

Police Aviation News

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Show Edition June 2007

IPAR



SHOW SPECIAL

Heli Middle-East

EBACE Geneva

WMRC Gothenburg

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This special edition of Police Aviation News is a brief visit to three conferences and shows that have taken place in May and June. It might be said with some justification that each of these events is not earth shattering in a global sense, but each can equally be said to represent an interaction between various sections of the airborne emergency services community. Interaction after all leads to understanding.

The first is in the area of an emerging market in the Middle East. In general the area remains closed to open skies aviation—the armed forces and police hold sway over all aspects of aviation and ‘civilianising’ aviation will mean many changes. Historically the public face of the situation saw all aspects of aviation falling to the existing operators. Yes this meant the obvious aspects like the transportation of people or goods, but it went further than that. For instance, if a contractor wanted to move a ton of gravel to the top of a hill for a project by air it was quite likely that the form of that transport was a police or military helicopter. Changing that scenario is going to require quite a seed change.

The second event is more familiar in that it is the annual EBACE Show held at Geneva Airport. Primarily a business aviation event it nonetheless attracts aircraft associated with air ambulance work and therefore valid for some surveying by PAN.

I offer no apologies for the final event— The World Maritime Rescue Congress in Sweden. As you will see the event is primarily about ships and the sea, but a number of aviation elements were to be found in the week-long event and exhibition.

Bryn Elliott

COVER: Geneva Airport Fire training aircraft.



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Heli Middle East 2007 - Shephard Conferences

As only the second 2-day event carrying this name and the second to be held in Oman the event certainly has no real track record. Having been there this time I can say [somewhat against expectation] this event now has now left a very positive imprint on the aviation conference market.



Although it is a typical [if that is the word] Shephard Conference the event in the Grand Hyatt Hotel, Muscat, is strongly supported by the Royal Oman Air Force [ROAF], the Royal Oman Police [ROP] and the Ministry of Tourism and as such collected 6 column inches in the Oman daily newspaper.

There were times when the event looked familiar and likely to avoid all the issues besetting the region, and then bang it was right in there addressing them. Having attended conferences in the past where the afternoon of day two left the hapless person on the podium talking to the spiders in the far corners of an empty room it was refreshing to see that Heli Middle East did not go down that route. Indeed late in day two was time for a few sparks to fly.

You need to know a little background of the region to follow some of the moves and expectations of local aviation and it is fair to say that the show and the people it attracted did a great deal to reinforce and add to the little I was previously aware of.

Oman is hot - very hot. And that is at the core of the aviation culture. This is 'hot and low' country where just about everything stops at noon and starts again some time later. ROP availability may well be a nominal 24/7 but everything has limits. I well remember that 20 years ago the UK CAA decreed that the performance of the Bell 222 operated by the Metropolitan Police in London, England was such that they 'could not' fly in an English high summer after the temperature crept past 20 degrees. Well the ROP operated the same model 222 in over 50 degrees and you get 20 degrees at night in your air conditioned hotel room - if you are lucky. Comments in the hall that the brand new AW139 was left gasping a little on test at 56 degrees must be taken in context for the region. This is a very daunting environment.

The show was not a police conference but there were policing aspects involved in every sphere of operations. The region is awakening to a wider use of helicopters but in many ways the existing infrastructure and practices are stultifying progress. Across the Middle East [and places like China] airspace belongs to the government and is administered by their air forces and police. As a result these organisations are what the Western establishment would refer to as pretty exclusive 'Stakeholders' in local aviation. You want to fly you get permission first - for every flight. At the moment the virtually non-existent mainland China police are having to do just that - ask a army general - to fly. For the longer established ROP flying VIP's is as much a role as law enforcement, EMS, SAR and other forms of patrol.

The commercial Falcon Aviation Services military SAR operation in the UAE [operated in cooperation with Evergreen] can be taken as the thin end of the wedge - but that must tem-



pered by knowledge that it is an interim solution with an intended life span of just two years. It could return to a re-equipped military command, but that is unlikely. The contract requires that their four-strong fleet of SAR configured Bell 412 [2] and AW139 [2] demonstrate a high availability level of three aircraft. The company is reporting it is able to meet that target for over 90% of the time, with four showing 80% availability.

Notwithstanding the difficulties Falcon are expanding into other fields with additional EC130 and A109S machines aimed at the commercial sphere. A second EC130 arrives in June, a third next year, two VVIP configured AS365N2's are on way with a third being sought and the 109 fleet is being standardised on the Agusta Grand. That is not to forget Falcon's growing fixed wing jet fleet, apparently only being stultified by the lack of good aircraft and long lead times quoted by manufacturers. All this increases the pressure on opening up the air lanes. Falcon want to offer SAR to other Middle Eastern countries.

