgium are all members of NATO, then the UK could, perhaps it should, invoke Article 4 of the NATO Treaty to maintain its territorial integrity.

Despite all the technology, including the Tekever AR5 drone, patrolling the English side of the median line, illegal migrants continue to cross the English Channel with impunity.



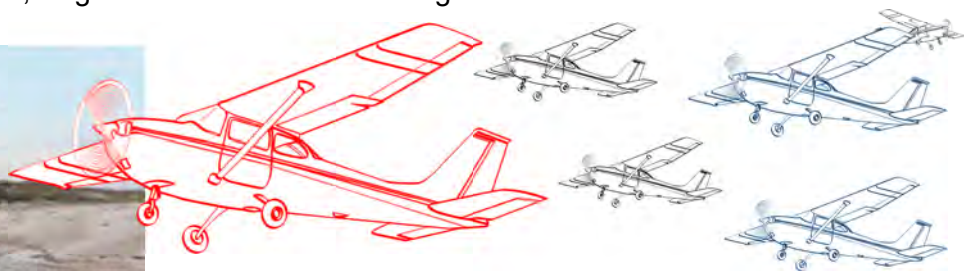
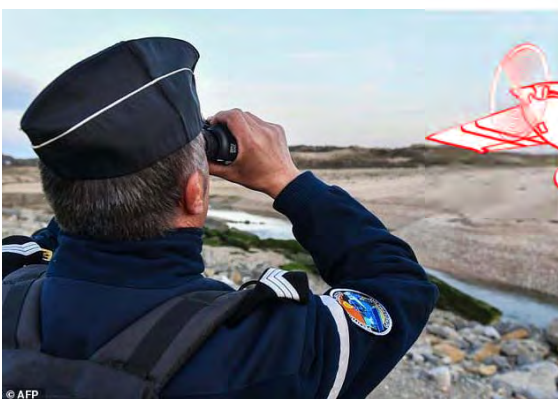
A JOINT OPERATION

Enough is enough, the majority will agree. This battle, a battle between the governments of France, Belgium and the UK on the one side, against the people traffickers, some of them from Eastern Europe, on the other, can only be won if there's a determination to do so with Anglo-Belgium-French cooperation, together with a joint operation on the beaches of northern France and on the beaches of Belgium. If the recent payment of £54M is insufficient to patrol the French beaches with extra gendarmes and soldiers would it be better, more affordable, to boost the beach patrols with volunteers? Should the British, the Belgium and the French governments enlist more recruits from the voluntary sector, in addition to those volunteers who crew the lifeboats belonging to each country?

The beaches of northern France and Belgium - too extensive to patrol on foot.

DETECT AND DETER

For far too long the recommendation to emulate the USA and form a Coastguard Auxiliary (Air), volunteers being reimbursed to fly coastal patrols in their own aircraft has been ignored by the UK's Home Office and its clandestine channel threat commander, former Royal Marine, Dan O'Mahoney. Most recently, it was recommended that with a good weather forecast, and with a full moon in prospect, members of the UK's voluntary sector should demonstrate their capability by completing coastal patrols on both sides of the English Channel on the weekend, August 21-22. This offer was ignored.



Should the foot patrols on the beaches of northern France be boosted with volunteers flying air patrols to 'deter and detect' those migrants planning to cross the English Channel in small inflatable boats?

Then, on the same weekend, on Saturday, August 21, 828 migrants were reported to have crossed the Channel in 30 boats, a record for one day! Subsequently, the clandestine channel threat commander, Dan O'Mahoney made the observation, "We are working across government, with French and international partners. We have doubled the number of police officers on French beaches." Sadly, despite the rhetoric, together with the very large sums of money, the numbers of migrants risking their lives, together with the lives of their children, shows no sign of abating. On the contrary, the numbers have increased significantly year on year. Moreover, a more recent report, from France, states that the number of French police

officers have not been doubled. According to the report, the additional British funding adds just 90 reservists to the existing 160 regular gendarmes. Also, French privacy laws prevent the use of drones, but not light aircraft, to patrol France's northern beaches

Anyone with a knowledge of airborne policing will know that it is persistent air patrols, not intermittent, casual flights with drones or light aircraft, but with dedicated 'spotter planes', that can, at very little cost, make the difference between success and failure. This is a 'low tech' criminal enterprise, one that involves hundreds of migrants setting sail from deserted beaches in inflatable boats, some of which can carry up to 50 people, in good weather. Therefore, persistent 'deter and detect' missions, with 'spotter planes' patrolling the same beaches in good weather may, if implemented, prove to be instrumental in dismantling the criminal networks.

