

Police Aviation News

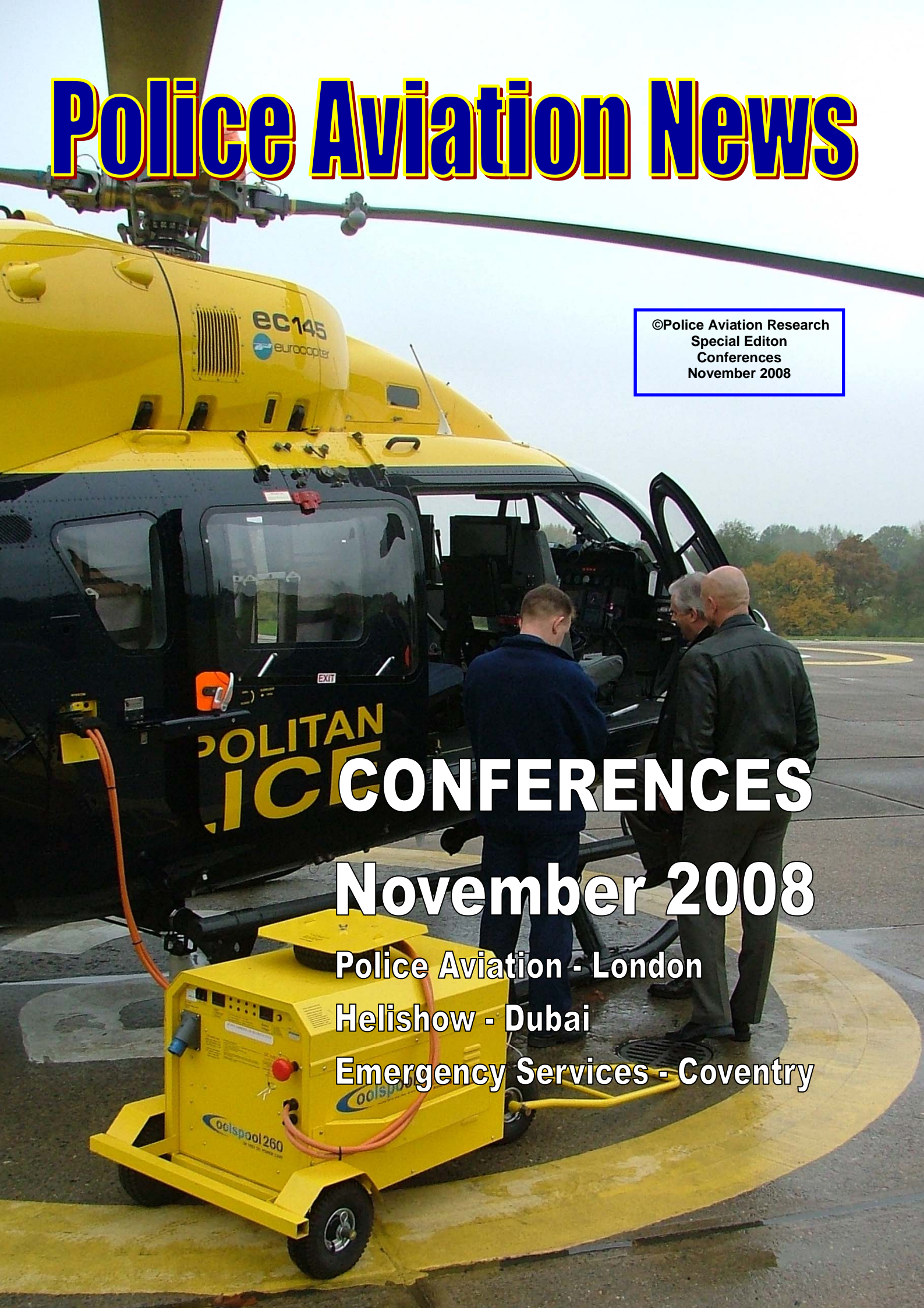
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Special Edition
Conferences
November 2008

CONFERENCES November 2008

Police Aviation - London

Helishow - Dubai

Emergency Services - Coventry



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EDITORIAL

This issue covers three events taking place in the last month. As ever the Editor feels a little unclear he can give an even handed appreciation of the Police Aviation Conference because he is so close to it but hopefully the reader will take into account that relationship when reading the report!

The other two reports are appreciations of the third edition of the Dubai Helishow organised by Mediac and an all too brief visit to the Emergency Services Show at Stoneleigh. Each contrasts in their content and their setting.

Bryn Elliott



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RECENT EVENTS

POLICE AVIATION CONFERENCE

November 5-6 Olympia, London.



2008 Conference line-up—some of the attendees: Bill Proberts Officer and pilot USA West Coast, Ken Solósky Chief Pilot East Coast USA, John Osmond, Industry UK and The Chairman Gareth Davies, Industry Germany.

