

Police Aviation News

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Issue 353

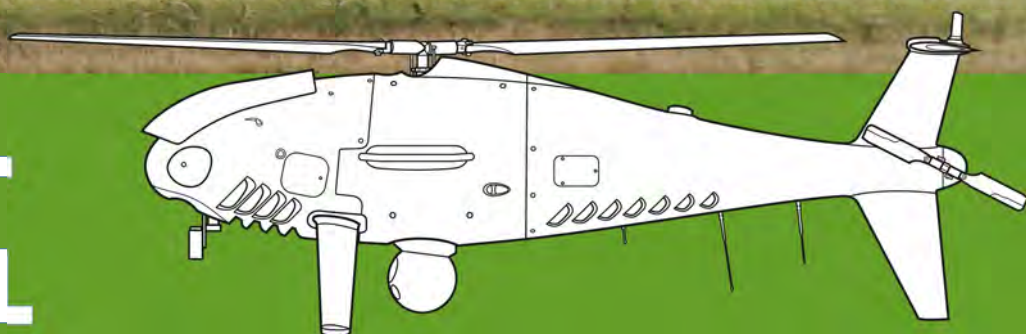
September 2025



Galileo SAR Meet 2025

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**THE N.P.A.S.
BVLOS TRIAL**



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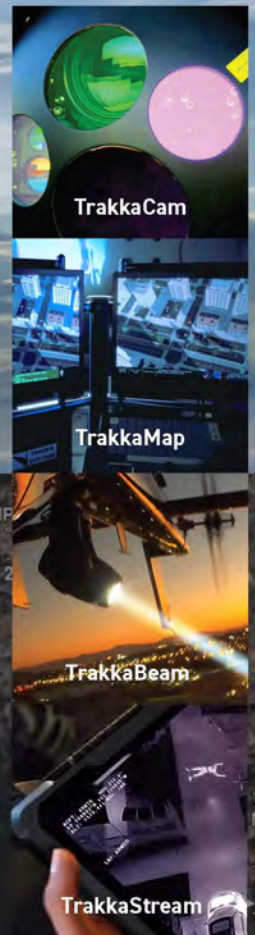


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COLOMBIA

POLICE: The downing of a Colombian National Police Sikorsky UH-60 Black Hawk places a whole new level of threat to airborne helicopter operations. There was always a perceived threat from 'accidental' drone impact but the weaponizing of the small craft in the wake of the Ukraine war brings a whole new level of danger to flying.

The growing vulnerability of rotary-wing aircraft to these attacks has already altered the plans of military buyers to acquire up-to-date high specification attack helicopters. Suddenly they seem too vulnerable for the battlefield and there is some evidence of this in reports from the war in the Ukraine. The incident in Colombia appears to be the first such incident in the Western Hemisphere, and in a near war scenario of drugs and warlords but relatively cheap and sophisticated drones look to rule the airways for the immediate future.

The police helicopter was hit by a drone while "providing security to officers engaged in manual coca crop eradication efforts," Antioquia Governor Andres Julian Rendon stated on X. Subject to the perpetrators making specific claims FARC dissidents and the Gulf Clan are the main suspects.

GHANA

POLICE: Strange events in Ghana in the wake of a fatal military helicopter crash (a crashing Chinese designed Harbin Z9 took the lives of the crew and some important politicians).

A member of Parliament's Defence and Interior Committee, Hon. Ernest Henry Norgbey, subsequently raised alarm over the state of three Ghana Police Service helicopters. He described them as "flying coffins" that are unfit for use.

His remarks follow public concerns that these police aircraft should have been deployed for search and rescue efforts after the previous weeks military helicopter crash, which claimed the lives of eight people, including the Defence Minister and the Environment Minister.

Speaking on one of the leading English language radio stations (Joy FM), Mr Norgbey revealed that the helicopters in question were manufactured in 1976 and have been grounded since their delivery.

"The 1976 helicopters that were delivered, as we speak now, they cannot be used because they were not fit for purpose. A 1976 aircraft, that is a flying coffin," he said, stressing that the nearly 50-year-old machines are unsafe and incapable of performing modern policing duties.



The NDC affiliated MP noted that the aircraft remain idle in a hangar despite the initial fanfare surrounding their procurement.

NPP, one of the major political parties in Ghana, were said to have hyped up the news for having procured three Helicopters for the Ghana Police Service. Back then sources within the security apparatus

COVER IMAGE: You might think that flying a Russian Mil was difficult during the ongoing war in Ukraine but there were several present at this years Galileo SAR Meet 2025 International Helicopter Crew Exercise which took place from August 4 to 7, 2025, at the 24th Air Transport Base of the Czech Air Force in Prague Kbely. This exercise is for search and rescue (SAR) helicopters, whose primary goal is to learn and share procedures and experiences from the entire SAR helicopter community, making the demanding search and rescue operations much safer, faster, and more efficient. See page 20 to see who else was there. [Image by Michael Mau]

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revealed that the helicopters were more than 40 years old. They were manufactured and used in the UK, and acquired via an agent in South Africa at what is now being portrayed as high cost. It was commented that Mahamudu Bawumia the Ghanaian politician and former central banker who served as the seventh vice president of Ghana from 2017 to January this year was a person who depended on hype rather than substance. The radio station commented that they thought the MP was right and that the Police Helicopters are flying coffins. A lack of finance is central to the purchases.

Mr Norgbey also addressed the status of another set of helicopters promised by government.

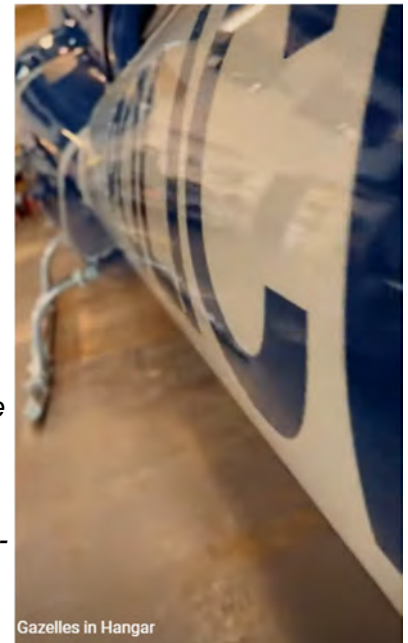
In October 2021, President Akufo-Addo announced plans to deliver three helicopters to the Ghana Police Service by November that year, alongside the completion of officer training and hangar preparations. However, these aircraft have not arrived.

Editor: The story was reported in a somewhat confused manner but the three helicopters that PAN reported as arriving in Ghana two years ago appear to be the ones described as 1976 death traps. They appeared in public in 2023 and were revealed as a single AS350 and two SA341 helicopters that were originally from the United Kingdom. What we do not know is the exact identity of each airframe. All three were prepared for Ghana Police Service at Excel Helicopters at Stapleford in Essex and were airworthy on delivery. They were kept in the background while the six local pilots built up experience after flight training in South Africa in the autumn of 2021 but there is evidence they were delivered as viable airframes.

Excel Helicopters, is one of the leading engineering supporters of the Aero-spatiale AS341 Gazelle and is based at Stapleford Aerodrome. One of the Gazelle's appeared in undated video footage in Hangar 17 at Stapleford Tawney. Back in 2023 Excel Helicopters declined to comment on this contract, or even to confirm their part in it.

That the age of the helicopters is only now being raised tends to show a lack of awareness among the politicians. The difference in cost between three new helicopters and the three old ones acquired is massive. From statements made it would appear highly unlikely the police budget could ever hope to meet the cost of new airframes. You get what you pay for and neither type of helicopter is equipped for a SAR role.

Whether all three helicopters were dating from 1976 as stated by the politician is unlikely. The first prototype of the AS350 helicopter achieved its first flight in June, 1974 a second appeared early in 1975. The Gazelle's were even older, dating from the 1960s and in service with the UK military for over 50 years until finally retired in 2024. They were old but certainly did not fit the 'death trap' description.'



Gazelles in Hangar

NIGERIA

NEMA AOO: The Nigerian National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Abuja Operations Office, has reaffirmed its commitment to disaster preparedness and public safety by participating in the 2025 Search and Rescue Simulation Exercise (SAREX), codenamed "Operation Safety."

The full-scale off-aerodrome simulation exercise was organised by the Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA) and held on July 31, 2025, near the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja. The objective of the exercise was to test and enhance coordinated response of key stakeholders to a simulated plane crash.

The exercise began with a stakeholder mapping session and pre-exercise briefing, followed by an active simulation involving a crash scenario and multi-agency response.

In addition to NEMA, agencies involved included the Nigerian Army, Aerodrome Rescue and Fire Service, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet), Air Traffic Control, Airline Operators Committee, Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Federal Fire Service, Federal Medical Services, Nigeria Police Force, Department of State Services (DSS) and local traditional leaders



The incident scene was brought under control, with simulated casualties successfully evacuated to the Air Force Base Hospital. The exercise concluded at 12:36 GMT, followed by an after-action review at the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC).

Overall the exercise was a success but inevitably some areas needing improvement. The simulation ultimately highlighted the importance of interagency collaboration and readiness for aviation emergencies. www.nema.gov.ng

PHILIPPINES

NATIONAL POLICE: This publication is about police involvement in aviation but I did wonder about the inclusion of the next item. In certain areas of the world the police are directly involved in the administration of what happens in airports and other borders. So that brings us to the Philippine National Police (PNP) Authorities and the spiders.

The PNP in their airport role intercepted a shipment of nearly 2,000 wild spiders at an air cargo facility of General Santos International Airport on August 22. The discovery was made during a joint inspection conducted by personnel of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the PNP Aviation Security Group (AVSEGROUP), and airport security screeners.

Officials found a total of 1,902 wild spiders inside an out-bound cargo box bound for Iloilo. The spiders were placed in resealable plastic sachets and were detected by airport x-ray scanners. These were immediately confiscated under Republic Act 9147, or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act. The spiders have since been turned over to the DENR for proper handling and disposition. Police investigators have yet to determine the sender and receiver of the shipment.



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UNITED KINGDOM

NATIONAL: Early in August the NPAS team operating trials of the latest Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) trial launched the first series of trial flights of a BVLOS uncrewed aircraft system (UAS), marking a significant step in the future of police air support across England and Wales.

Earlier this year, NPAS were awarded a place in the UK Civil Aviation Authority's (CAA) BVLOS Integration Sandbox – a controlled environment designed to safely test new aviation technologies within regulatory frameworks. This opportunity allows us to trial innovative systems while contributing to the development of future aviation policy in the UK.

The BVLOS UAS trials form a key part of the Futures and Innovation Programme, which is focused on harnessing new technologies to improve operational effectiveness and environmental sustainability. It also complements the ongoing work of the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) in exploring the opportunities that drone technology brings to policing.

Funded by the UK Home Office, these trials aim to explore if and how BVLOS UAS can complement traditional manned police helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft, enhancing the delivery of air support through greater flexibility, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

They are using a specially modified Camcopter® S-100 system, supplied by the manufacturer, Weiner Neustadt, Austria, based Schiebel.

The six-month trial for the Wankel-engined police drone has commenced in the Severn Estuary between Bristol and Newport. A Temporary Reserved Area (TRA) and identical Transponder Mandatory Zone (TMZ) has been established for the period of the trial. Avonmouth Helipad is being used as the launch and landing site, located on the edge of the Severn Estuary, providing easy access to both overwater and overland flying.

The TRA is in Class G airspace, up to 4,000ft above mean sea level (amsl). The vertical limits of the TRA are from the surface to 1,700ft amsl. All operations will occur between c 900ft and 1,200ft amsl and the drone will typically transit at c 1,000ft amsl. Routes to be flown will be pre-planned and Bristol ATC will be notified ahead of launch.



The standard Scheibel drone is fairly noisy and the NPAS model has been modified with the addition of a prominent exhaust expansion box (silencer) to meet the low noise needs of the trial. [NPAS]

Night-time test flights are being conducted over the Bristol Channel. The S-100 has previously been involved in flight trials from West Wales Airport, Snowdonia Aerospace Centre at Llanbedr airfield and Caernarfon Airport with Bristow Helicopters Ltd in support of uncrewed operations with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and also with Thales at Caernarfon in support of development of the Peregrine UAV for the

Royal Navy. Most of the NPAS flights will be at night to ensure deconfliction – the hours 2200-0400 reduce the other traffic likely to be encountered. As the trials move forward to an expected conclusion in December 2025 daytime flight will be included.

David Walters, Head of Futures and Innovation at NPAS, said:

“As technology advances, so too do the opportunities for police air support. This trial will test uncrewed aircraft capable of flying for up to six hours, equipped with mission systems comparable to those on our current fleet.

“If successful, this could pave the way for a highly capable and sustainable blended fleet of helicopters, aeroplanes and uncrewed aircraft.

“Our goal is to ensure the right tool is available at the right time, in the right place, to support policing across England and Wales.

“This represents an ambitious step toward a modern, innovative and best-value police aviation service, designed to meet the diverse needs of policing and communities.”

