

Police Aviation News

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Number 216 April 2014

PAR

Wales Air Ambulance

19,000 missions... and counting



Angola: Police Air Wing Expansion

UK Government scraps VAT for EMS

Upcoming Event Updates

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POLICE AVIATION

ANGOLA

LUANDA: The Luanda helicopter base of the National Police situated at the *4 de Fevereiro* airport will be replaced by a new unit on the outskirts of the capital when funds are available. According to National Police Commissioner Ambrósio de Lemos there is need to reduce the current airport base to a small operational unit, in line with the requirements established by the National Company of Air Navigation and Exploration of Airports (Enana). Until recently all resources were based in Luanda but the plan is to decentralise the aircraft to smaller units and improve reaction times.

One of the new smaller unit bases was opened at the end of February to operate from a hanger at the Mukanka International Airport (Huila) and the helicopters will cover the four provinces that comprise the country's southern region, Cuando Cubango, Cunene, Huila and Namibe and eventually central Huambo. Another three regional bases will be established in the provinces of Lunda Sul (northeast), Huambo (centre) and Negage (Uíge - north).

This build up in capability will in time embrace added roles including the transportation of injured persons in urgent need of medical aid and the movement of rescue equipment but may be held back by a shortage of aircraft – they currently mainly rely upon the AS350 helicopter. [ANGOP]



FRONT COVER: Helicopter charity Wales Air Ambulance has carried out its 19,000th mission since the service was launched in 2001.

The landmark mission was operated by the Swansea based crew, they were called to an adult male having a heart attack on a snow covered area near the Talybont Reservoir in the Brecon Beacons. This came as the charity celebrated the completion of its 13th year of operations. [WAA text and image]

ARGENTINA

FEDERAL POLICE: In the last few weeks, the Argentine Federal Police have taken delivery of two new helicopters from Airbus Helicopters production plant in Germany. As usual, the two-tone blue aircraft carry large tactical codes as well as much smaller ATC registrations on the tail. The new aircraft are the first acquisitions for two and a half years when they acquired their second EC135, these latest deliveries will see the last two Bo105s replaced. The fleet now consists of one BK117, two EC145s and three EC135s. [Helihub]

CANADA

COAST GUARD: Public Works and Government Services Canada has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP), on behalf of the Canadian Coast Guard, for the procurement of medium lift helicopters, under the Canadian Coast Guard helicopter fleet renewal programme.

Industry has until May 27, 2014, to submit a proposal. The RFP is available on Buyandsell.gc.ca, the Government Electronic Tendering Service.

The Government of Canada plans to acquire light lift helicopters, medium lift helicopters, polar helicopters and simulator(s) for the light lift and medium lift helicopters. [Citizen]

JAPAN

NATIONAL POLICE AGENCY: Airbus Helicopters Japan Co., Ltd. has delivered two EC135P2+ helicopters to the 'Agency. After delivery these aircraft were delivered to the Fukuoka Prefectural Police and Osaka prefectural police as successors to the aircraft currently being served. These two orders were first announced last May. Some 75 examples of the EC135s are active in Japan undertaking a variety of roles. [AHJ]

NIGERIA

RIVERS STATE: Like many in the region police aviation in Nigeria struggles with airframes and maintenance and as a result alternative strategies are tried by the regions. An attempt by Rivers State, capital Port Harcourt, to acquire two surveillance helicopters specifically to monitor oil theft and security was blocked by the Federal Government leading to the Governor, Rotimi Amaechi, protesting at what is seen as political interference.

This subject has a background, on 12 July 2012, at least 92 people were killed following the crash of a petrol tanker on the main east-west road in Okogbe. The crashed vehicle burst into flames engulfing many of the victims who had been attempting to scoop up spilled petrol for use.

There are calls for the federal government to explain its role in the alleged refusal of entry to the unidentified helicopters paid for by the Rivers State government two years ago. [Media/ PAR]



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RUSSIA

SOCHI: During the XXII Winter Olympic Games and Paralympics – the Schiebel Camcopter® S-100 UAS Unmanned Aircraft System (in cooperation with JSC Gorizont Russia: Gorizont Air S-100) was operating in Sochi undertaking surveillance within an area approx. 50 km from the seaside around the Olympic village.

During the Olympic Games all the information from the S-100 was received in real-time by means of interfacing of the UAV system with the unified safety control system of the organisers. From March 7th the craft operated in support of the Paralympic Games. [Schiebel]



© Schiebel

UNITED KINGDOM

SUSSEX: Local police are running a trial using a small unmanned aircraft system (UAS) at and around the Gatwick Airport that will give them an eye in the sky to deal with potential incidents. The system will be able to beam live high-quality pictures to officers on the ground, allowing them to quickly assess events.



An officer will control the aircraft from the ground, in line of sight, using a portable console from up to 500 metres away.

The trial of the Aeryon Skyranger system is being funded by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) to test how effective it could be in policing.

Land owners close to the airport are being shown how the system works and are being asked for their permission to deploy the equipment from their land.

The officers who will be using the equipment will do so in line with the current Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) regulations.

Future uses of the craft include collecting evidence after road traffic collisions or major incidents and in the search for wanted or missing people in the vicinity of the airport. <http://youtu.be/S-tOFkCzoo8>. For more information www.aeryon.com

Ed: The manufacturer of this craft is Aeryon Labs Inc., based in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. Field-tested and battle-proven, Aeryon sUAS set the standard for immediate aerial intelligence gathering by anyone, anywhere, at anytime, for a wide range of military, public safety and commercial applications. This is not the first time that British police have used small unmanned quadcopters in the support role but previous instances faded quickly for a variety of reasons after forces found themselves hamstrung by the CAA Regulations and in the case of Merseyside the craft was irretrievably lost beneath the waters of the River Mersea.

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The new fixed wing resource used by NPAS across the UK captured on the ground at Robin Hood Airport near Doncaster, Yorkshire on March 14 [© Correne Callow AB]

UNITED STATES

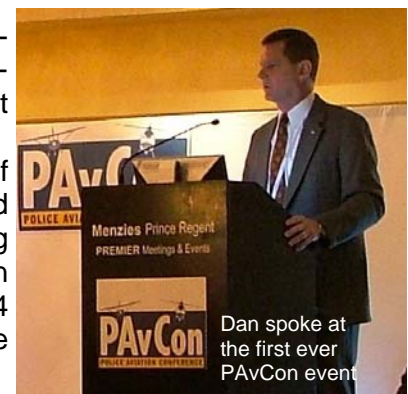
NATIONAL: Helicopter Association International's (HAI) annual HELI-EXPO took place in Anaheim, CA last month. Approximately 19,000 helicopter professionals attended this year's event to network with rotorcraft industry peers, attend educational forums and participate in industry meetings. At the event's opening breakfast, HAI President Matt Zuccaro said the health of HAI is strong, with 714 exhibitors and 63 helicopters on display in a sold-out exhibit hall. Zuccaro estimated that more than \$2 billion in business would take place at the event.

ALEA was among the exhibitors. ALEA's new Executive Director/CEO Dan Schwarzbach, President Kurt Frisz, Secretary Gregg Weitzman, Western Region Director Steve Roussell and Membership Manager Benay Osborne were among those who manned the booth to share the benefits of public safety aviation with attendees as well as information on ALEA's training, networking, advocacy and educational. It as effectively a honeypot for all things emergency services aviation.

The Metro Air Support Unit of St. Louis is the latest public safety aviation operation to achieve accreditation by the Public Safety Aviation Accreditation Commission (PSAAC). A presentation ceremony was conducted at the ALEA booth during Heli-Expo. PSAAC President Jim Di Giovanna and Secretary Don Roby presented the accreditation certificate and plaque to unit representatives Sgt. Dan Cunningham, Lt. Col. Mike Dierkes, Sgt. Dino Orlando, Dep. Dave DeVillez and Captain Kurt Frisz.

In the past year ALEA Membership has slipped a little with individual membership down 2.6% to 2698 members. Corporate membership, primarily industry supporting ALEA, has held steady at 304 members.