This permission thing is stultifying progress although there are a few signs of movement. The long-term success of the massive developments in Dubai is threatened by the situation. Dubai is enticing the rich and the famous to live there on one of the new man-made islands and then [currently] refusing them the right to fly their own [or indeed any] helicopter to the island. Many tower blocks have landing pads that will be hard pressed to be of use until this impasse is finally sorted. Some pads are already turning into nothing more than air conditioning unit mounts - all too many are not turning out to be built to the right standard. Mean-



while the rich and famous take two hours to get a few km from the airport by car and boat. Not exactly a lifestyle the brochures promise.

The primary long term operators of aviation in the region [ROAF/ROP] are facing requests from new arrivals hoping to step in and make money doing what they do already. You may understand the measure of reluctance on their part, but the fact is that whether it displaces their role somewhat or not the commercial needs go way beyond the capabilities of existing resources - unless they intend to get into sightseeing and taxi-flights for lesser VIP's like minor film stars and those having just money status.

Currently the ROP are awaiting delivery of a fleet of six AW139 helicopters to replace the problematic ageing Bell 214's. Although deliveries were expected this summer the arrival of the new type has now been pushed back until the early part of 2008, apparently because some of the systems are not yet ready. Although they were sponsors of the event AW did not have a major presence there to enable clarification. A similar story of delay is affecting the new fleet of NH90's for the ROAF. In the wake of many examples [Airbus included] the delivery pressures on all of industry are clear, the lack of time and resources including engineers is endemic and growing. To that must be added the hard environment.

Against that background came representatives from across the world to tell the locals how it should be done - and it is credit to the Omani's that they largely took it all on-board.

The first day was taken up with SAR in various forms, how the SAR is administered, operated and practitioners trained in other parts of the world - Australia, China [Hong Kong], UK and the USA. Oman is moving slowly towards the establishment of the local infrastructure for what will eventually be an element of a Rescue Coordination Centre in the GCC region, meanwhile they have their own house to put in order. ROP has the primary role in this but setting up the admin for the Oman SAR system is taking so long - years - that there are signs that they are not being kept in the loop. Contracts with the Ministry of Transport have yet to be signed.

The end of the first day was marked by a magnificent dinner hosted by the ROAF in their officers club. The event proved to be the only instance where helicopter hardware intruded upon the proceedings. One Super Lynx and two ROP Agusta A109E Power [A40-CK and A40-CN] being on display in what was a sultry and very dark night. In these torchlit conditions the ROP showed off Power's in typical EMS [CK] and law enforcement [CN] fit. The latter fit uses a FLIR 8000 sensor with the images relayed to a rear cabin mounted work station suited to three crew operations. Both were fitted with emergency floatation gear.



Little information has flowed out about where the Saudi's are going with aviation in law enforcement but some detail slipped out in a somewhat lengthy presentation by their Border Guard. The Saudi Border Guard are responsible for securing the 8,000km of national bor-



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der, 3,500 of which is coastline using a mix of water craft and land vehicles. Currently the only air assets they have are a pair of large hovercraft supplemented by access to air force Lockheed C-130 for logistics operations.. The news is that the Border Guard is now seriously looking at a range of new aircraft and helicopters to vastly increase capability. Such a development will clearly excite the industry but they will have to pay heed to their performance graphs in this demanding environment.

Adding an unintentional measure of humour into the proceedings many Westerners present were nonplussed by a Border Guard presentation that spoke of the organisation being created in the early 14th Century. Such a date left others in the shade and certainly impressed. Shortly there was some more head scratching when it was clear that the images looked decidedly 20th Century! Eventually it emerged that the quotes were referring to a different calendar. In Arabia the date is not indeed May 2007AD but Rabee al Thani 1428AH. So the Border Patrol was created not in 1340 but in about 1919 - still a creditable achievement!

Regular readers will recall the report on last December's Dubai Helishow and the mention of Dubai based Action Aviation's sales efforts with a hopefully resurgent MD Helicopter line. Their efforts have continued and with deliveries impending the police in the region are being targeted. There is a local perception that the NOTAR has a major safety advantage in specific local conditions. Landing in remote areas attracts the attention of the local populace in Arabia as anywhere, but the locals are unaware of the dangers of tail rotor equipped craft and quickly approach and surround them. It is rare for remote landings have the luxury of a ground crew. As a result the flight crew has to shut down prematurely and in a manner not conducive to the well being of the engines. NOTAR MD902 Explorer's would seem to offer a craft with a good high temperature performance that would be enable them to keep the engines running. It's a small advantage but it is opening doors.

