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LAW ENFORCEMENT

CANADA

VANCOUVER: Billed as British Columbia's first traffic enforcement helicopter this programme will start operations this month with a primary traffic control role across the Lower Mainland. The EC120 helicopter is to provide aerial support for police operations over the 17 municipalities in Greater Vancouver at a financial cost of \$2.2M. The cost is being shared between the provincial government and the Insurance Corporation of B.C.

The EC120 - "Air One" - was put on display by police and politicians at Vancouver International Airport in mid-February. [CBC]



Ed: Although the original text did not suggest it this is an RCMP operation. The aircraft is to be flown and maintained by RCMP personnel, with the tactical flight officer duties shared between RCMP officers and the Vancouver Police Department. See earlier articles in PAN including page 3 PAN January 2006. Image of the EC120B C-GMPT Cal Meeker.

IRAQ

United States military forces stationed in Iraq will soon be utilising methods adapted from those developed by law enforcement organisations.

Lockheed Martin, in conjunction with the Chicago and Los Angeles police departments, is employing counter-insurgency (COIN) surveillance technology to support urban operations conducted by the US Marine Corps in Iraq. The COIN technology will allow the military units to utilise video surveillance and other police investigative methods to track and identify persons of interest to learn their patterns, characteristics and associates, as well as help them to better predict when and where insurgents might strike.

The technology augments military procedures with proven police investigative methods and enables troops to act with greater accuracy and conduct round-the-clock surveillance from a safer distance. Lockheed Martin will create an investigative database that will store information about Iraqi insurgents collected by US military forces patrolling the area. The database is a customised version of a police investigative database developed by the Chicago Police



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Department for its anti-gang, counter-drug operations.

The effort also will include hands-free intelligent recorders developed by Lockheed Martin that automatically translate the Marines' spoken words into formatted text and precise location information which is then securely transmitted into the database.

Currently, the COIN technology is part of a pilot program that Lockheed Martin is testing to be used in Iraq. Following testing in desert situations, the corporation plans to deliver the surveillance architecture in early 2006.

The Los Angeles PD is assisting by bringing their urban and counter-terrorism operations experience to the programme, helping to coordinate how the COIN technology will be used by the Marines.

UNITED KINGDOM

EAST MIDLANDS: The three police force [Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire] air operation [EMASU] flying from a remote base at Husbands Bosworth has commenced operations using NVIS [Night Vision systems].

The EMASU flies a £2.2M Eurocopter EC135T1 acquired in October 1999 which has a police call sign of X55.

The EMASU has become the first police operation in the UK* to go live with the whole crew of three now working with Night Vision Goggles [nvg's] under new Civil Aviation Authority [CAA] regulations. Earlier and continuing operations by Devon & Cornwall using their BK117C1 related to a two crew operation that effectively pioneered the principles within the UK law enforcement aviation community.

The EMASU has purchased three sets of Fenn NG2000 nvg's and had its helicopter's internal lighting fully converted to be compatible with the eyewear.

The EMASU's main aims from the introduction of the night vision technology are: to enhance operational effectiveness and, importantly, to increase flight safety. The goggles improve the aircraft crew's spatial awareness at night, allowing the pilot and two air observers to see the ground, buildings, other obstructions and even wires, which was previously near impossible at night, particularly in very dark rural areas, or 'black holes', where there is little ambient light such as street lights, building lights or vehicle lights.

Similar to North Wales Police's air unit, the two air observers from the East Midlands unit have been using the nvg's since last June, but now new CAA and Air Accidents Investigation Branch rules and regulations have allowed for the pilot to also wear nvg's and for the aircraft lighting to be converted.

Their worth in the operational scenario is already demonstrated. Last July, with just the observers wearing nvg's, the unit located a man who had hidden his car in woods and was attempting to take his own life in north east Leicestershire. The crew spotted a glimmer of reflected light on the number plate of the man's car and were able to guide in officers on the ground able to save the man, who was believed to be just a few minutes away from death.

Mick Dunn, Executive Officer of the EMASU, said: 'We are thrilled that the whole crew is now able to use the Night Vision Goggles which has taken us two years to achieve under



D&G image

CAA and international aviation rules because of the fact that we are the first police operation in the UK to use the technology under the new rules and regulations.

'As well as the air observers extending their night time operational capabilities through the use of both Night Vision Goggles and the onboard thermal image cameras, it also greatly enhances flight safety for the pilot, particularly when operating in very dark rural areas.

'We cover three fairly rural shire counties where there are a lot of dark holes and previously night time searches were extremely difficult.

'With the Night Vision Goggles, the pilot is able to improve his spatial awareness being able to see visual references including, importantly, the ground. The goggles need just a small light source - if there is enough ambient lighting from the moon, the pilot will get an image.'

The introduction of the night vision system has cost a total of £160,000, which includes nearly £50,000 for the three sets of goggles and the remainder spent on converting the aircraft lighting.

The bulk of the cost has been funded by a £121,000 Home Office grant [announced April 2004] with the rest having been jointly funded by Northamptonshire, Warwickshire and Leicestershire police forces.

The decision to invest in nvg's followed recommendations by the Air Accidents Investigation Branch, the Civil Aviation Authority and the Home Office in the wake of the Strathclyde Police EC135T1 crash.

The East Midlands Air Support Unit has always endeavoured to be very proactive and forward looking, and has led the way nationally in the development of digital mapping and helmet tracking systems, attracting the attention of colleagues from around the UK. It is expected that many other police air support units will now follow this latest step in investing in night vision technology.

North Wales and others have used nvg's for the police observers for years. There is no restriction on this as under the rules in the UK police remain 'passengers' rather than crew members in the aircraft.

To further complicate the situation [created under the UK CAA some years ago] the European certification authority [EASA] does not recognise UK police aviation as it remains very much outside the European norm in being a civil operation where the rest of Europe operates firmly within a 'Public Aircraft' scenario. As a result the task of incorporating night vision into the fleet was devolved to the CAA to work out with the UK operators as they were likely to understand the 'strange' situation they had a hand in creating. From the EMASU viewpoint this decision did ease the process.

There is still a way to go before operations are fully NVIS. The current situation is that NVIS operations by pilots will be undertaken above 500 feet – and this also continues to apply to Devon & Cornwall. When the CAA is happy that they have sufficient experience the height restrictions can be eased downward to eventually allow take-off and landing on a case by case basis. Devon & Cornwall are expected to achieve that first – after all they have been at the forefront of the technology in the UK for a matter of years now – and East Midlands hope to be going down the same road of demonstrated experience after some nine months has elapsed. [Police Media]

HOME OFFICE FUNDING: Details of the final allocation of HO air support funds are expected later this month. The recipients of this years air support funding now know the result but it is not yet a matter of public knowledge.

From past information it can be expected to include a further financial contribution towards the new EC145s for the London Metropolitan Police. From Leicestershire Police Authority minutes dated August 2005 it is known that the East Midlands consortium applied for funding for a new aircraft in the current round of funding and from a similar source it is known that West Midlands are seeking to purchase an EC135 to replace their troubled MD900 Explorer G-WMID.

Notwithstanding the current problems associated with the intention to scrap many forces, it is likely that these applications will have gone ahead unaltered. The alterations in forces are not likely to have had an immediate effect. [IPAR]

METROPOLITAN: McAlpine Helicopters Limited has announced the confirmation of orders for three new Eurocopter EC145 helicopters by the Metropolitan Police Authority. The Met will be the first UK customer to operate the EC145 in the police role and following an extensive completion phase at Oxford, these helicopters are scheduled to enter service between late 2006 and early 2007.

Powered by two Turbomeca ARRIEL 1E2 engines, the EC145 is capable of carrying one or two pilots and eight or nine passengers. This multi-mission helicopter offers a fast cruise speed of 135 kts, an advanced MEGHAS glass cockpit, digital autopilot for both single or dual pilot applications and an endurance of up to 3.5 hours.