Dan Schwarzbach is now the CEO and Executive Director of ALEA, replacing Steve Ingley who served ALEA well and departed just before the recent HAI Heli-Expo event. Dan will be travelling more in order to be as involved as possible in ALEA events and in further developing ALEA and that includes attending the 2014 PAvCon with a view to increase the ALEA presence in Europe and elsewhere. [ALEA]



A row has emerged over the 'use' of images of agency aircraft in advertising. The California Highway Patrol has sent written warning letters to both the ALEA and Breeze Eastern one of the advertisers in the house magazine *Air Beat* after CHP took exception to the use of an image of a CHP AS350 helicopter in a paid for advertisement in an item called *Corporate Profile*.

This may well be just CHP being a bit precious about images of its aircraft but as a result the ALEA is now insisting on vendors getting specific approval from agencies when using their logos, photographs or other agency representations for submission to *Air Beat* for advertising purposes. The CHP position is that while they do use the Breeze winch product they also use other brands and do not wish to be seen as promoting the one product.

ARIZONA: Sheriff Mark Dannels of the Cochise County Sheriff at Bisbee, Arizona has published his 2014 forward plan stating he intends to create an air unit through funding provided from a foundation to include a helicopter / pilot(s) / mechanic / fuel / and maintenance to use for high risk incidents, as well as a aerial drone equipped with infrared to use in a multitude of situations to include SWAT response / fires / surveillance / officer safety incidents. [Media]

CALIFORNIA: The Bell 407GX the San Diego County Sheriff's Department wants to add to its aerial fleet could also support local fire departments with fire suppression efforts.

The California Highway Patrol's fleet of fixed wing airplanes and helicopters may be getting old, but an independent Legislative Analyst's suggest that state lawmakers should not fund the purchase of replacements until the state police force justifies why it needs 26 new aircraft.

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Nineteen of the CHP's 30 aircraft have flown more than 10,000 hours, a point at which a budget submission claims is where maintenance becomes costly and safety margins decline for some aircraft.

The authorities have approved \$17M in the current budget to start the process by buying three helicopters and one plane but there is a proposal for the year that starts July 1 requesting a further \$16M to replace two planes and two helicopters.

The analyst's office say that the figure of 26 has not been justified also suggest that the CHP could ask local law enforcement agencies which rely on their air support coverage to pay for the service they get. [Manteca Bulletin]

Ed: The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department has confirmed the GA8 as their selected platform, and the same type is one of several contenders for a recently released CHP request for bids to start to replace their Cessna 206 fleet, now at least ten years old. Other types in contention include the Cessna 206 itself and the Kodiak.

County supervisors have approved an \$11.6M, 25-year lease agreement with San Bernardino International Airport for more than 61,000 square feet of space that will house the San Bernardino (CA) Sheriff's Department Aviation Division when it relocates from Rialto Airport next year. San Bernardino hopes to be moved and operational in January or February 2015. The new facility will consolidate the division's emergency operations and aviation and volunteer forces units. A large portion of funding for the project will come from the City of Rialto, which will pay to cover the cost of relocating the sheriff's aviation unit.

The entire sheriff's fleet of aircraft will be housed under one roof. New facilities include a 22,500 square-foot hangar to house the Sheriff's Department's aircraft fleet and an 11,640 square-foot office building. [SBSun]

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Coming up over the next few months are three opportunities to partake in Human Factors Training. The first of three dates is April 21-22 and the venue is Pasadena Police Department, California, other dates are in September in Carlsbad and Concord.

Threat & Error Management (TEM) training provides participants with a key set of team-based risk management skills and strategies that have been developed to reduce human error and enhance teamwork in all settings. The programme is useful in developing an understanding of the nature of human behavior with respect to error. Topics of discussion include: Situational Awareness, Stress and Performance, Decision Making, Effective Communications in Critical Situations, and Leadership Skills.

Co-Founder and Instructor at California Training Institute, Craig E. Geis has an extensive background in error and risk management and is used by the National Park Service, police & sheriffs departments worldwide, military special operations and aviation, the FAA, commercial aviation, surgical & ambulance teams, nuclear power plant facilities, DEA, U.S. Customs, the United States Coast Guard, and US Border Patrol. More details on this and other events can be researched through California Training Institute +1 707.968.5109 www.CTI-home.com info@CTI-home.com

INDIANA: The State of Indiana has sold its 2001 Beechcraft Super King Air B200 twin-turbine aircraft N264SP for more than \$1.8M, and the money is expected to go toward supporting the Indiana State Police. Florida-based American Aviation purchased the aircraft on Jan. 30 for \$134,000 more than the state sought for it. Last year, Governor Mike Pence's office estimated that the plane, which had been used for travel by the governor, would sell for \$2.5M [IndyStar]


MISSISSIPPI: After operating a fleet of three different helicopters for more than a decade, the Mississippi Department of Public Safety decided to consolidate by buying an AS350B3e AStar from Airbus Helicopters Inc.

The AS350B3e was chosen over the competition as the aircraft best suited for multiple missions, including patrol, drug eradication and hurricane support. Mississippi DPS sold its ageing helicopter fleet to provide funding for the purchase of the new AS350B3e.

Mississippi DPS took ownership of its new AS350B3e, which was produced at the Airbus Helicopters Inc. plant in Columbus, Miss., in January. The aircraft is now undergoing completion at the company plant in Grand Prairie, Texas, with a final delivery scheduled for late spring.

NEVADA: Last month at Desert Rock Airport some 65 miles northwest of Las Vegas six aircraft took part on what has been largest joint exercise of agencies to deal with the threat of a nuclear accident or a dirty bomb in the Las Vegas Valley.

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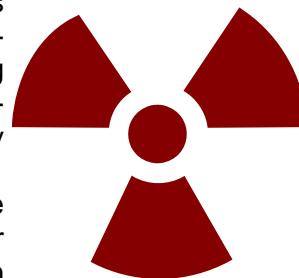
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The gathering brought together federal agencies and police from Las Vegas and Los Angeles. They spent two days training for the unthinkable, measuring radiation using the aircraft and the drawing upon other capabilities coached in part by Alan Remick, aerial measuring system programme manager for the National Nuclear Security Administration, a branch of the Department of Energy.

The six aircraft, four helicopters and two fixed-wing twins, were equipped with instruments that can detect dangerous nuclear sources apart from background levels of radiation either outside in pods or inside the cabins. The helicopters undertake the sorties flying between 150 feet and 600 feet above the surface, where longer-range, fixed-wing planes gather a big-picture view from 1,000 feet. The fleet included an Army Blackhawk, a twin from U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, a twin Beechcraft and a helicopter from the NNSA's Remote Sensing Laboratory and helicopters from Las Vegas Police and another from Los Angeles County Sheriff. Although there was existing data from US efforts in support of the nuclear meltdown in Japan the results of last months exercise are primarily for own use and training, gathering data for planning for future events and future responses.

Radiation detectors are similar to light meters, they make up a picture by plotting pixels across a page, the back-and-forth positioning of detectors mark a radiation point every second. Scientists can then plot the most prolific signals where a radioactive source is located. Some instruments detect the amount of exposure rate, others measure the signature, or spectrum. They can measure each colour and determine the type of radioactive source. Locally detection flights are done multiple times a year, usually before big events such as New Year's Eve and NASCAR races. All this effort began in the aftermath of 9/11, authorities have been on the lookout for dirty bombs, they have never found one. [ReviewJournal]

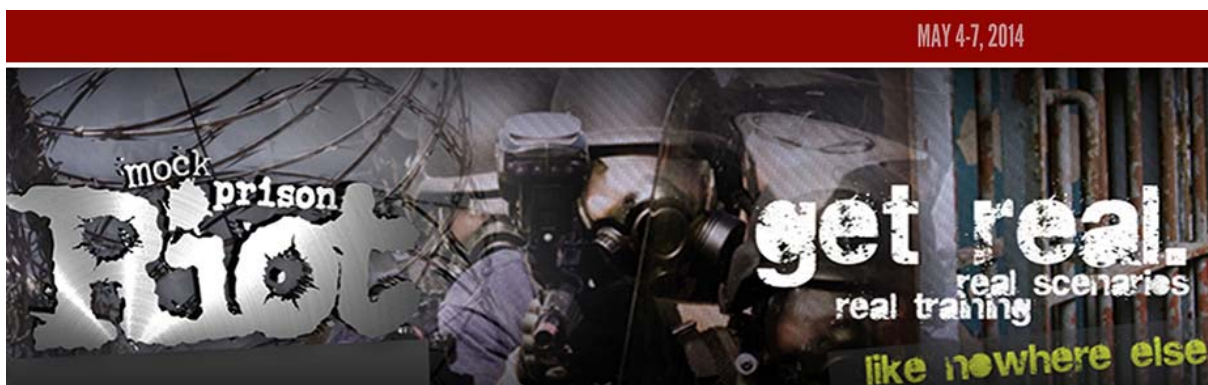


WEST VIRGINIA: A Washington DC based company intends to present Dronesheid, an alarm system that identifies potential approaches by drones, to the US Correctional industry in May.