The recently reported contractual problems being faced by MD acquiring new build MD902 airframes from Turkey now appear to be resolved. PAN understands that the flow of new build fuselages from TAI has restarted.

21st CENTURY POLICE AVIATION
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 Expo XXI, Amsterdam, Netherlands





Gulf SAR Cooperation

IMSARC has been working on the SAR Command & Control [C&C] project since May 2002. So long ago that many of the original multi-agency discussions have passed into history books, leaving the recent higher profile of the system to become news to mainstream members including many with the ROP. The projected contractors include BAE Systems, Frequentis, Fortek the local communications company NTS and IMSARC themselves. It is the Coast Guard Division of ROP that are mainly involved in the land based infrastructure of the C&C system with integration of the whole Gulf States system being little more than a mirage. Which country will be chosen as the central hub of a system intended to encompass such diverse countries as Saudi Arabia, Oman and Iran looks likely to employ the politicians for years!



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Conferences may be a seemingly unnecessary expense for operators. Such events do allow an opportunity for a range of operators to interact and explore what are often very substantial operational differences.

Another opportunity is to meet up with industry representatives promoting new technology both in the conference and in the exhibition hall and to try out equipment in what are usually agreeable surroundings.

Above: Virtualis PC based virtual reality training equipment—this particular set-up being for a rear crewmen in a SAR helicopter.

Right: A winch manufacturer explains the finer points of a typical rescue winch.

Below: The range of events on offer is substantial.





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EBACE *Geneva's annual business aviation event*

The European Business Aviation Association (EBAA) and the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) sponsored European Business Aviation Conference and Exhibition was held last month [May 22-24] at its usual Geneva Airport location. Unusually blighted by rain for the first two days, the third was both dry and set under a scorching sun.

The organisers concluded the event to be the biggest and best in the show's seven-year history. The Attendee total reached a record 11,267 this year, a 15% jump over last year's total of 9,743 Attendees. The Exhibitor count reached 354, up 18% over last year's total of 292 Exhibitors. There were 1,423 booth spaces. A record 61 business aircraft were displayed, with 56 business aircraft on the Static Display at Geneva International Airport and

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five aircraft (including four helicopters) at Geneva PALEXPO.

A highlight was the presentation of the EBACE2007 European Business Aviation Award to Judith Moreton, managing director of Bombardier Skyjet International, and Mark Wilson, chief executive of the British Business and General Aviation Association, for their outstanding contributions to European business aviation.

EBACE is primarily a business aviation show but within it can be found items of interest to the airborne emergency services - especially with a growing number of business aircraft finding employment in air ambulance and surveillance roles.

Grob Aerospace are proposing their spⁿ utility jet as a potentially useful platform for special missions. The company claim that the spⁿ is particularly well suited to fulfill special mission requirements thanks to its short field performance, range-payload, fuel efficiency and spacious cabin. The characteristics of carbon fibre airframe enables operations worldwide in some of the most severe climates and environments.

The company has already put in a bid for a 20-aircraft maritime/border/fisheries patrol order for an as yet undisclosed customer. Another variant of the design is being proposed as an high-altitude long-range spy plane alternative to long range UAV designs in the mould of the Global Hawk and capable of an endurance in excess of 30-hours.

Except in India the chunky 19-seat Dornier 228 has been out of production for nine years, but it has long been a type of choice for operators seeking a utility fisheries patrol or surveillance platform. The majority of the Indian airframes are for their Coast Guard. Swiss based RUAG are considering returning the type to limited production to fill a perceived need to fill special missions requirements outside the Indian sub-continent.



After the former manufacturer of the Do 228 Munich based Fairchild-Dornier went bankrupt RUAG bought many of the assets and the Do 228 type certificate and found that the type was still in some demand. This was pulled into prominence when RUAG won a contract in 2006 to source and convert two Do228-212s into maritime patrol aircraft for the Coast Guard in the Netherlands. They were obliged to source a pair of used aircraft, believed registered PH-CGC and PH-CGN.



Traditionally very few helicopters are displayed at EBACE in Geneva. In keeping with this three machines were displayed at the entrance to the main exhibit hall.

Thoughts are now directed towards considering setting up a final assembly line back in Germany using parts imported from the continuing line in India. If it goes ahead the project will probably only involve a handful of Special Mission completions each year rather than seeing service as a new build airliner.

