



# Police Aviation News

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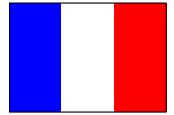


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# LAW ENFORCEMENT INTERNATIONAL

CONFERENCE: The PAVCon Police Aviation Conference 2025 took place in France on May 27-28 2025 at the Le Castellet International Airport, in the south of France.



The training session undertaken on the first day (Monday) attracted almost 50 booked attendees, the highly commendable best yet performance on the part of the training team in offering an attractive programme has made a massive difference. That figure did include attendees from the industry sponsors of the event but it was notable that the nationalities of police attending included Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Slovenia, Sweden and very notably, after an absence of several years, two attendees from the National Police Air Service in the United Kingdom.

The PAVCon Europe event which the training sat alongside was hosted by industry. The original planned location, Aéroport Sud de France Perpignan, became unavailable this year, leading to the event moving from the area close to the slopes of the Pyrenees deeper into France than originally intended. Our host *Air Attack Technologies* based at Perpignan found us a new location less affected by the regulations, Le Castellet. They hosted PAVCon Europe from there.



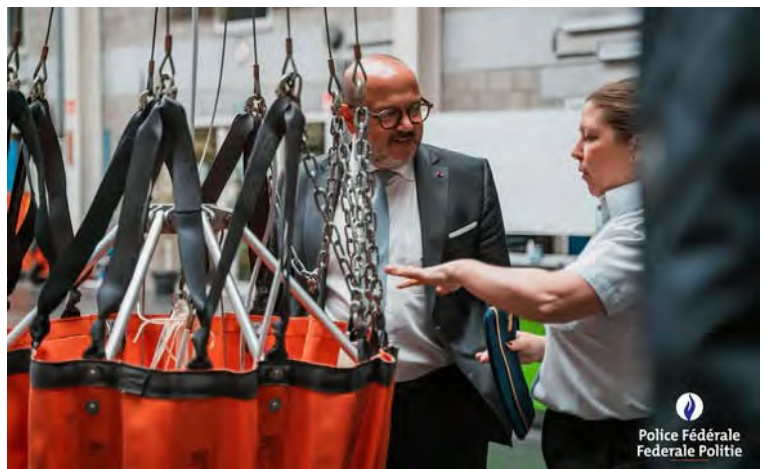
The location for next years event is not yet confirmed. The plan for the show to be in France hosted by the Gendarmerie has slipped due to their new aircraft delivery timings. They now plan to host in 2027. Meanwhile the 2026 location and dates are pending as the various offers are confirmed, or otherwise, with the command structure of the organisations making the offers. Watch this space.

A full PAN report on the 2025 event will appear later this month.

## BELGIUM

DAFA: Last month, the Minister of Security and the Interior Bernard Quintin visited the Air Support of the Federal Police. After a meeting with the cadets of the Centre Ardennes police area, he observed the air unit undertaking training with the new Bambi Bucket acquired by Civil Protection.

The Bambi Bucket offers draws its water from pre-filled 25,000 and 54,000 litres water pools, allowing the MD900 helicopter to supply water faster and respond more efficiently in an emergency – primarily fires in forests. [Direction générale Sécurité civile]



Cover image: Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin company and Rain, a leader in the emerging firetech industry, demonstrated and tested autonomous wildfire suppression techniques on both propane and burning brush piles using Sikorsky's optionally piloted MATRIX flight autonomy system layered with Rain's wildfire suppression planning software. Performed in late April in Southern California, the flight tests familiarized firefighters with the potential of autonomy to help crewed and uncrewed firefighting helicopters find and suppress early-stage wildfires.

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## CANADA

**QUEBEC:** The Sûreté du Québec are taking delivery of two new Subaru Bell 412EPX helicopters around now. They are C-GVSQ c/n 39130 and C-GSQY c/n 39131.

They got a passing mention in a Bell Helicopter press release highlighting the 6,000th Bell built in Canada. Bell will deliver the aircraft to the Ministère des Transports et de la Mobilité durable, which manages a fleet of aircraft through the Service Aérien Gouvernemental (SAG). This milestone marks a significant achievement in the nearly 40-year history of Bell Textron Canada in Quebec.

They also currently fly a Bell B206 C-GBPQ. A Bell 412EP C-GSQL delivered in 2004 and an Airbus H145 C-GSQP delivered in 2020.

## COLOMBIA

**POLICIA NACIONAL:** Colombia's National Police has taken into service its first Embraer ERJ-145LR twin jet as PNC-0277. It joins a mixed fleet of small airliners used for transportation work in Colombia. The aircraft was not acquired new and sources state that it is over 12 years old.

The other types in the transportation fleet of around 12 aircraft include six ATR 42, two DHC-6 Twin Otter, two DHC-8 300 and an Embraer ERJ-135 ranging in age from 20 to 42 years.

## GERMANY

**FEDERAL POLICE:** On May 7, the Bundespolizei, the German Federal Police, Air Support celebrated their 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in a ceremony held at BPOL-Fliegerstaffel in Sankt Augustin, near Bonn.

Part of the celebrations included formation flying by eight helicopters in service with the Fleiegergruppe. A source gives these as four examples of the H120 Colibri trainer [D-HSHE, D-HSHG, D-HSHD, two police specification EC 135: D-HVBJ, D-HVBH, one air ambulance [Zivilschutzhubschrauber] EC 135: D-HZSN, a two Airbus transports, an EC 155: D-HLTL and a Super Puma: D-HEGH.





The air unit was set up under Bundesinnenminister Dr. Gerhard Schröder 70 years ago as the aviation element of what was then a military formation the Bundesgrenzschutz, the Border Guard, with a main base as now alongside the Bonn-Hangelar airfield. About one and a half months later, the flight service began operations with a Hiller UH-12B.

After 70 years, the BPOLFLG looks back on inspiring missions and is an integral part of Germany's security architecture. Following the welcoming address, the President of BPOLD 11, Olaf Lindner, paid tribute to the outstanding achievements of the flight service over the past seven decades and emphasized the importance of its work for security in Germany: "Past and present generations of the flight service deserve the highest recognition and respect."



## UNITED KINGDOM

NPAS: SPX Communication Technologies based in Northamptonshire has been selected to provide advanced data link capabilities for the new fleet of Airbus Helicopters H135. This continues current equipment on the existing fleet.

Last month NPAS published its latest performance update for April 2025, seeking to highlight how the organisation hopes to continue to support police forces across England and Wales with effective aerial policing.

In maximising aircraft availability they work with their maintenance partners [Airbus Helicopters and Gama] to make sure aircraft are available as much as possible around essential engineering requirements. In April, aircraft were available for deployment 73.6% of the time.



Their Response times were:

Priority 1 calls (the most urgent) saw average response times drop to 11 minutes and 54 seconds

Priority 2 calls improved to 20 minutes and 45 seconds

In April, NPAS aircraft were deployed 1,028 times with crews delivering results that included:

101 vulnerable people being located

281 suspects found

133 vehicles recovered

Overall, over 90% of attended deployments led to a positive outcome - an increase from 89% in March.

Flying hours since the start of the financial year:

Rotary aircraft flew 664 hours

Fixed wing aircraft have flown 49 hours, supporting 13 police forces

*Editor: Abysmal. It is true that a large part of the problem is a lack of pilots and TFOs, especially in the fixed wing sector, and maintenance in the ageing rotary fleet, but those numbers are simply a shadow of the effort the pre-NPAS fleet put in 13 years ago. Last year the fleet were operating a little over 11,600 hours (compared to pre-NPAS figures around 25,000 hours accrued by over 30 aircraft), based on these April figures the annual total is in danger of dwindling to under 9,000 hours.*

*NPAS currently have 24 aircraft in the fleet and, again based on the performance in April, they are averaging just 30 hours each.*

*If four fixed wing aircraft are only putting in 49 hours in a month and only assigned to supporting a quarter of the police forces in England and Wales they are uneconomic. Unless the crewing problem can be turned around the four are unlikely to rack up 600 hours a year between them – the theoretical target for four aircraft should be in excess of 3,000 hours. That eventuality suggests that the youngest element in the fleet are way less capable than the supposedly clapped out rotary wing fleet – but it is more a case that they are not being given the opportunity to provide more.*

*I have had many complaints in the past that I have denigrated the current fixed wing fleet from the start but the historical fixed wings of UK police aviation – for instance the single aircraft operated by the Tees-side based NEASU, a BN2B G-NESU, usually flew for 800 hours each year of operation. At the time the performance and longer downtime of the fixed wing was deemed wanting when the UEO Nigel Dunhill compared it with the EC135 helicopter (averaging 1,000 hours each year) and the fixed wing was given up after operating for four years. On that basis I guess we can be sure that Nigel Dunhill would have closed down the whole NPAS operation long ago.*





## UNITED STATES

**FEDERAL:** Late last month the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Thetis' crew offloaded more than 28,500 pounds (nearly 13,000kg) of cocaine worth an estimated \$211.3M, at Port Everglades (Miami, Florida).

The seized contraband was the result of four interdictions in the Eastern Pacific by the crew of Coast Guard Cutter Thetis and an embarked MH-65 Dolphin helicopter crew from Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (HITRON) based out of Jacksonville, Florida.

On May 3, a maritime patrol aircraft located two suspicious vessels approximately 170 miles west of Mexico. Thetis' crew intercepted the vessels and seized 4,630 pounds of cocaine. The Coast Guard transferred 4,608 pounds of cocaine from this case to Ecuadorian government officials to aid them in their prosecution efforts.

On May 5, an embarked helicopter crew aboard the Thetis observed a bale field approximately 475 miles southwest of Colima, Mexico. Thetis' crew recovered 9,993 pounds of cocaine from the bale field.

On May 6, the Thetis helicopter detected two suspicious vessels throwing bales overboard approximately 575 miles southwest of Acapulco, Mexico. Due to an incoming storm, the air crew lost sight of the vessels but led the Thetis crew to three bale fields where 14,559 pounds of cocaine bales were recovered.

On May 10, the Thetis crew spotted a bale field approximately 660 miles south of Acapulco, Mexico. Thetis' crew recovered 3,984 pounds of cocaine. [USCG]



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**CALIFORNIA:** The Orange County Sheriff's Office have announced they are to buy an Airbus Helicopters H145. It is speculated that this will be taking on the role of primary SAR from the existing Bell Huey helicopters currently in service. [Christian Shepherd]

In Tehama County Sheriff's Office, in Red Bluff they announced that they had acquired a Bell Huey to support their operations in September 2023.

Located in Northern California approximately 120 miles north of Sacramento, Tehama County encompasses 3,300 square miles and has permanent residents and countless thousands of tourists and visitors who enjoy hunting, fishing, and vacationing in the vast wilderness areas throughout the county; and who come to Tehama County to view or participate in one of several National Championship sporting events. In

Back in 2023 they acquired Bell UH-1H N911NN from Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office in Louisiana for use in search and rescue. At the time it was reported that the Huey was acquired at no cost but they had no pre-existing unit, no pilot, no TFOs and potentially no idea what to do next.

