

Police Aviation News

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FRANCE - PREPARATIONS

Unexpected difficulties beset the run up to the Paris Olympics



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EDITORIAL

Occasionally I simply run out of time! This month has been typical of this problem in that I have been heavily involved in the organisation of PAvCon Europe. I may be stepping back from the day-to-day organisation somewhat, but I am still there and PAN has necessarily taken something of a back seat on my time.

Fortunately, I have friends and they have ensured that this month's magazine has content, despite being a little delayed. Later in the month a report on PAvCon Europe will appear on-line.

Meanwhile in the United Kingdom everything has come to a grinding halt as there is an election day pending on July 4, better known in the USA as Independence Day. For once, depending how the voting goes, the British may have a greater reason to remember that specific date. This time North America's celebration of freedom may preface a gloom settling over Britain. Or maybe not for many have little faith in any shade of politician. The Americans have their own date with destiny scheduled for later in the year!

The effect of the impending election is that everything is on hold, No threat of being flown off to Ruanda for the would be economic migrants chugging their way across the English Channel for some time to come – perhaps forever – just at a time that it looked possible the migrants were fearful of such a fate. For the next month nothing much will be achieved, politics in the British Isles has now slipped into a “La La Land” of likely promises without substance.

If the current government hold on to power, they will undoubtedly judge that all the nonsensical things they have done for the last fourteen years were acceptable. If they lose, the new lot will be so full of glee that they will change stuff for changes sake. It is a no-win situation that is unlikely to quickly resolve any of the pressing problems currently faced by the UK airborne emergency services.

Bryn Elliott

LAW ENFORCEMENT

CAYMAN ISLANDS

AIR OPERATIONS: On May 2 the unit took part in a joint agency simulation with those in the Emergency Medical Service and the humanitarian response vessel MV Dawn.

The exercise tested a number of scenarios including man overboard rescue, transporting cargo for disaster relief and deck landing at George Town and Little Cayman.



FRANCE

OLYMPICS: Paris is gearing up for a summer of sports as it prepares to host the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games in July. The city is already heavily involved with preparations for the opening ceremony, test events and the journey of the Olympic torch relay.

Among the issues facing the authorities are security against potential attacks by drones. The dangers of such attacks have been brought to the fore by the clear shift in military unmanned craft activity related to the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East.

Front Cover: The emergency services in France are facing distractions that have emerged at an inopportune time. After failing to boost its staff levels in time for next month's Olympics it found issues with equipment and then an outbreak of civil unrest in one of its Pacific colonies.

Among the tasks facing the Gendarmerie was to source and quickly prepare additional air assets for flying out to New Caledonia—including this example of the ubiquitous AS350.

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Significant problems have now been discovered in the operation of the Thales Parade system, a home-grown system that was naturally slated to be the prime anti-drone system in the Olympic arsenal. In particular it is indicated that the system, when in the detection mode, “confuses drones with air conditioning.”

Parade’s sensors are tuned to detect the rotation of small propeller blades and also respond to the sound that occurs when they do so. However, the sensors end up confusing the rotation of the drones’ propellers with the rotation of electric air conditioning fans, which are more likely to be encountered in the urban background – with the prevalence of tall buildings – rather than in warzones. The system works and was found useful at sporting events in detecting drones that were not registered for use in and around those sports venues. It was however noticed that many alerts were spurious, and this was eventually traced to the elements of air conditioning devices.



The French were planning to use Parade on a massive scale, but it is now suggested that in some instances the Thales system will have to give way to another system to provide full protection against drones.

Earlier this year a parliamentary report on counter-drone systems was released that acknowledged the shortfalls in the programme. Politicians had called for the use of French rather than foreign kit, but late last year were acknowledging concerns about late delivery of Parade. It had failed to be deployed at the Paris air show last summer and missed the rugby world cup tournament in the autumn.

Parade was to be deployed at the games, along with a similar, lighter CS counter-drone system, dubbed Radiant. The police force has ordered two Radiant systems for the sports event.

Parade had European content, with some 90% French, while U.K. suppliers were excluded due to Brexit,

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as were US and Israeli companies for not being European. The value of the project was expected to be €350M for 50 potential systems over a decade or more. It would seem likely that the foreign suppliers will take up the slack to meet the Olympic need.

Not long-ago France was very antagonistic towards official drone use, the police were deterred from operating them until (it seems) that UK pressure and finance to use them over the migrants around the English Channel prevailed. Even so France has seen the number of drones used in the domestic market rise from 400,000 in 2017 to 2.5 million in 2021.

Protect the flame!

Meanwhile the Gendarmerie Nationale were mobilised to protect the Olympic flame at sea and escort the 19th Century sailing vessel Belem as it arrived in the old port of Marseille in preparation for a tour of France and its overseas territories.



The Olympic Torch Relay is an outstanding tradition that takes us back to the roots of the Games. The first torch for the Paris 2024 Olympic Torch Relay was lit by the sun's rays on April 16, 2024, during a ceremony in Olympia, Greece. The Olympic flame then headed to Athens to board the Belem, to cross the Mediterranean for a 12-day voyage to Marseille before embarking on its journey across France.

The Forces Aeriennes de la Gendarmerie nationale FAGN were in support of the ground units and ensured the safety of the airspace. About 6,000 gendarmes and police officers were mobilised for this first phase of the JOP2024 [Jeux Olympiques de Paris 2024]

During June the Olympic Flame will travel to French overseas territories including New Caledonia, Guadeloupe, Guyana, Martinique, Reunion, Polynesia.

On July 26, 2024, the Summer Olympics will kick off in Paris, followed shortly after by the Paralympic Games. For nearly a month the French capital will become the focus of international sport as it hosts more than 300 competitions from late July until August 11.

Problems.

Complications in the plans were thrown up by unrest at home and in the overseas territories. One of the overseas territories on the itinerary is reported to be in turmoil with a near civil war erupting in New Caledonia off Australia. The problem appears to be the response to an edict in the Assemblée Nationale to allow French citizens who have lived in New Caledonia for over 10 years voting rights. That has not gone down too well with the born and bred locals. Several people have died in the unrest said to involve up to 5,000 rioters. Over 60 police and Gendarmes were among the injured and, among a handful of deaths, two Gendarmes have died.

Australia, France and New Zealand have undertaken evacuation of their citizens using military aircraft. The French President Emmanuel Macron visited the islands and declared a pause in the reform in an attempt to lower the temperature. The activity adds pressure to the task in hand when French law enforcement is already under manpower strains.



The Belem

The Belem is one of the oldest ships of its kind. During its short commercial career transporting cocoa, rum and sugar it survived a fire on its maiden voyage nearly 130 years ago, a volcanic eruption off Martinique in 1902. By 1914 it had been replaced by steamships – but it still survived two major wars.



In 1914 it was sold to the Duke of Westminster, turned into a yacht and a few years later was purchased by the Guinness family. A few decades later, the ship was sold once again; this time to an Italian charity and transformed into a training ship and for 15 years sailed across the Mediterranean.

By the 1960s, considered old and small, she remained in the harbour. It was handed over to the carabinieri (Italian police) for training. When they decided it was no longer fit for purpose, they sold the vessel to a shipyard in Venice.

