Police Aviation News

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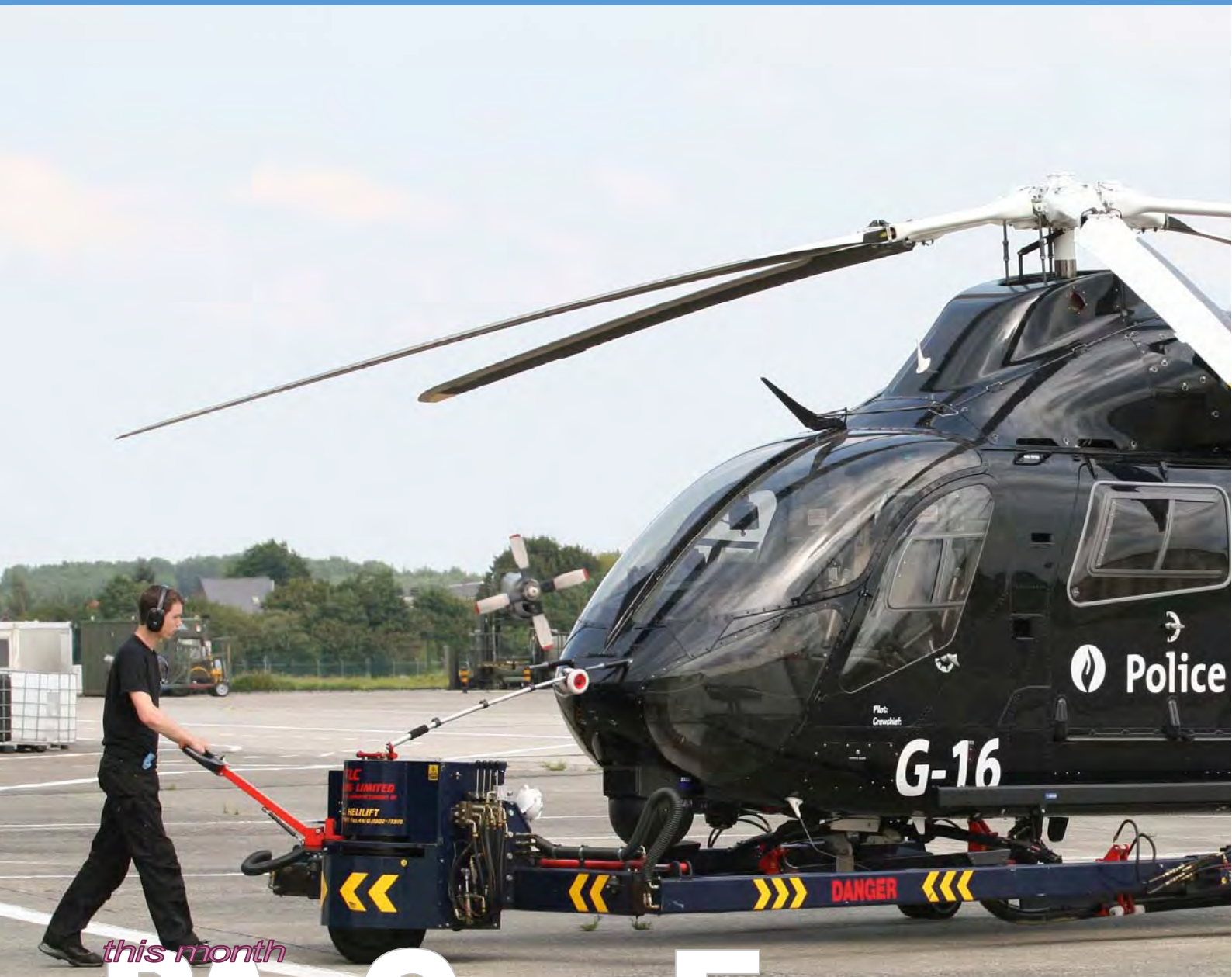

this month

PAvCon Europe

the international gathering

Royal Oman Police Select First Airbus Helicopter

Tripoli Insurance Payoff

Leonardo AW169 after ten years

LAW ENFORCEMENT

PAVCON EUROPE: In a few days' time the PAvCon Europe Police Aviation Conference event 2022 will open its doors in Austria. PAvCon has been there before, when the hosts were Diamond Aircraft. That event was superb and I have no doubt this one will be equally memorable.

Major changes in the format are not expected this close to the event, there will be a broad selection of presentations on flight safety, operations and technical advances suited to the education of operators and manufacturers alike.

By now the majority of attendees will have made their decisions on whether to attend. There are some odd absences from the event that give rise to speculation about modern strategy in the EO/IR sector.

PAvCon 2013: Same airport but a gathering of different people 9 years ago. Carl Crenshaw, Ken Solosky and Glenn Daley (PAR)

Despite numerous reminders, neither FLIR nor L3 Harris (Wescam) are exhibiting this year. I cannot recall a year before the onset of the disruption of Covid when both of them were not present at a PAvCon event and enthusiastically promoting their competing cameras and systems.

Other absences have been explained away by simply saying "…there is a war on in Europe…" If they mean it is too dangerous to be in Austria in June 2022, I think there are around 450 million Europeans who would tend to disagree – for the time being at least!

Fortunately, the PAvCon event has prevailed and, apart from those details, remains as big as it has ever been and attracting police operators from across Europe with several Eastern European countries attending for the first time. The door remains open to late delegates even at this 11th hour stage so who knows who will turn out to be a surprise visitor. I recall that even President Barack Obama turned up outside the hangar doors when the event was held in Brussels in 2014. It turned out he had a prior appointment elsewhere in the city, something called a G7, but I always count it as a near thing.

There several first timers at the event but even those with a track record have 'suffered' - if that is the correct word - staff and ownership changes that have left them not knowing the market they need to address. The pandemic that led to the close down of PAvCon and other events has apparently led to senior management making some mighty strange decisions as the primary information sources are retired or simply dispensed with.

Maybe I will be back here next month saying sorry sir please do not cancel my advertising! Some readers in high places do get very precious about who they are – and I am not talking about any of my advertisers!

ASOG: The day after the PAvCon Europe event the not-for-profit Airborne Sensor Operators Group association will be running an EO/IR focussed training and education event in cooperation with Airborne Technologies GmbH. The two-day event will take place on June 9 - 10, 2022 from 9am to 5pm daily.

The purpose of this course is to provide affordable training to average individual non-rated aircrew members who would otherwise would not be able to obtain such training through other education programs or avenues. Further details appear on page 19 of this issue.

COVER IMAGE: Brussels International Airport Belgian police MD902 Explorer G-16 being handled with ease on the TLC Helilift . Aviation professionals will gather on Austria this week to seek answers to their present and future operational and fleet replacement needs (Marc Arys)

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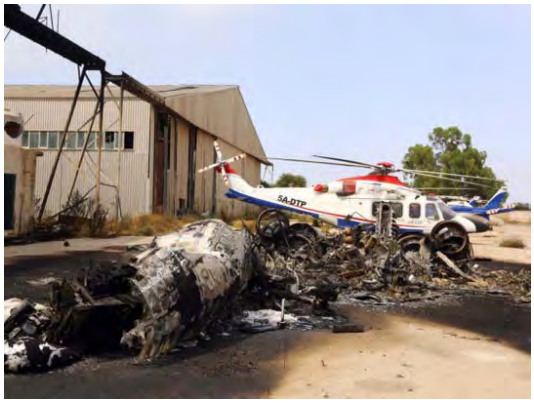
LIBYA

INSURANCE PAYOUT: Over several days in July 2014 fighting in and around the Tripoli International Airport resulted in numerous aircraft being destroyed and damaged.



The bigger aircraft losses were more obvious but the losses among the smaller emergency services airframes were largely unnoticed. On July 16 a Libyan Air Force Il-76T parked on the apron was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) during fighting between rival militias. Dozens of other aircraft were damaged or destroyed.

Other Libyan government aircraft reported at the time to have fallen victim to crossfire include a Libyan Border Patrol Agusta A109E Power, which was destroyed during a rocket attack on July 14. Another A109E, parked next to it, was damaged, and a nearby Libyan Police AW139 received minor damage.

Fighting between militia forces for control of the airport began on July 13 and killed at least 50 people and injured over 120. Mortar rounds, rockets and tank fire hit the airport and its buildings. The control tower and other infrastructure was badly damaged along with several airliners including types reported as Airbus A330 and Bombardier CRJ900. At least six aircraft were reported substantially damaged, mostly A330s and A320s, while over a dozen other aircraft received light damage.

Last month it was reported that six of the damaged and destroyed helicopters at Tripoli International Airport in Libya, on July 16, 2014, were government aircraft and an insurance syndicate has paid out on them. They bowed to pressure from the Libyan agency in charge of recovering assets abroad, LARMO, with the support of the UK-based Libya Consultancy.

OMAN

ROYAL OMAN POLICE: Although no official announcement has yet been made by the operator or the manufacturer, an Airbus Helicopter H145 in camouflage marks has been seen test flying in Germany. The helicopter wears the test registration D-HBTA over the colours of the Royal Oman Police (ROP). This is the first aircraft acquisition noted other than an Embraer Phenom business jet and a 175-airliner noted arriving several years ago.

This is the operator's first Airbus product having exclusively operated Bell or Agusta (Leonardo) in the past. A mixed fleet operator mainly dedicated to transportation of police to remote posts, since the mid-1970s the first helicopters were Bell Huey's and JetRanger's.

Over the years they added two short lived Bell 222s, and then in 1983/4 added six Bell 214STs. The 222s were sold in 1986, the 214STs were replaced by six Leonardo AW139s in 2007/8. A further five 139s were added in 2011/2, including at least one dedicated to the VIP role. In 2005, ROP added two police role equipped A109Es from Leonardo (then AgustaWestland), and a third six years later.

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UNITED KINGDOM

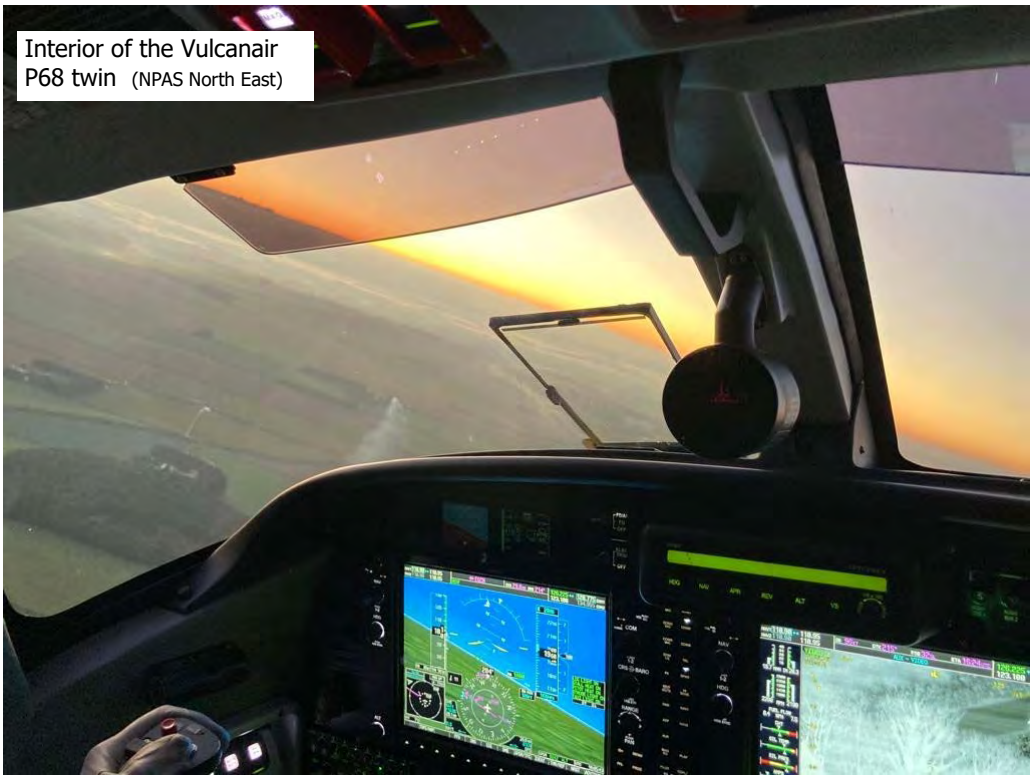
NPAS: Early in May the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, the organisation taken over by Mayor Tracy Brabin one year ago, was approached by an associate for a comment on the position relating to the leadership of the National Police Air Service. The request did not lead to the flow of positive information.

