

Police Aviation News

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PAR



NPAS call in industry

- a conference about changes to the EC135 fleet

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LAW ENFORCEMENT

AUSTRALIA

QUEENSLAND: The newly delivered police helicopter on the Gold Coast will not be given extra flying time despite the expressed concerns of some that its predecessor spent too much time on the ground.

The 'new' service was launched last month at a ceremony presided over by Queensland Premier Campbell Newman, Police Minister Jack Dempsey and Police Commissioner Ian Stewart. There will be some extra hours but they are being set aside – 'banked' – for potential use in an unforeseen emergency. There are funding restrictions that will see operations being intelligence led. The previous police helicopter had been flying around seventeen hours each week but was funded for twenty. It had built up a total of 143 unused hours since it was launched in November 2011; even so it had undertaken 2,200 missions. There are plans for a second helicopter in 2014-15 but the area of the state of Queensland is huge so it will remain a local asset.

In a former life the 'new' Eurocopter BO105 helicopter VH-NVH was a German air ambulance built in 1996 but now repainted from the red and yellow scheme shown a few months ago into a typical Australian Police blue and white and carrying police logos. It is being operated in partnership with Surf Life Saving Queensland Inc [SLSQ] Brisbane.

Although it is now approaching 18 years old it carries modern systems including the Trakka searchlight. [CourierMail/QP/PAR]



©Queensland Police

COVER IMAGE: The UK police aviation operator, the National Police Aviation Service [NPAS], has decided to standardise the layout and role fit of its EC135 fleet. The standard to be achieved is the low skid as typified by the former Suffolk Police helicopter illustrated. See story page 4.

CARIBBEAN

ROYAL NAVY: Despite ever diminishing fleet size the UK Royal Navy continues to play a significant part in the anti-drug effort in the Caribbean.

Recently the vessel HMS Lancaster made a drug bust in cooperation with the US Customs and Border Agency. The errant vessel was spotted by a US Customs and Border Agency aircraft in the Caribbean Sea and surface vessels alerted.

The frigate sped to the area and launched her Lynx helicopter and high-speed pursuit boat to intercept the 30ft vessel with three suspected smugglers on board. As Lancaster approached, the men attempted to dispose of the evidence by throwing one bale of drugs overboard, but these were quickly recovered by the boat crew.



A total of 22 bales of pure cocaine were seized along with the three men on board who, ultimately, were fully compliant with the Royal Navy and US Coastguard team. The suspected smugglers and cocaine were then handed over to the Coast Guard Cutter Sapelo and then the authorities in Puerto Rico.

As is standard practice, the empty drugs boat was subsequently sunk by Royal Navy gunfire to prevent its use in future smuggling operations.

HMS Lancaster has been patrolling with a team from the US Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment who provide intelligence in catching drug runners, as part of a multi-national effort to combat drug smuggling in the Caribbean.

This is the ship's third success in as many weeks and follows on from the seizure of a shipment of marijuana with a street value of up to £700,000 and the stopping of another craft with a significant amount of cocaine and heroine on board.

The Portsmouth-based Type 23 frigate is on her second counter narcotics patrol of the Caribbean region and will continue to combat the illicit smuggling of drugs until the end of the year.

These patrols are part of Operation Martillo, a 15-nation collaborative effort to deny transnational criminal organisations air and maritime access to the littoral regions of Central America; and focus on putting a stop to the illegal movement of drugs from South America into the Caribbean and onwards to the UK. Over the past year the US Coast Guard has seized 20,500kg of cocaine and 8,500lbs of marijuana during 22 law enforcement interceptions. [UK MoD]



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UNITED KINGDOM

NPAS: For some time now it has been known that the variety of equipment level specifications within the newly gathered together aircraft fleet of the National Police Air Service [NPAS] in the UK was going to have to be addressed sooner or later.

Various procurement projects have been instigated to address the main drawbacks – including the different levels of maintenance and the variety of downlinks, both analogue and digital that need to be standardised – and the latest example of that process is to seek to rationalise the mix of EC135T2s in the fleet.

Every single one of these aircraft was designed and built for a different customer and as a result no two airframes have the same specification and all have differing empty weights - a not insignificant problem for pilots with the mobility that NPAS expects of them. This is in contrast to the last batch of seven airframes which met a common specification.

The older airframes are Turbomeca powered on high skids and later deliveries PWC powered and on low skids each with a range of role equipment specifications.

There is a short-term plan by NPAS to bring these different specifications closer together. Nothing can be done about the engine choice but by narrowing the specification and where the role equipment is located at least a standard will emerge.

Last month NPAS invited potential suppliers to bid for the provision of an extensive Mission System Upgrade for all the earlier EC135T2 helicopters in the fleet. Part of that process was an August 27 'Bidder Conference' held at the police college at Ryton-on-Dunsmore near Coventry.

The intention is to replace most of the current police mission management system and sensors to create a common standard for these airframes. It remains to be seen how close that will be to that of the last seven airframes.

The main thing to be swept aside is the existing police mission pod [PAN used to call it the "Macpod" after its originator, McAlpine Helicopters] still fitted to a handful of aircraft. The Macpod was a good idea in that it freed up rear cabin space and allowed the aircraft to be readily used for the occasional 'out of hours' Medevac operation. Times have changed in that night HEMS is not now a primary police role with the UK charity air ambulance fraternity



© Ian Commin

now moving increasingly into 24/7 operations. It will not be the end of the role pod as a number of earlier EC135T1 aircraft have retained it but the idea is now museum grade. Like the airframes there was no standard mission pod, the weights differed as the design evolved through a range of customers and their specific needs so swapping them between airframes was problematical.

The end result will probably still see different specifications across the fleet but it will significantly narrow those variations and perhaps allow NPAS to set common empty and gross weight figures across the fleet based on the worse case airframes.

Although one of only a handful contractors will undoubtedly seek to undertake the work there will be interest from a wider industry keen to gain a foothold in ultimately supplying the equipment across the wider NPAS fleet.

Equipment that is likely to be standardised includes the skid system [removing the high skids and role pod], the mission system and its elements, the EO/IR system and the search-light.

The contract is expected to be worth between £3M and £7M and take four years to implement from contract date. The cost range is relatively high at this stage because NPAS are now in the formal tendering stage and the response from the various bidders expected to be attending the meeting will allow that variation to harden.

A wide range of interested parties is expected to attend, each with their own agenda, the end result will undoubtedly be the individual companies forming consortia to make the final bids.

The EC135T2 aircraft assumed to be involved are: -

NPAS 13	G-ESEX	c/n 0267	MTOW: 2910kg	built 2002
NPAS 23	G-LASU	c/n 0228	MTOW: 2835kg	built 2002
NPAS 43	G-WCAO	c/n 0204	MTOW: 2835kg	built 2001
NPAS 53	G-NMID	c/n 0300	MTOW: 2835kg	built 2003
NPAS 71	G-SURY	c/n 0283	MTOW: 2835kg	built 2003
NPAS 73	G-CPSH	c/n 0209	MTOW: 2835kg	built 2001

When NPAS is complete in January, if each of these is converted there will be 13 owned EC135 on strength, four EC145, seven MD900 Explorer's plus the leased in EC135 and A109E in Wales existing somewhere in 'no-mans land'.

G-XMII c/n 0215 MTOW: 2835kg this 2002 airframe is currently on lease to Norway to Oslo Police District where the current standard remains high skid and Macpod. When the airframe left for Norway it had over 10,000 hours on it [reached in 2011] so there might be grounds for doubt that this will ever be converted to return to the NPAS fleet if the lease is of any length. It is currently due back in 2016.

The seven identical airframes assumed to be the fleet standard to be attained is typified by the EC135P2+ G-HEOI c/n 0825 built in 2009. That has a MTOW of 2910kg.

[All data NPAS and G-INFO]

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The latest additions to the manpower at NPAS has been advertised in the aerospace press and on-line. They are seeking a Head of Compliance to be based at Wakefield, West Yorkshire and a Regional Manager based at the same location.

With NPAS having an operating regime founded on JAR-OPS 3 principles, this new role within NPAS has been created to ensure a compliant operation which maintains a safe and compliant delivery, with a culture to match. This post is to support the Accountable Manager and Chief Operating Officer in delivering the service in compliance with current and future aviation legislation with particular focus on quality and safety management systems.

