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WHAT IS IT?

See page 12

U.K. NATIONAL POLICE AIR SERVICE
LAUNCH DAY SPECIAL REPORT



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EDITORIAL

This month sees the Annual Meeting of the Association of Air Ambulances [AAA] in Telford on the November 19-20. As I reported last month the conference will offer delegates the opportunity to meet and share ideas on all aspects of air ambulance operations, clinical matters and charity fundraising.

What may not be on the table is the thorny question of how to make the AAA more representative. In the last two years the organisation has lost a number of members and the most damning aspect of this is that I knew that the 'retiring' members were leaving long before the AAA did. Most left because they were disillusioned with the demonstrated capabilities of the AAA and arguably the situation has not improved.

This month PAN reports on some meetings at recent political party conference where non-member The Air Ambulance Service has put itself forward at the self-styled core of a nationalised service virtually unchallenged by the AAA. Indeed these meetings only came to a wider public notice after a non-executive member of an air ambulance blundering into one of them.

It seems generally agreed that the future TAAS is promoting is of no interest to the majority of air ambulance charities; If the AAA cannot get its act together with its current set up it needs to import some dynamic new blood that is not afraid to fight its corner.

Bryn Elliott

LAW ENFORCEMENT

CAYMAN ISLANDS

POLICE: The Royal Cayman Islands Police Service is looking for a new pilot after one of the current incumbents decided to return to the UK to work as Bond Helicopter's TRE.

The post offers a salary range: US\$82,685 - \$111,228 per annum flying the unit's Eurocop-ter EC135T1 Helicopter. Qualifications include current CPL, with medical certificate (class 1 or equivalent), minimum of 3000 hours helicopter flight time, of which 1500 hours should have been pilot in command, with a minimum of 200 hours night flying experience, minimum of 1000 hours of multi engine turbine flying; EC135 type rating with minimum 50 hours experience, experience in flying over water during day and night missions. The number of pilots this is likely to involve is relatively few as there is a requirement for previous experience

Cover image: World Helicopters, the parent company of INAER and Bond, has relaunched as Avincis Mission Critical Services (Avincis Group).

in a Police, HEMS, SAR or Military role, with overwater operations experience and having an EC135 rating.

The Cayman Islands are a British Overseas Territory located approximately 180 miles south of Cuba and 180 miles west of Jamaica. With a population of 55,000, the Cayman Islands are known as a leading financial centre and a thriving tourist destination with two million visitors per year. They enjoy one of the highest standards of living in the Caribbean. [RCIPS]

JAPAN

NATIONAL POLICE SERVICE: Mitsui Bussan Aerospace of Japan has signed a contract with AgustaWestland for two AW139 helicopters to be operated by the Japan National Police Agency (JNPA) to perform multi-role law enforcement missions in the To-yama and Osaka Prefectures. [AW]



NIGERIA

AIR WING: Families of the four occupants of the ill-fated Eurocopter AS350B3e police helicopter crash in Jos have received death benefit payouts just months after the accident. The crash killed DIG John Haruna who was in charge of Operations at Force Headquarters. The death benefits amounted to 36,633,500 Nigerian Naira [\$233,300].

Beneficiaries of the payment also included the owners of houses that were destroyed when the helicopter crashed into their buildings in Jos. Those that benefitted are family of DIG Haruna John-N9.9M [\$60,000], ACP Garba Yelwa N3.3M, CSP Pwol Hananiah N3.2M and SGT Sanathan Shirunam N9.9M and four house owners. [Media]

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PHILIPPINES

PNP: One of the highlight presentations of the Tangent Link POLICE AVIATION event held in the Prince Hotel & Residence in central Kuala Lumpur last month was that given by Police Senior Superintendent Joselito F Salido of the Philippine National Police [PNP].



During times when it seems few worthwhile sales opportunities are to be found in the law enforcement market the Superintendent was announcing to industry that the PNP is embarking on a re-equipment task that is already part funded by the government. He confidently predicted that the new fleet requirements would see orders placed within the current five year plan but that deliveries would of course have at least a 12 month lead time.

The PNP is seeking six twin engine light utility helicopters with a minimum of 10 seats, nine single engine 7-8 seat helicopters, a fixed wing transport type with a 40 seat capacity and flight simulators to enhance the flying skills of the pilots.

The current fleet of the PNP is mostly in excess of a decade old, comprising the last two of a fleet of Eurocopter BO105s acquired thirty years ago, three Eurocopter AS350 from the 1990s, one Robinson R44 Police, two R44 Raven acquired in 2010, two ancient BN-2A-21, one Cessna 421B Golden Eagle and a single Cessna 150G trainer. All of the fixed wing are decades old.

In terms of equipment only the R44 Police offers the PNP a small FLIR sensor camera option and the plan is that the new fleet will be fully law enforcement role equipped from the day of delivery, taking the operation into a new sphere of activity.

As stated the first year of acquisition is funded and it is now a case of taking presentations from the manufacturers before selection of the various types. Although not indicative of the final selection it is known that the PNP has already considered the Bell 412 and Eurocopter EC145 but remains open minded on the final selection of the initial type purchase.

The POLICE AVIATION event details can still be found on the <http://www.tangentlink.com/> website

Ed: Although the pre-prepared presentation was based upon the proposed helicopter orders there were clear signs in the asides that accompany all such events that earlier presentations at the event on fixed wing solutions were providing food for thought.

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UNITED KINGDOM

NATIONAL: As predicted in last month's edition The National Police Aviation Service [NPAS] went live on October 1.

When fully rolled out it is expected that the national air service will have 26 helicopters running from 23 bases across the country and that the rationalisation will see the cost of running air support fall from around £63M to around £48M, and aiming to maintain the target of an average response time of 20 minutes.

Although there were areas of cooperation the artificial ownership boundaries of the air assets have meant that helicopters are restricted to operating within their own force area or consortia. The new service will nominally be national and borderless to ensure effective coverage of urban and rural areas alike.

Led by West Yorkshire Police, the new service will be phased in over the next three years, starting with four bases and 11 forces in the South East.

The forces are Cambridgeshire, Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire, Thames Valley, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire.

The bases will be at Boreham in Essex, Wattisham and Honington in Suffolk, Redhill in Surrey and Benson in Oxfordshire.

Not welcomed

Many on the 'front line' of the existing UK police aviation organisation stuck to their guns and declared that this was a terrible day and that the end of air policing as we know it had come. In part what they say is true, in other areas there are flaws in that and other arguments.

Launch day saw the closure of the RAF Odiham, Hampshire based Surrey and the Shoreham Airport based Sussex Police Air Support units and the transfer of the Sussex Police MD902 Explorer G-SUSX to a new, but not quite ready, base at Redhill, Surrey. The Surrey Eurocopter EC135T2 G-SURY was available for flight on launch day but it took on the status of spare and is likely to be redeployed to replace another EC135T2 G-ESEX, an aircraft with equipment standard issues. One thing is certain; some county based personalised registrations are going to be based far from their original home areas in the future. NPAS movers and shakers have considered a personalised series of NPAS registrations for any new fleet but as that is way off it has no more status than "Yes we considered that." There are many similar forming considerations in the moveable feast that is NPAS.

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A rain affected October 1 launch day was a mini media event and is just one small part of a roll out of NPAS. It was a long way from being a flashy and attractive launch, just a number of senior police officers and a Government minister hanging around awaiting their turn in early morning TV slots before repeating a fairly common but as yet unproven mantra of 'a better way to go' and 'cost savings.' Much of what was aired was source of police criticism by those in the business because the words uttered by the talking heads were not exactly what they wished to hear. For the public listening at home the reaction was nearer to bewilderment or disinterest. At best it is a complex subject that many will not grasp easily; a police aircraft is simply another rather special police resource how it gets or doesn't get to be overhead an incident is a detail of little real interest to 99% of the population. We may be talking about a special resource but to the public the problem is based on the arrival not how it got there or when or where it started its journey.

In what was a divergence of core subject matter Alex Marshall grabbed some subsequent headlines by being quoted as supporting the concept of unmanned craft in police air support – that too was quickly embraced by the doubters as an area of critique but as yet it is uncertain whether it was ever intended as a subject for the launch day – perhaps it just barged its way in on an unguarded moment.

Not everything in the operation is rosy. On launch day nearly 50% of the Police Authorities, arguably people occupying the more informed sector, had still not signed up. Nonetheless the build up must go on.