The Authority simply stated that
"The leadership of NPAS is still with West Yorkshire and discussions regards its future management remain ongoing," is all they'll say.

Ed: It seems highly unlikely that any transfer from West Yorkshire to another entity (let alone a police force) will take place in the near future. The failed organisation, NPAS remains wholly in charge of all that is manned.
Meanwhile, those that do not have air support, and through airframe age NPAS aircraft availability remains dismal, are finding that most of their day-to-day air support needs can be met by drones under their own control.
I would suppose that the biggest danger by far to the future is that someone proposes that NPAS gets into some sort of national drone operation and complete destroys that too. Unfortunately, that remains a horrific but very likely scenario, NPAS has said they want to get into drones. Fortunately, perhaps they have been saying just that since at least 2017 and have not yet managed anything that was not provided by the intelligence of others.
It's all down to weak management of course, not in West Yorkshire they are as bolshy as ever, it is elsewhere. The Home Office is massively distracted by Migrants and key staff are probably more interested in getting the children to the zoo whilst working from home and when it comes to oversight of each other the NPCC are simply not keen on asking each other awkward questions just in case it effects their mental health profile.

The words of congratulation relating to the success of the so recently decried fixed wing continue spout from Wakefield. On May 3, 2022, NPAS declared that in the first month since extending the service of fixed wing aircraft to operate across the whole of England and Wales, the crews have supported 27 forces – from Devon and Cornwall Police in the south to Northumbria Police in the north.

Ed: Nothing more voluble than the newly converted. Now the small twins have moved from being a not so loved asset for the Northeast of England to being used as a super-efficient national asset. It seems so easy for senior officers to flick a public relations switch that confined the aircraft to serving an area two hundred miles from the Doncaster base to one that declares the aircraft to suddenly equally capable of operating efficiently at up to 300 miles distance. Naturally no-one mentions the long-standing problem of where to refuel at night.
There have been positive claims that the aircraft have been returning some very positive reaction times well within the elusive 20 minutes expected of the fleet as a whole. With a control room monitoring exactly where the aircraft is at all times and judicious allocation of tasking it is relatively easy to ensure that a few 'instant' arrival times are accepted to drive down the averages. With an aircraft based in the northeast of England in Doncaster actual travel time to assigned tasks in say London would wreck such positive messages every time, whereas aircraft coincidentally in the right place at the right time have no such worries.


Interior of the Vulcanair P68 twin (NPAS North East)

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UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Aviation Unit is the lead aerial law enforcement agency for the county. Sheriff's Aviation provides general law enforcement support, narcotics surveillance, personnel/cargo transport, airborne photography, search and rescue operations, wild land fire suppression and emergency medical transport services. The Aviation Unit has sixteen aircraft in total comprising six Airbus H125, one Eurocopter AS350 B3, three Bell UH-1H, one Bell 212, two Mahindra Air Van fixed wing, one Renaissance Twin Commander, two Beechcraft King Air fixed wing airplanes.

All of the patrol helicopters are equipped with the latest technology including high-definition EO/IR systems, night vision, in-flight GPS mapping, searchlights, hoist systems and high-definition video downlink capability. The SAR helicopters are hoist equipped with but also have the capability of operating with emergency medical equipment and fire tanks/buckets.

OHIO: In the wake of the infamous Black Lives Matter attempts to defund police that were focussed for a time on the Columbus Police the air unit was the butt of criticism of its operation. On several occasions they featured in negative headlines but seemingly managed the shrug off the most damaging proposals.

The situation can hardly be helped when it was revealed last month that thirty months after getting a new $3.4M Bell 407GXi helicopter purchase approved the airframe remains unused in a hangar. The Columbus Division of Police has decided to sell it.

The development looks set to bury plans the unit had to progressively dispose of the existing fleet of MD530F helicopters, in favour of the larger Bell. The division was scheduled to purchase its second Bell this year, while retiring an MD. Negative management attitudes to the worth of MD was driving the decision to dispose of the MD fleet.

Plans for the gradual retirement of the MD530 in favour of a Bell product have been placed in disarray (MD Helicopter)

Part of the reason behind the move was an inability to fund the role conversion of the Bell. It was bought as a green airframe and required $671,000 in high-tech equipment, a searchlight and EO/IR camera before it could be used operationally. The role fit was set for 2020 and it simply did not happen. It is thought to have 50 flying hours on it and may even be worth more than the PD paid for it.

The division's long-range plan called for purchasing its second Bell this year, with $2.7M budgeted but now cancelled. An estimated $2M in saving will go towards upgrading the existing fleet of MDs, these are now up to 15 years old. Another $3M set for new aircraft purchase in 2024 is now pushed back to 2025.

ALABAMA: The Tuscaloosa County Sheriff's Office, has now given up helicopters in favour of drones. Announced in April the two Bell OH-58 N631TC 70-15094 and N632TC OH58C 72-21376 were transferred across the city of Tuscaloosa to the local police department last month.

Tuscaloosa County Sheriff's Office incorporated an Aviation Unit in 2000 to further their crime fighting arsenal. The helicopters were equipped with a FLIR (Forward Looking Infrared Camera), state of the art mapping system, MDT (Mobile Data Terminal) and night vision capabilities they have now been replaced with drones. The move reportedly improved overall reaction time and reduced costs,

Tuscaloosa County Sheriff's Office has replaced its helicopter units with drones, an initiative that administrators say will allow deputies to respond to most emergencies more quickly while saving the department money.

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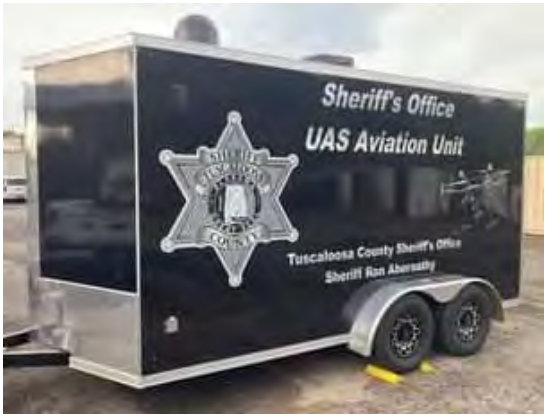
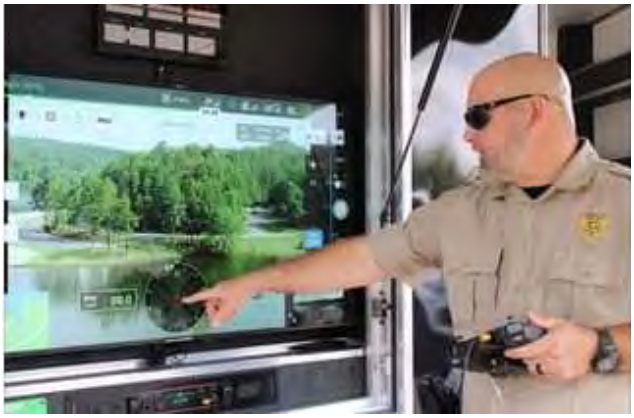
The cost of operating the two 50 years old DoD surplus helicopters ranged from $200,000 to $300,000 a year. The Sheriff's Office now has 13 small DJI Mavic 2 Enterprise Advanced drones and two larger DJI Matrice 300 RTK drones. The smaller drones will be kept aboard the patrol vehicles of supervisors and will be ready to deploy as needed. The larger drones will be used by the department's tactical unit in more advanced cases.

Deputies will be able to manage drones from the department's Draxxon DX-714 mobile drone command centre, a trailer that contains a range of high-tech equipment and monitors.



Close to 30 deputies have received certification, with more to follow. Bowles said in order to fly or operate the drones, deputies need a FAA Part 107 license. To earn a license, each deputy must pass an exam that is administered through an FAA-authorised test facility. [Gannett]



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AIR AMBULANCE

CANADA

ALBERTA: Northern Alberta and the Peace Region welcomed the ninth of ten new $13M Airbus H-145 helicopters for the STARS air ambulance operation.

STARS are selling on their old fleet, mainly early model BK117s, to other operators for other people to enjoy. [NAPR]

UNITED KINGDOM

GREAT NORTH: It seems like a story from an age ago, but it is probably only a couple of years and a Pandemic away.

The Great North Air Ambulance continues to consider using the one-man jet pack as a means of getting its paramedics from ground level to some difficult to reach point in space where an injured party awaits medical help and rescue.

The latest development is that a British air ambulance paramedic is has been trained up on the new jet-pack powered suit that will speed them to emergencies far faster than conventional ambulances. Even as the critics continue to expound their grave doubts, the paramedic, Jamie Walsh, went public with his capability recently.

Ed: Those HEMS units that decided to go for fitting hoists to their new airframes (Yorkshire and their H145 fleet for example) simply found that the cost and training requirement to attain proficiency in what was a limited 'fixed line' lifting technique were prohibitive for the few occasions when they might wish to use it. That and the CAA not being keen on the idea set it aside, perhaps forever. The hoists have either been sold on or they remain on the shelf awaiting more enlightened times and budgets.

The CAA were not keen on hoists, and they will be even more unsure about putting a jet fuel suit inside any part of a helicopter. The fuel will be classed as dangerous goods cargo, certainly complicating the manifest for the pilot. I am not sure HEMS are into underslung loads just yet…. Someone could hopefully drop the hot suit somewhere close to the point of need and then deliver the flight trained paramedic. Meanwhile the crumpled and in pain patient awaits the outcome of the complex logistics

Future developments in the technology include using the suits to quickly attend those buried in avalanches—potentially using the jet thrusters to blow snow away—and an all electric suit that might get around the 'fuel in cabin' problem. Such a development will require several leaps in battery technology.

MIDLANDS: Patients in Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire are already benefitting as Midlands Air Ambulance Charity's southern critical care car is now operating into the night to meet increasing demand.

The charity has changed its operational hours so that its vital lifesaving car will now run until 2am, allowing the team to attend a greater number of critical emergencies. In the first month of operation, the advanced clinical team has responded to almost 30 medical and traumatic incidents between the extended operating hours of 8pm and 2am. Seven of these call outs were to serious incidents, demonstrating the direct need for the expertise of Midlands Air Ambulance Charity's two critical care paramedics on-board. The car was dispatched to a variety of incident types including road traffic collisions, accidental injuries, assaults and medical conditions.

Previously the rapid response vehicle, based at the charity's Strensham airbase in Worcestershire, ran between 8am and 8pm with one specialist critical care paramedic on-board. Following analysis of the times of calls where patients are in critical condition and could benefit from the advanced treatment, surgical skills, medicines and hospital-level equipment rapidly brought to scene, the service now operates its southern critical care car between 2pm and 2am with two critical care paramedics.

