

Police Aviation News

A red police helicopter, likely a Eurocopter AS365, is displayed in a museum. The helicopter is positioned diagonally across the frame, with its main rotor blades visible at the top. The fuselage is bright red with white lettering. The word "BALANCE" is visible on the side of the fuselage. The cockpit area has the number "129" on it. The helicopter's landing gear is extended. In the background, a man in a grey shirt and blue jeans is standing near the open side door of the helicopter, looking inside. Another person is partially visible behind him. The setting appears to be a large, well-lit museum or exhibition hall with a high ceiling and structural beams.

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Event reports:
AirMed
Prague
Berlin
Air Show

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POLICE AVIATION

AUSTRALIA

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: Politicians are promising more police, reduced prisoner numbers and extra funds for courts and emergency services in the State law and order budget. The budget will allow replacement of the ageing police BK117 helicopter and provide recurrent funding for two police helicopters.

AUSTRIA



FRONT COVER

In the Airmed 2008 exhibition hall in Prague the 4th production example of the Bell 429. By repute this machine is also the first of ten Bell 429 helicopters on order for Bond Air Services in the UK. An official order announcement is expected next month, deliveries are not expected before 2009.



MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR: On May 5 the first four of eight Eurocopter EC135P2 helicopters arrived with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Interior last month. The first three were OE-BXF c/n 674, OE-BXG c/n 675 and OE-BXY c/n 677. The fourth delivery of OE-BXZ c/n 678 took place within a matter of days and the initial helicopter fleet was in place and afforded some training time well before the UEFA European Football Championships being hosted in Austria and Switzerland commences on June 7. Austria's minister of the interior, Günther Platter, inaugurated the first three helicopters at the flight operations base in Innsbruck. The new EC135s were also to be publicly presented in Salzburg, Vienna and Klagenfurt – each of which is an important venue for Euro 2008. The contract for the purchase of eight Eurocopter EC135 P2i twin-engine light helicopters

A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words!

The image shows a first-person perspective of a firefighter using a handheld video camera. The screen of the camera shows a large fire at a 'Friedman's Supermarkets' building. A helicopter with the registration 'N119SP' is seen flying in the sky above the burning building.

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was signed by the Austrian ministry of the interior on 26 September 2007. It was stipulated from the outset that four of these aircraft, configured as light multipurpose helicopters, should be ready for deployment before the beginning of Euro 2008 to ensure optimum security at this mass event, which is attended by visitors from all over the world.

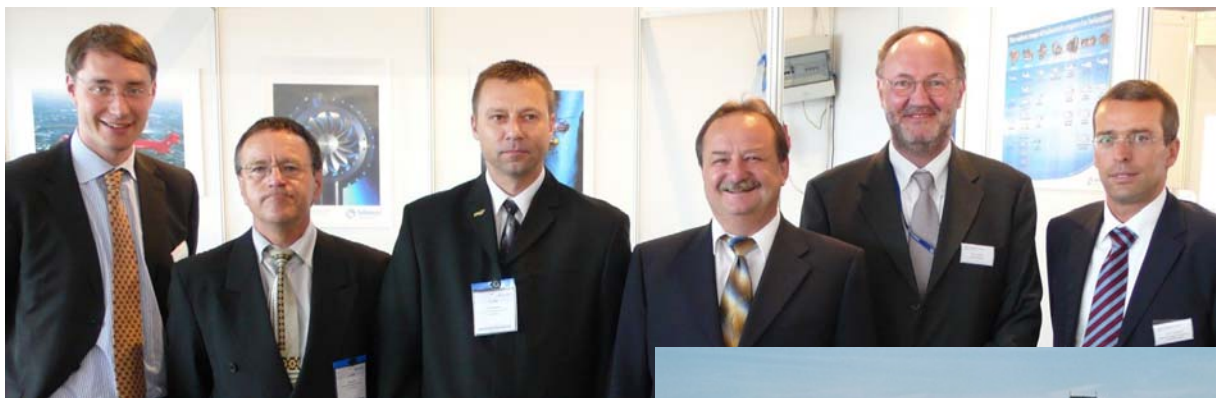
Two of the remaining four EC135s will be delivered in March and two in May 2009. The four EC135s scheduled for delivery in 2009 will additionally be equipped with FLIR (Forward Looking Infrared) cameras and searchlights. All the aircraft have a rescue winch, are certified for IFR (instrument flight rules), and are fitted with glass cockpits suitable for the use of night vision goggles.

The contract also makes provision for power-by-the-hour service over a period of ten years. In addition, Eurocopter will provide technical support for the Austrian police fleet while the EC135 system is being introduced at the Austrian Ministry of the Interior and during the European Football Championship. [Eurocopter/GH/UEFA]

CZECH REPUBLIC

During the ILA Air show in Berlin, Turbomeca and the Czech Police Aviation Department signed a support contract. This contract concerns the maintenance, repair and overhaul of the 16 Arrius 2B2 powering the eight EC135T2 of the Czech Police.

The contract also includes technical assistance and courses of instruction courses during two years. All of the EC135 helicopters in service in Czech Republic are powered by Turbomeca.



The Arrius 2B2 has a TBO of 3,500 hours. It benefits from the latest Turbomeca technology, offering a thermal power at OEI rating more than 8% better than its predecessor the Arrius 2B1/2B1A. The engine offers the facility to use the emergency OEI 30"/2' ratings several times without engine maintenance. The customer also benefits from a computerised maintenance aid which allows them to process the data downloaded from the EECU.



Over 3,000 engines in the Arrius family have now been sold, providing a wealth of experience with some 430 customers logging more than 3,400,000 flight hours. [Turbomeca]

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FRANCE

GENDARMERIE: Until recently the Gendarmerie helicopter base at Briancon, in the French Alps operated an SA316B Alouette III for SAR-HEMS and police work in the mountainous region. The future has now arrived and a replacement helicopter is working up there.

By the middle of this month the Alouette will be leaving the base to be transferred to Lyon where the helicopter will spend last flying-hours in Gendarmerie service.

The old Alouette JBU c/n 1160, first placed in Gendarmerie service in 1965, will be replaced by a new EC145 JBJ, and currently the two models are based together.

The base at Briancon is well known as the location base where Gendarmerie' pilot candidates hone their skills in mountain flying over a number of weeks prior to being assessed as capable of operating in Alpine regions.

For the future there are plans to construct a new base on the outskirts of Briancon, the current location is in the city, near the railway station. [Dino Marcelino]

INDIA

The local government in Jharkhand bought an HAL Dhruv helicopter last year on the basis that it would be operated by the police on security missions. Recent reports emanating from police sources suggest it is primarily being used as a ministerial transport in direct contravention of those initial ideals.

When acquired the Dhruv remained grounded for more than four months due to a lack of a pilot and a contractual problem with the manufacturers [they were behind with payments] and it was not until early this year that operations commenced.

The Dhruv is now said to have logged 160 hours in two months but police sources are suggesting that the flying has primarily been in the role of ministerial transport rather than in an anti-Maoist security role. A recent emergency requirement remained unfulfilled and two security personnel died of injuries in Hazaribagh district after being injured in a gun battle with

Maoists. Police tried to get the pair airlifted to hospital in the Dhruv but were told that the helicopter had developed a technical snag and was at the hangar for maintenance. [Media]

JAPAN




TOKYO: The Tokyo Metropolitan Police Agency (TMPA) has signed a contract for its second AW139 medium-twin helicopters in utility configuration. The TMPA received its first AW139 in March 2006.

The TMPA follow on order confirms the continuing success of AgustaWestland helicopters in the Japanese police market. Further TMPA orders are expected soon as part of a fleet modernization programme to replace older models that no longer comply with modern safety standards. Tokyo Metropolitan Police AW139s are equipped with NVG compatible cockpit, search light, loudspeaker, rescue hoist, HD side mounted camera, emergency floats, rappelling kit and other specific mission police equipment.

MALTA


ARMED FORCES: The first helicopter to be operated by the Armed Forces of Malta was presented to the Aviation Museum in Malta late last month. The Agusta Bell 47G2 served Malta for 37 years and had played its part throughout the many changes that led to




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the current formation.

Four of the former Luftwaffe Bell two seat utility helicopters were donated second hand by the West German government and formed the nucleus of what is now the Air Wing at St Patrick's Barracks in 1972. This 1957 example AS7201 is the last flying and was used in training until recently – another AS7204 c/n 225 is still with the AFM but is dismantled and crated.

In 1971 a number of Maltese pilots went to Germany to undertake helicopter pilot training and eight months later, on May 24, 1972, four Bell 47G helicopters donated by the Federal Republic of Germany arrived, closely followed by their pilots. The initial formation was under the Commander of Police but by late 1976 the now AFM fell under the Commander of Armed Forces of Malta.

In its time the helicopter wore civil marks as 9H-AAE but is now marked as AS7201 [Inducted into service 1972 Number 1 airframe operated].

The ceremonial 'last patrol' prior to delivery to the museum was flown by the commander of the AFM Brigadier Carmel Vassallo accompanied by Bombardier Mark Cassar the most recent recruit to the Air Wing and both first trained on the Bell.

The helicopter will join a former AFM Cessna Bird Dog 9H-ACB in the collections at the T'Qali based Malta Aviation Museum.

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Meanwhile a little more has emerged about the future equipment of the AFM. An illustration of the new US produced Eurocopter UH-72A Lakota for the AFM gives it to be AS0825 [2008 number 25]. There is yet no definite date when the Lakota will arrive in Malta but it will greatly extend AFM capabilities. Currently the single-engine Alouette helicopters are operating way beyond a safe distance from shore – and yet not enough to meet Malta's obliga-



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An artist's impression of the Lakota in AFM colours by SS Spiteri

tions to SAR in the region. Italy currently provides twin-engine helicopters to meet SAR requirements.