They have now overcome their difficulties and have the aircraft flying in support of the citizens and law enforcers, fitted the EO/IR and are now declaring themselves available.

**MINNESOTA:** The State Patrol based in St. Paul, MN, has now taken delivery of their first Bell 429, N717SP serial 57515. The state has been operating aircraft for over 60 years and has focussed on the Bell product for at least 30 years. [Christian Shepherd – SM/PAR]

**NEW YORK:** Two county sheriff's office offices in the State of New York have issued requirements for new helicopters.

Niagara CSO and Rockland CSO have issued requests for bids for new police role equipped Bell 407GX.

Niagara CSO in Lockport New York have operated several examples of the DoD surplus Bell OH-58C since 1996 although funding shortfalls and financial crisis have resulted in the unit being stood down for periods over the years.

Rockland have operated a Bell 206 N316RC in conjunction with Fire and Rescue since it was imported from Canada in the mid-1980s. On May 5 a tender was issued seeking proposals to enter into a contract with a qualified firm to provide a Bell 407 GX Helicopter for use in emergency operations in Rockland County by the Rockland County Sheriff's Office. The helicopter shall be FAA certified as a normal category helicopter, and all accessories (including avionics and mission equipment) installed to meet mission specifications shall be FAA approved by STC or under an FAA "337" field approval. Bids are to close on June 17.

**OHIO:** The Ohio State Highway Patrol in Columbus has added new downlink technology to allow its aircraft to share live video streams to law enforcement agencies on the ground anywhere in Ohio. The video streams are used in vehicle chases, missing person searches and more.

The new technology, funded by \$5.7M in state and federal money, enhances situational awareness and decision-making during emergencies. It is currently fitted to their 2018 Airbus H125 (AS350B3) N71HP c/n 8515. The rest of the fleet includes N73HP an 1998 American Eurocopter AS350B2 (c/n 3130) and N72HP an AS350B3 (c/n 7978) added to the fleet in 2015. That aircraft featured in the January 2016 edition of PAN as the first H125 AStar helicopter produced on the new US final assembly line in Columbus. The completion work, included a law enforcement communications and surveillance package, including a Wescam MX-10 thermal imager and Spectrolab SX-16 searchlight. Its navigation and communications system include the Garmin G500H glass cockpit and Aerocomputers moving map system. The fixed wing fleet currently includes a 2018 GA8 Airvan due to be replaced by a Cessna 208. [see pages 8-9]

**TENNESSEE:** The State Highway Patrol Special Operations Unit based in Knoxville, Nashville and Jackson has taken delivery of its second Bell 429 Global Ranger N280KW c/n 57516

The Aviation Unit is responsible for all air support and any other aviation related responsibility that assists the Department of Safety and Homeland Security and other public safety agencies. The unit utilises its helicopter fleet for both criminal and non-criminal searches, hoist rescue, tactical operations, stolen vehicle location, marijuana eradication, and other tasks..





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From previous page: The Ohio State Highway Patrol in Columbus has added new \$5.7M downlink technology to allow its aircraft to share live video streams to law enforcement agencies on the ground anywhere in Ohio. The unit has been busy promoting their new acquisition via the media and several YouTube videos using their Aviation Section Commander, Captain Justin Cromer as the front man.

Although video down link from aircraft is not new technology, the UK media were demonstrating it in a very rustic form 75 years ago, it still remains an aspirational technology for many operations to acquire. It is not just the cost of the sensors (EO/IR cameras) and the downlink transmission technology from the aircraft, there is the often costly consideration of who is to receive the images and the acquisition of the receivers and displays.





Helicopters have traditionally been from Bell since operating the model 47 in the mid-1960s. The recent fleet has been a mix of military surplus UH-1 Huey and the 206 JetRanger until the first 429, N780HP, was acquired in 2018. The Department took delivery of a new 429 N790HP, c/n 57520, based at the Highway Patrol Heliport, off the SE boundary of Nashville International Airport on May 29. I believe all the N7x0HP fleet are marked up as "State Troopers", ie. B206B - N710HP, N740HP B429 - N780HP, N790HP

The one reported as N280KW has a registration which doesn't match the sequence of the others, but is still operating out of the Highway Patrol Heliport. They also have two old OH-58s but it is not known if they are active or not - N820HP and N901TN [Christian Shepherd – SM/PAR/Parapex]

TEXAS: Airbus Helicopters H125 N582RD c/n 9496 is now with the City of San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

The department was always a Hughes and Schweizer operator with 300, 269 and 333 models operated until 20 years ago. They then moved to the Eurocopter EC120 which they are now transitioning from. The EC120's which were acquired between 2013 and 2015, and one H125 was added in 2018. The San Antonio Police Department will use the new aircraft to provide support to police units, as well as in search and rescue operations. . . image Vince Mascia



VIRGINIA: On May 19 the Virginia State Police Aviation Division took delivery of the first of three new fixed wing aircraft. The Dahar Kodiak 100 Special Mission Aircraft N33VA arrived at their Lynchburg Airbase to commence crew training before the other two examples arrive later this year.

The Kodiak's have been acquired to replace the existing Cessna 206 fleet dating from 2021 and this more powerful aircraft, with a 750-horsepower engine, will enhance their capabilities in search, surveillance, and law enforcement missions.

*Pictured: First Sergeant Andrew Goss and Senior Trooper Pilot Drew Skiff.*



WASHINGTON: On the Pacific coast side of the USA the Washington State Patrol is taking delivery of new aircraft to add to its operation in Olympia.



In operation since 1959 primarily with Cessna aircraft it currently maintains a fleet of Cessna 182s and 206 for patrol, most of them are 20 years old and have relatively high hours. In recent years two of the State Patrol Cessna 206's have been fitted with FLIR cameras for the first time thanks to a \$1M grant from the Defense Department. The camera is mounted in a black gimbal on the pilot side of the Cessna. Inside the plane is a control panel with a joystick that the flight officer who accompanies the pilot can use to control the camera. A microwave downlink sends real time images to five locations including the State Patrol facility in Bellevue and one at the Emergency





Operations Center at Camp Murray south of Tacoma. They also have access to portable receivers with screens.

Currently, the agency has two Cessna 206 aircraft, three Cessna 182 and two King Air B200s for transportation. The two new Cessna 206 are being completed for delivery this year. Past aircraft were numbered after chiefs but the latest ones will be named after fallen troopers. N823EG is after detective Eric Gunderson badge 823.

The plans to purchase a Pilatus PC-12 in place of one of the King Airs fell through. Currently staff levels are low and the 2011 numbers of 11-12 pilots and TFOs have now fallen to 4 pilots and no full time TFOs.

[Anson/PAR]

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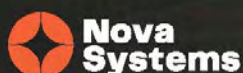


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# AIR AMBULANCE



## GREECE

**AIR FORCE:** Fargo Jet Center (FJC) have announced the completion and delivery of a newly outfitted dedicated air medical Beechcraft King Air 360C to the Hellenic Ministry of Health's National Center for Emergency Care (EKAB). Supported by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) as part of its Global Health Initiative (GHI), the aircraft will be operated by the Hellenic Air Force as part of Greece's expanding national air ambulance programme.

The King Air 360C is the third aircraft FJC has completed for EKAB in the past five years, continuing a partnership focused on delivering highly capable, mission-ready air medical platforms. The new aircraft will be used to provide critical emergency care and patient transfers between remote areas and medical facilities throughout Greece and surrounding regions.

A delegation from Greece travelled to Fargo early last month to perform final inspections and formally accept the aircraft.

The new aircraft joins four others two fixed wing and two rotary wing delivered in 2021 through a prior SNF donation. Since spring 2021, these aircraft have completed nearly 3,000 airlifts, according to the Ministry of Health. The total SNF donation, which includes two Agusta-Westland 109 Trekker helicopters, two Beechcraft King Air 350C aircraft, and the new 360C model, is valued at \$41.6M.

Equipped with advanced medical technology equivalent to mobile intensive care units, the Beechcraft King Air 360C can transport up to two critically ill patients simultaneously, including newborns in incubators. Modern avionics and an electric stretcher-lifting mechanism ensure safety and comfort, while its long-range capabilities enable international flights for patient repatriation or organ transplants.

The aircraft was supplied new from the factory for a FJC full interior completion. Medical equipment integration was completed in partner-





ship with Spectrum Aeromed, whose headquarters are also located at Fargo's Hector International Airport.

FJC are headquartered in Fargo, North Dakota. Since 1995, FJC has completed more than 145 special mission aircraft used worldwide for air medical transport, atmospheric research, reconnaissance, and cloud seeding. FJC has extensive modification experience across platforms, including the Beechcraft King Air series, Cessna Citations, Bombardier Learjets, Pilatus PC-12, Daher Kodiak, and others. The company also holds multiple FAA STCs (validated in Europe (EASA) and China (VSTC)) for the integration of atmospheric research and cloud seeding systems in King Air aircraft. [www.fargojet.com](http://www.fargojet.com).

## UNITED KINGDOM

**DORSET & SOMERSET:** Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with an charity auction, offering fans a once in a lifetime chance to see Oasis live in Cardiff on July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Two corporate box tickets to the sold-out reunion show, courtesy of Gama Aviation, are among the exclusive items up for grabs.

Oasis' highly anticipated concert has captured the attention of fans worldwide, and securing tickets has proven nearly impossible. Thanks to the generosity of Gama Aviation, Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance are offering two corporate box tickets for this event, giving the lucky winners an unforgettable concert experience.

The tickets come with an amazing view from Gama Aviation's Corporate Box, complete with exceptional hospitality.

You can place your bids for the seats through the auction page:

<https://www.jumblebee.co.uk/dsaa25thanniversary>

Online bidding closes at 16:00(BST) on June 5.

## UNITED STATES

**HAWAII:** Tecnam Aircraft has announced that Pacific Air Charters Incorporated (PACI) has officially launched on-demand charter services throughout Hawaii, utilizing a dedicated fleet of Tecnam P2012 Travellers.

Primarily a passenger aircraft meeting the business and leisure needs of the region the *P2012 will be offered for cargo and medevac missions*. The aircraft's advanced avionics and dual-pilot configuration further enhance operational safety and performance.

Pacific Air Charters, operating in Hawaii since 2004, emphasizes safety and reliability in aviation services with modern fleet of multi-engine aircraft. The company has invested over \$15M in the fleet from Tecnam. [www.pacificaircharters.com](http://www.pacificaircharters.com).







**KENTUCKY:** On May 16 a violent, tornado-spawning storm system tore across the central US, leaving at least 25 people dead in Missouri and southeastern Kentucky as it cut a path of destruction through several states. Large tornadoes were reported in Missouri, Kentucky, Illinois and Indiana.