Sophie O’Sullivan, Director of Future of Flight at the UK Civil Aviation Authority, said:

“We’re committed to enabling the emergency services across the UK to harness cutting-edge aviation technology to do their jobs more efficiently and effectively.

“Through our support for innovative projects like the trial with NPAS, we are helping future-proof critical operations and ensuring that emergency services can safely benefit from the opportunities presented by drones and advanced air mobility.

“The data gathered from these trials will play a vital role in shaping future policies and accelerating the safe and effective integration of new technologies across the emergency services sector.”

Editor: Lots of interesting questions surround these trials which are of course based upon a single engine (unmanned) helicopter equipped with radar and an Wescam MX-5 EO/IR turret. There is a long way to go, probably far longer than many appreciate, although 2030 has been mooted. Even when the system is accepted as capable there are numerous legal hurdles to jump.

UK police aviation is based on the supposedly intractable requirement that the aircraft in use will have two engines and it is understood that any craft flying over built up areas will still require two engines. The Scheibel is effectively a dead end for NPAS but it is understood that two twin engine drones of a suitable capability are being developed. David Walters declined to identify them but he expects one of them to fly in 2026, meanwhile the Austrian drone will lay the groundwork.

If at some future juncture it is felt that strict requirement might be relaxed the question will always be asked why for the last 45 years the costs of air policing could not have been mitigated by operating an Airbus Helicopters H125 (AS350B3) in place of the various twin engine types (e.g. Bell 222/AS355/EC135). It is to be hoped that the new VTOL twin types will be able to undertake the tasks envisaged at this time.

With a police, civil service and political hierarchy that is clearly unable to decide whether they want cream in their coffee, who is going to commit to putting a single engine uninhabited rotary craft into the sky over major conurbations at night and bad weather? Industry will no doubt resolve the problem for them eventually.

When I started to run the Shephard Group Police Aviation Conferences in London and the Hague in 2006 drones were just shimmering into view and many claims were being made over expectations for drones in law enforcement – most were never met.

There was even a £20 bet by two conference attendees over whether there would be drones operating over the 2012 London Olympics. Needless to say, the BAE

Herti, in police colours, was not there and all the resources committed to that event were manned and the Herti now hangs as an exhibit in a northern museum rather than patrolling the English Channel in much vaunted South Coast Project. Then there was

the BAE owned Jetstream business twin that was developing a sense and avoid system for use in drones and other aircraft. That project came to a halt (very quietly) many years ago and BAE will not even talk about it.

Who would have thought that now, 17 years later, David Walters, the NPAS project officer for uncrewed aircraft (drones), in charge of the current Schiebel S-100 project flying BVLOS operations over the Severn Estuary, is telling us not to expect police operations over urban areas until the end of this decade!

The current trials are being presented to the public as a craft with a ground based



The drone at the 2008 PAC



That bet! The ten pound notes were real and they were mentally set aside until after the 2012 event proved that drones were not to appear over the London Olympics.

(Hands are those of former PAC Chairman Gareth Davies)

pilot and a TFO operating the Wescam MX-10. I clearly recall that it was stated that for drones there would be a primary pilot and another person looking over his/her shoulder to make sure it all went well. A TFO with other duties could not safely do that.

Walters suggests that any future fleet will need to be autonomous simply to accommodate the sheer numbers of drones expected to crowd our skies in the future. The team are well aware that simply putting a sophisticated camera in the sky is not enough. The manned aircraft come equipped with two of three sets of eyes and time and time again it is they that survey the wider picture that the narrow viewed EO/IR cameras zoom into. Current thinking is that AI may be the key to replacing the human eye but, wisely, no-one is putting a date on that!

Who would have predicted a suggestion in 2025 that a manned aircraft with a camera and three pairs of eyes does a far better job than a drone? They are the future but the bets are off!



Check out the NPAS website for a link to the podcast this is based on.

<https://www.npas.police.uk/news/npas-feature-altitude-podcast-exploring-future-uncrewed-aircraft-policing>

Interestingly EASA has just issued initial guidance (means of compliance) on the parachute recovery of drones on the basis of any drone coming down would be a mite inconvenient. Even so I suspect that anyone encountering a drone the size and weight of an 200kg S100 on the end of a parachute is still in mortal danger. The EASA document states that it believes that anyone being hit by a drone on the end of a recovery parachute still has a 10% chance of fatal injuries. Comforting?

A Teledyne FLIR UltraFORCE 380X-HDc EO/IR system is mounted on an aircraft. The system is a compact, white, box-like unit with a large lens. It is suspended from the aircraft by a bracket. The background shows a cloudy sky. The Teledyne FLIR logo is in the top left corner.

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On a lighter note, to fit in World Helicopter Day 2025 last month the newly invigorated promotional team in Wakefield Towers sought to attract attention to their cause by giving an update on the age and condition of their fleet of helicopters – all Eurocopter's by reason of age! There is a link to the full text on Instagram via the NPAS web page. Lots of other interesting facts.



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Firstly the EC135T2 fleet

G-POLA based at Newcastle Airport has currently ramped up 14,000 hours
 G-POLB Carr Gate, the police base near Wakefield has 18,600 hours
 G-POLC is currently at Barton Airport near Manchester and has 21,600 hours
 G-POLD is now at North Weald with 18,100 hours accrued.
 G-POLF shares its base at RAF Benson near Oxford with military helicopters It has 20,000 hrs
 G-POLG is one of the two 135s in Wales at Hawarden (Chester Airport) it has 17,700 hours
 G-POLH operating from the first NPAS base to be opened in Redhill has 19,300 hours.
 G-POLJ is currently at Birmingham Airport and has flown 15,800 hours.
 G-POLU a training aircraft, located at North Weald, formerly Norway and flown 16,000 hours

The EC135P2+ fleet

G-NWOI Based at St Athan, Wales with 12,700 hours
 G-HEOI operating from Almondsbury alongside the Great West AA Has 13,000 hours.
 G-SUFK Based in the Midlands at Husbands Bosworth has 13,000 hours
 G-CPAS Operating from Exeter Airport alongside the Devon AA has 11,999 hours.
 G-CPAO Based at Hurn Airport near Bournemouth it has 12,000 hours logged.

The one EC135 aircraft they did not feature was G-EMID. This was the first EC135P2+ the UK police ordered and came configured with the McAlpine/Osmond role pod that the others dispensed with. The CAA has it listed as reaching 12,288 in July 2023. It was serving as the training aircraft at North Weald until G-POLU was refurbished after its sojourn with the Police in Norway.

It might be assumed that this airframe is still available but perhaps currently offline on maintenance.

The EC145 fleet

G-MPSA has 14,200 hours
 G-MPSB 13,000 hours
 G-MPSC 15,200 hours
 And finally the 'intruder' from Exeter...
 G-DCPB "The Devon & Cornwall Pasty Bus"
 which has just 10,000 hours
 All of the EC145s are now operating together out of Lippitts Hill Camp (01.IL) in Essex.



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Too late for this edition but in mid-August NPAS posted on Linked-In a request for responses to a future project on a flight simulator for the fleet. Post by The West Yorkshire Combined Authority (or such other successor body, company, organisation who shall have the responsibility of being the contracting authority of the National Police Air Service or any part or parts thereof)

... are working with BlueLight Commercial on a future tender for a rotary wing flight simulator to support pilot training at NPAS.

NPAS are therefore looking to access a Flight Simulation Training Device (FSTD) to conduct pilot initial type rating and recurrent training for their rotary-wing fleet. This includes the following aircraft types:

EC135 T3
 EC135 T2+

They are looking to understand what's out there in order to shape their approach to industry with a request to tender. They had put a deadline to respond: dated August 22 which is now past but that will not have a significant effect on companies involved in the final tender.

They have estimated that a possible contract for this service will be for April 1, 2026 to March 31, 2030 with a possible extension to 6 years ending March 31, 2032.

Editor: This outline suggests that the first deletions from the fleet, other than the EC145s, will be the Pratt & Whitney powered airframes even though they have a lower overall number of airframe hours and carry the larger 15 inch EO/IR sensor which I understand will be the standard for the future rotary fleet.

UNITED STATES

NATIONAL: APSCON 2025 was the Airborne Public Safety Association's 54th annual conference & exposition, held in July in Phoenix, AZ. Filled with education and training, the combined APSCON and APSCON Unmanned events offered a wide variety of conference courses and educational sessions for public safety aviators. Attendance was strong and this year's conference expo hall showcased 149 exhibiting member companies with 10 helicopters on display from various manufacturers and a wide array of mission equipment, including infrared sensors, mission-critical radios, mapping systems, and more. There were 18 in-depth courses taught during conference week as well as 55+ classes, roundtables, symposiums and Tech Talks.

Each year during the annual conference, APSA recognises those who have gone above and beyond and made a significant impact in public safety aviation. The Association presented six awards this year to:

Robert L. Cormier Award: Deputy IV Michael Sill, Fresno County (CA) Sheriff's Office Air Support Unit

Fixed-Wing Operator Award: Jacob Moore, Modesto (CA) Police Department Air Support Unit

Safety Award: Andrew Maholland, Metropolitan Nashville (TN) Police Department Aviation Unit

Technical Specialist Award: Matt Pagano, Riverside (CA) Police Department Air Support Unit

Tactical Flight Officer Award: Kyle Hansen, Edmonton Police Service Flight Operations Unit

Unmanned Aerial Systems Award: Nicholas Romano, Broward County (FL) Sheriff's Office UAS Coordinator

Members of the 'Association will receive a fuller report on the event in the September/October issue of the house magazine "Air Beat" Mark your calendar for APSCON 2026, next year's 55th annual conference & expo, to be held July 13-17, in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. [APSA]

ALABAMA: Earlier this summer the Dale County Sheriff's Office took delivery of used Bell 407. This is an important step toward modernisation as the Dale County Sheriff has generally relied on surplus Bell OH-58 helicopters and older model Cessna aircraft. A notable exception was the use of an MD 600N helicopter for a few years before it was sold off.

The Bell 407 in question, N1903A c/n 53475, is a 2001 model that had previously served with the Connecticut State Police. This would seem to be a step backward for the Connecticut State Police, who are now only operating surplus OH-58 helicopters according to an official spokesperson. The spokesperson also said that although there was no current replacement for the 407 they hoped to eventually replace it with a larger airframe with hoist capabilities. There have been rumours that CSP was interested in purchasing a Bell 429, but currently this only speculation and gossip in the face of raising the finance for a very expensive airframe. [FB LE]

In Henry County the Sheriff has re-registered the 1969 Bell OH-58 N712SD it acquired from Chambers Sheriff in Lafayette, AL last summer to N373HC.



The advertisement features a dark blue background. On the left is the Smith Myers logo, consisting of a stylized 'S' and 'M' above the text 'smith myers'. In the center, white text reads 'TURNS ANY MOBILE PHONE INTO A LOCATION BEACON', followed by 'DETECT - LOCATE - COMMUNICATE' and the website 'artemis.smithmyers.com'. On the right, there is an image of the Artemis device, a black rectangular unit with various ports and a small screen. To the far right is the Artemis logo, a white compass rose with a large 'A' in the center and the word 'ARTEMIS' below it.

CALIFORNIA: Last month the California Highway Patrol sold AS350B3 N314HP c/n 3379 to Silver Hawk Aviation in Sarasota Florida, and since then it has been cancelled to Canada. CHP have owned it from new in around 2001, so it was due its second 12 year overhaul. The AStar was among the first batch of the Eurocopter/Airbus type to be bought when the CHP moved from operating Bell 206s.

Reports suggest that it has flown little in the last year and a couple of test flights only since early May. On July 12 it was flown to Reno (Nevada) but had not progressed further to Florida or Canada at the time of writing. [Parapex]

FLORIDA: The Pasco County Sheriff's Office located on the Gulf shores of the state north of Tampa recently took delivery of two Bell 407 helicopters from Volusia County on the Atlantic coast. They were N803DS c/n 53880 and N801DS c/n 53977 with Volusia and currently retain the Volusia marks, colours and also appear to have the same EO/IR and searchlight set up. Volusia recently acquired more modern examples of the Bell 407GX, from a 2022 order taking their fleet of five. Volusia will soon take delivery of their third 407GX.



The Helicopter Institute, based in Fort Worth, Texas, have been selected to provide initial pilot training for the Pasco team, expanding on a long-standing relationship that has included training in both the Bell OH-58 and the Bell UH-1 Huey. Earlier this year Pasco held four Bell OH58 and two Bell Huey but which of these have been disposed of is unknown.

There have been a number of new and old aircraft movements in Florida in the past month including the sale by Miami Dade Sheriff of two of its existing Airbus H125 helicopters in preparation for receiving new examples. N806MP was sold to NS Air Leasing, and N807MP to Arlo Air LLC.

Citrus County in Inverness FL has re-registered two OH-58s with N472MP becoming N151PR and N474MP becoming N286JW

HAWAII: On July 24 the Maui Police Department held a blessing ceremony at the Central Maui Regional Sports Complex to officially welcome its new multi-mission MBB-BK117B2 helicopter, N468WA, it is named *Hekili*— meaning “thunder” in Hawaiian and seeks to reflect the department’s strength, resolve, and commitment to public safety across Maui County.