Powervamp the Weston-super-Mare based power pack and GPU supplier were in the static park of the show supporting the complete Bombardier fleet over the three days of the event. Long known as a specialist lightweight power pack manufacturer and supplier Powervamp have gone from strength to strength in recent years expanding the range of their products and services and have secured contracts covering the ground support power requirements of entire shows - often encompassing support elements way beyond their primary expertise of supplying battery power packs and chargers. The company has claimed basic power ground support at a range of helicopter shows in the past and were able to show a growing and significant presence at major international shows including Paris and Farnborough. To provide this level of support meant bringing in and managing elements beyond their manufacturing capability to power-up such types as Boeing and Airbus airliners.

The company has a very good name for these support contracts. To be placed in full support of the fleet of such manufacturers as Bombardier on a worldwide basis [where the customer regularly has



to pay a premium to retain that support in the face of an existing cartel] speaks volumes. Further underlining industry confidence in Powervamp is the news at EBACE that the whole of the management contract ground support and handling of aircraft ranging from light aircraft to the largest Jumbo airliner has been let by Farnborough International. This may well result in some interesting 'badge engineering'!

Pratt & Whitney Canada Customer Services Centre Europe GmbH has signed a five year Fleet Management Programme engine maintenance contract with UK based AirMed - the largest air ambulance company in the country. AirMed operates a fleet of nine fixed wing aircraft operating air ambulance flights in addition to passenger and cargo services across Europe and Africa.

The Pilatus PC-12, popular across the world in police utility and ambulance roles continues to sell well. According to 2006 General Aviation Manufacturers Association figures the type remains the top selling turbine-powered business aircraft fourteen years into a production run that started some 14 years ago. Ninety were delivered in 2006 and there are rumours of an impending upgraded model.

A PC-12 was on static in the exhibition hall throughout the show and, although its own presence at the show was brief it was joined by a newly commissioned painting of two Western Australian Police PC-12s. The painting by British artist Peter Bradfield came about as a commission after a member of Pilatus saw an earlier work by the artist including the PC-12.

Action Aviation, probably better known for representing the MD Explorer within the PAN readership continue to promote their first born project the Sino Swearingen SJ30 light corporate jet at venues such as EBACE. The SJ30 continues to work towards its expected use as a medical transfer type as they work with Lifeport on suitable stretcher fits.



Meanwhile the company has further broadened its operations in teaming up with Comtran International to work on the marketing of a fleet of eight 12-seat Dornier 328JET executive aircraft. Whilst the arrangement is a new venture there is an SJ30 connection in that the president of Comtran is Gordon Jaffe the son of Doug Jaffe - the J in the SJ30 designation.

L-3 Avionics has received STC approval for the IRIS™ infrared imaging system aboard the King Air C-90, as well as Parts Manufacturer Approval (PMA) from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). L-3 demonstrated IRIS at the show where it generated tremendous interest and already L3 have additional installation and certification efforts underway for many different platforms.

The L-3 IRIS Enhanced Vision System (EVS) for General Aviation offers an affordable system with excellent image clarity.

IRIS displays a real-time, greyscale image of the runway environment, other aircraft, terrain, people, animals and obstacles on a cockpit display. These images provide pilots with better situational awareness during taxi and ramp operations and an additional horizon reference during departure and approach. At night and during poor visibility conditions, IRIS helps pilots see obstacles that are invisible to the naked eye. During the day, pilots can see obstacles otherwise obscured by bright oncoming light or solar glare. Added details are available at www.L-3Avionics.com

The Eurocopter presence at the show was fairly muted, a corporate EC135 on the booth was in addition to an EC155 situated by the entrance to the show. The majority of sales of the EC135 have been into utility roles but increasingly the EC135 T2i/P2i is proving of interest in the VIP and Business Aviation Market. Eurocopter's order book for the EC135 stands at around 700 units and it is the company's top seller and the best-selling light twin-engine helicopter worldwide. About 100 helicopters have been delivered to the business market to date.

One of these aircraft, owned by The Flying Bulls GmbH & Co. KG of Austria (OE-XFB), was on show at Eurocopter's booth No. 7513 at EBACE. The Flying Bulls company is using this EC135 for business flights by its executives and flying guests to its international aerobatics events, but mainly for promotional purposes.