Compared to other helicopters in its' class, the EC145 offers a significantly larger and more versatile cabin layout , which allows the EC145 to undertake a variety of additional roles including, winching, fast roping, abseiling and casualty evacuation.

Eurocopter helicopters account for 71% of the existing UK and Ireland police surveillance market, with the smaller EC135 accounting for 52% of the helicopters deployed in this role. The EC145 is very much seen as a complementary helicopter platform to the EC135, adding a new dimension in terms of multi role capability and lift capacity in the 3.6 ton class. [ECUK]

WEST YORKSHIRE: West Yorkshire Police have unveiled plans for a multi-million pound extension to their force training centre in Wakefield.

The Carr Gate site is currently home to the force's helicopter, mounted section and dog units. Under the plans, specialist facilities would be built for firearms and driver training and for officers learning how to deal with public order problems.

UNITED STATES

FEDERAL: The FAA has reduced the size of the temporary flight restriction (TFR) introduced along the US-Mexico border to protect civilian aircraft from conflict with the unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) being trialed on border patrols.

AOPA has been pushing security officials to find alternatives to removing large areas of airspace from civilian use to protect these UAV flights. [AOPA]

ARIZONA: Tucson Police Dept. has opened the bidding on the city's online auction Web site for a surplus police helicopter. With a reserve price of \$200,000 the auction for the Bell 206B JetRanger N304PD c/n 4319 ends March 8. The Bell was purchased new for the Tucson PD in 1994 and has been a police role craft since being built - details are available on-line at www.citysurplus.org. Currently it has recorded 10,296 hours and 8,085 cycles.

Contact Sgt. James Graves, Supervisor, Air Support Unit at +1 520 791 4142 for an appointment to inspect the aircraft, logs and records. [TPD]



Tucson PD image

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CALIFORNIA: LOS ANGELES – Last month the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department [LACS] unveiled a model plane equipped with a video camera as a new tool for the use by SWAT teams as a new surveillance technology.

The four-pound [3.5kg] plane has a tiny camera in its belly that can be used for everything from surveillance of buildings and tracking fleeing burglars to searching for lost hikers and missing children.

The 'SkySeer' will be donated to the department by Chang Industry for field testing. The company has worked with the Sheriff's Department for about three years to produce a UAV that met their requirements. LACS requested something small and light that is also slow enough to take good video, easy to control, inexpensive, self-piloting and quiet.

With a collapsible, six-and-a-half-foot wingspan and a 20-pound computer base station to control it, the SkySeer is highly portable and can be operated by one person.

For a recent test flight a local map was loaded into the plane's computer and the locations where the plane to fly loaded. Launching was manual – an officer picked up the craft and switched on the engine, which set the electrically powered nose propeller in motion. It was launched from a throw then guided with a remote control as it climbed to 250 feet - where its engine was inaudible.

Landing options include a guided power-off landing onto grass, being caught mid-flight by an officer or a yet to be developed parachute recovery.

Other groups showing an interest in the plane include the Border Patrol, the Forest Service and a law enforcement agency on the East Coast. The estimated cost will be in the region of \$30,000. [Copley News Service]

Ed: As previously reported the LACS Aero Bureau is not involved in the testing of this equipment. [JDG]

OKLAHOMA: Tulsa Police have taken delivery of a new dual sensor FLIR unit with a 10x power zoom. The unit cost \$240,000.

The Tulsa police have two helicopters and most operations relate to patrol between 1900 and 0300hrs. [Newschannel]

TEXAS: The Department Of Public Safety in the State has purchased another \$3M AStar

helicopter for assignment to the San Antonio region.

The craft is equipped to a similar level to those elsewhere in Texas with a dual sensor camera pod, a GPS driven mapping system, LoJack receiver for stolen cars and a searchlight.

Last year the aircraft section flew 3,000 missions, arrested almost 800 people and made more than 800 drug busts as well as tracing 11 crime victims, rescuing 18 people in danger, and finding 47 people who were lost. [CBS]

WINTER OLYMPICS REPORT

By Dino Marcelliono



*Corpo Forestale and CNSAS rescue team [in red] in action on rescue training mission on Olympic mountains.
Refuelling from a tanker at the Sestriere base.*



All members of the Italian State Services, civil and military, were involved during the XX Olympic Winter Games Torino 2006 in assuring security and assistance. The respective Air Services deployed their helicopters in the Olympics Valleys, providing both security and ambulance missions. The massive airborne effort saw equipment and additional crews transported from other Italian bases to Turin, during the Olympic weeks, in order to maintain a 24/7 readiness .

The territory was divided in sectors of responsibility, the State Police and Carabinieri primarily performing security and surveillance missions from their existing bases in country and covering the whole territory, where other services deployed helicopters on Olympic sites – many of them recently constructed or improved for the event.

The Guardia di Finanza [Customs] operated their AB-412 from Bardonecchia, the Vigili del Fuoco (fire brigade) at Susa and Pragelato, and Corpo Forestale (Forestry Corps) at Val Troncea Valley.

Amid tightening security Police Aviation News was able to visit the Corpo Forestale in the run-up to the Games. The operation deserves a particular mention, because they deployed two AB-412 ten days before the Games' started, and they offered them to the Games' organiser not only in the rescue and HEMS role, but also to use the helicopters in works directly related to the free running of the Games organisation.

Whilst remaining available for emergency work in the lead up to the opening ceremony the green and white rotorcraft were regularly seen flying heavy underslung loads of fuel, equipment – including television broadcast gear – VIP's, police and security people and others.

During Games days the helicopters embarked a specialised rescue team from the Italian civil mountain rescue organisation, CNSAS, and doctors from local health authority.

A more discrete presence was the Corpo Forestale's only fixed wing - the Piaggio P-180 [see last month] – it flew numerous missions from Rome to Turin Caselle airports, and vice-versa, primarily undertaking logistic and VIP transportation.



14 - 15 March 2006, Bournemouth International Centre, UK

The engagement of all these resources, started in January, will continue beyond mid March, when the Paralympic Winter Games draw to a close. Only then will it be possible to illustrate the complete picture of activities in the region.

AIR AMBULANCE

WINTER OLYMPICS: Air Green, based in Cafasse and Robassomero near Turin, is the company operating the helicopters for HEMS in Piedmont. In the proximity of what are temporarily 'Olympic Valleys' Air Green normally maintain two AgustaBell AB-412 helicopters to serve Piedmonter Regional Medical Service using the callsign '118Piemonte' and based at Turin and Cuneo.

The company has taken the high profile mission opportunity presented by the XX Olympic Winter Games Torino 2006 to place into service its new AB139. The first AB139 equipped for HEMS role. For the Games it was deployed to the mountain site in Sauze d'Oulx, at 1,510 metres above sea level. A new helipad, H24, has been built there.

The helicopter – the same as that seen at last years Paris Air Show - incorporates many state of the art technologies, including a new stretcher loading system and an advanced radio system patching in direct communication between pilots, doctors, rescue members and the operational ground station and hospital.



AB139 at the Air Green base Cafasse.



Words and images by Dino Marcellino

BELGIUM

Ostend based NHV [Noordzee Helikopters Vlaanderen] took delivery of a new Eurocopter EC145 OO-NHB to replace AS365N2 Dauphin OO-NHZ as air ambulance at the heliport of Bra-sur-Lienne, Southern Belgium.

NHV was established in 1997 for off shore flights (piloting for Zeebrugge and Antwerp harbour) and air taxi operations. They are also active on the air ambulance scene with two MD900's (OO-NHF based at Arras, France and OO-EMS at the UZ hospital in Antwerp) and Dauphin OO-NHZ at Bra-sur-Lienne.

Bra-sur-Lienne is a small village located in the Belgian Ardennes between Liege and Luxembourg. There is no hospital, this is only a emergency medical center. They started operation during 1997 with S-76+ (D-HOSA) leased from Wiking Air but this was replaced by Dauphin OO-NHZ.