Bases

The number of bases is falling inexorably but there is a long way to go yet and until then numerous areas will have to continue without 24/7 cover that frankly they have never had before. On that alone NPAS can promise real progress. Areas



Above: Hampshire CC and ACPO Aviation Lead Alex Marshall faces a barrage of questions from a television reporter.

Right: An overview

Below: Ollie Dismore shows off the newly signed NPAS PAOC



with duplicate cover abound – for a while. By 2015 most of these are scheduled to go, but will they? There are already signs that nothing is written in stone. Dyfed-Powys was to be deleted but it looks as if it will host a fixed wing for the whole of the west. Recent comment on that yet to be selected resource spoke as if the fixed wing was there simply to service west Wales; it is not and is just as likely to be trolling around Cumbria as being ready and waiting for an incident in 'Downtown Swansea.' Wiltshire was to go but there are increasing signs that its departure will fit in with the arrival of the new Wiltshire AA Charity. Whether the charity will have to move out of its long term home in the grounds of police headquarters in December 2014 remains to be seen. It is significant that the Sussex aircraft now in place at Redhill retains the Ambulance paintwork even though it is effectively housed alongside what will shortly be the base of the Surrey/Sussex Charity Air Ambulance. The aircraft will continue to offer the region an ambulance service and police Night HEMS. There is no great enthusiasm for Night HEMS locally but it is possible the need will grow with the expansion of the recently announced air ambulance version. Just another imponderable.

Beyond that there are still moves within NPAS to offer co-location and shared support to air ambulances and perhaps even fire brigade aircraft. These elements, like the Dyfed-Powys fixed wing are not part of the plan announced two years ago. There is much criticism of 'the plan' but it remains a living evolving beast that might just result in a service that brings a great deal to the service table.

The people at the front – the pilots and TFOs.

It is not expected that more directly employed pilot wastage will take place. The effective shut down of Cambridgeshire, Hampshire, Merseyside, Norfolk and Surrey air units has led to resignations and redeployments within police air support and even the air ambulance world and 'leaned up' the number of pilots available. Any further reduction in the number of pilots is likely to fall on contracted pilots [from such as Premiair and PAS]. That thinking assumes that contracted pilots will more readily accept long distance commutes than those already directly employed.

It is intended that all pilots will be trained up on the Eurocopter EC135T2 and the MD902 Explorer. This will be an in-house process initially overseen by the NPAS Chief Pilot Steve Isaac but it will need to be monitored on a level above. Eventually a decision may have to be made about how many will need to be additionally trained on the Eurocopter EC145, for the moment both types enter NPAS proper late in the process with Devon & Cornwall and eventually the Met.

The effect upon trained police observers [TFO's] may be bigger. Everyone is being reemployed by West Yorkshire Police and that will have the potential to be catastrophic on travel and commuting. Thirty years ago officers could claim 'bus fares' for even the shortest journey away from their normal place of work. That largesse has now mainly gone forever so how does it work when your home is in Southampton [South Coast], your place of work HQ is Wakefield [250 miles north] and your normal operational base is somewhere in the middle? Such commuting numbers would not raise issues in the USA but in crowded Europe it is another matter.

The result is that many highly and expensively trained officers have jumped before they were pushed off a financial precipice. A 70 mile commute costs greatly in time and fuel.

There are rumours of mass departures at some units including South Yorkshire, a unit that was foisted upon NPAS by the South Yorkshire Police Authority. Whether there will be enough inertia in NPAS to mend a situation that they had no real support for remains to be seen.

Spare aircraft

Aircraft are being grouped in ways that were not originally appreciated. The Surrey base has effectively turned into an Explorer base. It makes sense when the police have available Explorer aircraft and that type is also the mount of the local air ambulance. Similar same type groupings will be common although there are significantly more EC135s in the fleet.

Maintenance

Nothing is going to change anytime soon. The aircraft will see out their existing contracts and that will give the NPAS hierarchy time to finalise where they go from there. It is intended that a mixed fleet of some form will remain so any glaringly obvious existing differences will apply. Eurocopter claim the potential to turn around an EC135 in three days, the EC145 takes longer and the MD902 takes three weeks or more even before unexpected problems become evident – all that uncertainty between elements in the fleet remains to be managed. The plan is that the significantly smaller fleet will deliver the same number of hours as last year and that may only highlight any deficiencies in engineering support.

Call signs

In last month's edition PAN raised the questions about radio call signs. Within hours the answer was forthcoming.

All the aircraft will take on NPAS identities. For most this will mean a new number but for Essex at Boreham the number coincides with their ATC PRN derived identity. Essex will therefore cease to be Quebec Hotel 99 and be both NPAS 33 and Police 33.

Getting together

The new service is delivered under the first National Collaboration Agreement between policing bodies in England and Wales. Unfortunately at the time it launched half of the Police Authorities had declined to sign all the paperwork on the deal.

West Yorkshire Police Authority has agreed to be the Lead Force for NPAS and this ensures that NPAS is led and owned by the police service and delivers the operational benefits and financial savings that have been presented to individual police bodies.

Minister for Policing and Criminal Justice, Damian Green said:

"I am very pleased to welcome the launch of the National Police Air Service. It will create the first national, borderless air service for the police, vastly improving current provisions. This is a great example of police working together to improve services for the public while saving money.

"This new police led, government-supported scheme will keep 98 per cent of people in England and Wales 20 minutes or less from police air support and will save up to £15 million a year.

"NPAS shows police forces working together can drive down costs. When Police and Crime Commissioners are elected in November their public mandate will provide a sharp incentive to drive forward even greater efficiencies in policing costs, while still improving public services."

The next group to join NPAS is North West from January 2013.



In the weeks since the launch there have been some potentially awkward developments at Police Chief level. Alex Marshall the chief constable in Hampshire since October 2008 and, as recited above, the leading 'talking head' of the whole project announced he was leaving his job and taking up a post as the chief executive designate with the new National College of Policing in early 2013.

More serious, though not for NPAS exactly Sir Norman Bettison the Chief Constable of The NPAS hosting West Yorkshire Police and formerly with Merseyside and South Yorkshire Police finally resigned from his post over his alleged involvement in a football tragedy cover up. Nothing directly to do with aviation but a blow to the project nonetheless.

The number of UK police chiefs getting into very public 'difficulties' that have resulted in premature resignation, retirement and even death in recent months has been staggering.

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: Some time ago the County of Los Angeles approved the acquisition of three previously owned Eurocopter AS 332L1 Super Puma helicopters by the L.A. County Sheriff's Department Aero Bureau. The new acquisitions will replace the ageing former US Navy Sikorsky SH-3H Sea Kings currently operated by Sheriff's Aero Bureau.

With parts and support for the three H-3's becoming more expensive and difficult to obtain, the decision was made to replace them. The three AS 332L1's that LASD is obtaining will continue the long tradition of the Department's Air Rescue-5 programme.

The Super Pumas will provide a power and capability increase over the outgoing H-3's, which will be especially valuable in the high-altitude mountains around Los Angeles County, and will increase the overall safety and capabilities of Air Rescue-5.

The change-over has not yet taken place, on delivery the three AS 332L1's will be upgraded for the Aero Bureau's missions with external hoists, nose-mounted forward-looking infrared cameras (another first on a Department rescue helicopter), night-vision compatible cockpits, multi-patient medical interiors, and various other airframe modifications specific to the Aero Bureau's requirements. [LACSD]



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LOUISIANA: Last month the Desoto Parish Sheriff's Office based in Mansfield, LA acquired a Robinson R44 Helicopter from the DeSoto County Sheriff's Office in Hernando, Mississippi. Sheriff Rodney Arbuckle says the helicopter, which is fully loaded with a police package and FLIR system, will serve people in other neighbouring parishes too; indeed the R44 has already been used to help round up dozens of suspected drug dealers in Sabine parish and the Webster sheriff also used after an explosion at Camp Minden. Arbuckle was prepared to spend up to \$300,000 on a helicopter, but was able to buy this one for \$15,000 less. The aircraft appears to be a 2005 example that the Mississippi operator acquired for its own use in 2009.

MARYLAND: At a ceremony held last month Maryland Governor O'Malley and the Maryland State Police Aviation Division accepted N381MD the first of ten \$12.6M AgustaWestland AW139 medevac helicopters at the Aviation Division Headquarters at Martin State Airport outside Baltimore.