[Olympics.com]



More images relating to the current problems in the Pacific., including the return home of two Gendarmes killed in the unrest.





Airbus Helicopters and Babcock have been awarded a contract to support 48 EC145s operated by the French Ministry of Interior. The 12-year contract that starts this year was signed with the Direction de la Maintenance Aéronautique (DMAé), the organisation in charge of maintenance for aircraft operated by the French government.

The contract covers the 33 EC145s operated by the Sécurité Civile and the 15 EC145s operated by the Gendarmerie air forces that are spread across 41 bases in France, including five bases in French overseas territories. The contract covers technical support (including industry technical representatives working on site), supply of spare parts, logistics solutions (transport of spares and stock management), technical data management and software support.

Airbus Helicopters and Babcock will ensure that the Sécurité Civile and Gendarmerie EC145s are available for their critical missions serving the French population. Sécurité Civile and Gendarmerie EC145s are used for search and rescue, emergency medical services and fire-fighting missions. The Gendarmerie EC145s are also engaged in law enforcement operations.

Airbus is also committed to the renewal of the Sécurité Civile and Gendarmerie's fleet of helicopters. Sécurité Civile already operates four new H145s ordered in 2021, which are also supported by Airbus Helicopters and Babcock. In late 2023, a contract was signed for 42 H145s for the French Ministry of Interior (36 for the Sécurité Civile and six for the Gendarmerie). Aircraft deliveries will start in 2024.

Ed: Back in 1982, when the BK117 was relatively new to the market writers were predicting great things of the model and its smaller brother, the BO105. At that time, it was perhaps a little early in police aviation and in the lifting needs of police helicopters as a whole. Now 42 years later those "lifting needs" of police role equipment have increased and the type has developed its full potential. However, would be operators are going to be lucky if they can order an H145 and get it delivered within this decade.

SPAIN

BASQUE REGION: After a long gestation period PAN understands that the police (Ertzaintza) has selected the Airbus Helicopter H135 as its future helicopter. The first of two has been delivered and is being used for training at the Airbus Helicopters facility in Albacete. The current airframes in use were among the earliest examples of the EC135T1 to be delivered to airborne law enforcement, even the autopilot was a retrofit, and they are significantly different to the new version delivered. The role fit includes an EO/IR sensor and a hoist.

The arrival of the new airframes is not yet official, and they are nominally still 'under construction' with a scheduled delivery to the Basque Government on June 24. Images of the pair are circulat-



ing with several of EC-OGK c/n 2258 flying pilot training sorties from Albacete since mid-May and others of EC-OJK in the paint shop.

Albacete Airport in Castile-La Mancha, Spain, is the home of both Airbus Helicopters and Los Llanos Air Base, operated by the Spanish Air and Space Force. The Airbus plant has supported deliveries to the Spanish Armed Forces and governmental fleets, including the Guardia Civil, Police, the General Directorate of road traffic, among others.

Since 1997 the Basque Police has operated two early Eurocopter EC135 including EC-GMZ c/n 016 and EC-GNA c/n 017.



OTHER AIRBUS DELIVERIES: Market Intelligence company Parapex Media advises PAN that at the end of May 13 H135s from Airbus Helicopters had been delivered from the production line at Donauwörth in Germany to Spain. This includes seven for the Guardia Civil and six for Policia Nacional. A further five airframes are due between the two organisations.

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UNITED KINGDOM

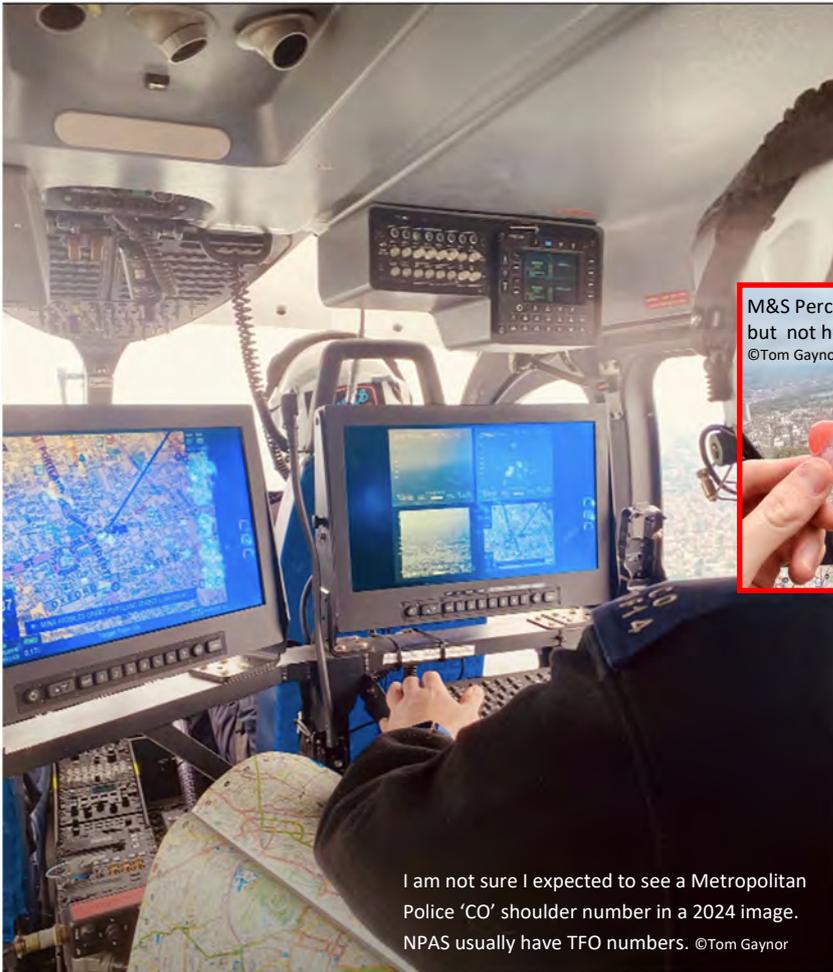
NPAS: It has long been stated that UK police aircraft are unable to carry persons not employed by the police service. As a result, it is rare, but not impossible, for such as journalists and broadcasters to fly on operational sorties. At best they rig up the aircraft with cameras and edit the output with voiceovers.

But rules are there to be altered when it suits the operator and last month it seems that just such an accommodation was reached when Tom Gaynor a broadcaster announced on Linked in that he was flying with the Lippitts Hill based London EC145s over London.

It is clear he was in the helicopter as it was lunch time and to sustain himself on a sorties likely to be two hours long he "...grabbed some 'Percy Pigs' and a drink and ran out to the aircraft" Over the shift the aircraft responded to vehicle pursuits, helped the public order command team, and searched for dangerous suspects and vulnerable missing people.



The Shard near London Bridge Station ©Tom Gaynor



M&S Percy Pigs, yummy but not healthy living! ©Tom Gaynor

I am not sure I expected to see a Metropolitan Police 'CO' shoulder number in a 2024 image. NPAS usually have TFO numbers. ©Tom Gaynor



North Weald Airfield, Essex. Showing the based EC135 and visiting Lippitts Hill EC145 ©Tom Gaynor

Ed: London has access to the lions share of NPAS assets, with the main base at Lippitts Hill the base for four EC145 helicopters - three from the original Metropolitan Police fleet and the fourth from Devon & Cornwall. Having four available does not often give them four operational airframes. The aged and maintenance hungry EC145s are often down to just one airframe flying. In addition the EC135 operating bases at Redhill to the south of London, North Weald to the north and Benson to the west provide backfill for the primary assets over the capital.



