

Police Aviation News

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Number 193 May 2012

PAR

HELP Helipad Operational



Queensland Gets Two NPAS Gives Way regia Hits Sixty

**The Helicopter Show is no more
PAvCon Bonn Developing Well**

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Former Los Angeles County Sheriff Captain Jim Di Giovanna [right] in a group with Jarat Ford (Lexington), Major Tareq from Traffic, and Jerry Litton (pilot) and a group from the CID / Traffic police who took part in the 'Police Air Support Tactical Integration and Training.' [ADP]

AIR WING: In recent weeks US ALEA Representative Jim di Giovanna has been in the region working with the police air wing and the Lexington Group who act as outside trainers. The Abu Dhabi Police Air Wing (ADPAW) run a fleet of eight Bell 412 and eight AgustaWestland AW139 helicopters tasked with VVIP transport, EMS, SAR and Police operations. They have a staff of some sixty pilots with eleven crewmen and five EO/IR operators. Aircraft tasking and utilisation reflects the low crime rates of the Emirates.

The Lexington Group have been working with the ADPAW since 2010 and in addition to an extensive aircrew training programme, have been running annual trips to UK Air Support Units.

At the end of June members of the Air Wing will be going to Newcastle in the UK to do some instructor training and coincidentally escaping the worst of the summer temperatures

Cover: After the successful funding and completion of two hospital emergency landing pads - one onsite at Southampton General Hospital and the other at Oswestry Spinal Injuries hospital - the HELP Appeal is now looking for further helipad projects at key A&E hospitals across the country.

back home – temperatures in the desert will be in the region of 40°C by then.

The UK phase of the training is planned to be 20 hours spread over the 6 working days. This year's visit builds on that by taking the top EO/IR operator and training him to become an ADPAW instructor and assessor. He will be responsible for ensuring that the operators meet their annual proficiency requirements, manage operator records, and conduct initial instruction.

Fahed Al Menhali ('Fahed') has shown the aptitude, work ethic, and motivation to become one of the Air Wing's FLIR Operator Instructors. He has had over 60 hours of ground school and flown in excess of 80 hours on the Lexington Group Tactical Flight Officer (TFO) training sorties. He is the ideal candidate to lead the FLIR Operator team in Abu Dhabi.

To act as a 'student', Sultan Al Tamimi has been chosen to accompany him to the UK. Sultan is a young, keen FLIR operator with 6 years on the police helicopter and 50 hours on the TFO sorties. Both Emiratis have good spoken English but Lexington will, however, provide Arabic – English translator. [JM/L]

AUSTRALIA

QUEENSLAND: A great deal changes in a month. Early in last month there seemed to be no chance that helicopters were to feature in the future of Queensland police aviation and a major car chase simply highlighted that situation. Time is running out for the police helicopter operating along the Gold Coast area of the State and additional helicopters were just a politician's pre-election promise.

Over a few weeks though the situation changed and on April 22 it was announced that the Gold Coast helicopter is to be made permanent and another acquired.

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UKAS QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The incoming government met its election promises and announced that the Queensland Government will take over funding of a police helicopter on the Gold Coast, with its use expanded from just over 14 hours a week to 20 hours each week. A second helicopter would be funded for Brisbane and surrounds by 2014/15.

The combined cost of the helicopters to taxpayers is expected to be \$18M. [Brisbane Times]

MOROCCO

GENDARMERIE: Last month five decades of Eurocopter helicopter operations by the Moroccan Royal Gendarmerie were celebrated at the 2012 Marrakech Air Show, where a commemorative plaque was presented to the military service.

The Moroccan Royal Gendarmerie Air Squadron operates a fleet of Eurocopter rotorcraft that covers the company's product range, with an inventory including SA3130 Alouette II, SA315 Lama, SA316 Alouette III, SA342 Gazelle, SA330 Puma, AS355 Ecureuil, AS550 Fennec, EC135, EC145, EC225, EC332 Super Puma and AS365 Dauphin.

Duties performed by this fleet range from search and rescue, medical airlift and anti-crime missions to VIP transport and fire fighting. [EC]



PERU

POLICE: A Bell Huey helicopter searching for dozens of rebel-held hostages in Peru's Amazon jungle was attacked with gunfire and a police captain, Nancy Flores, was killed and three others aboard wounded. The injured were named as the pilot, Major Roberto Ramos,

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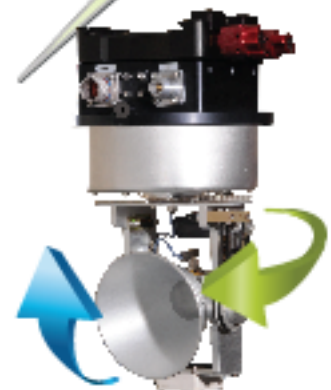


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Luis Gurero a police technician and a civilian Elver Huaman.

The attack came as the government sent 1,500 soldiers and police to the area near Peru's key Camisea gas field to try to rescue 40 construction workers who were taken hostage earlier in the week by Maoist Shining Path guerrillas who have demanded \$10M in ransom.

Gunfire from a group of rebels tore through the helicopter as it was patrolling an area of lakes in the Echarate district, and the police officer died. The civilian wounded on the helicopter was working as a guide.

Mass abductions are rare in Peru, this kidnapping showed a new brazenness from the Shining Path. The cocaine-trade funded rebel band is a small remnant of the Maoist group that terrorised Peru in the 1980s and 1990s. It is believed to number about 300 to 500 fighters and is centred in the Ene and Apurimac Valley region where more than half of Peru's coca crop is grown. The town where the kidnapping occurred is located in an adjacent region. [AP]

TURKEY

POLICE: The Anodyne Electronics Manufacturing Corp [AEM Corp] has announced that the Turkish National Police (TNP) has selected AEM's 400W External PA System for their new fleet of fifteen (15) Bell 429 helicopters.

The contract for the new helicopters was signed last month between Bell Helicopter and the TNP authorities. All aircraft will be built at Bell's Canadian facility in Mirabel, Quebec with the aircraft completion and mission specific equipment installations done at Bell Helicopter's USA facilities in Piney Flats, Tennessee.

AEM Corp started in late 2009, when Northern Airborne Technology (NAT, now part of Cobham) elected to close manufacturing operations in Canada, creating an opportunity for a new, 100% employee-owned company to emerge.

AEM Corp completed a licensing agreement with Cobham Avionics in December 2010 and now is the only provider of many of the former NAT products. [Via Adams Aviation who will be at PAvCon 2012]



Out of Egypt



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UNITED KINGDOM

NATIONAL: Some months ago a report on the state of the emergency services air components appeared. The RUSI report [Blue Light Air Assets: Cost-effective Operations for the Future](#) published in November 2011 was compiled by a researcher from RUSI it received a mixed welcome – the police and much of industry embraced its conclusions but the most negative reaction was perhaps that from the air ambulance charity sector. The report was far ranging but it is clear that not everyone was aware it was being compiled and understandably not everyone was asked for their opinions.

Last month RUSI held a conference in Whitehall, London covering much of the content of the report and bringing in some from the air ambulance sector that had not been consulted at the time it was being compiled.

At the core of the report is the fact that from 2016, military helicopters will no longer play a role in UK SAR, and the RUSI report saw that as well as a commercial replacement being put in place the other public sector organizations – including the police and the charity air ambulance – might fill the gaps. It was the inclusion of the charity sector that raised most controversy.

The expected participants included representatives from Parliament, the Health services, charity air ambulances, the fire brigades, NPAS, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and foreign speakers from Sweden and Norway.

Reports from the meeting suggest that there has been some easing back from the multi-role aircraft core of the Blue Light Air Assets report. The air ambulance sector are now holding their ground and putting forward persuasive arguments.