Since April, the charity operates its lifesaving service 19 hours per day, rapidly bringing parts of the hospital to the patient in an average of just ten minutes. The operational day starts at 7am via helicopter from RAF Cosford in Shropshire and the central critical care car (covering Birmingham and the Black Country, at 8am via helicopters at the charity's Strensham airbase in Worcestershire and Tatenhill airbase in Staffordshire, from 10am via the northern critical care car (which covers Staffordshire and Shropshire) and at

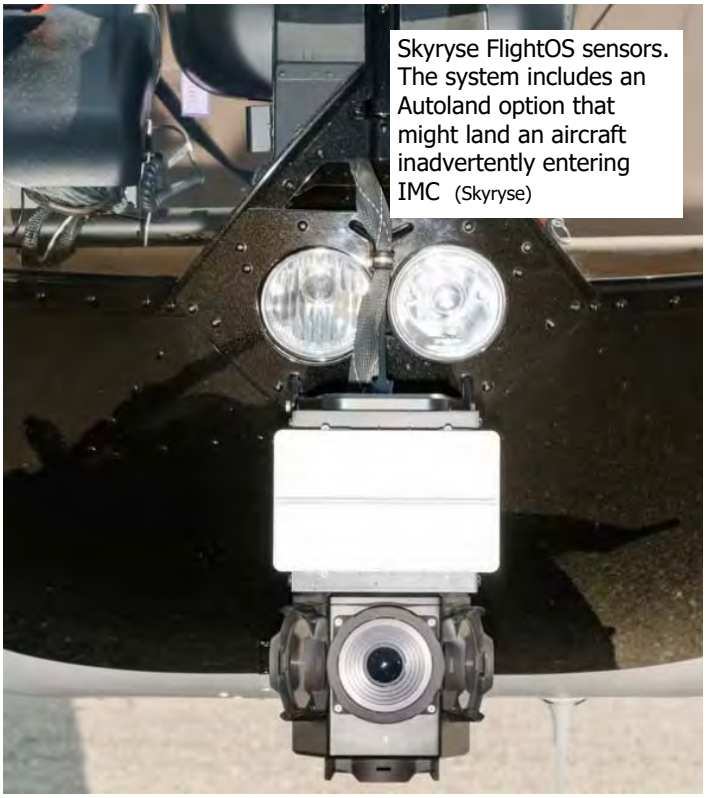
2pm for the southern critical care car, covering Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire, which is also based at Strensham.

The critical care cars carry the same advanced lifesaving equipment as the helicopters, such as hospital grade ventilators and a mechanical CPR machine, known as the Lucas device and advanced analgesic and sedative drugs not carried on NHS ambulances.

UNITED STATES

NATIONAL: Early in May Skyryse, a transportation technology company, and Air Methods, the leading American air medical transport company, announced a partnership to retrofit more than 400 single-engine helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft in the Air Methods fleet with FlightOS, a shared mission to advance further safety measures to protect pilots and patients. The intention is that there will be reduced operational complexity by making the flight deck more intuitive and standardized.

The new Skyryse FlightOS hardware and software stack replaces overly complex and manual flight control systems, allowing pilots to control helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft with a far simpler and safer control interface. The fleet affected includes the EC130, AS350, and Bell 407, and fixed-wing aircraft such as the Pilatus PC-12.



Skyryse FlightOS sensors. The system includes an Autoland option that might land an aircraft inadvertently entering IMC (Skyryse)

Air Methods has also invested $5M into Skyryse Series B, bringing the total raised to $205M, further backing the LA-based company's automation hardware and software. Skyryse's FlightOS state-of-the-art technology provides increased operational safety in clear or inclement weather using advanced sensors currently only used in commercial aviation and advanced military aircraft, meaning more missions are completed, and more lives are saved. The flight system is operational through every phase of flight and during any situational hazard, designed to never go offline, including during emergencies.

Air Methods will use the Skyryse technology to elevate air crews' ability to safely perform their core function of providing immediate, critical care where it is needed most.

FLORIDA: In Central Florida Advent Health's Flight 1 operation is undergoing a major expansion with the addition of a second state-of-the-art helicopter and, for the first time, a hangar at the Orlando Executive Airport that will enable faster reaction to calls and fly more patients in need.

For the past 36 years, Flight 1 has relied on one rescue helicopter, callsign Archangel 1, to transport critically ill patients between Advent Health's Central Florida campuses and from other health care facilities.

Last year, Advent Health's Emergency Medical Services transported about 45,000 people, 1,000 of which were onboard Flight 1. The purchase of a second helicopter, an Airbus EC145e, Archangel 2, will allow the operation to reach more patients and extend access to critical care.

Advent Health is leasing a 7,000-square-foot hangar to store both helicopters and some of its ambulance fleet and is renovating an adjacent 10,000-square-foot office building for the hospital's Emergency Medical Services. Until now, the hospital system's helicopter was stored on the Orlando campus.

Slated to finish construction in 2023, the building will house administrative offices for the Flight 1 program and a simulator used to train team members from the flight and ground rescue fleets.

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OHIO: On May 12 medical staff watched as a medical helicopter circled OhioHealth Mansfield Hospital, Mansfield northern Ohio then slowly landed on the roof.

It was a test flight, the first of many landings that will be made on the hospital rooftop landing pad in future years. Piloted by Jeremy Hildebrand, the near 3-ton MedFlight H130 helicopter was one of the smaller ones the new $2.3M rooftop helipad is capable 0f supporting.

FIRE

UNITED STATES

HAWAII: The Maui Fire Department has unveiled its new firefighting helicopter, a MBB BK117 named “Iolani” due to enter service from early July.

The twin-engine helicopter offers three times more capacity for water and passengers compared with its immediate predecessor. It also features hoisting capabilities, enabling MFD to rescue more people at once – previously, MFD were required to land the helicopter to rescue stranded people.

The aircraft will be operated by Windward Aviation, a Kahului Airport-based charter flight operator, through a contract with the government of Maui County.

The helicopter will be used for a range of emergency situations. In addition to fighting wildfires, the aircraft will also be employed for rescue efforts during flash floods or maritime incidents.

In recent years, MFD has faced a growing number of wildfires. So far this year, MFD has responded to 84 brush fires, compared with 71 by the same time in 2021, and 59 in 2020.

SEARCH & RESCUE

NEW ZEALAND

NORTH ISLAND: Northland Emergency Services (NEST) has outgrown its current Kensington base in Whangarei with some staff already working off-site due to lack of room. Other upcoming moves will see the numbers rise to 65, including 18 helicopter pilots.

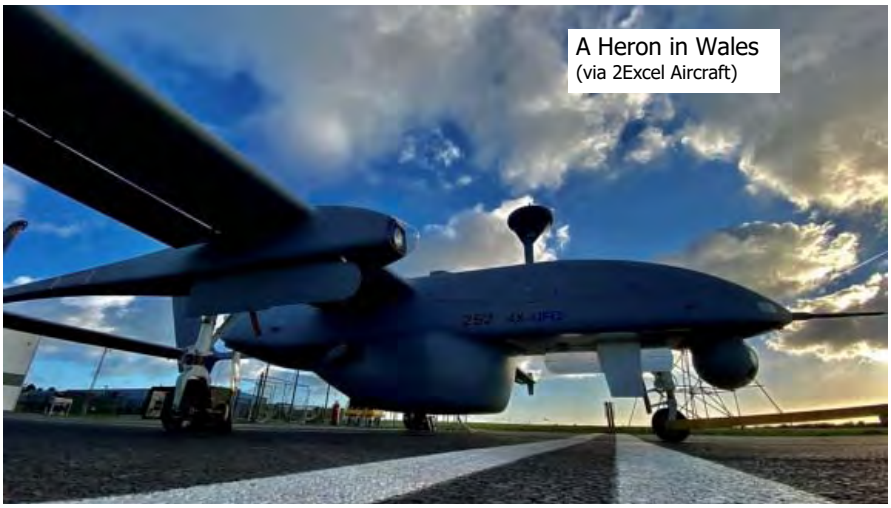
Shifting from Kensington to the Whangarei Airport, a small airport about four miles southeast of Whangarei city, in the suburb of Onerahi, will allow the use of an existing infrastructure rather than creating a facility on undeveloped land. It will offer big savings for the NEST as predictions are that a green field site would cost $8M where adding to Onerahi might only cost $4M. Nonetheless the proposal is not universally popular.

About 1,300 rescue helicopter flights will leave and take off from Onerahi airport annually, once the move is undertaken. The Whangārei District Council (WDC) lease on NEST's current Kensington rescue helicopter base expires in May 2023.

NEST currently operates Sikorsky S-76 helicopters, these are scheduled to be changed to newer, quieter and more capable Leonardo helicopters costing $15M each. [Herald]

UNITED KINGDOM

WALES: Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) and 2Excel Aviation successfully completed a demonstration of IAI's Maritime Heron uncrewed aircraft system (UAS) in a series of live, Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) maritime search and ISR scenarios.



A Heron in Wales
(via 2Excel Aircraft)

The demonstration was based out of West Wales Airport in Aberporth, Wales. Attending the demonstration were in-person and virtual observers from the UK Ministry of Defence, Government and the Civil sector. Following the demonstration, IAI and 2Excel received positive feedback from the UK Civil Aviation Authority.

The Heron UAS was ready to fly within 36 hours of arriving at West Wales and maintained full serviceability throughout the period of the deployment. The Heron UAS achieved 100% of its planned scenarios and demonstrated that it is highly capable in missions including search and rescue, border protection, fisheries patrol, safety at sea, small boat detection, and surveillance and other activities.

Andy Offer, Co-Founder and Director of 2Excel Aviation, said: "2Excel and IAI together demonstrated they can operate a very capable Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) platform in the UK within the constraints of the current regulatory environment. It is another shining example of us being able to do difficult things well. The feedback from the UK Civil Aviation Authority was very positive and we feel confident about the roadmap for future unmanned operations across our suite of contract air services."

Editor: This demonstration fits within the 'future fleet' scenario for 2ExCel. Last month there was an order for two DA-62 for 2023 delivery. Where they sit comfortably within the fleet of the future the Maritime Heron is massively expensive and it is probably more a case that 2ExCel might bid for an operating contract to support Heron if it is inserted into a government fleet. All part of learning curve for industry in unmanned BVLOS.

The DA-62 are not specifically for the UK Coastguard contract. The diverse current fleet is elderly and larger, but that diversity allows it to have capabilities well beyond those of the current Diamond offering. While it does not meet the current Coastguard radar specification there are plenty of roles it can fill. The Diamond will however insert into the fleet a modern 'green' machine that 2ExCel can build upon for the future.

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INDUSTRY

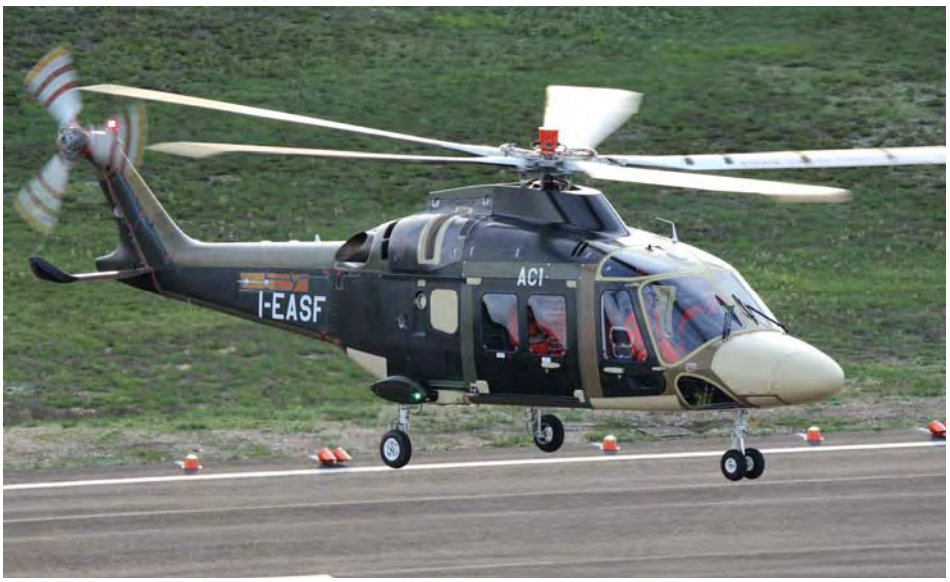
It has not been a good couple of years for **Boeing.** On May 5 they announced that they are moving their global headquarters from Chicago, Illinois, to Arlington, Virginia.

