

# Police Aviation News

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Issue 351

July 2025



## MOUNTAIN RESCUE

with the Gendarmerie Air Section (SAG) of Chamonix

*All the latest on*  
**DELIVERIES ORDERS PROJECTS**

... and of course who is busting the borders now...





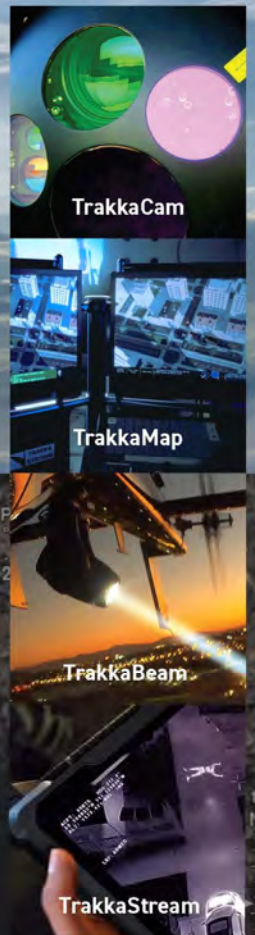


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ALT: 1324.3ft NAV: INS

TRGT: 9MP  
32.750058°  
ELV: 358°  
RNG: 12.22

LRF: AR

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Tc301  
CAM: HD-EO  
MODE: G-TRK  
2022-FEB-26  
AC: 20120-200

# EDITORIAL

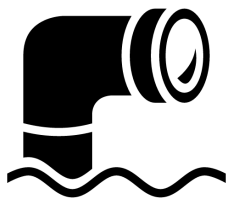
When will politicians of all persuasions think before they utter a word?

As Shakespeare did not state for us through the imagined words of Richard, Duke of Gloucester...

*Now is the summer of our discontent...*

Even as the sun peers out from the clouds and a multitude of would be 'Englishmen' gather upon the northern beaches of France looking for passage, the National Police and Gendarmes set forth to multiply on the beaches of the Mediterranean Sea as they have always done at this time of year.

You know it, I know it, they (every Frenchman and every would be People Smuggler) know it but strangely the political classes in the British Isles are so thick that they have not a clue. Despite the payment of hundreds of millions of pounds the law enforcers of France will be thin on the ground for the next two months and we can expect a flood of rubber boats to head north towards the ever welcoming arms of the Border Force and the RNLI, strategically located just 10 miles from the French coast. The latest revelation these law makers have discovered is that while the authorities are hard pressed to find and shadow the unseaworthy rubber boats migrating illegally across the busy waters between north France and England other vessels are sailing unchecked from Normandy to the western beaches of England. If the multiple aircraft are hard pressed to cover 21 miles (33 km) at the narrows I assume they have no hope of intercepting anything in the far greater 127 miles (205km) gap to the west.



And this was a nation that fought and won the Battle of the Atlantic against far more formidable foes travelling under the water. Then they were led by lions not donkeys. My apologies to donkeys.

These same educationally challenged politicians have promised that all need for housing the illegal boaters in hotels will disappear in four years. Hotels will be phased out by cutting small boat crossings and building new government-owned accommodation for asylum seekers. The basic flaws in that simplistic policy is that there is no sign that the numbers are going anywhere but up and the same government has so far failed to build new homes at a sufficient rate to provide alternate accommodation for the people already in these *Sceptred Isles*....

*Bryn Elliott*

## LAW ENFORCEMENT CANADA

**BORDER PATROL:** The *National Post* has revealed that Canada's helicopter industry is up in arms about Transport Canada creating special rules to allow the 40 years old US DoD surplus Sikorsky Blackhawk helicopters to patrol the US/Canada border.

Four privately owned Blackhawks are now used on the task and operated as RCMP assets. They cannot fly as civil aircraft, carry passengers or fly over built up areas. The special rules set up by Transport Canada are the only reason the operation is even viable.

### SELECTION

L3Harris Technologies has been selected to provide its next-generation of WESCAM MX™-10 electro-optical/infrared (EO/IR) sensor systems to Airbus Helicopters Canada. The technology will be the standard EO/IR sensor for the H125 helicopters selected to be supplied to several police services in Canada.

**COVER IMAGE:** French Gendarmerie Eurocopter EC145 'JBG' was among the first batch of deliveries of the type in 2003 and is believed to be c/n 9036. In recent times it has been allocated to the heart of the French Alps, with the Gendarmerie Air Section (SAG) of Chamonix. Working in coordination with the Peloton de Gendarmerie de Haute Montagne (PGHM), a specialized high-mountain rescue unit, the combination ensure that mountaineers, skiers, and hikers receive swift and expert assistance when danger strikes. The story behind their work appears later in this edition. Read the article by Roelof-Jan Gort, compiled after he visited the SAG Chamonix and spoke with Captain Herman who has been Squadron Leader since 2019.



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In 2024, L3Harris announced the supply of WESCAM MX-15D systems to Airbus Helicopters for the German armed forces and its new fleet of multi-role H145M helicopters and this larger sensor has also been selected for the new H135 helicopters ordered for National Police Air Service (NPAS) in the UK.

## IRELAND

**GARDA:** *The Journal* has reported that the Chief of Staff of the Irish Defence Forces has admitted that Garda law enforcement helicopter operations have been affected due to the crisis in military Air Traffic Control.

Lieutenant General Rossa Mulcahy made the comment during a hearing of the Defence Committee last month – he was responding to a question from Dublin TD Tom Brabazon. The service has been forced to move to a part-time five-day-week and daylight-only service because it does not have enough air traffic controllers.

Barring a fix been found soon, the service remains on the restricted hours with aircraft only operating Monday to Friday and during daylight hours.



The Garda Air Support Unit (GASU) helicopter is owned by An Garda Síochána with Air Corps pilots – it is based within the military Casement Aerodrome in Baldonnell, Co Dublin. When the service isn't available, the GASU unit operates from a different location.

## UKRAINE

**MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS:** The Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers has approved a draft law amending the 2025 state budget, increasing expenditure by UAH 397.5 billion [approx. US\$9.52 billion].

Among the allocations announced was the budget for the Ministry of Internal Affairs: UAH 84.24 billion (US\$2.02 billion), raising its total to UAH 522.5 billion (US\$12.51 billion), with additional funding for the State Border Service (UAH 45.9 billion or US\$1.1 billion), National Guard (UAH 24.5 billion or US\$586.80 million) and National Police (UAH 13.73 billion or US\$328.85 million). No details of any purchases were announced. [Ukrainska Pravda]

## UNITED KINGDOM

**NATIONAL:** In a promising move NPAS has continued to supply monthly updates on its performance in support of police forces across England and Wales. The latest update outlines NPAS' performance in May 2025, highlighting key achievements and areas of focus.

In May, NPAS aircraft were available for deployment 70.7% of the time. While this is slightly lower than April's 73.6%, it reflects ongoing efforts to balance operational readiness with essential maintenance.

They aim to respond quickly to incidents where air support can make a difference:

Priority 1 (urgent) incidents: Average response time was 12 minutes and 33 seconds

Priority 2 incidents: Average response time was 20 minutes and 33 seconds

The organisation states that, for them, these times remain within acceptable thresholds, ensuring timely support to officers on the ground.

In May, NPAS aircraft were deployed 1,154 times in response to calls for service – an increase in demand compared to April. As a result of these sorties 216 vulnerable people were located, 598 suspects were found and 285 vehicles were recovered.

Overall, 87.6% of attended deployments led to a positive outcome, demonstrating the continued value of air support in frontline policing. Since the start of the financial year: Rotary aircraft have flown 1,402 hours and the P68R fixed wing have flown 131 hours.

### PROMOTION

In an effort to promote the availability of the air service to local policing NPAS teamed up with the College of Policing and the NPCC to launch a Neighbourhood Policing Week of Action.

Several activities were included in the scheme, including support of Durham Constabulary, Greater Manchester and Staffordshire Police with anti motor bike enforcement -effectively illegal bikes and others simply causing nuisance. Elsewhere, Essex Police were supported in tackling wildlife crime, including Hare coursing and looking for cannabis grows in Birmingham.

*Ed: That will to be seen doing 'stuff' in support of ground policing is there but all of the actual activity undertaken is very much day-to-day and humdrum policing that would simply not have been highlighted by anyone in the past. The flight restrictions brought about by patchy crew availability and maintenance shortfalls do not help. Meanwhile the national government has brought in yet more cuts in funding that are in effect 'defunding' police from all directions. Officer numbers are being cut and others are being re-deployed in an effort to fill in the inevitable gaps. In some ways it is a miracle the NPAS are able to set up a pretence of normality.*

*Meanwhile, worryingly, police services in the length and breadth of Britain are placing ever growing reliance in small drones – regardless of their capability.*

### DOCUMENTARY

NPAS will feature in the upcoming BBC2 documentary series Murder 24/7, which offers a rare, behind-the-scenes look at the work of West Mercia Police's Major Investigation Unit.

This six-part series, produced by Expectation TV, follows six major investigations from the moment a crime is reported through to arrest and charge. The investigation into the tragic death of Aurman Singh is featured across the first three episodes, with NPAS playing a key role in supporting the police response.

NPAS Birmingham crew provided vital aerial support during the investigation, helping to direct officers to key suspects and the location of the weapon. The first three episodes became available on the BBC iPlayer in mid-June.

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## FINANCIAL UPDATE (ESSEX)

In an article below, primarily concerned with the finances of the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance, it was revealed that the National Police Air Service (NPAS) based on North Weald Airfield, Essex, was being charged annual rent of £108,000 to use the airfield, with landing fees of £40,000. A single police configured EC135T2 helicopter occupies an NPAS owned Rubb hangar on the west side of the airfield, although other air resources, including the training helicopters and the EC145 fleet from Lippitts Hill are regular visitors.

## UNITED STATES

**CALIFORNIA:** San Diego Police were due to receive the last of their order for three H125s - N884SD – last month. It is known to have overnighted at Las Cruces, New Mexico on its ferry flight in mid-month.