The alternative, to do more of the same, will see the number of cross-Channel migrants continue to follow the current, upward trajectory, increasing by many thousands to, according to a member of the UK Border Force, up to 22,000 arrivals in 2021. Fortunately, there are some signs of a shift in policy with the UK Home Office announcement that a senior civil servant, in charge of immigration enforcement for the last 3 years, has been replaced by a former chief police officer, Mr Tony Eastaugh with experience of counter-terror operations. Hopefully, the new incumbent will have some knowledge of airborne policing and policing at sea, or, if not, he will be willing to seek the advice of those who have this experience.



To date, neither the British nor the French have emulated the USA and harnessed the skills of the voluntary sector to patrol the coast with light, 'spotter' aircraft. Unlike the US Coast Guard Auxiliary (Air) and the complimentary US Civil Air Patrol © Airvan

CONCLUSION

Crossing the English Channel in an inflatable boat from a beach in northern France, or from Belgium is not only a very 'low tech' event, it's an event which now follows a known, well established route. It's become such a regular occurrence during good weather, on those days when Channel crossings are most likely, that these days are now identified in advance by the British authorities and promulgated as a 'Red Day'! Nevertheless, the sheer volume of these illegal Channel crossings is now challenging the finite resources of the UK Border Force, the French and the Belgium police, as well as the voluntary lifeboat services. Moreover, by their own admission, the French have, to date, found it too difficult to secure their beaches with foot patrols, despite the enormous cash injections made by the British Government.

To the pilot and to the aircrew observer, those who fly a light, 'spotter' aircraft, it's very obvious that with their 'birds eye' view, armed with no more than stabilised binoculars or, if necessary, night vision goggles, they can make an enormous difference. A difference that includes both deterring would be Channel crossers with the presence of the aircraft and, at the same time, providing very cost effective air support to the foot patrols on the beaches and to the patrol boats close inshore. If the question is, "Would air support with light aircraft, with 'spotter planes', prove to be a cost effective 'force multiplier'; a means to enhance the utility of the existing surface patrols on the beaches of northern France and Belgium?" Then the answer is, "Absolutely, yes!"

The author, James A Cowan MBE BA CF FRIN, Squadron Leader, Royal Air Force (Ret'd) is a former RAF maritime patrol pilot, has also flown as a pilot for the police in England and for the Scottish Air Ambulance Service. He is a Churchill Fellow and a Fellow of the Royal Institute of Navigation. He now flies his own aircraft to support the emergency services with simple air search missions, looking for missing persons, and for air to ground photography.

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EVENTS

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Late feedback from the late July Airborne Public Safety Association's 50th annual conference & exposition (APSCON) suggests that times remain difficult for the event industry. On the positive side some European police [including Austria and the Netherlands] were able to get to the event in New Orleans to take up with TFO training classes and networking but although such as TFO class and the Thermal Thermographer classes were fully booked with around 70 people in each class other classrooms reported a more sketchy attendance and at times the lower overall attendance left the halls taking on the feel of a ghost town – less the tumbleweed.

As the first APSCON show since Covid hit it was always going to be an unknown quantity and there were signs that the attendances were pretty much restricted to those that needed to be there, it is still a scary situation and that uncertainty was reflected with the USA noting a surge of the D or Indian Variant.