The AFM expect to be the first outside the USA to get the €6M UH-72A and it appears delivery will be this year. The US government is buying over 345 UH-72A helicopters and under the deal they will subsidise the AFM acquisition to assist them in their important role on the southern borders of NATO. Equally a second Lakota will be subsidised by Europe in recognition of Malta's important Frontex role. Both subsidies are believed to be 50% so Malta will be paying out €6M in all.

On May 8 Frontex announced that anti-immigration patrols in the central Mediterranean are due to start 'in the coming days' ... the German Federal Police Super Puma operations started shortly afterwards.

They have now been halted as the operator does not have sufficient spare capacity to simply undertake a long term loan of this type and the aircraft and crews are now back in Germany working up to deal with the UEFA football later this month. They will be returning to Malta later in the year.

This month the Armed Forces of Malta will be carrying out joint naval exercises with the Italian Navy in Maltese waters and airspace between May 30 and June 7. The aim of CANALE 2008 is to promote co-operation and peace in the Mediterranean Region. Exercise training activities will be focused on Maritime Search-and-Rescue (SAR) and Maritime Law Enforcement (MLE) combined operations.

This is the 15th annual edition of this exercise, which has this year been planned, organised and coordinated by the Armed Forces of Malta, involving naval and air units from other Mediterranean countries. Assigned tasks will focus towards soft-security issues rather than more traditional war-fighting skills. This will include such as the countering of illicit activities at sea and the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and the deployment of security and inspection teams to conduct board and search operations,

Algeria, France, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Portugal, Spain and Tunisia have accepted the invitation to participate with various naval units, patrol boats, aircraft and Staff personnel at the operations planning level.

NIGER

The government in Niger recently ordered Diamond Aircraft 42 Multi-Purpose Platforms (MPP) for border surveillance missions to inhibit smuggling and to protect critical infrastructures. The aircraft is equipped with the Carl Zeiss Optronics Goshawk 350 airborne observation system incorporating multiple sensors for daylight surveillance and night observation

using thermal sensors and a laser range finder. Video, voice and data information collected are transmitted via satellite downlink communication to the ground control station using the SCOTTY SATCOM system integrated in the DA42 MPP.

The SCOTTY SATCOM surveillance system brings the advantage of real-time communication from the air-to-ground and vice versa. This allows for immediate reaction and commands from decision makers sitting on ground in a secure environment which is independent from the aircraft's location. [Diamond]



A number of surveillance examples of the Diamond DA42 were on exhibit at the recent ILA Berlin Air Show [above]. In November the Police Aviation Conference in London is scheduled to include a live downlink of images beamed from a DA42 into the Conference.

OMAN

In mid-April the third and fourth example of the Royal Oman Police Air Wing's new fleet of ten AgustaWestland AW139's was delivered from the factory in Italy. The recent deliveries [A4O-CC and A4O-CD] were additions to the two delivered in December 2007. [AFM]

UNITED KINGDOM

GREATER MANCHESTER: It has been learned that the new MD902 Explorer helicopter for the Greater Manchester Police is not due for delivery until the summer. This new helicopter arrived at Police Aviation Services facility at Staverton on December 21st 2007 and has been undertaking role equipping and painting since then. At the time of its arrival in the UK it was not anticipated that delivery to the Greater Manchester Police would be undertaken in any haste.

NORTH EAST: The arguments and counter arguments continue in Northumbria, Durham and Cleveland over the fate of the two-helicopter air operation. One of the two aircraft has to be withdrawn due to the removal of the EC135T1 'Classic' helicopter from single-pilot IFR service in 2010. Two forces want to see the remaining aircraft removed to Northumbria but Teesside want a new EC135 helicopter bought for operation in the south.

Frank Cook, a Teesside Member of Parliament claims there has been a significant breakthrough in efforts to maintain the police air support unit in the region.

The Home Office is willing to fund the replacement and overall it is unlikely to have a real cost much more than £1M if disposal of the old aircraft is included in the deal. With time now getting tight – Northeast has not been directly involved in the multi-aircraft purchasing deal struck with Eurocopter for five identical EC135P2s to meet the Civil Aviation Authority [CAA] certification deadline. There is a suggestion that the CAA is showing more flexibility on the date when that aircraft had to be phased out because of safety regulations.

A Home Office statement seems to suggest that there is a Government's national strategy aimed at ensuring air support being able to reach a major incident within 15 minutes. Perhaps the removal of the second airframe from Northeast would in some way damage this ideal but there would seem to be many areas of Britain falling outside the 15 minute rule.

In other stories relating to this problem there has been mention linking Cleveland with North

Yorkshire, a very large county with no air support of its own that must be in a critical position as far as this newly disclosed 15 minute rule. Other reports suggest that Cleveland will 'go it alone' and buy their own air support.

Northumbria has said that both helicopters were available on a 24/7 basis from the two existing at a cost of £3.47M a year. Analysis shows these airframes do not patrol but respond and therefore their seven flying hours each day represents just 15% of the available flight time on a normal day to day basis. [Various]

Ed: In the Hansard report on the statements made by Frank Cook MP there are some errors of fact [mainly historical] but the main thrust of his words does place on public record a number of significant points and highlight a number of inconsistencies.

The consortium moved up from a single helicopter to add a second base and a fixed wing aircraft, after moving to a new generation EC135T1 the fixed wing was displaced by a new EC135T2 ... at which point the troubles with the retention of the two airframe set up appears to have started up. Was the two helicopter operation just too efficient?

The main contention of the defenders of the two aircraft operation is that response times will be adversely affected. This operation serves the three funding forces but in addition provides a service to both Cumbria [to the west] and North Yorkshire [to the south] – both forces without their own aircraft and reliant upon their neighbours.

Although there have been claims that the money saved would be diverted to other projects, costs do not appear to be a serious contention. The ACPO Air Support Chairman and Chief Constable of Merseyside, Bernard Hogan Howe, recently wrote that the average cost of UK air support was just 1 to 2% of the force budget. The actual costs faced by each of the three forces in the NE Consortium is in the region of 0.6%, way below the average.

To the outsider it can only be assumed that the main problem is a change in personalities. The pro air support people in the police hierarchy and the authorities seem to have moved on and been replaced with people less enamoured with this arm of policing.

Readers should be aware that the Frank Cook speech in Parliament was not a part of any debate, it seems that there were just four members in the House of Commons at the time.

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SOUTH YORKSHIRE: In April 2008, Sheffield airport finally ended its license as a general use airport. After being launched with a great deal of hype by the local authority and Peel Holdings and operating scheduled airline flights for a time the dream quickly went sour as air services were withdrawn and Peel Holdings set up at another new build airport nearby. Now the one time airport is transforming into the new Sheffield Blue Skies Business Park, with over 900,000 square feet of commercial and office accommodation.

Although not expected the business park will retain an updated heliport, a facility already used by both the South Yorkshire police as its permanent base and by Yorkshire Air Ambulance as a supplementary base. A local expectation that the fire authorities would also operate a helicopter there have yet to be realised.

UNITED STATES

FEDERAL: In late 2006 the authorities discovered that drug barons were using semi-submersible craft to get through the tight security ring protecting the USA. It was encountered at sea, 90 miles (145 kilometers) southwest of Costa Rica. A blue vessel resembling a submarine and carrying several tons of cocaine.

Authorities say they are detecting more and more self-propelled semi-submersibles carrying larger and larger loads of drugs and representing a major drug trafficking tool. Experts estimate 25 to 40 semi-subs left South America last year laden with cocaine, and they expect that figure to double in 2008. They are the new generation for the 'go fast' boats that tried to blast their way through the anti-drug defences and that led to the setting up of the armed HITRON helicopters.

Unlike speedboats though, semi-subs have a low profile. They travel just beneath the ocean's surface, making them difficult to find on radar screens. Other measures seek to minimize its heat signature and throw off infrared sensors.

Traffickers have fitted the semi-subs with a scuttling valve so crews can quickly sink the vessels if authorities get close enough to board and collect evidence. As a result the authorities have only estimates of their size and cargo capacity. What is certain though is that the craft are growing ever bigger, sturdier and faster. Some can cover up to 2,500 miles (4,000 kilometers) during a non-stop two-week voyage. They have crews of three or four men who share a tiny cylindrical capsule just four-feet high.

Despite difficulties interdicting semi-subs, the US Coast Guard seized a record 355,000 pounds (160,000 kilos) of cocaine in 2007, up 2% from 2006.



CALIFORNIA: Late last month a Los Angeles County sheriff's helicopter was struck by two bullets as it hovered over properties in the City of Carson in the south of Los Angeles but managed to land safely and seven men were later held for questioning about the attack. The helicopter was responding to a robbery incident and in the hover over Carson when it was struck by bullets at about 2300hrs. The pilot heard an unidentified "thump" and made a precautionary landing at the Carson sheriff's station, the firearms damage was then found on the underside and through the left rear stabiliser on the tail, the damage was such that the helicopter was able to fly back to its base.

The incident is being treated as attempted murder of a police officer and the investigation led sheriff's deputies to raid a home and arrest seven suspects some hours later. [Media – see also under Accidents and Incidents]

KANSAS: The City of Topeka may be forced to buy the \$800,000 police helicopter it ordered before having a court order posted on them and then having the existing R44 crash.. The company financing the city's lease purchase agreement, Municipal Services Group, has stated that Topeka is still under contract with Schreib-Air to buy the \$740,000 R44. Nonetheless the city is reported to have gone ahead with the cancellation. [Media]

NEBRASKA: United Rotorcraft Solutions (URS) has been awarded the completions bid for two new Bell 206 BIII's for the Omaha Police Department.

The completion will include installation of special mission equipment such as the Spectrolab SX16 Nightsun, the L-3/Wescam MX15 Camera, Paravision Monitor and Mount and the Aero-computers Moving Map and Digital Recorder. The Garmin avionics and communication systems will also be installed along with the Technisonic TDFM-7000 FM Transceiver.