The NPAS Flight Operation Director [FOD] Ollie Dismore went 'on pay' with the NPAS on March 31, some two weeks after the target date set in advertisement of late 2011, but the day after he was finally released from Eurocopter UK. The tardy break with the former job has not served Eurocopter UK's image too well. At least the FOD started before 'All Fools Day'... just.

Currently the funding the FOD post looks a bit confusing, the soon to be disbanded NPIA set up the advert and Hampshire Police and Kent Police are funding the immediate support services for the post. These may pass to West Yorkshire in the due course of time.

Quickly the planners for NPAS were in discussion with a view to getting the show properly on the road.

The future message about where the NPAS goes from here is being rolled out at both public and closed meetings by each of the principal figures involved in setting up the organisation. Recent venues have included the AAA quarterly meeting at the Hilton Hotel, Coventry and the RUSI meeting. Whether the audiences include those with a firsthand interest has pretty

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much depended upon the willingness of the individual to get to the forums where the tale is being passed out to audiences. On previous experience [Helitech 2011 and Heli-Power were easy to access but all too poorly attended] not too many are as interested as they claim to be.

The next tangible move will be the creation of the South East group [including all or parts of Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex and Kent] in October this year. From there on others will be rolled out, the last county area is expected to be Devon & Cornwall but things might change.

EAST MIDLANDS: The East Midlands Police Force Air Support Unit has installed the Avlite solar helipad lighting system at their base.

Systems Interface - Avlite's UK distributor provided a system that complemented the Unit's newly acquired in-flight NVG technology. EMASU use full crew in-flight Night Vision Goggle (NVG) technology under CAA and international aviation rules and regulations.

Systems Interface supplied solar-powered, remote controlled illuminated helipad for day and night operations in both visible and infrared/NVG configurations that clearly identified the helipad on approach or from above during hovering or in low visibility weather. Avlite's AV425-RF radio controlled solar LED helipad lighting system with optional NVG mode was well-suited to the Unit's needs. The system not only minimised the environmental footprint but also saved thousands of pounds in costly installations by not having to lay expensive cable and power to areas of operation. Since the lighting system was installed, it has been "...in high use for NVG operations" according to the Air Support Unit's Chief Pilot, Captain Graham Hancock.

The AV425-RF system has a practically unlimited range and can be controlled from the ground, air traffic control tower, or aircraft cockpit, through the use of the handheld controller via the AvMesh™ network allowing all lights to transmit and receive commands regardless of a single point of failure, increasing the system's reliability and providing fail-safe, self-realising encrypted wireless communications.

The East Midlands Police Force Air Support Unit provides aerial cover to three communities in the UK's East Midlands region and strives to provide the best possible aerial support to its Police colleagues and other Partner Agencies within the three counties and beyond.

[Systems Interface]



Systems Interface Image

SOUTH YORKSHIRE: The resolve of the South Yorkshire police Authority to retain its own helicopter appears to have prevailed over the previous plans to shut it down in favour of a wholly NPAS solution.

Last month the 'Authority announced that it had reached agreement with NPAS to retain a helicopter based in Sheffield to meet its own concerns that the initial NPAS proposals, announced last year, did not provide sufficient cover for South Yorkshire.

The agreement in principle is that South Yorkshire will join the national scheme on the basis that the coverage will be divided between a Sheffield-based aircraft and the NPAS.

The Sheffield based aircraft will be available on a ten-hour shift for seven days a week, while the county will also have access to the national service operating on a 24/7 coverage

from their NPAS bases outside South Yorkshire.

Nominally the agreed solution now offered by NPAS will not incur any additional costs compared with the current South Yorkshire Police helicopter service. [www.southyorks.gov.uk]

Ed: The wording of the report suggests that much of the current infrastructure will go and that the crews, whilst surviving as an entity, will be operating pretty much permanent evenings and nights to cover peak air support demand.

UNITED STATES

FEDERAL: The US Coast Guard exercised a \$78M contract option last month to purchase the service's 16th and 17th HC-144 Ocean Sentry [CASA 295] maritime patrol airplane from EADS North America.

The Coast Guard has already taken delivery of 13 Ocean Sentries, with the 14th due by July. The Coast Guard exercised the first option on the contract for the 15th Ocean Sentry in August 2011 with delivery expected in the summer of 2013.

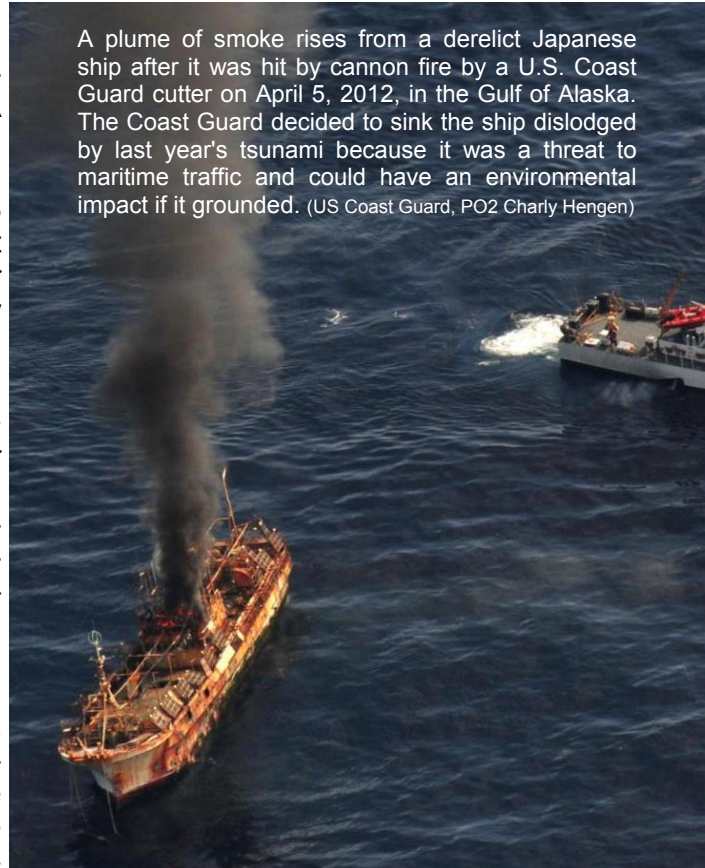
ARKANSAS: Two former State Police Bell OH-58 helicopters arrived on a low loader at the Baxter County Sheriff's Office.

The pair of DoD Surplus helicopters formerly belonged to the Arkansas State Police and had become surplus to requirements after they had purchased a Bell 407 [N524SP] for their own operation. The existing Bell serving with Baxter County is down to 20 hours before an engine overhaul is needed. The newly arrived pair, N528SP c/n 41748 72-21082 and N529SP c/n 42083 72-21417 will allow a replacement airframe to be put in place before the other is grounded and will potentially provide the Sheriff's Office with a vertical lift capability for a further few years.

NORTH DAKOTA: In recent years the tiny town of Lakota, ND has become a centre of some oblique positive interest in the area of military helicopters but it has now entered a further area of raised profile further the development of UAVs for law enforcement. It is being cited as a testing ground for the legality of the use of unmanned drones by law enforcement after one of its residents became the first American citizen to be arrested with the help of a Predator surveillance drone.

The case started when six cows wandered onto Rodney Brossart's 3,000 acre farm. Brossart, an alleged anti-government "sovereignist," believed he should have been able to keep the cows, so he and two family members chased police off his land with high powered rifles.

A plume of smoke rises from a derelict Japanese ship after it was hit by cannon fire by a U.S. Coast Guard cutter on April 5, 2012, in the Gulf of Alaska. The Coast Guard decided to sink the ship dislodged by last year's tsunami because it was a threat to maritime traffic and could have an environmental impact if it grounded. (US Coast Guard, PO2 Charly Hengen)





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A 16-hour standoff involving the Grand Forks police department SWAT team armed with a search warrant made use of a Homeland Security Predator to pinpoint Brossart's location on the ranch before moving in. With a population of less than 70,000, it doesn't make sense for the Grand Forks police department to own a helicopter, but the ability to call in a drone when necessary can provide a similar purpose.