Compared with the Dauphin there type is replacing the helicopter has larger cargo doors, the main landing gear

is wider at a little over nine feet apart and the helicopter is 5,000 pounds heavier. The AW139 cabin is 57% larger than the Dauphin.

The camera/FLIR system provides the crew the capability for heat-sensing, a license tag reader and satellite tracking. The avionics system includes the capability for terrain awareness warning systems, night vision compatibility and advanced instrument flight ratings.

The helicopters won't go into immediate service, the pilots and paramedics need to undergo extensive training which will take the in-service date into early 2013.

The Maryland State Police Aviation Division ordered the helicopters in 2010 and exercised an option for three more in July 2012. The delivery was delayed after some redesign of the interior medical fit was called for.

The old Dauphin's are not being overshadowed just yet though and it is they that will undertake missions for another year or so. One of the Dauphin's undertook the first test touch-down at the Frederick Memorial Hospital's new helipad in Frederick, Maryland, the home of the ALEA offices.

The rooftop helicopter landing is six stories high and 61 by 61 feet wide and directly above both the intensive care department and the emergency room – both quickly reached by lift/elevator.

The helipad was moved to the roof to make way for build a 400-space addition to the hospital parking garage. Both are part of a \$25M planning project that moved the landing site on the west side of the hospital grounds to the roof to utilise the elevator shafts that were already in place.

Before the test flight the fire suppression system on the completed helipad was tested and teams trained to receive patients who arrive by air.



MICHIGAN: After nearly a decade of being grounded, the Detroit Police Department has been granted a helicopter from the US Military. The Department sold off its small fleet of ageing AS350 helicopters but has now ended up with something significantly older to restart operations.

The 1970 Bell OH-58 helicopter they have been allocated is currently in Delaware awaiting minor repairs and transport and should be delivered this month.

Although the helicopter itself comes without a price, it will cost the department more than \$500,000 over the next three years, \$40,000 per year for insurance; about \$30,000 per year in fuel costs; \$60,000 per year for an aviation mechanic; and \$172,000 for a rotor and engine overhaul and \$20,000 to transport the chopper from Delaware.

Since 2008 the city has had access to a state police helicopter kept in a Detroit Police Department hangar and employs two pilots who fly two daily operations. Under the current agreement, the state police pay for maintenance and insurance costs; the Detroit Police Department pays for fuel and provides the hangar.

TENNESSEE: The Sevier County Sheriff's Office is to take tentative steps towards embracing air support for the first time. The organization is based in Sevierville, Tennessee under Sheriff Ronald L Seals, a 35-year veteran of the department who took up office in 2007 after being appointed as Sheriff by the County Commission upon the death of the previous incumbent.

In October Sevier County Sheriff's was testing a new helicopter, with hopes to add to its law enforcement tools. The white Robinson R44 helicopter N644RA will assist ground units across the county in mostly planned missions and only a low number of hours annually.

The department has been talking about getting a helicopter for an aviation unit for a couple of years, but the idea had only blossomed in the past six months. It will not be heavily used, being held for emergencies and planned missions. It will not be flying patrols.

The helicopter was bought by local company Public Safety Aviation [PSA] owned by Dwight Burnett and Jim Hickman, they will provide pilotage on what will be ad-hoc missions across the region.

The set up remains fluid with talks still underway with other agencies, city councils and the county commission to get involved and help support the unit by donating money to help cover the costs.

The Sevier County Sheriff's Department will be the central department, and the other agencies involved — Sevierville and Pigeon Forge Police departments — will have officers trained to be Tactical Flight Officers (TFOs), the eyes and ears of the ground units.

Training will reflect the amount of use intended for the helicopter so training

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days will be monthly or even less and will involve all the officers involved in the unit. To bring professionalism to the fledgling unit Officer Pilot Mike Traficano of the Mesa Police Department in Arizona was brought in to train the officers for the air unit. [Mountain Press]

TEXAS: Over a year ago, in June 2011, the Webb County Sheriff Martin Cuellar was given approval from county commissioners to look into acquiring a helicopter. In September a DoD surplus Hughes OH-6A helicopter was allocated to his department. The helicopter, along with specialised equipment and training, is valued at just over \$1M but will be provided at no cost to the county with the help of federal funding.

The county has agreed to pay the \$5,000 a year insurance cost, and the Webb County Sheriff's Office has agreed to use forfeiture money to maintain and even make improvements to the police helicopter.

The aircraft entered service in September as Air Wolf-1. Equipment includes an infrared camera system. The helicopter was purchased with over \$250,000 of forfeiture money and federal grants. Another \$800,000 in grant money has been secured to maintain the helicopter in the future. The 1968 Hughes OH-6A N62628 was delivered to Harrison County from DoD surplus back in 1996 but is not known to have commenced operations with them or any other operator in the past 18 years.

AIR AMBULANCE

GERMANY

AACHEN: Some pictures of the elevated heliport of the University Hospital Aachen in use since summer 2011. The heliport is fully compliant with the ICAO Annex 14 Volume 2 – Heliports standards and includes beside the FAO/TLOF a stand for parking of a second helicopter and an inclined elevator which ends in the basement floor directly in the A&E Department.

Text and images HeliportDesign Carloff GmbH, Essen-Werden, Germany +49 201 49 012 84 www.heliportdesign.de



SKYPARK: It may have been messy whilst it was being built but this futuristic helipad seems to solve many problems including minimalist footprint and a rain cover. [Heliport Design]

UNITED KINGDOM

NATIONAL: At two Conservative Party Conference 'Fringe' meetings held in the Hyatt Regency, Birmingham in early October the meeting organisers "The Air Ambulance Service" [TAAS] put forward what some viewed as some disturbing proposals.

Andy Williamson (the Chief Executive of TAAS) was advocating that all the separate Air Ambulance Charities in the United Kingdom merge together as "The Air Ambulance Service" and give up their individual county identities.

This line of thinking goes against the majority opinion of the many separate charity groups who rely upon the fundraising being 'local' in nature to engender a feeling among the fundraisers and givers that they are looking after 'their' own helicopter rather than some large corporate monolith. The fundraisers and the givers continually provide the necessary funding and this is because of the direct relationship between the people and their very own local charity.

The Fringe meetings' caught the attention of a broad swathe of industry, being attended by people from the air ambulance community, Members of Parliament and the aircraft industry. The Williamson point of view was challenged from the floor of both meetings by a number involved with individual charities and Clive Dickin representing the Association of Air Ambulances [AAA]. Reports on the effects of these challenges vary from Mr Williamson reportedly remaining adamant that his proposals were the best way forward to signs of a retreat in his stance by day 2.

For some time the TAAS has continued to push forward its own agenda in the air ambulance world. Some have declared this stance to be akin to domination of UK air ambulances in general. One clear example is the taking over of the ailing The Children's Air Ambulance [TCAA] which, because it has been seen as being a 'National' charity, has allowed TAAS to undertake cross border fundraising in what have previously been the local areas of county air ambulance charities.

The AAA still represents the majority of the charity groups, but not Andy Williamson's grouping of two county air ambulance operations and TCAA. The numbers of charities not renewing membership is growing and I am aware that in addition to the TAAS grouping Great North, Wales and Yorkshire have turned their backs on the organization. The result is that the AAA has been conspicuous in its inability to deter cross-border raids on funding streams. There are no rules that stop cross-border fundraising but clearly the Gentleman's Agreement is not working.

For the record the two evening meeting hosted and funded by TAAS were held in the Dolce room on Monday and the 50 seat Soprano Room on the Tuesday [9 October] and both centred upon the subject of Public Service Reform: Getting it off the Ground. The first formal meeting was chaired by Matthew Parris, a columnist with The Times and former MP; also

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present was Bernard Jenkin a Welsh MP who is the Chairman of Public Administration Select Committee, Andy Williamson. Day two was less formal but the speakers were Nigel Evans MP, Deputy Speaker – House of Commons and Andy Williamson. A whole string of 'also there' names have been mentioned but they were not a part of the formal attendance so I will not repeat the uncorroborated list of worthies.

The fact that this was being billed as Public Service Reform potentially cuts across future negotiations between police aviation [NPAS] and air ambulances so any souring of the atmosphere might have far reaching consequences.