The company says it plans to maintain a significant presence in Chicago, but also noted that less office space would be required at the site owing to “flexible and virtual solutions” (WFH) implemented over the past two years.

Boeing’s three business units will continue to be based at their current headquarters with Boeing Commercial Airplanes in Seattle, Washington; Boeing Global Services in Plano, Texas; and Boeing Defense, Space and Security in Arlington.

Along with moving to the new headquarters, Boeing also announced plans to develop a research and technology hub in Northern Virginia to “harness and attract engineering and technical capabilities.” According to the company, development at the new hub will focus on cyber security, autonomous operations, quantum sciences and software and systems engineering. Boeing’s Arlington office specialises in advanced airplane development and autonomous systems.

Ed: Many pundits in the industry maintain that many of the problems in Boeing stem from removing the headquarters from the industry base in Seattle to Chicago. Partly this was driven by its takeover of McDonnell-Douglas in 1997 but it is noteworthy that there is now a massive distance between the engineers building the aircraft and management that rarely gets to walk the factory floor. The move to Arlington will only exacerbate that factor.



A decade ago, the first prototype of the **AW169** light intermediate twin engine helicopter took to the skies for the first time at the company’s site in Cascina Costa di Samarate (Varese, Italy) piloted by Giuseppe Lo Coco and Giuseppe Afruni with the Flight Test Engineers Massimo Longo and Stefano Rognoni on board.

The 10 May 2012 marked the start of a new era for the Company. The aircraft enabled expansion of the company’s modern product range by entering a new market segment. The AW169 was the first all-new product in the light-intermediate category in nearly 30 years and met the latest and most stringent operational and safety standards. The AW169 achieved EASA certification in July 2015.

Although known to be beefier than its rivals, the most recent, smaller and lighter member of the AW Family of latest generation helicopters, the AW169 provides advantages to existing and/or new users of the AW139 and/or the AW189 operating mixed fleets in terms of effectiveness and efficiency and provides all new capabilities to operators looking for an ideal combination of light helicopter cost with higher category performance, payload, and cabin space.

From the start, the AW169 featured several new technologies including a touch screen capable cockpit display, APU (Auxiliary Power Unit) mode providing electrical and hydraulic power with rotors stopped without using the batteries, and an all-electric retractable landing gear.

The AW169 was developed with a strong customer-oriented mindset, including a range of support and training solutions since the beginning spanning from virtual to full-scale maintenance simulation, and a range of flight simulation devices up to Level D FFS – Full Flight Simulator and advanced HUMS (Health Usage Monitoring System) technology.

The introduction of the AW169 has strengthened the competitiveness and market position of Leonardo in the world helicopter market. It has expanded Leonardo’s presence in the emergency medical service market and added more operators for law enforcement, disaster relief and fire-fighting duties.

In the past decade the type has broadened its capabilities, including a maximum take-off increase up to 4.8 ton and three different undercarriage options - retractable/fix landing gear/skid. The open architecture of the design continues to offer ongoing and future improvements for all roles.

Nearly 300 AW169s are on order today, with more than 140 units delivered from the Vergiate final assembly line (Italy) to operators in 25 countries.

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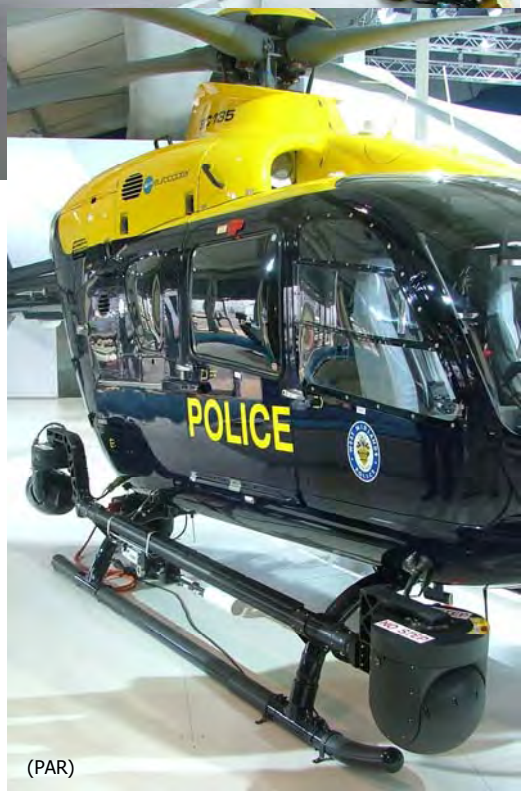
(PAR)



(PAR)

Ed: Ten months before the first flight of the AW169 the manufacturer displayed a mock-up of the type at the Farnborough Air Show. It was a sensation among the British police establishment – but for all the wrong reasons. AgustaWestland had decked it out in police colours and followed that up with advertising featuring the type flying over London as a police helicopter. Oh, the bare faced cheek of them! The line fed from the rivals Eurocopter and MD was that it was too big, too heavy etc etc. But in the end, it has proven that most of the criticisms were misplaced and that for many police forces it is the helicopter of choice. For the police in the UK anything that isn't 20 years old and clapped out will do

A further footnote on that Farnborough appearance of the mock-up is that on the EADS stand (what is that?) - Eurocopter - at the same show was a brand new EC135P2 G-POLA for the West Midlands police. That aircraft is still in service with NPAS.

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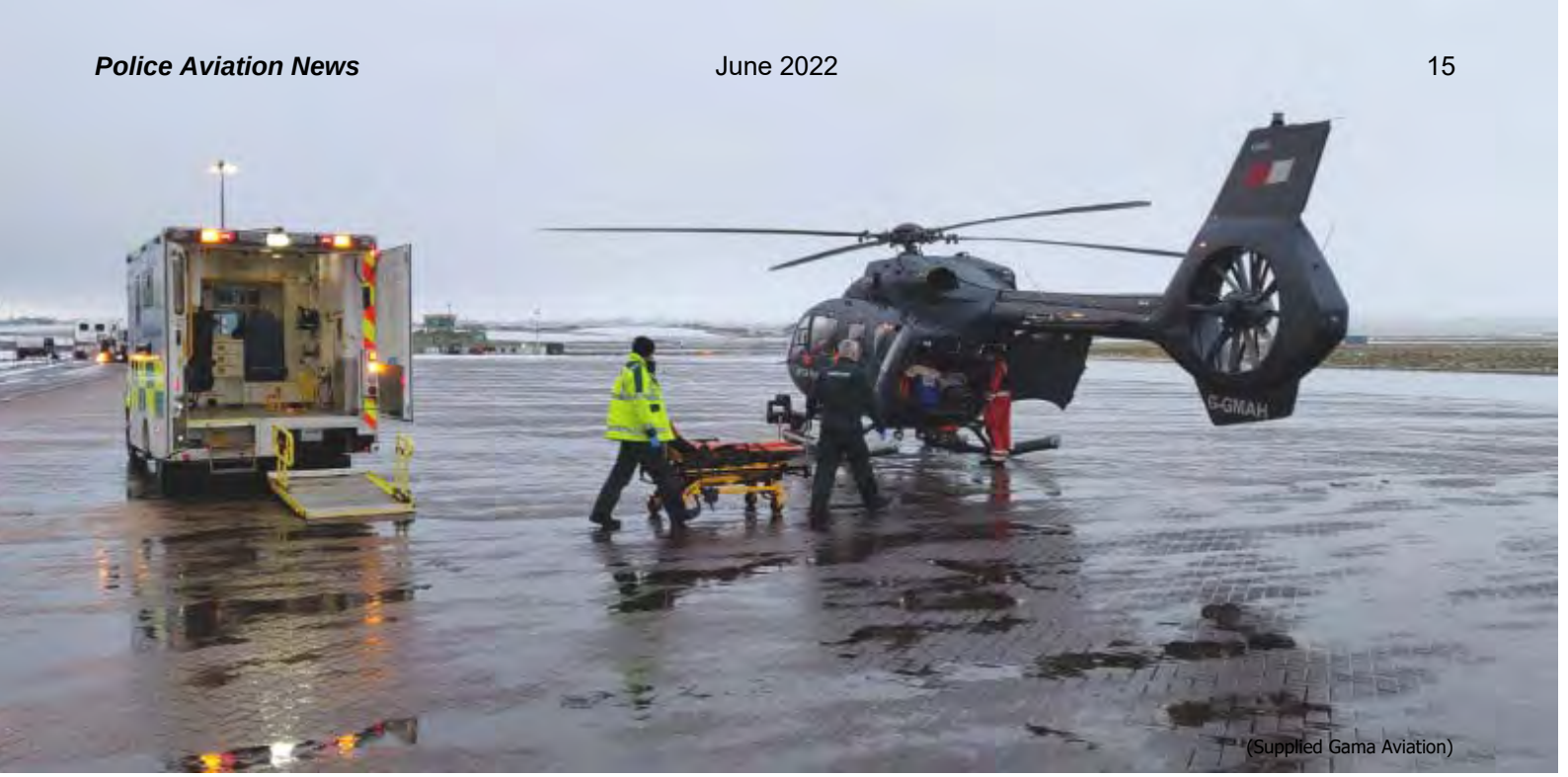

(Supplied Gama Aviation)

Gama Aviation is continuing to build its medical services offer with a new medical repatriation service focused on repatriating patients to and from the UK.

The service will combine Gama Aviation's Dorset based medical team with its own dedicated air ambulance aircraft, those of audited third parties and commercial airlines to provide medical care when repatriating patients into the UK or from the UK. The service has been in trial during the previous two months after the abatement of COVID-19 commercial flight restrictions.

Dr Simon Forrington, Medical Director for Gama Aviation Special Mission commented: "We have now successful delivered a number of these missions including supporting patients moving from Qatar, India, Indonesia and Europe. We expect an increase in seasonal repatriation requests as both the business and leisure market opens up after nearly two years of stasis due to COVID-19."

Mark Smith, Managing Director for Gama Aviation Special Mission commented: "Our aim is to provide a single point of contact for private individuals, insurers and governments that will ensure loved ones are repatriated with the utmost care and attention. To do so, we passionately believe that we need to 'own' the challenge and provide a true bed-to-bed service. You simply cannot do the part of the job that suits you. As such we believe that this new service offers insurers and governments an efficient 'one stop' solution to repatriating citizens in their time of need."

Gama Aviation is continuing to build its UK air ambulance offer by introducing a new service specifically aimed at the motorsport, events and film / TV industry in the UK.

The service seeks to provide fully crewed turnkey helicopter emergency services for situations that require additional medical infrastructure to support a specific safety case or insurance requirement. The service

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will offer helicopter air ambulance support that is fully crewed, allowing a variety of options to be deployed depending on the event, location and medical support requirement.

The company is predicting interest in the 'HEMS for hire' offer that will see its Airbus H145 D2, G-GMAH deployed. The aircraft, equipped for day and night operations will fly under a single pilot and Technical Crew Member (TCM) model with the medical team being allocated according to the required mission type.

Airborne Technologies has recently delivered a ISR role equipped Vulcanair P68C Observer for specialized Police operations in a southern Indian Ocean French Department. The Austrian company once again demonstrated its ability to develop extremely flexible and customised aircraft integration & modification solutions.

ABT

This new multi-mission aircraft is configured with a TRAKKA TC-300 and is optimised for a 2-man crew – Pilot and Sensor Operator. Additionally, the aircraft has two supplementary positions for a second Pilot and a Sensor Operator for training purposes. The sensor remains in stowed position within the aircraft for take-off and landing by a specially designed Airborne Technologies lifting unit which can easily be lowered by hand for the mission.

The complete integrated mission package consists of a TRAKKA sensor, monitor & augmented reality system, and a BMS downlink. Furthermore, the Sensor Operator monitor is manually adjustable, so it can be moved to an ergonomic working position for the mission and stowed during take-off and landing.

Diamond Aircraft Austria and California based, **Air Bear Tactical Aircraft**, LLC are excited to jointly announce that Diamond's special mission aircraft flagship will be touring the United States this summer.