The event brought together police personnel, county officials, and community partners to celebrate the arrival of this long-awaited asset, which significantly enhances the MPD’s emergency response capabilities.

Previously, MPD relied for support from the Maui Fire Department’s AIR 1, which is often committed to fire suppression and not always available for police use.

Hekili is not only tailored for law enforcement use but also serves as a shared public safety asset with MFD. Key capabilities include:

- Twin engines – Enhanced power and safety redundancy; can continue flight on one engine if necessary.
- Rescue hoist & human external cargo certified – Enables faster, safer rescues and reduces exposure during critical missions.
- Seating for up to 10 personnel – Supports rapid transport of specialized teams to remote areas.



©County of Maui

- Firefighting ready – Equipped with a 250-gallon water bucket for initial attack and wildfire support.
- Trakka System Suite – Features a high-intensity searchlight, infrared-capable camera, and a mission mapping system with real-time video integration.
- Night operations capable – NVG-equipped with Garmin 500H and synthetic vision to enhance safety and situational awareness after dark.

The readiness and success of *Hekili* relies upon the capable support of Windward Aviation, whose technical expertise and ongoing support have been instrumental in configuring and maintaining the aircraft to meet the dynamic demands of public safety in Maui County.

The Maui Police Department took delivery of a new helicopter, N468WA "Hekili", This Eurocopter MBB-BK 117-B2, owned and operated by Windward Aviation, is equipped with night-vision and rescue gear. The county paid \$1.3M up front and will pay Windward Aviation about \$2M a year to maintain, manage and operate it.

This is the 3rd MBB-BK 117-B2 that Windward Aviation owns and operates. The first, N154AM (c/n 7154), is operated for Air Method's LifeStar as an air ambulance, and the second is N828WA (c/n 7219), that's operated for the Maui Fire Department. [County of Maui]

NEW YORK: The New York State Police have ordered four additional Airbus helicopters to expand their fleet — three H145 D3s and one H160.

This brings their total order to eight H145 D3s and two H160s, marking a major investment in mission-ready aviation for public safety. Final deliveries are projected for late 2027 to early 2028.

Editor: But this raises the seemingly never ending question of why the US helicopter industry is seemingly unable to outsell the European imports even with the tariff pressures put in place by President Trump?

NEW YORK: In New York City the story that broke in the 'Post last month has taken on additional allegations to add to the pain.

The 'Post has now alleged that NYPD aviation unit chief Winston Faison was paying his cronies in the unit overtime they did not earn. Now the New York Police Department is under investigation as to how some officers received thousands of dollars for work they didn't perform, each item being signed off by recently-retired Faison, who approved the time slips for officers in his inner circle.

Lt. Lakeisha Smith, Lt. Winston Wright, and Detective Tanesha Facey, Faison's driver, reportedly received 20 fraudulent overtime hours per month. Smith's pay rose to \$185,405 from \$122,892 in the previous year, along with approximately \$40,000 in raises in the previous year for Wright and Facey. The overtime was

paid for a federal maritime safety training grant administered by FEMA. It is unclear if the false overtime payments accounted for the entirety of the wage increases.

The overtime was approved for rescue manoeuvres related to the aviation unit. The officers in question are not licensed pilots or mechanics.

The FAA investigation into safety issues at the unit, including a hard landing and damage to an aircraft during a hovering exercise, prompting Faison to retire as police chief. Smith has since filed her retirement papers.

As part of the probe into the unit's dealings, it was also uncovered that Faison had taken at least one off-the-books trip with the unit's Bell 429 helicopter. Log books were manipulated during the trip, with Faison failing to accurately disclose who was with him on the aircraft, where he landed, and neglecting to get permission from headquarters to leave the city. The unit typically responds to emergencies within a 60-mile radius of New York City. [Post]

SOUTH CAROLINA: Richland County Sheriff's Department in Columbia SC has reduced its air support to two fixed wing Cessna's and a handful of drones.

RCSD's aviation unit operates out of three spaces, with the primary headquarters office located in a hangar on the north side of the Jim Hamilton Owens Field airport. The unit currently flies two serviceable fixed-wing aircraft: a Cessna 206H Stationair and the older, but still reliable, Cessna 172. Currently on its eighth engine, the 172 has logged more than 16,000 hours, the larger, newer, more sophisticated Cessna 206H was manufactured in 2013 and purchased by the department in 2014. It is already on its third engine and has logged more than 4,500 hours.

RCSD's two helicopters, a UH-1 Huey N262RC and a smaller OH-58 N651RC, were recently declared as no longer serviceable. The Huey is about to be retired and the OH-58, a helicopter they have operated since acquiring it in 1999 has now been dismantled. Sheriff Lott hopes a replacement can be acquired at some point in the future. Both helicopters are for disposal but no word yet on who might be the purchaser or new operator.



When the unit was formed in 1977, it was operationally staffed by only three deputies. Today that number has swelled to nine, two of whom are full-time pilots capable of flying both fixed and rotary winged aircraft. Most are part-time pilots. The oldest and most experienced is an 80-year-old man, and the youngest is a 23-year-old woman.

PUERTO RICO: A couple of brand new 429s - N255PD (57529) and N767PD (57530) – have been ferried from the Bell completion centre in Tennessee to Puerto Rico. They have routed through Florida and the Bahamas and have overnighted in the Turks and Caicos Islands. Puerto Rico currently flies four 407s for their Police and three 429s for Fuerzas Unidas de Rápida Acción (FURA).

Microsoft FlightSim are offering a download featuring the Puerto Rico Bell 429 N767PD and including the new colour scheme for FURA. [web page](#)



AIR AMBULANCE

CHINA

Commercial Aircraft Corp of China has developed a medical variant of its C909 passenger jetliner, aiming to bolster the nation's air medical services.

The C909 air ambulance features a modular cabin design, enabling customized layouts based on patient needs and mission requirements. It can be used for both emergency first-aid missions and patient transport

A typical medical configuration includes three functional sections: a medical expert zone, a support crew zone and an intensive care unit zone. The expert area is fitted with height-adjustable and foldable tables for medical specialists to operate computers and other equipment. The ICU zone accommodates two critical-care stretchers, each capable of being equipped with devices such as defibrillator monitors, ventilators, infusion pumps and suction units, depending on the patient's condition.

Seats in both the expert and support zones can be converted into six sets of double-tiered lightweight stretchers to handle increased capacity. The aircraft also includes an electrically powered lift system at the rear door, allowing for efficient loading and unloading of patients in a lying position.

The Comac C909, originally known as the ARJ21 Xiangfeng is a 78–90 seat regional twin jet that entered the market in November 2015 and made its first commercial flight in June 2016. To date, 166 C909 aircraft have been delivered to 13 customers in China and abroad in Indonesia, Laos and Vietnam, serving routes throughout Southeast Asia.

The manufacturers are developing a range of uses for the aircraft beyond the air ambulance. They are offering it configured as a business transport, cargo, medical rescue, emergency rescue command functions and as a firefighting water bomber. [CAAC]



The advertisement features a black Macro-blue tactical mission display unit with a screen and numerous buttons, set against a background of a blue sky with white clouds. The Macro-blue logo and tagline 'TACTICAL MISSION DISPLAYS' are at the top. The text 'Now Partnering with Technisonic for radio integration.' is prominently displayed. The Technisonic Communications logo is at the bottom right, and the website 'www.macro-blue.com' is at the bottom center.

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NEPAL

ARMY: The United States will provide the Nepali Army with an air ambulance and one M28 Sky Truck aircraft under its foreign military assistance. The grant package includes spare parts, pilot and maintenance training, and support for modern maintenance systems.

The handover is scheduled for August 30, with the aircraft to arrive in Nepal from Poland. The M28, manufactured by Lockheed Martin's Polskie Zakłady Lotnicze (PZL), is part of a U.S. commitment to boost Nepal's airlift and disaster-response capacity.

Nepal previously received two M28s in December 2020 under the same arrangement. They are used for medical evacuation, cargo transport, paratroop jumps and VIP flights. The U.S. has confirmed that additional aircraft and training are planned, though promised helicopters have been delayed. [Nepal News]



UNITED KINGDOM

EAST ANGLIA: The UK's East Anglian Air Ambulance (EAAA) has launched a community consultation for its new air base near the city of Cambridge, prior to its planning application submission to South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The consultation will include a drop-in session on September 3, and feedback about the proposals can be submitted via the charity's website until September 17.

The proposed new base will be situated on the Balsham Road in Fulbourn, east of Cambridge, and is due to open by 2027. It will offer a range of operational improvements, including improvements to clinical training, crew welfare, aftercare facilities, and community engagement. The area is mainly agricultural and close to the A11 trunk road.

The charity is relocating there due to the impending closure of Cambridge City Airport, where EAAA has been based for the past 18 years.

"We have been working extremely hard behind the scenes for the last 24 months to identify a suitable location for EAAA's new Cambridge-based home, which offers similar response times to our current base," said Matthew Jones, CEO of East Anglian Air Ambulance.

"As we begin to progress a planning application for our proposed new base, we are committed to working openly and collaboratively with the local community. We are engaging closely with neighbors, the local authority, and relevant partners to ensure that feedback is carefully considered as our proposals evolve," he added.

Editor: The EAAA was launched in 2001 when it was based at Norwich Airport, that facility was upgraded five years ago. EAAA accommodation at the Cambridge Airport has always been 'temporary' in nature as the owners of the airport considered closure over the years. Currently the EAAA have offices and a non-permanent hangar on the airport.



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LINCOLNSHIRE & NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: The Leonardo AW169 helicopter that normally serves the east Midlands area from near RAF Waddington has been despatched to Germany to undergo maintenance. In its place the high visibility yellow helicopter has been replaced by a smaller black AW109SP Grand New G-VNER.

Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance said a black Grand New helicopter would provide cover for the iconic yellow AW169 aircraft as it undergoes work in Emden.

Chief pilot Llewys Ingamells said: "The service includes a complete strip-down of the aircraft to ensure every component is thoroughly inspected, operational and safe."

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.

UNITED STATES

NATIONAL: Air Methods has praised the introduction of the Protecting Air Ambulance Services for Americans Act, a bipartisan bill designed to modernize outdated Medicare reimbursement rates and protect access to emergency air medical services across rural America. The bill was introduced by four U.S. Senators from differing political backgrounds.

This legislation would give the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) the authority to update Medicare's current air ambulance reimbursement rate using actual cost data—ensuring payments better reflect the real expenses of providing care, including rising aviation and medical costs.

Currently, Medicare pays just 59% of the average cost of an air ambulance transport—a rate that hasn't been updated in more than 20 years. Without reform, access to air medical services could be at risk, leaving rural seniors, Veterans, and critically ill patients without a reliable lifeline during medical emergencies.

This is a significant milestone for those in our industry dedicated to ensuring that everyone has access to critical emergency and specialized care in their moment of medical crisis.

With rural hospitals closing at an alarming rate and many more reducing services, air ambulances have become the last line of defense for emergency care in remote areas. These aircraft are flying ICUs, staffed by highly trained medical crews who deliver critical care in transit when every second counts.

Air Methods is proud to support this bipartisan effort to ensure that every patient—regardless of where they live—can receive the emergency medical care they need, when they need it most. [AM]

FLORIDA: Leonardo has delivered the first two of three AW139s to Monroe County Sheriffs Office "Trauma Star" air ambulance operation.

The first helicopter N911LK was delivered to Marathon airport, in the Florida Keys, in February this year and the latest delivery was N911RR c/n 41601. Its journey to its future home base included a drop into the Naval Air Station (NAS) training base at Whiting Field in NW Florida on August 24 but it duly arrived in Monroe County. Currently the reason for the off-route stopover is unknown but may have been a demonstration or refuelling.



On average, Trauma Star provides nearly 1,400 flights annually, with three to four flights per day. According to Sheriff Rick Ramsay, Trauma Star is one of the top five busiest air ambulance operations in the United States. The three new helicopters will replace the three Sikorsky S76s, built in 2001-2 from October this year. The interior size allows for two adult patients to be flown in one helicopter at a time, something that the current aircraft cannot achieve. The funding for the new AW139s has been achieved via the County-level infrastructure penny sales tax, approved by a referendum. This sales tax is paid by Monroe County residents and visitors when buying items, not through property taxes.



Earlier in August the MCSO held an open day at which one of the current air ambulance helicopters put in an appearance. The Sikorsky S-76C N983TS c/n 760518 is seen here being inspected by members of the public. [Parapex Media/PAR]

NEW MEXICO: Emergency air medical program Native Air celebrated the opening of its newest base at Artesia General Hospital with a ribbon cutting ceremony on July 23. The event welcomed more than 75 guests to view the expanded access to lifesaving care the new base brings to Eddy County and surrounding communities.

Air Methods, the parent company of Native Air worked with Artesia General Hospital to bring advanced air medical care to the heart of the community, with a commitment to transparency, advocacy, and accessibility.

This new base, Native Air 24, expands the reach of Native Air's robust critical care ecosystem across southern New Mexico, joining its sister bases in Carlsbad, Roswell, Alamogordo, Las Cruces, Deming, and Silver City.