Eurocopter has increased production of the EC135 by approx. 40% to more than 100 units per year. The high production volume allows high reactivity to customer demand and delivery times of less than one year. The type continues to demonstrate more than 98% availability across the fleet with some operators claiming figures somewhat higher thanks in part to reduced maintenance schedules. Eurocopter claim further reductions in DOC's and the lowest maintenance cost of all twins presently in production.

w area. The company were able to announce the signature of a contract for a AS355NP helicopter at the show but this was not unexpectedly an example in the executive transport configuration for Sky Service in Almaty , Kazakhstan . Sky Service is the biggest operator of



Polish EMS has recently taken delivery of a new Piaggio Avanti II

foreign-built helicopters in that country and already operates 2 EC135, 2 EC130, 2 EC120 and 1 AS350 B3.

Website: www.eurocopter.com

Pratt & Whitney Canada Corp.'s in-service fleet of 42,000 engines has accumulated over 500 million flying hours, the equivalent of covering the distance to the sun and back more than 1,000 times.

P&WC engines are currently in service in 194 countries around the world, providing power to over 9,000 customers in a wide range of business, general, utility and regional aircraft and helicopter applications.

Cessna announced that its Citation Mustang has just gained European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) type certification, making it the world's first entry level business jet to gain both US and European certification. The Mustang is already in service with a number of US owners, and the first European delivery takes place later this summer.

The type has gained approval to land at airports with instrument approaches steeper than a 4.5 degree approach angle. Steep Approach certification is the first step in the approval process at airports such as London City in England, which has a glide slope angle of 5.5 degrees, and requires special authorization through the airport administration for both the aircraft and the pilots landing there.

The National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) has announced seven individuals who successfully passed the Certified Aviation Manager (CAM) Examination, which was admin-



istered by the Association in February and April 2007. Through the certification process, NBAA and the Certified Aviation Manager Governing Board seek to raise the level of professionalism and quality of management within flight departments.

The new Certified Aviation Managers included just one from the law enforcement area of aviation: Mark R. Reimann, Drug Enforcement Agency, Arlington, VA

Reimann has earned the right to use the designation of Certified Aviation Manager when officially listing their name. The CAM designation provides industry recognition of achievement and knowledge in business management, leadership, operations, personnel management, and technical and facilities services.

With these seven additions, a total of 95 individuals have passed the exam and are designated as CAMs.

The next CAM Exam will be administered on September 24 in Atlanta, GA, in conjunction with the NBAA 60th Annual Meeting & Convention. The deadline to apply for the September exam is August 6.

In some ways this years EBACE lost the plot. Due it appears to growth pains the show was spread over two halls rather than the one. The result was that whilst the main show was shoehorned in a new hall the original hall, Hall 7 - the only one with direct access to the static display on the airport, was somewhat denuded. Hall 7 was primarily the haunt of the majors - Gulfstream, Cessna/Bell, Eurocopter etc - but these alone could not fill the space. The result was the existence of yawning spaces between the displays and the static access. Meanwhile in the other hall exhibitors - some of them first timers at the Geneva show - were obliged to occupy tiny areas in backwater positions that resulted in them rarely seeing a potential customer.

It will improve of course as the show continues to attract yet more exhibitors and fill those gaps, but it does raise the question of whether those disadvantaged first-timers will wish to return in the first place.

NBAA and EBAA have announced the dates for the European Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition (EBACE) have been confirmed from 2008 through 2012 at Geneva PALEXPO.

The established dates for EBACE for the next five years are:

Tuesday, May 20, to Thursday, May 22, 2008

Tuesday, May 12, to Thursday, May 14, 2009

Tuesday, May 4, to Thursday, May 6, 2010

Tuesday, May 17, to Thursday, May 19, 2011

Tuesday, May 8, to Thursday, May 10, 2012

More details on this years EBACE can be viewed at their web site at www.ebace.aero





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World Maritime Rescue Congress

Gothenburg, Sweden



World Maritime Rescue Congress

The World Maritime Rescue Congress takes place every four years and this year in recognition of the 100th Anniversary of the Swedish Sea Rescue Society [SSRS - the Swedish equivalent of the UK Royal National Lifeboat Institute RNLI] the event settled in Eriksberg on the north side of Gothenburg at the point where both the Baltic and North Sea's meet to attract delegates from across the world. And attracted they were, all of the near European nations were present and in addition there were representatives from Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan, the Americas and many more.

A non-governmental Swedish voluntary institution founded in 1907 in 2006 the SSRS was deployed and carried out approximately 70% of all rescue missions in Swedish waters. Approximately 85% of all missions were made in response to distress calls from pleasure boats. Commercial vessels stand for the remaining 15%. The good stead in which the event and the centenary celebrations was held by the Baltic shipping industry was reflected in the breathtaking level of sponsorship given to the mainly volunteer SSRS and other SAR professionals.