EUROPE

In 2005, the TEAM DRF pilots, emergency physicians and paramedics flew 34,408 missions in their helicopters and fixed wing ambulance aircraft. The total is 1,564 more than in 2004 (total missions in 2004: 32,844).

24,358 of the missions were emergency medical related, helicopters flew 9,165 transfer missions and the aircraft flew some 5774 flight hours in repatriating 885 patients from 100 countries to their home countries for further medical treatment.

UNITED KINGDOM

EAST ANGLIA: The new Eurocopter BK117 for the East Anglian Air Ambulance [EAAA] is currently being fitted out with equipment and re-sprayed in yellow before it comes into service later this month or in early April. When complete and the crew trained it will serve Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire offering a more spacious craft able to accommodate walking wounded and carrying an enhanced range of new equipment.

Running costs for the new aircraft are more expensive than the Bolkow it replaces - it will cost about £110,000 per month to keep in the air, a sum entirely raised without NHS, government or lottery funding.

The craft it will replace is the Bolkow 105DBS5 G-EYNL, which is now 27-years-old. It was originally a 4,700 hour air ambulance in Norway LN-OTJ before being rebuilt to Super 5 standard for the Humberside Police in 1996. EAAA acquired it 5 years ago when the police moved on to an MD Explorer. [EAAA/IPAR]

ESSEX: Early last month the Essex Air Ambulance made its 7,000 flight in response to an emergency, since the launch of the service in July 1998.

Statistically the helicopter airlifts more men than it does women and children, its busiest day is a Sunday and more than 30% of its total missions are to road traffic accidents. [EAA]

GREAT NORTH: The MD Explorer operated by the ambulance service, G-GNAA, has now been named 'Guardian of the North' a name suggested by the BBC Radio Cleveland listener. [AN]

NORTH WEST: The NWAA is launching a brand new initiative in the region, to give people a unique way of raising funds for the only medical air emergency service to fly seven days a week, 365 days a year over the region.

NWAA is introducing a new scheme to promote recycling and raise funds through a schools appeal. By working with SWD Premier Clothing, a North West-based clothes and fabric recycling company, the NWAA will turn unwanted items into much-needed cash. For every ton of clothes or household fabric collected, the NWAA will receive £200. [NWAA]

YORKSHIRE: A regular pilot with the air ambulance, Pete Barnes, is flying off to the Bahamas to fly in support of the James Bond film Casino Royale, the first movie in the long-running franchise to star new 007 Daniel Craig.

The self-employed pilot with 18 years experience behind him he will be working in Nassau, before a stint in Europe later during the production in the Czech capital of Prague, where

filming is already underway.

Pete has a number of previous movie support jobs to his name including the last James Bond outing by Pierce Brosnan in *Die Another Day* which entailed him being in Spain for three weeks flying the MD900 Explorer – similar to the model of helicopter used by the Yorkshire Air Ambulance.



Early model MD900 [c/n 0010/N9208V] used in the James Bond Film DIE ANOTHER DAY ©2002 Danjaq, LLC and United Artists Corporation. All rights reserved.

Film work for his London based company, Helivision, is in addition to television shows, G8 Summit and employing ten pilots for the Athens Olympics in 2004.

Because of his other commitments Pete works six days a month for the Yorkshire Air Ambulance. He has been flying air ambulances for 10 years. [Leeds Today]

UNITED STATES

NATIONAL: In the first stages of turning around the parlous safety situation in the US EMS industry the NTSB has made recommendations to the FAA that it hopes will improve the situation.

All emergency medical services operators are now to comply with a stricter level of specifications during the conduct of all flights with medical personnel onboard and are to develop and implement flight risk evaluation programmes that include training all employees in the operation.

Operators are now to be required to use a formalised dispatch and flight-following procedures that include up-to-date weather information and assistance in flight risk assessment decisions and to install terrain awareness and warning systems on their aircraft.

TEXAS: CareFlite, the eighth oldest air medical transportation service in the USA, and the second oldest in Texas, is investing in a comprehensive network of IFR approach procedures at hospitals throughout the company's service area.

CareFlite operates six helicopters at five bases throughout the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex. All CareFlite helicopters are twin-engine Agusta A109E equipped for IFR flight and the announcement relates to the conclusion of the 17 instrument approaches to area hospitals meeting FAA certification throughout North Central Texas. This will permit CareFlite to transport critical patients to the area's trauma centres and other hospitals offering specialised care during poor weather conditions.



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CareFlite transports more than 4,000 patients each year by air, which puts it among the top ten busiest of the 200 air medical transport organisations in the USA.

Hickok & Associates, Inc was contracted in June 2004 after responding to CareFlite's request for proposal (RFP). Work began in late August 2004 with the first of two on-site trips.

Hickok divided the CareFlite project into two groups: sites where heliport work was needed to comply with FAA AC 150/5390-2 heliport design recommendations, and sites where no heliport improvements were needed. Production of final procedure packages for submission to FAA began in March 2005 and the final procedure package was delivered to FAA by mid-August. The first group of nine procedures was flight inspected in early September and approved by FAA in mid-November 2005. The final group of eight procedures was flight inspected the first week of October and approved by FAA in late December 2005.

CareFlite also operates seventeen non-emergency ground ambulances in Dallas County, and four ambulances in Johnson County responding to 911 emergencies.

NEVADA: A man who Reno police said was drunk and wanted to take a medical helicopter for a ride has been jailed for allegedly causing thousands of dollars in damage to the aircraft during his one minute in the aircraft – believed to be a AS350. He could face further charges.

Albert Shoars, 33, of Reno was intoxicated and intent on taking the helicopter for a ride. After climbing over a 3-foot locked gate with a sign declaring 'Authorized Personnel Only' and falling down, Shoars opened the unlocked helicopter door and took a \$2,000 safety helmet. He then threw the helmet against the outside of the aircraft, causing an 8-inch dent in the aircraft. Shoars played with switches and knobs, and pulled out wires. A plate that protects switches inside the aircraft was broken, ropes securing the main rotors were untied and the throttle was turned to neutral contrary to the instructions in the manual.

The event was captured on Washoe Medical Center security video surveillance. The heli-

copter is housed on hospital's property with hospital guards providing 24-hour security. Video footage of the incident helped maintenance staff locate and find damage. Because the incident was so rare, no added security measures will be taken by Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority's Care Flight. [RJG]

FIRE



CHILE

Under a three month contract two Kamov Ka-32A11VS helicopters belonging to a Spanish operator- Helicopteros del Sureste S.A., are to carry out forest firefighting for a Chilean company- Forestal Mininco S.A. in Chile.

The Ka-32 is the first Russian-made helicopter to be engaged in firefighting operations in this country.

In 2004-2005 Helisureste acquired four Kamov's and late last year additional contracts for four additional machines were signed. [Rusnews]

ITALY

Bombardier Aerospace has announced that the Italian government has exercised an option to purchase 15 additional upgrade kits to enhance its entire fleet of Bombardier 415 aircraft. Italy had previously ordered one kit for installation on the Bombardier 415 it purchased in 2005.

The upgrade kit package is derived from the Bombardier 415MP multipurpose aircraft and includes autopilot, nose radar, flight data recorder (FDR) and cockpit voice recorder (CVR). The kit is now being offered as an upgrade to the Bombardier 415 aircraft to enhance its operational capabilities while improving crew comfort and safety. [Bombardier]

Ed: See also item under Industry below.

RUSSIA

The Ministry of Emergency Situations [MES] plans to deploy Beriev Be-200ChS amphibians in Siberia during this coming summer.

The MES is to receive two additional aircraft from Irkut Corporation for deployment at Krasnoyarsk a new aircraft division which will take control over the north and east of Russia.