The Regional Manager is to cover 4 Air Support units within the North West Region. The role is to ensure the appropriate levels of ground support, resources and skilled personnel are made available to enable timely delivery of operational services to police forces as outlined within the collaboration agreement to meet identified performance standards. As Regional Manager you will have direct management of 4 Base Managers and through them of around 34 Tactical Flight Officers.

The closing date for the Head of Compliance applications is September 15, the Regional Manager is September 8. The online application form and role profile may be accessed through the following [link](#)

The Web was buzzing at media reporting of an EC145 from Exeter undertaking a site survey of potential landing grounds in the Isles of Scilly [right at the bottom left of England for those from other regions]. The EC145 wasn't there for an emergency, just undertaking a planned visit to allow new pilots to familiarise themselves with the islands.

The officers involved took photos from key points around the coastline, which could help in planning future operations to the islands.

The work only took a few hours, although a technical problem with the sliding door of the helicopter meant an overnight stay at St Mary's airport awaiting an engineer from the mainland.

The pundits were arguing over whether it was a wasted journey or a required mission for days afterwards! [Scilly today/PAR]

NORTHERN IRELAND: As this edition closed there is an unconfirmed report in the *Irish Independent* newspaper that attempts were made to attack PSNI helicopters with mortar devices had been thwarted by the security services.

It is said at least two vertically mounted mortars have been found planted close to the village of Cullyhanna in South Armagh.

The suspects are republican dissidents who have been responsible for the murder of members of the military, police and prison service in recent years. [Independent]

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UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: A couple of months ago PAN carried stories of disquiet in the community about a police helicopter being used at community events – in that instance dropping golf balls for a private fund-raiser. The reporting newspaper has not put the story to rest and recently revisited it, and it's not clear whether this is because they are short of news, nit picking or expressing some serious concern. In any case, as the UK NPAS flight to the Scilly Isles [above] shows, it does raise issues, real or supposed, across the wider community.

In this instance the spotlight is on Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department, operators of two Bell 206 and a pair of light fixed wing. One of the helicopters [the Bell 206L] dropped golf balls for a private charity event in May – the flight being billed as a training sortie but clearly timed to get the golf balls to the event on time.

The Sacramento Bee has reviewed flight logs back to 2008 and found that they could identify aircraft being used for law enforcement or training the majority of the time, but more than 45 hours were spent on community events, citizen ride-alongs, flyovers and demos, costing [because it is America and therefore extremely cheap] about \$35,000 in fuel, maintenance and crew pay. Place those 45 hours in Europe and you can easily quadruple the costs.

The hours they highlight were spent flying in support of community groups such as Boy Scouts and Leadership Modesto, took part in activities such as National Night Out and the Manteca Memorial Day event, and served in static displays at schools, flyovers for Peace Officer Memorial ceremonies and even an orientation flight over the county for a District Attorney.

On the other side of the storyline the 'Bee did highlight instances where the use of the air resources was inappro-

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appropriate – such as photographing a sheriff's aircraft for a private company's catalogue and officials using aircraft for transportation to meetings and agreed that there were no flights in those instances. This issue raises its head worldwide – and policies are written around it. As a rule the Public Use former DoD aircraft such as the OH-58 are not available for transport of sheriff's but there are countless instances where that rule is flouted. In Stanislaus the County leaders set a policy that restricts the sheriff's aircraft to law enforcement and work activities even though they are not former DoD machines.

For now the sheriff has said as far as he is concerned the aircraft will continue to support community groups that raise funds for underprivileged children or to support fallen peace officers. On their part the county's chief executive officer and county counsel have cautioned the sheriff about private fund-raisers that may be deemed inappropriate.

VIRGINIA: On the East Coast an incident with a light unmanned craft has caused some lawmakers in the US to think again about the safety of unmanned craft.

The incident, one of a number that now inhabit you tube was the crash of a light unmanned camera craft into a crowd at the Great Bull Run in Dinwiddie, VA., but among the others 'entertaining' the viewing masses is one where the Groom at a wedding ended up with a tiny cut when the official photographers low fly-by went awry.

In this latest instance only three people were slightly injured by the light craft at a public event but already market demand is pushing craft sizes upwards and weights are rising—a repeat performance with something heavier will eventually be fatal. So far all the 'accidental' fatalities have been in Third World locations and easily ignored, but kill a couple of US citizens and the heavens will truly cave in.

At the moment they are looking to see whether someone private and commercial can be prosecuted but how will they be if one of these craft is lost by a police officer?

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TYROL AIR AMBULANCE: The South Tyrol regional airline Air Alps headquartered in Innsbruck, Austria has been placed in liquidation after cancelling flights last November. The small Dornier 328 operating airline is part of the Welcome Air Group which also operates Tyrol Air Ambulance. Air Alps operated the air ambulance and airline operations in Italy.

In the intervening time there have been talks with the interested parties from EU countries but they came to nothing. Half of the eighteen employees have been taken on by the air ambulance operation. Welcome Air claim that this failure will not otherwise affect the rest of the group. Welcome Air was created in the mid-1990s by Jakob Ringler a director of Tyrolean Air Ambulance. [eTurbo]



GERMANY

DRF LUFTRETTUNG: A new Lear 45 air ambulance aircraft is now part of the DRF Luftrettung fleet. The new jet took off last on its first mission last month.

A patient had to be repatriated from Portugal to a German hospital for surgery due to a medical emergency. After the DRF Luftrettung dispatcher had clarified the medical facts, the crew set off for Faro at 12:45 pm. On arrival, they took charge of the patient and transported her to Munich that night while giving her intensive care on board the Learjet 45.

The DRF Luftrettung Alert Centre at the airport of Karlsruhe/Baden-Baden is staffed with experienced dispatchers around the clock, 365 days a year. An incoming emergency call sets off extensive medical and flight-operational preparations: the dispatch coordinators in the Alert Centre organise the entire transport of the patient, from hospital bed to hospital bed. While one of them, for example, obtains the necessary visas and landing permits, another informs the physician on duty, who will discuss medical details with the treating clinicians in a doctor-to-doctor call. After careful planning of the flight path, the crew is alerted and informed in detail about the deployment. Within two hours of being alerted, the crew, consisting of captain, co-pilot, emergency physician and paramedic, is ready for takeoff.

The new aircraft was purchased in South Africa and role converted and features a very useful single point refuelling – which uses a single nozzle for refuelling, to which all tanks are connected - saves time, which ultimately benefits the patient. In addition, the Learjet 45 has a modern glass cockpit with four screens that replace conventional instruments, an auxiliary power unit [APU], allowing the cabin to be permanently air-conditioned during extended waiting times on the ground in hot climates.

Last year, 839 patients were brought home from abroad with DRF Luftrettung air ambulances and those of the LAA (Luxembourg Air Ambulance) under the name of EAA (European Air Ambulance). The flights went to 103 countries. The DRF Luftrettung air ambulances are stationed at the airport of Karlsruhe/Baden-Baden and start from there on their worldwide missions. www.drf-luftrettung.de



SPAIN

CACARES: The Malpartida medical base in Cácares, operated by INAER Spain (INAER) is now the home of Spain's first all-woman medical helicopter crew. The crew is made up of pilot Beatriz Parera, medic Gloria Palacios and Salobar Sánchez and Rocio Ramos from the Extramadura Health Service, and uses a Eurocopter EC135.

Although the core of the storyline concentrates upon the gender of the crew the first statement from Beatriz the female pilot says that aspect is unimportant.

"The gender of the crew doesn't matter; what matters is the way the crew and the health professionals work together to ensure successful missions, like those we've seen over the past few days," said pilot Beatrix Parera of INAER.

Make of that what you will.

INAER operates a total of 27 medical aircraft in Spain. In 2012 the company completed 8,228 medical emergency missions and treated 6,658 patients suffering from conditions including trauma, heart attacks, strokes and sepsis, as well as providing neonatal care and transport. INAER is part of the Avincis Group, the world's largest provider of aerial services for mission critical operations. [INAER]



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TURKEY

Last month THK Gökçen Aviation, the commercial company of the Turkish Aeronautical Association THK, received the first five EC135s to provide medical airlift duties throughout Turkey. The helicopters have started operations.

The delivery of this first batch takes place only three months after the selection of Eurocopter as preferred manufacturer. THK Gökçen Aviation and Saran Holding will deploy a fleet of 17 EC135 to ensure helicopter medical emergency services (HEMS) in the framework of a five-year contract with the Turkish Ministry of Health. The remaining helicopters will be delivered in spring 2014.

Eurocopter products have been present in HEMS operations of the Ministry of Health in Turkey since 2008 along with types from other manufacturers.