For a brief few days in early November the 2008 Police Aviation Conference organised by the Shephard Group was the centre of attention at Olympia, London. As promised the event included another varied programme of interesting presentations from an international range of emergency services professionals drawn from Europe and the Americas. The presentations are but a part of the event, the greatest gain is from professionals speaking with their counterparts from different nations outside the conference room. Having made the effort to get to London those that were unable to stay beyond the presentations were perhaps the biggest losers in the whole process.

Most speakers are signed up months ahead and obviously their personal and business circumstances change through that period and they have to cry-off late in the process which causes some difficulties. There were times when it looked like circumstances might set aside significant sections of the programme but as ever the programme survived pretty much intact through to the end.

The Keynote Address to the gathered delegates was given by Chief Constable Bernard Hogan-Howe of Merseyside Police. He is the Chairman of the ACPO Aviation Sub-Committee and gave some insight into the official thinking behind the broader picture of UK police air support. There were no spectacular revelations in his prepared speech but it is clear that there remains an officially preferred move towards 'Regionalisation' of air support resources under the stewardship of ACPO.

This year was the first in which Canada and Switzerland gave presentations – and the contrasts were very real. Chief Superintendent Jacques Desilets, a non-flyer, is in charge of the RCMP Air Services Branch and is in many ways the equivalent of Chief Constable Hogan-Howe. Unfortunately they never met due to the tight schedule the latter was on but through the conference and the visits he made to UK units the RCMP officer gained important insights into operations in Europe. Felix Walz from Switzerland was involved in air support in



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his country – such as it is – in the past but is currently running Zurich Airport and overseeing the direct employment of personnel employed in passenger security and screening, a unique police viewpoint. His was one of those presentations that was at a total tangent to the experience of many of the delegates but it found its mark with at least one member of the audience. He was from an airport in the UK

A core series of presentations followed on from a theme set in the last conference in Den Haag, The Netherlands, last year. These further views on Frontex operations in the Mediterranean Sea moved on from Malta's viewpoint to take in the German and Italian aspects. This year is likely to be the last visit of a stalwart of these last few Conferences, Commander Gunter Carloff of the German Federal Police. He retires early next year.

Commercial presentations are seen as a problem at these events... often they can be too blatant and that does not go down too well with the delegates, but new technology necessarily has to come from industry in one form or another. In this vein were a number of presentations including one involving a direct downlink of images from a Diamond DA42 flying over Austria, presentations on a variety of light and medium UAV's and aircraft management systems. None of these would leap into mind as subjects in the forefront of the consciousness of the average police air support member, let alone on their shopping list, but bringing in non core subjects can hopefully raise the interest in the conference experience.

Presentations that take the attendee outside the normal comfort zone is what the Editor sees the Police Aviation Conference being about and bringing the military French Gendarmerie to a largely civilian audience is not that far removed from a keynote address from the head of the air ambulance operations in the UK. The latter may appear to be 'outside of the box' but the clear links between the financial support offered to some UK police air operations by ambulance charities with hopefully reconnect those thoughts.

Conferences such as these suffer from a flaw in that they must end and someone must pick up the short straw of the 'Graveyard' slot where the speaker addresses perhaps a handful of people. Until the last moment that unenviable speaking position fell upon the broad shoul-



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ders of John Osmond with his warning tome on the pitfalls of buying an aircraft from an OEM. As last time there was mention of his trusty Volvo that seemed to be well equipped for service as standard when it arrived from Volvo the OEM concerned and inevitably offers few worries related to its scheduled maintenance at the OEM's local representative. There is a vast contrast between John's Volvo and the service offered by most if not all helicopter OEM's and he offered some guiding words or warning. Some things cannot be avoided but being aware can reduce the pain of ownership.

That went down well and fortunately for John it was not destined to be the ultimate in Graveyard speeches for Michael Will from Goodrich Sensors 'volunteered' for an even later position. Goodrich were late arrivals and this was a commercial slot – the ultimate in Graveyard speaking that invariably attracts an empty room as the delegates recall an urgent train journey. But this was not to be. True the room had thinned out but it is the absentees who should feel a sense of loss. The Goodrich slot dovetailed into John Osmond's Volvo thread like a well rehearsed battle plan. But neither was aware of the others talk, conferences do that sometimes. The result was unexpected and welcome as Michael Will informed the audience about 'Moving from Health & Usage Monitoring Systems to Vehicle Health Management Systems and preparing for Condition Based Maintenance' – quite a dry sounding proposal! But the core of that item was that Goodrich is developing a system that offers a clear ability to improve serviceability by way of Condition Based Maintenance [CBM]. The problem is that helicopter OEM's are not welcoming the capability. Each of them has too much to lose. They sell aircraft at a keen price but the ongoing profit line is spares provision. CBM promises to erode that profit margin in keeping parts in service significantly longer. In many ways it takes the industry back to those heady days when the OEM's were launching new generation airframes with 'unlimited' life cycles until the certification authorities set them back to putting an arbitrary life on their moving parts.