The tour is scheduled to start early July from Diamond Aircraft's London, Ontario facility and will last until end of August/early September with a stop at the APSCON event in Reno, Nevada next month (25 – 30 July), where the aircraft will be on the show floor for the entire week.

This is the first time ever that the DA62 MPP is flying in the United States. Full FAA certified, the aircraft will be delivering to North American launch customers beginning in early 2023.

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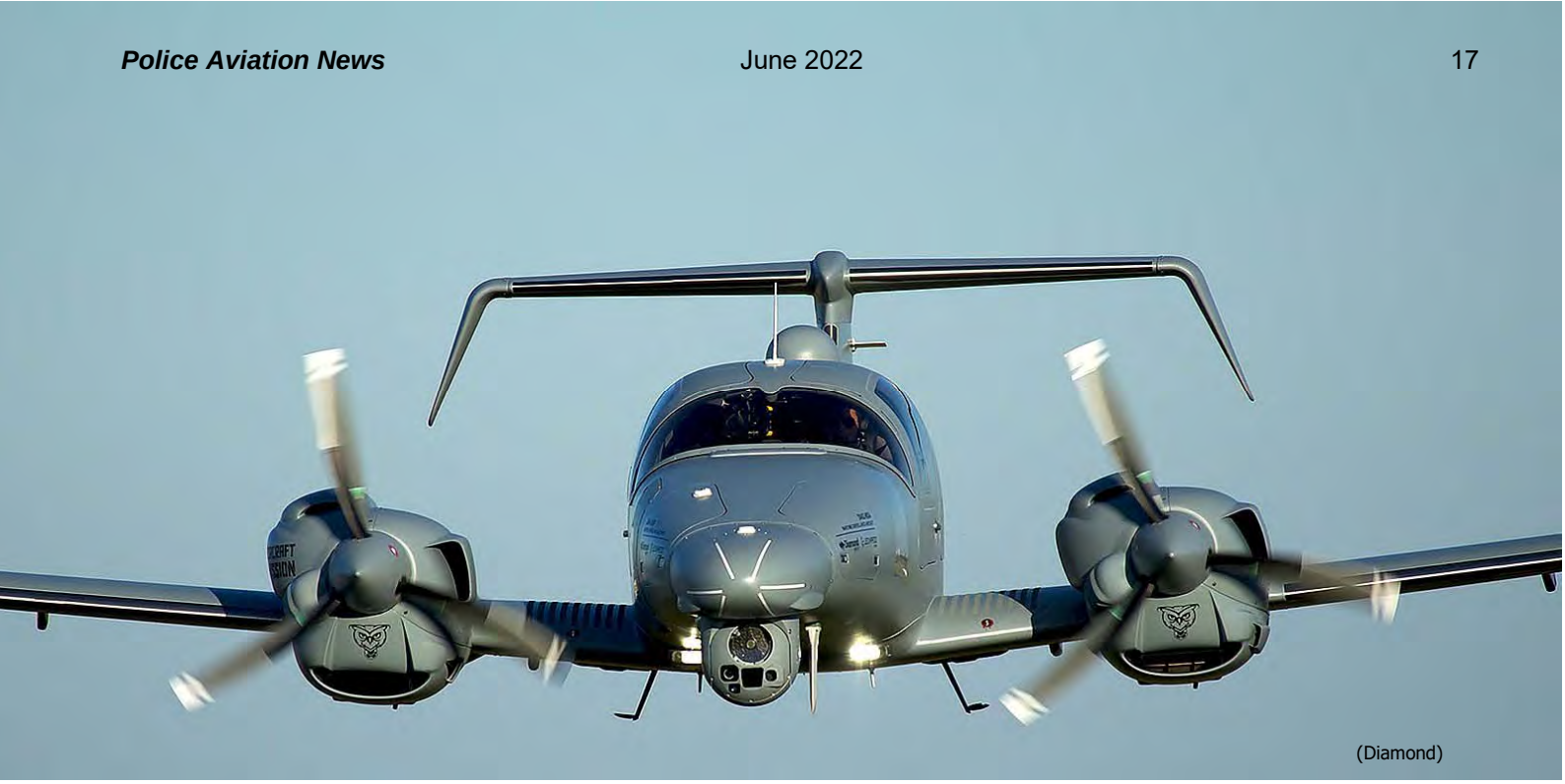


(Diamond)

The DA62 MPP demonstration aircraft will be configured with a standard suite of mission equipment typical of many airborne law enforcement operators. The versatility of the MPP platform also allows it to be a solid performer for littoral maritime patrol, counter drug/illegal immigration and other ISR activities. Additionally, it is a solid performer in commercial aerial survey and pipeline/powerline mission applications.

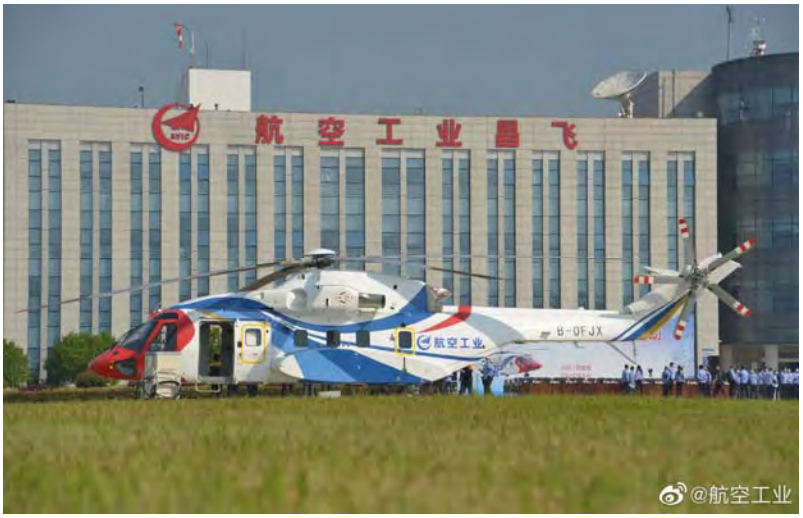
The aircraft will be outfitted with the following mission equipment:

EO/IR sensor TC-300 from Trakka Systems
Makito X4 Encoder from Haivision
HDX-1100 Line-of-Sight Downlink from Vislink
AIMS-ISR Mission Software from CarteNav

China's independently developed **AC313A** large utility civil helicopter successfully conducted its maiden flight last month.

The 13-tonne-class large helicopter conducted the flight at an airport in Jingdezhen, east China's Jiangxi Province, marking a major step forward in the development of China's air emergency rescue system. Registered B-OFJX, it is an updated design based on the earlier Harbin Z-8, itself a development of the 1960s Aerospatiale SA321 Super Frelon. With the completion of the maiden flight, AC313A will enter the flight test phase.

It is expected to receive the airworthiness certification before 2025. (Xinhua)



On May 13 Chuck Surack, founder of **Surack Enterprises**, announced that he has purchased The Enstrom Helicopter Corporation of Menominee, Michigan to rebuild the Enstrom brand into one of the leading American made helicopter manufacturer as it once was.

Surack is widely known for founding Sweetwater Sound, the largest online retailer of music instruments and professional audio equipment, growing it to a $1.5 billion business out of the back of his Volkswagen bus.

Earlier this year it looked as if MidTex Aviation would step in and buy Enstrom, but when they had unexpected problems securing the funding.

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The Putin War is costing Russia dearly and putting even their staunchest allies on the back foot in many ways. Rumour (always a good tool in time of war) has it that even China is looking anew at its aircraft types sourced in Russia. They are probably quietly thankful that so many of their 'home developed' types came from the Aerospatiale/Eurocopter/Airbus mould. Meanwhile the Russian drift towards powering its helicopters with engines from the West is stopped dead in its tracks.

As expected, the previously supper reliant Indian's are now looking within their own nation for new helicopters and not going to a Kamov solution to replace their ancient Cheetah and Chetak (Alouette) fleet.

The recipient of this fortune is to be Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), and the type they are going to use is the new six seat light utility helicopter (LUH). Though designed and developed indigenously, the single-engine LUH is powered by the Ardiden 1U engine from Safran, the French aerospace major. The first LUH will be delivered in August 2022, so it is a design very much in its infancy. It was never originally thought of as a type for mass production in the numbers now proposed. Indian content on their helicopters (the ALH and LUH) was quite low originally but it is growing.

Most of the Himalayas and the inhospitable areas in India are served by Cheetahs and Chetaks manufactured by HAL under a transfer of technology deal with France, inked in 1974. HAL built in excess of 600 Cheetahs and Chetaks; 415 very tired and worn helicopters are still in service. They will be needed for many more years yet. [Week]

Standard Aero has signed an agreement to acquire EB Airfoils a leading repairer and maintainer of aero engine compressor and fan blades and vanes.

EB Airfoils is a privately held company operating from two facilities located in Palm City, Florida. With nearly 20,000 square feet of operations and approximately 50 employees, EB Airfoils' unique capabilities and unequalled expertise, have enabled the company to become one of very few organizations in the world to be granted OEM source approval or source demonstration for the repair and overhaul of fan blades, compressor blades and vanes on leading aero-engine and aero-engine derivative platforms.

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"EB Airfoils expands StandardAero's existing airfoil capabilities at our Cork, Kansas City and Singapore facilities to provide a more comprehensive offering of hot and cold section aerofoils with immediate growth for our component repair capabilities for blades, vanes and other cold section component services to our portfolio," said Russell Ford, Chairman & CEO of StandardAero.

Following its recent acquisition of Global Engine Services (GES), StandardAero has now completed the first stage of building a new Mobile Service Team (MST) to support its customers in the UK and the EMEAI region. Combining the experience of H+S Aviation's UK-based Regional Turbine Centre (RTC) and StandardAero's existing local capabilities in the UK, France and the Netherlands, the MST will deliver expanded on-site engine support to business aviation customers when and where they need it most.

StandardAero's MST teams in the UK and Europe are on standby to deploy around the clock, thus providing the customer with the confidence that they can rely on expert support services for their aircraft when they need it most. Services provided include AOG and technical support, troubleshooting, borescope inspections, engine removal/reinstallation, and line maintenance.

StandardAero's EMEAI MST/RTC team provides support to business aviation customers operating Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6A, PW300, PW500 and JT15D engines, Honeywell TFE731 and HTF7000 engines, and Honeywell GTCP 36-100/150 auxiliary power units (APUs).

ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

30 April 2022 Airbus Helicopters H125 N. San Bernardino County Sheriff's Office. Three children were hurt at a San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department event in Rancho Cucamonga when a downdraft from a helicopter that was landing nearby lifted an occupied bounce house off the ground.

The incident happened Saturday, April 30, at a Sheriff's Department's open house event at its Rancho Cucamonga station at 10510 Civic Center Dr., authorities said in a news release. The event included displays, food and a children's bounce house.

As a sheriff's aviation unit helicopter that was participating in the event was landing on the rooftop helipad nearby, a downdraft from the helicopter caused several canopies and the bounce house to lift off of the ground, authorities said. The helipad was located on top of the roof of the station's three-story building and the bounce house was located in station's parking lot.