At the moment the MES has deployed two Be-200ChS, one based at Ramenskoye outside Moscow and is assigned to carry out firefighting operations in the central regions of Russia right up to the Urals as well as in the northwest of this country.

The second aircraft is assigned to operate in the Far East and based at aerodrome Khabarovsk-Centralny (a second aircraft is awaited). By 2007 seven Be200s will be in service.

In 2005 the Be-200s performed 232 forest and peat reconnaissance and firefighting missions and their total of flying hours exceeded 270h. 134 loads of water and some special fire extinguishing fluid agent weighing 918 tonnes were dumped over fires. [Rusnews]



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SEARCH & RESCUE

MEXICO

According to industry sources in Russia a Mil Mi-8 MTV helicopter, currently in test, will be delivered Mexico's Coast Guard in the next few months. [RusNews]

SPAIN

AgustaWestland has announced that Sasemar, the Spanish Marine Safety Agency, has awarded a contract for three AB139 medium-twin helicopters in Search and Rescue (SAR) configuration. Sasemar is the fifth government customer to choose the AB139 for SAR applications, following previous orders by UAE, Oman and Ireland and more recently Estonia. The Sasemar's AB139 will be used for SAR and water pollution detection missions and it will be equipped with rescue hoist, FLIR, Search/Weather radar, flotation and a 4 axis autopilot with SAR modes. Orders for almost 150 AB139s have been placed by customers around world.

UNITED KINGDOM

An investigation has been launched by Ofcom, the telecommunications regulator, after a £45 digital TV decoder set-top box sparked a search and rescue operation.

Coastguards were alerted after an emergency 1215 distress call was picked up at RAF Kinloss in Scotland.

It was traced to the home of Mary Donaldson, 67, of Wembury, near Plymouth, who was confronted by two officials at her front door on January 24 after Falmouth Coastguard sent out two lifeboats.

Two lifeboats and a police launch spent three hours scouring 20 miles of coastline in a desperate search for a mystery vessel they believed to be in trouble.

The signal was picked up by RAF Kinloss in Scotland and passed on to coastguards in Devon. Incredibly, two weeks earlier another Freeview box 'Mayday' resulted in a major air-sea rescue operation in Portsmouth harbour.

Ofcom admit to being baffled by the distress calls. Digital boxes are not meant to transmit any signals at all. They are supposed to receivers.

The wasted rescue operation off Plymouth cost £8,300 and lifeboat crew warned rogue signals could cost lives. [Media]

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: After hearing about a search underway on the late evening news a Oroville based pilot and aircraft owner were being criticised after self launching their night vision goggle and FLIR equipped Bell 407 and undertaking a search and rescue of 11-year-olds in the hills near Paradise, California last month.

Aided by night-vision goggles, a pilot and a helicopter owner, David Gunsauls and Dan Kohrtdt spotted Revina Dennis and her cousin Austin Rogers on a lava-rock-strewn hillside miles away from the ground party looking for them. The pilot held the machine in a stable hover while Kohrtdt pulled the youngsters inside.

All too predictably the local Butte County Sheriff's office was distancing itself from the celebration. They did not request the rescue, nor did they support the freelance operation even though it has become quite clear that the law enforcement unit was itself unwilling or unable to operate its own aircraft at that time. They cited the risk of flying close to terrain at night. Where Kohrtdt's Bell 407 has night-vision equipment the sheriff's DoD surplus machines have neither and were planning to launch in daylight. [Media]



Ed: Here we appear to have a case of the professionals, themselves ill-equipped to undertake a mission, and quite understandably unable to meet the needs of the moment rejecting the services of another party that had the equipment and capability of rescuing people. OK if it had gone wrong there might have been repercussions where the authorities might want to wash their hands of the whole Bell 407 rescue but in this instance a smile and murmur of congratulations might have been the better course.

There are many organisations that might give the impression of being less worthy than the 'emergency services.' On examination some prove to have a far greater capability and depth of experience in terms of both man and machine when duty calls.

INDUSTRY



Bombardier Aerospace announced last month that it is restarting its *CL-215T* conversion kits program. Nine orders for the turbine conversion kits to be installed on *CL-215* amphibious aircraft were placed by the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, AeroFlite – a private US operator, and Buffalo Airways Ltd of the Northwest Territories, Canada.

The total value of the nine orders is approximately \$85 million US.

The turbine conversion kits include the proven PW123AF Pratt & Whitney turboprop engines, which will enhance the *CL-215* aircraft's reliability and efficiency.

The converted aircraft will also feature improvements such as the modernisation of structural components, electrical distribution system & engine fuel system, in addition to the replacement of manual flight controls by powered systems to benefit from added engine power and reduced pilot workload. Once modified, the aircraft will perform similarly to the *Bombardier 415* fire-fighting aircraft.

Last month **ecms Aviation Systems**, the Hannover Police Helicopter Unit, and a SWAT team met in Hannover, Germany to test EDX02, an external fast roping and rappelling device with pyroelectric emergency release, specifically designed for the SA 365. The Police Helicopter Unit had contacted ecms a few months back asking if they would be able to design a system for their SA 365, which would allow the unit to perform their specific mission needs. The SA 365 is now fairly rare in police aviation and no COTS systems were readily available. The company [ecms] met with the pilots and crews of the unit to discuss their needs and wishes for the system and set out to design and produce a system that would meet or exceed these needs.



The EDX02 system tested proved more than successful. The system was mounted to the outside of the helicopter, the crews were instructed on the operating procedures, and the SWAT team was taken up for the first fast roping trials. After the second set of fast roping trials were completed successfully, the SWAT team was refitted and was taken up to 30 metres for the rappelling trial. Once again flawless, both the Helicopter Unit and the SWAT team expressed how pleased they were with their new system.

Observing these and later the vibration, stability, and effect on aircraft performance tests were the German Aviation Authorities (LBA) who are now working with ecms on the certification of the device. The company plans certification, delivery and training to be completed in time for the Soccer World Cup this summer.

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Microwave Radio Communications (MRC) has kicked off 2006 by penetrating the Public Sector Markets with a complete suite of products for both domestic and international customers. Leveraging their broadcast knowledge, MRC has created customizable solutions for the next generation of law enforcement and rescue operations. The specialized microwave equipment consists of four segments; Airborne, Body Worn, Mobile and Satellite. MRC will be exhibiting at over a dozen public safety and government trade shows throughout 2006.

Robinson Helicopter Company completed another milestone in 2005; delivery of its 4,000th R22 helicopter. Thirty years after test flying the first R22, himself, Frank Robinson presented the keys of ship S/N 4000 to John Skeen of Heliflite, Australia. This ship is one of approximately 400 R22 helicopters used in Australia for various tasks including flight training and cattle herding.



Photo: Frank Robinson congratulates John Skeen [left] on his new aircraft.

Rolls-Royce has signed a comprehensive services contract to support engines on C-130J aircraft operated by the **US Coast Guard** under the Department of Homeland Security. The aircraft, powered by four Rolls-Royce AE 2100D3 engines, are operated out of the Coast Guard Aircraft Project Office in Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

Under the \$35 million contract, Rolls-Royce will provide the USCG with maintenance and support over 10 years.

The C-130 has been the Coast Guard's primary long-range search, rescue and maritime patrol aircraft since 1959, powered by Rolls-Royce T56 engines. The latest versions of the aircraft are powered by AE 2100D3 engines.



Blue Sky Network [BSN] were one of the supporters of last month's record breaking around the World flight by Steve Fossett. The company supplied him with tracking, voice, and telemetry equipment. Thousands of position and telemetry reports (engine data, etc.) and numerous email messages containing updates were passed between the Virgin Atlantic GlobalFlyer and ground control through the use of BSN's communication equipment and SkyRouter mapping solution.

Enstrom Helicopter Corporation and the Estonian Environmental Inspectorate have signed a contract to build an Enstrom 480B to serve as a surveillance helicopter for the Republic of

Estonia's Ministry of Environment.