The showground for the whole event centred around Hotel 11 and the Eriksbergshallen both located on the site of what was once a thriving shipbuilding industry. Although there are very real reminders of the former heavy engineering past within the buildings both have been tastefully turned to the corporate entertainment and leisure industries.

The week long event started off with a public celebration of the 100th held over the first weekend in June. This included an invited guests grand dinner including the Swedish Royal Family as guests in the Eriksbergshallen but was primarily a waterborne display on the quayside.

Rescue vessels of all sizes from each of the nations of the Baltic and North Sea's were to be found crammed into the wharfs. Alongside each other could be found large numbers of modern Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Finnish, German and Netherlands rescue craft with lesser numbers appearing from more distant nations like France. The RNLI sent a number of preserved vessels, a modern inshore craft and the prototype of the next beach launched lifeboat. Each of the larger craft had travelled a week at the speed of the slowest hugging the coast across the North Sea and slipping through the Kiel Canal into the Baltic.

Airborne craft were few among the exhibits. Local Swedish Ivanoff Hovercraft AB [www.hovercraft.se] were statically exhibiting one of the handful of small machines in ser-



vice with the SSRS mainly on over-ice operations in the winter. Although relatively small in number the craft from this family-run business have reached other countries. One of the two hovercraft operating with the Burnham-on-Sea charitable SAR operation in Avon, UK is an Ivanoff. The machine was able to show its paces later in the WMRC when mid-week there was a 'sail past' of all the vessels as they returned to their own home ports as a final salute to the Congress.

The other aerial appearance was by the locally based Swedish SAR Sikorsky S-76 which gave a few public SAR demonstrations over the waters of the main river Gotha on the two public days.

On day 3 of the gathering [with speakers and delegates still arriving] the WMRC declared the SSRS 100th celebrations at an end and got down to the main Con-



gress business of the gathering in the Eriksbergshallen - the speeches, the presentations, networking and the small exhibition displays.

Day one of the WMRC was a plenary gathering - the hall was very full, heaving - and the subjects covered much ground but were primarily those expected of such gatherings - the following days were to cover more workaday subjects. The welcomes were from Captain Rolf Westerstrom the chairman of the International Maritime Rescue Federation and CEO of SSRS and others in the SAR world but the interest of the Chinese delegation was underscored by the inclusion of their Vice-Minister of Communications Mr Huang Xianyao. He may be largely unknown in the West but the point was that he was there and give added credence to a mentioned desire to hold the next event in China during 2011.

In the following days a whole range of subjects was covered by various speakers in workshop groups. From meetings such as these some new - if often obscure - information can flow. The PAN market highlights might include: -

In East Africa a number of moves are being made to introduce SAR to the underdeveloped regions. This is very much low tech material and in the case study put forward to the audience at the WMRC consisted of creating a water rescue boat station on Lake Edward [bordered by Congo and Uganda] with two standard containers bridged by a metal roof. The craft within is nothing more than a well powered local fishing boat design - basically a row boat with added oomph. They had to modify the craft in the end as the transom was so high it was extremely difficult to reboard unaided from the water - a factor brought starkly into focus after all the crew under training jumped in to rescue the 'victim' only to be then stranded outside the craft. The rescue techniques and water training afforded to the volunteer crews are basic but far ahead of that of the likely customers - their fellow local fishermen. One instance is that the locals needed to be introduced to the compass and the theory of magnetic north, let alone the theory and practice of swimming. They can understand both but they simply have never been introduced to them before. Western SAR operations may be tangling with the complexities of digital maps but first the potential rescuers in East Africa needed to create maps. The project is a start. The new boat station itself also provides the locality with a serviceable community hall for a range of events. Much of this is educational, just getting the attention of the local population offers clear opportunities to direct information unrelated to SAR including such as HIV Aids.

Beyond the boat rescue SAR project there are plans to provide East Africa with a viable helicopter-borne SAR resource, hopefully later this year and coinciding with the G8 Conference in November. www.lake-rescue.org

In the Netherlands Antilles the small local SAR organisation CITRO uses ex-Dutch lifeboat institute [the KNRM] vessels to undertake SAR around the islands - often supported by the local Coast Guard helicopter www.citro.org

The first of the new Swedish Coast Guard Bombardier Dash 8 patrol aircraft is expected to arrive from Field Aviation in September and a presentation on the aircraft was given. The new aircraft replace an existing fleet of CASA 212, one of which was recently lost in an accident. The replacement programme started in 2001 and the result was the Dash-8 Q300 a type already finding favour with Coastwatch in Australia. The aircraft leave Bombardier and go for fitting out with Field Aviation - the first of the three C-FEDJ is nearing completion and eventually all three will serve as KBV 501, 502 and 503. The new fleet will allow the Coast Guard to undertake its current mission profiles without having to resort to refuelling at the Norwegian base of Bódø.