UNITED KINGDOM

INTERNATIONAL: The theme for the second day of the Helitech Conference later this month will be 'Night-time Helicopter Emergency Operations', to be moderated by Gerry Hermer, Aviation Consultant at East Anglian Air Ambulance (EAAA). The first presenter to open this session will be Tim Page, Chief Executive at EAAA, which recently became the first emergency service operation to be granted permission to fly during the hours of darkness. Delegates will have the opportunity to listen and learn how the EAAA, its operations partners and the regulators fared on the path to achieving night-time missions. In addition to other perspectives from European operators (including Bond Air Services) Captain Carlos de la Cruz, HEMS Pilot at INAER, will provide a Spanish input on night-time operations to include the concept and design of the night HEMS operation and the advantages of using NVG in order to improve flight safety.

A panel discussion will then follow that will discuss the view across Europe, which will feature Willy Sigl, Rulemaking Officer at EASA Flight Standards, who will join session speakers to consider the critical issues around gaining permission for night HEMS operations and the on-going operational challenges, which will also include an audience Q&A period.

The afternoon agenda will then switch to 'Rulemaking - Open Issues', to be moderated by Peter Norton, Chief Executive of the British Helicopter Association, which will open with Willy Sigl's overview of the new operations and flight crew licensing rules relevant for helicopter operations, featuring active and future helicopter-specific rulemaking tasks. Peter Moeller, Flight Operations Manager, Rotor Wing at Luxembourg Air Ambulance, will then present 'The challenges ahead - Flight & Duty Time Limitations' to be followed by Gerhard Wittmann of ADAC discussing 'The challenges ahead - Helicopter Emergency Medical Services and Public Interest Sites.'

This session will close with an industry discussion on the way forward featuring regulators and operators who will be examining the issues and potential solutions for the rotorcraft sector.

You need to make choices later this month



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ANGLIA: Not so very long ago the news stories about the Magpas group spoke of an operation on the brink of failure. The expectation was that it was going to run out of funds within days.

Late last month it was a different story as the air ambulance charity set up a specialist training centre in Cambridgeshire and showcased a new aircraft to the media.

Magpas will use its facility to train 13 new recruits who will be sent out to offer life-saving treatment across the Anglia region. The training centre will use a variety of high tech simulation dolls which appear to breathe, bleed and vomit. Magpas says it will play a vital role in training up new recruits, helping it move a step closer to providing emergency care 24 hours a day.

Magpas has a new airframe at its disposal in the form of an MD 902 Explorer G-HMDX to act as its new air ambulance operating across parts of the East of England. The charity says the helicopter, which is able to fly at night, and the training centre in Huntingdon, mean it can now move towards its goal of providing 24-hour cover, seven days a week. [Magpas]



LONDON: Work is underway on creating a helipad in St George's Hospital, Tooting in South West London with the UK's largest crane at the site. The construction of the 25m by 25m helipad began last month and is due for completion in January 2014. It will be the second Greater London hospital to have a helipad.

It will be built on the rooftop of the hospital's St James Wing, five stories up, and will have direct lift access to the accident and emergency department, significantly reducing transfer times for critically ill and injured patients. A lift shaft in the middle of the wing is being built so patients can be lowered quickly into the hands of medical experts.

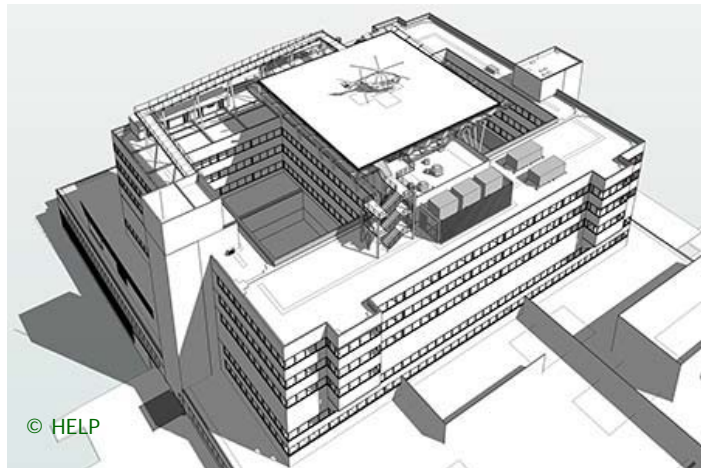
The Helicopter Emergency Landing Pads (HELP) have contributed £1M towards the estimated £4M project, with Miller Construction taking on the building work.

An original planning application was scrapped in March this year because the design was not big enough to accept search and rescue helicopters.

The HELP Appeal provides non-repayable grants to hospitals that need to update their existing helipad facilities or build new onsite helipads.

The Appeal has already funded helipads at Oswestry Spinal Injuries Hospital, Gloucestershire Royal Hospital and Southampton General Hospital and is currently talking to around twenty hospitals from Plymouth and Bristol to Leicester and Manchester about their helipad needs and how the Appeal might be able to help with this life-saving equipment.

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WILTSHIRE: So far the fundraising for the stand alone air ambulance is on course to take over from the joint police/ambulance when it is ceded to NPAS. An extra £1.8M will be required each year.

The current contract between Wiltshire Police and Wiltshire Air Ambulance Charitable Trust costs the charity £700,000 a year to run, but when this ends in December 2014 the charity will be forced to go it alone and foot an annual bill of £2.5M.

David Philpott, chief executive at the charity, made it clear he had no concerns the increase, which equates to £6,000 a day, would put the air ambulance at jeopardy, with rising revenue and reserves in place to cover costs.

Among the moves being made by the charity to increase and broaden the fundraising is a Friends of Wiltshire Air Ambulance scheme, which will take off this month.

The scheme will give local people the opportunity to become regular donors in return for news and access to events hosted by the trust.

Mr Philpott does not anticipate the end of the contract with Wiltshire Police will mean the end of a working relationship. He said a 25-year working history would be hard to ignore when each organisation relied on the other.

Mr Philpott expects that the many years working together will result in their being a special relationship continuing in some form, on some level, even without police funding support.

[Swindon Advertiser]

UNITED STATES

NATIONAL: The FAA is asking US-based helicopter emergency medical service (HEMS) operators to report to it the number of flights undertaken and total hours flown, along with other specified information. The information supplied to the FAA will be used as background information that will be used to foster the development of risk mitigation strategies to reduce what the FAA termed as 'the currently unacceptably high helicopter air ambulance rate'. Seventy-three operators holding the necessary FAA certificates are expected to share their operational data with the FAA on a quarterly basis.

Europ Assistance USA, the largest individual crisis protection provider, has announced that it is joining the International Air Ambulance Alliance. The IAAA is, an organisation devoted to raising the professional standards of fixed wing air ambulance providers, while also creat-

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ing business transparency for insurers, medical assistance companies and individual payers of air ambulance services.

In addition to its membership, Europ Assistance USA will bring a high level of expertise and best practices to the IAAA. As a major buyer of fixed wing air ambulance services, Europ Assistance has developed rigorous compliance standards and proprietary technology that facilitates the sourcing of credentialed air ambulance providers worldwide.

The IAAA is the only not for profit organisation dedicated to the fixed wing air ambulance industry, with the commitment of not only raising standards of care, but also working with NAAMTA for exclusive medical transport accreditation and acts as an advocate for fixed wing operators in a global niche industry.

Europ Assistance USA provides immediate support and assistance in times of emergency and distress. It has a worldwide network of 35 always-open multilingual assistance centres and 423,000 partners in 208 countries and territories. Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, EA USA is part of the Europ Assistance Group, which is owned by the Generali Group.

FLORIDA: In Fort Lauderdale the REVA air ambulance have been awarded the National Accreditation Alliance of Medical Transport Applications full medical transport accreditation. As a result, REVA is now considered a NAAMTA Alliance member. REVA operates international medical flight services, is the result of the merger of FAA Air Carrier Certificate holder Aero Jet International, Inc., and Air Ambulance Professionals.

NAAMTA is based in American Fork, Utah. It is the medical transportation field's leading auditing agency for overseeing unified performance quality standards for medical personnel, flight personnel, equipment, management, and financial performance by its members. Its auditing standards are certified by the International Standardization Organization (ISO) and endorsed by multiple specialty fields within the medical transportation industry.

FIRE

UNITED KINGDOM

WILTSHIRE: After a one year break brought about by the Olympics the Emergency Services Show is returning to Hullavington.