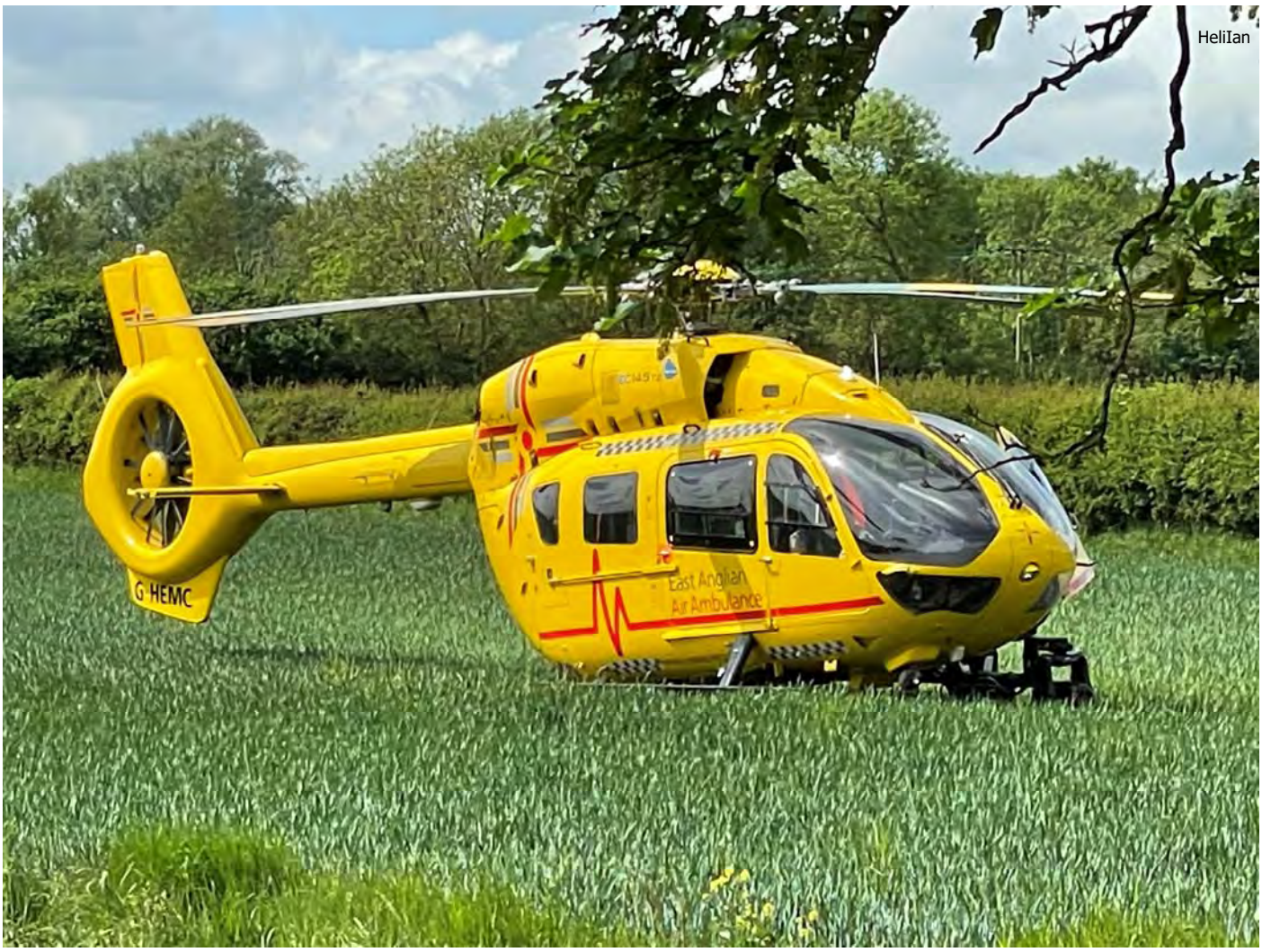
As a result, three children were taken to a nearby hospital for examination and treatment. Another child who was inside the bounce house did not need to be taken to the hospital. It wasn't immediately clear what the extent of the children's injuries were.

1 May 2022 Mil Mi-8 Firefighting helicopter. One person died, six more were injured in a hard landing at an airfield in the city of Mogocha about 60km from the China border. It had been returning from extinguishing a fire near the village of Maklakan, Trans-Baikal Territory, Far Eastern Russia. [Sputnik]

18 May 2022 Bell 407 N118SP Minnesota State Patrol. The co-pilot was hurt after he was struck by a duck that went through the left side windshield of the aircraft returning St. Paul from a law enforcement call. To Wabasha County. The pilot was able to land the aircraft safely at St. Paul Downtown Airport, where that patrol bases its flight operations. The injured co-pilot was wearing his helmet and had his helmet-shield down when he was hit.

18 May 2022 Airbus Helicopters H125 N851AL. Air ambulance of AirLink. Four crewmembers were injured – two of them seriously – when an AirLink helicopter crash-landed at the Christmas Valley Airport, Oregon, USA. The helicopter was arriving in windy conditions to pick up a patient beside a road but it landed hard, and the helicopter rolled onto its left side and was substantially damaged with the tail boom detached. [Twitter]

19 May 2022 Airbus Helicopters H145 G-HEMC East Anglia Air Ambulance. Aircraft grounded with a technical issue in a field of crops near Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire UK [Helian]



23 May 2022 Pilatus PC-12 N911MN Air Ambulance of Avera Careflight Sioux Falls, South Dakota, USA. A flight to pick up a patient, landing Runway 12 at Eureka, SD (3W8) approximately a half hour prior to sunset. Only moments after touchdown at a speed of approximately 70-75 knots, a deer was running across the runway from the pilot's left to right, and the airplane struck the deer with the propeller. Damage to the propeller caused vibration noticed by the medical crew in back but otherwise were not aware of what exactly happened. The more experienced Paramedic noticed this to be unusual and instructed the Nurse to brace. The pilot successfully maintained control and brought the aircraft to a stop on the runway and shut the engine down. No injuries were reported. All occupants exited the aircraft safely by normal means. [Concern]

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SAFETY

Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg told Congress that the issues surrounding the potential interference with aircraft radar altimeters and the full rollout of 5G cell service won't all be fixed by the July deadline set in an agreement with Verizon and AT&T. He also said he doesn't expect the Cabinet-level standoff that happened in January as the industry moved forward with the rollout. After White House intervention, the FAA, FCC and the telecoms agreed to a plan to limit 5G service near airports while the technical details of preventing the interference with the altimeters is worked out.

Buttigieg told Congress that all parties are working toward a calm solution "largely because we have much better dialogue and collaboration, not just among regulators but among industries, and have been directly engaging with the airlines, the aviation equipment manufacturers and with the telecom carriers to make sure that we're on a better path." There have only been a few scattered reports of 5G interference since the network went live despite dire predictions by airlines and technical groups. There were significant cancellations in Washington State but virtually all were resolved. [AvWeb]

A preliminary South African air accident report has been issued on a previously unrecorded event involving a Leonardo helicopter air ambulance.

Two paramedics aboard a AW119 Koala helicopter ZT-RZS found themselves careering in circles on a hospital roof and vacated the aircraft in life threatening circumstances.

The pair hurled themselves out of the Agusta onto Paarl Hospital's helipad — one injuring himself in the process — while the pilot battled to control the pirouetting helicopter.

Once the pilot shut down the engine, he also leapt out of the aircraft while the rotor blades were still spinning.

Details of the drama at 1am on February 19, have appeared in the preliminary serious incident report issued by the SA Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) on their web pages. The report says tests have been conducted on the seven-year-old single-engine aircraft involved provides little progress in finding out what caused its problems.

The 37-year-old pilot and paramedics aboard the helicopter were preparing to fly to Cape Town International Airport when the incident happened. When the main rotor approached the speed required for take-off the helicopter abruptly experienced violent yawing motions. After a while the two paramedics decided to disembark the helicopter voluntarily without alerting the pilot about their intention. Meanwhile the pilot closed the throttle and slowly reduced the yaw rate.

The pilot managed to get the helicopter to ground idle. He then shut down the engine and switched off all power.

UNMANNED

At its Annual Media Conference, and in its 70th year, Swiss Air-Rescue Rega presented its further developed drone system and a new version of the Rega app. The Rega drone, which is equipped with various sensors, is deployed when poor visibility prevents the Rega search helicopter from being used. The new version of the tried-and-tested Rega app is now even more user-friendly, enables an injured person to be located more quickly, and thus helps to save lives.

Rega's drone system and the Rega app are just two examples of how the operator continues to search for ways to further improving its air rescue services for the benefit of the Swiss population.

If there is good reason to believe that a person has gone missing and is probably in urgent need of help, Rega's Operations Centre initiates a rescue search. To do this, it has various resources at its disposal. A search flight with the nearest Rega helicopter and a crew who are familiar with the area is a sensible and swift initial measure in daylight if, for instance, the planned route of a missing hiker is known. For search flights in the dark, Rega has a search helicopter that is fitted, among other things, with an Airborne Technologies developed IR/EOS multi-sensor search system [right], a highly sensitive thermal imaging camera and a mobile phone location device. The Rega search helicopter is on standby for search missions around the clock. If, for example, poor visibility prevents a helicopter from

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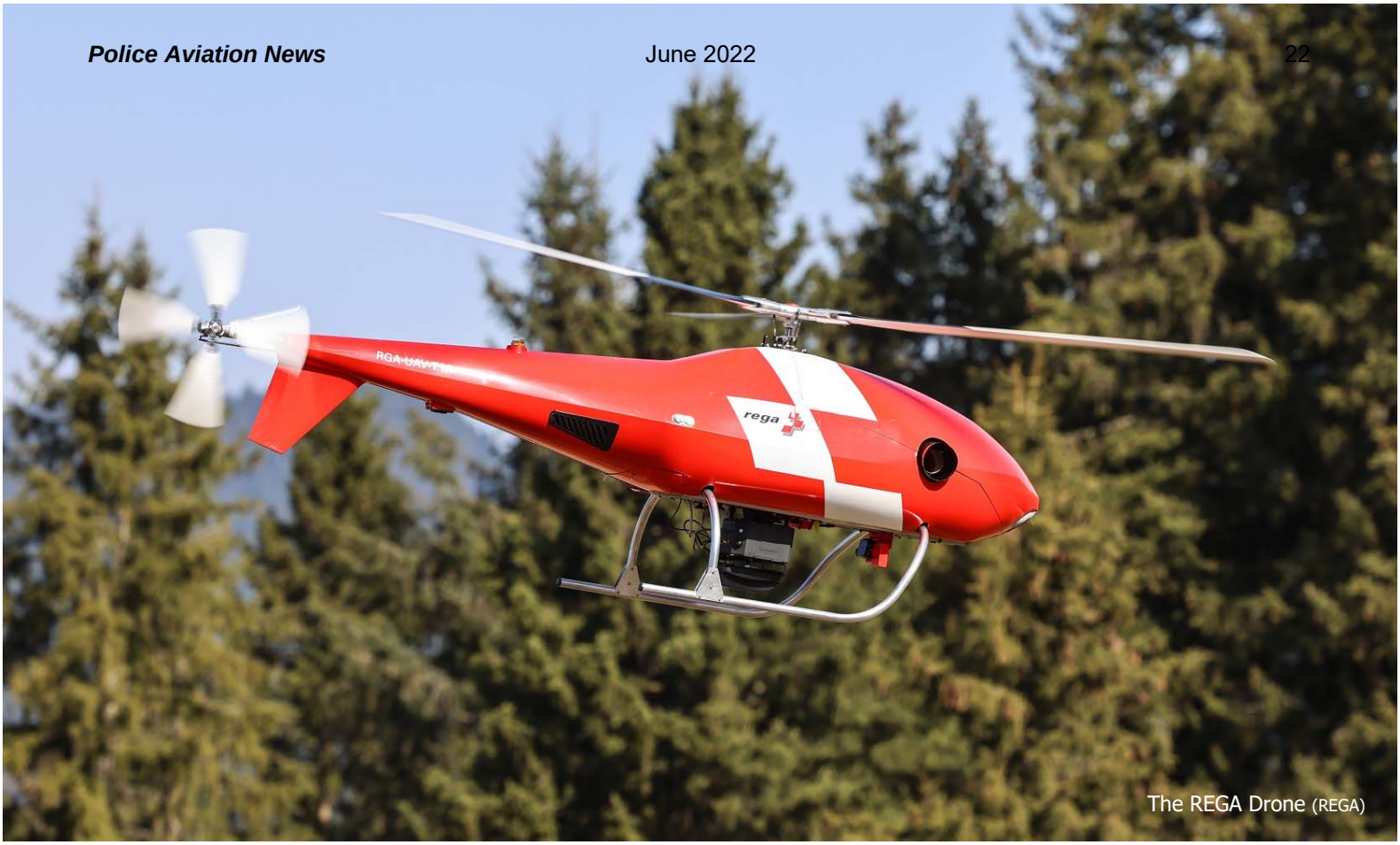


The REGA Drone (REGA)

taking to the air, the Rega drone can be deployed along with ground-based mountain rescuers from the Swiss Alpine Club SAC.