All this was months ago and in the meantime Brossart and his defence team became aware that the drone had been used in the arrest. As is often the case in the USA the matter is considered as being potentially 'illegal' evidence gathering activity. The state counter that the warrants were already issued and that the drone was simply used for locating Brossart.

As has been found in other areas of surveillance – FLIR finding hot spots caused by drugs is one instance – there are worries about drones simply being in the air watching them.

There is no current precedent for the use of unmanned drones by law enforcement it is certainly grounds for legal in-fighting within the US legal community.

From May 14, the government must begin issuing permits for drone use by law enforcement. Currently, about 300 law enforcement agencies and research institutions—including the Grand Forks SWAT team—have "temporary licenses" from the FAA to use the craft. Currently, drones are most commonly used by Homeland Security along America's borders. This was the first time the Grand Forks SWAT team successfully made use of a drone, the last time poor weather intervened.

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AIR AMBULANCE

CANADA

SASKATCHEWAN: A new helicopter borne air ambulance service has been launched as a daylight only service in southern Saskatchewan. The service, provided by STARS, the Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society, and subject to a ten-year agreement with the government, became operational in Regina on April 30 with a view to transitioning to a 24/7 operation later in the summer.

The service will initially use one Eurocopter BK 117 helicopter operating from offices and a hangar at the Regina airport, until a helipad is built at the Regina General hospital. Patients will be moved from the airport to the hospital in a road ambulance. Later it is envisaged that an AW139 might be available.

Operations will be HEMS with an expectation that they will also undertake both hospital transfers and a measure of air search and rescue work in cooperation with the RCMP.

Ed: In line with the model recently proposed for the UK charity operations it is noteworthy that this is a charity based service with significant sponsorship from several corporations. The service provider, STARS, describes itself as a charitable, non-profit organisation with existing operations in B.C., Alberta and Manitoba.

CHINA

GUANGDONG: The region is planning a helicopter transfer service. The concept was recently promoted using a police helicopter flying from the People's Hospital of Guangdong. Under the glare of high publicity the police Eurocopter EC135 was employed to fetch an infant diagnosed with a congenital heart disease.

An official with the Provincial Government Emergency Management Office said it was a rehearsal for the adoption of air ambulances in Guangdong for disadvantaged patients.

The Second Provincial People's Hospital is the first designated emergency treatment hospital with a helicopter pad, several others are preparing for the establishment of air ambulance stations.

It will not be a free service, the air ambulance charge is to be paid by the patient is US\$1,587 per hour. [Crienglish]

SHANGHAI: Civilian helicopters are expected to join the medical emergency service in Shanghai. Beijing Capital Helicopter Co Ltd, which was established by HNA Group, signed an agreement with Shanghai Gaodong Airport, a helicopter airport in the Pudong area, to use the company's base for emergency responses. The first two helicopters will arrive at the

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base as early as this month.

A drill the company conducted in January proved that the system is workable at a cost of 100,000 yuan for transportation and medical fees. The helicopter cost 30,000 yuan an hour. In the drill, the helicopter took only 41 minutes to carry an injured boy from Zhangjiakou, Hebei province, to Beijing. It would take about three hours by car.

In 2011, Shanghai started using police helicopters for medical rescues to improve the speed in providing first aid. Currently four hospitals in the city - Huashan, Ruijin, Changhai and Changzheng - have helipads and fast access between the helipad and the operating room.

Whilst the principle was set there remain some difficulties and Beijing Capital Helicopter has called for a financial support system to popularize the service. It is all about who pays the bill and it is likely that insurance rather than charity will be the locally agreed solution. There are 20M people in Beijing and if 20% were to buy 100 yuan (\$15.86) of insurance, the system would be funded. [China Daily]

GERMANY

ADAC: German EMS operator ADAC has recently welcomed the first female pilot to their roster of around 150. Melanie von Allwörden has joined the "Christoph 39" base at Perleberg, some 100 miles south east of Hamburg, flying a Eurocopter EC135. The 34-year old previously worked for the Hamburg Police – and lives in Hamburg with her partner and three children.

As part of its varied programme next month's PAVCon Police Aviation Conference taking place at the Bundespolizei facility at Sankt Augustin near Bonn, Germany is to offer delegates the opportunity to visit to the nearby ADAC HEMS Academy during the second day.

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See BMS at this year's PAVCon in Sankt Augustin, Bonn, Germany

JAPAN

AgustaWestland and Kanematsu Corporation announced they have been awarded a contract by the Japan National Police Agency (JNPA) to supply two GrandNew law enforcement light twin helicopters as part of an on-going programme to modernise the Police helicopter fleet. The two aircraft will be operated in Saga and Tottori prefectures.

The order represents the first sale of GrandNew helicopters to the Japan National Police Agency. The order will bring the number of AgustaWestland light twin helicopters operating in the Japanese law enforcement market to 25 and continues AgustaWestland's growing share of the Japanese light twin engine market.

Orders for more than 300 helicopters from the Grand series have been placed by over 180 customers in almost 40 countries worldwide.



ROMANIA

SMURD: The Romanian Ministry of Health's Eurocopter EC135 helicopter fleet will be increased with two additional helicopters ordered as part of a framework contract signed last year covering a total six of the twin-engine rotorcraft

This new agreement will lead to deliveries of the latest two EC135s during 2012, and provides follow-on to an initial helicopter ordered and delivered last year in the framework contract with the Eurocopter Romania affiliate. The rotorcraft are to be fitted with an emergency medical services kit provided by Austria's Air Ambulance Technology. [EC]

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SAUDI ARABIA

RED CRESCENT: Although many see it as something of a poisoned chalice PHI have won the troubled air ambulance contract in the country. Previous operations have foundered on a range of elements, many of them related to the inability of the cash rich Saudi's to get payments to the selected contractors. PHI has hopefully nailed down the 'due diligence' issues to ensure that they avoid the same bear traps.

Saudi Red Crescent Authority signed the contract with PHI last month. The deal will require the purchase of eight Bell 412 helicopters within three years – meanwhile a mix of Bell's and an Sikorsky S-76 looks to be on the cards.

The first phase of the new agreement, reliant upon the US company for pilotage and engineering, would see establishment of helipads in Makkah, Madinah, Riyadh, Jeddah, Qassim and Hail. [Pprune]

Ed: The previous variations of the air ambulance operation are reputed to have helped in saving the lives of more than 500 people in the past year despite the difficulties that had arisen in the contracts.

For the new contract PHI is to provide training to Saudi pilots and other staff members including engineers and administrators with a view to them eventually taking over the operation. Based upon previous experience of getting locals to achieve the necessary standards this is likely to be a very distant goal.

SWITZERLAND

REGA: The Swiss Air Rescue Service (Rega), 60 years in existence, had its busiest year ever in 2011 with 14,240 missions, according to the service's annual report. The helicopters undertook 10,797 sorties, including more than 2,000 night flights.

Rega also operates three fixed wing air ambulance jets and these undertook 698 missions last year; an additional 147 flights were undertaken using medical teams accompanying patients carried back to Switzerland on scheduled passenger flights.

Late last year a rival repatriation service was set up by the Touring Club of Switzerland (TCS), in partnership with a Zurich-based company, the Alpine Air Ambulance (AAA). TCS has 1.6M members and its travel assistance typically sees 800 people returned annually. [Swissinfo]



As part of its 60th year celebrations REGA held an Open House event displaying current and past aircraft and equipment. Correspondent Michael Mau was there to capture some images.

The displays of historical and modern equipment included a Bell 47 with a patient capsule on the side, an Alouette III, EC145 and A109. A wide range of rescue and medical kit, some clearly from the archives, was openly displayed on trestle tables in the hangar.



UNITED KINGDOM

AIR AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION: At a recent quarterly meeting of the AAA meeting a new full time Director was agreed, the post was seen as an essential element of the development of the AAA. The new face Clive Dickin will provide much needed continuity and support to various work streams now being directed by the Board.