This is not the trade show formerly located for a few days in November near Coventry, this is the public entertainment versions that also majors on fire engines but also throws in police dog displays and ambulances.

Wiltshire Air Ambulance and vintage vehicles are some of the other attractions at the show which takes place at Hullavington airfield near Malmesbury, Wiltshire on September 8 for the eighth edition of its kind. The last time out, in 2011, the event attracted some entry paying 10,000 visitors.

The Emergency Services Show is organised by a committee of volunteers drawn from Wiltshire Police, Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service, South Western Ambulance Service and the Highways Agency.

Pre-sale tickets are also available online and cost £5 for adults, £2.50 for children under 16 and free for the under threes. As well as saving money, the tickets grant access to the show through a fastrack gate. www.emergencyservicesshow.com

The Emergency Services Show is organised by a committee of volunteers drawn from Wiltshire Police, Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service, South Western Ambulance and is different to the event this year being held in Birmingham at the same time as Helitech is in London.

I guess we all have made paper planes at some time in our lives – perhaps some of us have never turned our backs on the craft. Some of us probably got quite good at it and managed to get the scrap paper craft clear across many a room. No one had thoughts this was anything but a rudimentary bit of aeronautics with limited future development potential and unlikely to have a future in anything like a challenging environment.

Now things are getting serious, scientists at the University of

Queensland, Australia, have been playing around with composites with a view actually operating the humble paper dart in challenging conditions.

The first of the two designs, created by Dr. Paul Pounds to act as tools to help record atmospheric conditions in the event of a forest fire. The disposable, self-steering drones are essentially sensor modules that can be dropped over a forested area to relay environmental data that could indicate potential for fire and it looks exactly like a basic paper dart model, and is rumoured to be cheap and easy to produce that it will be single-use. The prototype, called the Polyplane, is made of a cellulose sheet with 3D-printed circuits inserted on to the material. The cellulose is then treated with UV lights to make the body a mandible circuit board which, like the Paper Dart's we knew, manages the operation of plane's two elevons in flight.

The biodegradable drone has been proposed to monitor large areas of land in the case of a forest fire, but the options extend way beyond that. The Polyplanes are so inexpensive that unleashing a deluge of the planes would be very cheap.

The other design is called the Samara looks like Mother Nature's organic helicopter, the maple seed. It is less controllable than the Polyplane, simply falling slowly to earth. This UAV will have a traditional circuit board attached to a dual edge weight/antenna with a flexible wing and printed circuit board.



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JAPAN

MIYAGI: Eurocopter recently delivered an AS365 N3 to the Fire and Disaster Management Agency's (FDMA) third helicopter of this model. The brand new aircraft is a replacement for its BK117 C-2 which was damaged during the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake. The AS365 N3 has been deployed to the Miyagi Prefectural Government for use in fire-fighting, disaster prevention, emergency medical transport and rescue missions. In the event of a large-scale national disaster, it will be dispatched to disaster areas throughout Japan under FDMA's direction, to gather information and conduct rescue activities.

Eurocopter leads the fire-fighting segment in Japan with a 60 percent market share, thanks to its wide range of products and in-country support and services network. Popular models used for fire-fighting and disaster relief missions in Japan include the AS365, the Super Puma family, as well as the BK117 developed jointly with Japan's Kawasaki Heavy Industries.

Simplex® Aerospace has received an order from Japan Aerospace for a high rise building water cannon, called the SkyCannon™, for the Eurocopter EC225 helicopter. The high rise SkyCannon™ will be deployed for use in the city of Tokyo. Simplex® Aerospace will obtain an FAA STC along with Japanese reciprocal approval for use in Japan. This Simplex will be the first helicopter based high rise fire fighting system to be used in Japan. The new system will be delivered in 2014 for certification and is expected to be in use fighting high rise build-

A banner for the Aerial Fire Fighting (AFF) event. It features the AFF logo (an orange circle with 'AFF' in white), the text 'Aerial Fire Fighting' in orange, and the 'tangent LINK' logo in a yellow box. Below the logos, it says 'Connecting Business'. At the bottom, it states 'Sacramento, USA | 19th - 20th March 2014'. The background is a dark, stylized image of a city skyline at night.

ing fires in early 2015.

The new Simplex® Aerospace high rise building fire fighting SkyCannon™ utilises a modified Simplex® Aerospace STC'd belly tank in addition to the newly patented water cannon and is capable of using both water and fire fighting foam. The system also utilizes an infrared camera to help firefighters locate and target hot spots in real time. A distance measuring system is provided to assist the firefighter and the pilot in measuring the distance to the building for increased safety.

© Simplex



INDUSTRY

Airborne Technologies debut at this year's Paris Air Show was acclaimed as a big success by the company.

Eagle Aviation signed a contract to purchase an Airborne Technologies TECNAM MMA with a complete surveillance configuration (Wescam MX-10 and BMS downlink system). The aircraft will be used for pipeline surveillance in the Emirates and other Middle East countries. The completion took just eight months from the first contact with Airborne Technologies at the AERO Friedrichshafen last April up to the delivery of the aircraft and illustrates the flexibility of the company.

The handover of the completely configured TECNAM MMA will take place at this year's Dubai Air Show in mid-November. [AT]

AgustaWestland has announced the introduction major enhancements to the Maintenance Programme for the best selling AW139 intermediate twin-engine helicopter, which will reduce maintenance and operating costs and enable operators to further increase aircraft availability and utilisation. Thanks to the proven capabilities and safety demonstrated over nine years of operation with an in service fleet of now more than 580 helicopters that have accumulated approximately 750,000 flight hours so far, AW139 operators can now benefit from a new progressive maintenance programme as well as life extensions on major transmission components.



The new progressive maintenance programme allows more efficient maintenance planning, especially for those operators who need maximum availability for daylight missions and can resort to maintenance at night, such as in the offshore oil and gas support market. The introduction of the progressive maintenance programme has been achieved as a result of the strong cooperation and partnership set up between the company, through its Customer Support & Training and Engineering departments, and customers via a dedicated Maintenance Improvement Team. The new maintenance plan will reduce direct maintenance costs and further increase aircraft availability and utilisation.

In a continuing effort to drive down AW139 operating costs AgustaWestland has been able to extend the Time Between Overhaul (TBO) for the AW139's Main Gearbox from the current 5000 flight hours to 6000 flight hours and the Tail and Intermediate Gearboxes from 5000 flight hours to 7500 flight hours. The 20% and 50% increase in TBO will be a signifi-

cant benefit to operators in reducing their operating costs as well as making the aircraft even more competitive in the market it now dominates.

For the AW189 and AW169 AgustaWestland is progressing the definition of the relevant Maintenance Programmes through the MSG-3 methodology, having established dedicated Maintenance Review Boards in which experts from leading helicopter operators in the off-shore, EMS and SAR markets participate as well as those from engine manufactures and aviation authorities.

AgustaWestland's Brazilian subsidiary, **AgustaWestland Do Brasil**, is to undergo a major expansion with the building of a new facility in Sao Paulo which will include maintenance hangars with space that could accommodate a helicopter final assembly line, training centre, bonded warehouse, workshops and other supporting services including a dedicated heliport. Construction of the new facility is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2014.

The new facility is designed to cope with the expected introduction of significant numbers of new AW189 and AW169 helicopters into the Brazilian market. The AW169 is aimed at the corporate/private transport and parapublic markets and the AW189 for the offshore oil and gas market. The AW189 has now entered production in Italy, whilst production of the AW169 will start next year.

AgustaWestland Do Brasil's new maintenance hangars will be able to accommodate helicopters up to AW101 size with maintenance bays for 10 helicopters and additional space to potentially establish a helicopter final assembly line.

AgustaWestland do Brasil's new facility will also include a state of the art training centre with space for two full flight simulators and three flight training devices, as well as a maintenance simulator, classrooms, briefing and debriefing rooms for pilots undergoing training. A bonded warehouse with a greater number of spares and part numbers will also form a key part of the new facility giving customers in South America quicker access to spare parts.

The facility will have its own dedicated heliport for helicopters up to the size of an AW101, with five landing spots and a Final Approach and Take-off (FATO) area.

In a ceremony in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, **Pilatus** the Swiss aircraft manufacturer delivered the 1,200th unit of its single engine turboprop PC-12 to fractional aircraft ownership program PlaneSense™.

Last month **FLIR Systems**, Inc. announced that it has acquired certain as-



sets of DigitalOptics Corporation's micro-optics business for a purchase price of \$14.9M. Included in the purchase are fabrication equipment and more than 200 patents and pending applications associated with the design and production of complex optical surfaces, substrates, and low cost components.