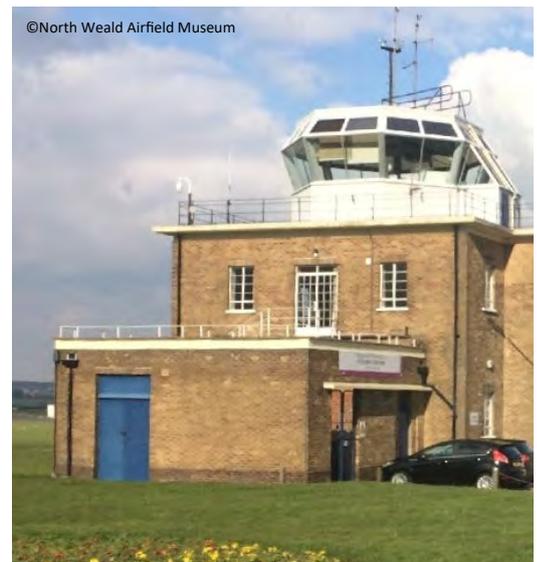
The NPAS base at RAF Benson managed to catch images of the recent and impressive Northern Lights above the RAF Benson NPAS base in Oxfordshire and posted the result on X May 10 at 2351hrs. RAF Benson is the home of the RAF Puma helicopters and the Boeing Chinook OCU.

NORTH WEALD: Around £5.7M is to be spent by Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) on building new facilities - including a new control tower - at North Weald airfield following the sale of some airport land to Google for a new data centre. The decision by EFDC to proceed comes after Google paid £88.2M for 21 hectares of the council-owned airfield - where the current control tower sits.

A new combined control tower and fire station is estimated at £4.9M, new equipment for the tower is estimated at £300,000 and works for a new interim airfield entry point along with works associated with the electrical power supply is estimated at around £500,000.

In addition to its function as an unlicensed aerodrome with a varied mix of aviation activities including flight training, warbird and jet flight experiences and leisure flying, the airfield is also home to the National Police Aviation Service (NPAS) and the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance Trust (EHAAT) who operate emergency helicopters from the site on a 24/7/365 basis. The daylight only control tower function has little direct relevancy to either of the 24/7 emergency services operations as they are self regulating.

The current tower, gatehouse and fire station functions are sited within the land bought by Google late last year so these historical structures may be threatened. The best place for a new combined tower and fire station has been identified on the western side of the airfield.



©North Weald Airfield Museum

UNITED STATES

ARIZONA: This is MD500F N507MP operated by the Mesa Police Department in Arizona. In this image it is carrying a IAI Taman POP200 sensor alongside the ever popular SX-16 searchlight.



Mesa is currently operating two MD500F models (N506MP & N507MP) with a third, N505MP currently at the MD factory in Mesa being converted from an E to an F model, with delivery expected in the next few months!

When the airframe returns to service it will be carrying the L3 Harris/Wescam MX-10. [Brady Jay, Jon Goldin]

Ed: The IAI Taman POP200 sensor never did make its mark in the international law enforcement market despite widespread marketing in Europe and the USA. It offered a unique modular style of construction with interchangeable cores. It became clear to most prospective purchasers that the manufacturers were unwilling to fully support the product in country by having at least one spare sensor on the shelf waiting to replace any defective units the new customers might be tempted to buy. As far as can be ascertained the POP200 only sold to three US operators [the AZ DPS, Mesa Police and Pinal County] It was widely used by Israeli operators and in 2006 the US Army awarded small contract for the later POP300 payloads, to replace earlier examples of the POP-200.



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HAWAII: Maui's police chief has requested a new helicopter capable of nighttime operations in order to respond to emergencies in remote locations quickly.

During a Maui County Council meeting this week, Maui Police Department Chief John Pelletier said the department currently has no air assets that can operate at night.

Pelletier has requested \$500,000 for equipment used by the airship and its crew, which would include night vision goggles and thermal imaging.

The request will be made in 2026 and is expected to cost the budget about \$2.3M annually. The aircraft wouldn't be just for law enforcement and could be shared with the fire department. The after-action report for the Maui Fire Department following the August wildfires recommended expanding aerial capabilities.

Aerial fire fighting was originally undertaken by MD500 helicopters. That small type recently gave way to a BK117 helicopter. The type intended for police work has not been revealed.

WASHINGTON: Thurston County Sheriff's Office, based in Olympia is looking to get back into air support operations. According to the 2020 census Thurston County has a population of 294,793.

Two decades ago Thurston operated a Bell Huey with the assistance of locally based Northwest Helicopters, Olympia but pulled out of the operations because of rising insurance costs. In 2006 the helicopter was used just 12 times. Seven of those trips were for community attempts, three times the helicopter was used in search-and-rescue operations and twice it was used for criminal cases. At the time it was reported that insurance costs rose from \$18,000 in 2005 to \$30,000 in 2006.

TCSO has been on a wait list with the federal surplus programme for a few years now waiting for a free helicopter. The model sought is the Bell TH67 Creek helicopter, which was recently (2021) retired by the US Army. The helicopter, based on the 206 JetRanger is unarmed, small, and was used by the military as a training platform for new pilots.



TCSO want the helicopter to undertake search and rescue, the Sheriff's Office is responsible for all of the waterways and lakes in Thurston County, the Puget Sound, and hundreds of square miles of forestry between Capitol Forest and Weyerhaeuser land. A TH67 helicopter would be extremely valuable when searching for endangered persons and children go missing but there are limitations on the role equipment it can carry.

As was found with the earlier arrangement, cost is the biggest inhibitor of starting up an aviation unit, which is why TSCO are again grateful to their local partner Northwest Helicopters who has offered to cover almost every single cost associated with starting up and running the police operation. Northwest Helicopters have offered to deliver the helicopter to Thurston County, make any necessary repairs to ensure it is flight ready, equip it with a hoist and EO/IR system, store the helicopter in their local hangar at Olympia Airport and provide access to pilots and maintenance for the machine.

TCSO would only be responsible to pay for insurance (estimated at \$15k per year) and fuel, which can be billed to their marine services fund anytime the helicopter is used for marine rescue.

The outlined scheme has yet to receive public approval.

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AIR AMBULANCE

AUSTRALIA

QUEENSLAND: Queensland Government Air (QGAir) has become the first Emergency Medical Services helicopter operator in Australia to surpass 30,000 operational flight hours. Operating within the Aviation Capability Group (ACG) of the Queensland Police Service, QGAir's fleet serves as a vital asset in frontline aeromedical, search and rescue, law enforcement and government capabilities throughout Queensland.

QGAir was the first Emergency Medical Services helicopter operator in Australia and currently makes a claim to operate the highest time conducting Emergency Medical Services operations globally. They have bases at Brisbane Airport, Archerfield, Townsville, Cairns, Mt Isa, and Horn Island to operate a fleet of fixed wing and rotary wing aircraft. The fleet includes five helicopters and eight fixed wing aircraft. The five helicopters provide more than 3,000 flight hours per annum and an average 2,000 patient rescues and transfers each year.