Dickin was previously the chief executive to the Association of Plumbing and Heating Contractors but also has links to The Classic Aircraft Trust Ltd.

The meeting reported on a number of subjects including the Framework Document, Standardising operational data and a meeting with manufacturers. The reviewed document was first published in 2008.

AAA is now a member of the UKSAR/HEMS Working group looking at the Co-ordination of Air Assets/Multi Agency Responses/Mutual Aid Agreements a part of a strategic look at air ambulances interaction with each other and other services and agencies.

The AAA now represents 14 of the 18 air ambulance charities. Those who are not currently members are: Yorkshire Air Ambulance, North West Air Ambulance, The Air Ambulance Service and Wales Air Ambulance. The operations that have left the AAA are perhaps the greatest spur to do better in future and perhaps attract those that have left back into what is currently the only industry wide talking shop. The difficulty is perhaps that there was no common reason for the four to have left in the first place.

As an association AAA would obviously wish to have every air ambulance in England and Wales as members. It is, of course, for the Trustees of the charities to decide whether membership is right for them or not. The AAA has, over the last 6-9 months, undergone a significant change. It has refocused its attention on the key issues of clinical and operational concern and has resolved to be the organisation it originally set out to be. With that firmly in mind, they say that they are also establishing a new Associate Membership offer so that they can include commerce and others in the sector in future operational and clinical discussions.

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE: The Coventry Airport based air ambulance is looking to move to a bigger base and have launched an appeal to fund the move. No decision on a new site has been announced and the AAS state that this is mainly because they do not have a specific site and cost in mind. Staying at Coventry Airport remains the intention.

Warwickshire and Northamptonshire Air Ambulance was launched as an emergency service based upon Agusta 109 airframes at Coventry Airport in 2003 and has been funded entirely by donations ever since. In 2008 it established a sister service – the Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Rutland air ambulance and last year it took over the troubled Children's Air Ambulance, a charity which had spent years fundraising for an aircraft to transport seriously ill children between hospitals for urgent treatment. That service is due to launch in the near future.



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As a result charity chiefs have decided they need a new 20,000sq ft operational base to replace their cramped facilities.

The group continues to pile the pressure on the rest of the UK air ambulance community with recent announcements about high profile ambassadors for their cause. A leading sportsman with important connections, Mike Tindall, has become an ambassador for The Air Ambulance Service.

The rugby ace - who is married to Queen Elizabeth's granddaughter Zara Phillips, who has also featured in air ambulance promotion - will support the charity by helping raise awareness of the service, and fundraising.

Simon Le Bon from Birmingham pop group Duran Duran is also reported to have taken up the role of ambassador with the Air Ambulance Service and the Children's Air Ambulance as well as being linked with the separate County Air Ambulance. [see also items under Midland AA]

CHANNEL ISLANDS: A new state of the art stretcher and transfer equipment has been bought for Jersey's air ambulance service by the League of Friends. They gave a donation of £10,000 for the purchase of the stretcher, which is made by the American company Lifeport, along with special mounts for monitoring equipment and new equipment bags. In the past, the League of Friends has supported the JETS team by providing other essential equipment, such as an incubator for babies who need specialist treatment in the UK.

Jersey's Emergency Transfer Service (JETS) set up over 300 air ambulance flights between Jersey and the UK, nearly one every day of the year.

ESSEX & HERTS: The Hertfordshire Air Ambulance (HAA) launched as a HEMS service in November 2008, has flown over 1,000 life-saving missions.

The landmark call-out was on Thursday 12th April where the aircraft was despatched to provide critical care to a patient in cardiac arrest.

Herts Air Ambulance is part of the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Trust, a Charity responsible for operating two Air Ambulances and providing free life-saving Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (HEMS) for Hertfordshire, Essex and surrounding areas. The Herts Air Ambulance is operational 5 days per week from its base at North Weald Airfield. [EHAA]



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GLOUCESTERSHIRE: THE helipad at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital is to be extended so it can be used again, at a cost of £140,000.

Air ambulances have not touched down at the landing site in Gloucester since construction started on a new multi-storey car park in April 2010. The car park opened last April and although it conformed to regulations when it was originally planned, it is now in breach.

Health bosses have confirmed funds for an extension have been allocated and a start on the work is imminent.

The work will involve clearing a small area near the emergency department, formerly used as drop-off parking.

ISLE OF WIGHT: The new Isle of Wight NHS Trust has welcomed the approval of planning permission for a helipad at St. Mary's Hospital, Newport. This will enable patients with life threatening injuries to be flown from the Trauma Unit at St. Mary's to the Trauma Centre at University Hospital Southampton.

MIDLANDS: PAN has recently carried editorial stories that suggested some disquiet among the wider charity air ambulance community about the activities of The Children's Air Ambulance [TCAA] charity. Whilst the expectation was that the AAA would eventually make a statement on behalf of its members, it was not to be.

It seems that someone at the Midland Air Ambulance [MAAC] could not wait for the AAA to grasp the nettle. A document that was circulating among delegates and raising eyebrows at the recent Quarterly Meeting of the AAA was issued to the media in the wake of the meeting.

MAAC distanced itself from TCAA and The Air Ambulance Service. (TAAS) and urged the public to understand the difference between these charities and MAAC, and the concerning history of TCAA before donating.

At some length the oft heard tale of woe relating to TCAA wasting money and not having an aircraft was recited for a wide public consumption. Even the December 5, 2011 TAAS take

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over was not seen in a positive light. They already run the Warwickshire & Northamptonshire Air Ambulance (WNAA) and Derbyshire, Leicestershire & Rutland Air Ambulance (DLRAA) and their claim of a first TCAA flight just before last Christmas was dismissed as false, simply a normal mission hyped up. All hard hitting stiff to take in at one sitting.

MAAC like many others believe there is no evidence for a dedicated children's service and that it is capable of fulfilling any child related case in the regions it covers.

In response the new owners of the TCAA brand, TAAS, hit back with a measured defence of its aims and reasserted its belief in its own stance.

TAAS claim documented proof by the paediatric fraternity that just under 6,000 critically ill children each year require transportation to a paediatric intensive care unit which represents one third of all child admissions. The vast majority of these are by long uncomfortable and expensive road transfer that denude hospital staff in specialist teams. They claim that the provision of a properly run service by air will make a very significant difference to patients and to hard pressed NHS finances.

They accept that other Air Ambulance Charities are opposed to this service, but do not accept much of the reasoning in the same way that they are opposed to the current system of fragmented air ambulance provision across the UK.

Ed: All of these arguments might have been better thrashed out in a forum such as the AAA rather than in the media. There are at least two other Children's AA type charities out there proposing a similar narrow health provision and they do not have aircraft either. Like TCAA, Lucy AA and Nets UK are sucking money out of the charity system to little obvious effect.

UNITED STATES

NEW HAMPSHIRE: The Dartmouth-Hitchcock Advanced Response Team (DHART), which has been saving lives for nearly 20 years, has now been honoured for its longstanding commitment to safety and patient service.

The New England Helicopter Council (NEHC) presented its 2012 Safety Award to DHART and its aviation services provider, Metro Aviation, Inc., at the Council's annual meeting on April 17 in Tewksbury, MA.

Since its inception in July, 1994, DHART – New Hampshire's only air ambulance service – has transported more than 14,500 patients in the air over 1,510,000 miles. DHART operates two helicopters: one at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, and a second based at the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport in Manchester, NH. The DHART program also includes two ground-based ambulances based in Lebanon. Approximately 75% of their work involves transporting critically ill or injured patients from one hospital to another.