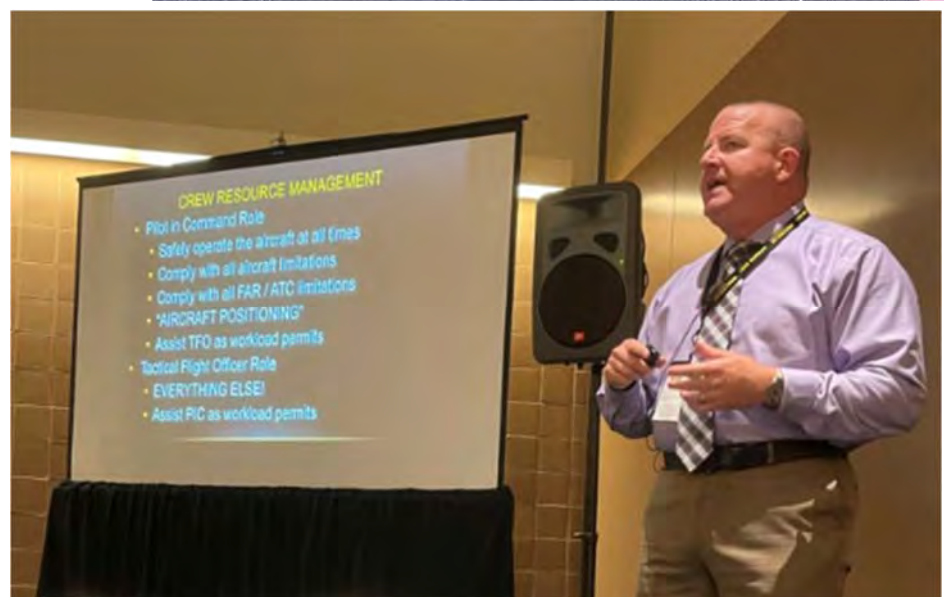
Although such as Airbus, Bell and MD were present and playing an active part in the show in general, Leonardo was absent and a normally high profile FLIR muted. They recently rebranded to Teledyne FLIR and had only a booth. Although



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it was near the entrance the relative sizes of the new and older branding caught many out. The newness of the Teledyne FLIR rebranding and relative unfamiliarity with the return to face-to-face events influenced the marketing in that although give-away T shirts were produced for the event, the traditional FLIR awards were not at New Orleans and the other long term traditional get-together, the pig picking meal did not happen.

The FLIR awards are now to be held as an on-line event in September but apparently from being an open house to all sensor brands these will be restricted to the output from the former FLIR Systems Inc. (FSI) brand alone. It looks likely that they will be an increasingly Teledyne item even though that disassociates the brand from the 'free advertising' of the common name for infrared sensors... FLIR.

APSCON 2021 was the delayed 50th event. Although clearly challenged, it met its primary aim of offering the best conference courses and classes in the industry regardless of international borders. This year the hall was host to over 120 vendors offering the latest cutting-edge technology for public safety aviation. For many the first event in nearly two years, for a few still a step to far, too soon.

At least, after a break of a year, there was an APSA Awards reception, where members were honoured.

They recipients included:

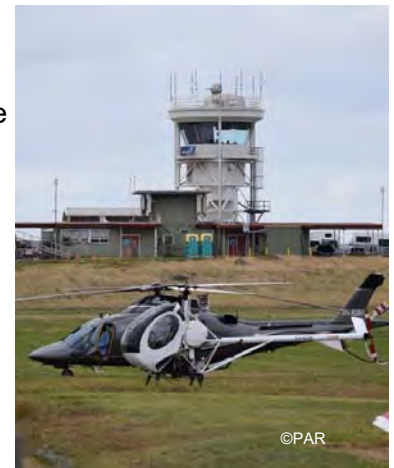
APSA Safety Award to John Cooper, Columbus (Ohio) Division of Police Helicopter Unit (Ret.);
Fixed-Wing Operator Award to Sgt. Hans Schirmer, Ontario Provincial Police Aviation Services;
Unmanned Aerial Systems Award to Sgt. Matt Rogers, Michigan State Police;
Robert L. Cormier Award to Dave Taylor, Arizona Department of Public Safety Aviation Bureau;
Tactical Flight Officer Award to Christian Smith, San Jose (California) PD Air Support Unit;
Technical Specialist Award to Marc Foreman, Oklahoma City (Oklahoma) PD Air Support Unit;
The Captain "Gus" Crawford Memorial Aircrew of the Year Award was presented to Deputy Johnny Reyes and Deputy Greg Villanueva of the Fresno County (California) Sheriff's Office Air Support Unit.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The **Australian International Airshow and Aerospace and Defence exposition** slated to be held at Avalon airport in Geelong, near Melbourne, Victoria from November 30- December 5 has been cancelled. The Avalon 2021 Show was yet another victim of the pandemic. The announcement was made by the show organisers AMBDA Foundation Limited, which stated that the cancellation was due to the increased uncertainty created by the impacts of the Delta variant of Covid-19. AMDA Foundation is now embarking on planning and preparation for AVALON 2023 which will be held from February 28 to March 5 2023.

The pandemic had already postponed the 2021 event from its original planned dates in the summer.

Ed: Europe and the USA have had a hard time with the pandemic – it contrasted with the apparent success in the Australasia where thanks to closed borders few died. Now it seems that a subsequent poor performance with vaccine roll out and a lack of herd immunity is telling against that initial success.