The Omaha Police Department launched their helicopter program, called "Able-1", in 1997. The helicopter is considered by the City to be an extremely valuable tool in the fight against crime and these new aircraft will increase the fleet to three (3).

The first 206 is expected to leave the United Rotorcraft facility role equipped in late July. The second helicopter is scheduled to arrive at URS the first part of July 2008.

NEW YORK: After a long drawn out appeal process the New York Police Department finally drew a line under the police career of one of its most enthusiastic fledgling pilots, Jon Goldin, early last month. As previously reported in Police Aviation News, Jon was tested for drugs – just part of a regular New York PD process rather than something sinister – and the test came up positive.

After many further negative tests it appears likely that the trace of drugs came from his user girlfriend and many accepted that claim. Jon's problem appears to have been the fact that there has been no recorded instance of NYPD retracting a suspension and dismissal for drugs no matter what the extenuating circumstances and he is gone. Although there is an outstanding further appeal process from outside the NYPD sadly it is now unlikely that this will reverse the situation. [New York Times/IPAR]

The last time I saw Jon Goldin at the NYPD unit he was swearing me to secrecy on the identity of the NYPD's one unmarked Bell 412 helicopter. 'Secret' aircraft are not unusual and I have been similarly sworn to secrecy of other such airframes across a number of continents, take an image but hide the marks from view is the usual request [some are more strict]. All these are understandable requests to which I willingly subscribe and in every instance I have never had a reason to do anything but protect the secrecy.

More recently though there has been a head scratching moment in relation to New York's secret machine — they just keep going public on it! In the most recent example [one of many] there have been images splashed across the world via the Internet that may have hidden the registration but failed to hide the colour and the fact that it carries a bulky and very clearly present role equipment line-up that includes a winch, SX-15 sensor turret and a searchlight. The secrets out it seems!

The point of the story is that an unmarked helicopter patrols NY from high above and that 'hundreds of sightseers below are 'oblivious' to the fact that a helicopter is peering down on them from a mile and a half away.' I can assure readers that even in the UK even those very conspicuous blue and yellow police schemes adorning the aircraft are likewise invisible to the majority of people when operating the high end modern sensor ranges.

In the media story one officer is quoted as saying that this unique creation looks like just another helicopter in the sky - well of course that would be that it looks like any other multi-coloured machine with an very comprehensive external role equipment.

They call their \$10M investment '23', after the number of police officers killed in the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks and its prime role is stated to be counterterrorism. And, bearing in mind my earlier comment about which parts to keep secret, I might add that the number is not the

only very visible thing that '23' refers to.

The thread in the article was to inform [if not panic] the populace, part of a continued paranoia with increasing the surveillance society, more and more CCTV and hundreds of radiation monitors — some worn on belts like pagers, others mounted on cars and in helicopters — to detect dirty bombs. There is talk about the use of blimp style air vehicles to undertake a guard against chemical, biological and radiological threats.

Not surprisingly this [runaway] train of activity is causing some concern in the civil rights movement

In return the police insist that law-abiding New Yorkers have nothing to fear for they do not intrude into homes, do not intrude into peoples privacy they are only looking to observe what people do in public. Thankfully a recent in-depth survey in the most CCTV infested country in the world [the UK] seems to prove that all these cameras do virtually nothing to improve public safety, if the truth be known there are no people who can be bothered to watch the footage.

But the question remains - what politically charged pressure in New York is regularly causing the NYPD to be obliged to publicly air their 'secret weapon? Money?

AIR AMBULANCE

INTERNATIONAL

AIRMED 2011: At the Gala Dinner marking the close of the main proceedings of Airmed 2008 at Prague Castle it was announced that the next Airmed will be held in the United Kingdom May 24-27 2011. The hosts of the 2011 event will be the Kent, Surrey and Sussex air ambulance.

The Congress, which will be the 10th Airmed will be held in Brighton, Sussex. It is the first time that the event, which is a prominent date in the aero medical world has been held in the UK.

A website for Airmed 2011 will provide regular updates on the Congress – www.airmed2011.com Ed: A first hand report on the Prague event appears later in this edition.

AUSTRALIA

ROYAL FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE: The Royal Flying Doctor Service [RFDS] celebrated its 80th Birthday last month. The first operational flight took place in May 1928 from a small north-west Queensland town of Cloncurry. It was set up by the Reverend John Flynn, 'Flynn of the Inland' and revolutionised medical care to people in the bush. There are now 20 flying doctor bases around Australia, and the service has branched out into preventative medicine and child health services. Although 'trading' under the same name there are a number of services in Australia, the groupings tending to be on the lines of state boundaries and their funding levels can and do vary – some RFDS do not talk to others.

But there is some friction surrounding the service and naturally it relates in some measure to money. Recently one section of the RFDS criticised the funding it received in the Western Australia budget and that led the local health Minister Jim McGinty to say that they were a political interest group. That slur led to him becoming embroiled in a row.

The RFDS was allocated a partial share of a \$2M patient transfer scheme, which it claims would barely cover the rising cost of fuel. It was well short of the additional \$68M the RFDS had requested for more planes and staff. The service is said to be in crisis because it cannot respond to all life-threatening emergencies after a 50% jump in demand in the past five years. [TheWest/IPAR]

GERMANY

DRF – GERMAN AIR RESCUE: The DRF (Deutsche Rettungsflugwacht e.V./German Air Rescue) and its partners in the TEAM DRF have ordered 30 new defibrillation and patient monitoring units for their air rescue centres. After extensive tests the air rescuers opted for the GS Elektromedizinische Geräte G system corpuls3 manufacture in Germany. The modular system combines several functions and helps thus to cut costs and weight.

Günter Stemple, chief executive officer of GS, handed over the first unit to Dr. Jörg Braun, Director Medical Services of the DRF, on May 6, 2008 at the DRF air rescue centre in Stuttgart. The new unit featured at the recent AirMed 2008 in Prague.

The new system replaces two units in use previously: a defibrillator with a monitor and a patient monitoring device. The latter shows for example continually the patient's heart rate or the oxygen saturation of his or her blood. One of the advantages is that the system can be split up into three modules which communicate with each other via radio. Thereby it is possible to adapt the system to the particular requirements of the mission. Each separate unit is powered by an identical battery or mains power.

In emergency rescue the crews have to work quite often under difficult circumstances with little available space. In this situation the corpuls3 offers us the possibility to leave a little measuring device with the patient and to clip off the rest of the system.

Data is transferred via a wi-fi link allowing the medical team to monitor the patient continually without any cables being in the way of the rescue team.

GS Elektromedizinische Geräte GmbH is a German company, which has developed and manufactured medical devices for more than 25 years. The corpuls defibrillator and patient monitoring systems are robust, reliable and durable devices designed for the professional. They are used in the first aid treatment of people suffering from sudden cardiac arrest. GS continually evaluates the latest scientific findings in clinical and prehospital settings and peer reviewed medical publications in order to design and produce state-of-the-art products. This is combined with input from EMS professionals and GS's knowledge in ergonomics and economics to produce high quality devices.

www.corpuls.com [DRF]

Editor: These units are entering service with HEMS operators across Europe. Other customers include ADAC in Germany, OAMC in Austria and ANWR in the Netherlands.



MALAYSIA

SARAWAK: After having to close it down after the long term service provider, Hornbill Skyways, ran into trouble the Health Ministry has re-activated its 'flying-doctor' service in the vast state of Sarawak.

The ministry has now divided the state into two zones - southern Sarawak (Kuching and Sri Aman divisions) and northern Sarawak (Kapit, Miri and Limbang divisions).

Hornbill are to handle the service in the southern zone while another aviation company, Layang-Layang, are operating the flights in the northern zone. Both are under six-month contracts pending the creation of an open tender. The new tender will require a single contractor to operate twin-engine helicopters across the whole region. [The Star]



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UNITED KINGDOM

THIS MONTH: AMBEX 2008 the international forum for emergency and urgent care is being held in Harrogate, Yorkshire this month. Hosting a conference and exhibition the event has attracted over 140 exhibitors and will feature two presentation theatres in the exhibition hall. There is a three day conference programme.

DERBYSHIRE, LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND: With Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Rutland Air Ambulance (DLRAA) now in its second month of operation it has already been called out to attend 103 missions in the area having commenced operational flying within hours of being launched on April 1.

DEVON: The Devon Air Ambulance Trust has been accredited by the Fundraising Standards Board, the organisation which offers the public a 'mark of reassurance' to look for when giving to charities and handles public complaints about how its members' raise money.

Caroline Creer, DAAT's Fundraising Director said: 'By joining the FRSB, we have agreed to adhere to a strict set of codes of practice committing the Trust to treat the public with respect, fairness, honesty and clarity in all our money raising activities. We have also signed up to an independent, robust and transparent complaints process. Of course we have already been working to these standards but this is a way that we can reaffirm this and reassure anyone who wants to or is supporting us that we are a good charity to be associated with'.

The Devon Air Ambulance Trust [DAAT] have started a 20 week countdown to the arrival of their new Eurocopter EC135T2 helicopter from the completion centre with Eurocopter UK in Oxford. Delivery is scheduled for late September.



Photo showing the helicopter on arrival at Oxford for role equipping and painting [red]. [Photo courtesy of Eurocopter UK].

DORSET & SOMERSET: After many months of moving around the region looking for a permanent home the Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance Eurocopter EC135 G-DORS moved base back to its original home at Henstridge on 14th May. A new hangar being constructed there is still some three months from completion [c]

HERTFORDSHIRE: The Herts Air Ambulance Appeal has passed the £250,000 target it set itself by a significant margin and almost a year to the day since the launch of the appeal the funds were standing at £313,000.