Below: Members of the DHART team with awards received from the New England Helicopter Council and American Eurocopter for more than 16,000 hours of safe flight. (Photo by Anne Clemens/Dartmouth-Hitchcock)



NEW JERSEY: Atlantic Ambulance Corporation, a subsidiary of Atlantic Health System, the parent company of Morristown, Overlook and Newton Medical Centers and Goryeb Children's Hospital, last month added its third Eurocopter EC135 medevac helicopter into service over northern New Jersey.

Atlantic Air Three, will provide service primarily to the residents of Sussex and Passaic Counties. The addition of the helicopter to serve this area follows Atlantic Health System's merger with Newton Medical Center last year, and reflects the organization's commitment to providing high-quality services to residents in these communities.

The PHI operated helicopters are equipped with state-of-the-art equipment such as GPS, radar, an aircraft collision avoidance system and four different communications radios, including satellite.

Atlantic Air Three will be based in Netcong with Atlantic Air One, but unlike Air One, will respond to medevac calls from the helipad located at the Mountain Creek Ski Resort in Vernon.

The airframe illustrated in this press story was N303PH c/n 0372 , operates from 1100 to 2300 hours.

NORTH DAKOTA: Sanford Health has purchased two King Air 200 aircraft that are based in Fargo and will serve patients across thousands of miles in the Midwest. Previously, Sanford's team in Fargo leased one plane from a local company.

They serve every kind of patient, from the smallest of babies to the most critically injured adults, are able to transport two patients, two medical teams (up to five flight nurses and paramedics) and two pilots. They can travel approximately 310 mph and are able to transport patients anywhere in the continental U.S. and areas of Canada. The planes each cost \$2.2M.

Since 1984, Sanford's Fargo fixed-wing team has completed nearly 10,000 flights and flown more than 2M miles. By the end of the year, Sanford Health's fleet will include four fixed-wing and four helicopters with 125 flight nurses and paramedics, 38 pilots, and additional support staff and specialty crew members. [SH]



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FIRE

UNITED KINGDOM

AVON: Avon Fire Authority is seeking to award a contract for the provision of Air Support Services. The proposed contract will be for an initial one-year full operational trial of air support capability, which subject to the success of that operational trial and the availability of future funding, may be extended for up to a further six years of operational deployment.

The services to be provided include the lease of a suitable aircraft with operating costs including management, maintenance, operating base, hangar, landing fees and fuel with optional services such as pilots, observer, training and support.

The contact for the bids is the Devon and Somerset Fire Service based in Clyst St George, Exeter, Devon.

The intention is that the contract will commence in December through to the end of 2018. The bidding process started at the end of March and closes on May 1st.

Editor: In a potentially associated move it was noted that one of the redundant former East Anglia Air Ambulance Eurocopter BK117C-1 helicopter G-RESC was moved from Norwich to the West Country in mid-April. It is known that Avon Fire trialled an EC145 which suggests the potential for a similar type to gain the contract via Veritair in Cardiff.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

EGYPT

AIR FORCE: AgustaWestland announced the delivery of North America completed AW139 aircraft to the Egyptian Air Force via its contract with U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command (AMCOM) Contracting Center for Foreign Military Sales.

Produced in the United States at the company's Philadelphia, Pa. facility, AgustaWestland configured the AW139s for the Egyptian Air Force's SAR missions.

Now that the aircraft have been delivered, AgustaWestland continues to support the U.S. Army by training aircrews and providing spare parts to ensure successful fielding of the aircraft.

More than 620 AW139s have been sold for EMS/SAR; offshore transport; law enforcement; utility; and government missions. [AW]

INDONESIA

AIR FORCE: Early last month a contract was signed between Eurocopter and PT Dirgantara Indonesia/Indonesian Aerospace for the supply of six EC725. To be received in 2014, Indonesian Aerospace will customize and deliver these CSAR configured helicopters to the Indonesian Air Force under a contract signed with the Indonesian Ministry of Defence last month.

The aircraft, for delivery from Eurocopter starting in 2014, will be shipped to Indonesian Aerospace's facility in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia, where they will be reassembled and customised before delivery to the Indonesian Air Force.



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As predicted **Diamond Aircraft** launched its fully equipped maritime surveillance version of its DA42 MPP Guardian patrol aircraft to the African market at the Marrakech Airshow.

The variant is equipped with a combination of a maritime radar, an EO/IR camera, an Automatic Identification System (AIS) and a data-link.

Diamond Airborne Sensing developed a special SAR radome for the maritime radar, a pod that is mounted under the belly of the aircraft. Additionally this MPP will come in a completely new grey military look. Both will be further tested to receive certification soon.

The DA52 is the newest twin engine airplane from Diamond Aircraft powered by two Austro Engine 180 hp turbo-diesel engines, AE300E and designed to carry up to seven people. The maiden flight was performed by Christian Dries (Chairman) and Ingmar Mayerbuch (Head of Flight Test) last month.



Another new aircraft that is actually a development of an existing airframe is the **MDHI MD 540F** announced last month.

The type incorporates some extensive performance improvements and technology enhancements that are designed to provide a full-capability, cost-effective option for *military* operators. The type may eventually appear as a commercial product to add to the MD500 line but such a commercial development is subservient to the military type simply because the

company see most sales in that sector.

The 540F is an upgrade to the popular MD 530F, boasting a 6 bladed, fully articulated rotor blade system made up entirely of composite material and a more rugged landing skid built for heavier take-off and landing weights.

Development of the MD 540F is ongoing, and flight tests have commenced. Initial certification is projected for the 1st quarter of 2013.

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Last month **Specialist Aviation Services** (SAS), the UK based emergency services and utility operator, celebrated having achieved 100,000 flying hours with the MD 902 Explorer. The group is the largest operator of MD902 Explorers in the world and first introduced the type into the UK in 1998 as a dual-role Police and Air Ambulance helicopter. SAS now supports over 20 Explorers flying in a variety of roles across the UK – this fleet also having amassed over a quarter of a million flights. Several of the Explorers are operating 24 hours a day and achieving up to 1,500 flying hours per annum. [SAS]

L-3 WESCAM has announced that it was part of a three member industry team deployed by the US Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agency to participate in exercises to help detect, identify and track illegal activity along the US border. The event was funded by the DHS Science and Technology Directorate and was formulated to evaluate a new surveillance system for use by the CBP on border missions. Working partners for these exercises were Raven Industries and Logos Technologies.

L-3's Flexible Area Surveillance Technology (FAST), a fully integrated surveillance solution, performed flawlessly throughout the evaluation. The solution includes an aerostat platform, a WESCAM EO/IR imaging system, connections to a ground control centre and the ability to view acquired surveillance footage from ground stations. For demonstration purposes, the solution also included the Kestrel EO/IR sensor from Logos Technologies.

For this evaluation, the aerostat was equipped with WESCAM's MX™-15 sensor. Its ultra long-range imaging capability and leading EO/IR technology successfully uncovered critical visual detail while operating from an altitude of 2,000 feet during daylight, lowlight and night evaluations.

GippsAERO the manufacturer of the GA8 Airvan, has announced a new partnership with MT-Propeller to provide a low noise solution to European operators.

The lightweight, composite MT-Propeller will give Airvan operators a significantly reduced noise footprint; a great benefit to European operators; due to the stringent noise regulations set by EASA and local authorities. On completion of the project, the propeller will be offered as an option with all new GA8 Airvans and will be offered under a Service Bulletin to existing Airvan owners.

The GA8 Airvan, an 8 seat utility aircraft, received type certification for Europe in 2005 and has since gained wide acceptance; Airvans now flying in Germany, United Kingdom, Lithuania, Romania, Netherlands, France, Luxembourg and Ireland. The aircraft has been adopted by a growing number of commercial operators in tourism, air taxi, skydive, and law enforcement segments.

The test flight of the Airvan fitted with MT propeller is planned for next month, and certification to follow soon after. Once certified, the propeller will be offered to both Normally Aspirated and Turbo Charged variants. [GA]

Ed: GippsAERO will be at next months PAvCon with a stand and an aircraft in the static.