DigitalOptics' micro-optics business, based in Charlotte, North Carolina, is a leading fabricator of wafer-scale specialty optics products, including lenses, lens arrays, optical receivers and transceivers, and various infrared optical components. These high volume, low cost optics technologies are used in a wide array of industries and applications, including security, surveillance, photolithography, data communications, laser-based medical equipment, and 3D gesture recognition. [FSI]

Purely as a demonstration tool FLIR Systems has created an uncooled thermal camera in a smartphone case to publicise its state-of-the-art thermal camera in a concept it displayed at the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI) Expo in Washington, DC, USA last month.

The miniature hand-held promotes the company's new line of miniature Quark camera cores but is the type of product that is marketable assuming the potential customer was willing to pay the price.

The Quark camera has been around for a couple of years now and can be seen operating in a range of small unmanned craft including the US Army's RQ-11 Raven. The new Quark core measures just three-quarters of an inch thick and comes in a range of resolutions, the most powerful being 640 x 480, or 0.3 megapixels. The image is not large but can spot a person at about 300 yards.

Similar imagers might fit nicely into helmets, eyeglasses, rifle sights, small unmanned craft and telephones but is not technology that will be seen as meeting the specifications demanded by manned aircraft.

The Quark demonstrator runs off a very small battery, putting imaging in a very small space, and has no-one has done before but this 'unlikely market' application could grow into something more widely available in the future and at a price point quoted as 'a few hundred dollars'. The demonstrator prototype cost many thousands.

Others are bringing to market devices with similar specifications, so giving FLIR early competition. [Mu Optics](#), a small Chicago-based group that came on to the scene early this year. They have developed a prototype intended for the DIY homeowner who wants to check for overworked electrical circuits, leaking insulation, and other problems. That system has a lower resolution and is larger – described as being like a digital camera glued to the back of a phone but it could provide a device with a similar capability. BAE Systems are said to be offering its own thermal-imaging phone in November.

[Popular Mechanics/UASV]



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Although no official announcement has been made by the manufacturer industry sources outside Bristow and FLIR have confirmed that Bristow has selected the FSI product for fitting on Future SAR helicopters in the UK. I have little doubt that the official announcement is being held back for the forthcoming Helitech International. [industry]

Vietnam is evaluating the purchase of Israeli-developed equipment, including advanced unmanned aircraft systems, with the maritime surveillance version of Israel Aerospace Industries' Heron 1 being one candidate.

The nation is currently involved in an effort to develop its own UAS but meanwhile the Vietnamese defence ministry is looking to acquire foreign systems. [UASV]

Surveillance technology is now even more compact with the launch of **Cobham's** ultra small COFDM transmitter, the SOLO7 Nano Transmitter, designed specifically for specialist video installations and body-worn applications. The same proven and trusted technology featured in Cobham's range of larger COFDM transmitters has been packed into a tiny transmitter measuring only 58mm x 38mm x 17mm and weighing just 51g.

Ultra small yet highly capable, the equipment is a low power, standard definition transmitter ideally suited for covert video hides, or applications requiring long term battery powered deployments, small unmanned aerial vehicles, and body-worn use. It employs ultra-low latency High Profile H.264 encoding for excellent image quality and supports both industry standard DVB-T modulation and a range of Cobham bandwidths - Narrowband (2.5 MHz), Ultra Narrowband (1.25 MHz) and Ultra-X (625 kHz). These narrowband modes allow users to share scarce spectrum allocation extremely efficiently or extend range without requiring additional power output, which increases the stand-off range for operators and improves safety during body worn applications. A HD version will be launched later in 2013. [Cobham]

Building work has commenced on **Helicentre Aviation's** brand new 10,000 square foot facility and heliport following a culmination of negotiations to acquire the 2.5 acre site at Leicester Airport. The complex will provide the company with additional lecture rooms, briefing rooms, offices and hangarage to fulfill their operational requirements in Professional Helicopter Pilot Training, which has reached Academy level.

Additionally the facility will incorporate its own VIP entrance and parking, an apron and a new operational area. The company's utility and charter divisions will also be integrated into the new site.

Significant investment has been made in the development alongside plans to expand the training fleet over the next three years to include six Cabri G2 helicopters, the second of which arrived last week.

The new complex is scheduled to be operational by October this year and it is thought that the expansion will create up to 20 jobs for pilots and operational staff over the next three years. Website : www.flyheli.co.uk Helicentre Aviation Ltd., Leicester Airport, Gartree Road, Leicestershire LE2 2FG UK. Tel: +44 116 259 0186 E-mail: info@flyheli.co.uk



Early last month **Bond Air Services** announced the official opening of Greater Gabbard, one of the world's largest offshore wind farms, located 23km off the Suffolk [UK] coast.

Bond provides helicopter support to deliver maintenance technicians by hoist to the wind farm's 140 turbines - the first helicopter operation of its kind in the UK. The wind farm has a generation capacity of around 500MW, enough to power approximately 530,000 homes.

The service uses a Eurocopter EC135T2i aircraft, operating seven days a week from a purpose-built facility at Lowestoft Port. Bond has invested approximately £5M in the operation, which has also led to the creation of five new jobs in the local area.

Vector Aerospace Helicopter Services North America and Coast to Coast Helicopters Inc., based in Alberta, Canada, have signed a PT6T repair & overhaul support agreement.

As per the terms of the three-year agreement, Vector will provide Coast to Coast Helicopters with repair, major overhaul, testing, modification and other services as required on their fleet of Pratt & Whitney Canada (P&WC) PT6T engines.

Vector Aerospace, with engine MRO facilities in British Columbia & Prince Edward Island (Canada), the United Kingdom, Africa, France and Australia, is a Pratt & Whitney Canada (pwc.ca) Designated Overhaul Facility supporting the following engines: Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6A/ PT6T/ JT15D/ PW100/ PW305/ PW306/ PW307/ PW308.

According to **TRACKER**, the leading stolen vehicle recovery (SVR) expert in the UK [and part of the US based LoJack operation] the BMW X5 was the car most frequently stolen and recovered in 2012. The BMW X5 was also top of TRACKER's table in 2011, making it a hot favourite among thieves.

For twenty years TRACKER, a wholly owned subsidiary of Direct Line Insurance Group Plc., has been leading the way in the field of vehicle tracking and telematics since 1993. With over a million market leading security and award winning fleet management systems fitted to vehicles including passenger cars, motorcycles, HGV's, LCV's and plant and construction equipment.



TRACKER's 2012 figures show that the Land Rover Vogue and Sport are the second most stolen and recovered vehicles. This is a shift from 2011, when Land Rover was in seventh position on the most stolen chart. The BMW M3 has also moved up from sixth in 2011, to third place in 2012, showing how thieves' tastes change too.

Back in 2011, BMWs occupied the top three spots, with the 1 Series and 3 Series taking second and third places, respectively. Today, the BMW 3 Series is in equal fourth with the Audi RS4, whilst the 1 Series has slipped out of the top 10 completely. Mercedes was a key target for thieves in 2012, with the SLK and ML in fifth and sixth place, followed by the CLS and E Class in joint seventh.

TRACKER's Mesh Network also contributed to the recovery of over £4,500,000 worth of stolen vehicles. The TRACKER Mesh Network takes tackling vehicle crime to a completely new level, by using other vehicles already fitted with TRACKER SVR units to identify stolen vehicles also fitted with TRACKER. This brings drivers together to create a nationwide network of 'listening vehicles', similar to a social network, but designed to snare thieves www.TRACKER.co.uk

The panoramic windscreen on the Eurocopter EC135 is manufactured in "Plexiglas" PMMA from German speciality chemicals producer **Evonik Industries** in Essen. The helicopter's front, side and rear glazing is all made in the transparent, UV protective material that Eurocopter say is twice as light as traditional mineral glass and safer if an accident occurs.

Evonik said that the sheets are easy to shape and provide pilots with a panoramic view – an important feature in spherical helicopter canopies. The material is produced by casting at the company's plant in Weiterstadt / Germany, where it is certified as meeting aviation standards for optical quality, thickness tolerance and mechanical properties.

The material is then delivered to helicopter glazing specialists Josef Weiss Plastic (Hofolding / Germany; www.plexiweiss.de) for further processing. The plastic is heated and stretched into the desired form to ensure perfect visibility for the pilot. Around seven sets of the finished glazing are delivered to Eurocopter's German headquarters in Donauwörth every month for installation in the helicopter.