The Appeals Team is now progressing to the stage of seeking its own dedicated helicopter it intends to operate with Accident and Emergency qualified doctor and a Paramedic. The initial contract will be for 12 months and further extensions to that contract will depend upon the fundraising stream continuing. A number of helicopter operating companies have responded to tenders for the provision of the new service on a 5 day week basis.

As the NHS does not currently have sufficient funds, the Charity is initially budgeting to cover the cost of its medical staff as well.

Hertfordshire is tied in with Essex Air Ambulance based in Boreham and the current Essex Air Ambulance will continue to provide cover until the service is launched and thereafter for the two non-covered days [HAA]

Ed: PAN understands that the service contract has now been let to a Staverton based company and that the chosen new generation aircraft has been sourced in the UK with an availability and service entry date scheduled to be late summer.

The base for the new operation is to be North Weald in Essex. A shared hangar base has been identified there on the west side of the airfield. Although out of county the location is close to the border with Hertfordshire and has good communications. The operation is tied

in with Essex Air Ambulance and as previously reported in PAN gravel extraction at their current base will soon require a move somewhere else. North Weald is well placed centrally for both counties should no alternative be found.



The MD air ambulance will have some exotic neighbours at its new North Weald, Essex base.

NORTH WEST: Although the charity air ambulances continue to stay at arms length from too much involvement with government departments the North West have allowed health chiefs to give them a £50,000 cash boost in recognition of its life-saving work in East Lancashire.

Since the new helipad at the Royal Blackburn Hospital was opened six months ago, 16 people from the East Lancashire area have been attended by the air ambulance.

The helipad, paid for by the NHS as part of the expansion of the Royal Blackburn Hospital, allows patients to be taken by air ambulance to land and be treated in East Lancashire, rather than in other North West hospitals.

The £50,000 grant from East Lancashire Primary Care Trust, which administers community health, will go towards the annual £2M running costs.

The North West Air Ambulance is not part of the NHS, but a charity which relies on grants and donations. [Blackburn Citizen]

At the moment just one air ambulance serves 7.5M people across 5,500sq miles in Cheshire, Lancashire, Merseyside, Cumbria and Manchester and a need has arisen to promote and fund a second machine in the region. In order to maintain two helicopters, North West Air Ambulance now has to raise £3.3M every year.

On average the air ambulance is called out four times a day, rising up to 10 in the summer. The extended service appeal will be formally launched at this year's Cheshire County Show and it is hoped that enough funds will be raised to have the second helicopter operational by August.

SCOTLAND: The only NHS operated UK air ambulance continues to attract headlines in its local media. The latest row is over a manning issue. It is now being claimed that medical crew members on the EC135 helicopters could be forced to ask bystanders for help lifting badly injured accident victims into air ambulances.

The claim was made by crews who are fighting plans to put just one paramedic on night-time emergency flights. Previously the aircraft have always operated with two crew mem-

bers and the pilot. The pilot is not allowed to carry stretchers because any lifting injury sustained would inevitably strand the flight. The move would save £170,000 annually. A spokesman for Unison the paramedics' union has claimed that this and similar edicts was damaging the service.

WILTSHIRE: Many column inches of reportage have been written over the last month about the survival and funding of the joint police and air ambulance operation since a major change in the local NHS took place.

Eventually, towards the end of last month a no doubt exasperated Great Western Ambulance Service [GWAS] spokesperson declared that the Wiltshire Air Ambulance is not under threat. GWAS it seems are committed to providing effective air ambulance cover to the people of Wiltshire and with it, the best clinical care possible. They want to continue the relationship with the police.

The contract for the air ambulance is in the process of being re-negotiated with the police and we are seeking a two year extension whilst we are undertaking a review of the best clinical ways of providing services to patients.

Prior to this statement the air ambulance situation in the county of Wiltshire remained unresolved. Fears have been expressed that the Wiltshire Air Ambulance will not be shared with Wiltshire Police in the future and a new helicopter based near Bristol will serve the county.

Bosses at the GWAS met representatives from Wiltshire Police at ambulance headquarters in Chippenham. The meeting included discussing renewing the lease on the Explorer helicopter. The police want to renew this for a further five years from December 2008 and to continue with a shared police helicopter/air ambulance but GWAS only wanted one year, could be forced into two years but certainly was reticent about five years. The police had a ten year contract in place so any of those numbers represents an alteration to established practice. Other sources quote Dave King Wiltshire's new chief constable as expressing his concern over the threat to the county's air ambulance service.

Wiltshire Police pays the running costs of the helicopter, more than £1M a year, under an existing Private Finance agreement with PAS leaving the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Appeal to raise the additional funding required - £350,000 a year. The most recent accounts available, up to March 31 2007, showed there was just over £1.1M in the appeal fund.

There are suspicions GWAS wants to launch a new air ambulance for Avon soon, based at Filton and wash its hands of the joint police air operation even though it offers just the type of extended out of hours service that the Kent Air Ambulance signed up to with Sussex earlier this year. [Gazette & Herald/Media]

Ed: Notwithstanding the recent easing in the public attitude GWAS does not appear much interested in the availability of the night time HEMS option as embraced by Kent, Surrey and Sussex recently. In the field of expertise they are very close to the NHS rather than having any charity or aerospace connections. As the law now requires the NHS to distance themselves from any charitable air ambulance operations and it looks likely that they have not yet fully set up such an independent body the reigning sense of confusion may be understandable. Whether any panic should set in immediately over the



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final fate of the Wiltshire operation is debatable. The county based charity has nearly three years of operating funds in hand and it is not unlikely that others are looking to send them a lifeline if all else fails.

UNITED STATES

FLORIDA: The air ambulance service based at the Charlotte County Airport has been shut down indefinitely by federal officials for numerous safety problems.

The FAA made an emergency decision last week to suspend Air Trek's carrier license, effectively closing the business until it changes its operation.

The FAA has said that the company had failed to adhere to regulations relating to aircraft weight, used unqualified pilots to command international flights, failed to give pilots proper rest and training and fell behind with maintenance schedules and inspections.

The suspension letter notes that there are safety issues and highlighted that Air Trek operated three flights that have crashed in the past three years, one of which was fatal.

Air Trek has 50 staff and operates seven aircraft mainly on inter-facility and repatriation flights. [Herald Tribune]

FIRE

AUSTRALIA

SOUTH AUSTRALIA: The state is set to spend \$2.5M a year leasing a Sikorsky fire-fighting helicopter to comply with a key recommendation of the coronial inquiry into the deadly 2005 Eyre Peninsula bushfires.

The Erickson helicopter - to be leased for a few months of the fire season - would expand the nation's fleet of Skycranes from four to five.

UNITED KINGDOM

ESSEX FIRE: At the end of April it was announced that fire fighters in Essex are looking at the use of a helicopter as a way of beating the traffic congestion that slows down response times in the county.

The 2012 London Olympics will put pressure on an already strained road network and the use of a helicopter might provide one solution – it would be the first fire service in England to get a helicopter. The fire authority hasn't approved the plan but it is studying the proposal. [Echo]

SEARCH & RESCUE

AFRICA

Last month Nigeria and eight other countries signed a multilateral agreement on Maritime SAR services in Lagos the capital of Nigeria.

The other nations are the Republic of Benin; Cameroon' Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sao Tome and Principe; Equatorial Guinea and Gabon. The ceremony

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was the climax of the inauguration of the helipad equipped Regional Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre (RMRCC). [All Africa]

Ed: The regional maritime search and rescue co-ordinating centre of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) was originally due to be commissioned in Nigeria in March.

CHINA

The world has looked on as two contrasting rescue operations in nominally 'closed' countries were played out in the media last month. In one, Myanmar or Burma the populace suffered as inadequate rescue services rejected outside help with damage caused by the storms. The other, the relatively well provisioned China, may not have asked everyone to the party but it did cherry pick additional aid.

The Hong Kong Government Flying Service [GFS] were drafted in to help Mainland authorities rescue 78 earthquake victims in Sichuan between May 20 and 22. It went on to provide assistance in quarantine work.

Escorted by a Jetstream J41 carrying support equipment a GFS Super Puma helicopter left for Sichuan late in the month to provide assistance in rescue and quarantine work. They will join seven GFS staff already operating in the province. The team arrived in Sichuan last week and is stationed at a civil aviation training school in Guanghan city. It worked closely with the Ministry of Transport's China Rescue & Salvage Bureau to conduct rescue operations in hilly areas.

The team will continue its rescue work in the hilly areas and its next task is to provide assistance in quarantine work. They have borrowed special equipment from the Marine Department to spray disinfectant onto affected villages. The equipment is normally used to tackle oil pollution in the sea. The team will inspect the environment first and spray disinfectant when circumstances allow. [News Gov HK]

LATVIA

Last month a cruise ship with nearly 1,000 passengers on board, the Bahamas-registered *Mona Lisa*, ran aground in the Baltic Sea off the northwest coast of Latvia.

The passengers were safe and the ship undamaged but after rescuers had tried and failed to free the vessel from the sand bank it was decided to take the passengers off. Rescue workers evacuated more than 650 mainly



Rescue effort: Permanent Secretary for Security Chang King-yeu and Government Flying Services Controller Michael Chan encourage the GFS crews before their departure for Sichuan. The GFS staff join their Mainland counterparts to rescue victims. (people.com.cn)



elderly German passengers from the luxury cruise ship.

The five-hour operation removed 651 passengers and 11 crew members from the 201-metre-long (660 feet) vessel onto two naval ships. They were taken about 37km (22 miles) to Ventspils, a port city in northwestern Latvia, and from there to the capital, Riga.

In a later development the Latvian Defence Minister cancelled an initial order issued for the arrest of the cruise ship *Mona Lisa* after she was freed from the sandbank. The earlier order stated that the vessel was forbidden from leaving the port of Ventspils, as there was an order issued forbidding the departure of the ship until payment for all costs covering the rescue operation had been received. The total cost estimated at €192,088 was paid by insurers allowing the vessel to sail.