A team with 20 years experience in science and engineering projects have developed a device that recognises the sound of unmanned craft and sends out an alert. Current versions are intended to be plugged into wall power at all times but they have batteries that are capable of providing a few hours of portable performance. It is a device that is intended to be added to the perimeter of a prison as a first line of defence against incursions by craft bringing in contraband which in the past has included mobile phones, drugs and tobacco but could include weapons.

The device only warns when one is coming it does not interfere, jam, or damage the drone in any way.

The demonstration will take place at the May 4-7 Mock Prison Riot event in the decommissioned West Virginia Penitentiary in Moundsville WV. The event has an 18-year history and this is the first time unmanned craft have featured as an exhibit. www.dronesheid.org



AIR AMBULANCE

CANADA

ALBERTA: The New Brunswick government has sold its 2006 Beechcraft King Air 200 to an air ambulance service in Alberta for \$2.8M, about \$1.7M less than the province paid for it six years ago. It was previously used to carry the premier and other politicians, they will now charter aircraft when they are needed.

The New Brunswick government reckoned the aircraft and its crew were costing around \$0.9M at a time when its use has been declining. They now need to find a way of getting out of a 14-year lease it has for a hangar at the Fredericton airport at an annual cost of \$100,000.

Can-West Corporate Air Charters, a public medevac contractor for Alberta is the buyer.

The situation surrounding Alberta Health Care remains unclear as there are other reports that at least one of Alberta's twelve medical planes will be taken offline next month as last minute negotiations continue with five prospective providers over contracts set to expire on March 31.

Integra Air has threatened that its regular air-ambulance fleet of three King Air B200s will not be available in April due to uncertainty surrounding the contracts. Some of their aircraft are being taken offline pending the clearing off the situation.

MANITOBA: The Manitoba government has given the green light to STARS air ambulance service to resume flying, three months after a patient's death raised concerns about potentially improper oxygen levels.

The non-profit agency, which has operated for years in Alberta and Saskatchewan without being grounded, has agreed to upgrade its equipment, increase training and work with a new oversight panel that includes the dean of medicine at the University of Manitoba.

What remained unclear is how much blame STARS should bear for 16 cases that were part of an external review by the medical director of air ambulance services in British Columbia.

STARS has agreed to upgrade its equipment. New ventilators are to have oxygen sensors for the first time. Oxygen tank regulators will have built-in alarms for when levels get too low. Crews also are to undergo more training alongside crews from other provinces. [WCTV]

CARIBBEAN: Air ambulance service Medi Caribbean Aero Medical Support Medicaire has been providing air ambulance services to the islands of the Netherlands Antilles since the year 2000, they started out with Piper Seneca, Piper Chieftain and Britten Norman Islander aircraft as the only official accredited service provider. Last year the operation was split the Islands of Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba, became direct territories of the kingdom of the Netherlands known now as the BES islands.

The CEO of Medicaire Rene Winkel together with organization on Bonaire in the Dutch Caribbean has developed an air ambulance service for the Dutch Caribbean islands Bonaire, Statia and Saba, and started flying in June 2013 and over 130 missions have been flown to date using a Learjet 35A on medevac and retrievals to destinations including St. Maarten. [MCAM]



NIGERIA

NEMA: Last month the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) announced the introduction of a nationwide air ambulance service with the hub in Abuja that uses a Cessna aircraft.

The aircraft has been fully equipped with state-of-the-art medical facilities and well-trained doctors and paramedics to cover the whole country.

The same agency has stockpiled reserves of equipment and relief materials likely to be required for urgent assistance to disaster victims across the country; these include helicopters, vehicles, ambulances, tents, assorted food items, blankets and mattresses. (NAN)

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UNITED KINGDOM

NATIONAL: Having a Government coming up for re-election next year is always a good excuse for a few 'give-away' measures in official statements on tax affairs. With the current Government due to face the polls next year there were a number of such measures and two affected the voter popular charity air ambulance fraternity.

The most nationally wide ranging measure related to the removal of VAT [value added tax, a sales tax] from fuel used by air ambulances.

The tax break was announced by the Chancellor George Osborne in a statement in Parliament is that VAT will no longer be payable on fuel for all air ambulance services across the UK. For such as the Herts & Essex charity it will save them around £5,500 a year so it is not inconsiderable – although different charities are affected in different ways the tax was actually only payable on some fuel rather than all. Hitherto VAT has not been generally payable on fuel provided for leased aircraft, but it varies from operation to operation. Essex for instance have their own fuel supply and VAT is payable, generally Bond absorbed the VAT on fuel uplifted at the home base on their leased aircraft operations so it was not payable unless the aircraft landed off base.

The move follows more than 12 months of lobbying with MPs spearheaded by the Association of Air Ambulances and the Air Ambulance All Party Parliamentary Group pressing for the VAT deal.

Not every corner of the industry welcomed the move without reservation. Adrian Bell, chief executive of Kent, Surrey and Sussex AA, said that while he welcomed the announcement it had created some uncertainty.

The budget set out plans for a five-year grant of £65,000 a year for air ambulance charities across the country and yet his charity currently spends about £180,000 on aviation fuel per year, of which 5% is VAT, about £8,000 a year on one charity alone. It would seem that all charities will not get all of the VAT back. It may be that such as Bond may feel that they should not have to 'absorb' this in future if a 'no strings' tax break is on offer. *[Ed: PAN has asked Bond about this but they were always unlikely to form such a policy shift in the few days since the Budget announcement so that is an answer for a future issue].*

The other Budget Gift was the granting of £1M towards a second air ambulance for the Capital City and is listed under 'London' below.

The air ambulance charities see an opportunity to access this same funding – a development that does raise issues for all charities wishing to retain total independence. [Media/PAR]



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CORNWALL: The charity air ambulance covering the south western tip of England, and also the first independent charity air ambulance created in the UK, went to the assistance of 675 patients last year, flying an average of 56 rescue missions per month, with May the busiest month with 89 operations.

Almost two thirds of calls were to patients suffering medical emergencies like cardiac arrest and stroke, and the remaining rescues were to patients suffering serious trauma injuries.

Some 10% of missions related to attendance to patients aged 16 and under, with some transferred straight to the specialist children's hospital in Bristol.

The Air Ambulance has also revealed more details about its new 'MD902 Explorer' helicopters, which will take to the county's skies from December replacing a long line of Eurocopter helicopters operated since the first BO105 entered service.

The announcement of the contract that will bring in examples of the MD902 Explorer helicopters means Cornwall will now be served by two air ambulance helicopters for the first time, providing a dedicated on-site backup for use when one aircraft is offline for routine or unscheduled maintenance.

Perhaps the most significant change is the new aircraft's ability to fly in the dark. Until a recent change in aviation law, no air ambulance service in the UK has been able to fly at night. Where most other air ambulances are operating brand new airframes to undertake this extended role Cornwall will be using existing airframes that are role enhanced.

DEVON: Devon's Air Ambulances are celebrating becoming truly independent and self-sufficient, joining other owner operator operations such as Yorkshire Air Ambulance, that have already taken the same route.

The Charity, through its operating arm Devon Air Ambulance Trading Company Limited, has been awarded their own Air Operators Certificate (AOC) from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), something the Charity have previously relied on other agencies to hold and operate on their behalf. These have historically been such as Bond Air Services who leased their early aircraft to the charity and Devon & Cornwall Police who supported DAAT after they started to own aircraft.

Some years ago the County Police entered into a support arrangement that saw DAAT move onto the police campus, greatly enhancing base, maintenance and pilotage costs but this became unsustainable under NPAS and future EASA rulemaking.

