

Police Aviation News

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Number 222 October 2014

PAR

NPAS PUBLISH ANNUAL REPORT FLIR ONE - THE APP B.G.A.D. SHOW REPORT EMERGENCY SERVICES



200 up
Best selling AW139 chalks up sales
for U.S. based production plant

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EDITORIAL

This month sees the first edition of Helitech International in Europe at the Amsterdam RAI Convention Centre from 14-16 October. Helitech in the UK was always held on the uneven years leaving the even years free to give the coffers of the industry exhibition departments something of a financial rest. This is the event that many said the industry did not want – remember the nasty activity directed at the group that wanted to run a helicopter event at Silverstone on the even years? They were driven to cancel their plans and yet here we are on the eve of just such an event on a few hundred km away.

Despite earlier rhetoric it seems that the RAI doors will open to reveal all of industry laid out in an exhibitor mode that not so long ago they reputedly said they did not want. Time will tell whether everyone will be happy.

Bryn Elliott

POLICE AVIATION

IVORY COAST

POLICE: There are reports that the police are in the process of acquiring three helicopters. Details are sparse but it appears that the three will be pre-owned and acquired through French Government sources.

A Eurocopter AS365N2 c/n 6540 currently registered OO-NHC is said to be destined for the Ivory Coast Police and a story on a local web site quoting a credible source states that the Head of State, Alassane Ouattara, acquired the trio of 'new' helicopters for police use via the local military command. The source suggests that the airframes are from France and will be used by the officers of the Minister of State, Minister of the Interior and Security, Hamed Bakayoko. [via Rotorspot NL]

COVER IMAGE: AgustaWestland's Philadelphia assembly line has built and delivered its 200th AW139 helicopter, featuring a fire fighting configuration for delivery to Mitsui Bussan Aerospace and the City of Yokohama, Japan.



JAPAN

©AgustaWestland

KYOTO: The National Police Agency (NPA) has ordered one AW109 Power light twin helicopter which will be operated by Kyoto Police. The Power will replace an ageing Bell B206 model and will be delivered for role equipping including the installation of local police radios, by Nakanihon Air Service in Nagoya, one of the authorized service centres in Japan for both AW109 series and AW139 helicopters in Autumn 2015 with delivery to the customer in December 2015.

The helicopter will be configured for law enforcement missions with role equipment such as a rescue hoist, search light and rappelling kit. [AW]

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PERU

Security forces in the country have been destroying clandestine airstrips in an attempt to deny them to cocaine traffickers. The positive impact of the activity has not been accepted without criticism from some quarters, the blowing up of some 54 airstrips is seen as little more than a discouragement by some. Many are being repaired in a matter of hours by local villagers being paid \$100 each time. Many have been destroyed and repaired numerous times.

Peru is the world's No. 1 coca-growing valley and the illegal flights were mainly to Bolivia. An average of about four or five small planes fly daily into Peru from Bolivia, picking up about 300 kg of coca paste worth about a \$300,000 in Bolivia, with pilots earning from \$10,000 to \$25,000 per flight. [Newser]

THAILAND

POLICE: In a ceremony held late last month at the Thai Police Aviation Division, the Royal Thai Police (RTP) received its first of two Airbus Helicopters AS365 N3+ that were ordered between 2012 and 2013. The second is due for delivery next year.

Configured for search and rescue (SAR) missions, the AS365 N3+ is outfitted with equipment including electrical hoist, rappelling installation, cargo sling and search lights and represents part of RTP's modernisation program to reinforce its capability. The helicopter will be operated in the rescue role but will also be used on traditional police missions such as border protection, anti-smuggling and anti-terrorism.

The RTP's Airbus Helicopters fleet currently comprises five EC155s from the Dauphin family, which have been in operation since 2009 as Royal transport aircraft.

RTP crew will receive training in nearby Singapore where the AS365 N3+ full-flight simulator is located.

Well adapted for operations in hot climates and high altitudes, the AS365 N3+ features a unique 4-axis autopilot to ease crew workload and help simplify the most demanding missions, including search and rescue. Its compact size and exceptional manoeuvrability allow police forces to operate in the most confined areas. [Airbus]



UNITED KINGDOM

NATIONAL: Although expected within hours of the publication of the last edition of PAN the official detailing of the upcoming maintenance contracts did not appear immediately the final choice of apparently being difficult to get right as a single release.

The multi-million pound maintenance deal announcement for NPAS even fell in line behind the acquisition of a relatively inexpensive bit of training kit for the helicopter crews.

The Emergency Exit Jettison (EEJ) training rig was delivered to the NPAS base at Carr Gate, alongside the M1 Motorway at Wakefield, West Yorkshire on September 5.



©NPAS

The trailer mounted equipment simulates the emergency exits of the three aircraft types that currently make up the NPAS fleet, allowing staff to physically operate the emergency exits of aircraft in the NPAS fleet - Airbus Helicopters EC135s and EC145s and the MD Helicopters MD902 without compromising the airworthiness of the aircraft.

The equipment enhances training and safety procedures and can be modified to represent any other types of aircraft that might be added to the NPAS fleet. It can be set up and operated by a single trainer.

Prior safety training was carried out using real aircraft, resulting in aircraft being offline for training and potentially incurring damage and consequent extended period downtime.

In the next year it will be going to every NPAS base across England and Wales as a part of a rolling training programme so that staff can carry out mandatory safety training in the physical operation of emergency exits. [NPAS]

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<p>surveillance</p>  <p>• Police & Military Surveillance • Force & VIP protection</p>	<p>inhibition</p>  <p>• Aircraft system integration & design, EASA Part 21J & Part145</p>	<p>aerospace</p>  <p>• DAOS, GCAA & ISO 9001 approval</p>			

The engineering support announcement when it came separated both of the winning companies - thereby apparently reinforcing the supposed long standing rivalry between the two. NPAS awarded a five-year contract for airworthiness management, maintenance and parts to Specialist Aviation Services (SAS) for the 6 MD Explorer aircraft in the NPAS fleet and to Airbus Helicopters UK Limited for the 19 strong Eurocopter/Airbus fleet of EC135 and EC145 helicopters.

Under this agreement which starts for both companies on Wednesday 1 October, SAS will provide 5,400 hours of support per year - or 27,000 hours over the five year term and Airbus Helicopters 17,100 hours of support every year - or 85,500 hours over the five year contract.

Specialist Aviation Services supports over 35 MD 902 Explorer helicopters and a number of Police organisations in the UK and overseas. On learning of the new contract award, Group Managing Director Henk Schaeken said: "We are very pleased to maintain our strong working relationship with NPAS to enable them to deliver an effective and cost efficient rotary wing policing service".

A few days later on Tuesday September 9 Airbus Helicopters UK reported that the Minister for Business and Enterprise, Matthew Hancock visited Airbus Helicopters, and toured the company's advanced aerospace design and maintenance operations. The Minister was briefed on the scale and nature of the company's operations, including the award of the National Police Air Service (NPAS) support contract.



NPAS has published its first **Annual Report** in digital format. It is fairly short and an easy read so I will leave readers to make up their own minds and make personal interpretations on the figures it presents. It is clear that the numbers of contracted flight hours and those actually operated for the individual police forces have diverged significantly to give a negative viewpoint on NPAS and its worth. Most of us expected that result, after all the police air support industry created by the diverse chief constables and police authorities of the past varied from a 24/7/365 gold standard to something many steps below – dictated by local financial muscle. The NPAS we have today is for most a dilution of the gold standard but if you contrast it with some of the many dire operational variations across the world it remains at least a silver standard and might easily enhance itself in time. The report is currently [here](#) on the Police Aviation News website pending the launch of the finite NPAS website

People

NPAS would not be able to undertake any of its activity without the officers and staff working for the service. Staff are employed by West Yorkshire Police, whereas officers, known as Tactical Flight Officers (TFOs), are, by enlarge, seconded from local forces.