SPAIN

AgustaWestland has announced that Sasemar, the Spanish Marine Safety Agency, has placed a follow-on order for three more AW139 medium twin turbine engine helicopters. These aircraft will be used for a range of roles including SAR and water pollution detection. This latest purchase increases the number of AW139 helicopters ordered by Sasemar to eight having previously ordered three in 2006 and two in 2007. Three AW139 helicopters have already been delivered and are operating from bases in Reus, Gijón and Tenerife.



The progressive expansion of Sasemar's AW139 fleet is seen as demonstrating the high level of customer satisfaction with the most advanced search and rescue helicopter in its class and its ability to meet Sasemar's operational requirements. The acquisition of the latest in SAR-dedicated rotorcraft technology is providing Sasemar with enhanced life saving and environmental protection capabilities.

The aircraft will be equipped with a dual rescue hoist, Forward Looking Infra-Red (FLIR) camera, search/weather radar, emergency flotation system and a four-axis autopilot complete with SAR modes. With the largest cabin capacity of any helicopter in its weight class and exceptional performance the AW139 is ideally suited for SAR operations both over water and over land. [AW]

SWEDEN

COAST GUARD: The first of three Bombardier DHC-8-Q300 MSA aircraft for the Coast Guard, SE-MAA c/n 622 was formally handed over at the Toronto facilities of Field Aviation, the completion house, early last month as was flown the Sweden. The following two aircraft in this \$80M contract will be delivered later this year.

Bombardier delivered the basic Q300 with long range fuel tanks and APU to Field and they in turn installed a complex array of L-3 surveillance systems including Maritime Search Radar, Wescam sensor pod, SLAR and Infra-Red/UV line scanner all feeding into an L-3 Mission Management system. In addition the aircraft has an air delivery system with drop tube for flares and oil sampling buoys as well as Field's proprietary air-operable door system for life rafts and other large systems.

Delivery of the first aircraft was expected late last year but no mention of the late delivery has been made, it is believed that the delay was related to the integration of the complex systems incorporated in the aircraft.

UNITED KINGDOM

RNLI: The Royal National Lifeboat Institution has selected a design for a sculpture to pay tribute to the hundreds of volunteer crew members who have lost their lives while saving others at sea over the last 184 years together with the many RNLI lifesavers and fundraisers who have served the charity.

The sculpture, by Sam Holland ARBS, will be located at the charity's Poole headquarters, opposite The Lifeboat College, 'home of the RNLI', where future generations of lifesavers and fundraisers train. The sculpture was chosen by a team that represented all the people of the RNLI. They meticulously judged over 64 detailed submissions through three judging steps and unanimously agreed on the final design. It is hoped that the sculpture will be unveiled in the summer of 2009.

The sculpture, of a person in a boat saving another from the water, symbolises the history, and future, of the RNLI in its most basic and humanitarian form. Radiating from the boat are flat bands of stainless steel, flush with the ground, providing both the effect of waves and a material onto which the names of those who have lost their lives can be engraved. Relatives and the general public will be able to walk round the sculpture and look at the names of those remembered.

The names of more than six hundred crew members who have lost their lives will become an integral part of the sculpture – written on the sea – a poignant and direct emotional link for anyone wanting to remember, reflect and be inspired. Constructed of stainless steel, a nautical reference, it will fit well in its surroundings, close to the sea.'



The existing artwork



- the New



SKYWATCH CAP: This fire at remote Foxholes North Yorkshire was spotted by Bill Tiplady based at No.9 Sky Watch Unit at Eddsfield near Bridlington. Bill, flying his Reims Rocket, called in the emergency to Eddsfield Radio who quickly alerted the fire service. Sky Watch make regular patrols looking for forest fires as well as other emergencies. Fires in remote areas may become fully established before they are noticed by observers on the ground, but air observation will often pick them out in the early stages.

Fire at Foxholes [Bill Tiplady]



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INDUSTRY

Meeker Aviation and AirFilm Camera Systems have announced the gaining of two new FAA/STC's for the EC135 and EC145 (UH-72) utility step mounts as part of an ongoing development programme to solve some perceived vibration problems with the existing mounts..

The step mount design provides an unprecedented capability of mounting up to four simultaneous payloads subject to a maximum single payload weight of 125lbs. There are four styles of payload arms to accommodate all the most popular sensor/cameras/searchlights and these are available in left / right or set as well as standard length boarding step version. They are designed to use the existing family of Meeker developed dovetails / quick disconnects / vibration isolation devices.

This equipment has been proven and tested on four continents and EASA certification is pending.

Details on these and other Meeker products are available at www.meekeraviation.com or call Cal Meeker at +1 604-644-1125



As sensors get more sensitive the least disturbance can effect their long range performance. [A Meeker image]

Eurocopter is to sue **Bell Helicopter Textron Canada** over what the European helicopter maker says is infringement of a patent for a type of landing gear. The lawsuit, filed in the Federal Court of Canada, seeks punitive damages of C\$25M.

Eurocopter said it wants financial compensation for the more than 250 Bell 429 model helicopters built using a landing gear design that Eurocopter claims infringes its patent. It is believed that the numbers quoted relate to airframes ordered as this type has yet to see service.

Eurocopter requires Bell to stop making the landing gear and to cease promoting it as a Bell innovation for the 429 model.

Ed: Having looked at production Bell 429 number 4 in the light of this news it is difficult to see what feature of the skid landing gear of this type is anything but a bent tube. Rumour has it the item in question is the rear cross tube mount but again it appears unclear what the connection is. Enquiries continue.

MD Helicopters is to stay in Mesa, Arizona—for the time being. Contracts have been signed on the existing property.

DART Aerospace Ltd., has received Transport Canada approval of their Interior Panels for AS350/355 series helicopters. FAA and EASA approvals are still pending.

DART Interior Panels are constructed of high quality impact resistant aerospace grade plastic selected specifically to minimize warping, cracking and discoloration. Particular attention has been paid to ensure quality of fit. Currently DART is offering panels for the overhead and the aft bulk head where sagging and breaking are most common. The overhead panels come untrimmed for compatibility with a variety of ceiling mounted modifications. DART's panels are available in light grey color to match OEM panels.

Bell Helicopter has announced that the 412EP helicopter has achieved Joint Aviation

Regulations Operations (JAR-OPS) status and as such is the first legacy helicopter to complete a European Aviation Safety Administration (EASA) Joint Operation Evaluation Board (JOEB) Catch-up Process for JAR-OPS 3 compliance.

JAR-OPS 3 pertains to three elemental ingredients for helicopter operations, proper safety equipment, proven flight procedures and trained crew and support staff. To demonstrate compliance, an operator will need to properly equip and maintain a helicopter, operate proven take-off and landing procedures and show that the crew has obtained proper recurrent training.

Bell's research and discussions with EASA indicate a JOEB recommendation will lessen the impact to Operator's since the Master Minimum Equipment List (MMEL), pilot qualification training, and operational equipment required checklist are completed and certified as compliant by EASA. And Bell has already created 412EP PC2e and PC1 performance charts for Operators use.

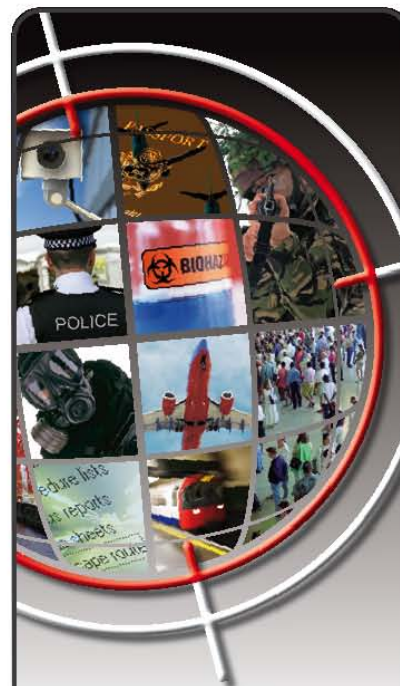
Bell's Training Academy has tailored classes for both the crew and helicopter maintainers that include simulating safe take-off and landings as defined by performance procedures and survival procedures. Bell is also updating the 412EP Flight Manual with new procedures and Training Packages to ensure that any customer that needs to operate under JAR-OPS 3 regulations can safely do so in a Bell 412EP.

PremiAir, a leading player in the provision of pilots to the UK Police Forces with contracts with 10 UK / Ireland Police Air Support units – both rotary and fixed wing operations, announced on May 8 that Oxford Airport will be the new home of its fixed wing maintenance operations. Work on Hawker Beechcraft business aircraft, for which PremiAir is an Authorised Service Centre, will move from PremiAir's HQ at Blackbushe Airport, Surrey, from September this year, making Blackbushe a dedicated base for rotary wing maintenance.

The company has signed a lease agreement on a 20,000 sq ft hangar with Oxford Airport's management. The comparatively short length of the runway at Blackbushe airport and a lack of ILS always constrained fixed wing operations. Recent upgrades at Oxford have made it even more attractive.

Although the main focus at Oxford will be fixed wing maintenance, PremiAir will also be hoping to attract new executive helicopter owners who may look to them to manage their aircraft from Oxford and to generate charter revenue from PremiAir's leading position in the UK executive helicopter charter market.

In preparation for the move, over the next few months Oxford Airport will be refurbishing one of its largest hangars to PremiAir's exact specifications, creating new offices, workshops, reception areas and car parking, as



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well as completely refurbishing the 20,000 sq ft hangar with new electrics, lighting, heating and modern insulation.

Ed: The statement that the company is also looking to undertake helicopter management may relate to an intention to take on some of the undoubted pressure that the current Eurocopter UK facility is under.

Established 25 years ago as a Sir Robert McAlpine company associated with what is now Eurocopter UK PremiAir is operates and charts aircraft. It was purchased from the Sir Robert McAlpine Group by von Essen in 2007 and almost concurrently the Group ratified a complementary purchase of The London Heliport, which is managed and operated by PremiAir.