The creation of NPAS also saw the County Police give both of the air units notice to quit the base located in the grounds of the Police Headquarters. As this issue closed for press the movement of both operations is underway — moving to a new base location on nearby Exeter Airport — where DAAT started operations.



Left to right Steve Tupper (Accountable Manager), Ian Payne (Flight Operations Director), Nigel Hare (Ground Operations Director) and Rob Mackie (Safety Manager)

Photo courtesy of Michelle Lovegrove Photography & Design



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ESSEX & HERTS: The Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Trust officially launched a new extended service beyond daylight hours last month. As an alternative strategy to that being taken by other operations the Trust have gone for having a dedicated fast response vehicle based in the middle of its region at North Weald Airfield. The HEMS Doctor/Paramedic team will respond to patients in Essex & Hertfordshire rapidly and safely in the hours of darkness on Friday and Saturday nights up to about 0100hrs in each case. The cars will carry full life-saving equipment and drugs exactly like the helicopters but unlike the helicopters they are not weather dependent.

The Essex & Herts model has been based on an extensive trial using a range of owned fleet cars and manufacturer owned demonstrators. The final choice is of Vauxhall saloon cars as a bought in asset replacing existing cars. The cars carry roof markings of 55 and 07 each reflecting the helicopters they work with at North Weald and Earl's Colne. Operations will be borderless and the location close to the M11 Motorway will facilitate fast response to assist all areas of the south-east during the operational days and additionally provide an alternative to the helicopters in bad weather.

London has had a similar system of response cars covering the night hours and adjoining areas still have restricted night hours helicopters available.

The whole system of night response in the UK is still developing and the variety of models being tried out varies considerably. A few years down the road we can expect some consolidation towards perceived 'best practice' but until then variety is the name of the game. [EHAAT/PAR]

Ed: The official launch of this scheme took place at the CEME Conference Centre in Rainham late last month. The Vauxhall cars involved are new to the scheme but it has been running for some time using existing [BMW and Volvo] fleet cars.

Later this month the same CEME Conference Centre is to be the venue for the Essex & Herts AAT Aeromedical Conference. As mentioned in an earlier edition of PAN this is a free training event and all are welcome to apply for places. To register visit www.ehaat.co.uk



© PAR

LONDON: Now 25 years old the London Air Ambulance has a new home and aspirations to acquire a second helicopter to serve the Capital City.

In last months Government Budget Statement it was announced that the Government is to give £1M of public money towards the cost of the second helicopter. The cash injection comes from the LIBOR (London Interbank Offered Rate) fines fund rather than an actual government injection of money.

Commenting on the announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer Chief Executive Officer, Graham Hodgkin said:

"This is fantastic news for the people of London as it is thanks to their support we are able to celebrate this milestone in the charity's development. £1M will give us the opportunity to acquire a second helicopter to give London 100% air cover during summer daylight hours and maintenance periods. In practical terms, we estimate we'll now be able to reach a further 400 patients each year by helicopter.

"The money will cover the cost of running a second aircraft and extended flying hours for one year so we'll also be stepping up our efforts to raise the £6M a year needed to keep the helicopter trauma service running in the capital."

Dr Gareth Davies, Medical Director and Chair of the Trustees of London's Air Ambulance said: "The charity covers the 10 million people who live, work and travel in the capital. In our 25th year of service, this donation is a tremendous boost for London's ability to respond to emergencies as well as a tribute to the 30,000 patients we have treated so far".

www.Londonsairambulance.co.uk

MIDLAND: Starting this month the charity is joining those operations that have chosen to buy and operate their own aircraft. The arrival of a new Airbus Helicopters EC135T2e G-OMAA to be based at Cosford will be marked in a ceremony that will also celebrate the extensive refurbishment of the base buildings. More next month. [MAA]

UNITED STATES

TEXAS: Philadelphia based Anglo-Italian manufacturer AgustaWestland have announced that a Texas-based air medical service has ordered an AW109 to join its fleet of fixed-wing aircraft.

The AW109 GrandNew helicopter for SevenBar, in the emergency medical service configuration, will feature modern a comprehensive EMS interior with single or dual stretchers capability, wire-strike protection and night vision goggle compatibility.

The GrandNew also features a synthetic vision system, highway-in-the-sky and helicopter terrain awareness and warning systems.

The helicopter terrain awareness and warning systems provide full terrain and obstacle awareness in low visibility flying conditions and gives the pilot three dimensional guidance and detailed terrain maps. [AW]

Ed: When AW announced the skid equipped A109 Trekker at this year's HAI Heli-Expo they marked the airframe as being for SevenBar.



SEARCH & RESCUE

SOUTH AFRICA

POLOKWANE: When a Kaingo Private Game Reserve safari vehicle carrying eleven people got swept away by the Mokolo River in Lephalale, Limpopo last month rescue came from an unlikely source.

Robinson R44 operator Coena Smith from Vaalwater in Limpopo, who had never used his helicopter, ZS-HDB for anything other than game capture excursions before, suddenly became the hero in the unfolding drama.

He told the paper that a friend had called him up to tell him about the incident and ask for his assistance. Without a moment's thought, Smith and a colleague, Wickus Venter, hopped in the helicopter and zoomed over to the Mokolo River where they found the victims dispersed in the raging waters and clinging to branches sticking out above the water.

The R44 is seen by no-one as the ideal rescue craft but, as the scratch crew found, there was no alternative resource available and they did their best.

They had only makeshift equipment, rather than a rope they employed a towing strop normally used to tow vehicles, this was secured in the cabin and wrapped around the forward skid and left dangling down to the river surface for those in the water to hopefully grab and allow themselves to be dragged or lifted to dry land.

Despite the obvious drawbacks in equipment and technique it took just an hour to complete the entire rescue mission, they would pick up one of the victims, drop them in a nearby field and return to pick up another. [photographer Johannes Oberholzer. News 24]

UNITED KINGDOM

UK SAR: This month the 2014 Alan Bristow Lecture by a pair of well regarded SAR Professionals will give an insight into the ways in which the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) and Bristow are capturing the 70-year history of Britain's brave men and women who have conducted military search and rescue missions. Chris Bond (Bristow Helicopters) and Damien Oliver (MCA) will outline how the technology in the new aircraft will compare to the RAF and RN Sea Kings, the engagement that has taken place so far with military personnel and other operational stakeholders as well as how both organisations are working together to ensure that the citizens of the United Kingdom receive a search and rescue service as good as they experience today.

Damien Oliver is the Change Manager, Maritime and Coastguard Agency, UK Search and Rescue (UK SAR) Helicopters Programme. He is responsible for making sure that the SAR helicopter service the UK Government procured meets the needs of its users. Damien is the principal interface for all those with an interest in the programme, including politicians and partner SAR organisations.

Chris Bond started flying in helicopters in the late 1960's with the Royal Navy; joining Bristow Helicopters in 1976. Chris has flown approximately 11,000 hours in the Search and Rescue (SAR) role, operating as SAR Rearcrew in a wide variety of SAR Helicopter types worldwide. He has been personally involved in the rescue over 1,100 people in both the maritime and land environments to date.

Chris was a Core Bid Team member (Technical lead) of the successful Bristow bid for UK-SAR, which will involve implementation of 22 SAR aircraft at 10 bases in the UK commencing in 2015. He is currently a member of the Bristow Quality, Safety & Standards Department and is responsible for Rearcrew SAR Standards & Quality Assurance within the Bristow Group globally, in addition Chris is involved in the development of new equipment and techniques for SAR operations.

For further information on this April 9 event at the Royal Aeronautical Society, No.4 Hamilton Place, London W1J 7BQ. Arrive 17:30 for Refreshments, the lecture starts at 18:00. Visit the [Royal Aeronautical Society website](http://www.royalaeronsociety.org) for details and RSVP to email conference@aerosociety.com

UNITED STATES

ALASKA: Alaska Electric Light & Power Inc. has purchased a piece of equipment — a long-range receiver that mounts to a helicopter — that will make avalanche rescues faster, more efficient and less dangerous for rescue workers.

With avalanche rescue you have 20-30 minutes to find the trapped person the new gear is all about reducing the amount of time it takes to get someone unburied, a couple of minutes can make a huge difference.