Three QGAir helicopters are due for replacement in the next three years and scoping work for the new helicopters has now commenced. They became the first operator in Australia of a AW139 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) helicopter to surpass 30,000 operational flight hours.

To mark this achievement, a celebration was held at the Archerfield Hangar with the Archerfield operational and engineering teams being presented with a commemorative print.

Rotary Wing operations has a permanent staffing establishment of 58 and is supported by an engineering and airworthiness staffing establishment of 32 permanent positions spread across QGAir's three bases. Rotary Wing is centrally tasked through Queensland Health's Aeromedical Retrieval and Disaster Management Branch as part of Queensland's Emergency Helicopter Network. The operation currently operates the highest time AW139 conducting EMS operations in the world.

GERMANY

HEMS: DRF have moved a second base over to 24 hour ops. Christoph Europa 5 operates a five-blade Airbus H145 based at Niebüll a town in the district of Nordfriesland, in Schleswig-Holstein, Germany. It is situated near the North Sea coast and the border with Denmark.

Pilot and station manager Jürgen Voiss is pleased about the expansion of operational readiness: "Emergency situations don't look at the clock and care should be just as good at night as it is during the day. We are therefore very happy that we will be able to provide people in the region with rapid assistance around the clock in the future."

Until now, DRF Air Rescue's Christoph 42 helicopter at Rendsburg was the only rescue vehicle on their fleet available for night-time emergency medical care. Daylight ops are single pilot, while night ops are dual pilot with night vision goggles. [Jeremy Parkin, Parapex Media]

DRF has also inaugurated Christoph 100 at Berlin-Buch. Since the beginning of the year, a new rescue helicopter has been in use in the skies over Berlin: Christoph 100, operated by DRF Luftrettung. The official inauguration of the station in Berlin-Buch took place last month in the presence of the State Secretary for the Interior of the State of Berlin, Christian Hochgrebe, and 150 guests - and hosted in the newly-built hangar by Dr. Krystian Pracz, CEO of DRF Air Rescue.

In his speech, Christian Hochgrebe, State Secretary for the Interior of the State of Berlin in the Senate Department for the Interior and Sport of the State of Berlin, emphasized above all the importance of the newly constructed helicopter base for the people of Berlin and the surrounding area: "DRF Air Rescue is a reliable partner for emergency rescue in Berlin. The team of the Christoph Berlin intensive care transport helicopter has been proving this for almost 30 years. I am very pleased that the new Christoph 100 will continue to enable excellent emergency care in Berlin in the future. My thanks go to all the air rescue teams with their 'flying intensive care units'"

Dr. Eiko Spielmann, Deputy Medical Director of the Berlin Fire Department's rescue service, and General Surgeon Dr. Ralf Hartmann, Commander and Medical Director of the Berlin Bundeswehr Hospital, spoke on behalf of the Berlin Fire Department and the Bundeswehr Hospital.

The Berlin-Buch station started operating Christoph 100 on January 2, 2024, and is the only German station with extended off-peak hours of 0600-2200 daily throughout the year. [Jeremy Parkin, Parapex Media]



THE MALDIVES

NATIONAL: The newly created National Air Ambulance of the Maldives has flown in excess of 150 flights since February this year.

Officially launched on March 1, the two aircraft collectively made 58 trips. In April, the flights made 64 trips, and by the last week in May, over 30 trips have been logged.

The statement further informed that the flights themselves would be equipped with the facilities and resources to provide first aid care, and would have a crew drawn from 15 health professionals trained in the field, including 5 doctors, 5 nurses and 5 emergency medical technicians.

Plans are underway to charter Maldivian air ambulance flights to other countries to establish a wider reach for medical treatment. The government of Maldives has engaged in discussions with the Sri-Lankan government to facilitate faster approvals to fly critical patients to Sri-Lanka. These discussions resulted in arrangements that provides Maldivian sea ambulances the required approval to bring in patients to Sri-Lanka within 2 hours which is a huge improvement to the previous 6 – 24 hour waiting period.

Currently the service relies upon fixed wing assets, a dedicated Dash 8 8Q-IAQ and a Maldivian airlines Twin Otter seaplane, but efforts are ongoing to introduce medevac helicopters before the end of the year.

UNITED KINGDOM

EAST ANGLIA: Last month East Anglian Air Ambulance (EAAA) marked a milestone of treating 25,000 patients since its inception in 2000. This has only been possible thanks to the kind support of others. EAAA receives no regular government funding, provides advanced critical care 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to the most seriously ill and injured people in the region by air and road. It relies almost entirely on public donations to save lives by air and road across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.

From road traffic collisions to cardiac arrests to medical emergencies, EAAA's specialist doctors, critical care paramedics and pilots bring the advanced skills, equipment and medicine directly – normally only found in a specialist emergency department – to the patient's side in the fastest time possible. The equipment carried by EAAA's helicopters and rapid response vehicles enables enhanced care at the incident scene – when the patient needs it most – such as blood transfusions, advanced pain relief, sedation and anaesthesia, and surgical interventions.





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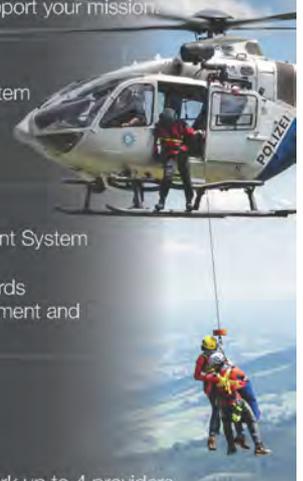
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ESSEX & HERTS: The North Weald base of the air ambulance was honoured to be visited by the remarkable WW2 veteran Flt Lt Colin Bell (aged 103) who popped in to meet the team while at North Weald helping promote the Aero Legends D-Day 80 North Weald Embarkation event. He is pictured here (right) with family members and Cliff Gale of the EHAAT.

The event, organised in conjunction with the Imperial War Museum Duxford base, has been flying a collection of Douglas DC-3/C-47 Dakota aircraft to France and drop parachutists in commemoration of the invasion of Europe by Allied troops in recent days.

GREAT NORTH: The air ambulance service hopes to expand its service to be able to respond to calls at night across its whole region.

Great North Air Ambulance Service (GNAAS) has helicopters flying in daylight, but at night has two rapid response vehicles; one covering Cumbria, the other the rest of the North-East. Cumbria's is currently only available from Thursday to Sunday.

GNAAS wants to raise up to £500,000 to expand that to every night, as well as continuing to care 24 hours a day in the rest of the region. Last year, GNAAS' critical care teams based in Eaglescliffe and Langwathby responded to 745 incidents at night using rapid response vehicles.

Ed: Unlike most other air ambulance services in the UK the GNAAS continues to use elderly Eurocopter AS365N helicopters that are unable to undertake a full helicopter night service and therefore it relies more heavily upon the car service for extended hour operations.





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Changes are on the way for the base next to the motorway .
©Midlands Air Ambulance

MIDLANDS: The HELP Appeal has granted £1.8M to Midlands Air Ambulance Charity which will fund the redevelopment of its Strensham airbase on the Worcestershire / Gloucestershire border. Strensham is uniquely located alongside the Roadchef motorway service area on the northbound M5 between Cheltenham and Worcester. The redevelopment will include a new hangar replacing the existing one which is over 20 years old.