The operation uses a new Airbus Helicopters H130 T2 helicopter equipped with advanced medical equipment and medications, Native Air 24 functions as a flying ICU. The industry-leading flight nurses and para-

medics carry whole blood that they can administer at a trauma scene or in flight, significantly increasing positive outcomes for patients. [AM]

Three more Bell 407s for Air Methods have been ferried from the production line in Canada to Bell's completion centre in Tennessee recently. They are

N528AM msn 56459, arriving on 15-Jul-25

N642AM msn 56465, arriving on 15-Aug-25

N645AM msn 56467, arriving on 23-Aug-25

[Parapex]

FIRE UKRAINE

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE: Pictures have emerged from the war zone of operations being undertaken by the Airbus Helicopters H225. Where the majority of fire fighting helicopters across the world are currently dealing with wildfires, the helicopters in the Ukraine are being used to assist in dousing building fires with Bambi buckets.

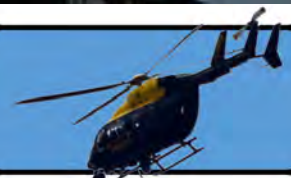
Firefighting helicopters were involved in eliminating the consequences of the massive Russian attack on Kyiv on the night of August 28. Where SES aviation was involved: helicopters made 30 drops, with a total volume of 60 tons of water.

"In Kyiv, rescuers pulled another body from under the rubble of a destroyed 5-storey building. Fifteen people, including 4 children, died as a result of the Russian attack on the capital," the State Emergency Service reported. [UNN]



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UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: In stark contrast to the Trump administration's cuts to public safety and emergency response, California continues to ramp up its firefighting arsenal: the state now has the largest civilian helicopter firefighting fleet in the world.

A far from popular Governor Gavin Newsom has announced a monumental achievement in CAL FIRE's ongoing commitment to protecting California, as the final two of sixteen Sikorsky S-70i Fire Hawk helicopters arrived at McClellan Airfield in Sacramento. This arrival completes a multi-year transition that significantly upgrades the department's aerial firefighting capabilities. This year also marks the full conversion of all ten CAL FIRE Helitack bases from the Vietnam-era Huey UH-1H helicopters to the state-of-the-art Fire Hawk. It's a full circle moment on an effort that the Governor initiated at the beginning of his first term.

This modernisation effort, which began with the first base receiving a Fire Hawk in 2020, represents a substantial statewide initiative and a long-term investment in the safety and protection of California's communities, property, and natural landscapes.

This comes amid the Trump administration's cuts to the US Forest Service, which threatens the safety of citizens throughout California. The U.S. Forest Service has lost 10% of all positions and 25% of positions outside of direct wildfire response – both of which are likely to impact wildfire response this year.



The poster for the Annual Safety Conference 2025 in Copenhagen features a blue background with abstract shapes. At the top left is the UK logo. The main title 'ANNUAL SAFETY CONFERENCE' is in large white letters, followed by the tagline 'AVIATE-NAVIGATE-COMMUNICATE' and 'SAFETY TODAY | SAFETY CROSS-DOMAIN | SAFETY TOMORROW'. The dates 'NOVEMBER 12-13' and the year '2025' are prominently displayed in yellow, with 'Copenhagen' below. Logos for EASA and Trafikstyrelsen are at the bottom left. On the right, three overlapping images show an airplane, a pilot, and a person on a rocky shore.

UK

ANNUAL SAFETY CONFERENCE

AVIATE-NAVIGATE-COMMUNICATE
SAFETY TODAY | SAFETY CROSS-DOMAIN | SAFETY TOMORROW

NOVEMBER 12-13
2025
Copenhagen

EASA
Trafikstyrelsen
Danish Civil Aviation and Railway Authority



The advertisement for A&R able&rush features a background image of business people shaking hands. The company logo is on the left. A list of services is in the center, and a quote from David Howell is on the right. The website address is at the bottom right.

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- Crew Resource Management
- Organisational Development
- Psychometrics
- Talent Management
- Coaching
- Facilitation

'Helping you to realise and release the talent potential that sits within your organisation, developing your people and ensuring that you safely thrive and fly'
David Howell, Director

www.ableandrush.com



SEARCH & RESCUE

Galileo SAR Meet 2025

©Michael Mau

The Galileo SAR Meet 2025 International Helicopter Crew Exercise took place from August 4 to 7, 2025, at the 24th Air Transport Base of the Czech Air Force in Prague Kbely. This exercise is for search and rescue (SAR) helicopters, whose primary goal is to learn and share procedures and experiences from the entire SAR helicopter community, making the demanding search and rescue operations much safer, faster, and more efficient.

The two main focuses of the entire event are the SAR competition and the symposium. These include the so-called Flying Challenge, in which all helicopter crews perform various tasks. It is also a navigation competition in which the crews must fly at a precisely defined speed along a specified route. This was followed by a precision flying competition, which tested the teamwork of the entire crew through precision landing, hovering, and winch operation.

Technical personnel and rescuers, as an integral and indispensable part of the team, had the opportunity to compete with colleagues from other units within the Highlands Games. Here, the helicopter rescue teams competed on a climbing wall in a tower. The best team then received the prestigious trophy – the SAR Meet Trophy.

The previous editions of the SAR Meet were organized in close cooperation with the Galileo project, the European Autonomous Global Satellite Positioning System (GNSS), which is funded by the European Union through the European Space Agency (ESA).

The participating countries and aircraft were:

- Slovakia – Sikorsky UH-60M
- Germany - Navy Westland Sea Lynx
- Germany - Bundeswehr Airbus H145 SAR
- Norway – Leonardo AW-101
- Spain – NH Industries NH-90
- Lithuania – Airbus AS-365N3
- Belgium – NH Industries NH-90
- Austria - Cessna 182



©Michael Mau

Czech Republic - Sokol W-3A
 Czech Republic – Mil Mi-17 2x
 Czech Republic – Mil Mi-171 SH



European Union Agency for the Space Programme (EUSPA)



images via Michael Mau



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UNITED KINGDOM

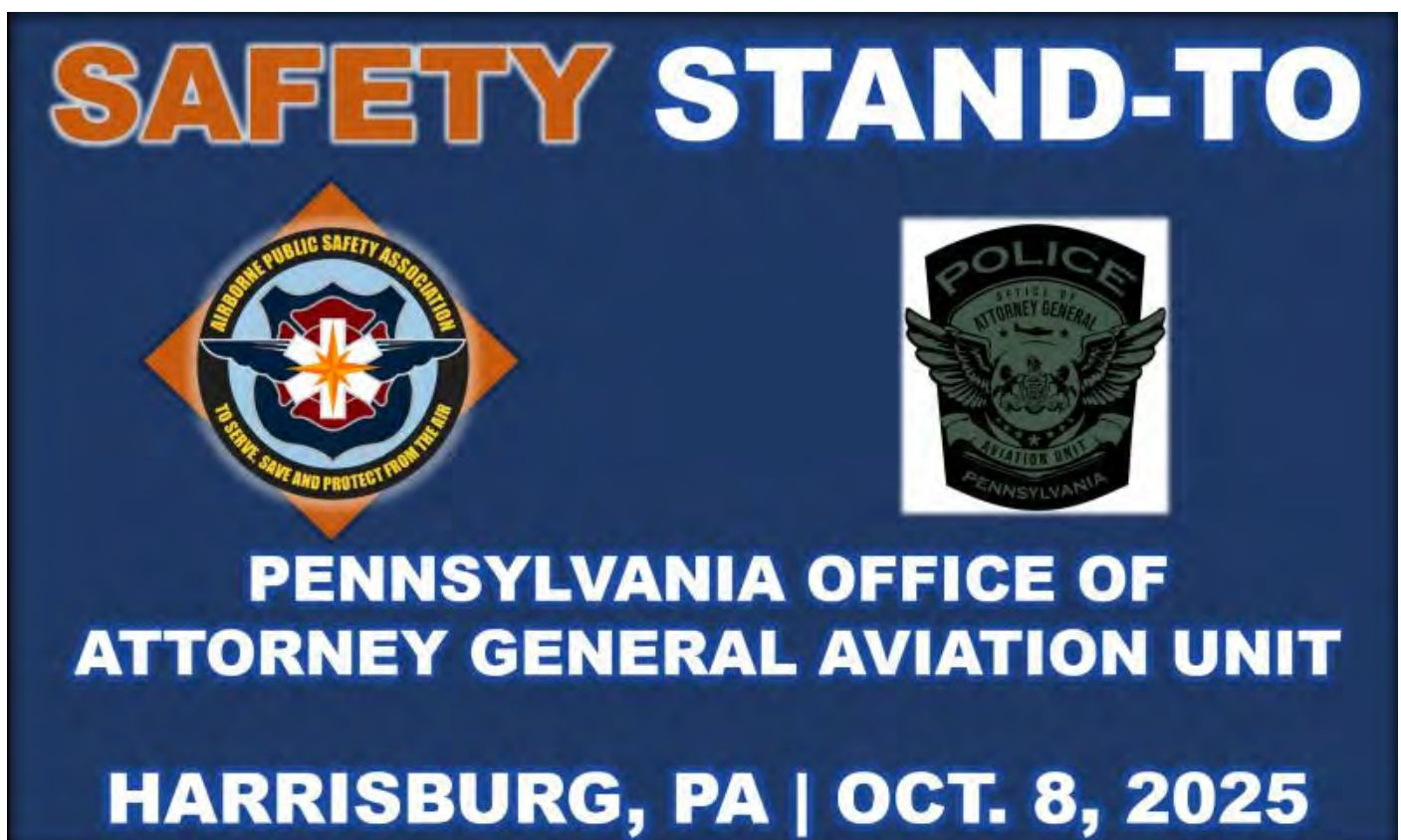
AIR RESCUE UK: Air Rescue UK is marking a major milestone—10 years of global operations—with the official opening of its new headquarters and state-of-the-art training facility, Sentinel House, in Harwich, Essex.

On August 19 – 20 there were events attended by invited guests and industry leaders from across the emergency services and safety-critical sectors.

From its origins in search and rescue, Air Rescue UK has evolved into a provider of technical services for the aviation environment including Hoist Operations, Emergency Response Training, Medical Training, and education in Human Factors and Non-Technical Skills.

Sentinel House offers cutting-edge simulation technology, flexible workspaces, and a collaborative hub for industry professionals. The facility is designed to prepare crews, companies, and communities for the challenges of SAR work. The opening event showcased immersive training scenarios across a range of incident types, including Fire and Rescue, Policing and Public Order, Rail, Aviation, and Maritime.

www.airrescueuk.com



INDUSTRY

In the United States roughly 200 **Federal Air Marshalls**, traditionally charged with safeguarding commercial air travel, are now reportedly assigned to ICE deportation flights, according to a Cable News Network (CNN) report

CNN claims that the deployment began in June, with marshals serving on chartered flights operated by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to transport detainees both domestically and internationally. Sources told the outlet that marshals on ICE flights are performing a range of duties beyond traditional law enforcement—tasks, including checking detainees for lice, managing trash, and cleaning aircraft, sometimes while unarmed.

Critics warn that this redeployment could dilute federal preparedness aboard commercial passenger flights, potentially impacting aviation security. The Air Marshal National Council, representing rank and file marshals, has sent a cease and desist letter to DHS and TSA, arguing the new assignments may amount to contract fraud and place personnel in unsafe or inappropriate working conditions.

As these deployments continue through mid and late July 2025, internal memos reportedly authorize re-assignment of up to 250 marshals, within a broader force of 2,000–3,000 total. [CNN]



A month ago the second **Airbus Helicopters H140** prototype completed its maiden flight at the Donauwörth, Germany. The H140 redefines the light twin-engine helicopter category. This 3-tonne class rotorcraft perfectly complements Airbus Helicopters' light twin offering for emergency medical services, passenger transport, and the private and business aviation market. It boasts a wide range of innovations, significantly raising the bar for performance, cost-effectiveness, and passenger/crew comfort.

Market response has been strong, with over 74 commitments, including firm orders, already secured for the H140, from major HEMS operators in the U.S. and Europe. A total of four prototypes are planned, this presumably does not include the developmental aircraft already photographed at the plant in Germany. The first H140 delivery scheduled for 2028.

The Royal Navy will benefit from world-class helicopter support services following a £41M, five-year contract awarded by DE&S to Dorset-based small-medium enterprise, **HeliOperations**, creating 15 new jobs and sustaining 80 existing roles.

Through the continued delivery of high-quality helicopter support services, the Fleet Helicopter Support Unit (FHSU) contract will see HeliOperations supporting training for UK and NATO global operations by supplying two state-of-the-art AW139 helicopters along with comprehensive technical support, maintenance, pilots and crew to Navy Command. The new helicopters will replace a single Dauphin N2.

Operating from Portland from spring 2026, the contract – which has the potential to extend until 2036 and is worth up to £68M – will enable the transfer of personnel and equipment to warships and vessels at sea, providing maritime rotary wing support to Fleet Operational Standards and Training (FOST) and additional aviation tasks. It will offer operational advantages due to the helicopters' modern capabilities, enabling the Royal Navy to meet its future requirements.