Disposition

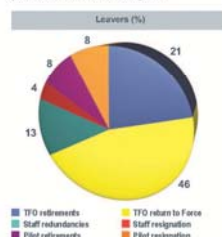
In April 2013, NPAS had 187 staff working for the service. At the end of the financial year NPAS has the following breakdown of resources deployed:

Role	No.
Dispatch and Flight Monitoring	34
Pilots	74
Base Managers	18
TFOs seconded police officers	154
Tactical Flight Officers police staff	4
Management and support staff	21
Total	315

Turnover

Seventeen pilots have TUPE transferred into NPAS from external providers in 2013/14 from five bases.

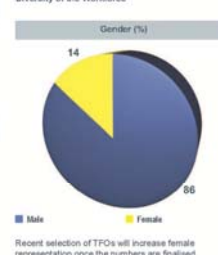
There have been 25 leavers from NPAS during the year broken down in the following chart:



The above numbers equate to 10% TFO turnover, 6.5% pilot turnover, 5.4% of non-flying roles, average turnover rate is 8%. This compares to the UK median turnover rate for public sector organisations of 9.4% in 2013 and 16.3% in the private sector.

NPAS is actively participating in West Yorkshire Police's talent management programme as part of a developing programme to attract, retain and develop the right people to deliver a world class service. A key objective within NPAS has been staff development that provides opportunities for career progression, staff retention and enhancement of the service. During the transition phases into the service each and every base had their own unique ways of working and there were differing levels of standards. NPAS have standardised the way we operate to ensure we continually improve our service through staff development.

Diversity of the Workforce



METROPOLITAN: From the first day of this month the three EC145 operation based in Epping Forest was expected to join NPAS. The event has been delayed as negotiations continue so news stories featuring their name can live on for a few more weeks. [NPAS]

RAILWAYS: For decades now the British Transport Police, a separate role specific entity covering the whole of Britain have made use of flight hours provided by railway engineering contractors, leased in hours on contract or made use of spare capacity on what are now NPAS aircraft. The cost to the BTP has varied between nothing and the commercial hourly rate but it has rarely if ever represented anything but a shadow operation. Often their flights were little more than PR stunts aimed at frightening would be criminals from stealing precious metals and cabling or simply trespassing on railway lines.

Late in August Network Rail Infrastructure Ltd issued an expression of interest in acquiring unmanned aircraft systems to undertake the type of operation that led the railway engineering contractors to lease in the few helicopters that BTP were able to call upon.

The notice issued required submissions to be made by September 11.



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WALES: As mentioned in last month's issue Newport in South Wales hosted the NATO Summit of Heads of State and Government at the Celtic Manor Resort on 4-5 September 2014. The security of the event was similar to that associated with the regular G8 meetings and included a police and military ring of steel and a local 'no fly' zone.

No major incidents took place but there were the inevitable protesters against aspects of the programme that covered meetings on such as Afghanistan and Ukraine and the ongoing sabre rattling from an absent Russia.

The Allied Heads of State and Government met with 27 partner countries including ISAF contributors (Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bosnia and Herzegovina, El Salvador, Finland, Georgia, Ireland, Jordan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Montenegro, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name), Tonga, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates), countries from the region (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Pakistan) as well as Japan. High level representatives of the United Nations and the European Union also attended.

On September 4 NATO Foreign Ministers met their counterparts from the four aspirant countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as well as countries which cooperate with NATO on interoperability.

What was strangely billed as being 'The biggest police security operation in British history' just two years after the Olympics in London and elsewhere swung into action as Cardiff city centre was taken over by thousands of uniformed officers in light blue NATO baseball caps. Security was such that it was thought necessary to tell residents not to be alarmed if they see armed officers patrolling the city. Not something you would need in most parts of the world where the police are always armed but relevant in Wales where any firearm toting police are a rare sight.

Police from across Britain brought even rarer sub-machine guns in to patrol the Welsh capital as the UK terrorist threat level was ramped up on the eve of the NATO event to 'severe.' President Obama and his entourage naturally played to the gallery with his mini security air force filling the skies over the city even as the hosts brought in the impressive £1 billion HMS Duncan into Cardiff Bay as AA security and the location for one of the three working dinners taking place in the capital.

The security organisers were pleasantly surprised to find that far from being put out by the noisy air activity of helicopters from all nations the public largely revelled in the free air show

HEDDLU
POLICE



on their doorsteps. Not only were they able to take in a range of police helicopters, they also had a number of military aircraft that are rarely seen close up outside of the air show circuit. South Wales has yet to be drawn into NPAS but for this event they were able to call in a range of UK National air assets from civil police aviation, industry and their own resources using national security funds ring fenced for the NATO event. This was effectively the last chance they will be able to call the shots on their own event as they join NPAS in February next year when their current lease contract with the Bond Group expires.

The main part of the police role air fleet was gathered at the Cardiff Heliport and included examples of the Airbus Helicopters EC135, EC145 and Agusta AW109E. The presence of the fixed wing element has not been reported. In addition AgustaWestland ensured that an example of the EH101 made its appearance.

Specific police airframes reported were EC145 G-PSNO and G-MPSB, EC135 G-SPHU and G-WONN, AW109 G-DPPF. [SAEWASU/JP/Helihub]

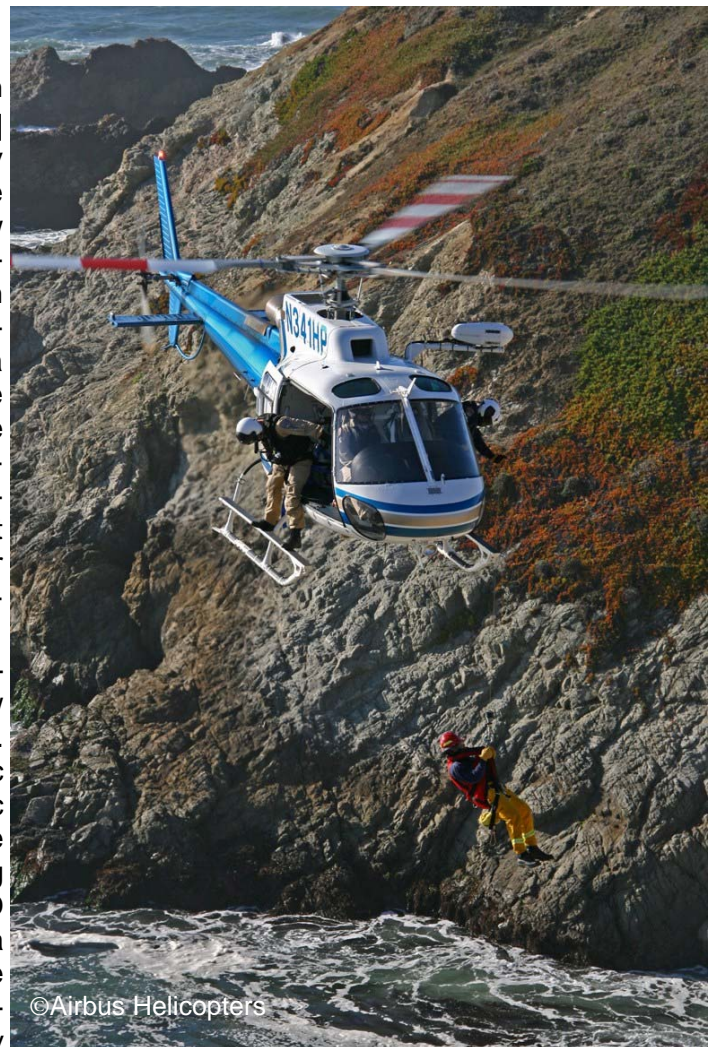
Ed: I expect that this subject will be revisited before the year is out. Visually it was a spectacular event and there is simply too little space left in this edition of PAN.