In the USA the **Department of Homeland Security** (DHS) will be expanding the number of tried and tested unmanned aircraft in its assessment programme shortly. The end result will be that potential governmental users at local, state, and federal levels will have access to impartial evaluation reports on a wider number of projects.

The whole subject of unmanned capability continues to be hyped up by an industry faced with a massive number of projects and prototypes but all too few purchasers. The DHS hopes to be able to apply at least a filter to the stream of information available.

There may be a large number of suppliers but there are even more prospective customers. The latter have been assessed as 30,000 fire departments and 18,000 police departments in the United States alone. A few of these potential customers have aircraft but many more will be attracted by small, unmanned systems that can be purchased for \$30,000 to \$100,000 and cost just \$25 to \$50 an hour to operate. They will be tempted by the apparent cheapness of the product – just as many were at the offer of FREE DoD surplus helicopters that turned out to cost far more tax dollars than the promotional literature said. The DHS hopes to inform them of the true position.

The first round of assessments related to developed craft with at least 1,000 hours in test, weighing 25 pounds and intended to fly at altitudes of 400 feet or lower and took place at U.S. Army's Fort Sill training range near Lawton, Oklahoma.

More than 70 groups applied, 50 had small craft that fitted the profile and were accepted. So far nine companies and fifteen platforms have been tested and the results posted free of charge for access by those public agencies and organizations authorized to use unmanned systems. Details can be found at <https://communities.firstresponder.gov> with an executive summary of results available to a wider market at www.firstresponder.gov

ERRATUM

L3 WESCAM has pointed out that PAN misinterpreted a term in one of its documents a recent issue. The Pan interpretation stated that one customer – the US Navy – had bought 2,500 MX series sensor turrets over the years. This was incorrect.

The press release Wescam sent out said that they had delivered the 2,500th turret to the US Navy. The release further states that since 1997, over 400 MX systems have been procured in support of key US naval programmes.

PAN apologises unreservedly for this error.

Rotorcraft Services Group, Inc. (RSG), has announced the development of a modular IV Warmer/Cooler to satisfy the requirements of the airborne emergency medical services community. The system is designed for quickly regulating the temperature of stored medical articles including I.V. fluids and temperature critical medicine. A precision Digital Temperature Controller with an advanced thermoelectric heat pump assembly automatically regulates the temperature inside the I.V. Warmer to a preset value selected by the operator. The interior aluminum basket compartment holds up to six I.V. fluid bags and glides smoothly on engineered slides. The system's lightweight modular design allows for seamless integration into the aircraft EMS interior, including



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medical cabinets, and can be powered from the aircraft 28V DC or 115V AC electrical generating system including shore power.

The **Air Methods Corporation** fleet of 368 air medical helicopters is fully outfitted with night vision goggle (NVG) capability. With this milestone, Air Methods' fleet is now the largest civilian helicopter fleet in the world to be fully outfitted with NVG technology. NVGs enhance visibility during night transports so crews can better detect hazards and obstructions and have greater situational awareness. [AM]

Dart Aerospace has launched its Bearpaw Kit with Wearplates as well as its Heli-Utility-Basket™ for the BK117 and EC145 models. The products were developed for a variety of market applications including utility, forestry, tourism and more, to transport mission-critical tooling and equipment and to provide stability when landing or taking off in soft terrain.

With the launch of these new products along with its existing skidtubes, DART is opening up the possibilities for BK117 operators, making it possible for them to bid on utility contracts.

The Bearpaws provide balance and stability when landing or taking off in soft terrain, such as tundra, snow or sand type environments. Made of high density polymer that resists cracking, chipping and breaking, the one-piece machined construction ensures consistent and deliberate load transfer. The Bearpaw Kit received approval from Transport Canada and EASA. FAA approval is expected shortly.

The Dart Heli-Utility-Basket™ provides an easy and secure method to transport cargo. It is constructed of corrosion-resistant stainless steel and is coated with a high-gloss, scratch-resistant white finish. A self-locking handle keeps cargo secure during flight and the easy bolt-on installation allows you to install or remove the basket in minutes wherever you are. The Heli-Utility-Basket has received approval from Transport Canada. FAA and EASA approvals are expected shortly. [DA]

PremiAir Aviation International, under new ownership and with a strengthened management team, will participate at Helitech International, the largest dedicated helicopter exhibition in Europe next month (September 24-26th) as sponsor and exhibitor. Stand G30 at London Excel. Owner and Chairman Graham Avery [right], who acquired the company late last year, has spent the past six months diligently restructuring and reshaping the industry's most prominent UK helicopter charter and maintenance brand. The result is a lean, debt free business, focused on one operational base at Blackbushe Airport in Surrey, an AOC and a team of 60 engineers, technicians, design specialists, admin and sales executives - all eager to rebuild the business.

In parallel he has also acquired a world leading E-learning training organisation for airline pilots – with bases in London (Gatwick), Dubai, Houston, New York, Seattle and Singapore and integrated it into PremiAir to create PALS (PremiAir Aviation Learning Systems). PALS comprises the largest and most comprehensive library of aviation computer-based training and vocational content delivered by a team of airline professionals. www.palsltd.co.uk.



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Police Aviation News includes materials produced for it by Ian J Commin of Insight Design of North Burnham, Slough SL1 6DS. This includes the banner titles and the PAvCon logo. In addition from time to time images specifically altered by Insight Design and others but originally produced for McAlpine Helicopters [now Eurocopter UK], Oxford, will appear with permission of the original owner. In some cases it may not be possible to indicate the source of this material directly associated with the images used.

The new PremiAir retains Christopher Forrest as Operations Director and Accountable Manager. Christopher, a professional helicopter pilot with more than 6,500 flight hours, has worked for PremiAir and its predecessor McAlpine Aviation Services for nearly three decades. He serves on the committees of the UK CAA, the European Helicopter Association, as well as being a member of the EASA Ops 001 Review Group. Christopher was awarded the prestigious Eric Brown Award from the UK BHA in 2010. www.premiairaviation.com

Aerotech UK Ltd., has been acquired by EuroAvionics GmbH.

Aerotech is an accredited aviation software solutions company specialising in professional ground based and iPad flight planning and flight operations software solutions. Customers also include Police, EMS, SAR, Offshore and (Para)Military operators. Significant numbers of pre-NPAS UK police aviation operators make use of the products.

The main products include easyweigh™ aircraft performance and weight & balance solutions for Windows and iPad, easytask™ Ground Station software to a number of industry accredited moving maps and also modular and scalable flight/mission planning, tasking and review software. aerotech also offer custom design and development to provide bespoke solutions to meet customer's needs, whether as modifications to existing modules, new modules or integration with third party systems.

aerotech uk limited will remain a separate UK company as a wholly owned subsidiary of EuroAvionics, and will continue to be managed by the existing management team, in addition to becoming the UK centre for EuroAvionics product sales, support and training.

Ulan-Ude Aviation Plant has produced the 750th Mi-8AMT (the export designation – Mi-171). The landmark airframe will enter service with the Russian Defence Ministry. The modern Mi-8AMT is fitted with various additional equipment options that expand its potential uses, including a searchlight with IR filter, a FLIR system and various winches, while additional fuel tanks can be added to increase the helicopter's range.



The image is a promotional poster for the AviationExpo Europe 2014. The top half features a green-tinted background with a blurred image of an aircraft. The text "AviationExpo" is prominently displayed in white, with "EUROPE" in smaller letters above it. Below this, a white banner contains the text "EUROPE'S FESTIVAL OF AVIATION". The dates "19 - 21 JUNE 2014" are written in large, bold white letters, followed by the location "Hradec Králové LKHK, CZ". The bottom half of the poster has a blue background. On the left, the "ILA Berlin Air Show" logo is visible. On the right, there is a detailed image of a jet engine. At the bottom left, the dates "May 20-25 2014" and the location "Berlin ExpoCenter Airport" are listed.