Now the audience is aware perhaps questions will be asked about when OEM's are going to join with Goodrich and grasp a chance to return to those heady days that they themselves proposed.

So the 2008 Police Aviation Conference closed on a real high point of being thought provoking – exactly what it is supposed to have been - regardless of the actual outcome of the CBM issue.

Although this was an event centred on a hall in central London many of the speakers and delegates travelling in from Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Spain, Switzerland and the USA found time to visit air units near to the Capital. The main recipients of these 'colleague visits' were Chiltern, Essex and the Metropolitan Police. Although the latter pair were presenting in London a 'hands on' visit to see the technology in action is always an added bonus. The Editor took two of the speakers to Boreham, Essex and Lippitts Hill but the latter took in a number of ad-hoc visitors as well and I need to add the profuse thanks that each of the speakers expressed at the event to their hosts for their time and trouble.



Officer Bill Proberts in the Metropolitan Police EC145

Beyond that I wish to add my personal thanks for the effort expended by each of the two dozen speakers – mentioned and unmentioned – in making this a truly memorable and I believe successful event.

To that I add thanks to the 'sick man' of the event, the Chairman Gareth Davies. He hid his streaming cold well and acted as ever as the glue that welded the speakers into one really great show.



Alongside the conference was an exhibition that brought forth some interesting highlights. BAE Systems were promoting the Herti UAV that had featured in their presentation and added material on another couple of ideas they have on a very expensive twin-engine UAV [Mantis] and a lighter than air option.

ECS were announcing sales to the French Gendarmerie for their EC135 fleet, Wescam an upgraded system to the Metropolitan Police and Police Aviation Services were showing the now 'acceptable' Trakkabeam searchlight and Sonix PA systems that were until recently being treated as something of an unknown quantity. They are now seen to have proven their worth in UK police aviation.

The most questionable item was some marketing by AgustaWestland and their AW139 medium-twin. The company stand at the event featured a large graphic of the AW139 featuring it in Metropolitan Police colours flying over central London and this was backed up by leaflets in the same vein. The company are aiming at the UK emergency services market but no

So is to continue to contract in maintenance provision an easy option? Or a best option?

- It would certainly keep my workload down
- 7 years of contracted service experience
- Some good service and some not so good
- Probably quite a common experience for most Contract Managers or Operators



Paul Marrion



Essex Police ASU

Although the speakers and what they have to say are important Police Aviation Conferences are as much about meeting with fellow practitioners in aviation as the content of the presentations themselves.

This year saw a good spread of presentations, some fine food and wine [thanks to Boeing] and some interesting visits to air support units.

Health Warning

- Cars are not helicopters
- If you think any of this applies to your company, that is your own choice
- Customers are always right and are seldom able to prove it
- These are my own views



John Osmond Helimetrics Ltd 2001



Gala Dinner



-one seemed totally aware about it enough to make an official announcement. The type is not seen as replacing the new Eurocopter EC145s in London but more complementing them with a larger capacity craft suitable for special missions and the movement of such as firearms teams. Whether there would be money for such an ideal even in the wider context of a regional solution to air support appears unlikely but it was a talking point in the show.

Within days it was off to warmer climes for the Editor, complete with Gareth's cold of course, to report on the Dubai Helishow..



In the Conference a light hearted wager was placed between fixed wing protagonists and those of a more rotary wing leaning as to the likely pace of unmanned aircraft developments. Many doubted that unmanned aircraft would make operations in time for the 2012 Olympics in London.

DUBAI HELISHOW

11-13 November 2008

In its third bi-annual appearance this is another of those shows where initial thoughts are that that it would be better to call it off. For usually busy sales staff on the stands working the event is difficult with seemingly empty halls and a small static. When even the busiest exhibitors spend hours chatting to fellow exhibitors it is great for mutual understanding but daunting when no business is being generated. In fairness similar conditions of sparse visitor presences can be seen at the average police aviation conference after the delegates return to their seats in the hall so this is not unique.

But, as is often found with these quiet events the low footfall belies the real worth of the event to the exhibitor. For some this Dubai based helicopter showcase is a little goldmine in a growing market. Most exhibitors will be back next time early in November 2010 as a reflection that the Gulf region is ever so slowly coming out of the dark ages and embracing aviation and helicopters.