They have chosen to store the device at Coastal Helicopters so it's available to Juneau Mountain Rescue, Eaglecrest Ski Patrol, Kensington Mine, or whoever needs it.

The long-range receiver hangs from the side of a helicopter and allows rescuers to search for beacon signals from the air over a wider area. [Greenfield Reporter]

INDUSTRY

The **AgustaWestland** AW189 undertook a demo tour among US Oil & Gas operators in the Gulf of Mexico region, from March 4th to the 7th.

After been showcased at Heli Expo in Anaheim, California a few days after the issuing with type certification by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), the AW189 demonstrated its capabilities to major companies in Texas and Louisiana.

The new 8.3 tonne AW189 is optimised for long range offshore transport and SAR missions and has already received orders for 130 helicopters, including options and framework contracts, making it the outright market leader in its class. Customers in the OGP market include many of the world's leading large fleet operators such as Bristow Group, Era Group, Gulf Helicopters and Weststar Aviation Services. Additionally major helicopter leasing companies such as Lease Corporation International, Milestone Aviation Group and Waypoint Leasing have signed agreements for AW189 helicopters.

AeroSimulators has relocated its Belgian facilities in response to the on-going need for additional space. The new facility, located at Laagstraat 65, 9140 Temse, Belgium (Telephone: +32 475 241 797), will provide expanded office and simulator production space, as well as customised simulator training facilities.

AeroSimulators is a worldwide provider of helicopter and airplane flight simulation systems address and contact details in Colorado, USA remain unchanged.

Pilot training with the first Level D full-flight simulator for **Airbus Helicopters'** new EC175 rotorcraft will be available from this summer, using an Indra-built system located at the Airbus Helicopters Training Services facility in Marignane, France.

Its near-term availability, announced at the Heli-Expo 2014 convention in Anaheim, California, will enable pilot training to begin ahead of the first EC175 customer deliveries later in 2014. This motion-based full-flight simulator incorporates a state-of-the-art visual projection

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system with a 210 deg. by 80 deg. continuous field of view to recreate the most realistic flight conditions for immersive training.

In addition to the Level D full-flight simulator, a flight navigation procedure training (FNPT) also built by Indra will be installed at the Airbus Helicopters Training Services centre in Marignane. This provides valuable pilot training opportunities on a fixed-base system that is complementary to the full-flight simulator.

At the recent Heli-Expo **Russian Helicopters** announced that over 150 Russian-made helicopters involved in UN humanitarian and peacekeeping operations around the world. Russian Helicopters, a subsidiary of Oboronprom, part of State Corporation Rostec, and commercial aviation firms UTair, PANH Helicopters and Ukrainian Helicopters discussed their positive experience of co-operation in this area.

Even as they spoke there have been developments in Ukraine that may well lead to a break up of that country and to them turning their backs on the tie up with the very name Russian Helicopters. Certainly there is an expectation that the benevolent attitude taken to helicopters from Russia being financed by American Dollars could take a major hit.



© Russian Helicopters

Trakka Corp Pty Ltd has signed a 10 year Long Term Agreement, for the supply of its A800 Trakkabeam Searchlight to Agusta Westland.

Trakka has a strong history of working with Agusta Westland having been installed on numerous AW139 platforms in the past. Based on this success, reliability, and unparalleled performance of the A800 on these installations, it was an easy decision to select Trakka as a long term partner for the future. With this agreement now in place the Trakkabeam is in the privileged position of being Agusta Westland's primary searchlight and will be available on all of their new platforms (AW169, AW189) as well as the already popular and established aircraft such as the AW101, AW139 and AW109. This agreement also benefits the end user as it guarantees a solid support structure and longevity of supply for the long term. The Trakkabeam A800 searchlight is a fully automated multi-mission searchlight system, with the only internally integrated filter wheel on the market. This enables the installation of a range of spectral light filters including infrared, visible red, amber and white light. This creates unparalleled visibility and mission capability during night-time operations, including over foliage, in moist or foggy weather, and during NVG operations. These filters can be changed remotely in less than 1 second without any airspeed restrictions, thereby increasing the operator's effectiveness.

This low weight and aerodynamic searchlight utilises precision optics to deliver a uniform beam of light with clear defined edges, eliminating the black spots and fading associated with other searchlight products. This advanced technology, only available with the Trakkabeam, also makes the searchlight far more efficient than any other on the market, resulting in the use of an 800W lamp whilst still achieving outstanding performance and range.

Summit Aviation, a Greenwich AeroGroup company, has delivered its first Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) platform to a State Law Enforcement Department. The modified Mahindra Aerospace GippsAero GA8 Airvan Astra new aircraft utilizes off-the-

shelf commercial packages, in addition to Summit's customized and installed features such as a full work station with moving maps and overlays, cross-cueing of various sensors, a 3D mapping aerial camera system and full motion video capability to enhance the mission capabilities of the operator.

Located in Middletown, Delaware, the company offers aircraft and engine maintenance and modification services on Bell, Eurocopter, Sikorsky, Boeing and MD helicopters as well as on Pilatus, Cessna, Beechcraft King Airs, Beechjets and other light jet model aircraft. The company also provides engine maintenance and support to its customers that include Pratt & Whitney, Turbomeca, and others. More information available at www.summit-aviation.com

On February 19th 2014, the **Federal Aviation Administration** validated the Vulcanair Aircraft Vr (P68R) and the A-VIATOR (AP68TP-600) latest version of the aircraft.

The Vr is a retractable gear variant of the popular high-wing twin piston aircraft the Vulcanair P68C; the main differences between the P68C and the Vr are in the retractable landing gear offered by the latter aircraft. The retractable gear imbues a distinctive sleek look and crisp flight characteristics aimed at both pilots and operators. The Vr is a modern and sturdy platform that is roomier than most light twins. The pair of 200hp Lycoming engines and robust metal construction of the P68 offer a valid alternative to older design light twins.

In addition to the Vr (P68R) validation, the FAA has also approved the latest version of the A-VIATOR

(AP68TP-600) aircraft currently manufactured and sold in Europe and the rest of the World. The A-VIATOR is a non-pressurized high-wing "200 knots" twin-turboprop powered by two Rolls Royce 250 (328-shp) engines. The aircraft maintains the easy to fly qualities of the P68 Series aircraft but brings more airspeed and space on board along with the increased MTOW of 6614 lbs. The aircraft is faster than most popular single engine unpressurized utility turboprops yet having a very similar price. It also offers comparably less total fuel consumption (249lbs/hr) than singles thanks to the turbines which are optimised to fly at non pressurised altitudes below 20,000 ft. The type is offered in several versions with easily configurable seating arrangements of up to 11 seats or for airborne surveillance and maritime patrol configurations. Vulcanair exhibited at last year's PAvCon in Austria.



The Vulcanair A-VIATOR at last year's PAvCon Police Aviation Conference in Austria [PAR]

ALEA EXPO 2014

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Lycoming Service Instruction No. 1009AW dated February 24, 2014 eliminates the previous 2200 time-between-overhaul (TBO) requirement that specified engines be used in "frequent" service, defined as 40 hours or more per month. The Service Instruction extends the engine overhaul period from 2000 to 2200 hours without restrictions, and applies only to **Lycoming** engines built to specifications for and installed in Robinson helicopters.

The 200 hour extension is based on the excellent service history of the O-320-B2C and O-360-J2A engines used in the R22, and the O-540-F1B5 and IO-540-AE1A5 engines used in the R44.

Meanwhile **Robinson** has delivered its 500th turbine engine R66 model, an example destined for Russia. At the recent Heli-Expo they were showing all their range of helicopters and the R66 was represented by, N951PD, a police configured model destined for the police in Fontana, California.

For the last decade Fontana has operated a succession of Robinson's and the latest delivery was ordered amid some controversy last year, there was a split vote among the lawmakers assigning the money. They will now operate two R66 and a fixed wing over a number of cities in the state.

The new R66 for police operations in California at this year's HAI Heli-Expo.



Auckland, New Zealand-based **Spidertracks** is hopeful of other deals with helicopter manufacturers after its Spider real-time tracking system was selected by Robinson Helicopters as an option for all R22, R44 and R66 models.