It is possible that it will go briefly to Hangar One Avionics (in San Diego) for some additional completion work, but it's been test flying with Airbus

The previous pair were delivered in December 2024 (N882SD) and February 2025 (N883SD).

The City of Burbank have changed the registration on a 1990 Aerospatiale AS350B1 AStar/Ecureuil c/n 1930 from N26CE to N275BP. The earlier registration referred to its past celebrity owner, the actor Clint Eastwood, who sold transferred it from his company Malpaso Productions in March 2024 after owning it for 30 years.

The City of Burbank police have operated MD520N Notar helicopters out of Burbank for over thirty years so the reason for the acquisition of the early AS350 remains a mystery at the moment.

**FLORIDA:** The Miami Dade Sheriff's Office took delivery of the first of four Airbus Helicopters H125s at their Hangar in Dade County last month. The collaboration between the Airbus Helicopters industry team and Metro Aviation has led to the airframe N306MP being delivered complete with a role fir that includes a Trakka searchlight and EO/IR sensor.



The first one, N306MP, c/n 9526 and the second one N307MP c/n 9531 was noted on delivery on the same routing and was confirmed as arriving on June 27. [Parapex]



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NEW YORK: The New York State Police took possession of their second Airbus Helicopters H145 (MBB-BK117 D-3) helicopter N420SP c/n 21314 last month and dispatched it to Metro Aviation for its Airborne Law Enforcement role fit completion.

Current imagery of the aircraft has been distorted by the manufacturer but it would appear that the airframe 21314 does relate to those marks. The first example of the H145 for the operator is N9SP (c/n 21301). [Vince Mascia/PAR]

OHIO: The air unit in Columbus, Ohio, has steadfastly flown the Hughes derived product since the 1970s when it started flying the Hughes 300. Since then it has steadfastly adhered to buying into the brand through various examples of the Schweizer and MD until 2020 when it had a three year dalliance with a single Bell 407GX. That airframe arrived without role equipment and was never fitted with it until the day it was sold, for a significant profit, three years later.

Meanwhile the MD500 based fleet has aged and currently the newest helicopter dates from 2012 and the oldest from 2006. It intends to sell the eldest of the four remaining MD530F as soon as a replacement appears.

Now, despite the dead end that was the Bell 407 the Columbus City Council has now agreed to fund the police air unit purchasing two Bell 505 helicopters for \$6M in the first steps towards revitalising the fleet over the next ten years. The 505 is less capable than the 407 but is now being promoted as being equal to the MDs and quieter.

*Editor: Other opinions may apply on whether the Bell 505 and the MD530 are equals. The reasons put forward in the business case for the two new Bell 505s cites maintenance and noise issues surrounding the existing fleet. It looks like another long term operator of the MD product has found itself obliged to give up in the face of difficulties.*

*The Columbus Dispatch seems to have grabbed the quote of the week from Deputy Chief Robert Sagle a former pilot who is now in charge of the unit*

*"This is comparable to trying function efficiently in 2025 using an iPhone 3"*

*The 3 was introduced in 2008, just 18 years ago. On that basis I am not sure quite where NPAS would place their current fleet of geriatric helicopters!*

OKLAHOMA: The Airbus Helicopters AS350B3 AStar N720KC (c/n 7803) bought new by the City of Oklahoma City in 2014 has now been sold. The new owners are Portlock Aviation in Mansfield, Texas. The unit acquired a newer AStar last year.

SOUTH CAROLINA: Greenville County Sheriff's Office, Greenville, SC has disposed of its Bell UH-1 Huey N234GS to a purchaser in Ozark, Alabama.

WASHINGTON: Last month a Commissioning Ceremony was performed at the Spokane County Regional Air Support base to see into service a Bell 505 helicopter c/n 65615 N509DV. The new helicopter was ordered late last year.



The newest addition to the 'Unit' was acquired at a cost of \$3.4M. It enhances the unit's ability to support law enforcement, emergency response, and community safety efforts. The helicopter and its role fit were made possible through the support of the Board of County Commissioners, the U.S. Department of Justice, and Washington State.

The Spokane County Sheriff's Office contributed funds from the sale of an older aircraft. The U.S. Department of Justice provided a grant, the State of Washington through the Washington Auto Theft Prevention Authority (WATPA) contributed to enhance pursuit technology with a thermal imaging camera. Spokane County allocated about half of the total, \$1.6M, toward the final purchase from local taxpayer funds. The Spokane Regional Air Support Unit (SRASU), celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, plays a crucial role in fugitive apprehension, fire suppression, surveillance, and patrol operations. Currently the unit operates Bell Super Huey's for SAR tasking, the Bell 505 will replace two venerable Bell OH-58 helicopters that have served the unit for decades.



## AIR AMBULANCE CANADA

**BRITISH COLUMBIA:** A Kamloops helicopter company, Summitt Helicopters, has failed in a legal challenge to extend a lucrative air ambulance contract claiming the procurement process wasn't fair.

Summit had claimed irregularities in the bidding process to obtain contracts with the BC Emergency Health Services and the Provincial Health Services Authority. Summit had been providing helicopter emergency medical services out of Kamloops since 2019 when it signed a six-year contract.

According to a recently published May 21 BC Supreme Court decision, in 2021, the province decided on a revamp, and instead of using multiple helicopter companies it decided to use a single firm. They were among the bidders for the contract but in 2023 were told they weren't successful, with the contract going to Ascent Helicopters.

## LUXEMBOURG

**AIR AMBULANCE:** The company Luxembourg Air Ambulance S.A. is changing its name to Luxembourg Air Services.

The board of directors has decided to rename the corporation and suppress the ambulance part of its old name to emphasize the corporate identity between Luxembourg Air Services and its shareholder Luxembourg Air Rescue A.S.B.L.

All new issued documents (contracts, invoices, letters etc) will with immediate effect be established in the name of Luxembourg Air Services. It will not affect existing contracts and agreements, these will remain valid and do not need to be amended.

## NORWAY

**AIR AMBULANCE:** Norwegian Air Ambulance and Airbus have signed a framework agreement contract for up to eight additional H145 helicopters in the coming years.

Norwegian Air Ambulance operates all HEMS bases in Norway relying mainly on a fleet of 20 Airbus H135 and H145 helicopters. The organisation's parent company, the Norwegian Air Ambulance Foundation, was the first operator in the world to take delivery of a five-bladed H145 in 2020. The latest version of Airbus' best-selling helicopter, the light twin-engine H145, adds the game changing five-bladed rotor to the multi-mission aircraft, increasing the useful load of the helicopter by 150kg. The simplicity of the new bearing-less main rotor design also eases maintenance operations, further enhancing serviceability and reliability, while improving ride comfort for both passengers and crew.



The advertisement features a black rectangular display unit with two white rectangular screens. The left screen is labeled 'COMPUTER 1' and the right screen is labeled 'COMPUTER 2'. Above the screens, the 'macro-blue' logo is visible, with the tagline 'TACTICAL MISSION DISPLAYS' underneath. To the right of the display unit, the text 'Multi-Host touch.' is followed by a red stamp that says 'PATENTED'. Below this, the text 'Touch control of 2 computers on 1 screen.' is displayed. At the bottom of the advertisement, the website 'www.macro-blue.com' is shown in blue text.

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In total, there are more than 1,750 H145 family helicopters in service, logging a total of more than eight million flight hours. Powered by two Safran Arriel 2E engines, the H145 is equipped with full authority digital engine control (FADEC) and the Helionix digital avionics suite. It includes a high performance 4-axis autopilot, increasing safety and reducing pilot workload. Its particularly low acoustic footprint makes the H145 the quietest helicopter in its class, while its CO2 emissions are the lowest amongst its competitors. Airbus Helicopters is the leading provider of helicopters to the air medical transport industry, providing 54% of the 2,900 EMS helicopters flying in the world today.

## SLOVENIA

**MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR:** Two companies, Leonardo and Airbus tendered for the purchase of two rescue helicopters for HEMS use in Slovenia. Leonardo would supply the helicopters for €32M and Airbus Helicopters Deutschland for €30.4M, both inclusive of VAT.

The tender was repeated at the Ministry of the Interior on 14 May after last year's unsuccessful tender. The original deadline for receipt of bids was June 16, but it was then extended until another few days.

A year ago, Prime Minister Robert Golob announced that Slovenia would build a fleet and infrastructure for helicopter emergency medical assistance, and first two dedicated helicopters would be purchased. Last November, the Ministry of Interior published a public contract for the purchase of two helicopters on the public procurement portal.

Only one bid was received on time for the public contract from Leonardo in the value of €30.744M including VAT. The Ministry of the Interior subsequently found that the submitted financial security was not fully compliant with the requirements of the contracting authority. There were also issues with the new aircraft not being dedicated HEMS airframes – they were also expected to replenish the police fleet. It was therefore sent for a new bid.

*Editor: In recent years the police in Slovenia have mainly operated Leonardo helicopters with A109 and AW169 being the main types but a single EC135 was acquired. Until now they have been the main HEMS provider.*

## SPAIN

**AVENCIS:** Europe's largest provider of emergency aerial services, has been awarded new wildfire response contracts by Spain's Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge (MITECO) and the regional government of Castilla-La Mancha. The new contracts, build upon Avencis' ongoing firefighting operations in collaboration with the regional governments of Andalusia, Aragon, the Valencian Community, and Galicia. The company currently operates 39 firefighting aircraft across Spain and employs more than 300 professionals dedicated to this mission.



Avencis has also revealed a new helicopter livery design, reflecting its new brand identity which was rolled out last year. Using the latest colour scheme, the Avencis inhouse marketing team worked closely with graphic designers at Leonardo to come up with this new look and feel for the Avencis helicopter fleet.

The first aircraft to be painted in the new colours will be a Leonardo AW139 from the operator's Spanish fleet. The aircraft is scheduled to be back up in the skies later this summer.



## SWEDEN

In early June Avincis took delivery of two five-bladed H145 helicopters from Airbus at its production facility in Donauwörth, Germany. These aircraft are destined for Stockholm, where they will reinforce Avincis' existing Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (HEMS) fleet operating in Sweden. These latest additions mark a continuation of the company's investment in advanced, mission-ready aircraft across its global network.