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: In recent months it has been reported that the California Highway Patrol [CHP] was replacing its fixed wing singles but that only small orders were being made for such as the GippsAero Airvan. Part of the reason for that low rate of acquisition is now evident with Airbus Helicopters Inc. (AHI) announcing that it has been awarded a contract for the purchase of up to fifteen AS350B3e AStar helicopters by the CHP – a major financial undertaking to be added to the fixed wing purchases. The initial order is for three helicopters, with deliveries beginning in December. The contract is for three years, with two one-year options. Other state and local government agencies in California can purchase new AStar helicopters through the contract and receive favourable terms.

The CHP helicopters will include an advanced avionics and mission equipment suite that enhances crew safety and law enforcement operational capabilities. This suite includes the Garmin G500H electronic flight information system, FLIR Systems 380HDC thermal imager, Spectrolab XP searchlight and the Churchill Augmented Reality System (ARS) moving map system displayed on an Avalex 15-inch HD monitor. Each helicopter will be equipped with a Goodrich 500 pound hoist, a key tool for CHP since it conducts many search and rescue missions. Completion services for this contract will be performed by Hangar One Avionics of Carlsbad, California.

“CHP has been operating Airbus Helicopters products for the past 30 years, starting with an AS350B model in 1984. They have flown more than 130,000 hours with their current fleet of 12 AStar's,” said Ed Van Winkle, Sales Manager for Airborne Law Enforcement for Airbus Helicopters Inc. “This order to begin replacement of the fleet demonstrates the high level of trust that CHP has in the AStar to perform their wide range of missions.” [AHI]



KENTUCKY: The State Police continues to revise its fleet thanks to the 135 Program of DoD disposals. In August they took delivery of two Bell OH58 and an unusual fixed wing asset clearly not designed for day-to-day patrol duties. The 25 years old Bombardier LearJet 35A business jet was known as the C21A in USAF service and was mainly used as an executive transport. The LearJet is now marked N865SP and will presumably be used to transport state officials. [AB/PAR]

NEVADA: Lt. Gawain Guedry, the Las Vegas police officer who accused his bosses of burying his scathing audit of Metro's aviation unit has abruptly retired from the service after handing in his notice. He had been in the service 26 years and spent the past two years highlighting what he saw as problems in the unit.

Earlier this year Guedry asked the Clark County district attorney's office and the Nevada attorney general to review whether senior police officers masked problems in the air unit in the wake of an officer's death.

Guedry, a former police pilot, and two other officers were tasked with auditing the unit in 2012 after two near-fatal helicopter crashes in May and September of that year. His contention in one of the initial versions of the report that the unit had been run under a "cowboy culture" of recklessness for many years resulted in the project being dropped before it was finished. [LVRJ]

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NEW ZEALAND

Nextant Aerospace the maker of the Nextant 400XTi – a remanufactured Beechjet 400 business jet –has sold its first 400XTi quick-change Air Ambulance to New Zealand based Skyline Aviation Ltd and its wholly owned associate company The New Zealand Air Ambulance Service Ltd.

The Nextant 400XTi will complement Skyline's aeromedical fleet of turboprops and helicopters. It will also be available for charter throughout New Zealand and internationally.

This will be the first unit of this kind in New Zealand and the deal proves significant interest in aeromedical operations in this region following the delivery of another Nextant 400XTi quick-change Air Ambulance to Australia three months earlier. The cabin is by far the quietest in its class with a composite interior shell designed to provide extra room around the head and shoulders for the patient and medical staff.

The new Nextant XTi is expected to be commissioned to service in mid-December 2014 and joins a fleet comprising King Air, Piper and Cessna twin aircraft. The light jet features Williams FJ44-3AP engines and the Rockwell Collins Pro Line 21™ integrated flight deck.

UNITED KINGDOM

NATIONAL: The Association of Air Ambulances in the UK has announced the nominated persons for this year's awards to be presented on 17 November at the Millennium Gloucester Hotel in Kensington, London.

The independent judging panel met on 10 September and considered all entries made across the nine categories. After lengthy deliberation and discussion, the panel came up with a shortlist:

aaa Association of Air Ambulances

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The Outstanding Young Person Award sponsored by the Bond Group is being contended by George Bellars, Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance Charitable Trust, Jayden (JJ) Butcher, London's Air Ambulance and Adam Hagyard, Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance Charitable Trust. The person to be awarded Charity Staff Member of the Year, sponsored by Milestone Aviation Group, will come from Susie Smith, Cornwall Air Ambulance Trust, Nigel Hare, Devon Air Ambulance Trust, Jason Levy, Midland's Air Ambulance Charity.

Air Ambulance Paramedic of the Year is sponsored by Prometheus Medical and the short list includes Mark Fuszard, Cornwall Air Ambulance Trust, Louise Rosson, Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Trust, Ian Walley, Midland's Air Ambulance Charity

AgustaWestland are supporting the Air Ambulance Doctor of the year and there are four doctors in line for recognition Dr Phil Hyde, Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance, Dr Rik Thomas, Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Trust, Dr Philip Cowburn, Great Western Air Ambulance Charity and Dr Syed Masud, Thames Valley & Chiltern Air Ambulance Trust.

The award for pilot of the year sponsored by Turbomeca has three names put forward Phil Merritt, Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance, Paul Smith, Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance Charitable Trust, Ges Charlton, Thames Valley & Chiltern Air Ambulance Trust

The Lottery backed Air Ambulance Campaign of the Year will go to Midland's Air Ambulance Charity's Bike4Life Rideout and Festival or London's Air Ambulance's 25th anniversary campaign or The Your Access to Critical Care campaign from East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust – the grouping that takes in Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Trust, East Anglian Air Ambulance, Magpas and BASICS.

The Charity Volunteer of the year will be decided from Jill Brookman, Cornwall Air Ambulance Trust, Pam and Fran Eamer, Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance and Gladys Tingle, Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance Charitable Trust.

Airbus Helicopters are backing the Special Incident Award, the three leading contenders being from London Air Ambulance, Midland and Cornwall. [AAA]

DEVON: A new £2M helipad is set to be built at Derriford Hospital, Plymouth with an expected in-service date early next year. The hospital – the South West's Major Trauma Centre – announced that £1.7M of funding has been agreed for a purpose-built helipad to replace the inadequate current landing place.

The new helipad will be equipped to receive police, search and rescue and air ambulance helicopters and will replace facilities that are based on untreated grass that cannot support larger airframes but are close enough to the hospital to allow easy transfer to the accident and emergency department.



Larger helicopters have to land patients at the nearby University of St Mark and St John prior to meeting a ground ambulance to undertake the final section of the journey.

The new build is being part funded by the charity the HELP Appeal (Helicopter Emergency Landing Pads), which is contributing £850,000 alongside £900,000 from the hospital trust, work on the new helipad will start within weeks. It is expected to take several months to complete and will hopefully be in service by the Summer of 2015.

With the arrival of its new night-capable aircraft in December 2014 Cornwall Air Ambulance will be able to extend its operations into the hours of darkness, making full use of the new helipad facilities at Derriford.