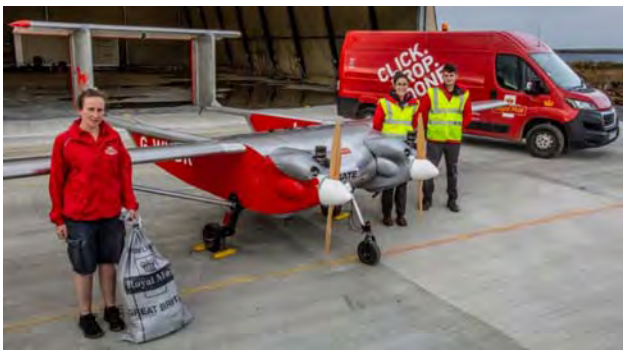
Over the last few years, the drone system has continually been developed. After conducting comprehensive tests under all kinds of conditions and subsequently finetuning the individual components, since autumn 2021 the Rega Operations Centre has been able to deploy the drone – which bears the designation "RGA-UAV-T1A" – for search operations. The drone can autonomously scan large search areas and is equipped with various sensors. With the airborne mobile phone location device developed by Centum Research & Technology in Spain as Lifeseeker, the drone is able to locate a mobile phone with an accuracy of a few metres, even if there is no mobile phone coverage in the search area.

In addition, a human detection system was designed for the drone. Thanks to a self-learning algorithm, this system can automatically detect persons in the terrain on the real-time images of the TI camera.

The Rega app was launched back in 2011 and was the first emergency app in Switzerland that could be used to transmit location data to an emergency call centre. Since then, it has been downloaded over 1.6 million times and has proved its worth in thousands of rescue missions. The greatest advantage when raising the alarm via the Rega app is that the caller's location is automatically transmitted to Rega's Operations Centre.

In 2021 Rega had a record year with the Operations Centre at Zurich Airport organised a total of 18,017 missions, 10.7% more than in the previous year - around 50 missions per day.

Despite the apparent logistical nightmare of running minimal load postal services out to the islands off Scotland the Post Office are to expand their trial of the technology.



Royal Mail has announced plans to increase its use of drones for deliveries with the creation of 50 new "postal drone routes" over the next three years.

Under a partnership with logistics drone company Windracers, and subject to Civil Aviation Authority approval, the move will provide faster and more convenient services for remote communities, Royal Mail said.

Drones will also help further reduce Royal Mail's carbon emissions and improve the reliability of island mail services. It currently uses ferries, conventional aircraft and land-based delivery which can be affected by bad weather.

The first routes for the new service include the Isles of Scilly, Shetland Islands, Orkney Islands and the Hebrides.

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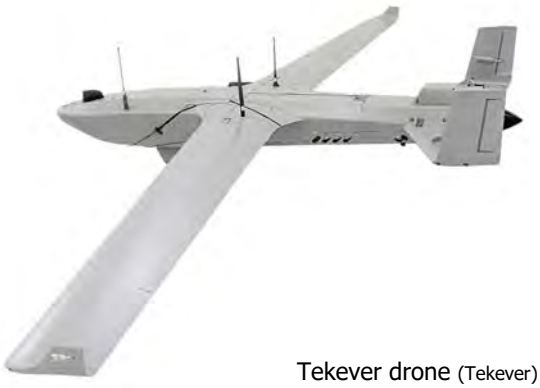
Phenix Solutions has completed a significant FAA milestone to continue their Type Certification (TC) journey for the Ultra 2XL Remote Piloted UAS. Recently, the FAA accepted and reviewed Phenix's Project Specific Certification Plan (PSCP) and provided the project number TC17844LA-R to the Ultra 2XL program.

The goal for the Ultra 2XL continues to be FAA TC, a status which allows operators to access the safety advantages and enhanced performance of the Ultra 2XL to execute commercial operations.

The Phenix team is comprised of aviation professionals with multiple decades of experience working with the FAA and Foreign Aviation Authorities certifying many products for worldwide use. website: www.phenixuas.com

TEKEVER, the European leader in drone-based Maritime Surveillance, and the US-based company Precision Integrated Programs (Precision), provider of UAV solutions and services to civil and government customers worldwide, announced a strategic partnership aimed at taking TEKEVER's Intelligence-as-a-Service capabilities to the US market. Precision will support US and International customers throughout the entire service lifecycle, including operations, training, maintenance, and commercial support to the family of drone products.



Tekever drone (Tekever)

Precision Integrated Programs offers transformative solutions to the world's toughest challenges and missions. Where a one-size-fits-all strategy falls short, Precision diversifies to match the machine to the mission and people to the project. Integration goes beyond technology — Precision tailors its most valuable assets to deliver a modernized, personalized, and more effective solution. Their website is at: www.flyprecision.com/unmanned.

PEOPLE

Twenty-five years ago Edition 4 of Police Aviation News featured a pristine white Eurocopter AS355N G-LCON operated by the Lancashire Police Air Support Unit. The recently operational unit was then under the control of Inspector Chris Weigh.

Inspector Steve Fitzgerald and the AS355N G-LCON (Lancashire Police)

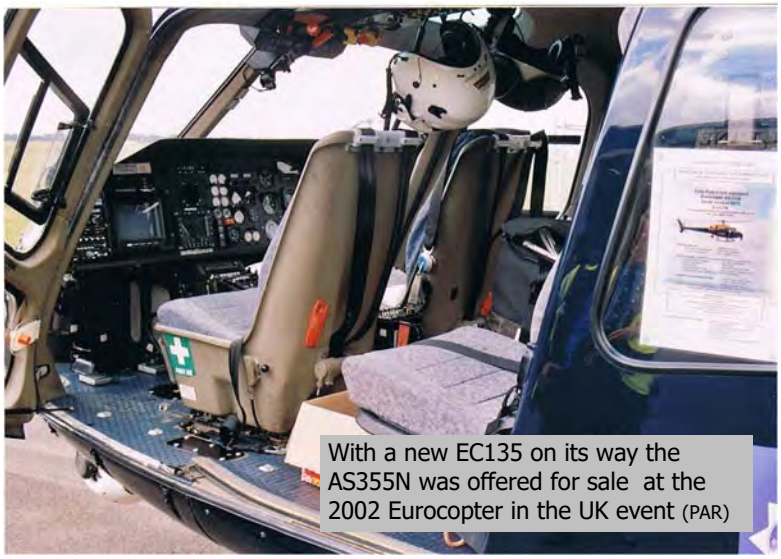
By the time the first UEO stepped aside at the turn of the century the white finish had given way to the new and now familiar blue and yellow 'conspicuity.' At the time there were still mixed feeling on the colour change.

The new UEO was Steve Fitzgerald a young police inspector, newly given charge of the unit based at the British Aerospace Warton airfield. It was to be his first task as Unit Executive Officer, but the last.

A few days ago, the Cayman Compass ran a short video marking the retirement of the first Unit Executive Officer of the Cayman Islands Air Support Unit – the same Steve Fitzgerald—if a little older and wiser.

The retirement marks the end of a 49 year journey in policing and some major highlights in police aviation since Steve joined Lancashire Police as a 16 year old cadet in 1973, the passing of 49 years seems to him to be a good marker to bow out on.

During his decade in UK police aviation he took the UK air unit through an upgrade process that brought into service an EC135T1 to replace an AS355N ordered in 1994 and sold on the old airframe. It was good grounding for what was to come.


With a new EC135 on its way the AS355N was offered for sale at the 2002 Eurocopter in the UK event (PAR)

An additional task was being nominated as the lead on introducing the then new Tetra digital communications – Airwave – into aviation. It was a it like the blind leading the blind but the many problems were overcome in time.

It is fair to say that a very complex task went significantly better than its replacement, the ESN Emergency Services Network, has done to date. Perhaps it was because Tetra was introduced locally in Lancashire and then rolled out to the nation after it was proved to work where ESN is being rolled out Nationwide even before it is proven. It seems that no-one really knows how the air component of ESN is supposed to work even now – five years after it was supposed to be in service.

His final years of UEO at Lancashire were shared with being a Specialist Project Manager with the now defunct National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA) working on the Tetra task.

A period of consultancy took him to the Abu Dhabi Police for a year and a half and into 2009 advising on their plans to introduce the AW139. Late in 2008 he was also drawn into emerging plans for the Cayman Islands to have a police helicopter.

The September 2009 edition of PAN announced that a long drawn out project designed to take a former East Midlands [UK] police Eurocopter EC135T1 to the Cayman Islands to operate as a police aircraft was imminent, two years after the aircraft was purchased.

The Eurocopter, by then registered VP-CPS, was expected to be delivered to the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service (RCIPS) and in service that year but events conspired against that. .It was stuck in the nearest Eurocopter facility in Louisiana, USA where it had been for some months. There were a few arguments and a fair bit of finger pointing over the choice of aircraft. Not only was the EC135T1 no longer

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good enough for UK operation it became clear that the design on high skids was not able to be fitted with flotation gear and yet the role of the aircraft was decidedly over-water. The helicopter was chosen primarily on cost basis and that it was role equipped with police equipment.

The almost stalemate situation was turned around by Steve Fitzgerald using his knowledge of the helicopter type and operating police air support in the UK model during his years with the Lancashire Air Support Unit. Compromise was the primary focus.

He became the Unit Executive Officer for the implementation of the Cayman Islands Air Operations Unit working under a UK style PAOC. He led on the entire implementation, the aircraft, unit set up, PAOC application, maintenance and pilot selection.

The element that lay at the centre of the furore - the T1 autopilot restriction that was one of the technical deficiencies that lead to the type being removed from UK police service - was not be implemented on the grounds that weather conditions and terrain in the Cayman are very different to the UK environment. The perceived problem over the lack of emergency flotation gear was mitigated by the type being twin engine. It was decided that the helicopter would still be able to undertake 95% of the predicted mission profile.

The aircraft it was replacing was an AS350 single so there were still capability gains. For an aircraft selected by a panel that included the former Commissioner Stuart Kernohan and no aviation expert it was not an inspired choice but on balance to was not a disaster.

*L*ater that year Steve Fitzgerald gave a presentation on air support in the region at the first PAvCon Police Aviation Conference in Woodford, Essex.

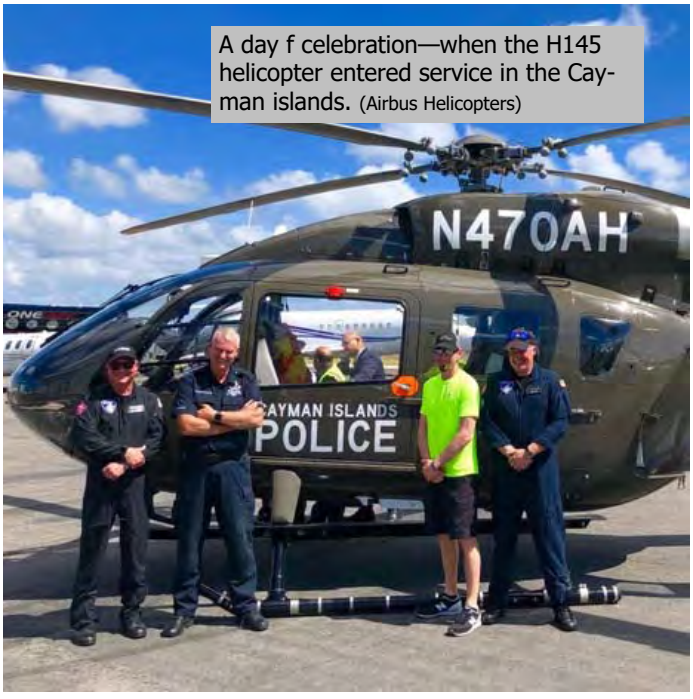
Twelve years have passed since the new adventure started with Steve signing up with the Government of the Cayman Islands to improve their police air support capacity.