The recently announced new order for the same type for the Icelandic Coast Guard [see June issue] was mentioned. Nominally the newly ordered machine is to be built to the same standard as the Swedish machines, in fact the two aircraft are already displaying some significant differences. The Swedish machines are to have a complete sensor fit - ELTA 2022A primary search radar, SLAR [for pollution recording and detection], Wes-cam MX-15 sensor turret etc feeding to three workstations in the cabin - two primary and the third acting primarily as a backup - with rest areas and just a couple of seats in the rear for visual observation points. The Icelandic authorities [www.lhg.is] have differing needs in this area. The new aircraft is replacing a Fokker F27 and past practices in that craft have resulted in a need for a greater availability of standard seating in the rear cabin. So the Icelandic machine is to have just two workstations and a greater number of seats making it more readily available for transportation.

On a lighter side one of the delegates from Norway reported on the success of their mascot in the film world. 'Elias the rescue boat' has turned out to be a very successful product for the Redningsselskapet, aimed at the 4-11 years old market it has [at a price] proved a highly successful educational tool internally promoted with a range of media and even replica ride-in electric boats. Originally it was all about water safety and Redningsselskapet promotion to a new generation. One character is [thankfully] a very female looking helicopter. This outflow of funds now appears likely to be turning around somewhat with the launch of a Norwegian language commercial film from the Norwegian Film Institute, a venture that, if it fully takes off might earn the Redningsselskapet a return on their past investment. If 'Elias and the Royal Yacht' can cross the language barriers it may do very well meanwhile it looks to do very nicely in the Nordic countries. www.eliasklubben.no



In the exhibition hall Transas Europe GmbH handed over ten life jackets to the Deutsche Gesellschaft zur Rettung Schiffsbrüchiger (DGzRS) - German Maritime Search and Rescue Service at the show. All of the institution's SAR vessels are equipped with Transas Navi-Sailor ECDIS including Radar Integrator Board, Navtex interface and AIS Transponder and it was this past association that led directly to Transas providing the gifts ahead of the DGzRS re-equipping its entire fleet with new life jackets.

It was a late decision that brought UK company Headset Services Limited [HSL] to the event - perhaps on an investigative trip to see if their primary aerospace background would be of interest at this type of event. The helmets themselves relate as they are standard equipment to winch operators in SAR helicopters, but 'intruding' into the rescue boats is less sure ground.

They are in the market though with recent NVIS sales into the Iceland Coast Guard and into the CHC fleet for the MCA and Coastguard. The company continues to enjoy a full sales association with UK police air support, new helmets, refurbishments and more recently upgrades to fit existing helmets with NVIS mountings and ANR.

On the 31st May 2007 the MEL Group acquired HSL to add to their existing portfolio an ex-

	<p>Reims F406 Land & Sea Surveillance</p> <p>The logical economical choice of many operators Police, Fisheries, Coastguard, EMINT, EEZ patrol.</p> <p>Recent sales and deliveries Serial No. 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95</p> <p>Bob Crowe Aircraft Sales Ltd Tel: +44 (0)1234 750442 www.bobcroweaircraft.com sales@bobcroweaircraft.com</p>	
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expertise in communications both airborne and ground based. HSL are based at Shoreham Airport, Shoreham by Sea, on the south coast of England but it remains to be seen what the future plans are for the company. www.headsetservices.com MEL themselves are spread across Europe but their base is in Suffolk. They have acquired other companies recently, the latest before HSL being RDD (Reliant Design & Development) in February, bringing an expertise in hydraulics, fuel, aircraft generators, radar cooling, and electrical actuation systems to MEL's existing expertise in pneumatic and gaseous systems.

Paris based Escape International [represented locally by Lite Flite ApS in Denmark] were exhibiting another variation on answering the thorny problem of rescuing as many people in a single lift. Their 'Type A Rescue Platform is a single point of lift gear capable of safely lifting 10 people. Military variants can insert a similar number of troops but the civil version - expected to be high viz rather than in green camouflage - comes with the companies safety stop to ensure that panicking victims are less likely to injure themselves. The 92.5 lb [42kg] device folds and can be stowed in the helicopter [necessarily a reasonably large type] but it does offer one partial answer to the age old problem of helicopters moving as many as possible to safety. www.escape-international.com

That theme of what to do with ships in distress where they are carrying thousands of passengers continues to dominate the thoughts of the SAR authorities.