Andy Hooper (DE&S Multi Helicopter Platforms (MHP) Delivery Team, Steve Gladston (CEO, Heli Operations) and Richard Garbutt (DE&S Multi Helicopter Platforms (MHP), type airworthiness authority.



Produced by Leonardo Helicopters, the medium-sized twin-engine AW139 is recognised for its quality in performance, versatility and safety, and is considered one of the most capable and adaptable helicopters in its class. AW139s are a modern-day platform offering increased payload and range, pilot situational awareness, and enhanced safety such as greater ability to sustain flight post a single engine failure.

Editor: It was HeliOperations that put in an unsuccessful bid for supplying the Bell 429 to NPAS. They have been happily flying other types of missions, including Sea Kings in support of various SAR contracts – although these have now largely gone as the Sea King left active service – they still continue to support German training needs using two Leonardo AW139 (one in service one awaiting delivery). Two additional AW139 helicopters will replace a single Bristow supplied AS365N Dauphin II currently used on the task.

Diamond Aircraft has announced the delivery of the fifth DA62 MPP (Multi-Purpose Platform) to 2Excel Aviation, cementing the UK-based company's position as the world's largest fleet operator of the DA62 MPP. The new delivery, G-ZEAC, does not wear the red and white colours of the Bristow SAR contract fleet.

The latest delivery further strengthens the successful partnership between Diamond Aircraft and 2Excel Aviation, whose fleet of DA62 MPPs is utilized for a broad range of special mission operations including maritime surveillance, environmental monitoring, and ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance) roles.

The DA62 MPP is Diamond Aircraft's flagship surveillance aircraft, designed to meet the needs of demanding mission profiles. Powered by efficient Jet-A1 piston engines and equipped with state-of-the-art sensors, mission management systems, and low operating costs, the aircraft continues to attract customers worldwide.

Receiving our fifth DA62 MPP is a major step forward," said Arnie Palmer, Director of Special Missions at 2Excel Aviation.

"As the largest fleet operator of this outstanding aircraft, we are uniquely positioned to offer our clients advanced airborne capabilities with a lower environmental footprint and high operational flexibility. Our collaboration with Diamond Aircraft has been crucial to our success."

Pilatus announced in early August that it has halted deliveries of its PC-12 and PC-24 business jets to the U.S. This halt is in response to the 39% tariff on Swiss goods that was announced a few days earlier.

"The new customs tariff imposed by the US authorities represents a significant competitive disadvantage for Pilatus," the company said. "In the short term, the tariff will lead to a temporary halt in deliveries and thus to a temporary interruption of U.S. business."

The U.S. market accounts for 40% of annual PC-12 and PC-24 production, making it a key market. With this halt in deliveries, Pilatus is considering redirecting PC-12 and PC-24 aircraft to other markets while increasing production in the U.S. itself. This would include an assembly plant that is planned to be built in Sarasota, Florida.

In August **Airbus Helicopters** delivered the first H160 helicopter in China to GDAT, enabling the start of H160 operations in the country. This helicopter is one of the fifty H160 helicopters originally ordered by GDAT in April 2023, and five out of these fifty H160 helicopters have been delivered to GDAT.

The aircraft will be used most notably for the energy sector, including offshore transportation for oil and gas platforms, wind farms and harbour piloting, as well as emergency medical services and other municipal public service missions.

HD Aerial Inc. based in Georgetown, Texas and Richmond, Virginia are offering a stock of 'several' L3 Harris Wescam MX-10S Gen 4(surveillance) EO/IR cameras for sale at rates that are claimed to be well below market value. They are new sensors, never in the field with zero hours and still with an L3 Harris guarantee.

The sensors are ideal for low-altitude surveillance and reconnaissance missions, used on manned or unmanned aircraft. HD Aerial have recently lowered the price to \$300K each, putting them at around \$150,000 below current market value.

The offer includes the turret and hand controller, brackets, cables, GPS antenna and shipping case. Check out the website for a full specification sheet for the offer: - <https://www.hdaerial.com/wescam-mx-10s-for-sale/>

If you are interested contact Matt Trub by e-mail matt@hdaerial.com, or call him on +1 512.864.5017 Mobile/Cell/Handy. www.hdaerial.com Member of the Airborne Public Safety Association. HD Aerial, Inc. specialises in aerial cinematography and aerial photography using drone cinematography, and manned helicopter cinematography.



Canadian owned **PAL Aerospace** has acquired the UK's **Airtask Group** in a move that secures jobs, expands innovation, and strengthens ISR and lifeline air services capacity in-country. By combining PAL's global expertise with Airtask's trusted operational track record, the partnership ensures continuity for existing customers while opening new opportunities for growth across the UK and Europe.

PAL Aerospace has completed its acquisition of Milton Keynes-headquartered Airtask Group, subject to certain regulatory matters. In continuous service since 1983, Airtask Group is a renowned UK integrated aviation solutions provider known for maritime surveillance and fisheries enforcement, global atmospheric and environmental research, and lifeline passenger services to remote UK islands. The combination pairs PAL Aerospace's global special mission footprint with UK operations, reinforcing in-country ISR capability, ensuring continuity of service for government and commercial customers, and positioning Airtask Group for long-term growth in innovation, sustainability, and export markets.

As a UK led subsidiary, Airtask Group will continue to maintain sovereign operations and ensure uninterrupted delivery for government and commercial customers. The company has several bases including hangars at Aberdeen, Cranfield and Lerwick. They also have contracts undertaking Fisheries Patrol around the coast of Britain and specialist operations relating to pollution control.

Airtask Group is renowned for low-level maritime surveillance, advanced sensor integration, and regulatory excellence. Backed by PAL Aerospace's global experience of over 350,000 special mission flight hours, the integrated team will fast-track aerospace R&D, field advanced mission technologies, and grow exports, while expanding their combined infrastructure and personnel UK footprint in order to meet the demand for helping to address today's safety, environmental, economic, and security threats.

ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

1 August 2025 Pilatus PC-12/45 N327SF Colorado Department of Public Safety when flying a fire fighting mission was damaged when it landed at Grand Junction Regional Airport, CO USA, with the nose gear stuck in the retracted position.

5 August 2025 Beechcraft 300 Super King Air N534AW. Air ambulance of CSI Aviation. Departed Albuquerque en-route for Chinle Municipal Airport, a small airport in Apache County, Arizona USA to pick up a patient for medical transport. The plane was landing at Chinle Municipal Airport when it crashed on the airfield, having missed the paved runway by about 300 yards. It burned out killing the two pilots and two health care providers on board. There were no patients on board. It was not immediately clear what had caused the crash.

5 August 2025 ECA Safir 43 7T-VQP An Algerian Civil Protection Safir-43, a Zlín Z 43 built under licence by Establishment de Construction Aéronautique (ECA), crashed on take off from Jijel Airport (GJL/DAAV), Taher, Jijel. The airframe appears to have crashed inverted with no subsequent fire. All four occupants sustained fatal injuries. The Algerian Civil Protection (also known as Civil Defense or Civil Protection) is a governmental unit responsible for firefighting, rescue services, and emergency response in Algeria.

7 August 2025 Piper Cub N Alaska State Patrol. Aircraft on patrol made an emergency landing on a road after encountering mechanical issue.

7 August 2025 Cessna 560XL Citation XLS 5Y-FDM. Air ambulance operated by the African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF) departed Nairobi Wilson Airport in Kenya en-route for Hargeisa Airport in Somalia. It crashed shortly after take-off, five minutes after departure, in a residential area in Mwi-hoko, Githurai 45 area, Kiambu County, Kenya some 22km from the airport. The impact point was residential buildings. Initial information suggests four occupants died in the crash, listed as two doctors and two nurses, as well as two persons on the ground and the aircraft was destroyed. No mention was made of the pilots. [ASN]

12 August 2025 Eurocopter EC135P2i SP-HXF Air ambulance operating for the Lotnicze Pogotowie Ratunkowe in Poland. The helicopter struck bird(s) while attending to a motorcycle accident on Motorway A1 near Rybnik, Poland. Due to the accident the motorway was closed and helicopter remained on the hard shoulder for damage assessment. After the repair crew arrived and conducted an inspection, no damage was found and it flew back to base. [ASN]

15 August 2025 Mil Mi-171E AP-BIL owned by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (PK) Government and operating in an area of Pakistan subject to disaster. Helicopter carrying relief supplies to Bajaur district when it crashed under unknown circumstances in an area that has suffered major floodings. All five people on

board died in the crash. Airframe found burned out and mostly consumed by fire. [ASN]

15 August 2025 Eurocopter AS350B3e C-GZNR Firefighting for the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources at Long Lake, Nova Scotia it crashed in shallow water while fire fighting. The pilot was injured and was taken to a hospital. The helicopter was conducting fire suppression operations near Fivefinger Lake. While lifting the bucket from the lake, the pilot reported hearing a loud bang, and that the helicopter subsequently lost power. The helicopter impacted the water and became partially submerged. [ASN]

16 August 2025 Mil Mi-8 205. Ministry of Defence of Kyrgyzstan on a rescue mission, made a hard landing in the mountains at an altitude of 4,600 metres in the area of Jengish Chokusu (Pobeda Peak in Russian), the world's highest peak. There were 10 people on board, two of whom were injured (the crew commander and the rescuer). They received various fractures, their condition is assessed as stable. The Mi-8 was supposed to evacuate climbers, among whom, presumably, there is a deceased person - a tourist from Italy. Two more people - from Russia and Germany - received serious injuries.

21 August 2025 Sikorsky UH-60 Black Hawk PNC06?? Colombian National Police . The Black Hawk with 16 occupants reported on board was reportedly downed by a drone in Los Toros, Amalfi countryside, Antioquia, Colombia while apparently providing security for officers during the manual eradication of coca crops. Thirteen of the sixteen occupants died and the helicopter was destroyed. Video emerging from the scene shows the helicopters slowly approaching a landing zone but the drone strike and crash are both unclear. [Media/X/ASN]

22 August 2025 helicopter responding to the Derby fire ended up in an Eagle County lake, fire officials said it's not clear what happened. The pilot had only minor injuries. The incident happened in a lake 13 miles west of the Eagle County airport, Gypsum, Colorado. according to the U.S. Forest Service. Five wildfires burning on Colorado's Western Slope — the Lee, Elk, Derby, Stoner Mesa and Crosho fires — have together burned more than 168,000 acres, or about 264 square miles. [Media]

22 August 2025 Air Tractor AT-802F Fire Boss EC-LON operated by Martinez Ridao Aviacion on fire fighting operations in Spain. The float-equipped aircraft suffered an accident during landing at the Rosinos de la Requejada Airport during the firefighting effort at Porto de Sanabria. The pilot is unharmed. The aircraft was responding to the fire that broke out in Porto de Sanabria, but reportedly suffered damage to one of its floats. It returned to Rosinos de la Requejada Airport, where the float collapsed during landing. The main airframe collapsed onto the floats but it remained intact and upright. [ASN]

24 August 2025 Airbus Helicopters H125/AS350B3e F-HLXO "SDIS Morane 29" a firefighting helicopter of Héliberté operating for the Finistère Fire Department, Brittany, France crashed into water while descending towards Rosporden Lake to pick up water in a bucket. A video appears to show that the sink rate was too fast and the lower part of the helicopter entered the water. it appears that the tail rotor struck the water and was damaged. After lifting clear of the water again the pilot appears to have lost tail authority. The helicopter spun out of control, dropped again and sank destroying the main rotor. The aircraft had just completed a mission against a vegetation fire in Beuzec-Cap-Sizun earlier that day, and this was reported to have been the 27th water pick-up by this helicopter. The pilot and crew member were able to extricate themselves and swim ashore safely. [TMZ]

24 August 2025 Cessna TU206F Turbo Stationair HK-1833 air ambulance of SAE Ambulancias, Colombia. Departed Tiquié airport on a flight to Mitu with four persons aboard. It crashed under unknown circumstances in Vaupés. All four occupants died in the crash. [ASN]

25 August 2025 Air Tractor AT-802F Fire Boss OR 2022 was substantially damaged when the float-equipped 802F overturned when it attempted to scoop water from the Karacaören dam lake in Burdur, Turkey. Both crew members were rescued. The firefighting aircraft had departed Antalya Airport on an instructional flight at the time of the accident. [ASN]

26 August 2025 Bell 407GX N38AJ Air ambulance of Lifelight Network. Departed Missoula-Johnson-Bell Field, Montana with three crew aboard to pick up patient from Lincoln. On arrival it was landing on Main Street, Lincoln, MT in the dark when it is believed to have hit a pole with its main rotor and rolled over onto its left side. Severe structural damage caused and fuel leaks but no fire and the crew walked away from the wreckage. [Media/ASN]

FLIGHT SAFETY

(Preliminary Report)

On May 1, 2024, about 1610 eastern daylight time, an Airbus Helicopters AS350, N413JM, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Plant City, Florida. The commercial pilot and the private pilot-rated copilot were not injured.