This follows the successful delivery of two five-bladed H145s in August 2024, one of which also joined the Swedish fleet, demonstrating a consistent and strategic approach to operational growth.



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## UNITED KINGDOM

**NATIONAL:** Last month a review of the recordings of an AeroTracker system observing aerial activity over central Leeds raised concerns about the safety of manned air traffic in the face of drone operations.

The footage showed six air ambulance flights into Leeds General Infirmary – a critical lifeline for urban emergency response– overlaid with drone flights in the same vicinity. While these events occurred at different times, visualising them all together is powerful. It underscores a clear message drones and helicopter are sharing the same skies, often unknowingly

As drone use increases in urban areas, the risk of mid-air conflicts – especially near hospital helipads – cannot be ignored. The consequences could be catastrophic.

**CORNWALL:** With progress being made on the medical fit of the second AW169 helicopter for Cornwall at the completion centre in Staverton in Gloucester, the charity are now gearing up for its arrival at the airbase.

Once G-CNLL arrives, the aircraft will need to undergo a period of final tests and checks before going into operation.

**DEVON:** Outline plans for the upgrade of the Devon Air Ambulance base at Exeter Airport have been featured in the latest edition of the DAAT House Magazine Helipad.

It is early days in the project yet so there is only a limited amount of information to glean. The plan is to stay at the current hangar they share with NPAS but to upgrade the existing facilities and add units and an access road on the north side. Currently the DAAT offices are remote from the day to day operation, the services including fundraising and training will occupy new buildings to be built on adjoining land and access the complex via the new road. This is agricultural land currently being acquired so no plans have been submitted.



Current access to the site is somewhat torturous in that it is across airport land occupied by other tenants and via several fences and gates. Next to the DAAT/NPAS hangar is one of the hangars once occupied by Capital Air Ambulance.

Behind the bricks and mortar of the facility update and the new buildings are expectations that the facilities will be more suitable for their newer aircraft and ease maintenance on site. The operation is not currently 24/7 but the added training facilities and base infrastructure will allow both the aircraft and crews to add to their skillsets to take on the broader challenges of an 'ever capable' service. Bringing everyone together on the same site will greatly improve the interface between the operation, the fund-raisers and the all important givers. At the moment most would be givers are only able to get up close to the helicopters at special events or by an often difficult to arrange site visit. Their usual meet up is often just a visit to a fund-raising shop unit.





Aerial view of the current site with limited hangar space for the air ambulance and police . The former Capital Air ambulance facility is the blue hangar to the right. The plans lay out an intention to acquire and build upon the agricultural field in the foreground.



One of the latest fund raising shops has opened in Tiverton, mid Devon.

More accessible are the fund raising shops in the towns and villages of Devon. One of the latest fund raising shops to open in is in Tiverton, Devon.

**ESSEX & HERTS:** A local disagreement has emerged in Epping Forest after it was disclosed that the owners of North Weald Airfield, Epping Forest District Council, are charging their local air ambulance £95,500 a year to use the airfield.

A local resident who disclosed the sums involved said it was "utterly crazy" to charge the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance Charity such a high fee. The sum is made up of £91,500 rent and £4,000 in landing fees.

Robert Born called for the authority to follow airports in Luton and Norwich and waive the charity's costs. In response a councillor, Tim Matthews, said it was a "fair charge" for an "excellent service". The airfield provides air traffic services and fire and rescue services during daylight hours. Another councillor is reported to have supported the opinion of Mr Born.

The fees were first reported by a local news service, Everything Epping Forest, citing a Freedom of Information request by Mr Born.

The data also revealed the National Police Air Service (NPAS) was being charged annual rent of £108,000 to use the airfield, with landing fees of £40,000.

In the background of the various arguments is that fact that the council is perceived as being cash rich after selling off a large section of the airfield, 52 acres, for £88.2M to Google for a data centre in 2024.

Epping Forest District see both the police and air ambulance operations as welcome customers but not local facilities, the police operation is effectively national and the air ambulance covers at least two counties comprising a number of councils of a similar size to Epping Forest. Their 135,000 residents are assumed not to be wholly supportive of subsidising the rescue services of several million people across London and the south-east.

**GREAT WESTERN:** Great Western, who base their single EC135T2 air ambulance near Bristol at Almondsbury has released its results in financial statements for the year to 31 December 2024.

Income up 24.3% at £6.684M

Expenditure up 14.2% at £6.499M

Operating Surplus up 59.3% at £184K

Balance sheet funds at year end £5.139M

**LINCOLNSHIRE & NOTTINGHAMSHIRE:** Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance have announced a funding appeal to add a second helicopter. Based near RAF Waddington, Lincolnshire in the East Midlands, Lincs & Notts currently fly an AW169 and contract with HeliService International for its operation. A new Leonardo AW109SP GrandNew is scheduled for delivery in summer 2027 and fully operational by the autumn of that year.

The £7M cost of the helicopter and medical fit-out is already half achieved with donations on £1M from the Michael Cornish Charitable Trust (Michael Cornish is the son of the founder of packaging company Linpac, who inter alia make burger boxes for MacDonald's) another £1M from the BNA Charitable Incorporated Organisation and unstated amounts from others amounting to £4M in all.

**NORTHUMBRIA:** The HELP Appeal, the only charity in the United Kingdom dedicated to funding NHS hospital helipads, has donated an impressive £600,000 to support the construction of a new helipad at the Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital (NSECH) in Cramlington. The project will ensure the new helipad meets modern and future aviation standards. It includes the installation of a larger concrete landing pad, a 4-metre-wide safety zone and enhanced earthworks and landscaping.

Once completed, the helipad will support both day and, for the first time, night landings, featuring new aviation lighting, safety markings, warning lights, and improved footpaths.

Situated at NSECH, the helipad plays a role in enabling the rapid transport and treatment of seriously ill and injured patients from across Northumberland and North Tyneside.

**THE AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE:** TAAS, the group that operate two emergency air ambulances in the Midlands and the Children's Air Ambulance released their financial statements for the year to 31 December 2024.

- Income down 6.0% at £35.902M
- Expenditure up 9.2% at £37.585M
- Operating Surplus down 144.7% at -£1.683M

Balance sheet funds at year end £37.097M [Parapex]

**WALES:** On June 19, 2025 a High Court appeal against the closure of an air ambulance base was rejected.

In April 2024, it was announced that two of the existing Wales Air Ambulance bases were set to close. Welshpool, Powys and Caernarfon, Gwynedd were to be replaced by a new base in north Wales.

Locals protesting against the decision won the right to put their case to save the Welshpool site before the high court and it is that the judge rejected last month. Campaigners said they were "extremely disappointed", but Wales Air Ambulance said it welcomed the "clear and unequivocal outcome".

Giving his judgement, Mr Justice Turner said he understood the "depth of feeling involved and the disappointment that this decision will bring to many people" but added it was not the role of the High Court to "usurp the decision making function of those to whom parliament has delegated the responsibility". [BBC]



*Editor: Although plans have the habit of changing from time to time, the editor understands that the "new site" is the reoccupation of the former North Wales Police ASU overlooking Liverpool Bay near Kinmel Bay, (pictured left in the days of North Wales Police). It was given up by NPAS some years ago.*

PAR





**YORKSHIRE:** The proposed new base designed to replace the current one at Topcliffe (above) has been passed by the local authority.

Following the announcement of their planning application in November 2024, Yorkshire Air Ambulance have now had local authority approval for their new Northern Air Support Unit.

The location will be a green field site on the outskirts of the village of Skipton on Swale, just 3.5 miles from their current operations at RAF Topcliffe. The new base will reflect the facilities already established at YAA's Nostell Air Support Unit near Wakefield. The building will create a dedicated, long-term base for the northern region, providing stability for the Charity's lifesaving operations and ensuring it is equipped to respond to emergencies efficiently. Planning approval limits operational hours to 0700-1900.

For over a decade, YAA has operated as a tenant at RAF Topcliffe, benefiting from the invaluable support of the Royal Air Force, the British Army's 4<sup>th</sup> Regiment Royal Artillery, and the local community. While this relationship has been pivotal in enabling YAA to deliver its critical service, the Charity's vision for a purpose-built base reflected its commitment to advancing its capabilities and ensuring its crews can operate at the highest level in the years ahead.

## UNITED STATES

**FLORIDA:** Air Methods, the leading air medical service provider in the United States, has announced the arrival of AirLife Florida 1 in Wakulla County. This new base, which opened on June 4, will enhance emergency care for residents and visitors throughout the area, further expanding the reach of Air Methods' critical care network across Florida. Wakulla County is located in the Big Bend region in the northern portion of Florida on the Gulf of America/Mexico coastline.

The AirLife Florida 1 team, based in Crawfordville, is fully equipped to provide the highest standard of critical care when it is needed most. It joins an ecosystem of Air Methods bases, including AIRHeart 2 in Marianna, Okaloosa MedFlight in Niceville, and AirLife Florida 12 and LifeFlight 1 in Pensacola. This expansion allows for faster response times to emergency calls, offering 24/7 care for patients suffering from trauma events, heart attacks, strokes, pediatric emergencies, burns, motor vehicle accidents, and more.



On social media Air Methods illustrated the story with this image of N272MJ confirming that the AirLife Florida 1 service is currently being operated by a Bell 407GX helicopter. It is fully equipped with the advanced medical equipment and medications required to function as a flying ICU. The aircraft carries blood on board, allowing them to administer this lifesaving resource at a trauma scene or in flight.

GEORGIA: Grady Health System, a ground ambulance operator and home to Grady Memorial Hospital and one of the busiest trauma centres in the state, has taken a major step forward in emergency medical care with the launch of a new, state-of-the-art medical helicopter developed in partnership with Air Methods.

Grady Air, one of the state's largest medical aircraft, can provide intensive care unit-level care to patients, allowing quicker access to life-saving trauma care throughout the Southeast. The air ambulance will be staffed entirely by Grady medical personnel – highly trained nurses, paramedics, and critical care specialists – while experienced pilots from Air Methods will operate the aircraft. The prime airframe is believed to be 2020 Airbus Helicopters BK117C2 N113AH c/n 9858.