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT: The air ambulance has announced it will start preparing to become a round-the-clock service in the coming months. The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance (HIOWAA) will upgrade to a specially-equipped new helicopter next year, which will have full night flying capability enabling a staged move from its current daylight only operations.

Staff training to use the aircraft at night, plus plans to ensure all hospital helipads are well-lit during darker hours are now under way. [The News]

MAGPAS: The Cambridge based air ambulance operation specialising in doctor to scene deliveries has purchased Hamilton T1 ventilator equipment to equip its MD902 helicopter.

Magpas provides best possible care for seriously ill or injured patients, in the East of England and beyond wanted to enhance its capabilities and after a thorough evaluation of a number of ventilators, the Clinical Governance Committee found the Hamilton T1 performed at the highest level and was already in use with a very big pre-hospital service in Switzerland (REGA).



Magpas Helimedix Doctor Alex Cross & Paramedic Paul Sallis, with one of the new Hamilton T1 ventilators, in front of the Magpas Helimedix Air Ambulance © Magpas

This improvement in equipment will allow Magpas to provide better ventilation (and therefore better oxygenation) to the patients they are called out to, which can improve patient outcome.

A patient involved in a serious road traffic incident may suffer major head and chest injuries and the Helimedix would need to protect the patient's brain and lungs, and get them to the Major Trauma Centre. If the patient is unconscious, the team may decide to anaesthetise this patient and place them on a ventilator (which is a life support breathing machine). This particular ventilator is so sophisticated that it can adjust itself, breath by breath, to work out how best to provide the life support. The Hamilton T1 can protect the patient's lungs and can also improve the amount of oxygen going into the lungs and bloodstream, which then goes to the patient's brain and protects it. This patient could be an adult or the smallest of children - the ventilator works for both. [Magpas]

UNITED STATES

FLORIDA: Sacred Heart Health System is now flying a new \$6M Bell 407 air-ambulance helicopter, N408SH, a helicopter that is larger, faster and has a higher patient-weight capacity than its predecessor. The Bell 407 arrived on Aug. 26 and is based in Crestview.

The Bell is 20 to 30 mph faster than the helicopter it replaces and holds more fuel, enabling it to make longer transport flights over Northwest Florida, South Alabama and Southwest Georgia.

The previous helicopter had a very limited patient-weight capacity of 250 pounds [113kg], depending on crew weight; the 407 can handle patient weight up to 475 pounds [215kg], depending on crew weight.

Another advantage of the new helicopter is that it is equipped with emergency flotation devices, allowing it to overfly water taking a direct route.



© Sacred Heart

OHIO: CareFlight Air & Mobile Services of Miami Valley Hospital has taken delivery of N730CFa new Airbus Helicopters AS365 N3+ Dauphin, the latest version of the medium twin. The new aircraft, which is based at Miami Valley Hospital in Dayton, Ohio, joins CareFlight's all-Dauphin fleet of four. The company has been operating Dauphins for 25 years and reports good reliability.

The AS365 met criteria that included speed, twin engines, single pilot IFR and night vision capability after the customer reviewed the types available to them on the market. For them the Dauphin met their speed requirement, the 4-axis autopilot system and the safety of the Fenestron, as opposed to the open tail rotor. The new Dauphin's cabin size accommodates the needs of pilot, crew and patients and was completed with an air medical transport equipment package by Metro Aviation.

Miami Valley Hospital is a division of Premier Health, which operates five hospitals in southwest Ohio offering service to areas within about a 150-mile radius from Dayton. Each of CareFlight's four Dauphin helicopters is equipped as a mobile ICU with the latest in emergency medical care technology and the most advanced communication equipment available. Since its beginning in 1983, CareFlight has completed more than 74,000 flights. The helicopters are operated and maintained by Air Methods Corp., and is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems (CAMTS).



© Airbus Helicopters

MICHIGAN: Munson Healthcare based in Traverse City and Spectrum Health officials have signed a non-binding letter of intent to explore a possible collaboration between North Flight EMS Air Division and Aero Med's operations in Big Rapids. Both parties are now in a due diligence phase expected to be completed sometime next year.

If it goes ahead the intention of the collaboration would be to enhance air ambulance service and access, improve operations/cost efficiency, maintain safety, and provide better education and training for crews.

The operation would be based in Traverse City and Aero Med would continue its West Michigan operations based at the Gerald R. Ford International Airport in Grand Rapids.

North Flight EMS Air and Ground was reaccredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems (CAMTS) recently. www.munsonhealthcare.org/northflight

NEW JERSEY: An EC135 for Commonwealth One, a new critical care helicopter service, made its maiden flight to Scranton early last month. It left its base at Seaman's Airport in Factoryville and landed at Nay Aug Park.

The helicopter was not due to be ready for emergency rescue flights until mid-September while it awaits a state inspection and several air-ambulance nurses still need to complete their training. [WNEP]

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The 7 Bar medical team in New Mexico by their newly configured King Air ©Spectrum

NEW MEXICO: Spectrum Aeromed completed its first installation for SevenBar Aviation in a King Air 200. The aircraft is located in Albuquerque, N.M. manned with a medical team from Lifeguard Air Emergency Services.

Lifeguard Air Emergency Services is a department within Emergency Services of University of New Mexico Hospitals, New Mexico's only Level 1 Trauma Center.

One of the most important features of this installation for the crew was the ease of the patient loading system and ability to adjust the stretcher into multiple positions. The system is safer and more secure in comparison to what was used in the past and makes it easier on the crews to lift and lower patients and easily secure the patient dependent on whether they are an infant or adult

In addition to the Dual Patient Configuration and patient loading system, Spectrum Aeromed also installed IV poles, Stretcher Bridges, Custom Medical Equipment mounts and an Infant Transport Deck. www.spectrum-aeromed.com.

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PUERTO RICO: It had been eighteen months since the Puerto Rico health programme 'Mi Salud' has paid air-ambulance service provider Aeromed for its services. The resultant debt is now \$4.6M and Puerto Rico's only air-ambulance service is in the process of shutting down.

The debt owed to the air ambulance provider is tiny when compared with the overall public debt in an economy reputed to be at breaking point. [The Canal]

NORTH DAKOTA: A report that Valley Med Flight of Grand Forks North Dakota charged \$67,000 for an air ambulance ride from Grand Forks to Rochester, leaving a patient with a \$54,000 bill that insurers would not meet and thereby caused a furore in the region.

Unlike the European model most air ambulances in the USA are not free and users are either insured or members of their local air ambulance but, as in this case from time to time someone gets an unexpected and controversial bill. It is all very well being insured and being a member of a specific air ambulance but circumstances can leave the patient flying on what their insurers perceive as the 'wrong' provider, one not in their preferential list, or falling ill outside the operational area of the local air ambulance operator.

In this case the media were soon able to check out other providers for comments and found one willing to slate the high charges.

Express Air Med in Florida say they would have charged \$13,000 for a similar flight, and still made a decent profit.

Another user of Valley Med Flight, Ivan Mitchell of Cando, was faced with a \$26,000 bill for transporting his wife to Grand Forks for a heart condition. The Blue Cross Shield Association, his local healthcare insurers, would not meet the cost because Valley Med Flight was not one of their network providers and they saw them as charging exorbitant fees compared with other local providers. Since then there has been argument over how much his liability is to be.

The Affordable Care Act guarantees Mitchell a maximum out of pocket expense of around \$10,000 despite the fact Valley Med Flight is not a provider for Blue Cross but Blue Cross does not agree with that interpretation.