Based in the Midlands, the HELP Appeal, operated by County Air Ambulance Trust (CAAT), is the only charity in the country dedicated to funding helipads at hospitals and at air ambulance airbases across the country. Such is the HELP Appeal's long-standing commitment to the region, this is the third time that it has funded work at the Strensham air base – first when it opened and again in 2010. In total the HELP Appeal has donated £1.8M to helipad projects for the Midland Air Ambulance.

During the refurbishment work, the helicopter will be temporarily located at Babcock's operating base in nearby Staverton in Gloucestershire, allowing full operational capability to be maintained, and ensuring the security of the aircraft whilst the building work is completed. The airbase itself will continue to be operational throughout, providing support facilities for the clinicians and the charity's fleet of critical care cars.

Midlands Air Ambulance Charity has now attended more than 75,000 missions across Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, the West Midlands, and Worcestershire, and continues to be the busiest air ambulance in England.



Another view of the base before the work starts
©Midlands Air Ambulance

UNITED STATES

FLORIDA: Broward County Sheriff's Office are advertising for an air rescue pilot with a salary on offer in the range of \$62,957 to \$104,601. They are waiting for two modern H145s slated to replace an EC135 involved in a fatal crash, and a remaining example of the early model 135.

Ed: In a wider context, PAN has learned that the ever rising popularity of the H145 in both a civil and military markets has resulted in delivery quotes for new production examples of the type being extended out to four years. The production lines include Germany, Japan and the USA.

**One of many faces.....**

The newly registered, but a 2022 build Leonardo AW169, it first flew in Italian marks I-EASI, wearing the full green colours for Parkview but fake marks N199SM at Heli-Expo.

©Parkview

INDIANA: Parkview Health is adding a new helicopter to its Samaritan Flight Programme. The new aircraft features advanced technology and flexibility specifically for rapid emergency response situations.

Parkview currently operates two Eurocopter AS365 N2 Dauphin medical role equipped helicopters from bases in Fort Wayne (Samaritan 1) and Rochester, Indiana (Samaritan 2). A Leonardo AW169 is being added to replace Samaritan 2 in Rochester and the current Samaritan 2 will become Samaritan 1, based in Fort Wayne. While no longer in regular service, the current Samaritan 1 will remain available to be used as a backup.

Additionally, Parkview Health has partnered with Sweet Helicopters in Fort Wayne for the Part 135 operations and maintenance of its medical transport helicopters. Sweet Helicopters was granted a Part 135 certificate by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in 2022, allowing for on-demand, unscheduled air service operations.

The pilots and mechanics operating the Parkview aircraft are also employed by Sweet Helicopters. The pilots and mechanics who will operate and maintain the new Leonardo helicopter are currently undergoing training.

Currently, each aircraft averages one flight per day. About 40% of these flights are to pick up patients from the scene of an injury and 60% are to pick up from facilities referring patients to Parkview Regional Medical Centre. Both helicopters are deployed by dispatchers at the Parkview Logistics Centre, located on the Parkview Hospital Randallia campus.

ILLINOIS: Celebrating two decades of providing life-saving care to the South Central Illinois region, ARCH 3 in Effingham held an intimate community gathering to mark the anniversary.

Crew members, past and present, and community members came together at the ARCH Air Medical Base on May 4 to celebrate the major milestone.

ARCH 3 is led by clinicians who are highly trained in paediatrics, high-risk OBGYN care, and specialized transport. Additionally, they offer heated and humidified high-flow oxygen support for both adults and children and carry whole blood during flights, ensuring access to crucial components like red blood cells, platelets, plasma, and clotting factors for patients facing trauma or haemorrhagic shock. Moreover, their aircraft is equipped to safely transport cardiac patients in need of Impella heart pump support during emergencies related to heart failure.

ARCH 3 is one of seven locations branded under the ARCH Air Medical program—a subsidiary of Air Methods, the leading air medical service provider in the U.S. This year, the overarching ARCH Air Medical program celebrates 45 years of service throughout the state of Illinois and Missouri providing lifesaving service to those who need it most. All 10 HEMS locations are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems (CAMTS).

NEW YORK: LifeNet of New York 7-14, in partnership with Volunteer Fire Company of Western, kicked off National Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Week by hosting a ribbon cutting and open house event commemorating LifeNet's one year of providing lifesaving service to the Mohawk Valley Region and officially celebrating their relocation from Watertown to Westernville.

Their new helicopter pad, hangar, and living quarters are now adjacent to the Volunteer Fire Company of Western.

The event drew more than 175 people and dignitaries including New York Congressman Brandon Williams, State Senator Joseph Griffo, and Oneida County Board Legislator Stephan DiMaggio. The attendance demonstrated the support and partnership the LifeNet team has fostered to date.

FIRE

SPAIN

BASQUE REGION: An open tender has been published for the hire of a helicopter with crew for security and fire fighting operations for a period of 24 months. It is estimated that the contract will be worth just over €5.7M

The deadline for the receipt of the tenders is June 18.

SEARCH & RESCUE

SPAIN

SALVAMENTO MARITIMO: Austria based Airborne Technologies has announced the successful completion of the first platform upgrade under the iSAR SASEMAR initiative. This project encompasses the outfitting of both a CASA CN-235 and a Leonardo AW-139 with cutting-edge technology to support the critical missions of the Spanish Maritime Safety and Rescue Agency (SASEMAR).

Acting as a subcontractor for Schiebel, Airborne Technologies has executed the upgrade for the CASA CN-235, enhancing its search and rescue capabilities. While work on the helicopter is still ongoing, the fixed-wing aircraft, EC-





Via Airborne Technologies, Austria.

KEM, has already obtained its STC approval.

Jesús Domínguez de Tena, from SASEMAR Air Service says: “This milestone represents a major step forward for Salvamento Marítimo in the modernisation of its air units, incorporating cutting-edge technology that will help us to provide a more efficient and effective service and, ultimately, to continue fulfilling our mission of protecting life at sea with the most advanced means at our disposal. The collaboration with Schiebel and Airborne Technologies as the subcontractor has been instrumental in achieving these enhancements, using their expertise in the field.”

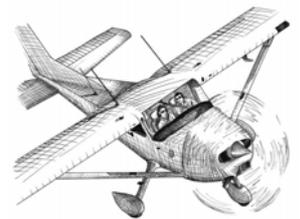
UNITED KINGDOM

SEARCH AND RESCUE: Pilots and SAR technical crew [including hoist operatives] were striking for a five week period through May and into June in support of their pay and conditions claim.

BALPA, which represents both pilots and technical crews says that further strikes are planned following the same pattern. The present period of strikes will conclude on June 6.

DELAYED JUSTICE: A clear example of the slow pace of modern British justice is the recent conclusion of a case of trafficking migrants by air. Kreshnik Kadena, 37, and Myrteza Hilaj, 50, both of Leyton, East London have been jailed for illegally smuggling migrants into the UK at an Essex aerodrome.

The trafficking mainly took place using aircraft flown from North Weald, Essex to Le Torquet in France and returning to Stapleford in Essex. Arrests were made in 2017 but those involved were only sentenced in April.