The Spidertracks system uses the Iridium satellite network to send real-time aircraft location to a web application. Two versions are available – the Spider S3 which costs U.S. \$995 and the S5 at \$1795, which is enabled with Bluetooth allowing the user to send and receive SMS messages to any iOS or Android device. The company has sold nearly 4,500 systems, with 50% of these used on helicopters.

Under the agreement with Robinson, all aircraft will be pre-wired with a Spider power cord and a mounting bracket will be installed on top of the instrument cluster, offering clear view to the sky for optimal connectivity to GPS and Iridium satellites. [R&W]

Bell Helicopter has received FAA supplemental type certificate (STC) approval for three new accessory options for the **Bell 412EPI** including a Cockpit Voice Flight Data Recorder (CV/FDR), Bell Helicopter Vibration Monitoring system (BHVM) and Helicopter Terrain Awareness System (HTAWS). All three Bell 412EPI STC-approved products are all available through the Aeronautical Accessories brand.

The CV/FDR is an "on-condition" line-replaceable unit that records both cockpit voice and flight data. The CV/FDR is capable of recording a minimum of 25 hours of flight data and two hours of audio. Flight data is recorded in flash memory and segregated from the cockpit voice data and may be downloaded to ground station equipment in approximately five minutes.

The new BHVM kit for the Bell 412EPI provides comprehensive airframe, rotor, engine and drive system vibration monitoring capability. Additionally, the system provides quick access aircraft data recording capability to support customer flight data monitoring (FDM) programs. The system is compatible with the new Bell 412EPI integrated avionics system.

For forward looking terrain and obstacle avoidance capability, the new Bell 412EPI Helicop-

ter Terrain Awareness and Warning System (HTAWS) kit is now FAA approved and available. This kit has the Honeywell Mark XXII system which presents visual and aural signals to pilots in advance when potential hazards exist. The system is compatible with the new Bell 412EPI integrated avionics system. www.aero-access.com

Dart Aerospace has added the Quick Release Long Cargo Tube to its family of cargo expansion products. Designed for the specific needs of AS350/355 operators transporting up to 12-foot long cargo, the Cargo Tube can carry up to 280 lbs of long, narrow items such as antennas, snow sampling rods, construction material, and long tools used in the mining industry.

The Long Cargo Tube is a unique, easy-to-install solution, easily removed by one person allowing the operator to go from one mission to another in less than a minute. The tube installs with the same mounting system already used on the Heli-Utility Basket™ and features integrated carry handles to facilitate handling. The equipment can be installed on the left-hand or the right-hand side, or on both sides simultaneously, it is compatible with the Spacepod™ and Squirrel Cheek features and has no flight restrictions under its current approvals in Canada. Approvals for other countries are expected shortly.

Heli-Support of Wanaka, New Zealand are demonstrating the PA100 PUREair System engine protection system for the AS350 and EC130 families of helicopters.

The PA100 PUREair System, co-developed by Pall Aerospace and Dart Aerospace, is a totally redesigned, reengineered, and retested engine air protection system that takes the capabilities of its EAPS predecessors to the next level. Featuring Pall's latest technology, the new system is self-cleaning and virtually maintenance-free, unlike other filtration systems qualified for this aircraft. The system will provide the highest level of helicopter engine protection while offering a 2% gain in engine power over conventional inlet barrier filters. After securing Canada STC approval, DART and Pall will seek FAA, EASA and ANAC STC approval.

Although conventional wisdom suggests that rotary wing craft have their own 'parachute' in the presence of the rotor itself, a Czech company has developed a new parachute based aircraft recovery/safety system. Readers may be familiar with the concept of the Ballistic Recovery Systems parachute based system used on such light fixed wing aircraft as the Cirrus, this new system is designed for light rotary craft.

Already tested it enables safe recovery of rotary craft from a height of 60m at a forward speed of 60km/h and higher or from 110m if in the hover.

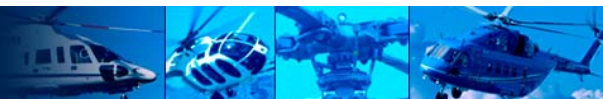
Glaxy GRS s.r.o. are to exhibit at AERO Friedrichshafen this month but were walking the halls in Anaheim last month. Fuller details can be found on their website at www.galaxysky.cz



© Dart



© Glaxy



The **Night Vision Awards** selection committee are now accepting nominations for the 2014 Night Vision Awards Show to be held in Phoenix, AZ at the Airborne Law Enforcement Association's (ALEA) annual conference. Awards will be presented to recipients on Thursday, July 17 at an awards reception from 4:30-5:30 p.m.

The Night Vision Awards are a bi-annual event with ceremonies hosted by Aviation Specialties Unlimited, Night Flight Concepts, Vertical Magazine and Rotorcraft Pro Magazine at ALEA in July and NightCon in August. The purpose of this event series is to promote operational leadership and excellence in the use of night vision, in North America and around the world.

The Community Awareness Award, International Awareness, if applicable, 5-Year Service Award and 10-Year service award will be presented at ALEA and the Mark of Excellence Award will be presented at NightCon in Dallas, Texas.

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>.

Operators must be present at ALEA in order to be eligible for entry for the awards. Nominators are asked to submit photos, videos and stories about their use of Night Vision Systems along with their nomination form. Applicants are asked to email supporting materials to scott@brandingiron.com. A full list of previous winners and award description can be found on <http://www.nightvisionawards.com>.

Airbus Helicopters and China's Avicopter have signed a joint agreement for the production of 1,000 new-generation EC175/AC352 rotorcraft. The agreement cements the industrial partnership between Airbus Helicopters and AVIC on their jointly-developed EC175/AC352. Development work has been equally shared between Airbus Helicopters and Avicopter for the EC175/AC352 project, production is likewise shared.

France and China launched their cooperation on EC175/AC352 in 2005, benefitting from 40 years of close ties between the partners on previous rotorcraft projects.

PremiAir International Group, U.K., has announced that it has entered into a transatlantic joint venture with **Aviation Specialties Unlimited, Inc.**, (ASU) of Boise, Idaho to bring innovative new night vision technologies to the U.K. and other European countries. Under the terms of the joint venture – which was signed at the recent Helicopter Association International annual HELI-EXPO in Anaheim, California. - PremiAir and ASU will jointly supply, sell and support night vision products, maintenance, training and aircraft modification services in the U.K. and Continental Europe.

PremiAir already has plans to showcase examples of the new technology aboard an AS 355 helicopter at their Blackbushe, Surrey, headquarter. www.premiairaviation.com

The majority of unmanned craft may still struggle for acceptance but one or two seem to sit above the mainstream. In July 2012, the **Sky-Watch HUGINN X1**, a quad rotor craft equipped with a FLIR thermal camera was determined by a panel of US government drone experts to be technically superior to other UAVs currently in use by various government agencies.

This year the HUGINN X1 is still seen as the strongest participant at the recent Army Expeditionary Warrior Experiments (AEWE) and in the IHS Jane's International Defence Review, the Sky-Watch/Colt Fenris Rifle-Mounted Laser-Control System was re-



vealed at the Shot Show 2014 Las Vegas. The principal operating function of the system in its current form is as a means of controlling the HUGINN X1. The system enables a user to provide GPS co-ordinates via the laser rangefinder, setting a waypoint for the HUGINN X1 UAV to monitor, transmitting imagery from its day/night electro-optic infrared payload via a 900 MHz datalink back to the Fenris unit.

The system can be deployed in a few minutes up to an Altitude Range of 10,000 feet amsl. The foldable airframe offers a flight time of up to 25 minutes and is tolerant of winds up to 10 m/s, as well as rain snow and dust, weighs 1,390 grams. (excluding payload).

An AgustaWestland AW139 operated by **Gulf Helicopters of Qatar** has achieved the milestone of 50,000 flight hours. Gulf Helicopter is one of the largest AW139 operators worldwide and a prime player in the Middle East with 17 helicopters of this type already in service. Gulf Helicopters first ordered the AW139 in 2007 for offshore transport missions as part of its fleet renewal and expansion plans. Gulf Helicopters is also an AgustaWestland authorised service centre for AW139s and also one of the first helicopter companies to have its own AW139 full flight simulator to support its own operations and for third party use. Additionally, Gulf Helicopters was established as an AgustaWestland Authorised Training Centre for the type in September 2013.