Valley Med Flight operate a modern fixed wing fleet of Pilatus PC-12 aircraft out of Sidney Montana, Iron Mountain, Michigan and Grand Forks and Williston both in North Dakota as a Critical Care Air Ambulance Provider. [VMF/ValleyNews]

TEXAS: AgustaWestland has delivered a GrandNew to SevenBar, a provider of helicopter EMS services in the Southwestern United States.



The GrandNew will join a fleet of fixed wing aircraft to deliver advanced in-flight patient care and transport and features a Spectrum EMS Single/Dual Litter capable interior that houses a medical cabinet, a 6.7ft (2.04 m) stretcher, patient oxygen system and various medical mounting areas within the cabin. Additionally, the air-

craft is equipped with a searchlight, digital moving map, and external rescue hoist.

The GrandNew is the first helicopter in its class to incorporate a Synthetic Vision System (SVS), Highway in The Sky (HITS) and Helicopter Terrain Awareness and Warning Systems (HTAWS) to provide full terrain and obstacle awareness in low visibility flying conditions. The system provides the pilot with three dimensional guidance and detailed terrain maps, resulting in an advanced operating capability which sets a new benchmark in safety.

SevenBar, headquartered in Dallas, is a leading provider of air medical transport services with over 30 years of experience in the air medical field. [AW]



© AgustaWestland

WEST COAST: AgustaWestland has built and delivered from the Philadelphia assembly line the 15th AW119Kx for Life Flight Network, the latest addition to their Pacific Northwest-based fleet of aircraft.

The AgustaWestland engineering and production teams integrated the Garmin G1000HTM flight deck system into the proven AW119 platform, certifying the new avionics suite, and delivering 15 helicopters to launch customer Life Flight Network in less than two years. The new avionics system includes a synthetic vision system, moving map, highway in the sky and obstacle/terrain avoidance systems for enhanced situational awareness and safety.

The achievements by AgustaWestland have resulted in the timely delivery of the most modern and efficient EMS helicopter fleet in service today.

Nearly 240 AW119 helicopters have been ordered to date in more than 30 countries by over 100 customers. [AW]

FIRE

SOUTH AMERICA

ARGENTINA: Advanced Helicopter+Rescue Techniques [AHRT] has completed aerial wildland fire fighting training with Aviacion Civil Salta. The training was performed in Argentina and provided Simplex Fire Attack System Training as well as fire behavior and tactics training using Aviacion Civil Salta's own locally based Bell 412EP and Bell 407.

AHRT offers a combination of training specialising in helicopter wildland fire fighting (day/night/NVG), advanced NVG rescue operations, day, night, land, mountainous and water environment flying, technical rescue as well as tactical operations and has been working closely with Simplex Aerospace to offer the training.

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: San Diego County is to further increase the size of its fire fighting helicopter fleet with the addition of a Bell UH-1H Huey helicopter leased from Blackhawk Helicopters in El Cajon. The Bell can carry 375 gallons to fight fires. It joins two helicopters owned by the sheriff's department and a helicopter loaned to the county by San Diego Gas & Electric Co.

COLORADO: The State of Colorado has unveiled two new fire detection aircraft to be based at Centennial Airport. The two planes use infrared cameras and on-board computer systems designed to provide critical real-time data about wildfire behaviour, size and spread to crews on the ground.

Colorado's initial investment is about \$20M to buy the fire detecting planes. At the same time, the state is leasing four helicopters and four single engine tankers to provide it with an instant fire-attack capability and remove the previous period of waiting for federal aircraft to arrive at wildfires - which can sometimes take days.



Ed: The aircraft promoted at the launch ceremony were a 1998 Pilatus PC-12 N125PZ and an 1997 Air Tractor AT-6 single N232AT '888' in addition the leased helicopters include a Bell UH-1. The PC-12/45 is leased from a company in Nevada.



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DELAWARE; Summit Aviation located in Middletown, Delaware, recently helped a veteran of military aviation, a Boeing CH-47D Chinook helicopter, make a groundbreaking transition into a productive new role in civilian life, fire fighting.

Starting late last year, the US Army began auctioning Chinooks for civilian use, this is the first time military Chinooks are being released for non-military operations, and Summit Aviation customer CHI Aviation has bought three of the twelve auctioned so far.

With more than two decades of experience working on the twin-engine Chinooks for Boeing and the military Department of Defense Summit are best prepared to also support the civil task airframes in the field.

To return the helicopter to service for the Howell, Michigan-based CHI, Summit did a 400-hour phase inspection, conducted FAA flight control rig verification and an internal fuel cell inspection, painted the aircraft and rotor blades, and performed a post-maintenance test flight and rotor blade tracking and balancing. In addition, several TBO items were overhauled by Professional Aircraft Accessories in Titusville, Florida.

Chinooks civilian heavy-lift roles will likely include fire fighting, search and rescue, logging, offshore transport, heavy cargo and construction. That makes the helicopters a good match for heavy-lift specialist CHI, whose work includes clients in the construction, oil and gas, electric utility and forestry industries. CHI also performs search and rescue, fire fighting and transport operations for businesses and government agencies. www.summit-aviation.com



SEARCH & RESCUE

MEDITERRANEAN

ITALY: The tide of humanity leaving northern Africa at any cost continues unabated. In late August almost 4,000 migrants arrived in Italy over one weekend, including one ship bearing as many as 100 children and at least two pregnant women among its 1,044 passengers. A navy frigate brought that group to the port of Salerno after rescuing the migrant vessel in the Strait of Sicily under Italy's search-and-rescue operation Mare Nostrum

The migrants faced long distance transfer to accommodation centres in regions all over Italy, but that was nothing compared to the journeys they had endured and survived on North Africa on rickety vessels.



The Interior Minister Angelino Alfano announced that Italy's Mare Nostrum, which was set



up one year ago as a temporary measure, will be replaced by an expanded version of European Union border control agency Frontex. The Italian operation has cost €9M [\$11.5M] a month, taking up the bulk of the Navy's budget but is reputed to have saved 70,000 lives. Italy had been calling for the EU to step in to shoulder some of the burden

Only two weekends later came news that up to 850 lives were lost in the Mediterranean as a result of five shipwrecks of boats carrying migrants.

Most of the movement has been concentrated in the central Mediterranean with the majority of departures from Libya, and Italy receiving most of the arrivals - about 120,000 so far in 2014, more than double the previous record of 54,000 (during 2011 at the height of the Arab Spring).

The number of deaths has reached a new high of nearly 3,000, including one which appears to have been the result of smugglers ramming and sinking a boat carrying 500 migrants who refused to switch to a less seaworthy boat.

Ed: The Italians [who have been as severely affected by the troubles besetting the Euro as any] want out but the only likely saviour is Frontex which is little more than a funnel for funding projects that various nations undertake on its behalf. It funds and trains and talks incessantly but it has no hardware or boots on the ground of its own.

INDUSTRY

Aero Asahi Corporation and its subsidiary Central Helicopter Service, have signed with Turbomeca (Safran) a 5 year extension of the SBH® ("Support By the Hour") contract covering their fleet of Arriel 2 and Arriel 1E2 engines.

More than 50 engines powering AS350B3/AS365N3/S76C+ and BK117C2 helicopters are now maintained through the SBH® program and used for all type of missions, from Utility to EMS, as well as VIP transportation.

Turbomeca and Aero Asahi recently celebrated a partnership of more than 50 years and are looking forward to the successful growth of their mutual activities.

On September 1 the **European Aviation Safety Agency** (EASA) revealed a new organisation which aims at preparing the Agency for the challenges of the coming years.