Enstrom was selected in October 2005 via a competitive public tender process. The 480B helicopter will be outfitted with the capability to mount a surveillance camera and recording equipment, along with a searchlight and emergency floats. The helicopter will be based in Tallinn and will be operated throughout Estonia. The Environmental Inspectorate's mission is to protect Estonian natural resources, such as wildlife, fisheries and forests while also monitoring inland, coastal and territorial waterways. The aircraft is scheduled to be delivered in April.

Sikorsky Aircraft's S-76 helicopter line has continued building upon its legacy with the recent delivery of the 600th S-76 helicopter.

More than 220 operators in 59 countries are currently flying S-76 helicopters. The S-76 fleet has accumulated more than four million flight hours since the first aircraft was delivered in 1979. Sikorsky announced one year ago a series of engine, air vehicle, interior and avionics upgrades available for order immediately on the new S-76C++ and a set of additional product improvements that will lead to the launch of the new S-76D model in 2008.

Low cost used **FLIR** sought by TV company for TV documentary work.

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With Aeroflot predicted to have given up Soviet built airliners by 2010 it may be no surprise that industry in Russia is looking to the West for cooperative projects.

On January 24, 2006 an American delegation paid a visit to a **Kamov** holding company. The delegation included Rolls-Royce, US Trade and Development Agency officials and some officials from the FAA.

During the discussion the sides touched upon the subject of changes taking place in Russia's helicopter-building industry and prospects for its further development which is a significant step in Russia's efforts to strengthen its collaboration with the 'Rolls-Royce' company and to expand Russian-US cooperation in the area of aviation.

Adams Aviation Supply Co Ltd have announced their investment in *The Flying Shop*. Since last month the two organisations – recognised as among the best of the UK's pilots' supplies outlets - are combining their websites and facilities to provide a new user-friendly and comprehensive shopping experience under *The Flying Shop* banner.

The name of AdamsDirect – the retail arm of Adams Aviation Supply Co Ltd – has become synonymous with friendly advice and detailed knowledge of Headsets, Avionics, Safety Equipment, Instruments and GPS, while The Flying Shop has always been renowned as a great source for Charts, Books, Clothing, Stationary and Gifts. By combining the two operations, pilots – from trial-lesson to professional, and from para-glider to commercial - as well as enthusiasts will have access to everything they need whether shopping on-line, by phone, in person or from the catalogue.

The Flying Shop will operate out of Hunter House, Biggin Hill Airport, Kent and will be available on both the old AdamsDirect AND The Flying Shop phone numbers and web-addresses, with the main contact details now being +44 1959-579800 and www.flyingshop.com

Bell Helicopter has announced that it has attained the coveted AS9100 Quality System Registration from Perry Johnson Registrars (PJR). Larry Beck of Perry Johnson Registrars presented the certificate denoting Bell's achievement of the AS9100 Registration to Mike

Redenbaugh, Bell's chief executive officer, and Lee Tait, senior vice president, Quality Assurance, and Chief Compliance Officer.

AS9100 Registration is the newest version of the aerospace industry Quality System standard, incorporating the principles of ISO 9001 along with elements unique to the aerospace industry.

Adam Aircraft has announced the first flight of the A700 AdamJet, Serial Number 002, which is the first of three FAA flight-test airframes.

A700 Serial Number 002 is painted and striped in its full air taxi livery, and features a production instrument panel with three-tube Avidyne Entegra avionics. The aircraft is constructed from production tooling, featuring a production fuselage with improved cabin window and emergency exit placement, with the balance of the aircraft manufactured from A500 production parts common to the A700.

Since its First Flight, July 27, 2003, A700 Serial Number One has flown more than 400 hours, providing important aerodynamic, systems test data and interior development that creates a baseline for the upcoming FAA flight-test program during Type Certification. Serial Number 001 will now be used as a marketing and flight test aircraft, visiting cities, airports, and aviation events across the United States. Serial Number 002 will serve as the production and flight test aircraft for FAA Type Certification, which is targeted for later this year. More than 250 A700 Very Light Jets have been sold to owners/operators, fleet operators, and air taxi companies. www.adamaircraft.com.

Drayton Manor Theme Park in Tamworth, Staffordshire <http://www.draytonmanor.co.uk/> was the ancestral home of the Peel dynasty, and home to Sir Robert Peel, the founder of the 'Peelers' and the police force. The owners of the theme park, the Bryan family, are launching a history book this year about the site and its development into one of the UK's leading tourist attractions. They would like to encourage all members of UK police forces to visit their park at special rates. The organisers are offering a discount voucher saving £20.50 to readers of *Police Aviation News*. There is also a scheme where a force could purchase tickets at a very special rate & sell them on to their members still at a rate lower than the list price, enabling the force to profit from the transaction. Please contact me should both/either of these ideas be of interest. Once the book is completed for Easter, we will be happy to send a copy & images.

Helen O'Neill, Managing Director O'Neill PR, The Communication Centre, 17 Buckley St, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK11 6UH. T 01625 266 650 F 01625 265 075 Please reply to oneillpr@btconnect.com

Dart Helicopter Services has announced that they have taken an important step toward becoming the industries one source for all landing gear solutions by certifying crosstubes that are compatible with both their patented Round-I-Beam™ skid tubes and OEM skid tubes. "Our goal is to have a solution for every landing gear issue, for every make and model." Commented Dart Helicopter Services CEO Jeff Shapiro.

DART has received TC and FAA approval for its new OEM compatible high crosstubes for Bell models 204/205/212/214/412 and 206A/B/L/L1/L3/L4/407. DART is scheduled to have certification of crosstubes for Eurocopter AS350/AS355 model aircraft mid 2006. Like the crosstubes for Bell rotorcraft, these will also be compatible with both OEM and Dart skid-tubes and will feature DART's unique split saddle design to make installations easier.

University of Florida research has identified the most effective way to insert breathing tubes in air ambulance patients en route to a hospital.

The study found a combination of sedative and paralytic drugs increased the chance of success by nearly fourfold and might also apply to other types of pre-hospital care.

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The research involved the air ambulance service of the University of Florida and Trauma One Flight Services of Shands Jacksonville Hospital. The study is reported in the current issue of Prehospital Emergency Care. [UPT]

The **LoJack Corporation** has announced that a jury in the Superior Court of Norfolk County, Massachusetts returned a verdict in favour of LoJack in its breach of contract suit against Clare, Inc. LoJack contracted with Clare in June of 2000 to develop and produce a next generation LoJack unit. It did not do so.

The jury found that Clare had breached its contract with LoJack, returned a verdict in favor of LoJack, and awarded damages in the amount of \$36.7M to compensate LoJack for the additional cost of retaining another firm to develop and produce the unit and for the higher interim product cost it incurred. With interest since March 2002, the date of breach, the total judgment is expected to be \$54M. An appeal is expected.

Tadiran Spectralink have announced the launch of an intensified business development effort for its SAR systems, focused on Asia-Pacific markets and with special emphasis on key countries in the region.

On the eve of the opening of the Asian Aerospace 2006 Exhibition and Conference, last month it was said that the company considers Asia-Pacific countries as a key market, with enormous potential for cooperation.

At the show they unveiled the new PRC-868G family of Personal Survival Radios, especially adapted for the requirements of customers in South East Asia. Based on the combat-proven and widely fielded PRC-434G, these special models offer all of the advanced func-

tions and characteristics of this cutting-edge PSR, plus features specifically suited to the preferences of users in this region.