At the London Corbin Airport, in Laurel County, KY several aircraft were destroyed and others damaged as the violent winds tore down hangars and wrecked the aircraft within them. Among the losses were two EC135P2 helicopters configured as air ambulances.

The pair were N885AE operated by locally based Air Evac Lifeteam and N307PH Air of PHI Health LLC., also based at the airport. The Air Methods air ambulance base at London closed in the summer of 2019 so the area is now reliant on helicopters from other bases in Kentucky until PHI Air Medical and Air Evac Lifeteam can rebuild their operations. When Air Methods pulled out six years ago it was considered that the ambulance service in Marion County considered there was no shortage of air services available, there still being dozens of helicopters available across Kentucky.

Other aircraft reported to have been destroyed or severely damaged include a Beech Baron, no less than five examples of the Beech Mentor, two Cessna 182s, Cessna 206H







Cirrus SF50 and a Piper PA32 Cherokee. It is said that ten examples of the Mentor are based at the airport, mostly in Warbird colours, so some may remain.

In all 19 people were reported as being killed in and around London. [PAN/ASN/Media/X]

## FIRE BRAZIL

AMAZONIA: Textron has delivered a Cessna 208 Caravan PS-BMA to a local Brazilian completion centre operated by Aeromot to be modified into a full EMS capability for the Bombeiros Militar do Acre. When in service it will provide air ambulance services to the west Brazilian state of Acre within the Amazon rainforest.



## GREECE

GOVERNMENT: Airbus Helicopters has signed a contract with the Hellenic Ministry of Climate Crisis and Civil Protection for the purchase of eight H215 helicopters (with an option for two additional aircraft) to support the combat of wildfires in the country following a tender conducted by the Project Preparation Facility of Growthfund (the National Fund of Greece) on behalf of the Ministry.

This contract is supported by two European funds and aligns with the Ministry's Aegis Programme aimed at enhancing the capabilities of the Civil Protection forces. The contract will be based on a "government owned contractor operated" (GO-CO) model for which Airbus Helicopters will be partnering with experienced H215 firefighting operators, Airtelis and SAF Hélicoptères, for the technical and operational support.

SAF Aerogroup specialises in complex helicopter operations like mountain rescue, air medical services,



firefighting, and humanitarian/logistic missions, demonstrated by their 2024 H215 RescEU deployment to Greece.

The Hellenic Fire Brigade operates two Super Pumas and the Hellenic Air Force operates 12 Super Pumas. The Super Puma ecosystem in the country will benefit from the support activities and training of technicians and pilots foreseen by the contract.

## UNITED KINGDOM

**ROYAL AIR FORCE:** Just over a year ago, the UK Ministry of Defence (MoD) ordered six Airbus H145 helicopters to replace the Puma on missions such as supporting Army jungle training in Brunei and firefighting in Cyprus. The first helicopter has just been delivered to the Airbus Oxford facility, where specialist engineers have prepared it for its new role. It will enter service as the Jupiter HC2 — the UK military's first five-bladed H145.

Officially the H145 Jupiter helicopter is being promoted as the right size for Cyprus and Brunei, and representing excellent value for UK taxpayers, but the types it effectively replaces (Bell Huey and SA330 Puma included) come from an undoubtedly different, more robust, military background. They will do the job and it allows a key step in the rationalisation of types in the UK transport helicopter fleet. The Puma is now retiring and the earlier model Jupiter is used for training.

## SEARCH & RESCUE EUROPE

**FRONTEX:** Until now, Frontex planes have always taken off from within the EU, supporting countries like Italy and France in patrolling Europe's external borders and helping to save lives at sea. This new launch from Albania, covering both Joint Operations Albania and Montenegro during the same flight activity, marks the first time one of their aircraft has operated from outside the EU.



The milestone flight from Tirana International Airport in Albania signals a new chapter in how they manage borders that means an earlier detection of irregular migration, more effective prevention of cross-border crime and improved coordination of Search and Rescue operations.

Frontex's surveillance planes send live images from the border straight to the national authorities in Albania and Montenegro, along with the Frontex HQ in Warsaw.

The Frontex Management Board held its first meeting in 2005, it has now been in operation for 20 years.



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## NEW ZEALAND

**NORTH ISLAND:** Two state-of-the-art Airbus H145D3 helicopters have been ordered for service at the Gisborne and New Plymouth bases in mid-2026 and 2027. These new machines represent the cutting edge in helicopter technology, featuring enhanced safety systems, increased payload capacity, and superior operational efficiency, helping our SRSL paramedics, pilots, and crew to continue delivering life-saving rescue and critical care across our communities.

This acquisition would not have been possible without the continued hard work and support of both the Taranaki Rescue Helicopter Trust and Tairāwhiti Eastland Helicopter Rescue Trust teams, together with the Government's increased investment and ongoing commitment to a full fleet upgrade across New Zealand's Emergency Air Ambulance Helicopter Service.

The new H145s are to serve Taranaki, a coastal and mountainous region on the western side of New Zealand's North Island, and Tairāwhiti/Gisborne, on the eastern side.

Search & Rescue Services (SRSL) has locked-in the purchase and is expecting the first of them, the one destined for the Gisborne base, in mid 2026. The second will arrive at the New Plymouth base in September 2027.

Central Air Ambulance Rescue Limited (CAARL) and Search and Rescue Services Ltd (SRSL) are registered charitable companies, whose shareholders are the five regional charitable Trusts (the Shareholder Trusts). CAARL provides Air Ambulance Helicopter Services, under a joint contract to Health New Zealand (Te Whatu Ora) and the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC). CAARL provides these services through its Air Operator Certificate (AOC) holding entity, (SRSL).

SRSL provides all the operational services and associated administrative functions for CAARL, this includes operations management, provision of pilots, aviation and medical crew, fleet management, and maintenance management of the fleet.

The Shareholder Trusts support Air Ambulance operations at a local level. Each Shareholder Trust provides a helicopter/s and operational equipment to SRSL, and a base/s for operations to be conducted from the front face of the operations as Eastland Helicopter Rescue Trust (EHRT), Hawkes Bay Rescue Helicopter Trust (HBRHT), The Taranaki Rescue Helicopter Trust (TRHT), The Life Flight Trust (LFT), Philips Search & Rescue Trust (PSRT)

## UNITED KINGDOM

**HOME OFFICE:** The confusion surrounding the illegal migrant traffic across the English Channel/La Manche continues unabated. The officials are so overwhelmed by the numbers that they are regularly revising them—and these are the numbers observed and assisted landing. There remains an unknown number that are crossing the wider stretches of the body of water in more seaworthy craft almost undetected.

It is clear that the new government (in post for almost a year now) has been able to exhibit all the shortcomings of previous administrations with an unerring ability to suggest that stopping the migrants crossing the waters is easy without being able to tackle any of the problems to the satisfaction of the British people. "Stop the boats" has simply not happened.

There are few discernible changes in tactics and every time some fact finding news medium stumbles across something that is not quite right the leader of the pack (The Prime Minister Sir Kier Starmer) exclaims that it is not right! As if that will placate the voters.

There seems to be a lack of sensible contact or even appreciation of the people on the front line. A new leader, a new name for the organisation but just the same boats sitting in the middle of the English Channel waiting to pick up the mainly youthful multi-national adventurers to take them to a warm reception point and thence to a hotel room and food on the land of their dreams. Even these accommodation centres are not secure and many simply drift away into the night and enter the black economy to take the jobs of those already born and bred in in the United Kingdom. Why would they stay cooped up in a hotel? Naturally they were escorted all the way to the hand-over point by French vessels to make sure they faced no problems on the way.





They do not even have to make the full journey these days, they are usually picked up out of their flimsy, barely seaworthy rubber craft, at the half way point (10 miles or so) and placed safely on board a rescue craft specially chartered so they have no difficulty in getting aboard. It seems the original UK Border Force craft simply had too high sides to get in comfortably. The whole process seems to be about Health and Safety and comfort.

All this special vessel chartering, and accommodation costs millions of pounds to which is added extra aviation surveillance (which see) and massive payments to the French Government to persuade them to interrupt the passage of would be migrants to the beaches and the waiting traffickers rubber boats. The latter has been seen to have worked but a simple change in tactics by the operators of the rubber craft has clearly blown away that progress.

To thwart the police in stabbing and deflating the boats at the tide line, loading is now undertaken the wet side of the beach. The local police no longer deflate the boats because they have yet to be trained to paddle in the water. We know this because the French Ministry of the Interior announced it in February this year, and stated that it would take two months of training to remedy, last month the British Government belatedly confirmed the paddling and two months training requirement after ITV news annoyingly filmed the cops arriving on the beach long after the boat had launched. They sit there still tantalisingly close to the dry sand but just far enough off to require this laughable paddling training. We have yet to find out if the two months training is reset from February to May because the Home Office failed to notice the announcement.

No doubt the British government is wringing its hands in worry now over whether they can supply the French police with Wellington boots to keep their feet dry as they paddle. There are no doubt political niceties to observe in view of their forebears problems with Wellington and his army at Waterloo (do not mention the war, or the use of longbow arrows to deflate the boats at distance). Perhaps it's going to be waders or a wet suit as they are not blighted by the Wellington name. More cost and a long delivery time from China no doubt. Images of police on the beaches show them wearing unsuitable leather ankle boots. Meanwhile the migrants waded into the cold sea waist deep to get in the flimsy craft and spend many hours afloat in wet clothing. There is little doubt that even the best of waders are unlikely to be enough to overcome that level of desperation to flee the uncaring grip of the EU. They will simply wade into even deeper water or even swim out to the overloaded boats.

Not all politicians are being wary of comment but they do risk being placed on the 'naughty step' for their opinions. The star of the latter days of Brexit, Nigel Farage, is safe from such concerns but his recently elected colleagues are more at risk from adverse comment. The newly elected Mayor of Greater Lincolnshire, Andrea Jenkins, Reform UK, pointed out that rather than placing the migrants in warm and dry hotels they should be offered tents just like the French Government do. No-one actually understands why it is so different in the UK, it is just a cosy tradition that is severely damaging the UK bank balance and the forbearance of the public at large.

Further promoting the air of secrecy the Home Office is reticent in disclosing everything it does relating to the migrant boats. No doubt it is in part due to a lack of self confidence – after all so far every remedial move they have undertaken has turned to dust.

In reply to a Freedom of Information request about whether the two DHC aircraft from Canada were still being used the Home Office replied that they did not want to comment but they could "... (reveal) that the Strategic Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance Special Mission Aircraft Manged Service contract has not been terminated"





It would appear that the aircraft used on this multi-million pound contract are being flown with their transponders regularly muted to remove them from Flight Aware apps.

It also seems that politicians memories are short. Despite the subject having been aired several times in the recent past Rupert Lowe, Independent MP for Great Yarmouth asked Parliament why the Royal Navy was not involved in stopping the boats! He asked a similar question last year.