The new organisation will enable the Agency to engage more pragmatically with the aviation industry. A strategy and safety management directorate has been created in order to strengthen EASA's overall strategy and to promote a data driven and performance-based approach to managing safety. All regulatory functions have been integrated across the different aviation domains and more homogeneity has been introduced to better enable the Agency to speak with one voice.



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Aviation Specialties Unlimited, (ASU) is no longer working with or associated with United Kingdom based PremiAir International Group. ASU will continue to serve customers in the UK and throughout the rest of Europe with its global representatives located in more than 17 countries.

Helipad LLC has launched a new pilot kneeboard designed by helicopter pilots for helicopter pilots.

"Although we specifically designed our kneeboards with the helicopter pilot in mind, any pilot who desires the ability to maintain hardcopy checklists or approach plates and an iPad or iPad Mini within a tightly spaced or open cockpit environment would benefit from using a Helipad Kneeboard™," says Vince Bustillo, owner of Helipad LLC.

The kneeboard was developed with several unique benefits. First, the kneeboard improves the pilot's ability to reference checklists or approach plates without distraction caused by the remaining documents, usually left flapping in the wind with other kneeboards. Next, the kneeboard is capable of holding an iPad or iPad Mini whether they are enclosed in a protective cover or not. The kneeboard was also designed to accommodate spare batteries for noise cancelling headsets and an external power supply used to power an iPad. Finally, an adjustable penholder doubles as a thumb-rest for the collective control hand. The kneeboard combines all of these features while maintaining a small signature within the cockpit.



© Helipad

The kneeboards are available at Ocean Helicopters, Inc., West Palm Beach, Florida, the exclusive distributor for Helipad Kneeboards or online at <http://www.helipadkneeboards.com>.

HeliMedia based at Staverton Airport in Gloucestershire is providing technical support to the Bond Aviation Group for the overall mission system design for the NPAS EC135T2 upgrade as well as supplying key system components, namely MX-10 EO/IR turrets from Wescam, and CarteNav's AIMS-ISR mission system and mapping software.

The combination of the MX-10 and AIMS-ISR software was selected after rigorous in-flight performance assessments, and will bring the latest generation of technology into UK Police Air Support. New features include Moving Target Indication, Augmented Reality, networked mapping between all work stations and record/playback of embedded metadata HD video. www.helimedia.co.uk.

Lockheed Martin delivered a US Customs and Border Protection P-3 Orion aircraft 34 days ahead of schedule on September 23.

This is the 10th of 14 aircraft in the Mid-Life Upgrade (MLU) modifications programme. The aircraft received an Avionics Upgrade Modification which included flight station panels and controls, new autopilot system and an update to the Airborne Early Warning (AEW) mission system computer. This accomplishment allows for a quicker return of the aircraft to the CBP P-3 fleet supporting homeland security and drug interdiction missions.



© File image

Meanwhile the 14th overall P-3 Orion wingset for the Customs and Border Protection and the ninth and final wingset produced in 2014 was crated for delivery from the Lockheed Martin facilities during the month. With this delivery, the P-3 wing line will shut down temporarily and is scheduled to reactivate in early 2015 producing wingsets for Canada. [LM]

The Brazilian public safety market is showing a new demand for helicopters, especially for corporations that already have aircraft, but want to renew the fleet or raising the power of its air services has been growing demand for twin-engine multi-mission helicopters for security, police and medical transportation activities in the region.

This trend, reported by **Helibras**, saw the EC145 model gain prominence in several states. The offering of large sliding doors and clamshell rear entrance and significant advantages when transporting patients on stretchers and medical equipment or police. In addition, greater engine power, range and flight autonomy offer more safety and precision for operations risk. The use of two engines in light helicopters in this type of mission is now a proven requirement and is unlikely to be overturned.

The EC145 already operates in public safety and medical care in Bahia, Ceará and Maranhão. Recently, in Minas Gerais, the EC 145 configured exclusively for aeromedical transport was acquired by the Secretary of Health and will be operated through a partnership between the Fire Brigade and the SAMU - Service Emergency Medical Care, the first twin dedicated to medical operations with advanced life support in the state. [Helibras]

In 2013, an initial group of 26 students from the Vietnam People's Navy completed the first phase of a multi-year flight and maintenance training program. Last month an additional ten trainees joined the ranks as certified Twin Otter Series 400 pilots, completing a 20-month intensive flight training schedule at Pacific Sky Aviation.



The graduating Group B students (back row) are joined by their Pacific Sky flight instructors alongside one of the Vietnam Navy's Twin Otter Series 400 aircraft. © Viking

The program, offered by **Pacific Sky** in support of a six-aircraft deal between the Vietnam Navy and Pacific Sky's sister company, Viking Air Limited, is timed to coincide with production and delivery of the sixth Twin Otter Series 400 aircraft. This aircraft is scheduled to arrive in-country in early October.

Viking and Pacific Sky provide continuing training support for customers over the lifespan of the aircraft with on-site flight training and maintenance assistance, and through the company's construction of a new advanced training facility that will offer a state of the art full motion Level D Seaplane Simulator, a first in the world, which will be ready for training at Victoria BC in 2016. The simulator is by TRU Simulation and Training, a Textron Company, and stands on 60 inch legs to give it a good range of movement.

All the Vietnam Twin Otter pilots completed the specialised training developed in cooperation with the Vietnam Navy, which included six months of Aviation English Language training, Transport Canada Private Pilot and Commercial Licenses over 6,000 hours of flight training.

Late last month **FLIR Systems, Inc.** announced that the FLIR ONE™ thermal imaging accessory for smartphones is now available for order online across 27 European countries at FLIR.com and in 18 European countries through Apple.com. The award-winning FLIR ONE is a lightweight accessory that transforms an iPhone 5 or 5s into a powerful thermal imager. When paired with its iPhone app, FLIR ONE displays live infrared imagery that allows the user to see the world from a thermal perspective.

It is also remains available in U.S. and Canada through Apple retail stores and Apple.com and in the U.S. on FLIR.com/FLIRONE for \$349.99 USD. During the fourth quarter of 2014, FLIR ONE will also be available throughout Asia in Apple retail stores, Apple.com, and FLIR.com.



Dallas Avionics has completed training of more than thirty pilots, crew members and installers from numerous aviation industry leading companies and municipalities on the new Technisonic TDFM 9000 series radios.

Airbus, Air Methods, Avionics Place, Bell Helicopter, Century Helicopters, ERA Helicopters, Phoenix Heliparts, Uniflight, and United Rotorcraft were among the companies represented. Members of The Texas Department of Public Safety from Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, and McAllen attended along with representatives from the city of Houston, United States Forest Service, Clayton County Police Department in Georgia and Houston Police Department also attended.

The Government of Romania and **Airbus Helicopters** have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in a ceremony at the Victoria Palace in Victory Square, the headquarters of the Romanian Government.

Present for the signing were Romanian Prime Minister Victor VioREL Ponta; Vice Prime Minister, Minister of Internal Affairs Gabriel Oprea; Minister of National Defence Mircea Dusa; Minister of Economy Constantin Nita; Minister of Finance Maria Petrescu; Airbus Helicopters President Guillaume Fauray; and Jean-Louis Mascle, General Executive Director of Eurocopter Romania.

The ceremony underscored the commitment by the Government of Romania and Airbus Helicopters to build on their shared history of success and to confirm the company's presence in the country for future decades. The memorandum paves the way for Airbus Helicopters to extend its activities in Romania and further develop production capabilities for the Super Puma MK1 helicopter at Brasov Aerospace Technological Park.