One of these new models is the PRC-868G/CS, designed for combat and non-combat SAR operations. This state-of-the-art software-defined radio (SDR) is an "All-In-One Solution" incorporating many advanced features, such as GPS geolocation response to interrogations from the airborne system or another PSR, secured two-way messaging, navigation along dozens of pre-programmed waypoints, and battery life up to 96 hours in "sleep" mode. In addition, the PRC-868G/CS is fitted for operation at the 406.025 MHz frequency of the Cospas-Sarsat emergency satellite constellation, thus effectively substituting for an Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT). Another enhancement is the Thermal Beacon, which can be added to this PSR to further facilitate survivor pinpointing and final approach for first-pass pick up. For further information contact +972-3-5706527 E-mail: oreet@oreet-marcom.com

At the recent Asian Aerospace 2006 air show at Singapore's Changi Airport **Bell Helicopter** announced a number of document signings for light helicopters.

The most important of these was the news that Bell has executed a Memorandum of Agreement with **Korea Aerospace Industries, Ltd (KAI)** to begin the production efforts for airframes for the Bell 429 light twin IFR helicopter. The agreement is projected to cover all Bell 429 airframes for the next 10 years, the worth of which is estimated to be over \$150M. Bell and KAI intend to work toward the execution of a more definitive Supply Agreement over the next few months.

Since the announcement of the 429 helicopter and co-development agreement among Bell, KAI, and Mitsui Bussan Aerospace Company Ltd. during the Heli-Expo 2005, the Bell-KAI team has been successfully developing the 429 helicopter. The First Production Flight of the helicopter is planned in February 2007, and the first delivery to the customer is expected during the 4th quarter 2007.

The best-in-class capabilities of the 429 attract many customers all over the world, and



more than 150 orders have been gathered so far. Bell and KAI are taking actions required to double the production capacity for the helicopter to meet the demand.

In addition to the sole source production of the airframe, KAI has the right to sell and assemble the 429 helicopters for the Korea and China markets.

The document was signed at the show at a meeting of Robert Fitzpatrick, senior vice president Marketing and Sales, Bell Helicopter, and J.J. Park, Executive Vice President and General Manager of Strategic Business Division, KAI .

Bell 429 development is proceeding on schedule with TCA and FAA certification expected to be in the 3rd quarter of 2007. Modified 427 Prototypes are flying various 429 components with first flight of the 429 prototype scheduled for the 3rd quarter of this year. Bell has suc-



successfully completed concept demonstration tests, wind tunnel tests and inlet and exhaust testing. Detail design is near completion and parts and tooling are being built to construct the first prototype.

Preliminary information indicates the 429 will offer a range of 350 nm or endurance of 3.8 hours, HOGE 9,300 ft and an empty weight of 4,300 lb providing a useful load of 2,700 lb.

Jubilant Enpro, the Bell Helicopter Independent Representative in India, has signed an option for six light helicopters. This will ensure that customers in India will get their allocation in the coming years, to meet the surge in demand for helicopters in the rapidly growing Indian economy.

In 2005, Jubilant Enpro helped Bell Helicopter secure orders for 16 aircraft. These included the Bell 407, 412EP and the new Bell 429 light twin.

Jubilant Enpro is part of the large diversified Jubilant Corporation with activities spanning Pharmaceuticals and Life Sciences, Oil and Gas, Aerospace, Software Development, Food, International Trading and Financial Services.

Hawker Pacific, Bell Helicopter's Independent Representative for Australia, New Zealand and UAE has signed an order for an additional dozen helicopters from Bell. The order includes six Bell 407 and six Bell 429 destined for Hawker Pacific's Australasian customers.

The 12 helicopters are to be delivered between 2007 and 2009. This order adds to Hawker Pacific's order book with Bell. In 2005, Hawker Pacific took 12 orders for Bell aircraft. This includes the first Bell 429 for Australia with Gold Coast helicopters.

Smiths Aerospace has been selected by Korean Aerospace Industries (KAI) to provide the next generation Health and Usage Monitoring System (HUMS) for the Korean Helicopter Programme. This will include more than 250 aircraft for the Korean Army plus a potential to retrofit legacy platforms in Korea. The contract is valued in excess of \$20M. Localised production, which will include supply from Smiths' facilities in Southampton and Michigan, will begin in 2010 with delivery beginning in 2011.

Smiths' single box HUMS will provide increased aircraft safety, availability, reliability, maintainability and Life Cycle Costs. Smiths' HUMS includes an airborne data acquisition and processing unit, pilot display, PC card data transfer unit, airborne and ground software.

With more than 400 HUMS, Smiths Aerospace is the world leader in the supply of HUMS for both military and commercial helicopter applications. Having developed the first certified HUMS for the North Sea helicopter operations in 1991, Smiths' HUMS have accumulated more than 2 million flight hours. Smiths has a track record of working with helicopter constructors including Bell, Boeing, Agusta, Eurocopter and Westland Helicopters to provide both new build and retrofit systems for more than 20 aircraft types. With the largest support team in the industry, Smiths is able to provide system and diagnostic support, on-site training and worldwide web-based fault prediction assistance.



ACCIDENTS & incidents

15 January 2006 Eurocopter EC135P1 N311MS. Air ambulance of Metro Aviation serving Northwest MedStar of Spokane, Washinton. Pilot, flight nurse, respiratory therapist, no patient. Responding to a rural vehicle accident night scene, the pilot landed in the middle of the highway as directed by state law enforcement. The pilot received confirmation from the scene commander that the LZ was secure and subsequently made an uneventful landing. A non-law enforcement vehicle passed the roadblock and nearly hit the crew and the port-side helicopter skid.

2 February 2006 Bell 205L1 N593AE. Air ambulance PHI Air Medical based at Anderson, Chesterfield, Indiana crashed returning from a cancelled flight request. The aircraft struck a tree and power lines resulting in a crash into a garage. All three flight crew injured, no injuries to any personnel on the ground.

The crash site about 10 miles southwest of Muncie was a few blocks from Anderson Municipal Airport, where PHI's regional operation is based. The airport tower was closed at the time. The wreckage was scattered over several back yards in the town of fewer than 3,000 people. All three on board were in serious condition at Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis. Later reports suggested that the pilot accepted an assignment that two other companies had turned down because of fog. [Concern/Indianapolis Star]

7 February 2006 US Coast Guard. The Coast Guard helicopter was forced to land at Crissy Field in San Francisco on Tuesday when it ran low on fuel following a successful rescue mission a few miles away. The helicopter had just plucked a surfer out of dangerous surf below the Cliff House at about 5 p.m. when it made the unscheduled stop.

The helicopter, which is based out of the San Francisco Airport, was returning from another rescue mission from Carmel when it was summoned to help the surfer. This led t a critical fuel situation arising. [Media]

9 February 2006 AS350 ZK- Square Trust Rescue. The helicopter pilot Mike Hall was forced to make an 'avoidance manoeuvre' while flying through uncontrolled airspace in New Zealand. The crew saw another aircraft that was heading north on a conflicting flight path and the TCAS was triggered. The incident was reported to Civil Aviation. Shortly afterwards the conflicting aircraft was one of two Piper Cherokee light aircraft which collided over Manawatu killing both their pilots when they crashed into paddocks near Shannon, southwest of Palmerston North. [Media]

11 February 2006 Eurocopter HH-65B Dolphin. An 82-year-old woman and her son died Saturday afternoon when their boat capsized in waves off the Humboldt County coast and the Coast Guard helicopter attempting to rescue them crashed into the water and floated upright at first until a wave tipped it over. Two other passengers in the boat swam to shore and were taken to the hospital. The Coast Guard crew had lowered a rescue swimmer into the water just before the helicopter crashed into the surf. The three-member Coast Guard crew suffered only minor injuries. [media]

13 February 2006 Helicopter. Vodacom Netcare 911 Surf Rescue. The helicopter that had just completed a training exercise and was flying at an altitude of about 15 feet [5m] over Hout Bay harbour Cape Town hit five seagulls, killing three of them and injuring the others so badly they died. [Times]

13 February 2006 Helicopter N. Montana Dept. of Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Severe weather forced the landing of the helicopter at the remote Spotted Bear Airstrip 50 miles south of Hungry Horse Dam and near the Bob Marshall Wilderness. In winter it is reachable only by snowmobile or aircraft.