With access to air space in most Middle East countries severely restricted the numbers of helicopter aware people in these countries is understandably low. The moves to open this air space are perhaps taking place at a slower rate than predicted but, as reported later, there are clear moves in this direction. The lack of an industry results in low numbers of locals directly employed and similarly reflects in those interested enough to increase [non commercial] footfall. Even nominally busy shows are not full of buyers.

For the future the great unknown is the credit crunch. In recent days there have been announcements of more and more manufacturers local representatives setting up shop, but that does not ensure them business. A few weeks ago Dubai thought itself proofed against the worst of the financial problems as it expanded its leisure region image with a cushion of oil revenues but it is becoming very expensive for Europeans and Americans and the imme-



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diate future is less sure.

Recent reports in the region state that its hotel rooms are among the most expensive in the world. I can second that. It does not even pass the 'Mars bar test' – where all commodities are judged by value on the relative cost of the well known confectionary bar – a 50p Mars bar cost the equivalent of £1 in the show and £3 in my hotel room. Some contrast.

The Helishow is not about entertainment or the cost of surviving in town, it is about selling goods and services into what is expected to be a lucrative medium term market. Meanwhile the sellers are getting themselves known for that day when hopefully the level of business grows. Companies might have to grit their teeth a little to stay in town to say 'I was here' as they wait for the day that the market truly opens up. Not this year for most, maybe 2010, maybe 2012.

That said the situation is improving and it might yet be that this region is the only one likely to have ready money through the financial slump.

The Helishow might have been small and quiet compared with a Middle East Business Aviation event scheduled a week later promising some seventy aircraft on the flight line but sources claim that many of these are really 'dumped' airframes for sale from the struggling Western World. The Helishow has shuffled its stands and backdrops but it is really not a great deal bigger than last time, there have been newcomers and some that did not return last time. The hall is 'spacious' with plenty of room for growth.

This years new participants included **Avicorp** - Middle East, **Bayards Aluminium Constructives BV**- The Netherlands, **Becker** – UAE, **cue-Sim** – UK, **Bristow Helicopters** – UK, **Bristow Academy**- USA, **Honeywell** –USA/UK, **GENA Systems** – Austria, **Industria de Turbo Propulsores** – Spain, **Onboard Systems** – USA, **Pall Corporation**-France, **Priority 1 Air Rescue** – USA, **Simplex Manufacturing Company**- USA and **Tulsa Turbine Engines & Aircraft** – USA.

The show had its absentees, the empty stands of no show companies including that of Rotor & Wing magazine who produced the excellent official guide but then failed to stop by or even get their regular magazine to Dubai for distribution.

Not everyone went away happy at the outcome of this event, but it is pretty clear that some exceeded their expectations in turning those rare customer encounters into business. Some first-timers thought they would never make a break through but on the whole most went away clutching the all important contact names that could lead to them being turned into customers.

The outside static remains small and thoughts that it might have been better housed in the cavernous and near empty hall alongside the AW139, LongRanger and MD902 have apparently been taken up by the organisers having already decided that is the way they will go for 2010, a move indoors. The range of airframes this year was similar to those attending in 2006 but that is simply a reflection of the current state of the local market.

Again the star position in the hall went to the **MD** stand and its impressive looking green 902 Explorer air ambulance. Although the onward progress of opening the airways in the region is falling increasingly to this type I seriously doubt it should hold a 'star' accolade twice in a row! Once again the MD stand was in the perfect position – dominating the hall – and all luck to them for that.



Burj Dubai—At 688m the tallest building in the World for a while at least.



Close by the Abu Dhabi Police were on hand in the hall with one of their new AW139's. The police have eight on order but they are not all in service or even operational. A training programme is ongoing to convert the existing pilots from the skid equipped Bell 212's to the retractable wheel equipped AW139. Each individual pilot needs 80 hours of training and the aircraft on display had only accrued 50 hours by show time so there is a fair way to go just yet!

The aircraft did not give up many of its secrets to the enquiring eye. It is fitted out in factory finish as a typical middle executive transport, no airs and graces and certainly little evidence of what might be seen as a typical law enforcement craft. That belies both its current role of pilot training and the wider use it will see in the future as an EMS resource and general transport. With the majority of their current craft struggling in the hot and high climate most Middle East police helicopters have seen only limited use in daylight and the the 'typical' car chases and area searches role but the greater power now available in modern craft like the AW139 may see a move towards the more stereotypical Western view of police aviation operations.

The other major manufacturers continue to rely upon models and whichever of their products happens to occupy the static, on their part there is no great flourish for such a limited audience. They need to be there and seen but it is doubtful whether there is much enthusiasm at the task just yet.

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Sikorsky got closest to 'pushing the boat out' in arriving with a mock-up of both the S-76D and the S-92 as well as parking their touring S-92 N492SA in the static, the others relied upon whatever others had brought to the party to represent them.