As Atlanta's only Level I trauma centre, this new helicopter offers reach, speed, and medical capacity to make a real difference when every second counts. The helicopter is equipped with advanced life-support equipment and can accommodate multiple caregivers at once, allowing for the highest level of care during transport. It will serve metro Atlanta and beyond, ensuring quick access to Grady's trauma services. [Air Methods/Grady]

HAWAII: Life Flight Network, the largest not-for-profit air ambulance provider in the USA, is to launch operations on the island of Hawaii later this year. Life Flight Network will invest \$27M into its Hawai'i operations, building on the previously announced \$15M investment from the Daniel R. Sayre Memorial Foundation through the acquisition of a new Airbus H145 helicopter. This funding will cover aircraft acquisition, medical equipment, and facilities for three bases on the Big Island, expanding critical care access for residents and visitors.

In partnership with Queen's North Hawai'i Community Hospital and Kona Community Hospital, Life Flight Network will initially station an Airbus EC135P2+ helicopter at each facility. These will transition to Airbus H145 helicopters by mid-2026. Additionally, a Pilatus PC-12NG fixed-wing aircraft will be based at Hilo International Airport. The ramp-up to full operations will begin later this year.

TEXAS: Travis County Star Flight are seeking bids for a fleet replacement project. In early 2019 Star Flight took delivery of three Leonardo AW169 helicopters – the first public safety agency in the USA to do so. It is now suggested that the operation is finding them too expensive to operate in the current financial climate and are seeking an alternate fleet. [Christian Shepherd]

## FIRE CANADA

MANITOBA: At last month's Paris Air Show in France, De Havilland Aircraft of Canada Limited announced that the province of Manitoba has confirmed their intent to purchase three De Havilland Canadair 515 (DHC 515) – the next generation of the world-renowned aerial firefighting aircraft.

This provincial commitment marks another milestone in the development of the original Canadair CL215 aircraft. DHC are working with the Province of Manitoba, a long-term operator of CL-215 and CL-415 aerial firefighting aircraft, for the renewal of its fleet. The 515 represents the future of wildfire suppression, and they are proud of the trust Manitoba has placed in them to support their hard-working firefighting teams.

The DHC 515 builds upon the proven legacy of the CL-215 and CL-415 aircraft, featuring modern avionics, enhanced performance, and increased efficiency. With climate change contributing to longer and more intense wildfire seasons, the 515 is specifically designed to meet the operational challenges faced by today's aerial firefighters.



ONTARIO: Part of the fleet of firefighting aircraft in the Canadian province of Ontario has been grounded by a pilot shortage brought on by low wages. JP Hornick, president of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, says the aerial firefighting force is short five pilots and that's resulted in the grounding of three of the province's eleven CL-415 water bombers. Hornick said the pilots left Ontario for jobs in other provinces where the money is better.

Job postings for the CL-415 positions list the pay range as \$1290 to \$1567 Canadian Dollar for a first officer and \$1520 to \$1850 a week for captains. In U.S. funds the upper limit for captains works out to about US\$6,000 a month.

The government is purchasing six new water bomber planes, but they have not yet addressed the staffing needs that they have on the existing planes.

## SLOVAKIA



AVIATION FESTIVAL: Appearing in public despite the ongoing war, XENA a subsidiary of Expedition Aviation, a full-service aviation project management company was displaying a rare Antonov An-32P Firekiller fire fighting aircraft from Ukraine at the Piešťany Aviation Festival in Slovakia.

The XENA operated An-32P stood out as the festival's only aerial firefighting aircraft, impressing the public by powerful water-drop. The aircraft was operating at an altitude of 70-80 meters (higher than the usual 40-60 meters maintained for safety reasons) and a speed of 250-260 km/h. The aircraft showcased its ability to discharge 8 tonnes of water with best-in-class disbursement, creating an impressive coverage pattern 35 meters wide and 160 meters long during the simultaneous water discharge. The type has undertaken over 900 successful missions and fully complies with FAA Category 1 and EASA Procedures, XENA has established itself as a leader in aerial firefighting operations.

The aircraft features specialized landing gear, low-pressure tyres, and high engine mounting, allowing operations from unpaved runways.

The Piešťany Aviation Festival, held on June 14-15, 2025, brought together an impressive array of aviation excellence, drawing over 25,000 visitors on its opening day. The show commemorated the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of World War II and featured military displays from the Ministry of Interior and Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic, alongside historic jet aircraft L-29 Delfín and L-39 Albatross from Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Estonia, and Latvia.

A promotional image for A&R able&rush. It features a group of business professionals in suits standing together. On the left is the company logo. In the center is a list of services under the heading "People Solutions". On the right is a quote from David Howell, Director, and the company website.

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## UNITED STATES

**CALIFORNIA:** The Department of Forestry received their latest Sikorsky Firehawk N453DF '615' on June 18. The delivery of two others followed close behind as the fire season draws closer.

In the final days of June N452DF was on delivery and it is expected that N454DF, currently in completion will appear soon.

The City of San Diego Fire Rescue Department has meanwhile taken delivery of a Bell 412EPX (c/n 39132) (Parapex)

## INDUSTRY

The ongoing sale of **Gloucestershire Airport**, Staverton, where major elements of the UK airborne emergency services are based has been narrowed down to two bidders. A decision on which of them would be accepted was expected on June 26. On the due date the sale was confirmed but the buyer remains un-stated.

The whole of the 350 acre site is valued at £25M – a figure that contrasts massively with the £88.2M paid by Google to secure a portion of land to build a data centre in Essex. Google now owns just 52 acres (21 hectares) of land at the similarly sized former RAF airbase. [MJ]



**TT Aero H125 Starlink** bracket kit by Drive Media in Las Vegas mounted an Airfilm v2 police and Shotover M1 to cover the Isle of Man TT live broadcasts. [DriveMedia/BM]



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Although it is not directly linked to the **Blackhawk** helicopters operated by the Polish Police, it is thought that moves in the country to reconfigure helicopter orders may affect them.

The police have their Blackhawks and there were moves towards equipping the military with 32 of them. That has now halted in the wake of trade issues with the USA.

Poland's Armament Agency has halted procurement of the Polish manufactured S-70i utility helicopters as it reassesses priorities in light of Ukraine war developments. A similar order for 32 Leonardo AW149 helicopters does not seem to have delays.

At the Paris Air Show it was announced **Smith Myers**, a global leader in mission-critical technology had joined forces with leading aviation training and simulation provider JD2E to showcase cutting-edge solutions at the show. Attendees were demonstrated the full potential of DMOS (Deployable Mission Operator Station). The versatile and transportable simulation and training platform is tailored to mission system and sensor software training across diverse environments and will demonstrate unparalleled integration and capability.

The DMOS will feature a fully integrated airborne system incorporating CarteNav's AIMS-ISR mission software, the Teledyne FLIR Star SAFIRE series airborne sensor and the groundbreaking Smith Myers Artemis system.

Artemis underscores Smith Myers' commitment to operational efficiency and mission success. Its ability to locate and identify handsets of interest, coupled with automated mapping and sensor control, provides unmatched situational awareness in critical environments.

Jonathan Bramley, Managing Director, JD2E added: "As the developer of the Deployable Mission Operator Station (DMOS), we are proud to demonstrate how this platform seamlessly integrates with systems like AIMS-ISR, ARTEMIS, and the Teledyne FLIR Star SAFIRE products. This collaboration showcases the potential for realistic, efficient simulation and training solutions that meet the demands of modern mission environments. DMOS has already been used to successfully train hundreds of air crew personnel."

Two King Air 360 aircraft configured for Special Missions were confirmed at the Paris Air Show by the **Fargo Jet Center** based in Fargo, North Dakota, USA.

The King Air pair are to feature next generation Collins Aerospace Pro-Line Fusion avionics.

These are the same airframes previously mentioned as ordered for air ambulance work in Greece.

**Robinson Helicopter Company** (RHC), the world's leading manufacturer of civil helicopters, has received FAA approval to install the Garmin GFC 600H Helicopter Flight Control System (HFCS) on all future Robinson R66 helicopters, now standard moving forward. This change marks an advancement in R66 avionics, by introducing a cost-effective digital flight control solution made to increase both ease of operation and safety of the R66. Key features and benefits include:

**Enhanced Safety (Garmin H-ESP):** Assists pilots in staying within safe operational limits with features like limit cueing, LVL mode, low-G protection, and low altitude protection.

**Seamless Garmin Integration:** Fully integrates with Garmin flight displays and navigators for streamlined operation.

**High Reliability:** Features smart servos and redundant sensors for dependable performance.

**Cyclic-Mounted Controls:** Allows pilots to manage autopilot functions without removing their hands from the primary controls.

**Comprehensive Autopilot Modes:** Offers altitude capture and hold, vertical speed hold, airspeed hold, heading select, navigation, and approach modes.

**Workload Reduction:** Includes hover assist (GPS-based position hold), airspeed stabilization, and heading hold.

**Optional Yaw Axis Control:** Improves ride quality, automates pedal input with power changes, and controls heading at low speeds.

Medlink and Gulf Helicopters have announced the establishment of **Gulf Med Aviation Services**, a private joint venture transport and medevac helicopter service that will greatly increase the companies' capabilities in the Mediterranean and Southern Europe.

Medilink International and Gulf Helicopters already have a long-standing partnership in providing synergistic operations to clients in the oil and gas extraction industries.

Gulf Helicopters was founded in 1970 with the primary aim of serving the needs of Qatar's offshore oil and gas sector. Today, it is a leading commercial aviation service provider with a global footprint and a reputation for safety, security and reliability, with approvals from EASA and FAA. The Company has also been growing its maintenance and training capabilities to evolve as a dependable MRO and Training service provider.