A sudden snowstorm produced white-out conditions and high winds. They spent the night at a nearby ranch and the pilot was able to recover the aircraft two days after the landing [AP]



Bryn,

Happy New Year.

Here are some pictures of our helicopter equipment in action on the [US Fox Channel] TV Show "24." The stunt involved fast-roping 4-guys onto a rooftop from the helicopter. It all went very well (no problems). Chuck Tamburro flew the helicopter and his brother John acted as crewchief. I basically rigged the equipment on the copter and educated the stunt team on fast-rope procedures along with overseeing safety.

We scheduled a rehearsal in the daytime and one of the stunt guys was working on "Spiderman." I ended up riding on the bench in place of the missing stunt guy and shooting some video during the practice run. The stunt coordinator (Jeff Cadiente) was so happy with the video, he showed it to the director and we ended up re-doing the shot I got with the video on film--rigged the camera operator on the bench like "Mr. & Ms. Smith" to get POV from the bench tracking the fast-roper to the ground.

I also shot the B&W stills and some of the color. Low light and no light is hard to shoot, especially a black helicopter at night. The company RGB that sells motion picture film stock for 35mm still cameras is now out of business. A victim of the digital age. It was good to shoot the same low light film as the production crew for night ops (true 500 ISO tungsten film--shifts yellow light to white and white light to blue).

Now, my quest is to find a digital camera with low light capabilities, 1 lux or better. Any ideas?

Craig Dyer www.tylertech.net <http://www.fox.com/24/episodes/>

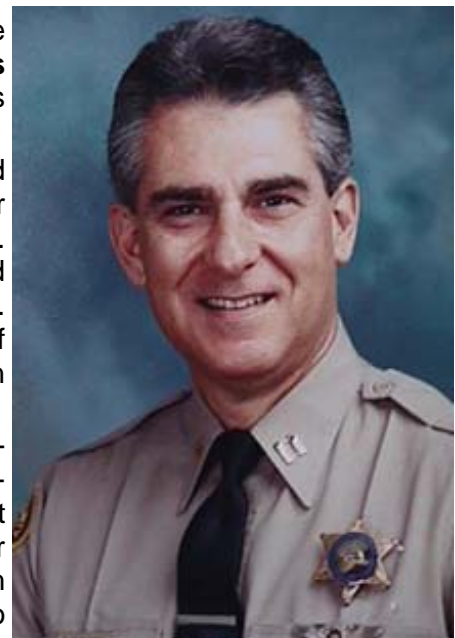
PEOPLE

That well known International Ambassador for both the ALEA and his own Sheriff's Department, **Captain James 'Jim' Di Giovanna** is finally retiring from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Aero Bureau in April.

Often threatened over the last decade but not carried through until now there always seemed to be yet another good reason for staying on for just another exciting project. Probably the last one was negotiating the purchase and then introducing a new fleet of AS350 AStars into the fleet. Before that it was overseeing the acquisition of a fleet of surplus Sea King helicopters to replace the LASD S-58s in the rescue role.

On Wednesday April 5 1130 to 1430hrs the LASD Aero Bureau will be running one of their lavish retirement celebration 'fly-in' (or drive in) events in the Aero Bureau's west hangar, 3235 Lakewood Boulevard, Long Beach, to honour Jim Di Giovanna's retirement after more than 34 years with the Sheriff's Department, the last 17 years spent at aero bureau.

In keeping with his background it will be an Italian buffet. Strange to European eyes there will be a charge of \$15.00 per person, but as the number of Europeans expected there will be few that should be no problem at all! For tickets, please contact Lisa Moore or Terri Davis at +1 562 421 2701, for fly-in information, please contact Sgt. Mike Griffin on the same number or via e-mail at: magriffi@lasd.org The deadline for ticket purchase is March 22.



There was I printing an item last month about **Tony Cowan's** involvement with Skywatch and the real news is that he has taken over as UEO of the Cambridge Unit at RAF Wyton! Tony Cowan was a fixed wing pilot at Northumbria in the days before they got rid of their BN-2 for a second EC135 helicopter.

He has taken up the post for a new Unit Executive Officer advertised in Flight International last September. It asked the reader.... 'Do you relish a challenge... ?'

Clearly Tony did and accepted the post listed as offering pay starting at £25,365 rising to £31,599. [Flight/IPAR]

NEW YORK POLICE DEPARTMENT

Aviation Unit

Police Aviation News took the opportunity to visit the NYPD unit in January. The operation is situated in south Brooklyn close to Jamaica Bay at the edge of Floyd Bennett Field a former military base and before that, in the 1930s, New York's first airport. Like all airports it is located in a fairly remote area, a fact not greatly assisted by it no longer being a public airport.



Being Friday the 13th in mid-winter the weather was naturally not particularly helpful in that all flying was closed in by a dense fog but it did provide a chance to see all the fleet together at once!

First founded in 1929, the NYPD is one of the world's first airborne law enforcement units. The NYPD also was the first to fully adopt the helicopter as a permanent feature in police duties in 1948 with the Bell 47. In 1967, the department was the first in the USA to use turbine power with the Bell 206, in 1985 they took into service their first twin-engine helicopter with the Bell 222.

As the Worlds longest serving continuous operator of helicopters NYPD has been associated with Bell helicopters since they introduced the Bell 47. There have been other types flying alongside them but Bell's were the primary airframe. The recent move to operate a fleet of AgustaWestland A119 Koala's [N315PD, N316PD, N318PD and N319PD] has therefore been something of a seed change but the unit continues to operate three Bell 412's two configured for ASR [N412PD and N414PD] with divers and the third as a special



Image by permission of Jon Goldin



missions craft equipped with a Wescam MX-15 sensor turret that provides enhanced video surveillance when required. Although no secret – the tasking of this craft [above right] includes VIP flights and has featured in a number of media events – NYPD do not promote it widely. The Koala's replaced the Bell 206, after operating the type some 38 years.

Introducing a new type is always traumatic but the flight crews are getting used to the marked differences in operating profile between the elderly Bell design philosophy and that of the newer Agusta. The differences in the inertia of the four blade Koala main rotor and the two blade main rotor of the Bell 206 means that the pair exhibit markedly different autorotation characteristics.

The aircraft are flown operationally with two pilots with the officer in the left seat undertaking the TFO role. NYPD does not employ TFO's and there is no sensor viewing equipment in the rear cabin, the rear seats are for passenger use only – although video recording equipment is situated in a compartment behind the rear cabin seats. At the time of the visit all the cabin rear seats were installed in each aircraft but the rear facing seats are seen as an unnecessary feature in a patrol craft generally used as two seaters.

The ground crews are introducing not only a new and unfamiliar type but a markedly different support infrastructure still largely based in Europe. The Koala's were among the first of their type completed by the manufacturer in the new US facility and differ in detail from those delivered to State Police in Pennsylvania in a similar time-frame. AgustaWestland expanded the manufacturing facility of its US subsidiary Agusta Aerospace Corporation in Philadelphia, PA, in the summer of 2004 specifically to provide additional space for the manufacture and final assembly of the Agusta A119 Koala then manufactured in Italy.



The NYPD Koala's vary slightly from the illustrations issued when the type was announced at the 2004 HAI show. Rather than the sensor pod and searchlight being mounted forward

in the traditional Agusta style, they were delivered upgraded to the Spectrolab Nightsun 2 mount under the rear uplift of the fuselage. Each of the aircraft has a 12inch Wescam mounted forward on the port side.

As a type being newly introduced to the market NYPD picked up a number of 'new type' problems – although these have receded with time. Operating over the damp east coast the NYPD suffered a rash of 'runaway' problems with the Nightsun 2 similar to those regularly reported in the UK. Similarly the heat of the searchlight can cause problems when pointing at the skid mounted flotation bags [in the UK the problem was blistered external paintwork]. The remedy in both cases was to alter the programme software to stop the light pointing at the area causing the problem. Spectrolab has modified the Nightsun 2 to eliminate the water ingress problems and runways.