Sikorsky announced that Falcon Aviation Services will establish a Customer Support Center in Abu Dhabi for the S-76® helicopters. The facility will be the first S-76 helicopter Customer Support Center in the Middle East. Last June, **Falcon Aviation Services (FAS)**, a provider of helicopter charter and maintenance services based in Abu Dhabi, signed delivery position agreements for four S-76D™ helicopters with Sikorsky Aircraft for VIP/Corporate transport. The D is the latest version of the popular S-76 helicopter and although retaining many Grandfather rights it will go some way towards incorporating many modern technologies..



Simplex came to the show and took a big stand within which they displayed a high-rise building fire fighting tank. They were there with a project to meet just four specific customers and they did just that, there were no casual visitors, but they met their specific aims for the show.





At the last Helishow there was a **Bell** helicopter in the static that was lined up to undertake high rise fire fighting with a water jet for the local Civil Defence department. In the event this equipment was inefficient and adversely affected by the downdraft from the MRB. That is where Simplex came into the Helishow.

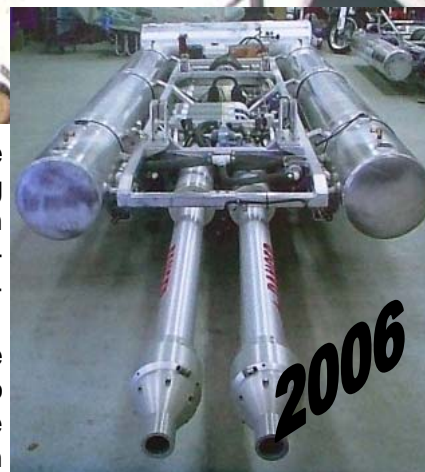
Cheltenham UK based **Specialist Aviation Services** have a number of contracts with UK police aviation units but also have a major presence in the Gulf region supporting the police in Kuwait. The Helishow was an opportunity to widen that work and to widen their existing installation work.

Again outside the UK they have contracts installing EASA approved L3 Cockpit Voice Recorders in the Bell 412. They have an ongoing installation contract with Gulf Helicopters and with the police in Slovenia. www.specialist-aviation.com

The show was the first outing for **Dart Helicopter Services** since they took over responsibility for marketing and selling the Spectrolab Illumination product line, including the popular Nightsun® series of searchlights. DART will represent Spectrolab products in Canada, Mexico, Latin America, and the Middle East but they currently have no plans to hold specific spare units for loan if the primary unit held by the customers fails and has to return to the OEM..

Aero Simulators brought their Gimbal imaging system training environment (GIST) a complete training system for operators on a wide range of WESCAM, FLIR, POLYTECH, ZEISS or other video imaging systems. The simulator supports training of new operators in the basics of system operation. The training system can also be used for advanced training of more experienced operators and for proficiency training of current or potential sensor operators.

GIST is an intuitive graphical user interface (GUI) allow-



ings the student to select training courses; load and play scenarios, control the simulation, and pause the scenario while it is running. The controls will be familiar to anyone working typical Microsoft Windows applications.

Pierre De Backer from the company based in Belgium hopes that the low cost simulation option will appeal to existing users of sensors interested in driving their costs down considerably.

Support equipment manufacturers **Powervamp** have been exhibiting at the show for three years now and it is fair to say that their usual 'frenetic' style of show business is muted by this event – time for coffee and a chat, not something that takes place at most shows – but each time they cover their considerable equipment shipping costs – and more. The products include the unique Portapump which sits well with those operators using remote location refuelling and other ground support equipment.

Within hours of arriving Richard Roller was doing a deal in the static. An AW139 that was not 'happy' with its 24volt GPU. The matter was simply resolved with the supply of a 28 volt unit that was more capable of undertaking the task.

The AW139 was one operated by Abu Dhabi Aviation. Having been alerted to the perceived problem Roller took along two of Powervamp's latest technology 29.5 volt 29 amp/hour Coolspool units connected in parallel to give 58 amp.hours. In this configuration the unit delivers a really fast spool up with the lowest voltage at the moment of starter engagement - still remaining above 24.4 volts compared to 17 volts or less if a similar sized conventional 24 volt GPU was used.

The result was a fast, cool start on the **Pratt and Whitney** PT6A-67 Turbines.

The company say that word is now spreading rapidly amongst AW139 Operators that for peace of mind--particularly if operating at remote sites where portable power is needed, Powervamp's 29.5volt (nominal 28volt) Coolspool GPU's should be used. The AW139 does not have a full FADEC system that monitors the whole start sequence, there is a need for the pilot to monitor voltages during the start cycle to prevent an over temperature situation arising.