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26 July 2013 Eurocopter AS365N3 N896LL. Air ambulance of Life Lion Critical Care Transport, Hershey, Pennsylvania. During the return flight from an inter-hospital transport of a patient from the Hershey Medical Center to the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, the #2 engine chip light illuminated without secondary symptoms noted. The pilot landed without incident at a local airport. [Concern]

31 July 2013 Schweizer S300CBi PR-MIL Sao Paulo Police, Brazil. MSN 0315 On training flight aircraft came down landing in shallow waters of a reservoir at Guarapiranga. Lower cabin water damage [seats dry]. [Police Pilot via Helihub]

2 August 2013 Eurocopter EC120 C-**** Calgary Police. A police helicopter had to make a precautionary landing in a playground field Friday night. Shortly before 10 p.m., an indicator light was activated in a HAWCS helicopter flying over Calgary. The pilot landed without incident in a field at the Glenmore Athletic Park near 50th Avenue and 19th Street S.W., said duty inspector Guy Baker. A HAWCS engineer was called to the site to determine what caused the indicator light to activate. [Calgary Herald]

4 August 2013 Kamov Ka-32 C-GKHL Firefighting. helicopter contacted the ground going sideways and rolled on its starboard side at Bella Coola, Canada. The main-rotor blades contacted the ground and broke. The crew was able to shut the engines off and exit with minor injuries. There was no fire. [Helihub]

5 August 2013 Fixed Wing Beech 200 Super King Air TF-MYX Air ambulance operated by Myflug Air [airline] carrying three people crashed on a race track by Hlíðarfjall mountain on the outskirts of Akureyri, in North Iceland, killing two and injuring one. Two pilots and one paramedic were on board the flight, which was returning from an ambulance flight to Reykjavík. Mýflug released a statement saying the airplane had aborted a landing at Akureyri airport before losing altitude and attempting an emergency landing on the race track. [Media]

7 August 2013 Bell 407 N803DS. Volusia County Sheriff. The helicopter made a forced landing on the beach after the crew experienced a faltering engine whilst undertaking a routine flight. The crew, including pilot Budd Darling, picked a safe location to land on the beach, approximately 1 to 1½ miles north of Ponce Inlet, near the 4600 block of Atlantic Avenue, Daytona Beach, Florida. After everything checked out during a visual inspection and preliminary field testing while on the beach, the flight crew flew the helicopter to New Smyrna Beach Municipal Airport for additional inspections and tests prior to flight back to the hangar in DeLand. [Dayton News Journal]

12 August 2013 Eurocopter EC135T2 OE-??? Air ambulance of Austrian Air Ambulance. The helicopter operated by the OAMTC was by a 9mm gun shot in Vienna, Austria. A replacement machine had to be brought into operation after one of the rotors was shot through on the helicopter Christophorus 9. It was damage found so the date is assumed. The pilot had not noticed anything out of the ordinary on the helicopter on Monday which is stationed in Aspern in the Donaustadt region of Vienna. A replacement machine from Wiener Neustadt was brought in to cover for the damaged machine. [Vienna Times]

12 August 2013 Bell 407 N407CH. Air ambulance of Classic Lifeguard, Page, Arizona, USA. While en-route from Page Municipal Airport to Kane County Hospital in Kanab, Utah, the pilot observed the illumination of the XMSN OIL PRESS caution light and a precautionary landing was made into a wilderness area trail head parking lot without incident. [Concern]

19 August 2013 MD500E N62MJ. Privately owned helicopter undertaking a sortie looking for illegal marijuana under contract crashed near Clamity Butte, Harney County in eastern Oregon. The pilot, Thomas Levanger, lost control of the chopper as it was 400 feet off the ground. Neither Levanger or his passenger, Harney County Deputy Chris Nisbit, were injured in the crash. [Media]

FLIGHT SAFETY

The National Transportation Safety Board today released preliminary aviation accident statistics showing U.S. civil aviation accidents fell from 1,550 in 2011 to 1,539 in 2012.

For the third year in row, there were no fatal accidents involving scheduled Part 121 operations (commercial air transport). In addition, there were no fatal accidents involving scheduled Part 135 operations (commuter), the sixth year in a row that this segment of aviation experienced no fatalities.

For the general aviation community, the results were mixed. Although the number of total accidents (1,471) and fatal accidents (271) increased from the previous year, there were fewer (432) fatalities and the accident rate per 100,000 flight hours declined to 6.78.

Finally, on-demand Part 135 operations, which include charter, air taxi, air tour, and air medical flights, posted decreases across all measures. In 2012, the number of total accidents, fatal accidents, fatalities, and the accident rate per 100,000 flight hours for these operations decreased from the previous year.

The 2012 statistical tables showing accidents, fatalities, and accident rates for major segments of U.S. civil aviation are found at: http://www.nts.gov/data/aviation_stats.html

Just how long can the Royal Air Force continue this dangerous farce? Yet again there has been a report that an RAF Tornado aircraft nearly crashed into a helicopter flying in the hover in Scotland.

The incident took place above the A9 main road at Dalnaspidal, one mile north of Loch Garry and midway between the Isle of Mull and Aberdeen in a remote part of Scotland. The 150ft Airprox miss in May this year was duly reported to investigators.

The incident is at least the seventh critical-level near miss to have involved a Tornado in the last three years.

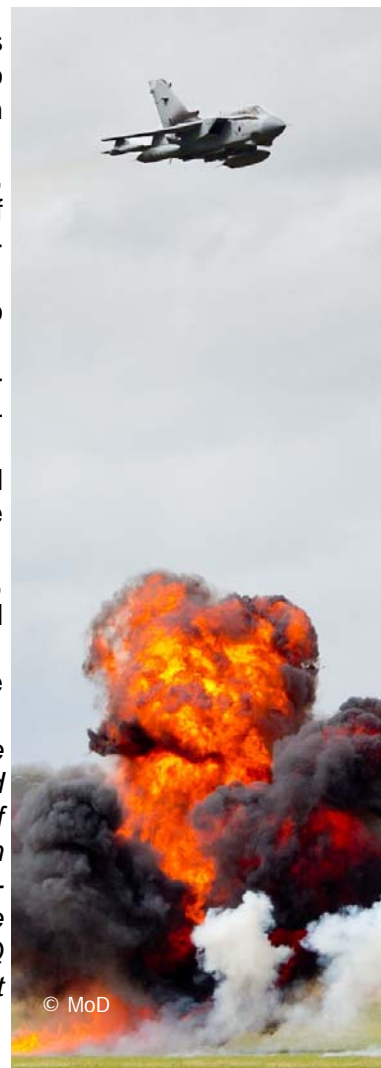
A red and yellow Eurocopter AS350 was hovering at 400ft photographing a work site when its pilot reported a Tornado GR4 passed to his right.

A report by the UK Airprox Board, which investigates reported near misses, stated: "He could not take any avoiding action due to the late sighting. He assessed the risk of collision as 'High'."

The board said the Tornado crew had not seen the helicopter, but it was visible in recordings of their forward-looking infra-red and head-up displays.

A motorist on the roadway below saw both the helicopter and the RAF bomber, thereby confirming the information. [The Scotsman]

Ed: For what seems the millionth time the Airprox Board said the RAF was fitting collision avoidance systems to its Tornados and breathed the erstwhile hope that it might reduce the likelihood of a repeat of this type of incident in the near future. This intention to turn around the ongoing danger from RAF fast jets in the future was brought into stark focus as I recently scanned some material relating to a TCAS Conference at the Dyfed-Powys HQ in 1998. Even then the RAF was making promises. Promises that remain so much hot air.



MOVE ALONG THERE PLEASE

We have seen them before and, like London buses, there will always be another one along shortly. The 'perfect' answer to personal mobility, just what the police/fire/ambulance always wanted in aviation.



The Martin Jetpack is the result of inspiration and many years of development work by Glenn Martin and an enthusiastic team of engineers and other experts. It looks like most earlier man lifting devices such as the 1950s Hiller Rotorcycle but swaps the simplistic main rotor for two lift fans – that too has been seen before. The latest offering is from Martin Aircraft Company, Christchurch, New Zealand Tel: +64 3 377 8584.

This latest offering uses composites and a more efficient propulsion system to achieve the goal of personal flight, with many safety features including a ballistic parachute and a 'crumple' undercarriage [questionable why you would need those latter two features....?].

The manufacturers say they originally designed the craft with the leisure market in mind but that there has been strong demand from a wide range of markets, including military, civil defence ... Search and Rescue and Police.

The Martin has twin ducted fans which produce sufficient thrust to lift the aircraft and a pilot in vertical takeoff and landing, and enable sustained flight. The Jetpack can take off from a small space is easy to learn to fly, has an automated hover function, and is ex-

pected to be able to be flown in *reasonable* weather conditions.

Ed: That is a similar description to the capabilities of a light helicopter and this would not be the first start up to assume the emergency services are the right home for small one man 'less than capable' flight craft. The large fleet of Robinson R22 light helicopters in South American police service did not last long.