To assist in the training and conversion to the Koala NYPD has just taken delivery of a new Frasca Interna-



PAN images



tional's TruFlite H IFR and VFR flight-training device. The training aid is located in a specially constructed room within the vast hangar. The Frasca is fully representative of the Agusta A119 Koala and will be used as a fully integrated aid within the unit training programme. At the time of the visit in mid-January the facility was not on-line - all the constituent parts were sitting shrouded in shrink wrap – but it has since been erected and available for use.

The NYPD unit is commanded by Deputy Inspector Joseph A Gallucci with Lt Ken Solosky, currently the Chief Pilot and Director of Training. Solosky is contributing a monthly column on Airborne Operations to the online magazine www.officer.com. The column is primarily aimed at ground personnel and intended to present airborne law enforcement and the ALEA in a positive light.

Ken Solosky, 19 years with the NYPD and due to retire this year, is asking for the support of ALEA members to view the articles and offer him advice and observations on them. A new article is to be released on the third Tuesday of the month.

The first in the series went on-line in January [KS]

New York's Bloomberg administration is on the verge of creating a wireless network [Wi-Fi] that will allow first responders to download fingerprints, photographs, criminal histories, vehicle registration information and even building floor plans via high speed connections whilst en-route to emergencies. The proposals are that all of the emergency services would be involved and that part of the plan is to allow all office bound tasks to be undertaken on the street. An officer typing a report in a patrol car on 5th Avenue is far more of a deterrent than one undertaking the same task in the Station House.



This is just an extension of New York's observed habit of 'abandoning' unused patrol cars on street corners all over the City. It only becomes noticeable when they forget to sweep off the snow two days after the storm!

Mayor Bloomberg's office put out requests for tenders to supply the network as long ago as March 2004 with the intention of starting the current pilot late in 2004. The start date was delayed several times, there are reports that as many as 150 companies had made submissions. It is suggested that Motorola and Northrop Grumman are now the leading candidates running pilot trials.

The pilot trial area is Lower Manhattan and equipment is already operating there on 12 week trials of equipment from different suppliers – that suggests that this stage will run until at least the summer before there is enough data to make a decision on. It is expected that the successful system will result in a five-year contract with two five-year renewal options. [Sun]





FORTHCOMING EVENTS

13-15 March 2006, SAR 2006 Bournemouth International Convention Centre, Bournemouth, Dorset, UK SAR 2006 will take an international approach to the truly global issue of saving the lives of those in distress, regardless of location or circumstance. World leaders in the international SAR community will share their perspectives on the current state of Search and Rescue and debate the potential opportunities and challenges of the future. What are the priorities and issues that influence those who set SAR policy and manage SAR services? RNLI Lifeboat College will be visited on Monday afternoon, 13 March, by pre-registered delegates – a unique opportunity to get a first-hand view into how one of the world's premier life-saving organisations trains. 14 March 12-30pm offshore demonstration Lifeboat/helicopter SAR Rescue Operation Demo Approx 10- 15 minutes +44 1628 606979 www.shephard.co.uk

16 March 2006 Night Vision Forum. Windsor, Berkshire UK. Run by Tangent Link, in association with DSEI. During the day the key areas being presented for discussion will include:

Uncooled thermal technology - Image Fusion - Multi and hyper spectral imaging - Dual/multi-band sighting systems - Lighter weight systems/adaptability of systems - Digitising images/communications and transmission of images.

Delegate rates are £349 commercial and £180 serving officer/ Government etc. Currently the event mainly has military and government delegates but these include both the Netherlands Police and German Border Guard [BGS].

The event is not looking at current operational practice, mainly 'New Technology' and applications.

The day will end with a drinks reception where delegates will be able to partake in a live hands on demonstration of the latest equipment which will be provided by the sponsors of the event. Qinetiq are demonstrating their new helicopter NVG's and Qioptiq their new night sights. <http://www.tangentlink.com> +44 1628 660400

26-27 April 2006 BAPCO 2006, Hailed as *the* Public Safety Communications and IT event it will be held at the Business Design Centre in Islington, London.

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1 May 2006 Brooklands Emergency Services 'May Day'. Brooklands Museum, Brooklands Road, Weybridge, Surrey, UK. +44 (0)1932 857381 www.brooklandsmuseum.com

8-11 May 2006 The May Series 2006 at the NEC Birmingham. International Police Expo 2006, IF-SEC 2006, Safety & Health Expo and The Facilities Show. International Fire Expo returns from May 21-24 2007.

With the ACPO event [23-25 May 2006 ACPO APA Conference and Exhibition] being drawn off from Birmingham to Excel in London the former organisers have re-jigged the event as the **International Police Expo 2006**, CMP Information's renamed international policing and public security event will take place from 9-11 May at the familiar venue of the NEC.

The police event is aimed at all management levels of the policing community, and will provide a forum for visitors to share the latest information on current issues affecting the modern police service, with particular emphasis on operational aspects. www.police-expo.co.uk +44 20 7921 8068.

Ed: Enquiries made within industry suggest that NEITHER event will include a significant airborne law enforcement input this year.

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Weybridge, Surrey, UK. +44 (0)1932 857381 www.brooklandsmuseum.com

14-15 November 2006. The Shephard Group are revisiting the concept of the **UK Police Aviation Conference**. This is to be co-located with the **8th Heli-Power Conference** at Olympia in West London a primarily military and paramilitary helicopter event. This year, running in parallel with this conference the organisers are running their **4th Police Aviation event**. The previous Police Aviation Conference & Exhibition was held at the Excelsior Hotel, London Heathrow during May 1997.

A lot of water has passed under the bridge since then, but there are just a few faces from UK Police Air Support still in the industry that might have an opinion on the worth of this returning. For the record *Police Aviation News* is a full media partner in this developing event. www.shephard.co.uk

DIARY

7 March 2006 BBGA Annual Conference Sopwell House, St. Albans. The British Business and General Aviation Association's major annual event attracts some 200 leaders of the General Aviation industry to debate matters of policy and regulation. This year there are three themes, the Development of EASA, Business and GA policy and skills training. www.bbga.aero



8-9 March 2006 Avionics 06. Expo XXI Amsterdam. Now in its 4th successful year in its permanent annual home in Amsterdam. www.avionics06.com

13-15 March 2006, SAR 2006 Bournemouth International Convention Centre, Bournemouth, Dorset. +44 1628 606979 www.shephard.co.uk

16 March 2006 Night Vision Forum. Windsor, Berkshire UK. Run by Tangent Link, in association with DSEI. <http://www.tangentlink.com>

With some police forces undertaking aerial environmental patrols the following event may be of interest: -

21-23 March 2006 Spill International 06 and the prestigious Interspill 2006 Conference will take place alongside OI 06, the world's largest marine science and ocean technology exhibition & conference at London ExCeL, 21-23 March 2006. A single - free - admission badge will admit entry to the state-of-the-art exhibition hall that will house these events side by side - more than 650 companies occupying 8000m² net of exhibits.

Alongside the Spill event DV Howells and Royal Haskoning are organising an educational workshop called 'Introduction to Contingency Planning for Chemical Incidents.'

They offer extensive experience in chemical substances and their behaviour and related legislation as well as practical response to spills. The course will provide an introduction to the problems and actions that should be taken in case of a chemical spill including chemical substances and their behaviour, health hazards and transport and storage along with associated legislation.

The course will take place in the afternoon of the 20th March 2006 from 1200 - 1630 hours. The course is not being organised by Spearhead Exhibitions Ltd. Details from f.sprong@royalhaskoning.com or +31 10 2865 429. www.dvhowells.com

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