PremiAir flies approximately 4,000 charter hours a year with its modern fleet of Sikorsky 76s, Eurocopter Twin Squirrels and one Bell 222. It has 18 Executive Helicopters on management programmes, providing a turnkey service to the owner – either private companies or individuals.

It has been alleged that the case of the Canadian anti-submarine helicopters is again going very sour.

In 1983, the Liberal government of the day announced an urgent requirement to acquire new helicopters undertake the anti-submarine and patrol role with the military in place of an elderly fleet of Sea Kings.

A quarter of a century later, the defence department is still in a hurry to buy helicopters to replace the self same Sea Kings but although the type has finally been selected, it is both late [and getting later] and seems to have a very variable price tag.

In 1993 the Conservative government ordered a fleet of 43 British-Italian **EH101 Cormorant** helicopters at a cost of \$4.8 billion. In the same year a new Liberal government cancelled the deal at a cost of \$700M in damages and started the process again.

Over the next decade, Cormorant kept re-winning every bid for the helicopter deal, despite all the Liberals' best efforts to avoid the embarrassment of that happening. Finally the contract requirements were changed and the EH101 was disqualified leaving just the Sikorsky proposal valid.

A contract for 28 **Sikorsky** helicopters was signed in 2004 a 5 Billion Canadian Dollar 'fixed price' contract... but maybe it was not. Recently it seems that Sikorsky has asked for up to \$500M more than the contract stated three years ago.

A few months ago, Sikorsky let it be known the original guaranteed delivery date of 2009 was not to be met and that the first delivery probably wouldn't be landing much before 2013. The bets are on as to whether a variant of the EH101 might yet return. [Winnipeg Sun]



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And another case of deals going sour has emerged in Chile. India's state-owned **Hindustan** Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) has lost out on an ambitious deal to sell its Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) Dhruv to Chile due to arm twisting by the US, Indian officials allege.

Chile, was keen to purchase the Dhruv, but overrode India's offer despite the best price offered and finalised the deal with Bell. The Chilean government was apparently under severe pressure from the US to go for Bell, diplomatic sources said.

According to several sources, HAL had offered six indigenously developed Dhruv helicopters with spares at \$46M and way cheaper than the deals on offer by Eurocopter, Russian and Polish companies. The Chilean government finally settled for four heavier Bell 412 helicopters for \$100M.



Right: Hindustan HAL Dhruv of the Indian Army at the recent ILA Berlin air show.

On the Micro UAV front there are some deals expected to be made within weeks. Last month PAN carried a story in good faith about Staffordshire having signed up for a **AirRobot** micro-UAV. This was subsequently challenged.

Well it seems that my source jumped the gun somewhat and announced a sale before the ink hit the paper but, the same source continues to claim that Staffordshire are going to get their system very soon.

The **FLIR Photon Thermal Imaging** camera on the MW craft is supplied under license from Focus2000 Ltd. Its capability is huge, being of military (25Hz) not commercial (9Hz) derivation. West Midlands Fire Service are the 9 months into their evaluation of the **Microdrones** system – referred to as 'ISIS.'

South West Fire & Rescue Service are next in line for MW Power's Thermal camera, although other 'HM Government' users have also ordered the system with Thermal capability. The system is also set to develop to include absolute, rather than relative, temperatures, giving the Fire Service further vital information from the Fire Ground.

Both Thermal and microCCD cameras will offer enhanced downlink clarity when used as part of the Domo Digital Fire Ground.



Reims F406 Land & Sea Surveillance



The Bournemouth based **Pilatus** aircraft distributor for the UK, Ireland and Spain has confirmed that the first visit to the UK of the enhanced PC-12 - the PC-12 NG - will be at **Aero Expo 08** at Wycombe Air Park in June. (13 -15 June) The Swiss manufactured next generation PC-12 has all new airliner style glass instrumentation (PFDs and MFDs), enhanced cabin environment technology and cockpit ergonomics, also better climb and cruise performance compared to the original, but still retains its popular features including long range, economic operating costs, large cabin space with integral lavatory, and ability to use small airfields as well as international airports. Through these revisions the PC-12 continues its presence as the world's best selling business turboprop.

Since the initial launch of the PC-12 in 1994, nearly 800 aircraft have been delivered. Today this economical and versatile aircraft continues to generate significant interest in various market segments all over the world.

The company also acts as distributors for the American manufacturers **Priceless Tugs** will also display the latest in the range (capable of pulling anything from light aircraft to executive aircraft up to 35,000 lbs) using the demonstrators to show how day to day hangar/ramp management can be made easier with the common sense designs which offer reliability, practicality and capability and safety. Additional information can be found at www.pilatus-uk.com

Apical Industries Inc., part of Dart, has recently received FAA approval of their Tri-Bag Emergency Float Systems for AgustaWestland AW119MkII (AW119Ke) helicopters. FAA, Transport Canada and EASA approval has been previously received for the Augusta A119 Float Systems.

The Apical Tri-Bag Emergency Float systems for the Agusta AW119MkII include 2 forward and 2 aft bags and additionally, offer a baggage compartment mounted reservoir option. The systems are compatible with ground handling wheels, the float bags may be removed in only minutes, and the systems are available either with or without integrated external liferafts.

The Tri-Bag Emergency Flotation System with Liferafts is recognized the world over as being the first fully integrated survival solution for helicopters. The Tri-Bag system provides the most stable float platform in the industry and, having been designed with aircraft recovery in mind, allow the helicopter to be towed at approximately 10 knots.

The **Sikorsky S-76®** helicopter fleet has topped the 5 million flight hour milestone, the milestone follows two other highlights for the S-76 helicopter in 2008: the 30th anniversary of the first delivery and the 700th aircraft delivery.

An intermediate class, twin-engine commercial aircraft, the S-76 helicopter originally was intended for the offshore and executive transportation segments. The S-76 helicopter was announced in February 1975 as the first strictly commercial production program in Sikorsky's history. It was certified by the US Federal Aviation Administration in 1978, and the first production aircraft was delivered in February 1979.

Today, more than 200 operators in 37 countries are flying S-76 helicopters, serving many missions that include offshore oil crew transport, civil defence, emergency medical service, search and rescue, and corporate and VIP travel including heads of state.

TGR Helicorp Ltd, a company working on the use of remote-control helicopter drones to rescue climbers on Mt Everest has been put into receivership. A charity Rescue on Everest, was operating out of the same premises.

TGR announced last year it was building special alpine helicopters to be used for rescues on Mt Everest. The company had developed an unmanned full-size rescue helicopter, the Alpine Wasp, which it would test on 3754m Mt Cook and then donate to the Everest rescue trust to establish a rescue service and base in Nepal.

TGR was formed in 1997 and launched an unmanned combat aerial vehicle (UCAV) called the Snark, at the 2005 Paris Air Show.

Clarion Events Limited has acquired three major events in the defence and security sector. **DSEi** (Defence Systems and Equipment International), **ITEC** and **LAAD** (Latin American Aerospace and Defence) have been bought from Reed Exhibitions. The shows have been purchased for an undisclosed amount.

The three shows being purchased by Clarion Events have all been sold as going concerns and the sale will involve the transfer of staff under TUPE arrangements.

AgustaWestland has announced that **FB Heliservices** has signed a contract for two AW139 helicopters. Delivery of the helicopters will start in early-2009 and they will be used to provide search and rescue training for AgustaWestland export customers. The aircraft will be operated from RAF Valley in Wales where FB Heliservices already perform SAR training for the UK military services.

The AW139s will be equipped for over land and over water SAR operations and will include rescue hoist, search radar, FLIR camera, cabin mission console, emergency flotation system, life-rafts, comprehensive communications system, NVG compatible cockpit and 4-axis automatic flight control system with SAR modes and search patterns.

ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

15 January 2008 Cessna 208 N454SF Air ambulance of Aeromed International based Anchorage, Alaska operated by Grant Aviation. The Pilot was planning to land on runway 18 in Bethel, Alaska with the patient and patient's parent on board. Instead the airplane touched down in a snow-covered area of the airport between the runway and the adjacent taxiway, collapsing the nose landing gear. [Concern]

21 April 2008 Eurocopter EC130B4 N133LN. Air ambulance of LifeNet Airmedical Service, Lexington, Kentucky. Prior to flight a walk around was performed in which some minor seepage was noted. The Pilot In Command (PIC) gave an absorbent rag to the Check Airman (CCE) and then went to the aircraft and started the pre-flight. The CCE cleared the seepage and then went to dispose of the rag. At the return of the CCE all entered the aircraft and flight operations began. Shortly after takeoff, at 100AGL, an impact noise was heard that was followed by several smaller noises. The PIC immediately began descent and landed in a small field adjacent to the landing strip. Landing was performed without event and the aircraft was shut down using correct procedures. Inspection was performed and the right hand transmission cowling was open approximately six inches, with the upper security latch unlatched. Minor damage was incurred and the aircraft was immediately grounded with appropriate personnel notified. [Concern]

6 May 2008 Sikorsky SH3H N613CK Fire fighting. Whilst dipping water from a water tank at Marfa, Texas, the helicopter settled on the tank and suffered damage to the underside.