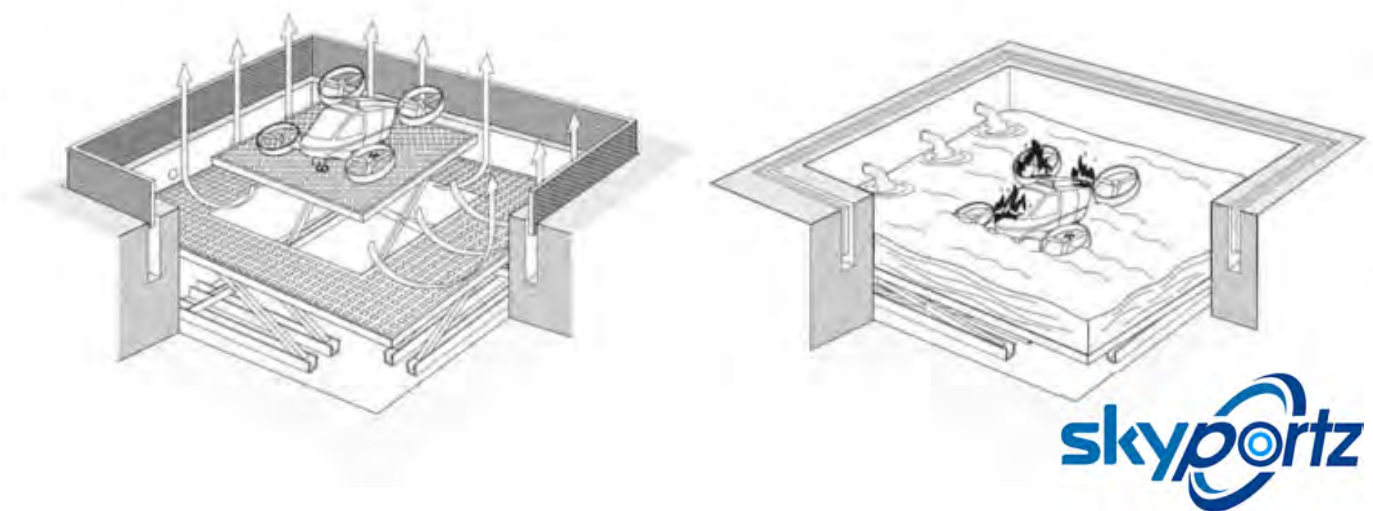
**Gama Aviation** has taken over fixed wing air ambulance operator Capital Air Ambulance. The takeover will see Capital Air Ambulance's medical and flight teams merged into Gama Aviation's Special Mission strategic business unit

The deal will see the transition of the Capital Air Ambulance team to Gama Aviation, as part of the company's Special Mission strategic business unit.

The move is expected to improve the resilience of Gama Aviation's existing clinical team, as well as its flight operations and pilot cadre.

Capital Air Ambulance has been weak for some years. It was acquired from previous parent firm Centreline, which in turn bought the company in 2021.

Australian vertiport developer **Skyportz** has released a new iteration of its award winning vertipad patent that ameliorates downwash and outwash at a private briefing for airport operators in Australia this week. The international patent application reserving all rights globally was filed on June 6, 2025. The modular vertipad patent addresses two of the standout issues for Advanced Air Mobility in urban locations – amelioration of downwash and outwash and fire suppression. Downwash and outwash have been highlighted by the FAA in January in their Engineering Brief 105A where the American air regulator indicated that vertipads will need to have a wind safety zone beyond the landing surface. This safety zone has been defined as where the windspeed exceeds 34.5 mph. The new design released this week is tailored for airport usage with higher throughput than the original single elevated landing pad design being offered to the property industry. With multiple height settings for the FATO landing surface and surrounds and an adjustable blast screen, this new design will enable airports to adjust the settings for particular aircraft types to maximise the downdraft amelioration features. Reduced wind speeds mean smaller footprint requirements for safe operations, enabling multiple pads side by side.



An estimated 1.5 million civil aviation professionals will be needed worldwide by 2034, according to CAE's biennial **Aviation Talent Forecast**, released at the Paris International Air Show. The comprehensive 2025 edition of the forecast analyzes the need for pilots, aircraft maintenance technicians, cabin crew, and, for the first time, air traffic controllers, predicting that 71,000 controllers will be needed globally over the next 10 years.



**Recoil Aerospace Inc.** (Recoil), designer of the world's most advanced aerial fire suppression systems (AFSS), has announced that the US FAA has approved its Tsunami Internal AFSS 790-gallon tank for the UH-60 Black Hawk series helicopters. US-based Recoil's Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) SR12058AK for the UH-60 Black Hawk series helicopters represents the only carbon fibre system of this design approved for UH-60 operations.

And the approval expands the Recoil family of aerial fire suppression products, joining the already FAA-approved Tsunami External AFSS 1,000-gallon Tank for Super Puma and Black Hawk helicopters. This breakthrough STC is applicable to all UH-60 type certificate holders as well as all model variants of the UH-60 and S-70 Black Hawk. Importantly, the Recoil AFSS tanks are designed and manufactured exclusively in the United States of America.

**Coulson Aviation Canada** has announced it has been awarded and started a 70-day contract by the BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) to provide one of its state-of-the-art Sikorsky S-61 Type 1 helitankers equipped for Night Vision Goggle (NVG) operations. This partnership marks the first time Coulson will conduct live-fire NVG aerial firefighting missions on Canadian soil. As the global leader in private NVG aerial firefighting, Coulson Aviation has set the benchmark for safe and effective night suppression. With thousands of NVG flight hours and tens of millions of gallons delivered at night, Coulson's rotary-wing fleet is the most proven and trusted in the industry. Since earning the world's first NVG firefighting certification from Transport Canada in 2011, followed by the first approvals of their kind in Australia and the United States, Coulson has expanded to operate a fully NVG-equipped rotary-wing fleet. This includes the flagship Quick Reaction Force (QRF) program, operated year-round in Southern California in partnership with the Orange County Fire Authority, the L.A. County Fire Department, and the Ventura County Fire Department.



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# ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

**3 June 2025 Pilatus PC-12/47E N812GS.** Fixed wing surveillance aircraft owned and operated by Tele-dyne FLIR Defense Inc. The aircraft was conducting flight from Reykjavik Airport, Iceland, to CFB Goose Bay Airport, NL, for a fuel stop. On the landing the aircraft ballooned due to overcontrol of the elevator resulting in a secondary balloon with the nose gear and prop striking the runway and then the main landing gear. The flight crew used the reverse and then taxied off the runway to park. The flight crew noted the blade tips had been curled. The aircraft propellor and engine will be replaced.

**13 June 2025 Bell 505 N** Law enforcement aircraft of Yuma County Sheriff's Office, Arizona. Received damage from a firearm fired at it. The Bell was undertaking a routine patrol over the 1600 block of East Calle Santa Clara when it was fired on by a person on the ground.

**15 June 2025 Airbus Helicopters H145 G-HEMC.** Air ambulance of East Anglia Air Ambulance based at Cambridge Airport as Anglia 2 deployed to Jaywick Beach on the east coast of Essex. Mechanical issues resulted in it being stranded there for several days as the contractor sought to recover it.

**19 June 2025 Air Tractor AT-802F Fire Boss amphibian LX-AFE** firefighting water bomber of Aquarius AFF. The aircraft was active on a firefighting mission when it overturned whilst scooping water from the Seyhan Dam Lake, Turkey. Both the AFF pilot and the Turkish observer on board were able to evacuate the aircraft unassisted.

**20 June 2025 MBB-Kawasaki BK117 C-GDGP** operated by AirMedic of St. Hubert Quebec, Canada. The 1990 build BK-117 crashed into a lake north of Natashquan, a municipality located on the Jacques Cartier Straight on the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Quebec eastern Canada with 5 people on board. Four fatalities recovered from the water. The helicopter was undertaking a medical evacuation.

*Ed: This is one of four airframes acquired from Canadian air ambulance operator STARS in 2022 when that operator upgraded its operational fleet to newer Leonardo airframes.*

**13 June 2025 Bell 505 N** Law enforcement aircraft of Yuma County Sheriff's Office, Arizona. Received damage from a firearm fired at it.

**21 June 2025 Mil Mi-17** air ambulance of the Islamic Republic of Iran Red Crescent Air Rescue  
Was substantially damaged in an Israeli airstrike while operating. Online images show puncture damage in the fuselage under the engine bay. No injuries reported. [IRCS]

**25 June 2025 Eurocopter AS350B3 Ecureuil/AStar N3951A** law enforcement helicopter of US Customs and Border Protection. Was involved in a hard landing near San Luis, Arizona, USA. No details or injuries reported. [ASN]



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# UNMANNED JAPAN

A research group led by Takayuki Matsumuro, a researcher at the Wave Engineering Laboratory of the Advanced Telecommunications Research Institute International (ATR) in Japan, has developed a new technology for wirelessly transmitting power to drones in flight.

This technology forms a special beam called an “air-core beam”, which can supply power to drones without affecting their cameras and other equipment (Figure).

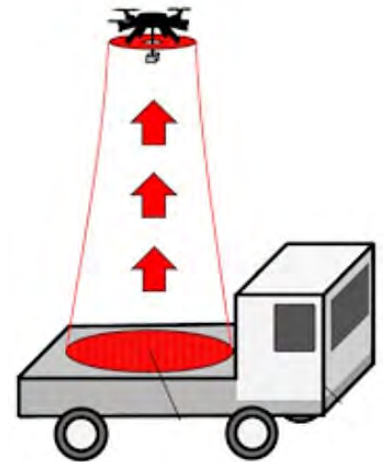
In an experiment, the power transmitted using the air-core beam was converted to direct current, and the group succeeded in lighting only LEDs located away from the centre of the drone. The fact that the central LED was not lit confirmed that interference had been avoided.

This technology will be the foundation for supplying power to drones in flight while they carry out various missions, and it is expected that wireless power transmission will be put to practical use and applied to a variety of fields in the future.

As drones are increasingly being implemented in society, they are expected to be used in a variety of fields, including watching sports, logistics, agriculture, and even collecting information and restoring communications during disasters. However, drones have a limited battery capacity and a short continuous flight time (approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour).