This is a TAAS campaign with many venues. On September 25 David Brindle, Public Services Editor of The Guardian, chaired a panel discussion on the progress of the Government's public service reforms at the Hilton, Metropole, Gloucester. That occasion was another Fringe Meeting at the Liberal-Democrat Party Conference. Panel members included Peter Holbrook, Social Enterprise UK, and Andy Williamson.

I was set to wondering just where the AAA were in what is apparently a very one sided campaign and after an earlier version of this item appeared on Helihub last month I did not have to wait too long to hear verbally but the promised position statement never appeared!

On September 20 a joint statement was issued by TAAS, TCAA and the Midland Air Ambulance Charity [MAAC]. It appeared on the MAAC web site a week later.

As reported in PAN at the time, on 18 April 2012 Midlands Air Ambulance Charity (MAAC) published an article and a Notice to editors (the Notice) with respect to The Air Ambulance Service (TAAS) and The Children's Air Ambulance (TCAA). At the time the statement was seen as pretty hard hitting and what some saw as a long overdue attack on TAAS and TCAA. The latest statement takes on a softer tone.

The latest version states that the notice was not intended to cause any misunderstanding in relation to the good work undertaken by TAAS and TCAA. It was intended to clarify to the press and the public that MAAC is not associated with TAAS and TCAA.

The Notice made reference to the investigation by the Charity Commission into TCAA (under its old governance) in 2010 and some of the negative findings made in the Report. TCAA was taken over by the TAAS at the end of 2011. The Notice did not suggest, nor should it have been read as suggesting, that TAAS was somehow implicated in the history of TCAA or that TAAS has poor governance and management practices. TAAS's position is that it is a reputable and respectable charity and there is no reason to suggest that TCAA's former problems will be repeated now its governance is fully under the control of TAAS.

The Notice also raised the question of whether there is a need for a specialist service such as that envisaged by TCAA. The parties to the new statement agree that this is a legitimate question and that it is a complex issue. As the Notice stated, "Figures gathered by the Air Ambulance Association (AAA) suggest the average number of child transfers in each region nationally is between none and two per year." However, TAAS points out that the AAA does not in its data conclude that an air ambulance service for children is not required. Members of the AAA are not specialists in paediatric and neonatal transfers nor do they provide a dedicated service to this end. In fact, there are typically 5,800 transfers per year of children by land vehicles and around 200 by air, which is serviced by private providers and the RAF

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Thus on the one hand there is a body of professional opinion, including the Paediatric Intensive Care Society Aeromedical Group working group, TCAA and TAAS, that believes the need for better access to an air ambulance service for children will be best achieved by a dedicated service, and on the other hand, there is another body of professional opinion, which includes MAAC, that does not consider such a specialist service is necessary and which provides the service to all regardless of age.

TAAS' existing helicopter emergency services have helped save many children across the years, in the same way as MAAC's own service has done. Although TCAA does not own or lease any air ambulance, it has now made it clear that funds are being sought from TCAA for child rescues. Therefore MAAC accepts that donations given to all of these charities will help children.

In conclusion, MAAC, TAAS and TCAA all passionately support the provision of air ambulance services, and while there are different views as to the most effective means of provision of these services, they hope that businesses and the public will continue to give generously to all air ambulance charities.

Ed: Earlier statements of intent by TCAA have the operation launch with a dedicated helicopter as before year end. The clock is ticking.

KENT, SURREY & SUSSEX: The air ambulance operating two Explorer helicopters across three-counties has confirmed its impending move of one airframe from Dunsfold to join the police operation in a hangar at Redhill, Surrey.

The move includes intent to investigate the potential for offering 24 hours a day service.

Ed: Recent changes by the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) promise to make it easier to offer so called Night HEMS but it is unlikely that the ageing current aircraft can meet the technical specification, thereby suggesting a new aircraft being brought in. No order has been made public which suggests a fairly long lead time on this project. Meanwhile ground vehicles and the co-located police Explorer can offer a degree of night coverage.



NEW HOME: Seen on October 1 the still incomplete base structure for the air ambulance being constructed within the hangar the charity is to share with NPAS at Redhill.[PAR]

WILTSHIRE: Trustees of the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Charitable Trust say they are confident they will be able to increase fundraising to £2M a year by 2015. The trust, formed a year ago, is currently fundraising to ensure it is able to take over the service in just over two year's time.

Ring fenced funds from the old Wiltshire Air Ambulance Appeal pay 35% towards the shared Wiltshire Police helicopter/air ambulance, amounting to £700,000 a year. The newer charity remains responsible for – audit, accountancy, publicity, a small staff etc. so not all that it currently rises is being saved for 2015. The reserves were not quite enough to meet the future leasing obligations so a considerable sum has been paid by the charity towards helicopter charges in the current year.

In 2015 the new charity is likely to have its own helicopter without police funding; they will have to raise £2M each year to fly the helicopter.

Speaking at its first annual general meeting, on October 3 at Devizes Town Hall, chairman Richard Youens spoke of his confidence in the charity being able to support the full cost of

flying beyond 2015.

The charity has so far raised £1.3M – an amount greater than brought in by its predecessor the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Appeal - and is on target to build up its fundraising organisation to maintain £2M annually. Next year the target is to raise £1.6M which should see them with over £2M in the bank before the stand-alone operations commence.

The charity was formed after Great Western Ambulance Service (GWAS) relinquished sole trusteeship of the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Appeal after years of lobbying by campaigners who wanted it to be independent of the NHS. The old charity no longer takes in funds, its bank balance being sufficient to pay a large part of the air ambulance portion of the joint service until the contract ends in December 2014. [WAA]

YORKSHIRE: As reported in PAN last month the Yorkshire Air Ambulance [YAA] has been investigating a potential new base of operations for its main helicopter at Nostell Priory near Wakefield.

Wakefield Council have since granted planning permission for the Charity to develop a new airbase on the currently vacant site at the Nostell Priory Roses Building, within the Nostell Estate.

The new site will provide a dedicated airbase for one of the two YAA helicopters and include hangar space, office facilities, and accommodation for aircrew. The helicopter will be relocated from its existing operating base at Leeds Bradford International Airport whilst the second air ambulance continues to operate from its base at RAF Topcliffe in North Yorkshire.

If all goes to plan, as from next summer the charity will operate from the new base at Nostell in daylight hours only, as specified by Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) guidelines.

The Yorkshire Air Ambulance's will continue to use Multiflight at Leeds-Bradford International Airport as its engineering facility for its two charity owned MD902 Explorer helicopters. [YAA]

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FIRE

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: In July of this year the Santa Barbara fire and sheriff's air units were unified and since then there have been reports that the crews are not working together well. Santa Barbara County Supervisor Janet Wolf is standing by the newly combined Aviation Unit despite the critics.

Complaints, in part have come from a recently, specifically worded, anonymous letter that said it was from concerned fire fighters. In it there were concerns about training and maintenance policies.

Prior to the consolidation, Supervisor Wolf, and Supervisor Steve Lavagnino spent months researching air operations for first responders before the united unit was established. The county says the benefit includes a saving of over \$250,000. The police unit operates Bell Kiowa's and the fire department larger Bell helicopters. [Key]

SEARCH & RESCUE

CANADA

CORMORANT: AgustaWestland has announced that its fleet of AW101 (formerly EH101) "Cormorant" search and rescue helicopters has achieved dual milestones of 10 years active service with the Royal Canadian Air Force and 50,000 operating hours.

The first operational flight of a Cormorant in Canada took place in July 2002, with a medical evacuation of a sailor from a freighter 200 km (110 nm) off the coast of British Columbia. Later that year, a Cormorant flew a 1,200 km (648 nm) rescue mission off Newfoundland, demonstrating its enhanced search and rescue capabilities by surpassing the 1,100 km range of the Labrador helicopters it replaced.



SWEDEN

COAST GUARD: The Swedish Maritime Administration (SMA) has signed an agreement to purchase seven AgustaWestland AW139s for SAR duties. The new aircraft will replace Sikorsky S-76s that were inherited by the SMA after the Swedish government nationalised private operator Norrlandsflyg, which operated the aircraft on SAR and air ambulance duties on behalf of the agency. The AW139s will begin replacing the S-76s from mid-2013 with the last arriving at the end of 2014.

The order will come as a blow for Sikorsky. In 2008, Norrlandsflyg placed an order for six S-76Ds, but the late arrival of the aircraft, it has only just received certification, and then the financial difficulties of the operator have resulted in the type being changed.