8 May 2008 Beechcraft B200 N301HC. Air ambulance of Intermountain Life Flight Salt Lake City, Utah. Immediately after liftoff from Salt Lake City International Airport the pilot observed a significant power loss in the left engine. Believing he had an engine failure, the pilot retarded throttles to both engines and landed straight ahead on the runway remaining without further incident. It was determined that the engine power loss was the result of the left side throttle inadvertently moving back toward idle. The primary cause of this incident was insufficient friction set on the left side throttle. [Concern]

9 May 2008 Schweizer S269D N584PM. The helicopter was substantially damaged during a hard landing following a practice autorotation. The flight instructor and private pilot receiving instruction were not injured. It is believed that the helicopter entered a "down draft" resulting in a loss of altitude. The pilot was unable to arrest the descent rate and the helicopter touched down, bounced and came to rest in the upright position. Damage was discov-

ered to the helicopter skids and supporting structure. [NTSB]

10 May 2008 Eurocopter EC135 N135UW. Air ambulance of University of Wisconsin Hospital Med Flight helicopter crashed after taking off from La Crosse. The helicopter was on a return flight after dropping off a patient when it crashed after take-off, killing the surgeon, nurse and pilot aboard. [Concern]

15 May 2008 Robinson R44 N. Polk County Sheriff's Office, Florida. Both Polk County Sheriff's Office pilots were injured in the helicopter crash at Lake Wales Municipal Airport were subsequently quickly released from hospital. The helicopter was moved to a hangar at Bartow Municipal Airport & Industrial Park, where the sheriff's aviation unit is based. The helicopter was piloted by Greg Love, 48, and Deputy Brian Bolton, 39. It is reported that they were practicing emergency procedures when the accident took place. [Media]

16 May 2008 Bell UH-1H Super Huey N306SB. San Bernardino County Sheriffs Aviation based at Rialto, California. Returning from a static display, the crew caught a slight smell of hot oil. Less than a minute later, while entering the pattern at Rialto Airport, the master caution and hydraulic segmented caution lights illuminated. The pilot extended his downwind and completed a long shallow approach to a running landing to runway 35. Maintenance personnel discovered that a flexible braided metal high pressure hydraulic line running near the transmission had developed a pinhole leak resulting in the loss of hydraulic fluid. [Concern]

17 May 2008 Bell 206L3 LongRanger N206UH. Air ambulance of AirMed at the University Health Care, University Of Utah operated by AirMethods. During a repositioning flight from the Salt Lake International Airport to Ogden base a near miss was encountered with 2 small civil aircraft. AirMed 14 was being directed by SLC approach control when 2 aircraft not in contact with approach control came close enough for all aircraft to take evasive action. Both civil aircraft were flying close enough to each other that approach control could only identify one target on radar. No radio response from either of the civil aircraft was obtained before, during, or after the incident. The flight ended with no further incident. [Concern]

20 May 2008 Eurocopter EC145 N378TC. Air ambulance of Travis County STAR Flight in Austin, Texas. While responding to a call-out and some four minutes into the flight the port side sliding door opened in cruise flight. The pilot slowed and landed without incident in a large clearing at a local park. The aircraft was inspected, minor repairs made to the door assembly and the aircraft was returned to service. There were no identifiable causes for the door to open. [Concern]

22 May 2008 Eurocopter AS350 N. Los Angeles County Sheriff. Aircraft suffered damage from two bullet rounds when fired upon whilst on patrol over the City of Carson. The pilot heard and unidentified airframe noise and discovered the nature of the damage after a precautionary landing [Media]

24 May 2008 A medical helicopter that was transporting a patient from Florida Hospital at Celebration Caught fire, Saturday.

Osceola County fire officials say they responded to an engine fire that forced the helicopter to return to the hospital shortly after take off. Crews quickly worked to correct the issue and no one was injured. Hospital officials would not release details about the fire.

25 May 2008 Sikorsky UH-60 Air rescue helicopter, public use military operator. Undertaking rescue mission in vicinity of The Dearborn River, Great Falls, Montana the rotorblade struck a tree. Landed without further incident 34 miles from Great Falls. [FAA]

29 May 2008 Sikorsky S76 N176SH. Air ambulance of AeroMed. Helicopter reported to be on a helipad approach training mission with two persons aboard lifted from a rooftop helipad at Spectrum Health Butterworth Hospital, Grand Rapids, Michigan and crashed. Possible that the helicopter drifted into wall bordering one side of the twin helipad and destroyed the tail rotor. A fire broke out after those aboard escaped with only minor injuries. Airframe destroyed by fire and significant damage to the hospital structure in the vicinity of the helipad. [Media]

29 May 2008 Bell 212/UH1N SAN100 Panamanian Government. The helicopter crashed into a building in a busy central district of Panama City, Panama killing eleven of the twelve people on board. It collided with a commercial building and broke in two, the rear section of the helicopter was torn off and landed on top of a nearby office building. A fire started in the main impact area.

Five Panamanians and six Chileans were killed when the decades-old helicopter slammed into a store and exploded. Only one person on the helicopter -- a Panamanian -- survived. He is in the hospital in stable condition,

The passengers in the helicopter were Chileans visiting the city to attend an anti-terrorism conference. Among the dead was Chile's federal police chief, Gen. Jose Alejandro Bernales Ramirez, 59, he was one of two senior security personnel from Chile travelling in the helicopter when it slammed into a store, breaking in half with the impact and setting the building on fire. Also killed were Chilean police commanders Oscar Tapia and Ricardo Orozco, Capt. Mauricio Fuenzalida, and two wives one of whom was identified as Tapia's wife, Carolina Reyes and the other as Bernales wife Teresa. [Media/JP]

30 May 2008 Eurocopter EC135 N Air Ambulance of Lehigh Valley Hospital operated by Air Methods. The helicopter came down in Pottsville, Schuylkill County Pennsylvania shortly after taking off from its Schuylkill County helipad. The aircraft finished up in an upright condition. Two crew members involved were taken to hospital and released, a third remains in stable condition Valley Hospital-Cedar Crest. [Media & operator]

31 May 2008 Helicopter. A Chinese military helicopter involved in relief operations to the recent earthquakes crashed in heavy fog near the town of Yingxiu with 14 people on board. No details of casualties available. [media]

AIRMED 2008 *Prague, Czech Republic 20 – 22 May 2008*

The event takes place every three years at a different venue and it therefore stands to reason the style of each event will be different to its forebearers. In brief though the event is about bringing together a mix of medical and aeronautical conference subjects mixed together with a small exhibition that clearly will reflect the attractiveness of the location to likely sponsors.

The location in this case was Prague, Czech Republic, an area in eastern Europe still finding its feet in a brave new world entering upon Western values.

The venues chosen for the event were a mix of the old and the new. A large old exhibition centre that could easily hold every bit of the Airmed 2008 event was obliged to cede some of the glory to the comforts of the Hilton Hotel even though in doing so the attendees were obliged to travel back and forth on coaches on a journey that was at one too far to walk and too short to seem worthwhile.

The conference included a seemingly vast number of subjects over three days that required three streams to be run in adjoining halls at any one time. Sometimes the very number of



options made attending all that the heart desired very difficult.

Most of the hour long sessions were overseen by two chairman, a seemingly unnecessary complication that on at least one occasion led to a severe conflict of interest. In this instance one Chairman got up to give a 15 minute presentation and then finally sat down 45 minutes later wholly unchallenged by the other chairman. With a session time slot running seriously over time who can blame the other speakers being a little piqued when both chairman then berated them for running their 15 minute slots for 16 minutes! Neither it seems was able to control the situation

The static exhibition hall was over a mile from the conference a factor that did cause some awkward logistic problems but there was a clever means by which the attendees were attracted there. The midday meal was only available there!

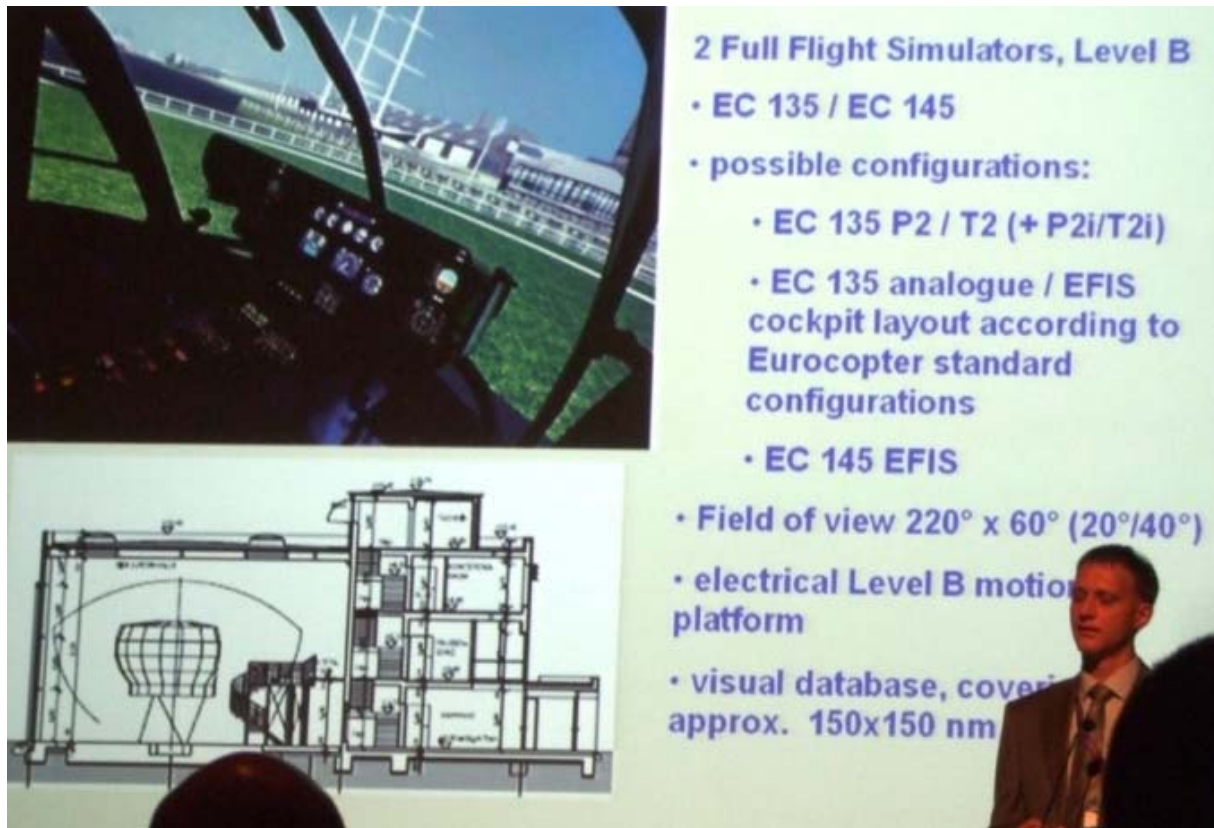
Although other exhibitors might well dispute this description – Pride of place in the two exhibit halls was given to Bell Helicopter and their bright red Model 429. Everyone was dutifully denying it but this unmarked 429, the fourth production example, appears to be the first for the UK's Bond Air Services Limited [BASL]. Subject to some get-out clauses [such as the 429 not meeting its specification] BASL has ordered up to ten of this exciting new type and clearly must have placed an order early in the manufacturing process to get access to No 4.