To solve this problem, this study proposes a wireless power transmission system using microwaves. However, to transmit power wirelessly, a “rectenna” \*2 must be installed at the bottom of the drone to receive the power. This causes problems such as radio and physical interference with the drone’s mission equipment, such as cameras.

In the study, the group developed a wireless power transfer system that uses a special beam called an “air-core beam” to solve the interference problem during power transfer.



## UNITED KINGDOM

The UK CAA has approved Operational Authority for leading independent drone advisors, Drone Major, to conduct the UK’s first beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) drone flights over the UK’s Critical National Infrastructure marking a major breakthrough in the drone industry.



This is the first time long-distance approved BVLOS drones in non-segregated airspace have been given the green light to fly over the UK’s critical national infrastructure and places the UK at the forefront of drone innovation.

This development will initially enable long-range drones to patrol over the UK’s rail networks. It marks an important step towards enabling more complex BVLOS operations across other areas of Critical National Infrastructure, with potential applications in sectors such as energy, utilities, defence, border management, and sensitive national infrastructure surveillance.

The approval was possible as a result of Network Rail enabling and funding this groundbreaking work and now paves the way for possible imminent trials of the technology on a critical 12km route between Wolverhampton and Sandwell & Dudley Station in partnership with Network Rail. The trials have the potential to vastly improve the safety, speed, and efficiency of the UK railway service, while also delivering many millions a year in savings.

Flying over railways, these drones will operate in a carefully defined 'safety corridor', much like aeroplanes, using Drone Major's advanced 'Digital Tethering™' concept to assure the safety of the aircraft's flight behaviour, significantly minimising risks to those on the ground. The innovative Digital Tethering™ solution began in Wolverhampton before being trialled further afield to include tests, trials and surveys along the Severn Valley Railway. The drones are able to monitor the UK's railways, transmitting visual data in real time to operators, providing vital detection and monitoring of trespassers.

The Digital Tethering™ system employs a range of world-leading onboard navigation and safety systems as well as innovative ground-based technology, together delivering a unique, cutting-edge capability to the project and enabling reliable autonomous navigation, providing real-time and precise position of the drones, particularly in areas along the railway where GPS/GNSS signals are unstable or inaccessible. Digital Tethering™ has been designed to significantly improve safety and increase the efficiency of UAS operations during monitoring and inspection tasks.

## UK EVENT CANCELLED

The drone event scheduled for 1-3 July 2025 Drone-Zone Expo 2025. Yarmouth Heliport, Norfolk, UK has been cancelled.

The first ever outdoor trade and industry drone exhibition was set for in the east of England, but circumstances led it to be cancelled in mid-June.

*Editor: This was always a difficult call for a new stand-alone event both by supporters and its quirky location and leaves the UK industry mainly reliant upon a series of piggy back events to get its marketing before the public. The events that spring to mind are all around September in the diary and will therefore likely water each other down as far as attraction is concerned. DSEi and the Emergency Services Show will likely be the winners with the 'dedicated' Drone X show at the end of September in ExCel London is blighted by bad marketing and poor delivery. It shares a space with Helitech which waters down under 100 shared exhibitors and claims they are 300. The combination has little or no credibility as either Drone X or Helitech..*

## LAS VEGAS EVENT

September sees the annual Drone industry get-together in Las Vegas, and this is usually marked by a post event report in Police Aviation News from Mark Colborn.

Unfortunately, this year Mark is busy elsewhere so we will not have the report. He is in western Colorado and eastern Utah during that time performing field research with the US Fish and Wildlife Service on an endangered butterfly species called the Silverspot Butterfly (Fritillary).

Carl Berndtson, the Director Global Partnerships – Div Com Tech Portfolio (Americas) who operate the Las Vegas Drone event has said "thanks for your amazing reporting from the past few years.

## PEOPLE

Awards, they are often given out like confetti to seemingly deserving people as something better than a pay rise. Occasionally the award does not really make sense. Over 70 years ago my father got an MBE for mending an aircraft engine under pressure of the Berin Air Lift, but he was just doing his job in aircraft engineering. It is often difficult to understand why the US military [and numerous other countries] have so many medals and awards in times of peace compared with other nations. To a degree even the grumpiest Englishman can just about understand the reasoning behind the 'Purple Heart' - awarded to US service people for getting shot or killed, but it is not exactly an award to aspire to!

All this begs a question as to why the latest crop of King Charles' Birthday Awards includes so many obscure awards for very little achievement. A whole raft of medals is dished out to people just like my father who were doing the job they were paid to do – oddly though many seem to be entertainers and civil servants doing their day-to-day work.

It is far more controversial when the award goes to reward apparent failure. In industry this is giving the Chairman of the Board a massive pay-off as part of being sacked for losing the company business and money. So where does Philip Douglas, Director General of Border Force, fit into his recent award of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, a British order of chivalry 'for services to border security and public service'? His citation states he is responsible for securing the UK border and controlling migration at maritime ports and airports. Since his appointment in November 2021 129,000 immigrants are known to have arrived in Britain illegally in rubber boats. Let's just forget the countless others that arrived in a variety of 'trains, planes and automobiles'....

He has been rewarded for complete and utter failure.





# SEARCH & RESCUE

## UNITED KINGDOM

CHANNEL UPDATE *from Tony Cowan. Based on the latest UK Home Office figures*

Illegal migration across the English Channel, from the beaches of northern France to England, continues unabated. The UK's Border Force, assisted by the national lifeboat service, the RNLI, routinely lands large numbers of illegal migrants at the Port of Dover. The only real change since last month's report is that in June the numbers continued to go up! The monthly total, up to the 29 June 2025, is 4,291 illegal migrants in 65 boats, greater than in June in any year since the first 299 migrants crossed the English Channel in small boats in 2018. There are, of course, good days and bad days, dependent on your point of view. If you believe that the bad days are those days when large numbers of illegal migrants leave France, when the weather is benign, with light winds and a calm sea, described by the Home Office as, 'Red Days', then in June there were just 13 bad days! Nevertheless, reports from the Home Office, together with up to the minute media reporting, show that some 4,600 illegal migrants were landed in the UK, at Dover, in just one month. With the total for the first 6 months likely to exceed 19,500, then the total for 2025 is expected to be in the order of 40,000. No checks, no vetting, no prior permission.

**Migrants wait, in the sea, for the next 'taxi boat' whilst the French police look on, refusing to intervene to save lives at sea.**



BBC

### OUT OF TOUCH

A senior government minister, Darren Jones MP, the First Secretary to the British Treasury, would have you believe that the majority of these migrants are women, children and babies. His statement caused the audience of the BBC current affairs programme, 'Question Time', Thursday, 12 June 2025, to gasp in disbelief! The programme host, Ms Fiona Bruce, was also taken by surprise. Why? Because, this statement, by a senior Labour politician, is simply untrue. The vast majority of illegal migrants travelling in boats, up to 90%, are young men. Although, sadly, a small number of women and children have been crushed to death in the bottom of the same boats. For a senior politician, a member of the British Government, to appear on BBC television and to be so out of touch with such a serious subject is simply beyond belief.

It's generally accepted that up to 90% of illegal migrants, those who cross the English Channel in large inflatable boats, are young men, economic migrants, lured to the UK by the 'pull factor', which includes free accommodation, often in hotels, together with an allowance for food and toiletries, whilst their claims for asylum are assessed by the immigration service. An immigration service which is overwhelmed, many would say, broken! Today, many of these young men may be seen in London, working illegally for companies such as Deliveroo, Uber Eats and Just Eats, whilst others work in nail bars and wash cars. These are just a few examples of the out of control gig economy in the UK which fuels illegal migration across the English Channel.



**The craft mainly carry young men across the water**

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## AN UNANSWERED QUESTION

When it was pointed out that the UK Border Force is routinely rescuing illegal migrants from grossly overloaded inflatable boats in French waters, and then transporting them to England, to Dover, rather than taking them to the nearest place of safety in France, the response by the Home Office was:

*“UK rescues are coordinated by the Maritime & Coastguard Agency. In supporting these rescues the master of the vessel and the Border Force officer in charge conduct an assessment of the vulnerability of those being rescued, the vessel, the environment and make a dynamic, risk based decision as to where to land those rescued. At all times safety of lives at sea will remain the top priority.”*

The question remains unanswered. Why is the UK Border Force rescuing illegal migrants from dangerous, grossly overloaded, unseaworthy boats, boats that are described as ‘death traps’; rescuing the migrants in French waters, and then transporting them across the English Channel before landing them at Dover? Why aren’t these migrants landed at nearest place of safety, in a safe country, in France? If those who are contracted by the Home Office to man the 5 repurposed crew transfer vessels based at Ramsgate (Defender, Hurricane, Ranger, Typhoon and Volunteer) are unable to transport 60 or more migrants, many of them young men, without personal risk, then these rescue boats should each carry a section of Royal Marines to guarantee the safety of the civilian crew.

**The Home Office operates 5 rescue vessels with civilian crews. These repurposed crew transfer vessels routinely rescue illegal migrants in mid-Channel, often in French waters, before landing them in England, at Dover. An operation which has been described as a taxi service.**



Home Office

## ANOTHER GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

The most recent initiative, from the British Government, announced in mid-June by the Foreign Secretary, David Lammy MP as a ‘World-first’, will see a crack down on the people traffickers, the criminal gangs, with new sanctions, including travel bans, freezing assets and being disqualified from becoming the director of a British company! These new sanctions are due to come into effect within months, in the Autumn of 2025.



Sadly, British politicians, those with responsibility for border security, are living in world which is completely different from the world that is occupied by the people they are paid to govern! In the past, when new legislation has been announced, to close the UK’s southern border, the English Channel, the organised criminal groups simply work harder to beat the new deadline. In this case, Autumn 2025. As a result of the new announcement we can now anticipate a surge of Channel crossing in the summer months. In July, August and September when benign weather with light winds and calm seas may be anticipated.