Dahar-Socata has unveiled its TBM900 single engine turboprop, the latest variant of what is now a 25-years old design.

The TBM900 replaces the TBM850 which was introduced in 2006 and offers performance improvements brought about by aerodynamic enhancements in the airframe while retaining the same PT-6A-66D powerplant.

The manufacturer will be exhibiting the surveillance aspects of the TBM at this year's PAvCon Police Aviation Conference in Brussels.

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Even as the **Avincis Group** was itself in talks for Babcock International Group PLC to acquire the share capital of the Group from KKR it emerged that Scandinavian Air Ambulance (SAA), the foremost provider of air ambulance services in the Nordic region, intends to join Avincis.

The agreement would see the business take its place alongside Avincis' existing companies which deliver medical emergency, search & rescue, fire fighting and energy support services across eight countries worldwide with a fleet of 343 aircraft.

The total enterprise value derived from the purchase price amounts to €80M. The agreement would see Avincis acquire 84.6% for an initial cash consideration with a further amount in the form of a vendor note payable in cash in two years' time. The transaction is subject to the satisfaction of certain conditions and regulatory approvals prior to 30 June 2014.

SAA's fleet of 22 aircraft annually transports more than 14,000 patients across Sweden, Finland and Denmark, making it a natural fit for Avincis. Like much of the existing group SAA would continue its existing operations serving customers across Scandinavia, and would continue to manage the business. www.avincisgroup.com

INCIDENTS & ACCIDENTS

6 January 2014 Beechcraft King Air 200 N634B Air ambulance of Air St. Luke's of Boise, Idaho USA operated by Turbo Air, Inc. On loading the isolette into the aircraft, the pilot closed, but did not secure, the door to keep cold out. On take-off roll the door dropped open. The take-off was aborted and the door closed. Maintenance inspection did not find any failures. [Concern]

21 February 2014 Antonov An-26 Air ambulance of the Libyan military crashed in Tunisia. At least 11 people died according to the Tunisian civil protection authority, the plane carrying doctors and patients came down in the region of Grombalia, 40 km south of Tunis. A Tunisian interior ministry spokesman said the pilot radiod that his engine caught fire before the aircraft crashed. The aircraft had left the military air base of Mitiga, in Tripoli, and was carrying some patients to Tunis. Libyans often travel to other countries, mostly Tunisia, for medical treatment. (ANSAméd).

27 February 2014 Eurocopter AS350 N357FB. While operating on a search for a stolen vehicle there was an indication of a mechanical problem and the pilot put down in a parking lot near 22nd Avenue and Lower Buckeye, Phoenix, Arizona USA. The pilot reportedly felt a strange vibration and decided to land. [Fox]

28 February 2014 Eurocopter BK117 D-HDRJ Air ambulance of DRF Air Rescue 'Christoph Offshore 2' undertaking an exercise offshore Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Germany crashed into the water with four aboard. The two pilots were recovered but one died shortly afterwards. Two other bodies, the medical crew, were recovered later. [Bild]

2 March 2014 Eurocopter MH-65C U S Coast Guard helicopter that was flying from Traverse City to Iron Mountain in Michigan made an emergency landing on Washington Island, Traverse City. [Media]

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5 March 2014 MDHI MD500 N921SD Fresno County Sheriff's Office, California, helicopter "Eagle One" had to make an emergency landing on the playground of Jackson Elementary School in Sanger. The pilot and his partner smelled smoke in the cockpit and decided not to take a chance flying back to Fresno. After being checked out by a mechanic the problem was determined to be only minor. The crew flew Eagle One back to Fresno. [KPMH]

7 March 2014 Helicopter [Sikosky S-76C+?] Air ambulance of Cleveland Clinic Air Ambulance, operated by ERA, made an emergency landing at Port Bucyrus-Crawford County Airport in Ohio with three members of the flight crew and the pilot on board. Approximately 5 miles east of the Bucyrus airport, an alarm light came on in the helicopter, requiring it to land. There was no damage to the aircraft at any point. The air ambulance was heading to a hospital in Mansfield, Richland County when the incident happened, and no passenger was aboard. [Mansfield News]

17 March 2014 Eurocopter AS350 N229LA Los Angeles Police Dept., A caution light caused the pilot to land at the LA Memorial Coliseum parking lot at Menlo Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. [Media]

22 March 2014 Bell 412 Wespac Rescue helicopter, Australia. A near miss between the rescue helicopter and a drone above its base at Bavin Street, Broadmeadow, New South Wales is under investigation by safety authorities. The Transport Safety Bureau is taking details from the duty crew involved in the incident, which occurred as the helicopter was returning from the John Hunter Hospital. The crew spotted the lights on the unmanned craft at about 1000 feet but thought it was a larger aircraft further away until it was seen to be small and close by. They took evasive action. [Newcastle Herald]

28 March 2014 Bell helicopter. Kern County Sheriff's Office. A sergeant sustained minor injuries and the airframe some unknown damage after the helicopter made a hard landing. The helicopter was transporting an injured police dog to a veterinary surgery in the Antelope Valley when it was forced to land east of the City of Tehachapi near Highway 58, California. [turnto23.com]

PEOPLE

Sepura plc has announced the appointment of Jonathan Hamill into a newly created senior executive role of VP Government and Public Safety.

The appointment follows Sepura's rise to market leading status in the UK's Public Safety market, and will build on its continuing success in the Government and Public Safety markets across the rest of the world. Hamill's appointment follows the telecommunications plc's increased systems and applications capabilities provided by the acquisition of 3T, the Austrian supplier of TETRA infrastructure and Portalify, the Helsinki-based developer, and the expansion of its offering in commercial markets through the launch of its DMR portfolio.

Hamill had previously held a number of senior commercial positions at Sepura including, most recently, the role of Regional Director UK & Ireland which included worldwide responsibility for Sepura's Covert & Specialist portfolio. He will continue to lead Sepura's involvement in the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP), the UK Government's review of its long term communication requirements.

The role of Regional Director of UK & Ireland will be filled by Gary Maughan, who has previously held senior UK and European sales and business development roles in public safety, intrinsically safe and commercial markets, including fifteen years at Motorola.

The **Justice Department** is investigating Lynn Tilton the owner of MD Helicopters. The enquiry reportedly is looking in to military contracts MD took and then hired the Army officer who allegedly steered the money her way.

At the centre of the enquiry are entrepreneur Lynn Tilton and Col. Bert Vergez who retired from the Army in late 2012. Among the allegations is that Vergez provided Tilton with details about upcoming contracts to give her company, MD Helicopters of Mesa, an advantage over the competition. No charges have been filed.

Vergez went to work for Tilton less than three months after hanging up his uniform. The Justice Department is examining whether his hiring breached "revolving door" rules that require federal officials to wait a year or more before receiving compensation from a company they had dealings with while employed by the government. Vergez's ties to two Russian businessmen also are being investigated.

LETTERS

Hi Bryn,

I was just re-reading the latest issue of PAN when I realised I've never thanked you for all your years of effort in keeping us all up to date. Now 'forcibly retired', (60+), I really appreciate being kept up to date on all areas of the 'industry'. You have great insight and I enjoy your 'dry' humour too!

Many thanks!

Regards,
George Phillips

EVENTS

PAvCon Police Aviation Conference 2014.

3-4 June 2014 Brussels Airport

Some details of the programme planning for the upcoming PAvCon [June 3-4] have been agreed in recent weeks.

This year will see a significant increase of input from north America as the Frederick, Maryland based Airborne Law Enforcement Association [ALEA] becomes more closely allied to the event and its theme of promoting greater contact between air units across the world.

In addition to the 'usual' American input PAvCon will see a workshop based Safety seminar designed to promote free discussion of a range of safety issues of interest to all airborne law enforcement professionals whether pilots, observers/TFOs or maintainers. This workshop brings Bryan Smith who promotes Safety within the ALEA to Brussels to enable a meeting of both US and European viewpoints on the subject. It will be interesting to see how close the thinking between the two groups is.

All police are welcome at the event without charge. The organisers only need details of who they are for security matters and to ensure that they get catering [food and seats] in our plans. There is no need to speak but they will consider proposals on any subject. The primary subjects are Flight Safety, Crew Resource Management [CRM] and accident investigation but others include Training and Purchasing tactics. There will be 3-6 Commercial Presentations on search and surveillance, role equipping of airframes and technology advances.