The Ministry of Defence has clarified the Royal Navy's role in intercepting small boats in the English Channel

*"The Home Office is the lead government department responsible for border security and migration..... the Home Office has established the Border Security Command, which aims to "strengthen global partnerships and enhance the UK's efforts to investigate, arrest, and prosecute people smugglers profiting from the dangerous movement of people across the channel."*

While the Royal Navy has previously been involved in Channel operations as part of joint efforts with the Home Office, *"Defence assets are procured for Defence tasks" and are not primarily intended for border security operations.*

The Royal Navy's involvement in channel interceptions is supplementary to the primary role played by the Home Office. The establishment of the Border Security Command reflects a shift, aiming to integrate international cooperation and intelligence-sharing to tackle human smuggling and unlawful entry.

It is fair to say that the matelots of the Royal Navy were, and always would be, a little too harsh in dealing with gentle people trying to invade Britain in rubber boats. Potentially because 90% of them are young men of military age and with a fair smattering of criminals among their numbers. Strangely, they cannot hang on to their passports and other documents but they seem able to keep a grip on and recharge their cell phones and their cameras.

## SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENT

In a pertinent social media post, the former head of the Lancashire Police, UK, and Cayman Islands police air operations, and now representing a drone operator, Steve Fitzgerald posted a note that.....

There have been a few posts over past weeks that have focused on drones vs police helicopters in police operations. No less so in the North West of England, and especially Lancashire where Project Noctua is based.

I speak from experience of being involved in the halcyon days of air operations in the UK in the late 90's and early 2,000's. In 1999, we had three helicopters serving the Lancashire, GMP, Cumbria and Merseyside area, all 24 hour units with no cost mutual aid. It was not unusual to have two deployed at major incidents, flying around 3,000 hours a year.

On the 5th February 2004, the Lancashire Police helicopter crew responded from our BAE Systems Warton base to reports of Chinese cockle pickers in trouble in Morecambe Bay. The incoming tide had swamped the group. The Lancashire helicopter crew immediately found the only person to survive on a rapidly disappearing sandbank in the pitch black of the night, and were able to talk in the RNLI Morecambe lifeboat to rescue.

That moment is picked up in the first minute of this video report <https://lnkd.in/e2BqV5xw>. In what was a tough night for a lot of people, 23 people drowned.

In 2017, as part of NPAS reorganisation and despite local political opposition, Lancashire's police helicopter unit was closed. The stark reality is that had the cock-





ling disaster happened after that date, that survivor would likely have drowned. Just one example of many of the impact of 'resource realignment'.

Their remains one police helicopter based in the North West of England, the Merseyside base having been closed on the formation of NPAS. That base is at Barton, with a huge geographic area of coverage.

So it's not about replacing existing resources, the challenge is to fill in the gaps. There are challenges in achieving this, but those challenges will be worthwhile. The technology is developing, but importantly so is the user case. The end users are the most important element in the equation for the solution, but we are not naive in Project Noctua to think there are open cheque books to support that end user. There remain competing funding decisions to be made, which means efficient and effective use of solutions.

But then we must remember that one life saved - the ever present question of the value of that life in the overall picture. [see comment on Project Noctua under Unmanned]

**CHANNEL ISLANDS:** Channel Islands Air Search provides a vital 24/7 search and rescue service that relies entirely on donations. They operate a Britten-Norman BN-2.

They are currently looking for corporate partners who recognise the value of community safety and want to support a trusted, volunteer-run emergency service. Any offers can be directed through [friends@airsearch1.com](mailto:friends@airsearch1.com).



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# INDUSTRY

**Gama Aviation** hosted the media at their Farnborough Headquarters on May 9<sup>th</sup>. The primary aim was to make senior management available for face-to-face conversations.

In addition there were representatives from Gama's primary partners at Airbus, Leonardo, and Textron. All three OEMs are central to the delivery of the Gama Special Mission contracts and in total represent firm orders of around 12 aircraft over the next three plus years.

During the morning there was an opportunity to learn more about our drone detection / mitigation CUAS service that Gama are delivering at trial events over the summer with their partners Helipad. Primarily this service provides enhanced airspace security for events with high levels of rotary traffic as well as augmenting local law enforcement detection systems.

**Sikorsky**, a Lockheed Martin company and **Rain**, a leader in the emerging firetech industry, demonstrated and tested autonomous wildfire suppression techniques on both propane and burning brush piles using Sikorsky's optionally piloted MATRIX flight autonomy system layered with Rain's wildfire suppression planning software. Performed in late April in Southern California, the flight tests familiarized firefighters with the potential of autonomy to help crewed and uncrewed firefighting helicopters find and suppress early-stage wildfires.

The autonomous wildfire suppression tests in late April were the first performed by Rain and Sikorsky in California over live fires in wildfire-prone terrain; at 3,300-ft altitude; sometimes in wind gusts up to 30 knots (35 mph). The tests were performed in close collaboration with firefighters from the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District, who built and set fire to multiple brush piles for the aircraft to find and suppress with water. Sikorsky's autonomous Black Hawk helicopter is equipped with fly-by-wire flight controls, MATRIX flight autonomy, satellite data-link, and on-board thermal and vision cameras. MATRIX allows operators to choose between fully autonomous and piloted modes.

For the fire suppression tests, Rain layered its mission autonomy onto the MATRIX system, enabling a ground operator to command the Black Hawk aircraft using a Rain tablet to assign specific tasks including: Guiding the aircraft to a water source; filling the bucket in a hover; searching and finding a brush pile fire with the aircraft's thermal sensor; determining the fire size; calculating the flight path, speed and altitude to the fire; accounting for wind speed and direction during suppression; and determining the precise moment to release water to achieve the desired water coverage level.

Sikorsky safety pilots were hands-off the flight controls as the Black Hawk aircraft flew with a 324-gallon Bambi Bucket attached to a 40-ft line. Wildfire Water Solutions provided the water source — a 189,000-gallon water tank installed less than a mile from three adjacent hilltop burn sites.

In total, the aircraft flew 24 hours in California during two weeks of flight. Witnessing portions of the tests were representatives from CAL FIRE, San Bernardino County Fire District, Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA), and the U.S. Forest Service. During one series of water drops, a crewed OCFA Sikorsky S-76 airborne command helicopter operated alongside the autonomous Black Hawk aircraft. The joint flights demonstrated communication interoperability of the autonomous aircraft with a human-piloted helicopter in the same Fire Traffic Area.

The Black Hawk helicopter is similar to Firehawk™ helicopters flown by CAL FIRE, Los Angeles County, Orange County and other local governments. CAL FIRE and local fire departments across California operate 24 Sikorsky S-70 Firehawk helicopters, each equipped with a 1,000-gallon belly-mounted water tank. Three more Firehawk helicopters are to be delivered to CAL FIRE this year.

The Portuguese drone manufacturer **Tekever** has announced it will invest over £400M in research, infrastructure and defence technology development in the United Kingdom over the next five years. This will lead to the creation of over 1,000 jobs.

The announcement was made during a meeting with the UK Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer.





Late last month Global aviation training leader **CAE** was showcasing its innovative eye tracking technology for air traffic services (ATS) training at *Airspace World 2025* in Lisbon, Portugal. CAE is studying the technology, which is proven for pilot training and has been adapted for ATS training, as a way to better understand how trainees scan, process, and respond to dynamic radar environments. This technology is one of many elements in CAE's advanced end-to-end training ecosystem that is being explored to elevate the company's ATS training quality, enable scalable delivery, and ensure operational readiness in rapidly evolving airspace environments. The interactive demonstration put users in a realistic, real-time operational environment where eye tracking analytics can assess trainee focus, scanning behaviour, and response prioritization under pressure.

**ZeroAvia** announced that it has signed an agreement with **RVL Aviation** which will see RVL operate Cessna Grand Caravan aircraft retrofitted with ZeroAvia's hydrogen-electric, zero-emission ZA600 powertrain. Flights within the British Isles will commence once certification for the engine, airframe integration and planned services are obtained and all retrofit and training work is complete.

RVL Aviation is a British specialist charter airline, part of the RVL Group, based alongside the fixed wing element of the NPAS at East Midlands Airport in the United Kingdom.

RVL has extensive experience of working with Government organisations and non-government bodies with devolved powers. It is well used to developing long-term partnerships and geared up to understand the strategic needs of client organisations.

RVL has wide experience of aerial surveillance and aerial surveying including photography, thermal imaging, LiDAR

**Britten Norman** has announced a period of significant growth at their Bembridge production site on the Isle of Wight.

Over the next two years, they will be creating up to 60 new skilled jobs and bringing exciting career opportunities back to the island.

They are currently seeking Aircraft Detail Technicians, Final Assembly Technicians, Mechanical Fitters, Welders, Inspectors and Engineers to build for the future. <https://britten-norman.pinpointhq.com/>

**Diamond Aircraft Industries** is proud to announce the successful delivery of a state-of-the-art DA62 MPP (Multi-Purpose Platform) aircraft HA-HML, to HM Zrínyi Nonprofit Kft., marking a significant milestone in Hungary's defence and geospatial intelligence capabilities.

The official handover ceremony took place at Budapest's Liszt Ferenc International Airport, attended by senior representatives of the Hungarian Ministry of Defence, including Dr. János Czermann, Deputy State Secretary for Human Resources, and Lieutenant General Ferenc Kajári, Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff. Equipped with cutting-edge remote sensing technology from Vexcel and Riegl, the DA62 MPP will provide unprecedented aerial imaging and geospatial data collection capabilities. This includes high-resolution digital cameras and airborne laser scanners, enabling the creation of detailed orthophotos, digital terrain models, and 3D urban mapping.



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Artists impression of the Boeing 737-800 in hangar

The Doncaster based aviation services company, **2Excel Group**, has been awarded a twenty-year contract by OSRL for the continued provision of Global Wide Area Oil Spill Dispersant Services. This contract follows on from the existing successful Special Missions operation which began in 2016, and which has repeatedly demonstrated its value over a wide range of OSRL-led exercises and spill responses across three continents with its TERSUS dispersant system fitted to a pair of Boeing 727s, designed, built, tested, and certified by 2Excel's in-house Capability Development Team.

The new service will begin operation in 2028 with a pair of specially modified Boeing 737-800s, offering a significantly lower fuel burn and carbon emissions profile than the current 727s, and will be hangered, available to deploy worldwide at six hours' notice, helping to minimise the effect a spill may have on the environment.

The 737s will be equipped with an improved TERSUS II system, which offers improved components for a longer life and enhanced performance, along with other continuously developing features such as the "Flight in Known Icing" (FIKI) modification that allows the aircraft to operate in icy conditions, also developed by the 2Excel team.

Vania De Stefani, CEO for OSRL, said: "We are pleased to continue our collaboration with 2Excel, allowing us to provide an unrivalled service to our members."

OSRL is the largest international industry-funded cooperative, dedicated to supporting its members in preparing for and responding to oil spills globally.