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WT-9 Dynamic of SkyWatch CAP

SW-CAP

UNITED KINGDOM

In one of the largest search operations in recent times the Civil Air Patrol joined other members of the voluntary sector, the RNLI, mountain rescue teams and members of the Search and Rescue Dog Association, together with over 150 local volunteers, to assist Dyfed-Powys Police in the search for missing child, April Jones.

April, who was abducted from the village of Machynlleth, in mid-Wales, on the evening of Monday, 1 October, sparked a search of the village, surrounding rural areas and, in addition, the River Dovey with rigid inflatable rescue boats, canoes and a hovercraft. The air search included police helicopters and an aeroplane from the Civil Air Patrol. The CAP aircraft, a WT9 Dynamic, was flown by retired Royal Air Force wing commander and justice of the peace, Richard Hughes-Ellis.

During the extensive search by foot, on the river and in the air the Civil Air Patrol searched open countryside, the River Dovey and the estuary where the river enters Cardigan Bay and the Irish Sea north of Aberystwyth. Sadly, the search, which continued for seven days, failed to locate the missing child. A local man has subsequently been charged with murder, abduction and attempting to pervert the course of justice.



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INDUSTRY

Enterprise Control Systems Ltd (ECS) has secured a significant COFDM Helicopter Downlink contract with an established helicopter manufacturing company in Brazil.

The scope of this contract includes both airborne and ground based equipment which will be designed, manufactured and installed by ECS. This secures the company its first business opportunity in Brazil.

ECS see this project as being a very important breakthrough, with Brazil soon to be hosting several major world events including a Papal visit to Rio de Janeiro in 2013, the 2013 FIFA Confederations Cup, the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games. It is hoped that this already secured business will act as a springboard to provide further opportunities for ECS, who are renowned for providing reliable, turn-key system solutions for security and surveillance purposes at events of this scale.

Chief Executive Officer of ECS, Colin Bullock commented: "I am very honoured that ECS has won this business opportunity with such an important, well established company in one of the world's fast-emerging economies. This opportunity has been a core strategy for my Business Development Team and I am delighted that our COFDM downlink equipment has been selected for this application over our competitors'. The level of performance that our equipment is capable of far exceeded the expectations and requirements of the application which gave us a major advantage in winning the contract."

With this contract secured by the ECS team, it initiates the strategy to develop further business opportunities within this economically progressing region of the world. [ecs]

Late in September the **Night Vision Awards** selection committee were taking nominations for the 2012 Night Vision Awards Show to be held in Seattle at the Air Medical Transport Conference (AMTC). Unfortunately the whole idea was a bit wayward in planning as the announcement only hit the media a bare three weeks before the award ceremony on October 23. The last awards we held were at ALEA this summer.

The Night Vision Awards is an annual awards series with recognition events held at three key industry events in North America: HAI, ALEA and AMTC. The purpose of this event series is to promote operational leadership and excellence in the use of Night Vision, in North American and *around the world*.

Night Flight Concepts [NFC] has again joined forces again with ASU - as they did at ALEA 2012 this summer - to produce the Night Vision Awards at last months AMTC.

Nominations are accepted year round. Any flight operation using any Night Vision systems is eligible for consideration. Award nomination packets can be downloaded or filled out at <http://www.nightvisionawards.com>

Ed: These were 'always' perceived as the FSI sponsored awards and American only but now the sponsorship has at least tried to distance itself from both the one sensor company and the US label. There is a possibility that they are achieving the first but have a long way to go to achieve International credibility.

Soloy Aviation Solutions has delivered four Model 570-1000-1 portable Heliports to San Diego Gas & Electric (SDGE). The company needed to access remote locations of transmission towers for maintenance and inspection. The rugged free standing 12ft x 13ft transportable helicopter pads with a 6,000 lbs capacity met the criteria.


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Before the Soloy Heliports, a helicopter had to land miles away from the SDGE transmission tower and personnel had to hike into the area. Assembly of the Heliports is quick with the patented telescoping legs that adjust to any terrain and lock into position. Made of heat-treated aluminum alloys with stainless steel cables and pins, the Heliport is designed to transfer the load from the landing helicopter throughout the structure, minimizing the loading on any one structural member. The Heliport has a stable sling load and can be set in place with low environmental impact and no site preparation.

Soloy Aviation Solutions is a Washington State based company specialising in fixed and rotary wing aircraft power and performance improvements as well as contract engineering and aviation parts manufacturing for over 40 years. www.soloy.com

Adams Aviation based in Biggin Hill, Kent, UK are now representing McFarlane Aviation throughout the whole of Europe and are stocking their range of quality FAA-PMA parts.

Manufacturing almost 2,000 different parts, McFarlane products are not simply duplicates of the original part but have been engineered to be superior in quality and have a longer and more reliable service life. Not only do McFarlane products offer an engineer-driven and overall better solution but also a lower price - up to 60% less than the equivalent aircraft manufacturer's part.

McFarlane Aviation has grown in the US to become a leader in light aircraft parts innovation as end-users and engineers have realised both the quality and cost-savings of their products. Now, in partnership with Adams Aviation, those price advantages are able to be passed on to the European customer.

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World Helicopters, the parent company of INAER and Bond, has relaunched as Avincis Mission Critical Services (Avincis Group).

One of the world's biggest providers of air ambulances the group is establishing its headquarters in the UK to seek government outsourcing opportunities across Europe.

Avincis employs 3,000 people in ten countries and will be pursuing further market share in air rescue services, fire fighting and air ambulance services. Avincis is among shortlisted bidders for the UK SAR.

Avincis chose London as the site for its headquarters because of its proximity to the financial services market as well as the aviation expertise and the ease of travel. The group has 350 helicopters and 50 aircraft



After buying stock earlier this year **Cassidian** has now acquired a majority shareholding in what was previously Carl Zeiss Optronics GmbH from Carl Zeiss AG. Cassidian now holds a 75.1% stake in the new company, which has its headquarters in Oberkochen, Germany, while Carl Zeiss AG holds 24.9 %. All of the optical and optronic activities previously carried out by Carl Zeiss Optronics GmbH are to be continued under the name of "Cassidian Optronics GmbH". This includes also the South African subsidiary Carl Zeiss Optronics (Pty) Ltd.

For Cassidian, the acquisition of this part of Carl Zeiss AG is a strategic addition to its existing product portfolio. Cassidian Optronics will exploit Cassidian's global sales channels and its know-how, to provide its existing business activities with a long-term perspective. Both partners expect that the combination of market access and the integration into Cassidian's systems and platform business will open up new business opportunities. The company will be integrated into Cassidian's "Sensors & Electronic Warfare" business line.



Mixed messages at the Police Aviation Conference

Easy Access Industrial Design Inc. based in Peachland, British Columbia, Canada is offering a new in-house designed line of aluminium maintenance platforms.

The Scissor Deck industrial maintenance platform design, with US patent pending, has been developed from over 10 years of integrating customer suggestions.

The Scissor Deck product line includes benefits of a removable extension ladder which stows under the deck when folded flat. Product features include: multi height adjustability, interchangeable full surround handrail system, deck surface and high weight capacity locking wheel options. Three models with deck lengths of 4', 5' and 6', widths of 20" to 40" allow operators plenty of room to perform maintenance functions. www.Scissordeck.com

Meanwhile another maintenance stand company has been hosting members of its current major customer – The US Coast Guard.

The USCG recently visited the manufacturing facilities of **All Metal Maintenance Stands** to inspect the final prototypes that All Metal custom designed to outfit the Coast Guard's fleet of MH-65 Dolphin's. The multi-purpose maintenance stands were designed for use when performing both routine maintenance and complete overhauls on the MH-65.

All Metal developed the concept of designing a cohesive set of smaller stands which surround the aircraft with stands crafted for specific functionality.



The prototype custom stands underwent rigorous testing in the Coast Guard's Elizabeth City facility. After the testing, enhancements were made by All Metal, leading to the factory visit to give final design approval.

All Metal Maintenance Stands has signed an agreement with Bickel Wheels and Casters USA to exclusively use Bickel products on all All Metal maintenance stands. Since 1953, Bickel has provided top-of-the-line products to companies globally, providing their customers with the best products available on the market.

All Metal will be installing Bickel casters on all of its future production maintenance stands and will offer them as a retrofit option to existing users.