According to the National Crime Agency [NCA] report the pair were sentenced to a combined total of five years and two months prison, after an eight-year investigation by the agency into an Albanian organised crime group involving in facilitating illegal migration, money laundering, drug trafficking and the supply of counterfeit documents.

The NCA said at least nine journeys of Albanian economic migrants in 2016 and 2017 were investigated – three involving light aircraft and others with migrants getting in the back of lorries. The group's pilot fly to France and bring back three or four migrants on each trip.

Albanian migrants were paying up to £10,000 for their journeys to the UK and additional sums for fake documents, the NCA.

Hilaj came to the UK in the 1990s and worked as a restaurant owner and security guard, he supplied the migrants with fake documents. Five individuals provided him with the false documents – tens of thousands of them - at an east London facility for use in banking fraud. Another individual produced passports created in south London.

British pilot David Green and facilitator Edward Buckley were jailed in France in 2017 for the light aircraft operation which ran from June to July in 2017. The operation by the NCA involved a total of 27 arrests with 11 convictions in the UK, and nine convictions overseas. The NCA said the operation that led to the arrests of the men prevented fifty people coming to the UK and resulted in the closure of four forgery factories. Confiscation orders of just under £1M were issued. The wider investigation by the NCA, not linked directly to Hilaj or Kadena, involved the seizure of four tonnes of cannabis and 30 kilos of cocaine. [NCA/In Your Area]

UNITED STATES

FEDERAL: In a US Government Accountability Office (GAO) report it was noted that the Coast Guard relies heavily on its fleet of about 200 aircraft, 146 helicopters and 47 airplanes, for search and rescue missions. In FY 2022 alone, the Coast Guard used these aircraft for more than 35,000 hours of mission-critical work—including about 12,000 hours of search and rescue work. Many thousands of hours more of flight time were used to find migrants, stop drug trafficking, and more.

The Coast Guard has struggled to meet its own target of having its aircraft available for use. The Coast Guard aims to have its aircraft available at least 71% of the time. This goal is meant to ensure that even small air stations (those with only three aircraft) will have at least one available to respond in an emergency. But it was found that the Coast Guard missed its target. Overall, the fleets' availability ranged from 66% to 68% between FY 2018-2022. This means aircraft were only available two-thirds of the time (64,000 hours less than the target) in FY 2022. Sixteen stations had not met availability targets that year.

Part of the reason why the Coast Guard's fleet hasn't met availability goals is because of their age and higher need of maintenance. As revealed in last month PAN, the Coast Guard plans to phase out its short-range helicopters (MH-65D/E) because the manufacturer ended production of these aircraft in 2018. This has made obtaining critical replacement parts, such as gearboxes, difficult.

It has also been found that three of the five types of aircraft currently in use are either approaching or have exceeded the end of their service lives. Many of these aircraft entered service in the 1980s and 1990s. The Coast Guard plans to spend about \$105.6 billion on fleet replacement efforts but the GAO assess that they have not demonstrated whether the replacement types will best meet its mission needs. As a result, the GAO recommend that the Coast Guard assess whether the type of helicopters it plans to buy actually meet its mission demands. [GAO]

Mission critical data transferred in real time



Evenlode is a series of equipment providing capability for a range of **information exchange** requirements. The new video and data encoder enables police forces to react to evolving scenarios in real time thanks to the low latency of <math><120\text{ms}</math>; equipment can be deployed for air and ground, which provides innovative video solutions for **police applications**

INDUSTRY

Bell Textron Inc., has revealed its Aircraft Laboratory for Future Autonomy (ALFA) based on the Bell 429 commercial aircraft. Developed by Bell's Advanced Programs team, ALFA is dedicated to performing flight manoeuvres with an aircraft safety system and executing autonomous fly-by-wire flights. The fly-by-wire integration was a critical step in future development of autonomous controls for Bell's commercial aircraft, an emerging technology that aims to reduce pilot workload and enhance safety.

ALFA's aircraft safety system separates safety functions from flight control functions, allowing for rapid development and evaluation of novel flight control technology without compromising overall safety. The aircraft completed its first flight at Bell's Commercial Assembly and Delivery Centre in Mirabel, Quebec, Canada and is now being used for further work at Bell's facility in Fort Worth, Texas.

Bell is committed to developing technology that will provide the best possible, advanced solution for current and future customers. The Bell team continues to explore technology development to elevate its products for Commercial and Military customers.



ALFA is based on the Bell 429



Miriam Brgdo with the 337 ©Ministry of Ecological Transition

In case we even started to assume that all the best surveillance systems were modern we need only to look to Spain to see that there are examples of some older and 'unusual' aircraft and sensors out there doing a days work.

Some may have thought that it has been a long time since the unique push-pull engine Cessna 337 served on the front line as it were – the police in Cumbria, UK were led into a disastrous scheme with a 337 many years ago when they tried to fit a large EO/IR sensor directly under the wing – that effectively killed the whole project overnight but fortunately proved non-typical, other operators operate the type with an acceptable (or 'sensible' size) sensor fitted.

The Ministry of Ecological Transition based at Leon provides information on forest fires to command posts and is provided by Eliance.

The sensor mounted under the left wing close to the fuselage comes from Heligrafics based in Alicante, Spain. They offer range of equipment including Lidar and this 337 is not the only one they equip. Heligrafics sensors also equip two Cessa 337s in Chile.

ON-LINE NEWS

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Smith-Myers, a global leader in cellular communications solutions, has been honoured with a King's Award for Enterprise Innovation 2024.

Smith Myers ARTEMIS suite of Search and Rescue SAR systems have been saving lives around the world. Recently selected for several major UK, European and North American SAR and Coast Guard Programs, ARTEMIS provides a new and mission critical capability to aircrew/first responders and is deployed around the world in Maritime Patrol, Border Control, Aerial Firefighting and Natural Disasters.

Announced on May 6, Smith Myers has been nationally recognised with the prestigious King's Award for Enterprise and in particular, for its Excellence in Innovation, an accolade acknowledged worldwide.

The King's Awards for Enterprise, previously known as The Queen's Awards for Enterprise, were renamed last year to reflect His Majesty The King's desire to continue the legacy of HM Queen Elizabeth II's by recognising outstanding UK businesses. The Award programme, now in its 58th year, is the most prestigious business award in the country, with successful businesses able to use the esteemed King's Awards Emblem for the next five years.



Spectrum Aeromed has completed an EMS interior on a fourth Challenger for Turkish operator Redstar Aviation. They recently added a fourth Bombardier Challenger 605 jet to their fleet, which also includes five Learjet 45s and three Leonardo AW139 helicopters from their base at Istanbul-Ataturk Airport. The aircraft is equipped Spectrum's Dual Patient Intensive Care System with additional oxygen cylinders for extended-range missions, particularly to prioritise continuous patient care over long distances. The interior layout has been configured to prioritize intensive care, guaranteeing that patients receive the utmost medical attention throughout their journey.



As a subsidiary of Qatar-based Gulf Helicopters, Redstar Aviation is also the only EMS provider in Turkey accredited in Fixed Wing Air Ambulance by EURAMI. [Jeremy Parkin - Parapex Media]

Spectrum Aeromed has announced a new initiative in the maritime sector with the Romanian Government. This follows a successful project involving two Air Ambulance Bombardier Learjets for the same customer.