The manufacturers permit a start with a battery of 23 volts but some pilots based in the region are of the opinion that the lack of a full FADEC system leads them to avoid attempting a start below 24 volts.

Delivering power into the AW139 at just below 30 volts gives Pilots huge peace of mind and ensures Turbine temperatures - even in the extreme heat of the Gulf region - are well within limits.

Already AW139 Operators in Europe, India, Africa and throughout the Middle East either have bought or placed orders for the Coolspool 58 Portable GPU.





The TLC Helilift

A great deal of the success achieved by smaller exhibitors with the drive of Powervamp results from their willingness to invest in the transport of equipment to the venue. The Abu Dhabi Aviation AW139 start could not have been achieved from a brochure product.

Talking of the show Richard Roller said "Again, it is a pity that there was such a conspicuous lack of hardware for visitors to view—too many Exhibitors simply pin posters in English on the booth walls."

While he felt the Helishow attendance was lower than at the previous show, "the quality of visitors and the orders that are in negotiation or expected, more than compensated in our case, for any reduction in traffic".

The trickle of other substantive visitors able to get hands on experience of the product range was enough to make the trip worthwhile. Already one UAE operator is budgeting to take a significant number of the Coolspool 58 GPU's with more planned as AW139 deliveries increase throughout the region.

Another UK exhibitor prepared to spend the time and money in bring bringing his full prod-

uct to market was **TLC Helilift**. The large and capable helicopter mover is seeing increasing interest among Middle East operators. This is the third Helishow for TLC and year on year the interest has been enough to keep the proprietor – Tony Hancock – coming back to support the event and to move the in-hall exhibits between the apron and the hall before and after the show..

The Helilift was parked up in the dead space behind the main exhibition during show time but remained accessible to demonstrate to potential customers.



The new MD advertisement featured inside the cover of the Helishow programme drew more than its fair share of comment in that it included Lynn Tilton showing off her brood of helicopters.



Air Medical & Rescue Conference and Show Day 1.

Last time the intended workshops and conference failed to take place at the Helishow. This time with a new set up they duly appeared and were by all accounts worthwhile [The editor only sat through a few of them].

A specialist exhibition accompanied by a one day conference focusing on the unique issues that the air medical and rescue sector face, was launched at the Dubai Helishow. This exhibition focused on air, ambulance, air rescue, air evacuation and other medical transport services and associated equipment. This was a significant development of this year's show but in many ways it did not work as well as it should have – that was no fault of the organisers, more the failings of a few of the exhibitors in not dressing their stands with even an image or two and being present during the show days.

Much of the air medical section of the conference centred around the most recent attempts at overcoming the long standing and 'difficult' air regulations in the region.

Very like China helicopter flight in the Middle East is a game of two halves on the one hand you have government related organisations that can operate almost at will and on the other hand you have everyone else that cannot. Until recently 'everyone else' had to apply for permissions to fly and given mission that might take from four hours to four days to get. There have been easements in this state of affairs - particularly in Dubai - but in other parts of the UAE it can be impossible to fly with anything like the ease accepted in the Western World.

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This state of affairs particularly affects air ambulance operations wishing to undertake HEMS and it is with this background that two presentations were given to the Air Medical Conference. The contrasts between the two new HEMS operations now set up in Qatar and Saudi Arabia is stark.

The thinking behind the Qatar operation was the subject a presentation from Malcolm Perry the HEMS operation Assistant Executive Director.

LifeFlight Qatar is today a reality primarily because it was a vision of the Emir, HH Sheikh Hamed Bin Khalifa Al-Thani to provide the people of Qatar with a world class health system and was launched by the National Health Authority just over a year ago in October 2007.

The initial air operation was set up by Action Aviation using an MD902 Explorer formerly operated by the Suffolk County Police in New York State. The thinking behind the use of the 902 was that many locals would not understand what a helicopter was so removing the tail rotor from the equation was a sensible precaution, the high rotor added to the safety aspects and the airframe was a useful size for the intended daylight tasking in rural areas.

This was all new territory for the region and there were many problems to overcome. One of the most obvious was a lack of mapping references. At present this is a limited operation aimed at outlying districts and not the Capital so its primary area off operation is desert and although there are many immovable features the roads – or tracks- are very much a movable feast subject to the vagaries of the wind, so to overcome the problem they created a system of Gridding. When required the helicopter was called to a grid block. The wider availability of GPS has improved this process but the grid remains as a primary locator.

The success of the Action Aviation trial led to the ordering of new MD902 helicopters. It also led to a pretty ugly disagreement between Action Aviation and MD over margins and that led in turn to Action giving up its representation of MD in the region.

The number of trained pilots and medics in the region is low so for ease the working side of the new air ambulance operation centred on MD902 helicopters operated by an international crew mix. The medical crew are on the whole not able to speak the local dialect but they are high quality medical practitioners. The thinking is that for the time being at least the sick and injured will forgive the lack of dialect in return for high quality care.