The main hotel, the Gulden Anker in Mechelen is now full but the other hotels should be useful. At least 24 exhibitors are bringing 6 aircraft in the static. We may see more than 30 exhibitors. The conference will run from 9am to 5pm each day [3-4 June] but some attendees will arrive on 1 June and leave 6 June.

The 2014 PAvCon Police Aviation Conference will be held in cooperation with the State Police in Belgium. The location of the conference and commercial exhibition is the Air Support Unit of the State Police in Belgium, Haachtsesteenweg 138, 1820 Melsbroek, Brussels, Belgium located on the north side of Brussels International Airport within the secure military area. The event set up is on June 2 and exhibits will be dismantled on the afternoon of June 4. +44 1992 714162 admin@pavcon.org www.pavcon.org





It must be a year of clashes, not only will PAvCon clash with the Helicopter Show in Northampton, England it now seems it is becoming a tough choice for go-getting German aviators who want to be seen between Brussels and a fairly new police technology event in Munster, Germany!

The Deutsche Hochschule der Polizei [German Police University], the home for those few candidates who qualify for the highest ranks of the police is holding its technology event in Munster on June 4-5 in the same week as PAvCon. www.dhpol.de

Still it's not the only set of clashes as on the PAvCon dates National Association of Police Fleet Managers will be holding their Conference & Exhibition at the International Centre, Telford [UK] and that will attract an international police audience fortunately more inclined to ground transportation – as will the 3-5 June 2014 Airmed at the Palazzo dei Congressi, Rome, Italy. Operated by the European HEMS and Air Ambulance Committee also based in Munich, Germany this is an event held every few years – the last one at Brighton UK. One could claim that there is a Euro conspiracy looming against PAvCon but it's just there are more shows! Only the best will win out, so I guess PAvCon will be busy....

Still one victory, this year by moving from a May date there is no clash with the EBACE in Geneva like there was last year!



7-9 April 2014 Search & Rescue Europe, Radisson Blu Scandinavia Hotel, Copenhagen, Denmark. Better integration is the key to more effective SAR operations. In 2014, Search and Rescue Europe brings together leading SAR practitioners to discuss how we can move towards better integration between different SAR agencies. Building on the success of 2013's iteration, the 2014 event features over 90% new speakers and briefings to reflect just how much the SAR world has evolved over the past year. Tackling issues ranging from the latest requirements for airborne SAR assets through to the latest in innovative life-saving training and techniques. SAR Europe will bring you Insights into the diverse problems facing SAR operations in diverse regions – from the Arctic wilderness to the vast migration across the Mediterranean into Europe, the latest information on requirements and future plans for enhancing aerial SAR capabilities from Canada, Norway and the United Kingdom, case studies from SAR agencies in emergent Europe nations and from outside of Europe. It will also examine the importance of social media to Search and Rescue. www.searchandrescueeurope.com

7-8 April 2014 ISR 2014 Conference, Holiday Inn, Regents Park, London Operated by SMI this is a follow on event from the successful 2013 **ISR conference** and now in its third year, **ISR 2014** will continue its tenancy in London for another year. Building on a solid foundation on International Military speakers, key opinion leaders from international research facilities and Industry companies, this **ISR** will again play host to two days of distinguished speakers and topical debate. The term **ISR** covers all manner of surveillance reconnaissance and target acquisition in the military world. www.asdevents.com



27-29 May 2014, Civil ISR, Kensington Close Hotel, London. If you cannot get to PAVCon 2014 you may find that the event the week before hand is familiar. Someone seems to have been reading the PAVCon script as a handful of the speakers at this event are straight out of the PAVCon book!

The 18 billion dollar value recently placed on the global ISR market was influenced heavily by the continued growth in the civil ISR sector. As civil ISR operations continue to grow in importance, Defence IQ has introduced the inaugural Civil ISR event just a week before PAVCon! Covering the whole remit of Civil ISR operations including policing, border surveillance and disaster response, the organisers claim that Civil ISR 2014 is the only European event of its kind for this burgeoning community. Really?

With leading international briefings from governmental agencies, federal police and border surveillance organisations from across the world, this really is a must-attend event for anyone concerned with the Civil ISR sector. View the full agenda online: <http://bit.ly/1qmLAqI>

Less likely by far to tread on the toes of PAVCon [or Civil ISR for that matter] as it is separated in time and distance is the China Civil Helicopter Summit being run over the 25-26 June. Organising company OPPLAND is part of CAN News of AVIC Group, who are endeavouring to produce and operate top level business events aiming to be the premier platform for business networking and generation in China and Asia market. Their business events are from Aviation and Aerospace, Power and Electricity, Infrastructure and Finance etc.

Spurred on by the opening of China's low-altitude airspace – altitudes lower than 1,000 meters for private flights, which mostly benefit helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft and with the rise of the general aviation market, China will soon become the fastest demand growing helicopter market in the world. The deputy manager of AVIC forecast that China's demand for helicopters is expected to reach 1,867 helicopters before 2013 representing a market value of \$4.9 billion, in the next 20 years.

The number of civil helicopters in the country is expected to reach about 10,000, - at least 3,000 in more conservative estimates.

The event will seek to gather 300 industry professionals representing relevant government officials, helicopter OEMs, police force, SAR operators, offshore operators, financing providers and leading helicopter industry solution providers together, discussing topics of China helicopter industry regulation and policy. www.opplandcorp.com

DIARY

A comprehensive listing of helicopter specific events in the coming year can be accessed at <http://www.helicopterlinks.com/shows/> but these are the events of greatest likely interest to readers in the next two months.



23-26 April 2014 Marrakech Aero Expo & Air Show 2014, Menara Airport, Marrakech, Morocco. Most major manufacturers will be present at this north African air show that covers both military and civil exhibits. www.marrakechairshow.com

29-30 April 2014 Counter Terror Expo and Forensics Europe Expo 2014, Olympia, London. The premier dedicated international forum for the entire forensics sector and supply chain to source forensic products, equipment and services, as well as providing the definitive source of education, best practice, training and networking. The event was formed with the intent to connect leading exhibitors with a wide range of international visitors. In 2013, the event hosted 70+ exhibitors and visitors from: UK Police Forces, MOD/Armed Forces, Forensic Laboratories, Law Sector Representatives, Government Agencies, Office of Fair Trading, Councils, Academic Sector, and Private Sector Companies. The 2013 Expo attendance expectations were exceeded by 62%, placing it as a key international gathering for forensics professionals. Exhibitor contact is Bilal Domah – Email: Bi-lal.Domah@clarionevents.com or visit www.forensicseuropeexpo.com Contacts for Counter Terror Expo Zoe Bonser - Email: zoe.bonser@clarionevents.com Dean O'Reilly - Email: dean.oreilly@clarionevents.com Or visit: www.counterterrorexp.com

30 April 2014 Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Aeromedical Conference 2014, Ceme Conference Centre, Rainham, Essex. The Air Ambulance Trust is hosting this national event, sponsored by Medical Aviation Services, in pre-hospital care which brings together delegates from all over the UK and Europe giving a unique insight into the Aeromedical world. The aim is to bring together the specialists and emergency services involved in the care of patients in the pre-hospital and critical care industry to create an atmosphere in which we can learn from each other and inspire clinicians of all specialities to strive towards greater patient care and safety. Refreshments and lunch are included on the day and following the conference there will be an evening reception at The Manor Hotel which is a short drive away. The evening consists of a two course dinner, entertainment and networking. The cost of the evening reception is just £20 per person which can be paid at the time of booking. Travel to Ceme Conference Centre is easy as it is just outside London, directly off the A13. There are four local airports; City airport is just 8 miles away; Southend airport is 30 miles; Stansted airport is 40 miles and Gatwick airport is approximately 45 miles. If travelling by train, there are regular departures from Fenchurch Street, London taking approximately 20 minutes followed by a five minute taxi ride to the venue. If you require any assistance with travel arrangements please do not hesitate to contact Wendy Marcon-Knightley, Trust Events Manager at wendy.marcon@ehaat.uk.com





Another image from the Page 10 story about air ambulance service Medi Caribbean Aero Medical Support showing one of its crews aboard an aircraft. [image from MCAM]