It will be some time before BASL will take delivery of No 4 as the type has yet to achieve European EASA certification. No doubt the bright red airframe will play its own part in achieving that and its arrival at Staverton is unlikely this side of 2009. To date no announcement of this sale has been made and it is believed that the official story will come out at the Farnborough Air Show next month.

In the same hall – a project highlighted in a separate conference presentation – ADAC Europe's largest motoring organisation and DRF German Air Rescue were demonstrating rescue simulators. ADAC is to build a specialised rescue training complex [HEMS Academy] that will house the two cueSim full flight helicopter simulators ordered from QinetiQ last year and an EC135 based procedures trainer. The latter bearing the marks D-HELP was on display and demonstrating its future uses to the crowds at the Airmed. The HEMS-Academy is for ADAC's own helicopter pilots as well as for its customers.

Right D-HELP and overleaf the presentation on the new complex.





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Other exhibitors included AgustaWestland, showing an air ambulance configured Italian A109, and Eurocopter showing an EC145 dually marked in German and Spanish colours. After the three day show drew to a close a large number of attendees went up to Prague Castle to eat the Gala Dinner and be shown a video produced by the hosts of the next Airmed in 2011. The following day a number of helicopters and a fixed wing were shown at a small exhibition and air display at the airport.

ILA BERLIN 27 May – 1 June 2008

The editor visited this event for one day at the end of last month. Compared with the previous event in 2006 there was perhaps less to be seen insofar as emergency services aviation was concerned.

Many have suggested that large shows in the mould of Berlin, Paris and Farnborough rarely have time for helicopters and much of the airborne emergency services equipment and such was the case here. Civil helicopters were displaced to the far reaches of the showground along with a 'Police Aviation Conference.' Around a park of civil helicopters were a number of exhibitors somewhat starved of the big players in this field. There was no presence by Bell Helicopter and no AgustaWestland, the presence by Eurocopter was muted by being badged under EADS but MD Helicopters were there, albeit without their CEO.

At the last ILA Berlin I was able to report on the proposed game plan for the recovery for MD



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into the world market. The information given out by the inside source was pretty true to what has actually taken place in the last two years. Unfortunately there was no such accurate briefing this year as it may be that CEO Lynn Tilton has decided her speeches to the media are not perhaps doing what was intended – and in any case she was busy trying unsuccessfully to buy a motor bike [American IronHorse Motorcycles]. Unfortunately the source of the accurate 2006 briefing no longer works with MD.

It is fair to say that the company is running very much in line with the 2006 predictions and has turned many corners.

In the same remote helicopter section of the show Troll Systems of California teamed with camera manufacturer Axsys to exhibit real time images of the Berlin Air Show from a Euro-Copter EC135. Responsible for all the HD transmission, on-board radio control and ground reception sites. Troll System's unique steerable SkyLink airborne antenna and onboard C100 map based controller have brought Troll to the forefront of the rotary, unmanned and fixed wing air to ground transmission and reception of broadcast quality video/data via microwave. Troll's unique designs improve signal strength and range making it possible to increase the distances between ground receive sites. The introduction of diversity ground receiver, complemented by Troll's portfolio of remote control, master control and network communications packages now enable the delivery of end to end video communications anywhere in the world.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

AEROEXPO 13-15 June 2008

Whether you are already involved or would like to be involved in general aviation, attendance at one of the AeroExpo seminars is a must for you. This year's programme has been designed to offer something for everybody!

For the engineers amongst you AeroExpo offers seminars on the B3 License and the impact of EASA Part M Rules. Or if you're looking to buy an aircraft you'll want to attend our 'Choosing the Right Touring Aircraft' session before looking round the static park. In fact attendees interested in air taxi operation, aerobatics, instrument ratings, the future of the LAA, getting the most from weather forecasts, or flying over the London area, will all find something of interest on this year's programme.

Hosted at Cabair's facilities at Wycombe Air Centre, seminars are free and open to all. Cabair will also be presenting a free Modular Commercial Pilot Training Seminar on the 14th designed to help those wanting to build a career in Aviation and Cabair students will be on hand to tell of their own experiences.

You are guaranteed to be spoiled for choice in Wycombe this year as a range of interesting and highly relevant subjects and speakers enrich your AeroExpo experience.

Full information about all the seminars on offer can be found at:

www.expo.aero/london/seminars.asp

If you wish to take advantage of FREE online registration for AeroExpo London 2008 - it is now live - simply click on the button below and follow the instructions: PAN will be at the event but not exhibiting this year.



ACPO-APA 24-26 June 2008

The International Policing Exhibition taking place in Liverpool in June is a must-attend event for all Police Officers and representatives of associated organisations. Running alongside the ACPO – APA Summer Conference this is the biggest event of the year, and a unique opportunity to see and sample the current and future products and services needed for every aspect of policing.

The event is a source the latest products for Security, IT & Communications, Special Operations, Forensics, Drug Detection, Vehicles, Surveillance, Uniforms, Mobile Data Management and much more from over 150 leading suppliers.

The exhibition is FREE to attend for all Police Officers, Staff, Associates and Colleagues.

The theme of the conference is 'Policing a Complex World', and the two-day exhibition reflects the increasingly global and sophisticated threats, challenges and demands faced by a modern police service in the 21st Century. The event offers a mix of the latest products for the policing and security sector plus informative seminars.

Seminars are open to all visitors and a full seminar programme can be found on the web site. The event is free to attend for all Police officers, staff, associates and colleagues. [Register Now](http://www.acpo-apa.co.uk) or visit www.acpo-apa.co.uk for more information.

POLICE AVIATION CONFERENCE 5-6 November 2008

The final touches are now being made to the initial programme for the 2008 Shephard Police Aviation Conference.

Police Aviation 2008 will attract influential figures in the world airborne law enforcement and emergency services sectors. It is not seen as being exclusively for police and covers a range of non-law enforcement aspects including inter-service cooperation.

Attendees will be decision makers, end users, policy drivers and suppliers of all ranks and services.

This event will provide an unique opportunity to network with a wide range of figures within the industry, to keep abreast of what is new and to gain first hand opinion on what may be needed for the future.

The specially selected panel of speakers will present a broad selection of well researched subjects ranging from past and current practice to future intent and aspirations. The subject matter addressed at Police Aviation 2008 is of interest to an international audience. www.shephard.co.uk/police

DIARY

3-5 June 2008 GPEC 2008 Munich, Germany. The GPEC General Police Equipment Exhibition & Conference® 2008 takes place in the New Munich Trade Fair Centre. The organiser, Exhibition & Marketing Wehrstedt GmbH, moves GPEC® to this internationally important trade fair venue. The main aim is to further internationalise the event.

GPEC® is a closed specialised trade fair exclusively for members of authorities with accompanying congress and lecture programme for business with police equipment, security technology and services. Target groups of this meeting, which is unique in Central Europe, are police, border guard, customs, the prison service, and government services for internal and external security as well as special task force and infantry units. GPEC® takes place every two years and reaches politicians, executives, technicians, procurement officers, instructors and users on international, national and regional level.

EMW Exhibition & Marketing Wehrstedt GmbH, Phone: +49 34743/ 62 092 E-Mail: info@GPEC.de
Internet: www.POLICESHOW.com

13-15 June 2008. Aeroexpo 2008. White Waltham Airfield. The event will showcase all sections of the market, including the latest Aircraft available - from light aircraft, or Pistons and Turboprops from all the major manufacturers, to Gliders and Power Gliders; AeroExpo has them covered. <http://www.expo.aero/london/>

24-26 June 2008. ACPO-APA Policing Exhibition at the Liverpool Arena and Convention Centre (ACC) from 25-26 June with the ACPO-APA Summer Conference taking place alongside from 24-26 June at the same venue. More details will be available at www.acpo-apa.co.uk.

24-26 June 2007 Ambex 2008. International Centre, Harrogate, Yorkshire. ASA Conference 24-26 June, exhibition 25-26 June. Contact: Jude Coverdale Sales Manager 020 7973 6671

25-26 June 2008 DVD the annual mobility service expo held at Millbrook, in Bedfordshire, England. DVD™ is run by DE&S through life Specialist and Utility Vehicles IPT, with the aim of bringing together industry and customers within the defence and emergency services environment. The DVD event typically attracts more than 3,000 visitors, all of them would-be purchasers and users of the latest mobility equipment, from radio technology and lighting all the way up to heavy construction plant and armoured transport. <http://www.theevent.co.uk/visitor/whatisdvd.asp>

25-26 June 2008 TranSec World Expo, now in its 6th year will be held at PTA Amsterdam, Netherlands.

The 2007 event attracted 1,589 Heads, Managers and Directors of Transport Security from 49 countries. The web site is www.transec.com For further information on the exhibition, sponsorship, speaking opportunities or visiting please contact Peter Jones, Event Director, TranSec World Expo, pjones@niche-events.com + 44 (0) 208 542 9090



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