The project included five critical care ambulance modules and medical cabinets for two specialised vessels, both designed for missions up to three days in all weathers. The two are a Search and Rescue Multi-role Ship dedicated to medical aid and capable of evacuating at least 50 people from emergency situations, and a Firefighting Multirole Ship, equipped to combat fires on vessels and offshore platforms, with the capacity to carry at least 30 people.

The project was undertaken with Damen Shipyards, a well-known leader in the shipbuilding industry based in the Netherlands. "This was not only our inaugural project working together but also marked our

entry into the maritime industry,” said Julia Kutsche, Sales Representative for Spectrum Aeromed. Damen's Project Manager for Workboats, Jurriaan van de Beek, noted that the collaborative effort between Spectrum and Damen both demonstrates a shared commitment to innovation and excellence, and sets a strong foundation for future collaborations. The equipment for the two vessels was delivered at the end of 2023, and the ships have since been delivered to the Romanian Government, with their christening ceremonies already conducted. Jeremy Parkin, Parapex Media



The vessels ©Damen Shipyards

TracPlus, a global leader in aerial firefighting software solutions, has announced the launch of TracPlus Beacon, an innovative mobile application that transforms smartphones into advanced tracking devices. Integrated seamlessly with the TracPlus Cloud platform, this solution extends the trusted tracking, operational oversight and safety to more asset types across land, sea, and air. It is designed to meet the needs of diverse and complex environments, providing scalable, cost-effective tracking capabilities without the need for additional hardware for assets within cellular reception. As the only commercial provider delivering a complete country-wide tracking solution for the aerial firefighting market, TracPlus continues to redefine emergency management worldwide. By utilising a team's smartphone, leaders can now operate these devices as sophisticated safety tools, providing real-time location updates directly within the TracPlus Cloud platform. With just a tap, users can activate real-time tracking and use the phone's GPS to send continuous location data, even caching data when out of cellular range to upload later and ensure uninterrupted tracking. TracPlus Cloud offers real-time visibility for managing remote field teams or coordinating complex logistics. Customers gain a consistent and accurate overview of their operations, enabling effective safety management and operational efficiency across diverse environments.

It is now available to all organisations, regardless of their current aircraft tracking system provider. TracPlus is offering one free licence to any organisation that operates aircraft anywhere in the world, including those that do not yet use the system. This initiative invites entities to experience a major advancement in tracking technology. TracPlus has become a pivotal partner for first responders, government agencies, militaries, and other critical operators around the globe.





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Airbus Helicopters, LCI, and Sumitomo Mitsui Finance and Leasing Company, Limited (SMFL), have announced an order for up to 21 of the latest generation helicopters.

The major new order consists of 14 firm orders plus 7 options. It is made up of a mix of light twin H145, medium twin H160 and super medium H175 helicopters. The new helicopters will be delivered through to 2028 and will be aimed at a variety of operating segments such as emergency medical services (EMS), search and rescue (SAR), and offshore energy, including wind. LCI and SMFL's combined fleet currently includes over 40 Airbus helicopters. They are deployed by 12 operators in over 10 countries across the globe on a range of missions including EMS, SAR and offshore wind, all of which align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Three Airbus types are involved in this order line-up ©Airbus Helicopters

Could Hill Helicopters revolutionise police aviation?

British company Hill Helicopters is getting closer to the first flight of their HX50 helicopter, with a target date of the end of 2024. Initially marketed to private helicopter owners, Hill holds non-returnable deposits of up to £100K (approx. \$127K) from over 1,300 prospective purchasers. Their HX50 model is being developed under Experimental category regulations, and they are also planning an equivalent certified model under the HC50 name at a higher price tag which would be of interest to many law enforcement operators as it will be very competitive against an R66 for example.



©Hill Helicopters

Owner Dr Jason Hill is not just an engineer with a dream, in the way that many GA aircraft are developed, but he has built up a plan over many years, starting at his choice of university course in the mid 1990s, progressing to a doctorate on an aspect of helicopter design through the sponsorship of Leonardo. Building his own engineering company first was all part of the bigger plan to revolutionise the light helicopter world with a turbine-powered five-seat helicopter for the price of a piston-engine Robinson R44. A number of new light helicopter designs on the market in recent years have been created by engineers who consider their product "so good that it should sell itself". Hill's whole ethos has been to cover not just the engineering aspects, but has included a long-term marketing plan, and the intention to bring modern production line methodology to our industry.

Hill does not want to be beholden to any supplier, and to achieve that they are also building a 500hp turbine engine of their own design, as well as adding their own avionics. Notable features include powered wheels for ground taxiing, haptic responses in the controls to alert the pilot to certain situations, and a shrouded-in rotor mast to help take forward speed to their initial target of 140 knots and so on. Hill has also involved the UK CAA in every aspect of the project for eight years to ensure the path-to-market is as smooth as it can be.

Looking a few years ahead, the HC50 will be in a strong position to make an impact on the law enforce-

ment aviation world, particularly in terms of straight line speed, five hours duration and a target engine TBO of 5,000 hours. We wish Hill Helicopters well as their development turns into a flying prototype. The company holds regular monthly updates online, each with a good deal of time set aside for audience Q&A. Further information at www.hillhelicopters.com Parapex

The subject of an earlier image in past editions of PAN, G-EHAT, the new AW169 for the **Essex and Herts Air Ambulance** was reported as 'apparently on delivery' on June 3. The helicopter was seen departing the Babcock facility at Gloucester / Staverton Airport at 1-25pm. This arrived at the Essex & Herts base in Earls Colne, Colchester, Essex some 45 minutes later. (M.Jones)

ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

25 February 2024 Pilatus PC12-NG N214AL. Air ambulance of Airlift Northwest, Seattle, Washington. , Airlift Northwest was dispatched for a patient transport from Yakima to Tacoma, Washington. Weather had been variable through all parts of the state, with several declines earlier in the shift. At pilot change, the team reports to have discussed wind in the area and the potential for turbulence for any flight requests during that night. Reports that wind had subsided in key areas and forecasting reduction in wind with high confidence, resulted in a resumption of flying.

Airlift completed the majority of the transport flight without much deviation from normal – some bumps out of Yakima Air Terminal / McAllister Field and some rough air around Mt. Rainier, but nothing outside of normal.