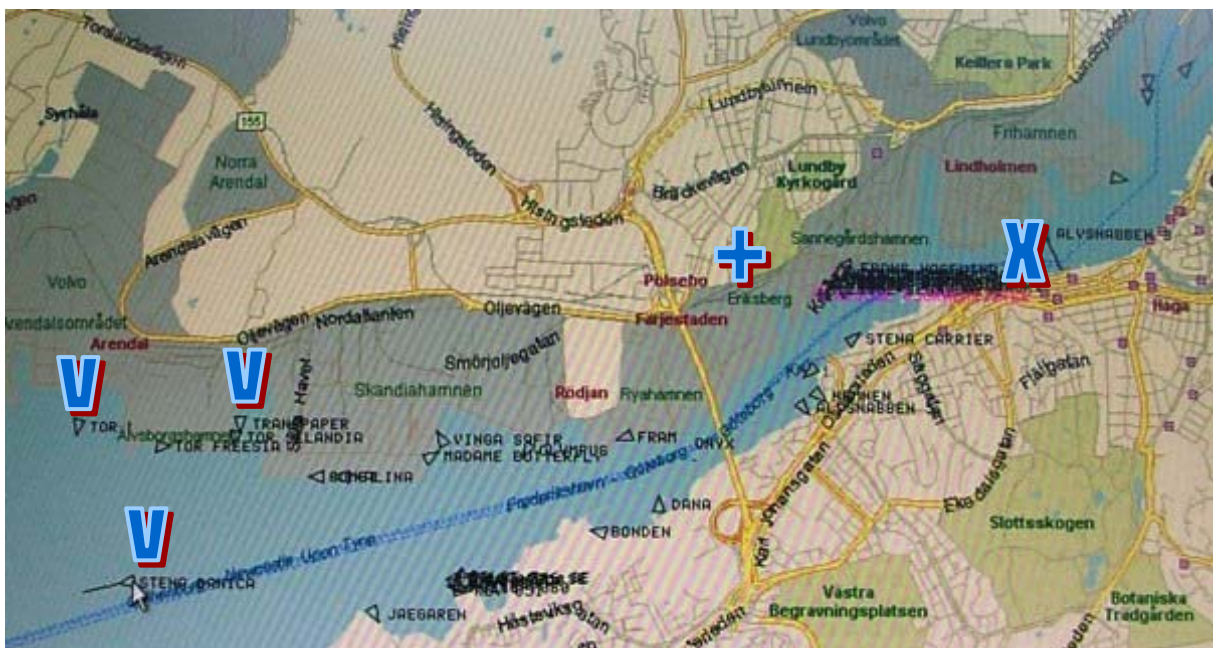
Goodrich were exhibiting one of their winches at the show and displaying images of what will shortly be the newest SAR aircraft on the North Sea for the UK Coastguard. Both the Sikorsky S-92 and the AgustaWestland AW139 will have double winches, the former having a side by side arrangement [already seen at HAI this year] and the AW139 will be fitted end to end.



Avionetics were displaying their AIS (Automatic Identification System) already being operated by shipping and SAR helicopters in Sweden. The AIS uses two VHF channels, where information about a vessels identity, position, course, speed and heading is transmitted with details of the ships size, cargo and destination (if available). All details are presented to the user on a standard display system.



The system has already enjoyed some international sales success in the form of sales to the Australian coastal patrol aircraft. The AIS transponder system benefits environmental protection and helps to eliminate the problem with radar range. Another great advantage with the AIS transponder system is the national security monitoring. Avionetics is a regional representative for Dallas Avionics and in turn they are their representative in the USA. www.avionetics.com



A close up of the real time display of the Gothenburg harbour area surrounding the Conference venue [+] shows 'transponder returns' from a number of individual vessels [V]. Each return is in the form of a black triangle and most will return major security information including tonnage, cargo, destination and whether underway. The black area [X] is a stretch of the river where a number of vessels are anchored close together.

Zao Transas a Russian company based in St Ptersburg have been developing a searchlight they want to bring to the western market with a view to providing a viable alternative to the Spectrolab product which it clearly resembles. At the show they were now able to provide technical details so the editor is unable to determine whether this is a true alternative to the US product or just something similar. www.transas.com



Modern SAR ships display all the new technology that we have grown used to in aerospace. SAR ships are no longer heavily crewed. There may be a handful of seats in the wheelhouse but the Norwegian SAR craft operate a crew of three who spend their life on-board comfortably 24/7 — each with their own living quarters.