As recounted in numerous stories in back issues of PAN – mostly fed from the Cayman Compass – the development of air support in the islands over the coming years was a difficult road.

In a relatively short time however the old craft proved its worth well beyond the original law enforcement role and found itself acting in the role of search and rescue and air ambulance and becoming much loved in the islands.

Its success was such that plans to replace it were well in hand to replace it with a modern H145 helicopter. The move was financed by money from the Cayman and the British Governments. Thus, proving that money flowed to Cayman police aviation far better than it did UK policing. The difference was that Cayman was overlooked by a different ministry than a belligerent UK Home Office.

In the event the move forward was precipitated by an accident to the EC135 that saw it damaged beyond economical repair. The rest is history, and the unit is now operating two role equipped H145s that will infuture be managed by former Police Sergeant Neil Mohammed, who has served as Training Officer and Deputy Head of RCIPS Air Operations since March 2010, he has now been promoted to the rank of Police Inspector.



A day f celebration—when the H145 helicopter entered service in the Cayman islands. (Airbus Helicopters)

“I was proud of my days at Lancashire, many achievements. The fact that I believed in and got Tetra to work allowed NPAS and the borderless policing to work.”

I still remain passionate about the air and what can be achieved. I did dip my toe in the water to try and get back to NPAS about five years ago, to be e-mailed a rejection that they could not security vet me as I had not lived in the UK for more than three years. I only get to work with the US security services here. Glad I stayed here, as am handing over one of the most advanced and capable units in the region.

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MOVE ALONG THERE

Returning to the story of launch of the AW169 at the Farnborough Air Show in 2010, and I apologise to those that have heard this many times before, there was the unfortunate case of the personalisation of the new AgustaWestland in the marks of Eurocopter.

Both the AW169 mock up and the EC135P2 G-POLA featured a neat yellow on blue checkerboard pattern on the tail fin. The stylists of the Italian manufacturer had long noted that most UK police aircraft of the time sported black on white checks and had assumed that the proliferation of the checks on many police aircraft at the time reflected the checks of the police flat caps and elsewhere. Yellow on blue was of course brought about by the new conspicuity colours.

Earlier checker patterns of black on white were less obvious (PAR)

With being new to the UK police market the Italian stylists failed to notice that MD police helicopters of the time did not feature similar checker strips.

What they were was in effect a personal signature of, David Lewis, the McAlpine Helicopters/Eurocopter salesman at the time [1988-2016]. Almost every sale he made to police featured 'his' checker band, it looked good and in keeping so few purchasers turned it down.

So, the AW169 was launched in an effort to unseat Eurocopter [aka Airbus Helicopters] whilst inadvertently acknowledging their rivals signature!

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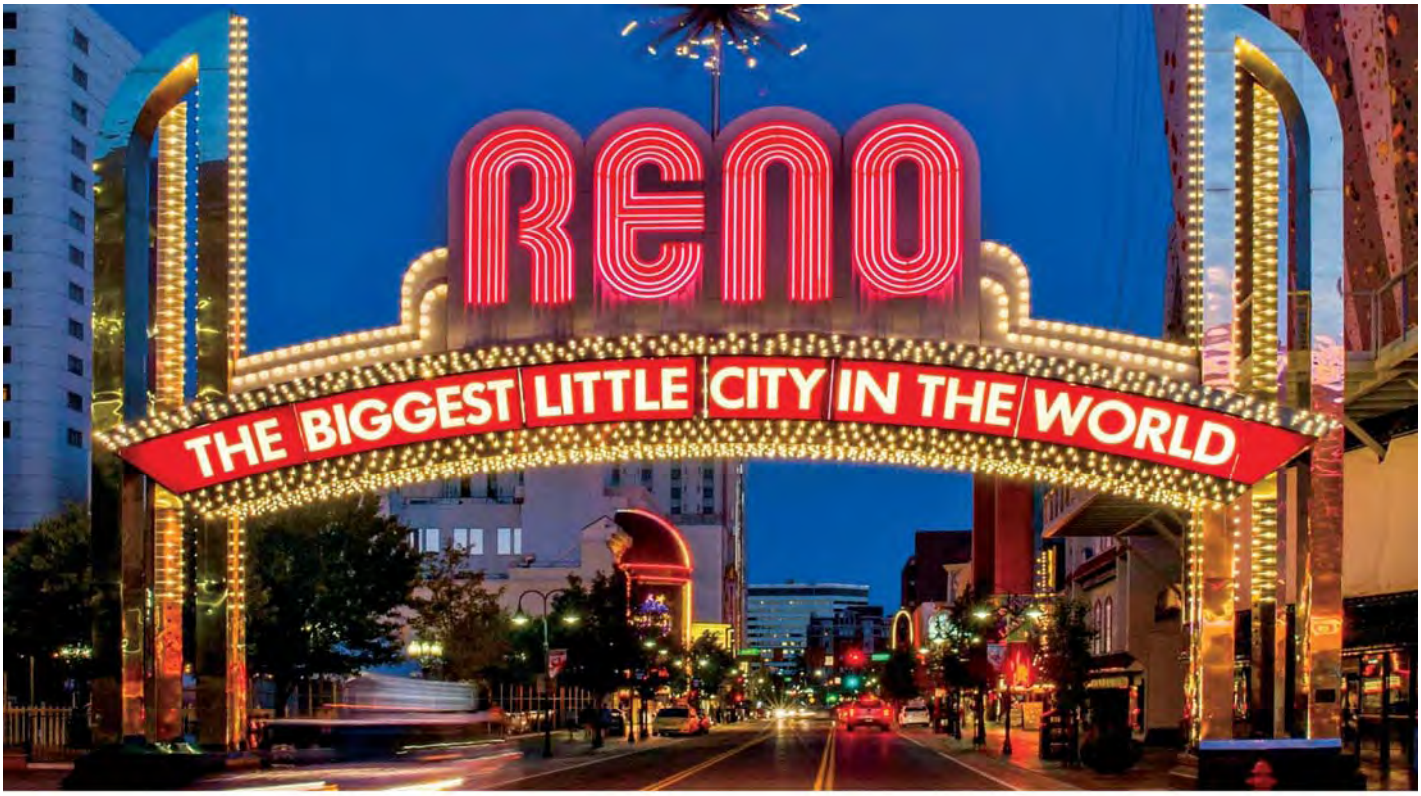

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APSCON *Unmanned* 2022

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RENO, NV | JULY 25-27

The Airborne Public Safety Association (APSA) proudly presents the best in manned and unmanned public safety aviation education and networking, all in one location! APSCON 2022 and APSCON *Unmanned* (formerly Public Safety Drone EXPO) will take place concurrently in Reno, Nevada the week of July 25-30. Conducted as separate educational events with a shared exhibit hall, you now have access to industry-leading public safety aviation training, products and services in one location no matter what type of aircraft you operate. Detailed information for both events, including registration, is on our website. See you in Reno!

To learn more, visit publicsafetyaviation.org

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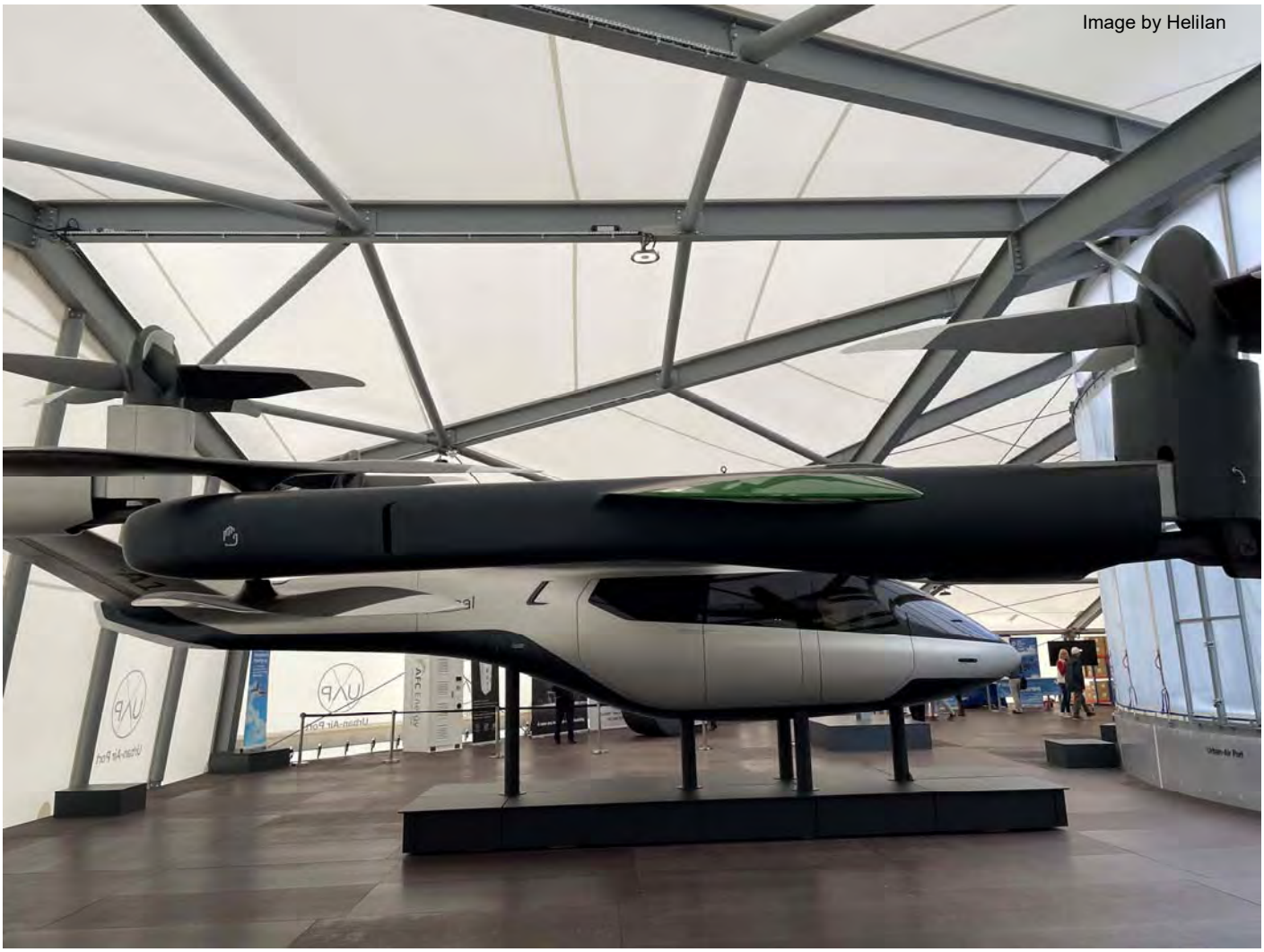

Image by Helilan

Urban-Air Port Limited promotes itself as a designer, developer, manufacturer, seller and operator of ground, air and digital infrastructure for new forms of sustainable urban air transport such as air taxis and autonomous delivery drones. Its mission is to remove the largest single constraint to sustainable air mobility – ground infrastructure – In order to create a zero-emission-mobility ecosystem that will significantly cut congestion and air pollution from passenger and cargo transport.

Last month they held an open door event to promote their vision in Coventry inhabited with a wide range of drone and air taxi models and concepts in a large portable structure—Air One. The partners in the project included the West Midlands Police drone team. In its on-line promotional footage it was introduced as a “fully functioning Vertiport” although it was somewhat short of fully functioning vertical take off craft.

The promotion of this technology moves on but the appearance of working hardware remains safely at a distance todays pilots will be glad to know.

Image by Helilan