On April 4 an unmanned and unarmed USAF **Remotely Piloted Aircraft** used to monitor piracy off the East African coast crashed into sea water in the vicinity of the runway at the Seychelles International Airport on the island of Mahe. There are no reports of injuries and no indications of any hostile act that contributed to the incident. [Seychelles Ministry of Tourism & Culture]

Embraer has reported sales of its EMB-314/A-29 Super Tucano aircraft to three African countries primarily for border patrol and counter insurgency. The three countries are Angola, Burkina Faso and Mauritania. Burkina Faso, who were reported to be operating Celer Xenon light autogyros on police missions in 2010 already has three in service and Angola are ordering six of which three will be delivered this year.

Mauritania will take delivery of an undisclosed number of the aircraft from next year. [Flight]

Daily inspections are being carried out on one of Scotland's helicopter air ambulance fleet following concerns about their safety. Action by EASA and **Eurocopter** has established that a rotor head crack found on the Bond operated EC135 is an isolated incident across the fleet.

About 1,000 EC135 models worldwide have been inspected for the problem but no other airframe has been found to be showing indications of a similar crack.

Meanwhile the airframe at the centre of the problem is undergoing safety inspections each day while the fault is being investigated. The suspect part was replaced immediately.





A European Union report into state aided aircraft projects has declared that the French **Gecis Skylander** turbo prop aircraft needs extra investments worth tens of millions of euros.

The project to build the small, light Skylander aircraft suitable for hard-to-access areas, should cost €306M, or €70M more than initially planned. Although the funding shortfall has been identified the project's technical quality has been praised.

The Skylander, which has yet to make its first flight and should be delivered to customers as of 2014, is seen as key to support the economy and industry of France's north eastern Lorraine region.


The Skylander is designed to carry up to 19 passengers or 2.7 tonnes of cargo and to serve the needs of small airlines and logistics specialists like FedEx as well as to conduct surveillance flights.

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The report deemed Geci's plan to deliver 1,500 planes in 15 years too optimistic, not taking into account any possible delays or adaptations to the aircraft. Delivery of 1,000 aircraft in 20 years - or 48 aircraft a year - would be more realistic. [Reuters]

After the successful funding and completion of two hospital emergency landing pads - one onsite at Southampton General Hospital opened late last year and the other opened a few years ago at Oswestry Spinal Injuries hospital - the **HELP Appeal** is now looking for further helipad projects at key A&E hospitals across the country. A long list of projects wait funding.

The HELP Appeal, established by the County Air Ambulance Trust, provides non-repayable grants to hospitals needing financial support to build life-saving helipads, or to upgrade existing facilities with lighting for night flights. Hospitals looking for helipad funding should call +44 192 261 8058 or contact robert.b@helpappeal.org.uk

L-3 Communications announced that it has entered into an agreement to acquire the assets of Thales Training & Simulation Ltd's civil aircraft simulation and training business. The purchase price is £83M (\$132M) and will be funded with cash on hand.

Headquartered in Crawley, United Kingdom, the business employs approximately 400 people. It is a leading manufacturer of commercial flight simulation equipment, with an installed base of more than 540 simulators and a significant global customer roster. The business also operates a training center in Asia. Its advanced civil aircraft simulators are compliant with U.S. Federal Aviation Administration, European Aviation Safety Agency and International Civil Aviation Organization regulations.

The acquisition is anticipated to be completed in the summer of 2012, subject to customary closing conditions and regulatory approvals.

The 500th and 501st EC145 helicopters has been delivered by Eurocopter to **Transportes Aereos Pegaso**, which is the largest Mexican operator in the Gulf of Mexico. Pegaso already operates 13 EC145s and four of the predecessor BK117 versions, an additional EC145 is to be provided to this customer this month.



Kazan Helicopters has successfully completed the first demonstration flight of the multi-role civil Ansat helicopter with a hydro-mechanical flight control system. To date Kazan Helicopters has produced two prototypes of the new Ansat for aerial and ground-based testing. The company previously developed a version of the Ansat featuring a fly-by-wire (FBW) flight control system. This innovative development threw up an unexpected obstacle, as no FBW civilian helicopter had been certificated before and no standard requirements existed and the traditional hydro-mechanical flight control system was seen as the best alternative option.

The FBW Ansat will continue development for the military. Russia's Defence Ministry purchases the Ansat-U training helicopter for its flight training schools. The latest batch was delivered to the Air Force Training Centre in Syzran in 2011.

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The inauguration ceremony at **Eurocopter** Japan's brand new facility at Kobe Airport marks a new milestone for Eurocopter in a country that has been one of its most successful markets in Asia. With the support of the Japanese government and local authorities, Eurocopter Japan will augment its support and services capacity to enhance helicopter safety, cost-efficiency as well as mission capabilities, and contribute to the country's aviation industry development.

The new Kobe hangar can accommodate up to 25 mid-sized rotary-wing aircraft as compared to 15 helicopters in its previous location in Osaka, thus significantly increasing its MRO capabilities. The modern, state-of-the-art hangar represents a new hangar concept that could become the reference in future hangar designs in Japan – environmental friendliness being at the core of its design concept. The mostly-white, contemporary architecture building comes complete with solar panel systems and large window panels allowing natural light.

As part of an ongoing expansion of product offerings, **REB Technologies, Inc.** (REBTECH) has received an FAA Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) for the installation of an intravenous (IV) medical pump mounting system. The mount can accommodate up to three SPACE Infusion Pumps manufactured by the global medical products company, B. Braun Medical, Inc., and applies to the 206A/B, 206L, and 407 series helicopters. The SPACE IV pump is widely used during medical patient transport and features a compact and lightweight design for easy transport and flexibility. The modern pump also contains a comprehensive internal drug dosage library with integrated safety features to mitigate incorrect infusion delivery rates.

Bell Helicopter has opened a new office in New Delhi for all of its operations in India. Bell has had a presence in India for nearly 20 years, opening a liaison office in 1995. There are currently more than 100 Bell aircraft operating throughout India.

Currently, there are two Bell Helicopter Customer Service Facilities in the region. Deccan Aviation, located in Bangalore, and Air Works, located in Mumbai. Bell Helicopter also has full-time Customer Service representation.



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Gama Engineering Ltd announced today that it has achieved EASA Part 21G manufacturing approval. This adds to Gama's existing EASA Part 21J Design and Part 21M Continued Airworthiness Management Services accreditations, enabling customers to utilise these services all from one EASA approved supplier and one location, Fair Oaks Airport, UK.

The formation of Gama Engineering Ltd in late 2011 at Fair Oaks Airport, near London Heathrow, joined together the combined talents and expertise of both Lees Avionics and Mann Aviation Group Engineering (MAGE).



American Eurocopter has asked **All Metal MS** to design custom maintenance stands for its manufacturing facility in Texas. These unique stands will solve a number of safety concerns that American Eurocopter and other aircraft manufacturers commonly contend with in manufacturing facilities. The goal is increase efficiency while improving overall safety for all staff working on and around aircraft.

These custom stands will be designed specifically for the streamlined manufacturing cells in American Eurocopter's Grand Prairie, TX facility, and will allow the manufacturing crews to easily maneuver around the sides and top of the helicopters in compact spaces.

Pratt & Whitney Canada (P&WC) has received Transport Canada type certification for the PT6C-67E turboshaft engine that will power Eurocopter's EC175 helicopter. The Eurocopter EC175 is a new commercial multirole helicopter and the PT6C-67E is the latest turboshaft engine in the PT6C-67 family for the medium class helicopter segment.

The Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, Florida, has selected the **Becker** DVCS6100 digital airborne audio control panel system for its new Bell 407GX helicopter.

The aircraft is currently being outfitted with a law enforcement completion package at Bell Helicopter's facility in Piney Flats, Tennessee. The new Bell 407GX is equipped with the Garmin G1000H integrated glass-panel avionics system.