The helicopter departed Lakeland Linder International Airport (LAL), Lakeland, Florida, about 1545 and was destined for the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office base at Tampa Executive Airport (VDF), Tampa, Florida.

According to the pilot, he elected to conduct the flight from the left seat to remain "proficient" and while enroute, he selected a field to conduct confined area approaches, approaches to landings, and slope landings. After completing the initial approach to a 15-foot hover, the pilot maneuvered the helicopter inside the landing zone about 20 knots and 50 ft above ground level when the helicopter entered an uncommanded left turn that the pilot could not arrest. The turn progressed into a left "spin" and the helicopter rotated 2 to 3 times before impacting the ground and coming to rest upright with the engine running, the main rotor system "intact," and no evidence of fire. The pilot performed an engine shutdown, and the crew performed a normal egress.

Examination of photographs revealed multiple bends and wrinkles in the tail boom, damage to the tail "stinger" and tail rotor guard. The tail rotor gearbox was separated, and the tail rotor driveshaft, hub and blade assembly remained attached. One of the two tail rotor blades was separated consistent with impact. Removal of the tail rotor driveshaft cover revealed that the most aft-mounted hanger bearing (No. 1 of 5) was severely damaged and free of its mount and bearing race, while the tail rotor driveshaft itself remained intact and connected. The left side bearing mount attach bolt was not installed but found atop the tail boom next to the mount. The right-side bolt was installed, but the attachment nut was not fully seated. The pilot held a commercial pilot certificate with ratings for airplane single-engine land and rotorcraft - helicopter. His most recent Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) second-class medical certificate was issued February 22, 2024. He reported 2,322 total hours of flight experience, of which 1,852 hours was in helicopters with 800 hours in the accident helicopter make and model.

The copilot held a private pilot certificate with a rating for rotorcraft - helicopter. His most recent FAA second-class medical certificate was issued November 17, 2023. He reported 132 total hours of flight experience, of which all were in the accident helicopter make and model.

According to FAA and maintenance records, the helicopter was manufactured in 2019 and was powered by a Safran Arriel 2D 860-horsepower engine. Its most recent 100-hour inspection was completed on April 4, 2024, at 1,970.2 total aircraft hours.

According to the HCSO unit supervisor, the helicopter had recently been returned to service after completion of multiple inspections as well as several safety-of-flight component removals and replacements. He reported that all 5-tail rotor driveshaft hanger bearings were replaced during the inspections, and that the helicopter had accrued 12.3 hours of flight time since completion of the work.



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UNMANNED

As mentioned briefly under the details of the NPAS BVLOS trials near Bristol, UK, EASA has recently issued guidance on a Means of Compliance for the introduction of safety parachutes on drones.

As drone operations become more ambitious, especially in the “Specific” category, safety becomes the top priority. A failure during flight over a populated area is not an option simply because it would turn the public away from allowing drones anywhere near them. This is where emergency parachute systems come into play — a key, if rustic, technology for mitigating risks in case of an incident.

But how can an operator or aviation authority know that a parachute system is truly reliable? The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) has established a clear path through Means of Compliance (MoC). This document is your quick guide to understanding what they are and what they require for parachute systems.

In short, an MoC is a technical guideline published by EASA that describes an accepted method to demonstrate that a safety system, such as a parachute, complies with regulations. While not the only way to demonstrate compliance, following an MoC is the most direct and predictable path to obtain approval from the aviation authority.

For parachutes, the key document is the **MoC for Mitigation M2**, which focuses on reducing ground risk. The main goal of this mitigation is to achieve a risk reduction of approximately 90%. MoC M2 defines three strategies for reducing ground risk. Parachute systems can be designed to meet one or more of these:

Type 1 (Critical Area Reduction): The goal is precision — reducing the size of the potential impact area. A parachute that minimizes wind drift and ensures a more vertical descent is a good example of this strategy.

Type 2 (Lethality Reduction): The aim here is to reduce impact force. In case of collision with a person, the likelihood of causing a fatal injury should be very low (less than 10%). A common method to demonstrate this is ensuring the maximum impact energy is below 175 joules.

Type 3 (Combined): As the name suggests, this is a solution that combines partial impact area reduction with partial lethality reduction to reach the overall goal of 90% risk reduction. To demonstrate that a parachute system complies with MoC M2, the manufacturer or operator must provide evidence supporting three fundamental claims:

The parachute actually reduces impact effects It’s not enough to claim the parachute works — it must be proven. This is done through tests measuring descent characteristics. At minimum, one representative flight test is required to collect key data such as descent speed and the drone’s behaviour after activation.

The parachute reliably works when needed This is the ultimate reliability test. The system must function correctly even after the drone has suffered a major failure. To demonstrate this, the MoC requires: A minimum of 30 representative activation and deployment tests.

All 30 tests must be successful. If even one fails, the manufacturer must identify and correct the root cause and then repeat the full series of 30 tests.

At least one of these 30 tests must be conducted in a representative flight state.

The parachute does not introduce new risks A safety system should not become a hazard itself. The



main concern here is unintentional activation. The parachute must not deploy by mistake during normal flight, as this could cause an accident. The manufacturer must demonstrate that the probability of this happening is sufficiently low, especially for higher-risk operations.

Parachute systems are an essential tool for safely conducting advanced drone operations. EASA's Means of Compliance, particularly the MoC for Mitigation M2, provide a clear and standardized pathway for manufacturers and operators to demonstrate the reliability and effectiveness of their systems. By following these guidelines and passing the required tests, the industry can ensure these safety technologies fulfil their promise: protecting people on the ground and enabling the future of drone flight.

[EASA MoC M2: A Complete Guide to Certifying Drone Parachute Systems and Reducing Risk | EU Drone Port™](#)

WEST WALES TAKEOVER

Over in West Wales the Portuguese manufacturer and drone technology developer **Tekever** has acquired Aberporth/West Wales Airport to advance UK and NATO defence capabilities.



Aberporth Airport is situated southwest of Aberporth, Ceredigion, Wales. The airport is being developed as West Wales Airport for domestic flights. It is also developing as a centre for the deployment of civil and military drones.

Located on the south west coast of Wales overlooking the Irish Sea it is marketed as the only site in Europe that can enable the flying of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) under regulated conditions. Privately owned and entirely independent, it supplies an exclusive world-class UAS flying environment, offering specialised facilities and 2,500 square miles of restricted airspace over land and sea.

Whilst the airfield facilities may be accessed by all aircraft operators, the unique capabilities are especially suited to companies and organisations who are engaged in civilian or military UAS operations. From here, an extensive range of flight options can be delivered exclusively, including systems approvals, training, payload integration and demonstration.

Editor: Time flies and it does not seem like nearly 20 years since West Wales Airport burst onto the scene as the place where the new and 'never going to happen' drones were to be tested. It was simply the MoDs ParcAberporth 1940s weapons testing site with a new name. They were not called drones in those days but no-one could then work out what to call them. They went through a stream of names including unmanned aircraft, UAS, UAV etc. At that time they would be operational in ten years, it seemed plenty of time!

Market research indicated a huge potential for civil applications, including fire-fighting, homeland security, coastguard and environmental monitoring, with a market potential in Europe alone of \$1.5 billion by 2015. As they say only hindsight can give you the real answer!

The project came out of the 2006 Farnborough Air Show and later that summer the press were invited by the local authorities in Wales and Leonardo-Finmeccanica SELEX to see what was only a cold and windswept bit of Wales. Someone had a vision but wonders whether he lived to see it through! Selex Sensors and Airborne Systems UK became the first major tenant at the new West Wales UAV Centre (WWUAVC) with their first project the Falco fixed wing. Others active at the time were EADS, Thales, BAE Systems, QinetiQ, and Flight Refuelling Ltd Some of them still exist.

www.flyuav.co.uk



PAN 124 August 2006 reported on the happenings in West Wales

READ THE RULES!

Last month an ex-police officer from Merseyside who flew a drone near the Manx Grand Prix course on the Isle of Man during the first day of the qualifying rounds has been fined.

Andrew Summers, 56, was flying his drone from the car park of the Creg Ny Baa public house off Mountain Road, Onchan, at about 14:45 BST, despite there being a ban during practice and race periods throughout the event.

At the courthouse of the island's capital, Douglas, the bench heard the presence of the drone was reported by the staff at the Creg Ny Baa pub in Mountain Road, Onchan to the deputy course marshal who

made the formal complaint to police that the actions put the safety of the event at risk. Summers who was operating it from the car park waited for the police to arrive and was arrested.

The drone was hovering about 20ft (6m) high and was about 16 to 20 ft (5 to 6m) away from the course which follows the A18 road past the pub and its large car park. Summers told a marshal he was not aware of committing an offence – the drone was not above the circuit.

His defence advocate told the court Summers, who was also a former Royal Marine, used an app which usually shows if an area has flight restrictions, but no warnings flashed up at that location on the app. He had been taking scenic footage of the motorbikes coming down the mountain and it was "nothing sinister", his defence continued.



The prosecutor told the court that maps were available online, showing which areas were restricted. Summers plead guilty to operating an unnamed aerial vehicle within 0.6 miles (1km) of the course, Summers was fined £750 and must pay an additional £125 in costs.

During racing periods such as TT, Manx Grand Prix and Classic TT the Manx CAA impose restrictions on the flight of aircraft including drones. It's for the safety of aircraft, competitors and spectators. These temporary restrictions come into force when the airspace is notified as 'active'.

This year the world-famous Isle of Man TT was running from May 26 to June 7, 2025, in the final days of August a different event, the Classic TT, was being run.

USA SCENE

When it comes to BVLOS Part 108 communications, don't confuse 5GHz with 5G!



On February 7, 2023, the Federal Communications Commission released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) entitled "Spectrum Rules and Policies for the Operation of Unmanned Aircraft Systems" to amend 47 CFR Parts 1, 87, and 88. The main thrust of the NPRM was to allow unmanned aircraft radio communications for command-and-control (C2C) linkage in the 5030-5091 MHz frequency band. But the FCC also, in Section 131 (starting on page 7929 in Volume 88, #25 of the Federal Register) suggested an amendment to Part 87.18(b) by allowing "Licensing of UAS Operators for VHF Communications." In the NPRM, the FCC stated there is currently no mechanism in place for a UAS operator to obtain a ground-based station license, nor is it currently legal to put a VHF air band radio (or any radio for that matter) in a UAS to act as a relay station. The FCC further stated that this puts all users of the national airspace system at risk because UAS operators cannot legally communicate via radio, especially on the aeronautical VHF band (117.975 MHz-137 MHz) used by aviation for air traffic control and advisory communications among other aviation-safety purposes. (WT Docket No. 22-323; FCC 22-101; FRID 122915).

The FCC posted a final rule on January 8, 2025, but didn't mention anything about a change to Part 87.18 (b) so drone pilots can talk on their handheld Sporty's. However, the FCC will now grant UAS operators the ability to obtain direct frequency assignments in a portion of the 5030-5091 MHz band for non-networked operation (or those communications occurring within radio line of sight). Under these rules, one or more dynamic frequency management systems (DFMSs) will manage and coordinate access to the spectrum and enable its safe and efficient use, by providing requesting operators with temporary frequency assignments to support UAS control link communications with a level of reliability suitable for operations in controlled airspace and other safety-critical circumstances. (WT Docket No. 22-323; FCC 24-91; FR ID 255475).

Why is this important? The FAA in the proposed Part 108.185 (that covers operations over people) lists equipment requirements for five operational categories. Anything Category 2 and above will require a C2C link that is not on any of the public frequency bands (like WiFi and Bluetooth) covered by 47 CFR Part 15. The FCC has given us 5 GHz just in time!

Mark Colborn

Mark is a former Dallas PD, Texas, pilot and something of an expert on operating drones both privately and in law enforcement.

PEOPLE

Louis Williams has retired from his position as Director of Maintenance with the Massachusetts State Police Air Wing a position he took up 13 years ago. He started in aviation working on a US Coast Guard Gulfstream II in 1987 and worked his way to joining Massachusetts SP. [LW]



Meanwhile down in the southern hemisphere another police aviation retiree, **Dave Scutchings**, is looking to continue in the industry as the Chief Executive Officer of Pilatus Aircraft Australia, commencing on 1 September 2025.



This leadership opportunity represents the culmination of his passion for aviation, leadership, people, and hard work.

Scutchings served in SAPOL for more than 30 years including postings in patrols, CIB and STAR Group. There have been many highlights including spending more than 1000 hours chasing bad guys in POLAIR and then conducting a Winston Churchill Fellowship which saw him flying around the world with units including LAPD, NYPD and California Highway Patrol.

He believes it was the opportunity to manage specialist areas including Aviation, Crime Gangs Task Force, Security Response Section and Communications Group that shaped his leadership skills. His social media post making the announcement ends with these words...

"Thank you to everyone who has supported me throughout my journey—your encouragement and belief in me have made this possible." [DS]

UP AND COMING

PAN normally covers the activities of so called 'important' people but, for a change, I noted a social media post of Laura Juchnik an adult and mental health nursing student at the University of Southampton, UK, She was recounting her experiences with the UK air ambulance sector and it seems appropriate somehow!