Lockheed Martin received a \$218M contract for three additional HC-130Js for the US Coast Guard last month. This will increase the fleet of HC-130Js from six to nine. The contract also includes funding for two mission suites, which are critical in supporting SAR operations. The new aircraft are scheduled to be delivered in early 2015.

The current fleet of HC-130Js, based at Air Station Elizabeth City, North Carolina undertakes the long-range maritime patrol requirement for the USCG. The Long Range Surveillance (LRS) aircraft also provide heavy air transport for maritime safety and security teams, port security units, and National Strike Force personnel and equipment.

The HC-130J's special mission suite is comprised of a two mission system operator station located behind the pilot and co-pilot, a belly-mounted 360-degree long range search radar, nose-mounted forward looking infrared radar and an advanced mission communications suite. <http://www.lockheedmartin.com/>

Pall Corporation a leader in filtration, separation and purification, has entered into a new partnership agreement with Carson Helicopters to provide an upgrade of its legacy Centrisep engine advanced protection system [EAPS] for Sikorsky Sea King/S-61 helicopters. Carson specialises in the overhaul, repair, and remanufacture of the S-61 product line. The new system can be installed on commercially certified S-61 aircraft, whereas the legacy EAPS was only available to Westland Sea King operators and government users of Sea Kings.

With approximately 620 aircraft in service today, the Sea King/S-61 model is one of the most widely used military and commercial helicopters in the world. As many as half of the aircraft currently in service are flying without air filtration systems.

The Centrisep EAPS is an inertial air cleaner system that removes airborne contamination from helicopter engine inlet air. The air stream is subjected to a centrifugal force that continuously separates contaminants and exhausts them overboard. The EAPS technology reduces erosion of critical engine components and hence, extends engine service life, enhancing helicopter safety, reliability, availability, and performance even under severe conditions (i.e., sand and dust; rain; snow and ice.) www.pall.com/Centrisep.

Ed: Russian Helicopters announced in Kuala Lumpur last month that the latest version of the Mil-8 family – the highly westernised, Turbomeca powered Mil 171A2 - is to have Pall engine filters.



Osimco, a provider of the latest in simulation technology for new applications, has published its product catalogue. This quality catalogue will contain thorough and detailed technical information about Osimco standard hardware products.

The company from Velbert, near Düsseldorf, is embarking on new pathways by showcasing their products in an easily accessible, detailed manner. At first, the catalogue will contain over sixty product data sheets with a focus on medium and heavy helicopters. Later, as they become available, customers will be able to easily request more product pages, reaching a total of over three hundred data sheets.

In addition to the established models of Airbus and Boeing, Osimco specialises in the growing market of helicopters, including the EC135, EC145, EC225, UH72A, CH52GA/GS and AW159.

More information about Osimco can be found in the product portal of their website at www.osimco.de and companies can request an Osimco catalogue free of charge at sales@osimco.de.

Tekever, a company based in Lisbon, Portugal publicly presented the latest addition to its family of Unmanned Aerial Systems, the Tactical UAS AR5 Life Ray, at the AeroSpace and Defence Industries Association of Europe (ASD) Annual Convention, last month. [October 10-12th] in Lisbon.

Specifically designed for Maritime and Near-Shore Surveillance and Search and Rescue (SAR) missions, the AR5 Life Ray is a 9 metre wingspan platform able to achieve a cruise speed of 120 km/h, carry a 90kg payload of multiple sensors and provide satellite communications. The craft is scheduled to begin operational tests in 2013. <http://www.tekever.com>

Rolls-Royce has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with **Scott's – Bell 47 Inc.** (SB47) to examine the application of its RR300 engine to the Model 47 multipurpose light helicopter.

The ancient Bell Model 47 helicopter is world-renowned, and over 60 years old with over 1,000 still in operation. There have been turbine conversions before from the likes of Soloy but this project may be seen as a step above mere conversion as a factory built option.

The RR300 engine embodies new technology and advanced design methodology. The engine draws on the proven record of other Rolls-Royce turbine engines to deliver a powerful and dependable engine at a competitive price. The RR300 was FAA type certified in 2007 and since that time over 500 engines have been delivered and it has accumulated over 12,000 operational hours.

Key attributes of the RR300 include: lower acquisition and operating costs; low-weight, compact design; improved specific fuel consumption; an embedded engine monitoring system; and the ability to burn a variety of commonly available jet fuels.

A new type of laser eye protection (LEP) for pilots is being tested by the UK Ministry of Defence.

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) has been working with **Defence Equipment and Support** (DE&S) to evaluate and assess the specially designed spectacles.

The LEPs can filter out different wavelengths of light from the spectrum, including those used in various laser weapons and laser pens, which are becoming increasingly available from the internet.

Unlike conventional LEP, which tends to filter out and block just one wavelength from the colour spectrum, the prototype spectacles, made by Glasgow-based company Thin Film Solutions, can filter out a range of different laser wavelengths, allowing greater operational benefits and flexibility for pilots.

This is achieved by a composite structure comprising a polycarbonate layer, made with a special absorbing optical dye, bonded to a thin glass lens with a special coating to reflect certain wavelengths.





AgustaWestland has been selected to go forward to the contracting phase for their bid of up to £46M from Round 3 of the UK Government's Regional Growth Fund (RGF). If the funding comes through the combined RGF and AgustaWestland investment of more than £100M will create a brand new industry sector in the UK with the establishment of a Civil Helicopter Hub. The projects will create and safeguard over 3,000 jobs across the UK and create hundreds of new opportunities for the UK supply chain.

The funding will also support the design and development in the UK of advanced technologies in the field of tiltrotor systems integration and for increasing the performance of tiltrotors.

The Civil Helicopter Facility will include a commercial helicopter final assembly line, helicopter maintenance facility, helicopter training academy in conjunction with the Aerohub at Newquay Cornwall Airport, and a helicopter Research and Development (R&D) Centre in conjunction with industry and academia.

RGF funding will support design and development work for the AW609 TiltRotor and future tiltrotor designs. AgustaWestland will work with the National Composites Centre, University of Liverpool and a number of key UK suppliers on this programme. This project will allow UK industry and academia to be involved in the most advanced and innovative aerospace programme of today.

AgustaWestland has launched the AW119Kx, the latest evolution of the AW119 single engine helicopter, which features the Garmin G1000H glass integrated flight deck system and the very latest avionics, including synthetic vision, moving map, highway in the sky and obstacle/terrain avoidance systems, to improve situational awareness and increase safety. Certification of the AW119Kx is scheduled in the first quarter of 2013.

The new aircraft was officially unveiled at the Air Medical Transport Conference in Seattle, USA, which is being held from 22nd to 24th October.

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ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

24 August 2012 Eurocopter EC135P2 N136KY. Air ambulance of UNC Air Care, Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Operated by Air Methods. During return trip to home base transmission chip light came on. Power was immediately reduced and a request for an emergency landing was made to approach control. The only suitable landing area was Pope Army Airfield which was about 3-4 miles away. Aircraft was landed without further incident. Inspection found chips on magnetic plug. It was found that the Air Comm air conditioning compressor drive shaft sheared. [Concern]

20 September 2012 Eurocopter EC135T1 N911CK. Air ambulance of Collier County Med-Flight, Naples, Florida. On return flight from hospital, 1/2 NM north of Naples Municipal, crew utilizing NVG saw a small bird directly to the front of the aircraft and then 1 second later heard a small thud. Pilot continued landing to base. Post flight revealed bird remains on upper cowling and rotor system. No actual damage to aircraft [Concern]

30 September 2012 AgustaWestland A109E N144CF. Air ambulance of CareFlite medical helicopter based at Granbury Texas crashed with a crew of three on board near Eastland, Texas, USA on its way to pick up a patient.