AIR ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

13 march 2012 Bell 429 N429SL. Air ambulance of Air St. Luke's, Boise, Idaho operated by Idaho Helicopters, Inc. Whilst night flying in intermittent rain and snow on a request for an inter-hospital transfer between two locations reported to be in VMC aircraft encountered unexpected IMC. En-route, they skirted intermittent squalls. Approximately half way to their destination, they observed a wall of unreported IMC and made the decision to abort the flight and return to Boise. On return, they encountered IMC that had developed behind them. Rather than land at night in uncertain terrain, the pilot made the decision to initiate a climb to 10,000 feet, file and execute an IFR approach to Boise. The aircraft is single pilot IFR rated, and the pilot is IFR current. [Concern]

2 April 2012 Bell 412EP N911FR. Miami-Dade Fire and Rescue. While taxiing at Opa Locka, Florida the tail rotor struck the ground. [Concern]

4 April 2012 Bell 206L LongRanger N424AE. Air ambulance of Air Evac EMS West Plain, Missouri based in Louisiana. The crew was transferring a patient from a medical facility in Winnsboro, Louisiana to a hospital in Alexandria. Shortly after takeoff, the aircraft experienced a bird strike. The pilot maintained control and landed the aircraft safely at the Winnsboro Airport. The co-pilots windscreen shattered on impact with the bird landing in the aircraft. Damage was also noted on the vertical tail fin. The windscreen and vertical fin were replaced. [Concern]



6 April 2012 helicopter. Air ambulance. An unidentified helicopter responding to a wreck involving multiple vehicles broke down in Interstate 95 causing the closure of the northbound lanes for more than two hours. [First Coast News]

10 April 2012 Robinson R44 Peru National Police. A police helicopter on a surveillance mission made an emergency landing on the roof of a house in the Peruvian port city of Callao, leaving its three crew with minor injuries. The three police officers aboard were taken to a nearby clinic for medical exams; the aircraft suffered considerable damage. [Media]

12 April 2012 Bell UH-1H PNP-357 Peru National Police helicopter searching for dozens of rebel-held hostages in Peru's Amazon jungle was attacked with gunfire and a police captain on board was killed and three people were wounded, including the pilot. The police captain, Nancy Flores, was killed and three people were wounded, including the pilot, Major Roberto Ramos, Luis Guerrero and Elver Huaman, [AP]

14 April 2012 helicopter. An Avera St. Luke's Careflight pilot has been treated and released from the hospital after a hard landing on a gravel road in Aberdeen South Dakota. The pilot was the only person on board as the air ambulance was flying to Avera St. Luke's Hospital after refuelling at the airport. An unusual noise prompted the pilot to make a precautionary landing in the northeast part of town near the Sacred Heart Cemetery. The helicopter sustained significant damage during the hard landing. [Media]

15 April 2012 Eurocopter EC135T2 G-ESEX. Essex Police Air Support Unit based at Boreham, Chelmsford, Essex. Reported to have had a bird strike. Minor incident no damage found. [Twitter]

26 April 2012 Kamov Ka-32 ER-KGD. Fire fighting aircraft operated by Pecotox-Air, Ukraine for the Ministry of Water Affairs and Forestry. All five persons on-board were killed after the helicopter, one of two being ferried from the Moldova to Turkey for fire duties in that country crashed at Ostrov, Romania. [Helihub]

FLIGHT SAFETY

After a fatal accident involving an Agusta AW139 helicopter, the Federal Aviation Administration is requiring inspection and possible replacement of tail rotor blades found to be cracked. For certain Agusta S.p.A. Model AB139 and AW139 helicopters, the FAA requires establishing a revised life limit for each tail rotor blade and updating the helicopter's historical records, repetitively inspecting tail rotor blades for cracks, and replacing certain tail rotor blades as a temporary solution. [CourthouseNS]

PEOPLE

Wiltshire Air Ambulance - one of only two remaining joint Police/Air Ambulance services in the UK - has announced that **Doctor Rod Mackenzie** is to be its Independent Medical Director.

Dr Mackenzie is a career Emergency Physician with a specialist clinical interest in Pre-hospital Emergency Medicine and an academic interest in injury prevention and control. He is currently a Consultant in Emergency Medicine and Pre-hospital Emergency Medicine at Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (Addenbrookes Hospital) and the Clinical Director of the East of England Major Trauma Centre. Prior to this, he has worked as a Senior Lecturer in Emergency Medicine at the University of Leicester and honorary NHS Consultant in Emergency Medicine at Leicester Royal Infirmary. Throughout his career, he has combined his Emer-



gency Medicine practice with a sub-specialist clinical interest in both civilian and military Pre-hospital Emergency Medicine.

He has practiced pre-hospital emergency medicine in established services in both the UK and Australia - and has been responsible for development of operational, training and governance systems. He is also the Faculty of Pre-hospital Care Sub-specialty Development Lead and the Chairman of the Curriculum, Training and Assessment Sub-committee of the Intercollegiate Board for Training in Pre-hospital Emergency Medicine. Although retired from active military service, Dr Mackenzie is also Civil Consultant in Pre-hospital Emergency Medicine to the Royal Air Force.

Doctor Mackenzie has family who live and work in the area covered by the Wiltshire Air Ambulance and has taken up this role on a pro-bono basis to support the work of the charity.



Bob Strickland, Business Development Manager to Goodrich, Sensors and Integrated Systems in Diamond Bar, California has retired from Goodrich and the world of aviation after over 40 years. He has moved to the mount Baldy area of California and can also be found most Sunday mornings on the Glendora Ridge Road in a US Forest Service uniform keeping the road beautiful.

Spectrolab has officially announced that Mr. William 'Dick' Richardson of LuxOpus Ltd with offices in Buckinghamshire, England as a New Distributor based in the United Kingdom.

Dick Richardson comes from a background in rotorcraft aviation having graduated from the Royal Air Force Technical College as an Aeronautical Engineer. He was elected as a Fellow of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers in 2002.

Dick can be reached via email at dick@luxopus.co.uk or you can contact him by phone at +44 1844 292865.

EVENTS

This message was received at the Editorial Office last month.

Dear Bryn

I am really disappointed to tell you that we are not going ahead with **The Helicopter Show**. Despite our experience in organising aerospace & defence shows, our vision of a dedicated helicopter event for commercial + military + private owners, in a state-of-the-art venue, with a cost-effective pricing structure did not prove attractive to the manufacturers. Without that base of support we cannot realistically attract the audience that you seek, so reluctantly we have decided not to run the show in 2012. Perhaps 2014 when the economy will be stronger.

Thank you very much for your commitment and for your support

Best wishes

Bob

Ed: There were a lot of annoyed people out there. Not only did the team setting up the show at Silverstone upset the Helitech team from which some.... no... all... of them had been born into the industry ... 'how dare they set up a rival to Helitech etc ..' they seem to have led the big manufacturers to get together and decide not to go for purely commercial reasons—too many shows.

The Silverstone team were banned from last years Helitech [literally] an almost unknown type of attack on a rival show where many other shows are advertised often on a contra basis. In addition it was a rumoured that there was to be a meet between the 'big' manufacturers to squash this upstart.

The list of exhibitors taking part were largely suppliers, a supporting cast to a group of main players who apparently decided the outcome of this event last autumn.

Damian Green MP, the Minister of State for Immigration will be the keynote speaker at this year's **BORDERPOL Annual Conference and Exhibition** to be held in London during October.

Damian Green is the Minister responsible for the UK's immigration, asylum and border control and he will be the keynote speaker at this year's first BORDERPOL Annual Conference and Exhibition at Central Hall, Westminster, in London, UK, October 16th-17th 2012.

THE SUPERMARINE SPITFIRE

A HISTORY LESSON IN SPARES

Last month it was reported that 20 Spitfire aircraft buried in Burma [now Myanmar] at the end of the last World War were to be retrieved with a view to being restored and returned to flight.