**When new legislation is announced, to ‘stop the boats’, the result is a surge of illegal migrants crossing the English Channel to beat the deadline.** Daily Express image

Another new initiative, recommended by the French, is to exchange migrants on a one for one basis. Migrants in France, those wishing to join relatives in England, would be exchanged for migrants in England, those who have been refused asylum. The unanswered question is, who will stop those migrants, returned to France, from catching the next ‘taxi boat’ to leave France for England? In the first 3 weeks of June 2025, the numbers of illegal migrants landed in the UK, at Dover, was, according to Home Office figures, 3,588 migrants from 57 boats. In the same period 2,128 migrants, some 37% of the total, were ‘prevented’ from leaving France by the French police. However, those migrants ‘prevented’ from leaving France on one day will try again the next day, or the next week, or the next month. Preventing migrants from crossing the English Channel without, at the same time, destroying more boats than can be delivered from China is a nugatory exercise. Those migrants ‘prevented’ from leaving France simply have their departure deferred, rather than stopped.





Should the French police develop more robust tactics to 'stop the boats', to do what the British Government has paid them to do, then the criminal gangs will develop new tactics. In 2023 the British Government agreed to transfer to the French Government £476million, to pay for additional police officers for 3 years and to build a new detention centre to remove migrants from the French coast. To date, there is little evidence of a significant number of boats being stopped and destroyed and the detention centre has not been built. In the meantime, the criminals are testing alternative routes. In July 2024 the Border Force towed a yacht into Dover after it was found carrying migrants from France to England. Then, in April this year, the UK Border Force intercepted a second yacht off the Cornish coast with 20 people hiding below deck, 19 men and one woman, all thought to be from Albania.

### AIR SUPPORT

An integral part of any operation at sea is the use of aircraft. To search, to find, to observe, to report and, if necessary, to initiate search and rescue action should persons be seen to be in distress. The irregular route across the English Channel for illegal migrants hoping to enter the UK without permission is different. These illegal migrants choose to pay criminals large amounts of money to travel in a grossly overloaded, unseaworthy boat. To cross one of the world's busiest shipping lanes, the Dover Strait, with the expectation, with the realisation that a French naval vessel will escort them to the half-way point. They will then be met by the UK Border Force before completing their journey to the UK in a rescue vessel.

These mid-Channel rendezvous' are coordinated by a fleet of aircraft. First two deHavilland Dash 8 maritime patrol aircraft, based at Lydd in Kent, are on contract to the Home Office from PAL Aerospace in Canada. These Home Office aircraft are supported by HM Coastguard with a Diamond DA62, a Beechcraft King Air and a Schiebel S-100 drone. Other drones used to patrol the English Channel include the Portuguese built Tekever AR3 and AR5. The French also fly occasional air patrols between Dunkirk and the Baie de Somme with Diamond DA62 based at Ostend, in Belgium, and a Vulcaniar P68 Observer, based in Lille, in northern France. The latter aircraft is flown by the French Police Aux Frontiere. To 'stop the boats' persistent air patrols must be flown along the French coast. Flying air patrols mid-Channel is too late to make a difference, too late to stop the boats.

Should additional patrol aircraft be required, to patrol the coast of France, to spot boats on the beaches, or close inshore, then the UK National Police Air Service Vulcanair P68R would be a worthy contender. These aircraft, 4 of them, are flown infrequently by an organisation that, through an absence of aviation expertise, purchased an aircraft that's too small for police air support duties in the UK. Nevertheless, the P68R does have an electro-optical MX10 camera turret. A 'line search', along the French coast would be well within the capability of this aircraft and its 2-man crew, the pilot and the tactical flight officer.

**A persistent air search, a 'line search' along the coast of northern France, between Dunkirk and the Baie de Somme would be ideal for the Vulcaniar P68R and its 2-man crew; pilot and tactical flight officer.**

NPAS



## CONCLUSION

After a full year in power there is no sign that the current Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, together with his Home Secretary, Ms Yvette Cooper MP have made any reduction in the number of illegal migrants crossing the English Channel, from France to England. In fact, based on the current trajectory, 2025 may prove to be a record year with over 40,000 illegal migrants entering the UK after crossing the English Channel in small boats. If a government cannot control the countries borders, if it cannot control who arrives and who leaves, is it fit to govern?

Rather than introducing yet more legislation, legislation that is unlikely to make a one iota of difference to the increasing number of illegal migrants entering the UK, there is an alternative. The security services in Europe and especially those in France must destroy more inflatable boats than can be delivered to Europe from China. Those inflatable boats that do reach the beaches of northern France must be disabled and destroyed on the beaches, or, in the case of the 'taxi boats', pushed into shallow water and then destroyed.

Also, those illegal migrants who escape from France, in an inflatable boat, must be rescued at the earliest opportunity, in French waters, and returned to the nearest place of safety. to France. The organised criminal groups have been running circles around the governments of France, the UK and other European countries for far too long. This cannot go on and France and the UK must now work together to close the cross-Channel route forever. Destroying more inflatable boats than can be delivered to Europe from China would be a good start. Instead of 'stopping the boats' and 'smashing the gangs' the new mantra must be to, 'destroy the boats - save lives at sea'. Without boats the criminal gangs will disappear. Without boats the irregular route for migrants, across the English Channel, will be finished.

**Without boats the criminal gangs will disappear. Without boats the irregular route for migrants, across the English Channel, will be finished.**



James A Cowan MBE

AFF

Note: The author is a former member of the Royal Air Force, a maritime patrol pilot. Ince leaving the RAF he has served as police pilot, air ambulance pilot and a police helicopter unit executive officer.

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## FEATURE

## COVER STORY

## Guardians of the Mont Blanc Skies:

*The Gendarmerie Air Section in Chamonix*

Nestled in the heart of the French Alps, the Gendarmerie Air Section (SAG) of Chamonix stands as a life-line for those who dare to venture into the treacherous beauty of the Mont Blanc massif. Working in seamless coordination with the Peloton de Gendarmerie de Haute Montagne (PGHM), a specialized high-mountain rescue unit, these airborne heroes ensure that mountaineers, skiers, and hikers receive swift and expert assistance when

danger strikes. But what is behind these operations? Roelof-Jan Gort visited the SAG Chamonix and spoke with Captain Herman who has been Squadron Leader since 2019 and pilot at the FAGN since 2005. As qualified pilot on the AS350 Ecureuil and the EC145 he has over 4700 flight hours.

This morning, Captain Herman, the Commander and squadron leader of the Gendarmerie Air Section in Chamonix, is sitting at his desk with a view of the platform where EC145 is being prepared by the ground crew behind him. In the background, the mountains are gradually becoming visible as the mist clears. "It's going to be a busy day today with various training missions, and we may also have some additional rescue missions to carry out," says Commander Herman as he reviews today's schedule.

As Commander of the SAG Chamonix section, Captain Herman is responsible for flight safety, effective management of technical resources, operational response, and crew preservation. Chamonix SAG offers a 24/7 alert system that includes a pilot, an on-board mechanic, and additional radio alert personnel. SAG Chamonix employs three pilots, four winch-on-board mechanics, and one aero surveillance operator, in addition to office staff.

The assignment to SAG in Chamonix is based on volunteer participation. It is not possible to assign personnel who are not volunteers due to the technical demands and commitment required for this role. Additionally, candidates typically need to have served at one or two other mountain bases before being eligible for assignment in Chamonix to ensure they have sufficient experience.

### A Legacy of Aerial Rescue

The need for specialized mountain rescue services in France became evident in the mid-20th century as alpine tourism and mountaineering gained popularity. The treacherous conditions of the high mountains necessitated a dedicated force trained to manage emergencies in such environments.

The history of aerial rescue in the Gendarmerie dates to May 6, 1954, when France set up its first airborne unit, ushering in a new era of mountain rescue. Just three years later, in 1957, the introduction of the Alouette II helicopter revolutionized high-altitude operations, providing rescuers with the ability to reach climbers stranded on sheer rock faces or deep within icy crevasses.



In response to this need, the PGHM was established in 1958, focusing on mountain rescue operations. Recognizing the importance of aerial support in such missions, the Gendarmerie Air Section in Chamonix was subsequently formed. This collaboration between ground and air units revolutionized mountain rescue operations, allowing for quicker response times and more efficient rescues.

As technology advanced, so did the Gendarmerie's fleet. The AS350B Écureuil, introduced in 1978, brought increased agility and power, while the EC145, added in 2002, became the ultimate workhorse for high-altitude rescues. These state-of-the-art helicopters, equipped with advanced medical and rescue



gear, allow SAG to execute missions in some of the most challenging conditions on Earth. These aircraft are equipped with specialized gear such as winches, stretchers, and navigation systems tailored for mountain operations.

### **A Highly Trained, Elite Team**

Operating in the extreme environment of the Mont Blanc region requires skill, precision, and courage. The SAG of Chamonix consists of eight elite military personnel, including highly trained pilots and expert winch operators. These professionals undergo rigorous training, often boasting years of experience in both military aviation and mountain flying.

Mechanics in the unit serve dual roles, not only ensuring that the aircraft stay in peak condition but also acting as in-flight winch operators, lowering rescuers into perilous situations where every second counts. Their ability is critical when evacuating injured climbers from near-vertical rock faces or extracting skiers caught in avalanches.

To get more information about the pilot training and mountain training within the FAGN, Roelof-Jan asked Captain Herman about the pilot training at the FAGN (Forces Aériennes de la Gendarmerie Nationale). He explained: "The pilot training in the FAGN begins with an 18-month basic training course in the Army's aircraft school based in DAX to obtain a pilot's license. It continues with five to six weeks of additional training at CNIFAG to obtain the qualifications required for the gendarmerie (winching, camera, type qualification, etc.)

He continued: "Then assigned to a unit, the young pilot will have to continue his training by completing around fifty hours of operational flight in dual control. He will then be released on a mission. If he wishes to become a mountain pilot, he will have to, after a detection phase, confirm a mountain flight qualification provided in four 2-week courses spread over the 4 seasons. This training is given at the Mountain Flying Training Center in Briançon, which is also situated in the French Alps, but more to the South.

### **The Role of the CNISAG**

Central to the effectiveness of the PGHM and SAG is the Centre National d'Instruction de Ski et d'Alpinisme de la Gendarmerie (CNISAG), located in Chamonix. Established in 1988, CNISAG is responsible for training gendarmes in mountain operations, including skiing, alpinism, and aerial rescue techniques. The rigorous training ensures that personnel are well-prepared for the challenges of high-altitude rescues.