Laura has some experience of the sector, she is a community carer and an events volunteer with the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance but she was recounting how Gama Aviation provided her with a placement as part of her integrated masters in nursing. She was given the opportunity to complete a self-organised elective placement with the medical team at Gama Aviation.

Over three weeks in late July, she gained invaluable insight into the specialised field of flight nursing, observing the unique challenges of delivering care in an aircraft and the complexities involved in patient transfers.

The placement offered a comprehensive learning experience, from observing clinical decision-making in dynamic, unpredictable environments to gaining a deeper understanding of the meticulous planning and multidisciplinary coordination involved in emergency repatriation flights.

She found the entire Gama Aviation medical team were not only exceptionally skilled, but also incredibly welcoming and supportive, creating a learning environment where she felt encouraged to ask questions and take initiative to continuously develop her knowledge base.

Although sad to see the placement come to an end, it has significantly broadened her understanding of the diverse opportunities within nursing. She is taking everything learned into the next stage of her training and career. [LJ]



PER ARDUA AD ASTRA

Talk about secret lives. Very few of the visitors to the Adams Aviation Supply Company Ltd., marketing stand at aviation events are aware that Mr **Richard Turner** has a different life in aviation to that promoting the multiple spares that Adams Aviation offer to a world market.

With effect from September 1 Mr Turner will also be Wing Commander Richard Turner and will be the Officer Commanding Kent Wing, London and South East Region, RAF Air Cadets from September 29 when

his predecessor, Wing Commander Ian Woodhouse MBE., completes the handover.

Wing Commander (designate) Turner accepted the appointment saying "It is a real honour to be chosen to lead Kent Wing".

His journey with the Air Cadets began in Merseyside at the age of 13; where he rose through the ranks to Cadet Sgt, attending various ATC Camps and being selected for the Air Cadet Leadership Course, as well as regularly winning his Wing's Aircraft Recognition competitions. His adult RAFAC career has spanned over three decades, serving in all ranks from Civilian Instructor up to Squadron Leader. Most recently, he has been the Sector Commander for the eight Kent Wing Squadrons whilst also acting as Deputy Officer Commanding Kent Wing for the past six months.



Earlier this year Richard Turner, Adams Aviation, teamed Up with Canyon Aeroconnect to exhibit at PAvCon Europe 2025 in France www.adamsaviation.com

We hope that Adams Aviation will again join us at next years PAvCon Europe 2026 which will take place on May 27-29. The venue is yet to be confirmed. For the first time, the event will be starting on a Wednesday with Tactical Air Crew Day. This will be followed up by the two conference and exhibition days. Same format as usual just a shift of two days.



Thousands of New York City police officers gathered to mourn the death of NYPD policeman Didarul Islam, one of four people killed in a widely reported shooting at an office building in New York City. Islam, 36, was shot dead while providing security for the site on Park Avenue in Midtown Manhattan. Officials said he had migrated to the US from Bangladesh, had two children and was expecting a third with his pregnant wife. He died "a hero", they said.

Around 30 US police officers have been killed by gunfire, assault or explosion so far this year.

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MOVE ALONG THERE.

The problems surrounding drones with one engine are not new. Ninety years ago there were similar issues facing the authorities intending to use Autogiros (the helicopters of their day) over cities. Back then aircraft engines were far from reliable and putting together types with additional engines was not exactly easy.

US manufacturer Kellet designed a power boost which added two additional engines either side of their main radial engine. It never flew in that configuration.



Perhaps the future of multi-engine drones in the late 2020s will draw upon the technology of the profligate multi-electric engine air taxi designs. Many still have doubts about the numbers of the public wishing to jump into self flying air taxis no matter what the guarantees.

The debate over closure of police stations to public access in London continues unabated. Last month, the Metropolitan Police confirmed that it would shut 18 out of the 37 remaining front counters in London. One of latest plans includes closing the counter of the station in the suburb of Chingford even though it is the only one for miles around. Needless to say local people and politicians are up in arms over the proposal.

It is all about saving money of course, some £7M as part of its bid to fill a £260M funding gap. Clearly it is only a fragment of a much bigger housekeeping problem. Meanwhile the assets of the police are being sold off as the number of station houses and other facilities are sold off to meet day to day running costs. Who knows where that money is being frittered away.

Naturally the grounds of the Chingford closure beggar belief, overall the police say "just 5%" of all crimes were reported using front counters last year, with "only 1%" of these being made during the night. And when the very senior officer, Assistant Commissioner for Frontline Policing Matt Twist appeared before irate local politicians representing Chingford in the London Assembly he emphasized this disparity. Unfortunately the wholly unprepared officer was unable to say to the councillors how many people visit the front counter during a year so his audience could assess for themselves the importance of the front counter service as a whole.

After police service that started in 1996 this officer was so well trained in evidence and fact gathering that his sole reason for station closure was that an average of only 3.4 crimes were reported at the counter and that he did not have any information on the other 85% of reasons that the public sought to attend the police station – worse, he did not even attempt to defend his lack of knowledge. Astoundingly incompetent for a man who days later was expounding of whether the long proven to be deadly Notting Hill Carnival was a safe event and was expecting to be taken at his word. A leader of men.



Assistant Commissioner for Frontline Policing Matt Twist



HOT STUFF

On August 24 pictures emerged on Kent On Line of a stricken Tekever AR5 G-TEKE Evolution Mark 2.3 c/n 513 in Home Office markings, the type is used for maritime surveillance missions in conjunction with the illegal migrants in small boats crossing the English Channel.

According to the accompanying text, firefighters were called to the westbound carriageway of the M20 Motorway between Junction 13 (Folkestone) and Junction 12 (Cheriton) to deal with the craft as it was smoking. It appears that it had caught alight while being transported in a vehicle. "Firefighters used hose reel jets to extinguish the flames. No injuries were reported."

In 2023, the Home Office awarded Tekever a three-year contract to provide surveillance drones to be used over the English Channel. The twin engine AR5 can fly for more than 20 hours and carry multiple sensors, including maritime radars and day and night cameras. The craft involved in the incident was registered in 2023 and appears to have been disassembled for transportation.



©Kent Online

SEARCH QUERY

How long does it take to identify the helmet of a hiker lost in a 183-hectare mountain area, analysing 2,600 frames taken by a drone from approximately 50 meters away? If done with a human eye, weeks or months. If analysed by an AI system, one afternoon.

The National Alpine and Speleological Rescue Corps, known by its Italian initialism CNAS, relied on AI to find the body of a person missing in Italy's Piedmont region on the north face of Monviso—the highest peak in the Cottian Alps—since September 2024.

A CNSAS drone pilot who intervened along with his colleague searching for any sign of the missing hiker, discovered and led to the recovery of the body over less than three days.

The body of 64-year-old Ligurian doctor Nicola Ivaldo was found on July 31, more than 10 months after his disappearance, thanks to his helmet that clashed with the rest of the landscape. It was the AI software that identified some pixels of a different colour in the images taken during the new search.

The team collected all the images in five hours with just two drones and analysed them using AI software the same day. By the evening, the rescuers had a series of "suspicious spots" to check. Only bad weather the following day delayed the operations. [WIRED IT]

ON-LINE NEWS

www.POLICE AVIATION NEWS.info

www.POLICE AVIATION NEWS.com



Migrants have unduly attracted the attention of everyone in the United Kingdom and Social Media is awash with some really funny (and some humour a little riskier than they ought to be)

This one caught my attention....

SMASH THE GANGS

Crowds flock to the Humber Bridge near Hull for one final look today, as it's carefully taken apart for its long journey to the south of England.

The bridge is to be reassembled between Dover and Calais, forming a safe route to France, in what officials are calling the ultimate solution to 'Smash the Gangs'.

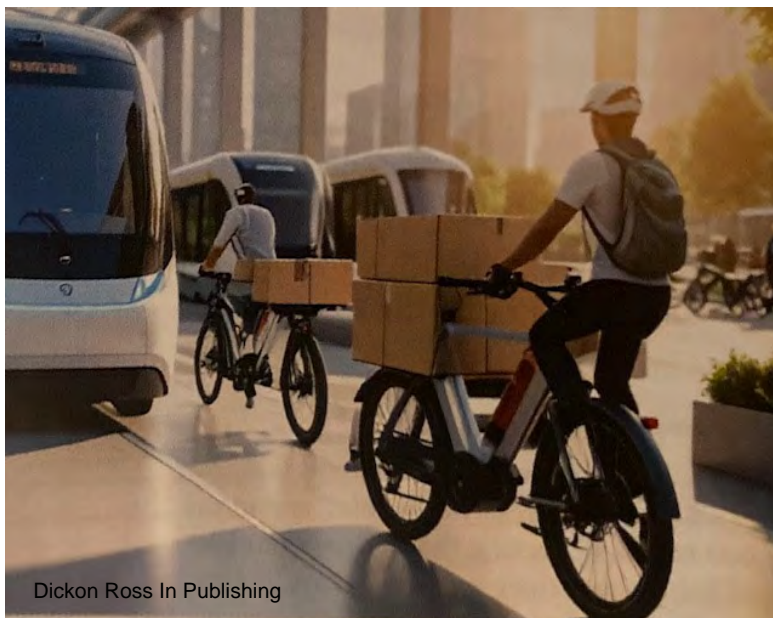
Dubbed the Bridge of Hope, it will make its move during the final week of summer holidays. Police have warned drivers to brace for some delays along the M1.



For those from foreign parts who may not immediately understand the humour. The Humber Bridge is a 2.22 km single-span road suspension bridge near Kingston upon Hull, East Riding of Yorkshire, England. When it opened to traffic on 24 June 1981, it was the longest of its type in the world; the Akashi Kaikyō Bridge surpassed it in 1998, and it became the fourteenth-longest by 2025. Images above are taken from its construction days (it is still there....). It is way too short to span the 34km English Channel but no doubt the Border Force boats could arrange to pick everyone up and deliver them to Dover. As usual!

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Many of us will be happy that artificial intelligence (AI) has a way to go before it out-thinks us and destroys too many jobs.



I understand from users that it is a great help in providing the basis for inserting facts into scripts but still struggles with fantastical images. Strangely AI has 'trouble' with getting the correct layout of bicycles, there seems to be something of a conflict between the riders position, the pedals and the steering! From this image of a non-specific helicopter it seems that AI does not fully understand that the tail rotor and the Fenestron are alternatives! It will get better, but when?

MISSING FROM HOME

In England and Wales, the number of persons reported as missing in the year 2022-23 was 312,901, an increase of 10% from the previous year, 2021-22. Fortunately, the majority, 88.3%, were found, or returned to their homes, within 48 hours. However, 970, approximately 1 in 330 cases, resulted in a fatality, 934 adults and 36 children. Although these numbers are relatively low, every fatal outcome has a devastating impact on the family and the friends left behind.

In County Durham, in the North East of England, this year, there have been three cases with the worst possible outcome. First, in the early part of 2025, Jenny Hall, 23 years was reported as missing from her home, a farm in the west of the county, on the 18 February 2025. Following the largest search in recent times, a search that involved police search teams, search dogs, off-road motorcycles, 15 volunteer mountain rescue teams, police drones and a Coastguard helicopter, her body was not recovered until the 23 February from a remote area in Upper Teesdale.



The body of Jenny Hall was recovered after 5 days from a remote area of Upper Teesdale in County Durham, England. [Image CAP]

A second search took place in County Durham, in Hawthorn Dene, a steep sided, heavily wooded ravine, approximately 2 miles in length, after James Allen, 25 years, was reported as missing from the nearby village of Murton on the 27 May. Hawthorn Dene was searched by the police and by the local mountain rescue team, supported by a Coastguard search and rescue helicopter, a Sikorsky S-92. The local Civil Air Patrol also searched and photographed the beaches at low tide at the seaward end of Hawthorn Dene, in case Mr Allen had entered the sea. Sadly, the body of Mr Allen was not recovered until the 7 August, some 10 weeks after the first report. He was found in Hawthorn Dene by a member of the public walking their dog.

The seaward end of Hawthorn Dene, a heavily wooded ravine in County Durham, England. [Image CAP]



Then, on the 12 August, Durham Constabulary reported that the body of missing person, Darren Crow, 44 years, had been found by a farmer in woodland, close to the village of Willington, some 20 miles north of Darlington, County Durham. He was last seen in Darlington on the 29 May, almost 11 weeks earlier. The police report included references to CCTV, ANPR, house to house enquiries and an analysis of Darren's mobile phone. All to no avail.

IF EVERY MISSING PERSON CARRIED A LOCATOR BEACON?

Although it's quite the norm for aircraft and ships to carry locator beacons, in the event of a mishap, and those who venture into remote areas may carry a small, personal locator beacon, would a locator beacon be of value if everyone carried one, particularly those who are subsequently reported as missing from home? Obviously, yes, and the good news is that everyone who carries a mobile phone does, in fact, carry a locator beacon too, although the 'phone must be switched on.