No matter how deep they are into helicopters and commercial aviation most readers will know that the Vickers Supermarine Spitfire was a great 1939-45 war fighter aircraft flown by most national air forces at some time. Some will know that over 20,000 Spitfires were built, a few might know that today there are over 100 still intact and 50 flying.

It is how that 50 are still flying 76 years after the type was first flown that provides a not to be ignored lesson in modern logistics.

Today you can rebuild a wrecked Spitfire to flight standard thanks to plentiful residual spares remaining from the 'price no object' support production for the 20,000 that were built. Three-quarters of a century on from the first flight some items might have to be remanufactured but for the Spitfire the rate of consumption of the spares and the urgency of their delivery is no longer critical.

If you switch to the modern scenario numbers matter a great deal. Arguably it seems clear that the least likely airframe to be declared AOG regularly is the in-production type with the most production numbers. So you have the EC135 with over 1,000 units, the MD500 series with something over 4,000, and the Bell 206 with over 7,000 and each has a history of reasonably good spares back-up.

The areas where poor back-up is an issue mainly afflicts those types with low overall production numbers and poor ongoing type development. In many cases it is fortunate for manufacturers that—as in motor cars—all types gain a strong 'brand familiarity' that tends to deter migrations to other potentially more acceptable types.

Brand loyalty affects all operators, there must be many sold on the legendary support of the high volume early Bell products [JetRanger and Huey included] who took a reality check when faced with the effects of the less than meteoric sales of such as the 222, 230 and 430.

In recent days MD have been seen to be pushing out the promotion of the latest variant of their high volume Vietnam era military scout craft based on the MD500 – small, easy to certify to military standards, and pretty bog standard conventional. Safe developments like these can assure company survival because parts remain plentiful and worthy of restocking in significant numbers for the spares back-up. It is noteworthy that an ominous air of gloom has settled over everything NOTAR. Far from being a jewel in the crown the 'super-safe' concept appears to be simply out of the production plans for the immediate future.

The MD902 fleet barely struggled over the hundred mark and the other two NOTAR craft [the 520 and the 600] have each yet to reach c/n 100. Truly new NOTAR airframes are not on offer.

With the low numbers – sales spread over 15 years – a large number of consumable spares



have simply run out. Who knows what production runs McDonnell Douglas envisaged for the NOTAR concept 15 years ago – but if they ordered 500 of everything it will all have gone now – consumed in normal operations. And that is where the rub is. If they go back to those original suppliers today [if they can even identify them] and ask for replacement parts in the numbers that reflect the actual fleet support requirements for the operating NOTAR airframes they will be laughed out of the factory. The result is that manufacture from scratch and rebuilding the existing units is the only real answer—and that can be very costly and time consuming in these days of mass production. The ridiculous plan to build just 8 hand-built 1950's technology BAE Nimrod aircraft was an illustration of failing to grasp the implications of dealing with small numbers.

So the parallel with the modern Spitfire production is that keeping types like the Explorer is going to be expensive and time consuming. Today operators of the NOTAR types are all too well aware that in intensive flight operations some parts are very difficult to source and lengthy periods AOG often result. Operators tend not to complain too much partly because of brand loyalty stops them trying an alternative.



As reported in this publication CALSTAR in California are offering their old fleets, including BO105s and Explorer's, for sale. The question is not whether they are viable flying machines, more whether they have enough spares on them to keep existing operators flying for a little bit longer by turning them into Christmas Trees. In short deferment of the issue – a ticking bomb with the end game being withdrawal from service.

Some readers will call foul on this – picking on the MD product line again – but it is only fair to point out that there are others in a similar position—some of the Bell product line for instance. Despite the company's enviable reputation in Professional Pilot Magazine, there must be a suspicion that that reputation is based upon the plentiful old military models and the variants of the 206. The sales records of the 222/230/430 and 427 are nothing to be proud of and the 429 has yet to set the world on fire.

With all these aircraft a lack of overall sales brings difficulties with 'unique to airframe' spare parts. The MD Explorer is taking centre stage on this but perhaps it was just fortunate that the Bell spares bin was deeper and has yet to exhibit widespread shortages.

COUNTER TERROR EXPO

This was a good and interesting show in a architecturally spectacular hall but the aviation content was low. Diamond Aircraft [due at PAvCon next month] and Ovation Systems were the only companies that spring to mind, although there were some with UAVs as part of their display.

The rest was a bit armoured cars and security gates. No photographs were allowed [even of the grand arches of the hall at Olympia] so PAN has none to show.

One aviation name—Northrop Grumman Corporation- announced that it has been recognised for excellence and achievement in the counter terrorism and security industry by winning four Counter Terrorism and Specialist Security Awards (CTSS) presented at Counter Terror Expo. Unfortunately none of the products had a direct aviation link.

The UK based Information Systems Europe won awards for CBRNe Detection and Protection, Command and Control Services, Cyber Security and IED Disposal. www.northropgrumman.com



PAvCon is next month in Germany.

This **Zeiss Optronics** sponsored event takes place on 5-6 June. Everything is pretty much in place for the event, the number of exhibitors attending compared to last year has doubled and the number actually expected to make it to Germany has already been exceeded to such a degree that some may have to be turned away from exhibiting but room for delegates will remain open until the start of June.

Those attending can look forward to some great Networking with industry and fellow aviation professionals. For attendees just about everything will be 'free' over a couple of days regardless of rank it has all been covered. Except getting there and the overnight stay.

The PAvCon 2012 will take place in association with the German Federal Police at their Hangelar, Bonn police air support facility. Address: Bundespolizei, Bundesgrenzschutzstrasse 100, 53757 Sankt Augustin, Bonn, Germany

An outline of the event programme is:-

Monday 4th June

Arrive and sponsored Bar-BQ on police grounds at Hangelar at 1900hrs.

Tuesday 5th June

0900-1230 Presentations and exhibition in the conference building.

1230 Lunch and exhibition in the conference building.

1300 Static Display of based and flown in aircraft and guided tours of the Bundespolizei facility.

1500 Resume Presentations and exhibition in the conference building.

1730 Closing remarks.

1800 Sponsored drinks and meal on site [Kantina]

Wednesday 6th June

0900-1230 Presentations and exhibition in the conference building.

1230 Lunch and exhibition in the conference building.

1300 Static Display of based and flown in aircraft and guided tours of the Bundespolizei facility.

1500 Resume Presentations and exhibition in the conference building.

1600 Exhibition closure.

1730 Conference closing remarks.

1800 Disperse

1900 Meal for remaining speakers [about 30 persons] at the Burgerhoff in St Augustin

DATES

8 – 10 May 2012 EBACE 2012, Geneva www.nbaa.org.

8-10 May 2012 GPEC. 7th GPEC is planned for Leipzig GPEC General Police Equipment Exhibition & Conference® is a **closed** specialised trade fair **exclusively for members of authorities** for the business with police equipment, security technology and services. A special conference and lecture programme rounds off the event which took place for the first time in 2000. This event addresses the following **target groups**: Police/Gendarmerie, Border Guard, Customs, Prison Service, Government Services and Agencies, Special Forces, Military Police and Infantry www.gpec.de

9-10 May 2012 Military MRO Conference & Exhibition, Prince Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tangent Link event. Targeted at the ASEAN region this two day conference & exhibition will address how Military and Defence agencies are overcoming current challenges and changes facing asset maintenance and sustainment elsewhere in the world and how ASEAN Defence and Military organisations could benefit from the outsourcing of these functions to specialist companies. www.tangentlink.com

14-17 May 2012 IFSEC International at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham UK. www.ifsec.co.uk

23-24 May 2012 Shephard's HeliPacific on the Gold Coast of Australia. Contact Hamish at hamish.b@shephardmedia.com

25-27 May 2012 AeroExpo UK 2012. Sywell Aerodrome, Northampton. +44 20 8549 3917 aero-expo@avbuyer.com www.expo.aero/uk