The aircraft encountered marginal VMC conditions enroute. The pilot made initial contact with ATC to open an IFR flight plan but while transitioning to IFR controlled flight was lost. The aircraft struck the ground tail first, 4.4 miles south of airport, sliding 500ft before rolling over and coming to a stop. The crash site — near County Road 309 — was less than six miles from the Eastland Municipal Airport, where the patient was waiting. Photos from the crash site in a farm field showed the cabin of the helicopter on its left side but with the tail rotor in an upright position. All three CareFlite personnel suffered "minor to moderate" but not life-threatening injuries. Pilot Scott Wayne Wallace, 58, of Fort Worth, Medic Teresa Lynn Campbell, 53, of Granbury, Medic Rhett Derek Drahen, 34, of Frisco [Media/Concern]

7 October 2012 Bell UH-1H N. Fire fighting helicopter owned and operated by Columbia Basin Helicopters, Baker City was damaged during an emergency landing 15 miles north of Medford, Oregon, USA. The pilot (the only person on board) was not injured. The 30 years old pilot Cody Seeger, was airlifted from the crash site by Brim Aviation, but he declined medical treatment. The helicopter landed on its side in a forested hillside several miles to the west of Rogue River Drive. [Media]

13 October 2012 Bell OH-58A N40TN Jackson Police Department, Tennessee. Aircraft lost engine power and force landed in Mount Calvary Cemetery, Hardee Street, Jackson during a firearms incident. Aircraft remained upright but the tail boom was detached and there was no fire. The crashed JPD helicopter was Air One, with Sgt. Gerald Wiltshire piloting the helicopter and Officer Tony Valdes serving as an observer. Both walked away from the scene and were transported to Jackson-Madison County General Hospital. [FAA/wbbjtv]

16 October 2012 Eurocopter AS365N Dauphin G- Air ambulance of Great North Air Ambulance. At Durham Tees Valley Airport, Darlington, UK the crew found the door to be unsafe just after take-off. There were no patients onboard and the aircraft landed safely. A replacement door has since been installed and operations are running as normal. [Media]



19 October 2012 Fixed wing probably Pilatus PC-12 VH-F.** Air ambulance of Australian Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). Aircraft was damaged and grounded after hitting a kangaroo while landing at Mount Allan Station, about 300 kilometres north-west of Alice Springs. No injuries to those on board. [Media]

Ed: RFDS Alice Springs list four based PC-12 aircraft in their fleet. VH-FMP, VH-FMW, VH-FMZ and VH-FDJ.

21 October 2012 Eurocopter AS350B2 N Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office helicopter made a precautionary landing after a bird strike. The landing closed a busy street, Del Amo Boulevard, Lakewood, for some hours. The bird struck the fuselage above the windscreen but caused no damage and the AStar was flown back to its base. [Media]

23 October 2012 fixed wing aircraft VH-*.** Air ambulance of Australian Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). Aircraft carrying a patient, flight nurse and pilot had taken off from Sydney bound for Wagga Wagga, it was noted that the landing gear lights in the cabin indicated that the landing gear wasn't locked into position correctly. Aircraft returned to Mascot to overfly so engineers could confirm the gear was visually ok. A safe landing was undertaken. [Australian]

FLIGHT SAFETY

On August 24, 2012 Eurocopter EC135T2 N862NC, an air ambulance operated by UNC Carolina Air Care out of Chapel Hill, North Carolina was sitting at flight idle on the ground level hospital helipad in Roanoke, Rapids, NC with the paramedic and his trainee in the cabin attending to the patient and the nurse standing about 30 yards in front of the helicopter at the entrance to the helipad, waiting for last-minute patient paperwork to be brought up to the crew. One of the crew noticed a man approaching the helicopter from the right. The crew then noted that what appeared to be an obviously intoxicated man standing about 8 feet away from the helicopter - underneath the rotor disc - motioning and talking as if he were asking "Can I get a ride?" The blank, glossy stare in the face of the man quickly revealed that all of our yelling and gesturing at him to go away would not have any effect. The trainee announced that he would get out and take the person away to safety. The trainee quickly exited the aircraft, grabbed the man by the arm and escorted him from underneath the rotor disc toward the security guard who by that time came rushing by to help. The person must have approached from the 4 o'clock position of the helicopter, just outside of the pilots peripheral view as he was engaged in pre-takeoff preparation cockpit duties and focusing on the nurse standing out to the front.

Although fairly new and measuring about 45x45 feet, this ground level helipad is not secured by a fence or chain. The helipad has an access road and parking lot in the immediate vicinity. The only safety measures routinely taken are to block vehicle traffic to the parking lot entrance between helipad and hospital entrance. There is no provision to keep pedestrians at a safe distance from the helipad. [concern]

PEOPLE

Sky Watch, the Civil Air Patrol in the UK has appointed **Dave Unwin** as its national press officer. Dave, a very experienced pilot, is well known as an aviation journalist. He is currently the flight test editor for PILOT magazine and was formerly the editor of Today's Pilot.

Metro Aviation is pleased to announce that **Amy McMullen** has joined the company as its Customer Configuration Coordinator. Ms. McMullen's primary focus is to assist customers with aircraft configuration, equipment selection, and layout in addition to wide-ranging support during the entire completion process. She has spent most of her career in the air medical industry working as a Flight Coordinator and Supervisor for Life Air Rescue for nine

years in Shreveport, and with Aeromedical Collection Services for eleven years specializing in EMS reimbursement. Most recently she was with Allegiance Health Management where she held the position of Vice President of Finance and COO at a critical access hospital. Her knowledge of the day-to-day detail of a flight program, reimbursement, hospital finance, and as a paramedic allows her the opportunity to work in coordination with Metro's customers to ensure a well-rounded approach when assisting in the decision making process for their aircraft. Company Managing Director, Milton Geltz commented, "Staying ahead of emerging technologies in the medical industry is quite a challenge these days, and we feel Amy's experience and forward thinking will streamline the configuration process significantly."

LETTERS

Bryn

I think you are running [the piece on East Anglia Night HEMS] in your latest edition [October].

Just for background info, I think it is worth pointing out that EAAA is not the operator of this aircraft and the Civil Aviation Authority has no dialogue with them. Bond Air Services Ltd are the AOC holder and operator, and we have been engaged with them and others since last year in developing a safe context for the beginning of helicopter emergency medical services flights in the UK. Landing at unprepared sites in the dark is potentially one of the most hazardous challenges in helicopter operations, and it is universally recognised that the Joint Aviation Authorities' regulations were under-developed in this area, calling only for illumination from the ground or the aircraft. We built our knowledge from the police sector, where we introduced Night Vision operations some years ago, and gathered information and experiences from many other states in Europe before issuing a Safety Direction and associated requirements that will set the high level of safety needed for this role.

The aircraft concerned has only very recently been delivered to Bond Air Services and has not yet even been assessed as fit for purpose.

Richard Taylor

Press Officer, Civil Aviation Authority

EVENTS

POLICE AVIATION



The speakers line up with the Moderator former Air Force General Dato Seri Addulrah bin Ahmed

Kuala Lumpur

The first two day Tangent Link Police Aviation Conference took place in the centre of Kuala Lumpur last month. Last year PAN dedicated half of a Christmas Special Edition to the inaugural one day event [it remains on line at the web site]. This year there are some news stories scattered within this edition but sadly the latest extended event did not thrill for sheer content.

There were fifteen separate presentations, including the excellent Keynote Speech from Commissioner of Police Rashid but half were industry presentations that were simply in the

category of Powerpoint projected brochures - pure sales pitch. It came across as a one day event stretched to two.

As I have said many times before though, these gatherings are mainly opportunities for industry and the police to come together in one place and on that count it ticked most of the boxes. There were some interesting personalities from the world of police aviation in the Asia/Pacific region – growth of the event is not meteoric but it is getting there.

This was the first opportunity for *Carl Zeiss Optronics GmbH* name to bow out and be replaced by the new majority ownership branding from Cassidian – needless to say not all of the stand artwork had lost the Zeiss logo. It will be interesting to see whether the new branding will positively affect the acceptance of the sensors on other EADS products.

Both of the new technology searchlight company's took stands, the Southern Hemisphere Trakka across from the more conventional northern Thommen light. Both had news to tell of certification and acceptance. The Thommen will commence Western deliveries this month, adding to the line of existing Russian deliveries. Their chosen certification pathway proved difficult but the final hurdles have been surmounted.

For Trakka progress is quietly meteoric but secretive. Most of the sales have been to customer's who prefer not to 'admit' to having such a quirky bit of kit so the sales team have been hampered. The searchlight provides a very good and flexible light source in a lightweight package that was the first to have been submitted to the costly rigours of certification. Sufficient to say that all the hard work on certification is finally paying off in an ever growing market acceptance. Even the latest bit of good news is not yet cleared for them to release, so it was fortuitous that the otherwise bland Eurocopter presentation came out and nailed it. Eurocopter are backing Trakka all the way and it will be a factory option to go on the EC175 and a number of other options not yet released!