The core operation may be centred on 2Excel in Yorkshire but several other internationally diverse companies play their part in the OSRL operation – in part to provide the surveillance of the threat by sending light aircraft to the scene before calling in the less manoeuvrable and more costly Boeing assets to lay down the dispersant. There is a commitment to training but, thankfully, to date no live incident requiring the call out of the OSRL assets has taken place.

**Maverick Aviation Group Limited** has announced its acquisition of Maxcraft Avionics Ltd., a leading Canadian provider of avionics installation, repair, and design engineering services, headquartered in Pitt Meadows, British Columbia.

This strategic acquisition strengthens Maverick's presence in Western Canada and positions the combined group as one of the most capable independent avionics and instrument service providers in North America and globally. For Maxcraft's customers, the transition ensures continuity in service, leadership, and technical excellence—with added benefits from Maverick's coast-to-coast service network. Daryl Macintosh and Steve Nunn, two long-standing leaders at Maxcraft, will remain with the company and continue to oversee operations and customer service. Their roles ensure that the relationships and service standards customers have come to rely on remain unchanged. [www.maverickaviationgroup.ca](http://www.maverickaviationgroup.ca)

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Spain based **Centum** has introduced Cellair, a compact airborne cellular system engineered to provide secure, reliable, and rapidly deployable communications for critical and tactical missions. Cellair enables mission teams to establish a private cellular network within minutes, offering immediate connectivity in environments where existing infrastructure is compromised or unavailable.

The system integrates all necessary services and protocols into a single device, allowing users to deploy, control, and manage a fully functional LTE/5G network without interfering with commercial cellular infrastructure. This ensures mission-critical voice and data exchange across all deployed assets, supporting coordinated operations in real time.

Designed for versatility, Cellair can be seamlessly integrated into a wide range of platforms, including unmanned aerial vehicles, manned aircraft, and ground-based systems. Its lightweight form factor and rapid deployment capabilities make it ideal for defence, public safety, disaster response, and other high-stakes scenarios that demand uninterrupted communication.

This inclusion highlights Cellair's potential for supporting advanced missions in austere and remote environments, including future space exploration. CENTUM's latest innovation offers a new standard in mobile, secure communication for teams operating at the edge, where every second counts.

Last month **Brodair** based at Degersheim, St Gallen, Switzerland delivered a Viking.DHC Twin Otter C-GVKI from Canada to **Airborne Technologies** in Austria for Zimex Aviation also based in Switzerland. Zimex is the company associated with the recent supply of the surveillance Twin Otters for Denmark's Home Guard. The aircraft for the Garda in Ireland is already in the works to be configured for operations. This new arrival will emerge in due course as the new demonstrator for DHC, ABT and Zimex.



Brodair specialise in aircraft ferry services, focussing on the safe and efficient transfer of turboprop aircraft across the globe. With over 25 years of aviation experience, the founder has successfully completed numerous ferry flights.



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**HeliOperations** have announced that construction of their new hangar will commence this month at their Portland base.

As UK's leading provider of helicopter-based search and rescue and maritime training and operations under both military and civilian regulations, HeliOperations we have recently secured new international contracts and expanded its fleet with new Leonardo AW139 helicopters to support these missions.

**Southeast Aerospace** has received Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) number SA12011DE for the installation of mission equipment on the Cessna 208 and 208B Caravan aircraft.

This FAA-certified modification includes three mission console designs and a side sensor mount providing a robust and flexible platform for a variety of airborne special mission operations. The STC is valid for all Textron Aviation Cessna 208 and 208B aircraft, with or without the cargo pod installed.

SEA designed the console and mount to support law enforcement, surveillance, and intelligence-gathering missions. The mission console configurations—available in both slim and universal styles—are seat-rail mounted and allow for customized integration of monitors, communication panels, and DZUS-mounted equipment.

Key features of the installation include:  
Modular Mission Consoles (LH/RH options) designed for single or dual-monitor use  
Universal camera turret mount supporting payloads up to 200 lbs (e.g., MX-20, MX-15, FLIR 380HD)

Camera adapter plate and connector stowage assembly for secure and flexible equipment integration

Sensor mount can be removed and a plug can be installed to return the aircraft to a normal configuration.

Minimal impact to cabin seating and existing interior layout

The SEA 208 mission consoles have been successfully integrated into four Cessna

Caravan's and one Kodiak 100 currently with law enforcement agencies. An additional installation is scheduled for a PC-12 platform later this year, further demonstrating the versatility and growing adoption of SEA's mission equipment solutions across multiple airframes. For more information about the Cessna 208 Mission Console and Camera Mount solution, or to discuss your agency's mission requirements, please contact Nathan Hernandez at [nathan.hernandez@seaerospace.com](mailto:nathan.hernandez@seaerospace.com).





# ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

**29 April 2025 Air Tractor AT-802A Fire Boss N4025K.** Fire fighting aircraft being ferried from St. John's Newfoundland to the Azores went missing 120 nm east of St. Johns Wreckage found. The JRCC says a pontoon and an empty, orange life raft were found floating on the surface in the search area. An "oil slick" was also located.

**29 April 2025 Bell 212 XB-SNA** Fire fighting helicopter of Heliservicios Internacionales SA de CV crashed during firefighting activities in a forest near the La Rioja Canyon, Arteaga, Coahuila, Mexico. The nine occupants suffered minor injuries and the helicopter was destroyed by fire.

**2 May 2025 Eurocopter AS350B3e Ecureuil (H125) EC-OGL** on fire fighting with underslung water bucket struck wires and crashed into a lake near Tanes, Caso, Asturias, Spain. The sole occupant, the pilot, survived with injuries.

**6 May 2025 Airbus Helicopters AS350B1 Ecureuil OE-BXI** BMI Flugpolizei Austrian Police. Flying a training mission, circuits, from Vöslau Airfield when it came down in hard landing on grass on the airfield, Bad Vöslau, Austria. Remained upright, no fire, substantial damage no injuries reported. Landing skids collapsed and MRB broken. Airframe manufactured 1986.

**15 May 2025 Bell UH-1H Iroquois** Paraguay National Police Experienced a mechanical failure and made a forced landing in a field of tall crops near La Fortuna ranch, Alto Paraguay, Chaco, 160 km from Fuerte Olimpo, while carrying out evacuation tasks and delivering food supplies to families affected by the floods in Chaco. Although remaining upright it received substantial damage around the tail boom but the five occupants were not reported injured. [Ultimas Noticias]

**16 May 2025 Eurocopter EC135P2 N885AE** Air ambulance of Air Evac Lifeteam based at London-Corbin Airport, London Kentucky, USA severely damaged in a tornado weather incident.. Aircraft was parked. [ASN]

**16 May 2025 Eurocopter EC135P2 N307PH** Air ambulance of PHI Health LLC. based at London-Corbin Airport, London, Kentucky, USA severely damaged in a tornado weather incident.. Aircraft was parked. [ASN]

*Ed: A violent, tornado-spawning storm system tore across the central US, leaving at least 25 people dead in Missouri and southeastern Kentucky as it cut a path of destruction through several states. Large tornadoes were reported in Missouri, Kentucky, Illinois and Indiana. The helicopter loss was just one of several aviation losses at London.*

**17 May 2025 Eurocopter AS350B2 VT-KBS** Air ambulance owned by Pinnacle Aviation, New Delhi, India but operated as the Sanjeevani by All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Rishikesh, Uttarakhand. The 2007 helicopter with three aboard landing at Kedarnath, Uttarakhand, India, landed hard near to the raised pad area but when it lifted again almost immediately it started rotating uncontrollably and suffered a collapsed tail boom, possibly a ground strike or severed in the first landing. It remained upright and short of the helipad with MRB still operating. The occupants were uninjured, no patient on board. The town is in the Himalayas about 3,583 m (11,755 ft) above sea level. [ASN/PAR]

**19 May 2025 MBB BK117C-1 N117NC** Air ambulance of Penn Starr en-route from Pee Presbyterian Medical Center North Heliport Pennsylvania to its home base at Philadelphia Wings Field Airport with three crew on board when an emergency was declared and a hard landing undertaken in a residential area. The emergency landing happened near Cannon Hill Road and Old Eagle Lane in Whitemarsh Township. Airframe damaged but no damage to surroundings. Airframe remained upright There were no injuries. The tail rotor and tail gear box can be seen to have separated from the aircraft at some point in the accident sequence. The skids were collapsed. [ASN/Media]

**23 May 2025 Airbus Helicopter H145 LX-HLP** Air ambulance of Luxembourg Air Rescue. Responded to a traffic accident on the N27 near Nothum. No patient transport required. On departure from the scene the helicopter's rotor blades struck nearby tree branches, resulting in imbalance of the MRB and strong vibrations. The pilot put the aircraft down on the roadway again in a hard landing that led to the collapse of the skids and substantial damage. The airframe remained upright and no injuries were reported.

**24 May 2025 Bell 212 2215** Royal Thai Police from the Kanchanaburi Police Aviation Unit crashed during a Police training mission in Ban Nong Kok, Ao Noi Subdistrict, Muang District, Prachuap Khiri Khan, Thailand. Three crew members perished, one survived, and the helicopter was destroyed by a post crash fire. The dead, two pilots Police Major Pratheung Chulert, and Police Captain Songphol Boonchai, and Police Lieutenant Thinnakrit Suwannoi, a mechanic, were found in the burned-out wreck. [ASN]

# UNMANNED

## UNITED KINGDOM

**LANCASHIRE:** The Noctua team has linked up with the University of Lancashire (formerly University of Central Lancashire) at their public unveiling of the Altitude facility, a state-of-the-art aviation innovation hub situated within the Warton Enterprise Zone, alongside BAE Systems.

Over the past few months, Project Noctua has been engaging closely with the university's academic, research and enterprise teams, and is now publicly discussing the partnership with the University of Lancashire, a relationship that has become central to the mission of revolutionising emergency service response through UAS technology.

This partnership provides our team access to exceptional facilities, including one of the largest indoor netted test flight spaces in Europe (1,050 sqm), a world-class BVLOS Laboratory, and the Extended Reality and Big Data Lab. Together, these environments provide us with design and real-world validation capabilities, supporting the development, testing and refinement of our systems in a secure and collaborative setting.

The move to Lancashire was driven by more than just infrastructure, it was the people, the ambition, and the vibrant defence and aerospace ecosystem here that sealed it. The support from both the University and the wider regional innovation community, including the Northwest Regional Defence & Security Cluster has been nothing short of phenomenal since Noctua relocated from Cheshire. [Steve Fitzgerald]

# PEOPLE

## JOHN OSMOND



John Osmond Chairman of PAvCon Europe conference in 2019.

Known by many as JO, we report the untimely death of John Osmond, former Royal Navy aircraft engineer and long-term supporter of UK police aviation, in general, and both Police Aviation News and PAvCon Europe in particular. John died on May 2, aged 68. His funeral is later this month.