The local media reported that police had been unable to shed any light on why a police helicopter was hovering above Central Reading [Berkshire] last month.

Thames Valley Police (TVP) said nothing had been recorded on its system after reports that a police helicopter had been sighted over the town on August 17.

It was first reported as the Thames Valley [Chiltern] machine but of course all that is in the past now with NPAS ruling the roost.

Thames Valley were only able to look at information relating to the helicopter serving its area which is based at RAF Benson in Oxfordshire. NPAS has its headquarters at West Yorkshire Police, which handles media enquiries for the service, and said it was only able to comment on "the strategic shape" of the service.

West Yorkshire Police added that it did not have any access to information about day-to-day incidents in which helicopters may be called out to in other force areas.

NPAS told the local media to go back to TVP to find out why the helicopter was flying over Reading that day and the same response was given but that proved a blank wall. [Reading Post]

Ed: It looks like the borderless policing provided by NPAS has its limitations but of course it may simply be that either it was a training mission or it was a mission that the operator simply did not wish to divulge! Nudge nudge, wink wink.

LETTERS

Dear Bryn,

First, I would like you to know how shocked and upset I was to learn that our good friend Andrew Griffin has passed away in the middle of July. I never got to know Andrew really well although we would usually look for each other at the various trade events including PAvCon, Helitech and the Counter Terror Exhibition. Whoever replaces Andrew at FLIR Systems will certainly have some big boots to fill!

Also, once again, I must thank you for including the Civil Air Patrol in the current issue of PAN. This story is far from over and I'll get in touch when there are any significant developments. For the time being the press and the politicians are asking Police Scotland some really difficult questions. For the record, I'm a Trustee and the current Chairman of the Civil Air Patrol in the UK. The President is Air Marshal Cliff Spink CB CBE FCMI FRAeS RAF (Ret'd). Apart from his business interests Air Marshal Spink is well known in the aircraft display circuit where he flies a Spitfire, the P51 Mustang and a F86 Sabre – I believe that makes him very lucky!

Very best regards,

Tony

Ed: As one who attended I can report that the funeral of Andrew Griffin attracted a large gathering with the chapel overflowing. Industry representation was large, as befits his status over the last 20 years. In addition to FLIR itself a number of major customers were represented.

EVENTS

COMING UP THIS MONTH

POLICE AVIATION – Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 4-5 September 2013

Police Aviation is taking on an increasingly important role in Asia. Maintaining law and order from the air has grown in stature as sophisticated platforms and systems once the domain of the military are now being used by police forces all over the world.

Asia is now seeking to catch up with the methods used by their western counterparts, an example of which is the growing role of Malaysia's Police Air Wing, known as the Air Operations Force.

Malaysia Police set to talk about their operational experience in the Sabah event and the invaluable lessons learned.

China to illustrate their air reconnaissance activities in the pursuit of fugitives

Kenya outlining their current fleet, operations and future plans



DSEI 2013. 10-13 September 2013 DSEI, Excel Docklands, East London.

One of the world's largest fully integrated defence and security exhibition that brings together the entire industry to source the latest equipment and systems, develop international relationships, and generate new business opportunities. Based in ExCeL, London every two years, the event provides unrivalled access to key markets across the globe. Combining a high quality of exhibitors across the supply chain, networking opportunities and the ability to see new technologies first hand on the show floor, DSEI provides an inspirational experience to nearly 30,000 visitors.



BGAD 2013 17 September 2013

The ninth UK Business & General Aviation Day - BGAD13 - will take place at the regular venue of Cambridge Airport. BGAD 13 will offer free to attend seminars, which will this year take place in specially constructed rooms with the hangar. This will help to maximise attendance while also keeping attendees on site throughout the day. A fine static aircraft display is directly outside of the BGAD13 venue. www.bgad.aero

BELGIUM STATE POLICE 21-22 September Open Door

15th Airlift Wing Melsbroek, Brussels, Belgium. Celebrations of the 65th Anniversary of the Wing together with 40 years of operational service of the C-130 and Falcon DA-20 fleet. Includes participation by the State Police Air Wing. <http://www.opendoor15w.be>

HELITECH 2013 24-26 September 2013 Helitech 2013, ExCel London.

Controversial because of the venue change from the IWM Duxford this year's event will be far easier to get to for the International attendee and offers masses of easy to get to accommodation across London. The very first Helitech International at ExCel London offers over 200 expert exhibitors showcasing their latest helicopter products, services, parts and accessories, all under one roof. Listen to insightful debates in the Conference Programme covering key issues in the rotary wing industry at £99+VAT. Join in on the free-to-attend Safety Workshop Programme. View the static display of helicopters inside and outside the venue. Meet exhibitors and fellow visitors at the Networking Party which will take place on Tuesday 24 September from 17:00 - 19:00. www.helitechevents.com

UPCOMING EVENTS**Aviation Expo Europe 2014**

The Organisers of AviationExpo Europe 2014 have confirmed dates for next year's show. The event will take place at the new location of Hradec Králové Airport, Czech Republic during the 19th - 21st June 2014.

Work is already underway for the AviationExpo Europe event for next year. Show Director Alex Ayling remarked *"We are looking forward to building a European Festival of Aviation for Central Eastern Europe. We have just witnessed a record breaking event at our sister event AeroExpo UK and hope to replicate the hard work and ideas into this European event at Hradec Králové Airport, Czech Republic"*.

Europe's Festival of Aviation in 2014, showcasing an exhibition with everything from aircraft to the latest products, services and seminars. Whether you are interested in learning to fly, or are already a Pilot, AviationExpo Europe has a weekend packed full of extras for everyone!

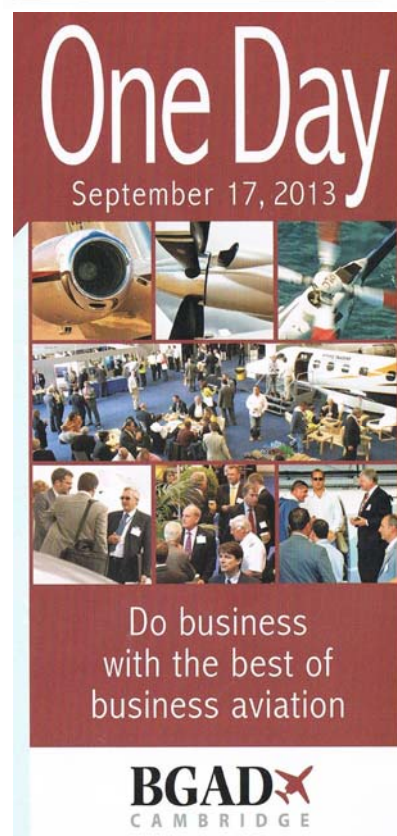
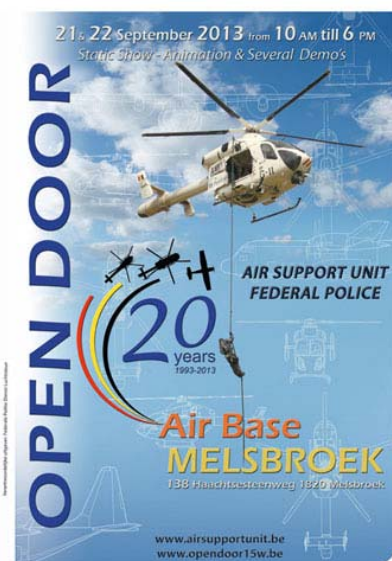
Counter Terror Expo 2014

Clarion Events, the largest independent event organiser in the UK, has appointed Singleton PR to handle the PR for Counter Terror Expo 2014 which is being held on 29th and 30th April next year at Olympia, London.

In 2013, the Editor and 9,253 other people attended Counter Terror Expo, a 9% increase on the previous year.

8 September 2013 North Weald Community Day and Resilience Event. A charity fund raising event for Herts & Essex Air Ambulance and another. The event will be a family day featuring the Resilience Roadshow. The event will run from 10.00am - 5.00pm approx Prices will be £5.00 per person in advance and £6.00 on the day. Contact Darren Goodey Epping Forest District Council 01992 564200 dgoodey@eppingforestdc.gov.uk Control Tower, Merlin Way, North Weald Airfield, Epping, Essex CM16 6AA UK

15 September 2013 North Weald Airfield Museum Annual Open Day and reunion, 12 noon to 5pm. Displays, food, drink and Free entry to the museum www.northwealdairfieldmuseum.com



World's Largest Helicopter Trade Show and Exposition