Driven by Covid-19 **The Emergency Services Show (ESS2021)**, being held at the NEC, Birmingham [UK] on 7-8 September 2021 is not alone. From 7-9 September there are other events normally held in the Spring. The presence close by of the Safety & Security Event Series (a range of Fire, Health & Safety and Security events) may greatly enhance the visitor experience. It remains to be seen whether fluctuations in Covid and the resultant public reaction alter that expectation.

That unknown factor aside, this year's ESS offers a long-awaited and in-person opportunity for police visitors to discover innovative technologies, handle the latest kit, share experiences, exchange best practice, and collaborate with other police forces and blue light services. The transformational power of new and emerging technologies will be the central theme of the expanded and enhanced trade show, which features over 450 exhibitors, more than 90 of which are new.



The event incorporates a new feature – **Future Policing** – backed by the Home Office, techUK, Blue Light Commercial, National Enabling Programme, Police Digital Service, The Police Federation of England and Wales and The Police Superintendents Association, who will all be available to speak to in the exhibition.

Future Policing is sponsored by Audax and supported by an influential Advisory Council chaired by Lord Hogan-Howe, the former Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service and architect of NPAS who will open the Show with a keynote address. There is a two-day, CPD-accredited high-level conference featuring a line-up of senior speakers covering key topics for the future of policing in the UK.

A panel discussion chaired by Georgie Henley, Programme Manager of techUK's Justi

tice and Emergency Services Programme will discuss how digital technologies including AI and cloud-based solutions can better support frontline policing.

Avon & Somerset Police will lead a session on automation and machine learning, and Leicestershire Police share the lessons it has learnt from the pandemic.

Skills for Justice will explain how to collect and use workforce data in policing.

In view of the ongoing process of sorting out the future of NPAS BlueLight Commercial will provide guidance on how to ensure public sector procurement delivers both social value and economic impact.

On day 2 BlueLight Commercial will host sessions on policing and the journey to zero carbon and working with academia, while Nic Pole, Principal Analyst at the College of Policing will make the case for “futures thinking” in policing, discussing key findings from the College’s Future Operating Environment Report. National Search Advisor Murray Haynes will outline the work of the National Crime Agency’s Major Crime Investigative Support (MCIS) team in the most high-profile and challenging criminal and missing person cases.

Sponsored by MSA Safety, The Emerging Technologies Theatre will showcase the most cutting-edge technology and equipment used in operational response. The Vehicle Innovation Theatre will focus on one of the fastest growing areas of innovation in the police sector covering everything from electric, hybrid and decarbonised drivetrains, to connected vehicles and mobile incident command units.

Technologies on display in the exhibition include connected and smart vehicles, satellite communications, GIS and mapping technologies, ruggedised mobile computers, tablets and phones, cloud storage, wearable tech, connectivity, UAVs/drones, hybrid and electric vehicles, virtual and augmented reality training, body-worn cameras and other video capture systems.

In something of a blast from the past, in the Learning & Development Theatre, there will be a session on planning for a nuclear disaster something that the police service has moved away from since Civil Defence training was axed by the Wilson Government in the mid-1960s.

In those days the Russians were the beastie boys and the police officer on the street was the hero who was apparently nuclear fallout proof and ready to rescue everyone. There are links between police aviation and this retro activity in that almost all the early air observers were trained by the military to be War Duties Observers A sort of nuclear bomb damage spotter.

Now of course the threat comes more from terror cells. They are arguably more difficult to spot! Than a big ball of fire and a giant mushroom



The Learning & Development Theatre will include another thread on communicating well in a crisis. Free-to-attend and based in Hall 5 and the Outside Area at the NEC, The Emergency Services Show will for the first time be co-located with the Safety & Security Event Series; The Fire Safety Event, The Health & Safety Event, The Security Event, The Facilities Event and newly launched National Cyber Security Show, creating the UK’s largest event dedicated to the protection of people, places and assets. The NEC Venue Protect programme ensures all participants enjoy a COVID-safe and secure visit. Parking at the NEC for show visitors is free. Register in advance for free entry to all six events with a single pass at: www.emergencyuk.com

POLICE AVIATION
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The **Airborne Public Safety Association (APSA)** conducts regularly scheduled online meetings for safety officers, maintenance technicians, SAR and Natural Resources personnel, and UAS operators that you can join using your computer, mobile device or phone. To facilitate this, the UAS, Safety Officer and Maintenance Technician Meeting Groups meet once every two months, and the SAR Personnel and Natural Resources Meeting Groups meet quarterly.