Over 300 Pumas and Alouettes helicopters (IAR330 and IAR316) produced under licence in the 1970s for national and export markets, Airbus Helicopters has enjoyed a longstanding partnership with the Government of Romania.

Bell Helicopter held a regional Safety Symposium for rotorcraft pilots and technicians in Prague, Czech Republic at the Prague Marriott Hotel last month.

Introduced in 2013, Bell Helicopter's safety symposiums are designed to promote safety

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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 times 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.

practices and applications that maintainers and operators can easily implement into their daily work. The effort is tied, in part, to Bell Helicopter's participation in the International Helicopter Safety Team's (IHST) mission to establish international partnerships in countries with significant helicopter operations and encourage development of safety interventions.

Back in May Joseba Mendizabal, a pilot with the Bilbao Police and currently the sole ALEA Member in Spain, was obliged to cancel his usual trip to the PAVCon event in Brussels. Close to the event he received an offer to act as interpreter on a four week long training mission to Argentina on May and June.

Much missed at PAVCon, and indeed the similarly dated Civil ISR in London, Joseba did send PAN some images of the training and even some months later it is worth reproducing some here.

It was a real International effort. The project for a German company, **Helitravel**, was about training up the Federal Police in Buenos Aires Argentina on winching but they found themselves needing to find a competent English-Spanish translator with aviation knowledge. Although we have always scurrilously referred to Joseba's English as 'Combat English' he is pretty good at understanding the nuances of English with English humour—anyway he fitted the bill just fine. Even if he temporarily lost his voice as soon as he got there!



Aireon LLC, developer of the world's first space-based ADS-B global air traffic surveillance system announced its plan to provide the Aireon Aircraft Locating and Emergency Response Tracking (Aireon ALERT) service, a global emergency tracking solution that will be provided as a public service to the aviation community, free-of-charge. The Aireon ALERT service will allow rescue agencies to request the location and last flight track of any 1090 MHz ADS-B equipped aircraft flying in airspace currently without surveillance.

Aireon is deploying a global space-based ADS-B surveillance capability providing direct air traffic controller visibility of flights operating in oceanic or remote airspace, focused on improving the efficiency and safety of aircraft operations. When Aireon is fully operational, anticipated for 2017, it will create a powerful platform capable of tracking ADS-B equipped aircraft around the globe in real-time. The Aireon ALERT service will be available soon after Aireon's full deployment and will be provided through a 24/7 application and emergency call center. Historical track data will be available to pre-authorized users, including ANSPs, airlines and search and rescue authorities, through Aireon ALERT soon after controller communications are lost with an aircraft, and the system can also provide real-time tracking of aircraft in distress, provided ADS-B transmissions are still operational.

INCIDENTS & ACCIDENTS

9 August 2014 Airbus Helicopters EC145 Air ambulance of Sanford AirMed. During cruise flight while transporting a patient from Bemidji, MN to St. Paul, MN, a tail rotor chip light illuminated. The fuzz burners installed were unsuccessful and the pilot elected to land the helicopter in Breezy Point, MN, at the local airport. [Concern]

20 August 2014 Beechcraft King Air N400SL Air ambulance of Air St. Luke's of Boise, Idaho, USA operated by Turbo Air. While departing Salmon, Idaho, an uncontrolled airport the pilot needed to perform an evasive maneuver to avoid an aircraft on approach to the runway. The departure was announced two times over the radio without any response or acknowledgment, nor was there any radio traffic about an inbound aircraft on final approach. [Concern]

12 September 2014 Bell 407 N64AW. Cochise County Sheriff's Office in Arizona. Aircraft leased from Airwest suffered heavy landing in the desert near 1000 block of Old Bisbee highway near Tombstone. The Cochise County law enforcement helicopter made a hard landing whilst on a routine operational flight to check out a controlled burn. It had recently taken off from Sierra Vista airport. A loss of engine power has been cited. There were no injuries to the two on board. The pilot Larry Pucci was from the Cochise County Sheriff's Department, the officer on board was the Sheriff's son, Officer Justin Dannels. [Media]



13 September 2014 AgustaWestland AW119 EC-KSD. On fire fighting operations for FAASA near Alpera, Albacete, Spain when it crashed killing the pilot Fernando Baraza.

FLIGHT SAFETY

The United States Helicopter Safety Team (www.USHST.org) has released new statistics on accident rates for US civil helicopters along with new data on fatal accident rates and fatalities.

For the first seven months of 2014, there have been 3.94 helicopter accidents for every 100,000 flight hours. This is a 51% decrease compared to the 2001-05 baseline determined by the USHST parent organization, the International Helicopter Safety Team (www.IHST.org). This also is a 22% reduction compared to the 5.06 rate posted in 2009 and a 12% reduction compared to the 4.46 rate posted in 2012.

These results are especially encouraging because they include data from the month of July which historically tallies the most helicopter accidents in the United States during the year.

In addition, the rate of fatal accidents is down so far in 2014 compared to 2013, which showed a troubling upward spike. During the first seven months of 2014, there were 0.53 fatal helicopter accidents per 100,000 flight hours compared to a rate of 0.86 for all of 2013.

The decrease also is reflected in the fatality rate. There were 1.79 fatalities per 100,000 flight hours in 2013 compared to 0.91 fatalities per 100,000 flight hours so far in 2014.

NASA researchers will drop a 45-foot-long helicopter fuselage from a height of about 30 feet for the second time in a year – all in the name of safety. The drop test was scheduled for October 1 at NASA's Langley Research Center in Hampton, Virginia.

NASA is collaborating with the U.S. Navy, U.S. Army, Federal Aviation Administration, the German Aerospace Center (DLR), and the Australian Cooperative Research Center for Advanced Composite Structures on the Transport Rotorcraft Airframe Crash Test Bed full-scale crash test at Langley's Landing and Impact Research Facility.

The difference in this year's experiment is that NASA are testing three energy absorbing composite subfloor concepts that should help some of the dummy occupants sustain fewer injuries than they did in the first test last August.

For this test NASA supplied six crash test dummies, built two composite subfloor concepts and installed four emergency locator transmitters that researchers are evaluating. The Navy provided the CH-46 Sea Knight

helicopter fuselage, seats, crash test dummies and other experiments. The US Army Aeromedical Research Lab (USAARL) contributed a litter experiment and the Army CH-47 program office (PEO CARGO) provided a crash resistant troop seat. The Federal Aviation Administration provided a side-facing specialized crash test dummy and part of the data acquisition system. Cobham Mission Systems also contributed an active restraint system for the cockpit. The German Aerospace Research Center (DLR) and the Australian Cooperative Research Center for Advanced Composite Structures supplied a third composite subfloor technology. Other industry participants have also contributed experiments. <http://www.nasa.gov/langley>

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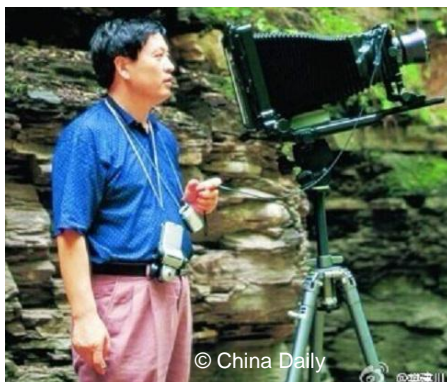
Thwarted plans! As this was the 222 edition of PAN I had already selected a fine image of a Metropolitan Police Air Support Unit Bell 222 to grace the front page! This image of the first type they operated at the time of the official creation of the unit in November 1980 was to mark the passage of the Metropolitan Police into NPAS [also known as oblivion]. It was a cover that was not to be although it is only a stay of execution that may well fall into place in the November edition.