His multi-faceted interests in life were sailing, engineering, railways and aviation and his career paths reflected them.

He spent 8 years in the Royal Navy as a Lieutenant Air Engineering Officer Following training at the Royal Naval Engineering College at Manadon, Plymouth and in the fleet in HMS Arrow, he was appointed to 706 Naval Air Squadron and then 824 Squadron C Flight. As the flight engineering officer, he served aboard RFA Fort Grange in the 1982 Falklands conflict and in the following peace/patrol period. This was followed by an appointment to the Aeroplane and Armament Experimental Establishment Boscombe Down as a Trials Officer on a range of

aircraft. He completed his service as a 'searider' with the Third Flotilla (carriers and amphibious ships) in 1987.

Still in aviation he spent from 1991-93 delving into envirometrics, a futuristic sounding title that was basically observing the passage of waste water at the British Airways Maintenance Area at Hatton Cross, Heathrow Airport.

Making greater use of his aerospace engineering skills he spent two years as the Editor of *Defence Helicopter* and *Helicopter World* for the Shephard Press in Burnham, Bucks. It was a fascinating job that encompassed travel and writing around helicopter makers, exhibitions and conferences worldwide. It was at an interesting time that oversaw the developing competition between the McDonnell Douglas MD900 and Eurocopter EC135 for the emergency services.

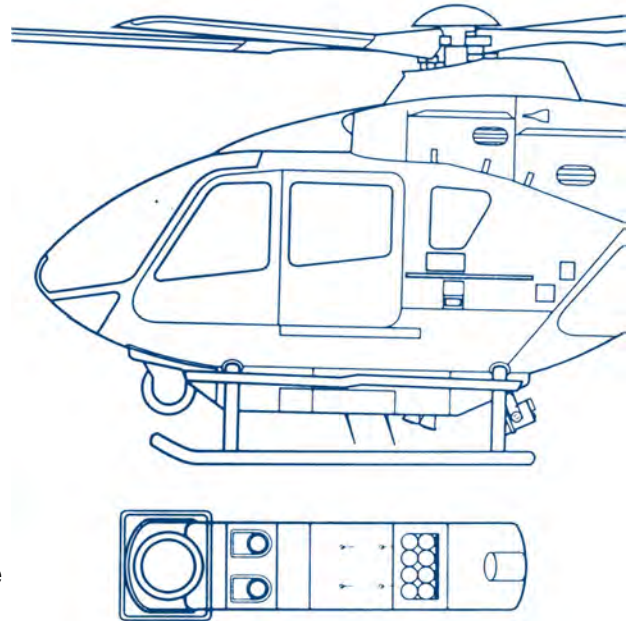
Life at the Shephard Press saw the publication of numerous magazines and those invaluable handbooks under his editorship





Early in 1995 John chose which type he wanted to represent when he took up a vacancy as Marketing Manager with McAlpine Helicopters, the Oxford based representatives of Eurocopter UK. For more than nine years he was at the forefront of sales in the UK and responsible for the marketing, launch and introduction of Eurocopter EC135 helicopter to the UK public service. Similarly he launched the Eurocopter EC120, AS365N3 and EC145 and led the marketing effort leading to sales to UK Government and ultimately the police service. He helped forge the Company's three successful Home Office Framework Contracts - bid preparation and management and fought some often bitter sales battles to get the Eurocopter product accepted.

In addition to the traditional commercial roles at McAlpine, he was also responsible for the development of the company's Advanced Police Helicopter mission pod fitted as initial equipment on many UK-based Eurocopter EC135 and a number overseas. The 'Police Role Equipment Pod' was invented to allow the external carriage of police mission equipment beneath and outside the fuselage of the helicopter to ensure as much space as possible was retained for crew use in the aircraft. [GB GB19980013503 19980624 · Issued Dec 29, 1999]. The pods are still in service today.



John led the company's UK MOD sponsored risk reduction programme to evaluate Eurocopter civil aircraft in military roles including the AS365N3, AS355N, EC135 and EC145 all types that are now accepted in those roles as a matter of course. He supported a further trial on the Sikorsky S-61N for an offshore operator.

John was largely responsible for the planning and execution of the bi-annual Eurocopter in the UK events held at Oxford in 1993 and 1995. Set up to reduce the need for the small helicopter agent to attend the expensive Farnborough air shows they were modelled on early editions of Helitech and highly successful – albeit confined to the products of Eurocopter and its suppliers.

In 2005 John had left McAlpine to set up Helimetrics Limited with his wife Rosemary, consulting in the same emergency services fields for a range of manufacturers, police and ambulance operators for more than a decade from his Chipping Norton home. In addition they hosted many members of the French military, the Armée de l'Air, in a 'enhance your English' project that greatly boosted their standing in industry.

One of the more interesting and challenging contracts awarded to Helimetrics, on the back of John's experience and expertise, was acting as a technical advisor to the fledgling Emergency Services Mobile Communications Project. His insight helped to shape the outcome of this project and it was intensely frustrating that a number of his initiatives were not adopted at the time but have since borne fruit.

On the conference front, from 1991 his connections with the Shephard Group resulted in him being involved with their early police aviation conferences. When they were resurrected from 2006 he became a regular attendee, even as they evolved into the PAVCon branding. In 2019 he was appointed as the Chairman of the PAVCon in Austria – a role he described as a fascinating and a challenge for the years ahead.

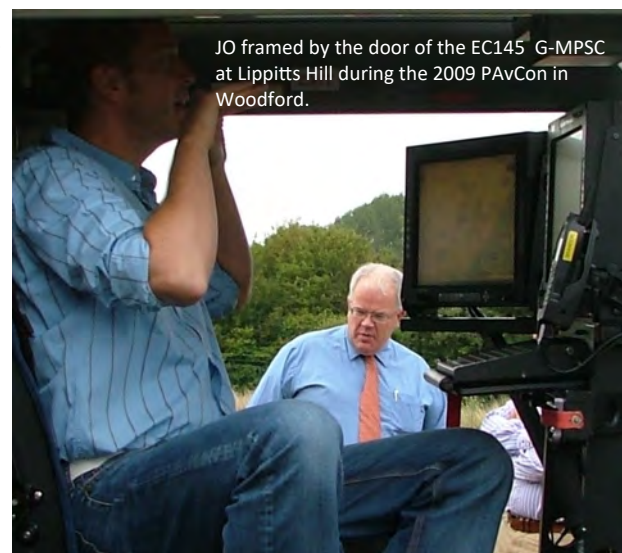
In March 2020, John was granted a Fellowship of the Royal Aeronautical Society but his health was deteriorating and he stood back from his activities and finally retired his business in April 2023.

Typical of John and his generous spirit, even as his business was winding down he trained as a community first responder in his adopted Chipping Norton and only gave up when he felt he could no longer perform the role.

He is survived by his wife, Rosemary, who has also been a staunch supporter of PAVCon over the years.

**John Charles William OSMOND 26/10/1956 – 2/5/2025**

*The funeral is to be held in Chipping Norton on 12 June 2025. Details from the Editor.*



JO framed by the door of the EC145 G-MPSC at Lippitts Hill during the 2009 PAVCon in Woodford.

The Delaware State Police (DSP) has honoured the enduring sacrifice of Corporal Dennis F. Kelly by adding his name to several law enforcement memorials, recognizing a life and service.

Corporal Dennis F. Kelly, originally from Wilmington, Delaware, served with the Delaware State Police for seven years. He was assigned to the Delaware State Police Aviation Section.

On May 20, 1984, while conducting routine helicopter take-off and landing exercises at Sussex County Municipal Airport in Georgetown, DE Cpl. Kelly and his partner, Cpl. Thomas W. Robbins, were involved in a crash. Their 9 years old Bell Jet Ranger 206B N75SP helicopter made a hard landing and rolled over upon impact with a raised section of grass alongside the runway. While Cpl. Robbins sustained non-life-threatening injuries, Cpl. Kelly suffered a broken neck and spinal cord injury, resulting in quadriplegia.

Kelly never fully recovered from his injuries. He lived with the enduring effects of the crash for four decades with strength and resilience before succumbing to complications from those injuries on December 21, 2024, at age 69.

Last month Kelly's name was formally added to both the Delaware State Police Memorial, located at DSP Headquarters in Dover, and the Delaware Law Enforcement Memorial on Legislative Mall as the 24th trooper recognised for making the ultimate sacrifice. His name was also be added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, D.C.



Nighthawk Flight Systems, Inc., a leader in advanced federated avionics instruments and displays, is pleased to welcome Randy Jones as Vice President of Sales and Marketing. Jones brings more than 30 years of aerospace and defence sales, marketing, and business development experience to Nighthawk. In this key position, he will be responsible for developing customer, dealer, and aircraft OEM relationships, building sales, and driving business growth.

Jones most recently served as aerospace and DEFENSE sales executive within a newly certified AS9100 manufacturing organization, delivering first year sales revenue that exceeded projections by 153%. Throughout his career, he has developed long-standing customer relationships, conducted deep strategic data analysis and provided business development strategy to successfully roll out new products and grow market share.

"I am very excited about Nighthawk Flight Systems and the new technology we are bringing to market," Jones said. "Nighthawk has the potential to change aviation across all markets, delivering high-end technology that improve safety and makes advanced situation awareness more accessible and affordable. I am looking forward to bringing this product to market and turning Nighthawk into a household name in our industry."



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# MOVE ALONG THERE

Senior police officers and politicians have no understanding of the importance of having police officers cemented within their communities. Police stations and premises play a vital role. [DM]

For all those that have little or no faith in the accuracy of AI [the *Artificial Intelligence* version] the new Chairman of PAvCon, Luc Stremersch asked ChatGPT how the recent PAvCon Europe had performed and received this analysis....

*Conclusion PAvCon 2025 confirmed its reputation as an essential platform for knowledge exchange, professional development and cooperation within the police and rescue aviation community. The event provided valuable insights into the latest technologies and operational strategies, and facilitated important networking opportunities for professionals from different countries. For those interested in the developments within the police and rescue aviation, PAvCon 2025 was an unmissable event.*

On May 17 The Times (London) revealed details of yet another forthcoming UK Defence Review. As we have learned for a long time now a Defence Review is the latest mad-cap idea for politicians to create a reason not to spend money on the Defence of the Realm and time soon. I can report with confidence that it looks to be as good as all its predecessors – absolute rubbish. Time will tell.

Among the more questionable elements is the creation of a Home Guard. Unlike the version already working well in Denmark this will be a non-aviation formation established to protect British power plants and airports against attack from enemy states and terrorists. It will be modelled on the citizens' militia created in 1940, when Britain faced the prospect of invasion by Nazi Germany during the Second World War. Several thousand volunteers, who would be deployed to safeguard assets such as nuclear power plants, telecommunications sites and the coastal hubs where internet cables connecting Britain to the rest of the world come onto land.