The market now has two new fully certified searchlights on offer to a market still largely occupied by uncertified lights from Spectrolab; it will be interesting to see whether ultimately the MROs will select the new but proven by certificate lights over the heritage product.

Other exhibitors included such as Airborne Technologies, Breeze-Eastern, Churchill Navigation, RUAG, Russian Helicopters, Sikorsky, Viking and Vulcanair.

But hiding in the delegates could be found such as Bell Helicopter, GippsAero and Field, presumably looking to assess whether they would take the exhibiting plunge next time. For GippsAero there are perhaps additional pressures. The region is rich in the survivors of existing fleets of the GAF Nomad, there are a handful at Kuala Lumpur's Subang or Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport, clearly a good region to be inserting their updated GA-18 version of the Nomad as well as their GA-8 and GA-10 Airvan.



The Eurocopter Malaysia facility next to the Terminal at Subang Airport [Kuala Lumpur] is to be replaced.

No dates have been given but it appears that the new purpose built facility is being constructed a short distance from the jumble of hangars that currently serve the manufacturer.

Left: The current jumble of buildings used by Eurocopter is about the only thing [nearly] on view from the public viewing area of the airport. [PAR]

HELITECH—a Saga

Last month PAN reported on an item appearing in Helihub that leaked a story about an intended move of Helitech 2013 from Duxford to the ExCeL Centre in London Docklands.

Apparently stung by the leak Reed Exhibitions, the organisers of Helitech, the largest dedicated helicopter exhibition in Europe, grudgingly announced that the Helihub story was true and the 2013 event will be staged at ExCeL London between 24 – 26 September.

It appears that the move follows an independent industry survey commissioned by Reed Exhibitions, together with discussions with a number of the manufacturers and suppliers that currently exhibit, as well as potential new exhibitors and the European and British Helicopter Associations [EHA and BHA]. The stated aim is to raise Helitech to a new level of influence and attract a wider international audience but, repeated pressure from Helihub elicited that the all important survey was limited to less than fifty people.

From 2013 onwards the event will be called Helitech International. The 2014 show is currently scheduled to be held in Berlin, Germany and thereafter at key locations around Europe to ensure that all major markets are engaged. The new branding will seek to ensure that the goodwill and professionalism associated with the Helitech name will underpin its evolution into a more globally focused event.

The plan is said to have the support of AgustaWestland, Bell Helicopters, Eurocopter and Sikorsky, as well as the European Helicopter Association [EHA] and the British Helicopter Association [BHA].

According to the organisers the ExCeL London venue will provide exhibitors and visitors with an attractive array of facilities, including an indoor static aircraft display and the opportunity for customer flights in exhibitors' aircraft from a site 'just outside the exhibition hall'. Local hotel accommodation provides easy access and offers affordable prices ranging from budget to luxury all within walking distance.'

Ed: This announcement caused nearly as much fury as the NPAS launch – can one month take much more fury!

Everyone was doing the rounds trying to find something bad to say about the plan and mostly they found plenty. The worst flaw seems to be that the BHA were not willing partners in the enterprise that quoted their support. It seems that money talks and that Reed funding of BHA is such that the organisation felt obliged to follow their line – only up to a point.

The BHA Chairman Brian Humphries says that the Reed Exhibitions stipend of £25,000 a year locks in BHA support, saying "We either had to make the best of it or opt out, placing our solvency in these tough times in doubt with the loss of £25k per annum".

Bang goes BHA's reputation for being an even handed representative organisation for the UK helicopter industry – probably forever.

Helitech's ownership has changed regularly and the characters actually doing the job have changed almost annually. Lots of blood letting in this market. You may recall the Helicopter Show that did not happen at Silverstone... the characters involved in that were once part of Helitech and it was the new/current Helitech team that was at the centre of successfully getting the Silverstone event in September crippled.

Helitech International is to be an Annual helicopter show, a stance from Helitech that is exactly the opposite to the message they were putting out when a few months ago they were intent on destroying the Silverstone show – then there was an industry stating categorically that it could not afford annual events.

It may be an industry ploy to kick away the potential competitor from your path by fair means or foul – it looks like foul won this time – but Reed's pedigree is taking a knocking.

Reed has a good UK based show in Helitech but it has been to Europe before, the earlier foray to Helitech Portugal [the bottom left hand corner of Europe] failed by location because

The Helitech International website is now live and it shows the 24-26 September 2013 show to be occupying the eastern most end of the giant ExCeL building—a tiny portion representing the spare capacity of the building when DSEi is held in the same building shortly before Helitech [10-13 September 2013].

industry did not want to go there at all never mind once a year, so where the new show goes needs to be carefully judged. An intention to go to Berlin in 2014 coincides with ILA Berlin and the ILA Show has its own Helicopter Hall [no matter how poorly it may be viewed] so any intention of going to Berlin to be embraced by friends looks to be off the menu unless there is a secret deal already in place for Helitech to be the new Helicopter Hall.

There are annual helicopter shows already, Heli-Expo in the USA is well known as an indoor event and the initial plans published on the Helitech Events website reflect a mini-Heli-Expo.

For a decade a smaller European event has been quietly sitting in the Czech Republic [Hradec Kralove 18-19 May 2012 and 9-11 May 2013] and had intentions of widening its appeal in the outdoor market from 2013..... this looks as if Reed could be out to destroy that and any other competitors as well.

DIARY

6-8 November 2012 Dubai Helishow Incorporating Military & Homeland Security and Air Medical & Rescue. Dubai Airport. Contact details for the organizers, Mediac Communications, PO Box 5196, Dubai, UAE: UK Office Julia Cuthbert Tel: +44 (0) 1293 823779 Fax: +44 (0) 1293 825394 Cell: +44 (0) 7734 563324 www.dubaihelicoptershow.com www.dubaiairmedical.com www.homelandsecuritydubai.com

The relocated Dubai Heli-Expo Includes a conference entitled Exploring the Use of Helicopters for Firefighting and Rescue in High-Rise Buildings an event that will seek to address the challenges facing international emergency services, first responders, civil and government helicopter operators, helicopter and firefighting equipment manufacturers. It will discuss the solutions, tactics, technologies and the systems already explored and introduce new ideas to help meet the increasing requirements of this specialist fire protection and rescue field.

The line up of international experts sharing their knowledge and experience under the Chairmanship of last year's Police Aviation Kuala Lumpur event Rear Admiral Terry Loughran CB FRAeS, Royal Navy, UK who will bring presentations including: -

A Feasibility Study of Rotorcraft Fire Fighting for High-Rise Buildings Carlo L. Bottasso, Ph.D, Professor of Flight Mechanics, Dipartimento di Ingegneria Aerospaziale, Politecnico di Milano, Milano, Italy.

Experience of using helicopters for High-Rise Firefighting & Rescue in the Urban Environment – A Case Study of Moscow from Lebedev Aleksander, Chief Engineer, The Ministry of the Russian Federation for Civil Defence, Emergencies & Elimination of Natural Disasters (EMERCOM), Russia.

High Rise Buildings - Problems in Firefighting from LTBD DIPL. ING Frieder Kircher, an expert in high rise fire fighting from the Berlin Fire Brigade, Germany.

Establishing and Conducting Helo High Rise Fire Fighting & Rescue Teams by Larry Collins, Battalion Chief, USAR and Helicopter Rescue Practitioner, Los Angeles County Fire Department, USA

Practical Considerations for High Rise Fires and Emergencies by Glenn Daley, NYPD (Retd), USA

In the past this publication has annoyed the organisers by publishing actual attendance numbers way below the official figures. The show goes on though and it is claimed that 100 exhibitors will be there. PAN will not be there this year but I have looked at the list and it is clear this will not be 100 booths filled with industry, there are duplicate names and some are just publications.

A sop to the historically low footfall is the extended opening hours on day 3. The venue is a race-course and on there is a meeting taking place the late afternoon/evening of the final day of the show that will reportedly add another 3-4,000 visitors including many Sheikhs and other dignitaries who love their racing. Perhaps the real rule of thumb is not about horses it is about buying helicopters. Delaying aircraft industry exhibitors into the evening of the traditionally shorter last day to talk to jockeys and punters is a risky path. Get it wrong and pay the price.

13-15 November 2012 ALEA Regional Safety Seminar Central Region San Antonio, Texas contact Ryan Miller rmiller@alea.org www.alea.org

21-23 November 2012 Emergency Services Show at Stoneleigh Park in Coventry.

www.policeaviationnews.com