Air forces and rescue organisations around the world are reporting success stories on a regular basis. In 2022 a father and son were caught out by bad weather whilst on a hunting trip in a remote area of Norway. A rescue helicopter belonging to No.330 Squadron of the RNoAF, equipped with ARTEMIS, quickly located and rescued the missing hunters in an area without cellular coverage. Andrew Munro, the managing director at Smith Myers, the UK manufacturer of ARTEMIS, a mobile telephone locating system designed for air, land and sea applications, puts it quite succinctly, "ARTEMIS saves more lives, faster!"

Unfortunately, in the UK there are no aircraft, police, or Coastguard, that currently carry ARTEMIS. However, it is anticipated that the aircraft flying with the National Police Air Service, aeroplanes and helicopters, may be equipped with ARTEMIS by the year, 2027. HM Coastguard are expected to add ARTEMIS to their patrol aircraft and rescue helicopters as part of their UK Second-Generation Search and Rescue Aviation Programme (UKSAR2G), from 2026 onwards. In Spain, Centum Research & Technology are promoting an airborne phone location system called 'Lifeseeker'.



The search and rescue Leonardo AW101 'SAR Queen' helicopters of No.330 Squadron, RNoAF carry the ARTEMIS mobile telephone locating system. [Image Leonardo]

ARTEMIS - Flex

Most recently, Smith Myers have introduced ARTEMIS-Flex, a lightweight version of ARTEMIS, in response to a request from land rescue teams. This is good news as ARTEMIS can now be deployed on land, at sea and in the air. Nevertheless, aircraft will always have edge in a search operations, particularly in remote areas, with the key attributes of height, speed and reach, over land and over water too. Even if the trial in the UK, with the National Police Air Support Unit flying the uncrewed Shiebel S-100 Camcopter proves to be a resounding success, this single-engine drone is restricted to overwater operations. currently over the Severn Estuary in the south-west of England.

Nevertheless, small crewed aircraft, Cessnas, Pipers and other types, flown by the Civil Air Patrol in the USA and by members of the 'voluntary sector' in the UK, together with other countries in Europe, could, very easily, become a 'force multiplier'. With ARTEMIS more lives would be saved, faster!

ARTEMIS-Flex is designed for mountain rescue teams, but it may be carried on a quad bike, on a snowmobile, and by small, inshore lifeboats. [Image Smith Myers]



CONCLUSION

There can be no doubt that ARTEMIS, which can turn every mobile telephone into a locator beacon can save the lives of missing people, and quickly too. But only if the 'phone is switched on and only if the local search and rescue organisation, police, coastguard and voluntary sector have ARTEMIS on board their aircraft. ARTEMIS could, at very little cost, be carried by aircraft belonging to the Civil Air Patrol in the USA and by selected aircraft flown by members of the UK's 'voluntary sector'. But, if it had been available, would ARTEMIS have saved the lives of Jenny Hall, James Allen and Darren Crow in County Durham? Yes, certainly, if each person had been carrying their mobile 'phone and if each 'phone had been switched on. This is now a question for the coroner at the subsequent inquest into the unnatural deaths of these three young people in the early part of 2025.



In the UK, ARTEMIS could be carried and used by members of the 'voluntary sector', those flying light aircraft in the private category. [Image Author]

NOTE; The author is a former member of the Royal Air Force where he completed tours of duty flying the C-130 Hercules, the BAE Nimrod, the 'Mighty Hunter', together with several light training aircraft. Whilst a member of the RAF Reserve Forces he flew for the police in the North East of England and for the ambulance service in Scotland. He currently has a share in a Victa Airtourer T5 Super 150 [above] and has flown several air searches, looking for missing people.

The Chipmunk aircraft he flew around the world many years ago is shortly to be on display in Northern Ireland after transfer from the RAF Museum collection.

Perhaps more importantly, he is also the man that won the 'Drones in 2012' bet at the Police Aviation Conference!



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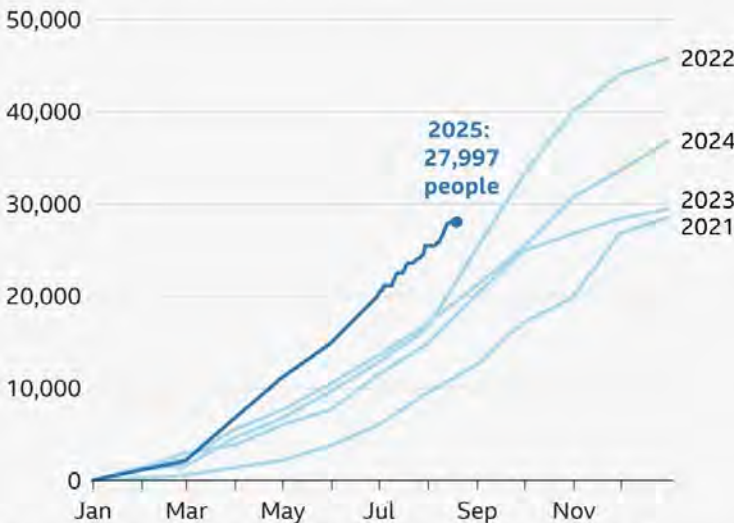


UNITED KINGDOM - CHANNEL UPDATE

In the previous, August edition of *Police Aviation News* I began the 'United Kingdom Channel Update' with the words, "The numbers of illegal migrants, mostly young men, those leaving the beaches of northern France in large inflatable boats, before being 'rescued' in mid-Channel and landed at the Port of Dover by the UK Border Force, continue to increase." In this respect, nothing has changed, the numbers continue to increase. At the time of writing, in the last week of August, the current annual total for 2025 was 29,003. If this trajectory continues then the annual total this year will exceed the record of 45,774 illegal migrants landed in the UK from small boats in 2022.

People crossing the English Channel in small boats

Cumulative total detected by year



Note: Data to 30 June 2025 is monthly totals, more recent figures are daily

Source: Home Office/Ministry of Defence

BBC

Note: Up to the 15 August 2025 the annual total of illegal migrants landed in the UK was 27,997. The current total, up to 28 August 2025 is 29,003.

CIVIL UNREST

The emerging feature of 2025, with regard to illegal migration, in particular those illegal migrants, mostly young men, accommodated in hotels, are the impacts on local communities. There are reports of an increase in civil unrest throughout the UK. The first, large protest was at the Bell Hotel at Epping, north of London, was quickly followed by other protests in other parts of England, in Scotland, in Wales and in Northern Ireland. At the time of writing, 32,059 asylum seekers are housed in 210 hotels, an increase of 8% in the year that the Labour government came to power. The British Home Secretary (Minister for the Interior) Ms Yvette Cooper MP has said that she is determined to close all asylum hotels, but without 'stopping the boats' and without a significant increase in deportation, it's unclear how this can happen.

In 2025, although there may have been fewer inflatable boats rendezvousing with UK Border Force vessels in mid-Channel, before their passengers are transported to the Port of Dover, the boats are becoming bigger. Up to 80 passengers in each grossly overloaded inflatable boat is not uncommon, with a new record of 107 illegal migrants in one boat!

MILITARY INTERVENTION

One member of the government, Lord Glasman, a member of the upper chamber, the House of Lords, shared his view of the crisis in the English Channel with LBC News, "The first thing I'd do is put the Royal Navy in the English Channel to stop the boats..... Just turn them back to France. What is the problem with being in France? France is a safe country that has signed up to human rights. Why are they leaving France?" Lord Glasman will understand the problem is that rather than closing the UK border successive governments, successive Prime Ministers and Home Secretaries, have, since the first illegal migrants crossed the English Channel in 2018, tried to resolve the problem with more and more legislation. Taking asylum seekers to court, employing expensive lawyers at public expense, rather than returning the migrants immediately to France which is, as has been pointed out, a safe country.



WWW.PAVCONEUROPE.EU
Europes Police Meeting Space



Lord Glasman: “Put the Royal Navy in the English Channel to stop the boats.” The Royal Navy, River-class offshore patrol vessel has a complement of 30 crew plus, if required, a detachment of 18 Royal Marines. This patrol vessel carries two Pacific 24, 7.8 metre RIBs. It can also embark the AW159 Wildcat helicopter and the larger AW101 Merlin helicopter.

Royal Navy/MoD



The latest gimmick, concocted by Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, a former lawyer and former head of the Crown Prosecution Service, together with President Macron of France, is to swap migrants, one for one with ‘good’ migrants being allowed into the UK and ‘bad’ migrants being returned to France. Just how and who decides who is a ‘good’ migrant and who is ‘bad’ migrant is unclear! Rather than coming up with bizarre ideas, ideas that will never work, it would be better if Sir Keir Starmer and his Home Secretary, Yvette Cooper, were to visit Sweden where, with bold policies, successive Swedish governments have, within a decade, turned around their own migration crisis. From having the highest number of asylum seekers per capita than any other European nation to under 10,000 asylum applications in 2024, roughly ten times lower than in the UK. This was the result of tougher border controls, offering temporary rather than permanent residency permits and tighter rules on family reunification. In the year to June 2025 the number of asylum applications in the UK reached a new record of 111,000.



An AW159 Wildcat helicopter returns to the flight deck of HMS Trent, a River-class offshore patrol vessel.

Royal Navy/MoD

CONCLUSION

The advice to Sir Keir Starmer, together with his Home Secretary, Yvette Cooper and the Secretary of State for Defence, John Healey, is to encourage the French, with, if necessary, financial support, to destroy more inflatable boats and more outboard engines than can be delivered. Those boats and engines that are delivered to the beaches of northern France from China, via Turkey. At the same time, the UK Border Force, together with the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines, should be ordered to rescue migrants attempting to cross the English Channel in inflatable boats, to save lives at sea, at the earliest opportunity, south of the median line that runs down the middle of the Channel, and then, in accordance with international maritime law, land the rescued migrants at the nearest place of safety, in France.

James A Cowan MBE



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 open through the APSA website. The contact in Frederick, Maryland is Benay Osborne at bosborne@publicsafetyaviation.org, +1-301-631-2406.



Clay Lacey from the Texas Department of Public Services is covering the first day. Clay is a great instructor and his classes are well worth attending. Check out the website for more.



Although final confirmation of the venue for the **2026 PAvCon Europe** remains to be revealed the training programme for the event is already largely set and will continue on from the programme of last year. The dates for your diary are the Wednesday to the Friday in the last week of May 2026. [27-29 May].

EMERGENCY SERVICES SHOW

EMERGENCY TECH SHOW

17-18 September 2025 National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham.

Although the ESS event in Birmingham has long been a go to event for serving emergency services personnel it has always suffered from a dearth of core aviation and police content. There have always been lots of fire engines and quite a few ambulances but real police stuff, as opposed to “nut and gut” support societies and associations have been few. Although aviation companies have attended, along with Blue-Light, and the NPCC I cannot recall NPAS ever turning up to promote themselves to the attendees in any form. But, there will be drones and drone support equipment.

This year the Emergency Tech Show (ETS) and Emergency Services Times (EST) have teamed up with the National Police Chiefs Council Digital, Data and Technological Committee (NPCC DDaTCC) and the Police Digital Service (PDS) to announce a new strategic partnership relating to this show.

In the partnership they will be leading the development of policing content on the stage at the event, helping shape the national conversation around innovation, digital infrastructure, and technology in law enforcement. The curated programme will reflect strategic priorities set out in the National Policing Digital Strategy and bring forward key voices from across the policing and technology landscape.



This collaboration underlines a shared commitment to strengthening connections between policing, technology, and public safety. It also ensures ETS remains a vital platform for cross-sector engagement and informed discussion.

ETS and EST will also support the upcoming NPCC Innovation and Digital Summit 2025 to be held in Liverpool in October as official media partners, strengthening the alignment of both events and amplifying their shared goals.

24 September 2025 APSA Safety Stand-To, Spokane, Washington, USA. APSA is partnered with the Spokane (WA) Regional Air Support Unit (SRASU) and Spokane County (WA) Sheriff's Department to conduct a Safety Stand-To, at the Spokane County Sheriff's Office Regional Training Center on the West Coast. Class topics include safety, tactics, CRM and a presentation on high-angle, confined site rescue. In conjunction with this event, SRASU will conduct Rescue Hoist and Dunker Trainings which need to be pre-booked. www.publicsafetyaviation.org



8 October 2025 APSA Safety Stand-To, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, USA Over on the eastern side of the USA, APSA partners with the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General Aviation Unit for a Safety Stand-to in Harrisburg, PA. Class topics include mission equipment, spatial disorientation, covert surveillance operations, safety, multi-agency operations, and more. You can register at www.publicsafetyaviation.org



20-22 October 2025 The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) Innovation and Digital Summit will be taking place at the ACC Liverpool. The Summit is being organised by the NPCC Digital, Data and Technology Coordination Committee (DDaT) and the NPCC Science and Innovation Coordination Committee in coordination with the Office of the Police Chief Scientific Adviser, industry partners and Police Digital Service (PDS). It will be an opportunity for policing to strengthen collaboration between forces, law enforcement and industry.

The Digital Awards 2025 will be taking place during the summit on evening of 21 October, where policing will be recognising the outstanding contributions by police staff and teams across UK law enforcement agencies.

www.npcc.police.uk

WWW.POLICEAVIATIONNEWS.COM

Keeping up with Emergency Services News