One of the two new aircraft for this operation, currently N999GU pending local certification, appeared on the MD Helicopters stand.

In stark contrast was the presentation given by Dr. Fatih Mehmet Gul the Project Manager for Saudi HEMS.

The Saudi HEMS operation faced just the same air space restrictions that have beset helicopter operations in the region. The Royal Family in Saudi had a similar desire to overcome those problems and to provide an efficient air ambulance. To that mix should be added the problem of Mecca.

For the Saudi Arabians the 'simple' Qatari solution of importing the staffing to give local skills time to catch up was not going to happen. All because of Mecca and the Haj – the religious festival at the centre of Muslim religion. One of the primary uses of Saudi HEMS was always going to be in support of the Haj Pilgrimages that have a history of involving periodic major loss of life. Anyone with a little knowledge of the region will realise that there



was a real ‘problem’ with just anyone doing HEMS at the Haj, let alone turning up in Mecca as a non believer.

So Saudi HEMS was based on two second hand former German BO105 helicopters and a crew that had a primary skill set called Muslim. The rest, the ability to save life and to be a good pilot, was trained into the selected crew.

It was clear that Dr. Fatih Mehmet Gul still had many, many problems to face in making this HEMS by edict work.

In January 2007, shortly after the operation was set up, one of the two Bolkow BO105LS operated crashed outside Madinah killing its three crew members. The copter’s Bosnian pilot and two Syrian doctors died in the air crash. Regular readers may recall the story in this years ALEA Conference issue about the training given to the Baltimore County [Maryland] Police Department that led to them being able to undertake a rescue and receive an award from Breeze Eastern. All pretty important ‘day-to-day’ material that rarely reaches these pages. You may recall that the organisation that undertook the training was SRT Helicopters in California.

Christian Gadbois, president and CEO of SRT Helicopters of Bakersfield was a featured speaker at the Conference. He is an acknowledged expert in airborne emergency services, including aeromedical evacuation, search and rescue, and international disaster response and spoke on ‘Multi-jurisdictional Search and Rescue: The U.S. Approach’ at the conference.

In all the busy Air Med day included twelve primary slots, starting in late morning and ending seven hours later at dusk.

Another new feature introduced at this year’s show was a comprehensive one day conference organised on Day 2 by **The International Helicopter Safety Team** focusing on the safety issues faced by pilots worldwide. The IHST is responsible for development of mitigation strategies to bring down military and civil accident rates by 80% in the next 10 years.

Like the Air Med event this was a very busy conference programme but it went many steps further in attempting to start 8-30am and run to dusk cramming around 20 speaking slots into a scheduled 10 hour space. It started late and ran later than programmed as a result.



New to the show were Onboard Systems

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EMERGENCY SERVICES SHOW

19-20 November

If you got to visit the Emergency Services Show at Stoneleigh Park, and some UK aviation units did, you will have noted that the weather was unusually kind to both visitors and exhibitors this year right up to closing time.

This show has a Fire Brigade feel about it – stemming from the background of the organisers Fire Times - but an increasing level of police involvement is evident.

The vast venue, two large halls, and a multitude of outside spots was crammed with exhibits ranging from small 6x6 shell scheme booths to giant fire engines. Although I guess there may have been one or two I failed to notice a single abandoned or untended spot. There were no directly aerospace related exhibits – if you discount the giant airport fire engine – but there were a number of names that the aircraft industry will be familiar with and I would say that this event is perhaps more representative of the Emergency Services than many others that end up being little more than a sales forum for locks, bolts, alarms and CCTV.

Even after visiting last year most of the exhibitors were a strange collection of previously unheard of organisations including 'Amputees in Action' who it seems help out in providing limbless people to make play acting scenarios somehow more 'real' for the emergency services.

There were more familiar Government groups including the NPIA and Women in Police but thankfully we were spared the more politically active police groups. By way of a contrast the fire and ambulance services have their own quirky options. There were a smattering of military organisations including RAF SAR and a number of civil SAR groups including the Coastguard, mountain rescue, International Rescue etc – not organisations that get invited to the police promoted expos I am more familiar with. I assume that somewhere along the line the organisers are able to make this venue work and thereby invite 'poor' organisations along at nominal cost. Others should take a lesson from this.