Elsewhere in Britain they have been marking the 40th anniversary of the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and featuring the founder of the British Safety Council, James Tye.

James Tye passed away in 1996 but has been remembered about his campaign efforts to improve safety in Britain. James was one of a few people in the 1950's and 60's who single-mindedly campaigned to make the world safer, he was gripped by a mission to protect people from harm and used his skills to effectively capture the attention of the public and media to shame those who endangered others.

Over 1,000 workers were being killed at work in Great Britain when James began in the late 1950's. Given that since then to today we have seen a reduction of fatalities by 85%, it is clear that his efforts have borne fruit. The massive build of the London 2012 Olympic site resulted in no workers being killed – and not many projects can claim that sort of record.



We have all heard the story about the boss using the state helicopter to go to a private function, a golf or football game, and different nations take some widely different views on the practice. In China they class it as a major element of corruption.

China is in the middle of an anti-corruption crackdown and there are some interesting cases showing up in the news and one sortie in a police helicopter that amounted to little more than a 'photo-shoot' by the local police chief came under scrutiny for misusing public resources.

At one point this sortie came into the public domain mentioning an unnamed "important person" who rode a police helicopter on a photography trip in central Henan province, hoping to take snaps of swans in the Yellow River during winter. The trip was ruined by the noise from the helicopter driving all the swans away.

The Peoples Daily subsequently broke the same story along with the identity of that important person - Qin Yuhai, a senior official in Henan and former police chief of Henan Province. It appears that he was well known for his photography and for placing interesting scenic and wildlife images in the public domain that were used to publicise the region. This positive activity may not have been enough to save him from the customary lengthy prison sentences such corruption brings. No news though of his punishment, if any, for being found out.





The now annual low profile meet of General Aviation practitioners at Cambridge Airport – BGAD 2014 – passed off in good weather and attracted a good audience that did not include many of the airborne emergency services.

Among the exhibitors links could be made to the PAN readership, the insurers to NPAS Hayward Aviation, a supplier of specialist aircraft Bob Crowe still representing the Reims product but now also looking after the local interests of the Viking Twin Otter another potential surveillance platform and a newcomer in RocketRoute who announced the presence of their stand with a large blow up cartoon styled space rocket. They may be one to watch in the flight planning field as they already have the ear of a number of European law enforcement and rescue operators and expect to announce a sale to an Alpine SAR operator imminently. www.rocketroute.com



The aircraft on display this year were primarily fixed wing jets and turboprops, only a single helicopter graced the apron and even the locally based East Anglia Air Ambulance helicopter stayed at a distance. It had previously been the centre of attention as the event promoted the move of air ambulances into night flying – yesterday's news. But that was yesteryear.

Of interest was the first displaying of the new TBM900, the new enhanced build standard of this airframe that will be offered to anyone wishing to obtain a surveillance version in the future.



Left: The presentations were of interest to a wide audience.

Above: The TBM900 is on offer to surveillance operators across world markets as a fast and compact air observation platform © PAR





EMERGENCY SERVICES SHOW—NEC BIRMINGHAM

Last year the Emergency Services Show moved its dates from November to September and in the same move re-located from a rustic agricultural setting in Leamington Spa to the halls of the National Exhibition Centre [NEC] near Birmingham Airport.

The move may have improved the lot of the visitors in relation to the weather significantly and removed the awkward situation in 2012 where a tented hall was evacuated after being seen to be in danger of collapse after being battered by fairly high winds but it placed itself head to head with *Helitech International* being held on the same dates in London. A slowly growing aviation presence was stopped in its tracks. Mainstream aviation did not return to the NEC this year.

There were bits of aviation present, a stand for the Association of Air Ambulances and for such as Skywatch Civil Air Patrol but no sign of the mainstream Aviation MROs such as AgustaWestland returning to try the venue.

There was though aviation some meagre content in the presentation hall thanks to Cleveland Police ACC Sean White [47] who is the ACPO lead for unmanned aircraft. He has responsibility for leading the delivery of specialist operational policing support services across Cleveland in conjunction with the four territorial districts and partnerships of Middlesbrough, Stockton, Hartlepool and Redcar & Cleveland.

The ACC presented an overview of what we may take as the current ACPO view of the likely worth of unmanned craft in England and Wales but unfortunately it became clear that Mr White is about to retire in the near future with a successor supposed identified but not yet named.

There was an evident personal enthusiasm for the unmanned craft and he is not the only one who appears to see a certain amount of pressure for UK police to embrace small unmanned craft as an in-house facility that might if nothing else save the need for wrangling with NPAS over the cost, appropriateness and availability of a 'real' helicopter for smaller tasks.

The only areas where there may be grounds for dispute are his expectation that the correct body to evaluate small unmanned craft is NPAS. I doubt they have the inclination, time or resources to branch out into that field and it looks like we may actually have a repeat of the development of full size police aviation vested in individual police forces trial and error.

Cost is the driving factor, anything is going to be cheaper than the cost of NPAS [though not the £130M he erroneously quoted, that was nearly a £100M over the top]. For the moment the number of users is low, basically Staffordshire that use a quad rotor craft to cover surveillance at the annual V Festival since Merseyside lost theirs in the River Mersey, but others are looking to fill what may be seen as the NPAS gap at a tiny comparable cost.



A minor victory for Sky Watch CAP? The ACC was obliged to regularly remind the audience that he was not promoting any specific UAV as he appeared to constantly duck around the strategically placed craft operated by the volunteer organisation. ©PAR

Warszawa
15-17.04.2015



Brewing in the background of the show is the high yield multi-faceted replacement for the Airwave Digital Radio Network. The original cost eye watering amounts to set up and yet, although it successfully covers all the emergency services it can still be shown to suffer from major gaps in service.

Among the bidders for part of the contract is Arqiva Secure Solutions already in the market as providers of reliable and secure networks and infrastructure to various customers such as the Government and emergency services, as well as industry sectors such as transport and utilities. The company recently headhunted Stephen Doran, Arqiva's newly appointed Director of Secure Solutions from being the CEO of Tracker Network UK Ltd [LoJack in the USA] - the stolen vehicle recovery company mainly for his long standing contacts with the emergency services.

DIARY



HELICOPTER LINKS
The online yellow pages of the helicopter industrySM

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.

14-16 October 2014 Helitech International at the Amsterdam RAI Exhibition & Convention Centre, Europaplein 8-36, Amsterdam NL 1078 GZ, Netherlands Open 10am to 5pm Tuesday and Wednesday and 10-4 Thursday

4-6 November 2014 Dubai Helishow 2014 Grand Stand, Meydan Hotel, Meydan Racecourse, Dubai UAE. To include a Military & Homeland Security Exhibition and an Air Medical and Rescue Show. Operated by The Domus Group, PO Box 5196, Dubai UAE. +971 4 328 5666 info@domusgroup.ae www.dubaihelishow.com

5-8 November 2014 INDO DEFENCE 2014 Expo & Forum in Jakarta, Indonesia. The 4th edition of Indonesia's Official Aviation, Aircraft & Airport Technology Show at JIExpo Kemayoran Jakarta, Indonesia is supported by the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Trade, the Ministry of Industry, Indonesian National Air Carriers Association, Indonesian Aircraft Maintenance Shop Association (IAMSMA) and Indonesian Exhibition Companies Association. Held concurrently with the Expo will be the Indonesian Aerospace Industry Conference an important platform for the regions aerospace industry to share experiences, network and build strategic partnerships.



Another image from those taken in Argentina this summer, an AS355N of the military police © Joseba Mendizabal

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