These meetings are open to any APSA member. Contract maintenance providers to APSA members are welcome to participate in the maintenance meeting as well. To receive meeting information and be added to the mailing list, send an email to safety@publicsafetyaviation.org

The upcoming events include:

UAS: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 from 1:00-2:00 pm EDT (1700 UTC)

Safety Officers: Friday, September 24, 2021 from 1:00-2:00 PM EDT (1700 UTC)

Natural Resources: Wednesday, October 6, 2021 from 1:00-2:00 pm EDT (1700 UTC)

Also this month is **DSEi** at its usual location in London Docklands. As with the ESS it has been joined by events moved due to Covid disruption.

Clarion Events Defence and Security have announced that Counter Terror Expo (CTX) and Forensics Expo Europe (FEE) will be rescheduled and take place alongside DSEI at ExCel London on 14 – 16th September 2021.

DSEI is on track to deliver the event’s most comprehensive iteration to date, with both returning key accounts and first-time exhibitor numbers reflecting the industry’s commitment to a return to live events. As the UK’s leading networking event for security professionals from industry, infrastructure, government and policing, CTX attracts attendees and exhibitors from across Europe, all of whom will have the opportunity to seek counter-terror business synergies with a wider pool of stakeholders attending DSEI across the Land, Naval, Aerospace, Joint, and Security domains.

“Clarion Events, one of the largest exhibition organisers in the world, hold the safety and well-being of all event attendees as the highest priority. DSEI aims to deliver an event as like those in previous years as possible and will fully implement all public health requirements, to make the venue COVID-19-secure. Working alongside Government, public health officials, the venue, business partners, transport operators and hotels, DSEI 2021 will take all the necessary precautions. <https://www.dsei.co.uk/>



Helitech Expo, relies upon the brand name to attract the attention of the potential exhibitor and visitor.

Since it left Duxford and, more recently splits from its European partners, it has been a damaged brand. As indeed have the Europeans due to the pandemic.

It is being marketed as the UK’s leading event for the rotorcraft industry, and it comes with a new management team.

Unfortunately it also appears at the ExCel Centre in London Docklands. It is a great venue but the potential audience long since said they hated it.. Note that the exhibitors and audience of DSEi have never to my knowledge complained about the identical location of that event.

The new management are the *multi award*-winning PRYSM Media Group. Partnered with the industry’s leading bodies, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), ADS Group and British Helicopter Association (BHA).

To make full use of the organisers text—Helitech Expo 2021 promises to be the can't miss event of the year! Refreshed and ready to go, Helitech Expo will be returning to London's ExCeL on the 5th & 6th October, delivering cutting edge exhibitors, key buyers, a dedicated emergency service zone as well as 100 expert-led seminars, all leading to unparalleled networking opportunities.

The show will be filled with informative, inspiring, and innovative ideas directly from front runners of the sector. This plethora of content will assist the discovery of the latest advancements from the people who are on the front foot as the rotorcraft landscape continues to adapt and diversify.

Unfortunately I am led to believe that the major players, Airbus Helicopters, Bell Helicopter, Leonardo and many others will not be at the event. That is what hurt Helitech at its last outing in Farnborough and I would assume that is a major detrimental factor for audience attraction.

I expect to be there early next month but with a month to go I do not have any major expectation that the event will even run! [Helitech Website](#)

Further in the future is PAvCon Europe 2022

Scheduled for 6-8 June 2022 this will be training days and an exhibition all held in Wiener Neustadt a few miles outside Vienna, Austria. The return to Austria, and Wiener Neustadt is after an eight year gap.

This time we will be hosted by aircraft and systems completion experts Airborne Technologies but the plan is that we want to embrace all of the aerospace occupants of the airfield if they wish to be involved by way of the exhibition, static display and maybe flight displays. Letters are now out with Austro, Diamond, Schiebel and the Austrian Police to gauge their level of interest.

I am looking to getting an advert designed for the event and the design will hopefully meet the content—reflecting aircraft built, completed or operating at Wiener Neustadt (that mainly involves ABT, Austro, Diamond and Schiebel). To that end all I need is an indication on which companies wish to be involved and therefore included in the artworks in marketing this event. As far as outside agencies are concerned PAvCon has verbal interest and even deposits from such as APSA, Airbus Helicopters, Axnes, Bell, Hensoldt... but clearly COVID could still effect this whole plan. At the moment I am assuming that 2022 will be alright.