At approximately 500' from runway, the team felt a fairly significant and sudden wind gust and what felt to be a 'drop.' Upon touchdown, the team reported continued bumpiness, forward lean, and a grinding noise and vibration was experienced – this occurred twice. Initially, the team thought they had blown the front landing gear tyre, but later it was apparent that the propeller had struck the ground on landing and 'porpoising' after touch-down. [Concern]

1 May 2024 Airbus Helicopters H125 N413JM Hillsborough County Sheriffs Office in Tampa, Florida undertook an emergency landing in a field set to grass off County Road 39, Plant City while traveling back to the David Gee Aviation Complex. The helicopter had two people on board, and neither person was injured, but the helicopter was damaged but not apparently terminally. It landed upright with the landing skids collapsed. Press photos show multiple creases in the tail boom, damage to the tail rotor guard. Tail rotor gearbox separated, and the tail rotor driveshaft, hub and blade assembly remained attached. One of the two tail rotor blades was separated Corporal Jeramy Butler was flying the helicopter, and the passenger was Sheriff's Pilot Robert Bateman. [Media/Parapex]

7 May 2024 Mil MI-171V PNP-501 Policia Nacional de Peru. Shortly after take-off from the town of José Olaya with at least 20 POB, the helicopter made a sudden turn and emergency landing less than 30 seconds later, narrowly missing a group of children watching the take-off. No apparent damage to aircraft from images found online. [Parapex]

11 May 2024 Helibras HB350B Esquilo PP-EHO Goiás Military Police, Brazil. was landing in Aparecida de Goiânia when the rotor blades hit a traffic sign on Avenida Furnas. A video of the incident suggests that the rotor tip impact with the sign was with a relatively flimsy sign plate rather than the pole. It is believed that of the 4 POB some were standing on skids on each side of the helicopter with the sliding doors opened during the incident. Analysis of Google Street View suggests that the chosen landing spot had a significant number of obstacles including wires at both low level and on higher pylons, as well as typical urban street signs etc. 4 POB, landed upright on its skids The pilot managed to complete the landing. There were no injuries. [ASN/Parapex]

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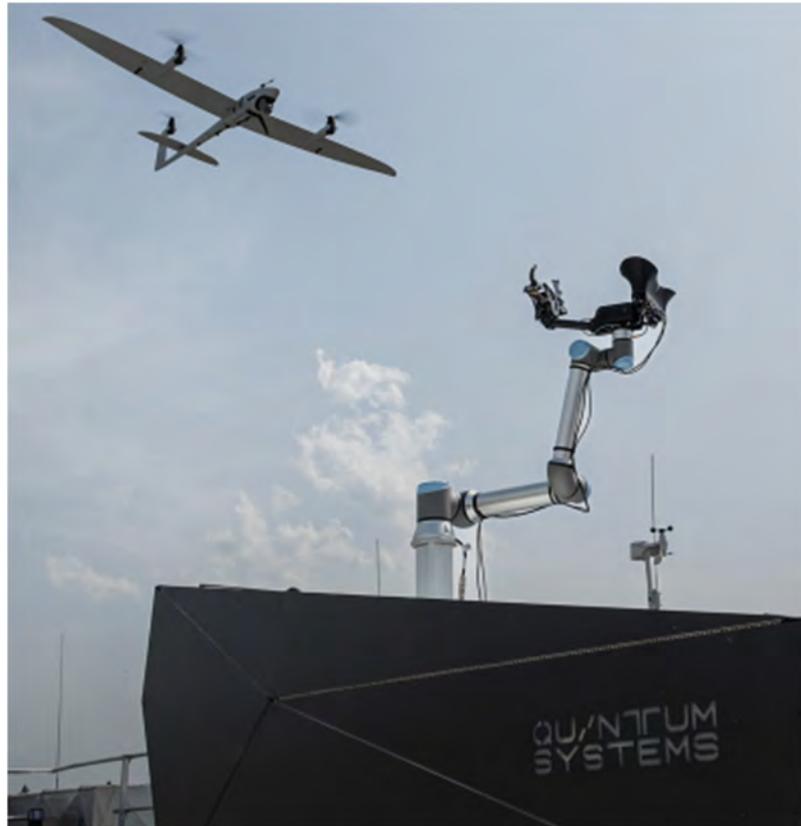
UNMANNED

We are still looking for a reliable BVLOS UAS and Quantum Systems GmbH have put forwards their contender in the form of the Reliant a long-range, long-endurance VTOL UAS shown in Tampa, Florida last month. The company mainly operates from Gilching in Germany and Moorpark in California USA. The Group 2 platform delivers over 10 hours of endurance and provides persistent Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) and Target Acquisition (TA) in contested, demanding environments.

Reliant is a fixed-wing, long-range vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) UAS designed for beyond-line-of-sight ISR/RSTA missions in inaccessible, denied environments.

The easily transportable system features a two-case mission pack-out and can be operational in less than 10 minutes with no tools required. Reliant features a secondary payload bay for additional ISR sensor integration and greater mission versatility.

Reliant has a flight time of 4 hours on its Li-Po Batteries alone, which rises to 10+ hours using Internal Combustion-based Hybrid-Electric Drive. Maximum cruise speed is 60 mph and in addition to the two sensors fitted it can offer a modest payload capacity of 3 kg / 6.6 lbs. The craft is 7.8ft / 2.37m long and the wingspan is 12.8ft / 3.9m. Quantum UAS systems are very popular in Ukraine, where the company has a factory. It is noteworthy that the Reliant and its stablemates, the Vector and Scorpion are capable of operating from a cradle system that might accord with the type of equipment being put forward for the UK Home Office response drone due for trial in Norfolk.



Meanwhile, the Tekever AR5 twin engine drone having not been seen operating over the English Channel from Lydd in months made a reappearance at the end of May.

PEOPLE

As this publication goes to print the last member of the NPCC assigned to being the Aviation Lead was facing his "trial" for misinforming his employers about his past.

Northamptonshire's Chief Constable Nick Adderley, 57, has been accused of "gross misconduct" by exaggerating his achievements while serving with the Royal Navy and implying he "served in the Falklands War" in 1982 when he would have been just 15 years old. A career of two years as an Able Seaman in the Royal Navy was promoted as a ten year career based on the war service claim. Mr Adderley was suspended in October 2023 after a complaint from a member of the public was accepted. It is said that Mr Adderley has remained on full pay throughout his suspension - £176,550. Acting Chief Constable Ivan Balhatchet is holding the post until the result of the investigation emerges.

A South Atlantic Medal, awarded to British military personnel and civilians for service in the Falklands War, that Adderley had worn on several occasions, and claimed was his brother's, was "not believed to be a valid medal".

Mr Adderley denies misconduct and that he acted without integrity, but admits he breached standards in terms of duties and responsibilities.



MOVE ALONG THERE

We all know the world is changing, but most of us are having some difficulty in assimilating the rate of change and an ultimate destination. Already questions are being asked whether the future is electric cars or hydrogen – confusion reigns.

Just last month at the PAvCon Europe show another small line of confusion emerged.

For years aerospace magazines have been moving towards having a digital version available to enable quick transmission around the world. We publishers embraced that factor but thought that there remained a need to produce hard paper copies for “promotional” purposes. At shows bins remained to give away these hard copies. It is true there are not as many as there used to be, but the demand seemed set. It appears that conclusion was an error.

Based on the experience last month that thinking may well be considered old fashioned. Several publications sent in their hard copies, all high quality and at one time prized and collectable. The cost of delivering them to the professional audience and delegates at the venue does not bear thinking about. No more. I assess that 90% of them were pulped and the call from one delegate was for some means whereby the still valuable content (the words and images) can be delivered to the audience for off line access in the future.

Might it actually be cheaper for publishers to follow the lead of the manufacturers in reducing their printed hand-outs to hand the audience a cheap USB carried to the venue in hand luggage?

You can please all of your customers some of the time but you surely cannot please all of the your customers all of the time. Even if the message is anonymous there will be barbs on view when it hits social media.

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