The home guard plan is a central part of the review, which focuses heavily on homeland security, national resilience and the need for the public to realise that Britain has entered a pre-war era, as tensions heighten with an axis of Russia, Iran and North Korea.

They will be separate from existing organisations, such as the army reserves, but will be similar in structure, and are likely to be used to bolster and complement the work of units such as the Civil Nuclear Constabulary, an armed police force that protects the UK's nuclear sites.

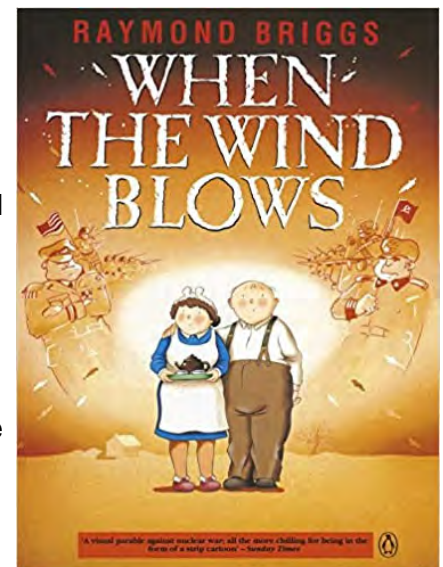
I am not so sure people volunteer for anything much these days but by all accounts we have many thousands of migrants looking for work, sat in hotels across the land, who love the United Kingdom and would surely seek to protect it (presumably once they have mastered the English language). Employing them would surely solve many problems!

As this treads into territory previously trod, perhaps we could re-use another similar plan. We could designate all police persons to undertake the task of guarding infrastructure in between running around in their cars arresting people for thought offences. In the UK it is now an offence to think someone is wrong – let alone say they are. We could resurrect the Home Office Police Mobile Column, a plan from the 1950s and 1960s where a group of police were assigned to rescue the population after a nuclear holocaust. Police being invulnerable to nuclear blast and fall-out would bring together vehicles and convert them into rescue trucks to save the irradiated and blistered population, make them cups of tea and be all sort of nice to them in their misery.



Training would be little more than an extension of *"Coffee with the cops"* – it seems the only time they currently leave their local base warehouses to be seen in public.

On a more positive note the future should be quite safe because the current level of history education has taught half of the population to believe the unsettling war of the 1940s did not happen!



**Talking of war.** Time the break out the old library and read up on the defences and effects of nuclear war with Raymond Briggs "When the wind blows."

Not so compelling as Fungus or soothing as The Snowman it may be a must read for Putin and his looney tunes war-plans! And there is an old fashioned VHS video available in the PAN war bunker too!



## LOCAL NEWS (May 21)

Local sources were quick to point out when a local air-ground operation took place just a stones throw from the offices of PAN so it is worth recounting the (thankfully rare) event even though it did no amount to a great deal in terms of severity or time.



Suffice to report that several police vehicles were damaged when officers tried to stop a Colt Shogun vehicle which failed to stop in Waltham Abbey after police were called to reports of a driver under the influence of drugs.

Officers were called to the industrial Brooker Road at about 1pm and tried to stop the vehicle which drove off trying to evade several police cars. After a brisk journey south towards London the vehicle was forced to stop after around three miles in Sewardstone Road. It ended up hemmed in by an ever growing number of police response vehicles by the Lee Valley Camp Site.

Meanwhile Essex Police are now appealing to anyone who saw the incident to come forward, especially if they have camera footage. Mind you they already have some pretty comprehensive imagery from the North Weald based NPAS EC135T2.

The driver was arrested on suspicion of failing to stop, dangerous driving and theft of a motor vehicle, and the vehicle was recovered. [incident 485 May 21]. The pursuit was covered in a video that was posted to YouTube....

[https://youtu.be/D\\_997GREovI?feature=shared](https://youtu.be/D_997GREovI?feature=shared)

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# UNITED KINGDOM - CHANNEL UPDATE

Despite the rhetoric, from politicians on both sides of the English Channel, in the UK and in France, the numbers of illegal migrants, those crossing the English Channel in inflatable boats, continue to go up and up, week by week, month by month. At the time of writing, in the last week of May, the number of illegal migrants landed in the UK in 2025, at Dover, had reached 13,617, a new record, 38% higher than in the same period in 2024. Moreover, there is evidence which shows that the UK Border Force may have become complicit in this criminal operation; 'rescuing' illegal migrants in French waters, before bringing them to the UK. This activity was observed on Sunday, 27 April and again, on the 28 April. Then, on the 30 April, the British newspaper, the 'Daily Express' reported that on the previous day, on Tuesday, 29 April, the Border Force vessel, BF Ranger rescued illegal migrants from a broken down inflatable boat, one mile inside French waters, before landing them at Dover rather than taking them to the nearest place of safety in France, to Calais. A response, to a question to the British government department responsible for border security, the Home Department, also called the Home Office, requested under the auspices of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, is pending.

## MORE LIVES LOST

More recently, in the early hours of 19 May, the French rescue tug, Abeille Normandie was escorting inflatable boats, carrying illegal migrants, towards mid-Channel, to rendezvous with vessels of the UK Border Force, when one of the "overloaded boats" broke up and sank. What had been a routine escort mission, by the French, quickly turned into search and rescue. Of the 62 migrants crammed into one boat, one perished and 2, a mother and child, both suffering from hypothermia, were subsequently airlifted to a hospital in France. Of the total of 61 migrants who were rescued, 50 were rescued by rescue craft deployed by the Abeille Normandie, 9 were rescued by the Border Force vessel, Ranger and 2 were rescued by a lifeboat of the UK lifeboat service, the RNLI. All those rescued were landed in France at Boulogne-Sur-Mer.

Then, on 21 May the French coastguard responded to a further incident when a grossly overloaded inflatable boat, carrying up to 80 passengers requested assistance. Two of the migrants, later reported to be a woman and a child, had died, on board the boat. Ten migrants elected to be rescued whilst the remainder continued their journey to mid-Channel where they transferred to a Border Force vessel before being landed at Dover, to claim asylum. The question remains; why are these unseaworthy boats, part of a criminal operation, permitted to leave France, to endanger lives at sea, before continuing to the UK? The total number of migrants reported to have perished in the English Channel in 2025 is believed to be 14. In 2024 there were 78, although the true number will never be known.

Where is the determination, in France and in the UK, to close this irregular cross-Channel route, to defeat the organised criminal groups who, without regard for human lives, are permitted to ply their evil trade in people smuggling? The phrase, 'people smuggling' now seems inappropriate when illegal migrants and, inter alia, the criminal gangs receive so much support from the police, the coastguard and those responsible for border security in England and in France. Using the words, the catch phrases, of British prime ministers, where is the determination, on both sides of the English Channel, to 'stop the boats' and to 'smash the gangs'?



**On Monday, 19 May 2025 the French rescue tug, Abeille Normandie was escorting inflatable boats, those carrying illegal migrants, across the English Channel when one, grossly overloaded boat broke up and sank. Of the 62 migrants in board, 61 were rescued and one perished. The question remains, why are these unseaworthy boats, part of a criminal operation, permitted to leave the beaches of northern France?**

AFP

The French police, those who are being paid by the British government to 'stop the boats', have, instead of getting their feet wet, appeared on British television, by ITV News at Ten, standing on a beach near Dunkirk, watching migrants queue up, in the sea, to catch a so called, 'water taxi'. Frankly, because of the numbers involved, with up to 60 plus migrants per boat, these large inflatable boats should be called, 'water buses'. A 'coach trip', albeit an expensive one, up to £3,000 per head, starting in France and ending in England." The publication, by the British Home Office, of migrants 'prevented', by the French po-

lice, from crossing the Channel in a small boat is misleading. Those migrants prevented from leaving France one day simply try again the next day, or the next week! The true measure of success is the number of boats destroyed in transit across Europe, or destroyed on the beaches of northern France. Only when the number of boats destroyed is greater than the number of boats delivered from China will this battle be won.



**On a number of occasions the British media, press and television, have shown French police officers' looking on as migrants board a 'water taxi', before setting off, towards England, some 20 miles away. Despite this being an irregular, an illegal route, these boats are invariably met at the half-way point by the UK Border Force, for the migrants to complete their journey in relative comfort. [AFP]**

## FRENCH POLITICS

In February 2025 the French Minister for the Interior, Bruno Retailleau called for a new approach to permit the police to intercept boats, those carrying migrants, when the migrants are standing in the sea. This would thwart the, so called, 'water taxis'. Inflatable boats which travel along the coast, close inshore, to collect those migrants, including children, standing in the sea, waiting to be picked up. Now, almost 3 months later with an additional 11,500 illegal migrants landed in the UK we're still waiting for the French police to implement this new tactic, to get their feet wet, to save lives at sea!

**In February 2025, the French Minister for the Interior, Bruno Retailleau (right) called for a new approach, by the French police, to stop boats at sea, close inshore, to save lives. Now, 3 months later, we're still waiting for this new tactic to be implemented.**



To add some context to this ongoing problem, at the end of 2024 the cost, to the British taxpayer, for accommodating some 38,000 asylum seekers in hotels, many of whom had crossed the English Channel, after travelling across Europe, was reported to be £8 million a day. Those who had arrived by boat accounted for a third of all asylum applications. Another large group are those already in the UK with a visa which has expired (BBC Verify). Frankly, the British public have had enough and so have citizens of France, those who live in the proximity of Calais and Dunkirk. This was demonstrated in the recent local government elections in England when the right wing party, Reform UK took control of 10 county councils, including Kent, which borders the English Channel; the frontline of illegal migration into the UK.

In a recent speech the British prime minister, Sir Kier Starmer warned that Britain is becoming an "island of strangers", the result of uncontrolled migration. At the same time, Ms Yvette Cooper MP, the Home Secretary, with responsibility for border security, was adamant that the French police will now stop migrants from getting into small boats, when the migrants are in the water. This was after the UK "persuaded France to change its rules". However, when confronted by a television news broadcast showing French



police officers, standing back, observing migrants queuing in the sea to board a boat, with children standing in the sea, shivering, she quickly added that the failure of the French police to stop migrants crossing the English Channel is, “undermining our border security” and, this is, “not what we want to see”. Moreover, we should not forget that the UK government has agreed to pay France £476million over 3 years, 2023 to 2026, for extra police officers to patrol the beaches of northern France, to ‘stop the boats’!



**The failure of the French police to stop migrants crossing the English Channel is, “undermining our border security”, according to Yvette Cooper MP, Secretary of State at the Home Department in the United Kingdom.**

So, if both the British and the French governments are determined to ‘stop the boats’, to close the irregular route, across the English Channel, in the same way that the Channel ports, Calais and Dunkirk, together with the Channel Tunnel, were made secure in 2016, with migrant camps, including the infamous ‘Jungle’, dismantled, how can this be done?