The PGHM and SAG units are composed of highly trained professionals, including mountain guides, pilots, flight engineers, and rescue specialists. Their combined expertise allows for seamless coordination during complex rescue missions.

### **Rescue Missions**

The primary mission of the SAG in Chamonix is to conduct aerial rescues in the Mont Blanc massif and surrounding areas. These missions often involve evacuating injured climbers, skiers, or hikers from inaccessible locations. The unit operates year-round, with increased activity during peak tourist seasons. Beyond rescue operations, SAG also assists in law enforcement activities, including surveillance of protected areas, monitoring of illegal activities, and support during major events in the region. The SAG often collaborates with other emergency services, including the Sécurité Civile and medical teams, to ensure comprehensive response capabilities during emergencies.

Roelof-Jan Asked Captain Herman about these rescue missions they perform. He explained how the rescue missions take place at the SAG: "Mountain rescue missions are conducted under the authority of the PGHM, which determines the necessary resources for each operation. If a helicopter is deemed the most effective option, the PGHM coordinates with SAG for assistance. During the day, the helicopter can be airborne in just a few minutes, while at night, a delay of approximately 40 minutes is typical. We can respond anywhere in the territory, both day and night, and at all altitudes. The only limitations we face are adverse weather conditions, such as intense winds, clouds, fog, and snow".



And to conduct these rescue missions successfully they need a crew made up of a pilot and a winch mechanic. They have equipment to perform each type of rescue mission like a camera, Night Vision Goggles (NVGs), thermal binoculars, searchlight, winch, etc. Depending on the type of mission they can take rescuers, doctors, investigators, intervention teams (GIGN) with them. They only take off at night for verified life-threatening emergencies and with stricter weather conditions than during the day.

Captain Herman explains what a rescue team consists of and the tasks these individuals perform: "A rescue team typically consists of five members: a pilot, a winch operator, two PGHM rescuers, and a doctor. This configuration can be adjusted based on the specific type of rescue. For instance, in an avalanche situation, it may be necessary to quickly deploy more rescuers during the search phase. The doctor might only become involved in the second or third rotation. Each member of the team has a specific role. The crew's mission is to transport the rescue team to and from the scene of the incident. To conduct this mission, they must hold a mountain qualification issued by the gendarmerie.

Captain Herman continues: "The personnel from the PGHM (Peloton de Gendarmerie de Haute Montagne) are trained first aiders, judicial police officers, and high mountain guides, and they are responsible for conducting the rescue operations. Additionally, the doctor is an emergency physician who can work independently in mountainous and high-altitude environments, and he or she oversees making medical decisions. About the clothing, the following. We carry a survival kit in case we get stranded in the mountains. To prepare for this, we undergo all mountain survival training. We are equipped with clothing suitable for the environment, which allows us to move comfortably and protects us from the cold".

The helicopters are equipped with skis, winches, and an aluminum floor. This setup allows for climbing with crampons and includes rescue and survival equipment. Their performance is consistent, but working at high altitudes necessitates taking off at a light weight. Therefore, we only carry the equipment, personnel, and fuel that are strictly necessary to maintain this lightness.

### **Swift Response in the Face of Tragedy**

The SAG's work is more than just technical ability—it is a mission of life and death. On April 9, 2023, the SAG was instrumental in responding to a massive avalanche on the Armancette Glacier, which tragically claimed several lives. The swift action and coordination between aerial and ground units highlighted the critical role of the SAG in managing large-scale mountain emergencies. Their rapid response allowed rescuers to reach survivors trapped beneath tons of snow, showing the vital role of aerial intervention in mountain emergencies. Beyond rescue missions, the unit is also instrumental in medical evacuations, law enforcement support, and high-risk interventions, ensuring that no corner of the Mont Blanc massif is beyond reach.

### **The Lifeline of the Mont Blanc Massif**

With over 60 years of experience in mountain rescue, the Gendarmerie Air Section of Chamonix is more than just a unit and is a symbol of dedication, skill, and heroism. Their presence enhances the region's safety, giving adventurers the confidence to explore the majestic yet unforgiving landscapes of Mont Blanc.





Whether soaring through stormy skies or hovering inches above a frozen peak, these airborne rescuers embody the spirit of mountain rescue, proving that when disaster strikes, help is never far away.

### Routine Rescues

The SAG conducts numerous rescues annually, ranging from assisting injured hikers to evacuating stranded climbers. For instance, in August 2022, the unit conducted multiple operations, including rescuing paragliders and elderly hikers, showcasing their versatility and readiness.

### Increasing Tourist Activity

With the growing popularity of mountain tourism, SAG faces the challenge of managing an increasing number of rescue operations. Ensuring the safety of both tourists and residents requires continuous training and resource allocation. The SAG is continually updating its equipment and training protocols to incorporate the latest technological advancements, ensuring that they remain at the forefront of mountain rescue operations.

### Future Outlook

The Gendarmerie Air Section of Chamonix stands as a testament to France's commitment to mountain safety and rescue excellence. Through rigorous training, advanced equipment, and unwavering dedication, the SAG continues to safeguard the lives of those who explore the majestic yet perilous terrains of the French Alps.

When asked about the future expectations of the SAG Chamonix, Captain Herman said "First I want to continue to thrive at SAG in Chamonix and prepare for the arrival of the next helicopter scheduled for 2026 (H145D3). This is another positive advancement with a helicopter that is in many ways superior to the current EC145. Next to this the technological evolution of helicopters and climate change are the primary factors that will impact our profession. Climate change leads to issues such as landslides, melting glaciers, and rising temperatures, all of which affect our performance and introduce new dangers. We rely on manufacturers to provide us with innovative technologies that will help us maintain a high level of flight safety while carrying out our missions. Therefore, FAGN must adapt to these changes by continuing to develop its equipment, ensuring that we excel in this challenging environment, just as we have for the past 60 years".



The author, Roelof-Jan Gort would like to thank Captain Allerre from the Headquarters at BA107 Villacoublay and Captain Herman from the Gendarmerie Air Section Chamonix for making this article possible. Roelof-Jan Gort lives in Barneveld, The Netherlands and operates as Fly High Aeromedia.



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# EVENTS

## UPCOMING

### 14-18 July 2025 APSCON 2025 Phoenix, Arizona, USA.

APSA's premier training and networking events, APSCON 2025 and APSCON Unmanned, are taking place concurrently in Phoenix, AZ the week of July 14-18, at the Phoenix Convention Center, hosted by the Phoenix Police Department Air Support Unit. Conducted as separate educational events with a shared exhibit hall. Attendees will have access to industry-leading public safety aviation training, products and services in one location.

APSA will again offer the best conference courses and classes presented by the experts from our industry. This includes, new this year, a Pix4D-based photogrammetry course and a combined Tactical Flight Officer / Airborne Thermographer Certification Course. There will be ground schools for AS350/H125, Bell 407 and MD 500 model helicopters as well as for the TDFM 800/900 series of tactical radios. And Survival systems USA is conducting their Water Egress & Survival Training in conjunction with APSCON.



### 2-4 September Commercial UAV Expo – Las Vegas, Nevada USA.

Commercial UAV Expo, presented by Commercial UAV News, is the world's leading commercial drone trade show and conference focusing on the integration and operation of commercial UAS in select vertical markets.

**The Conference Program** will spotlight real-world use cases that drive efficiency, safety, and operational success. Whether you're building a drone program, refining workflows, or navigating compliance, you'll find practical insights tailored to your needs. Focused tracks will address the unique challenges and opportunities faced by drone pilots, project managers, service providers, surveyors, airspace management, and public safety. These tracks will offer targeted education designed to help professionals take the next step with UAV technology—whether that means scaling operations, exploring new applications, or aligning with regulatory best practices. Attendees will also gain insights on cross-functional topics including FAA regulation for BVLOS operations, AI integration, data workflows, battery life, and the evolving future of UAV operations. The program delivers value for all levels— from new learners to seasoned experts.

The **Drone Pilot Hub** is a dynamic space in the Commercial UAV Exhibit Hall that will feature content tailored for attendees who are new or current professional drone pilots. Learning opportunities include drone pilot preparations for Part 107 tests, discussion of standard operating procedures and best practices for flights, and details of regulation and documentation.

Commercial UAV Expo is produced by Diversified's technology portfolio, which also includes Commercial UAV News, Commercial UAV Forum, Geo Week, Geo Week Newsletter, Geo Business (UK), and Digital Construction Week (UK).



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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 address for the venue is Plataforma Sur Calle 2, Avinguda Comarques del Pais Valencia, Quart de Poblet Valencia, 46930 ES

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 available. The contact in Frederick, Maryland is Benay Osborne at [bosborne@publicsafetyaviation.org](mailto:bosborne@publicsafetyaviation.org), +1-301-631-2406.

Rumour has it that officers from Brazil are attending this 'European' event. This may just be an expression of interest similar to that they showed for PAVCon Europe. They were not in France.

With 3 months to the event just one day of the programme seems set.

Clay Lacey from the Texas Department of Public Services covering the first day. Clay is a great instructor and his classes are well worth attending. So far the content in the other days remains unadvertised.

*Ed: On the face of it the event faces some problems in that there are currently no APSA members with units in Spain. Spanish companies are corporate members and several organisations have indicated they will be there. None of these issues is insurmountable—as indicated by the supposed invitation to Brazil—but it is one to watch.*

**9-12 September 2025 DSEi at the ExCel Docklands** Having stepped into 2025, we're excited for a ground-breaking year in the defence sector, with DSEI 2025 at its core. As you set to achieve new goals, DSEI 2025 offers the ultimate platform to explore innovations, build strategic partnerships, and discover key trends shaping the future of defence.

**17-18 September 2025 The Emergency Services Show 2025**, National Exhibition Centre (NEC), Birmingham



Also to look forward to at ExCel in Docklands at the end of September is the joint show involving DroneX and Helitech. We have been there before and the enthusiasm in industry is low already.

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