Blazepoint, the rugged mobile computing technology company based in Oxford, was mentioned last month in the preview of the show. They were showing their 7 inch tablet model to visiting police aviators as an option for them. This ultra mobile tablet PC is manufactured



from a magnesium alloy and weighs a mere 1.15kg. Optional docking station and accessories further extend functionality. Whilst the fanless and IP-54 compliant design permits outstanding performance in any environment. As before you will find more information available at www.blazepoint.co.uk

MW Power, industry-leaders in the supply of micro UAV to the Emergency Services as well as suppliers of special vehicles to the services were at the show displaying their now familiar German Microdrone quad rotor mini-UAV and were exhibiting their new larger craft. Completion of this new craft is running behind schedule but they were able to bring the basic structure to the event and demonstrate its lightweight structure. Light in weight or not this is still a larger heavier and more capable craft and it will no longer be 'super safe' in the presence of crowds. It will be interesting to see whether it is considered sensible to operate it in such venues as Milipol in Paris where its smaller, lighter, predecessor flew above the attendees. Another new development reflects a customer request. MW are trialling 'small marker lights to improve the visibility of the craft.



For the UK market call Alistair Fox on +44 1270 875 115 or glance at www.mwpower.co.uk

Enix Energies displayed a range of Interplex Warning Beacons as ideal for use at helipads and private airports, Interplex offer a full range of high visibility, battery operated and solar powered portable warning beacons using LED and photovoltaic technology. The high intensity LED's, with viewing distances from 1km to 10km's and long operation times, offer an economical alternative to costly conventional flashing lights.

As an established brand, Interplex products have been utilized by major forces throughout Europe for the last 20 years. For further details on the full range, contact the Sales department e-mail: info.uk@enix-energies.com or visit Enix Energies at stand 93 of The Emergency Services Show 2008.

On one edge of the outside displays was the familiar sight of a large **Helibasket**. It was the first time I had seen one of them outside the USA. Manufactured in the USA by Precision Lift Inc and designed for the external load carriage of modular special loads such as fire fighting equipment to remote



locations it is also possible to use one to rescue people. They are in service with the US military.

But, as I said, not a familiar sight in the UK. It transpired that the equipment was in the custody of **Helicopter Logistics Support Ltd**, [HLS] a Nottinghamshire based training organisation that is also a leading provider of helicopter flood and rescue training for the emergency services.

They offer training for helicopter ground crew from Basic Awareness and Flight Safety through to Specialist Load-Lifting, Fast Roping and Abseiling. Three of their courses are now certified by City & Guilds. There are several specific applications for the basic course - Emergency Services, Film & TV personnel, etc. They also offer High Rise Rescue training, voice marshalling and advanced SAR techniques training for Aircrewmembers and Winchmen and are looking to a new course of Landing Site Surveyor.

HLS are the exclusive agents world-wide and distributors (excluding North & South America) of the full range of Precision Lift Inc. products, and are Factory Approved to offer training on the Heli-Basket® range of cargo and rescue baskets. www.helisupport.co.uk

With the UK being a damp place at the best of times and rarely likely to need much recourse to fighting the type of massive fires that are still laying great swathes of California to waste the it is hardly surprising that a great section of the Emergency Services Show seemed set aside for reacting to water in all its forms and in particular floods [fortunately not Tsunami's just yet].

Base -X from a new group made up of Oriol Solutions and Expeditions Solutions Direct and now known as Blaythorne Ltd based in Wales covers all the options in providing a new expedition system of living under canvas that can be deployed in any terrain from countryside to an urban setting.

Blaythorne recently signed a partnership agreement with Base-X Inc a global leader in scalable rapid deployable command and control, administration and infrastructure shelter systems. Blaythorne will become the UK hub for sales, demonstrations, after sales support and the capability to deploy into the field during incidents throughout UK. Base X Shelters are currently deployed with the largest Fire Department in the World, Japan; FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, Houston Fire Department, Countless Medical Facilities and was the Operations Hub for the FBI in Chicago during President Elect Barack Obama's Victory Rally.

The US product is a little different to existing offerings in that it comes ready wired and ready for access to power sources. Blaythorne's were promoting their system as the perfect solution for all of the emergency services to standardise on with a view to having an ease of cooperative working. Whether current emergency services operators are yet ready to move away from their existing but varied range of instant buildings remains to be seen.

Blaythorne's is promoted as a one stop shop for a vast range of operational and personal equipment, compasses, food, clothing, vehicles and aircraft items and as such were also offering the HIMATT all terrain emergency response vehicle. Their new website – currently not complete – will eventually have a 700 page catalogue of their product lines and perhaps explain just why they feature an Mil Mi-17 on the site! www.blaythorne.co.uk





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A Typical stand at the Emergency Services Show

The October issue revisited at Stoneleigh.

One of the displays was by Hampshire Fire and they were displaying their recently acquired Carvec Kestrel aerial observation system [left and below].

Perhaps a little crude but the lower image shows in detail the still [A] and IR [B] cameras fitted for the Stoneleigh event along with the recorder [C] for IR footage which is also downlinked on an analogue system.