### **AIR, LAND AND SEA**

First, the beaches of northern France, between the Baie de Somme and Dunkirk must be patrolled persistently, with aircraft, in good weather, the same good weather that permits a large, unseaworthy, under-powered inflatable boat, overloaded with 60 migrants, or more, to cross one of world’s busiest shipping lanes, the English Channel. The occasional patrols, those flown with a Diamond DA62 based at Ostend and a Vulcanair P68, flown by the Police Aux Frontiere, based at Lille would, if necessary, be supplemented by those DA62’s that already patrol the English on behalf of HM Coastguard.

The UK National Police Air Service has 4 Vulcanair P68Rs, complete with an electro-optical camera turret, which are grossly underutilised and which could be used to enhance the UK’s border security. These 4 aircraft flew a total of just 49 hours in April 2025! Then, if necessary, additional pilots, with observers, together with their aircraft, could be recruited from the voluntary sector to form a volunteer air corps, modelled on the Swedish Volunteer Air Corps, the Frivilliga Flygkaren (FFK). These persistent air patrols, flying a simple ‘line search’, along the shoreline would carry out 2 complementary missions. First, ‘deter and detect’, second, ‘observe and report’.

With persistent air patrols those police officers on the ground, members of the French Gendarmerie, together with the Police nationale, would be directed from the air to be at the right place at the right time. Hopefully, stopping migrants from endangering their lives by embarking in overcrowded, unseaworthy inflatable boats; destroying the boats and destroying the outboard engines too.

**With direction from the air patrols the police, the Gendarmerie nationale and the Police nationale would be at the right place, at right time, saving lives at sea by destroying unseaworthy inflatable boats**



For those migrants who may evade the police on the beaches of northern France the last line of border control would be at sea. First, the patrolling aircraft would direct police, or border control officers, those with jet-skis, suitable for operating in shallow water, with water jets rather than propellers, to intercept the 'water taxis' which would then be pushed into shallow water before being disabled. Climbing out of a boat, in shallow water, a boat which has been disabled, is no more difficult than climbing into the boat and, most probably, a lot easier! Those inflatable boats that venture further offshore would be intercepted, in French waters, by those vessels belonging to the UK Border Force, Defender, Hurricane, Ranger, Typhoon and Volunteer. The illegal migrants would then be rescued, in French waters, before, in accordance with international maritime law, being landed at the nearest place of safety, at Calais, Dunkirk, or Boulogne-sur-Mer.

**Should an inflatable boat, a 'water taxi' be intercepted close inshore it would be pushed back to the beach by a police officer on board a jet-ski, before being disabled in shallow water.**



Home Office

## CONCLUSION

The British public, together with those French citizens living in northern France, have had enough. After 6 years of political rhetoric, with no sign of a reduction in the number of illegal migrants crossing the English Channel, many will agree that it's now the time for action; in the air, on land and at sea. The public are tired of broken promises, tired of words and tired of more and more legislation. Legislation that has proved impossible to enforce, although there must be many human rights lawyers who have, over the years, benefited financially.

How is it that the Belgians can stop illegal migrants from crossing the English Channel in small boats, but the French can't? How can Denmark, with a well-deserved reputation for being one of the most liberal nations in Europe, also be the toughest country for migration, with zero tolerance towards illegal asylum seekers and strict laws on integration? As an example, residency permits are rarely granted for more than one or two years, whilst language and dress are strictly controlled. Applicants for residency must promise to learn Danish and pass a test within 6 months, or face expulsion. In Denmark, convicted criminals are automatically excluded from applying for citizenship. The United Kingdom, and France too, could learn a lot from Denmark. However, positive action by the French police and the UK Border Force is required now. Action that could be implemented within days, certainly within weeks, if both governments would agree, unequivocally, to take joint-action, to 'stop the boats' and to 'smash the criminal gangs'.

**James A Cowan MBE**

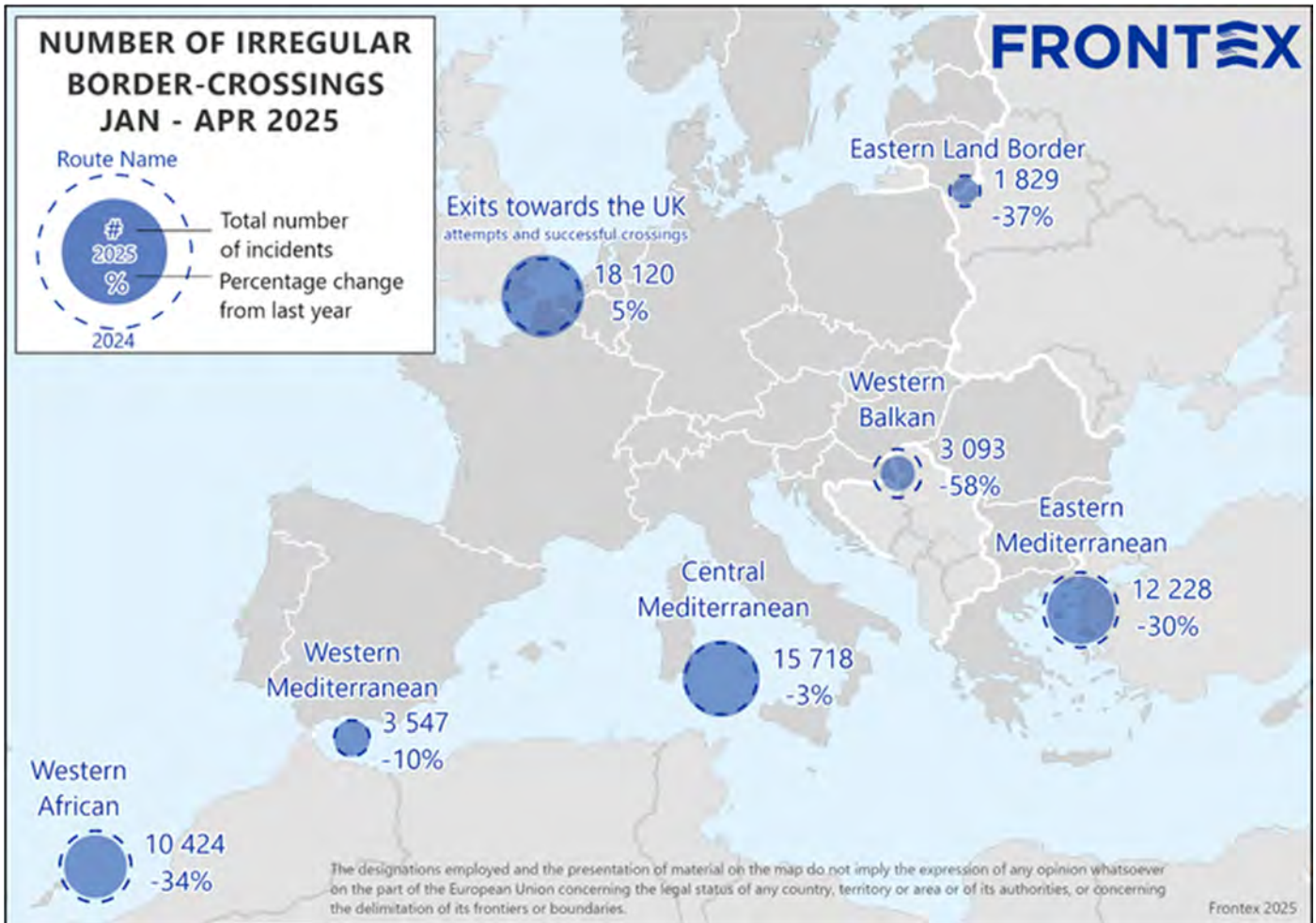
Note: The author is a former member of the Royal Air Force, a former maritime patrol pilot. Also, a former police pilot and a former air ambulance pilot too. He still flies private light aircraft in the north east of England.

### Editorial Update

On the morning of Saturday, 31 May, in good weather, the UK's rescue services were overwhelmed by a surge of 18 inflatable boats carrying 1,194 illegal migrants, an average 66 migrants per boat. Fishing vessels were requested to assist a yacht and several kayaks in distress in the English Channel. Four of the 5 Border Force vessels were at sea, together with 2 RNLI lifeboats, 3 patrol aircraft and a drone. The French responded with 7 vessels including the rescue tug, Abeille Normandie, Ridens, Oyapock, a warship and 3 lifeboats. The total number of illegal migrants landed in the UK, at Dover, in the first 5 months of 2025 now stands at 14,811, a new record.







## EVENTS UPCOMING



**18-19 June 2025 International Drone Show, Odense, Denmark** is hosted by Odense Robotics and UAS Denmark International Test Centre, which offers key testing facilities and BVLOS flights. Odense Robotics is co-funded by the Danish Board of Business Development, the Danish Agency for Higher Education and Science and the European Union, as well as a broad range of projects and partnerships. Last time the event attracted 500 visitors. This year the expectation is to see growth to over 700. From Copenhagen airport you can take the direct train to Odense, without additional transportation or changing trains. 1.5 hours later you are in Odense. [www.internationaldroneshow.com](http://www.internationaldroneshow.com)

**25-27 June 2025 AERO South Africa at Lanseria International Airport, South Africa.** The airport and AERO South Africa, Southern Africa's leading business-to-business trade show for the General Aviation industry, is proud to announce Lanseria International Airport as the new venue for its fifth edition. AERO South Africa is a business-to-business trade show and not a public air show. No children under the age of 15 are allowed to enter the trade show. [AERO South Africa](http://AERO South Africa)

**1-3 July 2025 Drone-Zone Expo 2025.** Yarmouth Heliport, Norfolk. The UK is holding its first ever outdoor trade and industry drone exhibition in the east of England. It is hoped to be a busy inaugural 'must

be there' open-air flying event for industry.

It is being hosted by Yarmouth Heliport, also known as North Denes, which is an active airfield with frequent fixed wing and rotary flights operating alongside drones delivering CAA's much praised strapline, "Equitable Use of the Skies"

[www.drone-zone.co.uk](http://www.drone-zone.co.uk)

The venue is a grass airfield with two runways and a hardstanding with several helicopter spots left over from the days the location was an important base for Bristow and CHC in the early days of gas and oil.

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**8-10 September 2025 APSCON Europe in Spain.** An APSCON and Bell sponsored event at the Bell Training Academy facility in Valencia, Spain. The event is modelled on the safety seminars held in North America, will feature two and a half days of public safety air support unit training, a mini tradeshow of six-foot tabletop exhibits and ample networking opportunities. Exhibitor set up will be on Monday, September 8, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm, with exhibits open all day on Tuesday, September 9 and until noon on Wednesday, September 10. Exhibitor registration for this event is now open through the APSA website. Visitor registration has been available from early last month. The contact in Frederick, Maryland is Benay Osborne at [bosborne@publicsafetyaviation.org](mailto:bosborne@publicsafetyaviation.org), +1-301-631-2406.



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