

Police Aviation News

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PAR



UK National Police Air Support
Air ambulance Explorer delivered
Great North AA re-equip
Emergency Services Show 2010

Update

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EDITORIAL

It is perhaps promising that we are approaching the ‘Season of Goodwill’ for the last month or so seems to have been sadly bereft of much to cheer about here in the UK airborne emergency services. Not only are the police aviators in turmoil, more recently the air ambulance fraternity have been displaying their own variations in bad blood among the professionals. Come to think about it you can probably add on to that the machinations in the voluntary sectors.

Hopefully these problems will pass by the time the New Year issue appears but I somehow doubt it.

The situation relating to the UK police reorganisation continues to bubble quietly in the background. There have been no dramatic developments and with the main protagonists serving officers many are simply silenced by regulations. Not that details like that stop them getting the word out by one means or another.

Which sort of leaves the matter down to the free press to investigate as best it can. Although most agree that this national police organisation is the way to go it looks as if the group of expert organisers at the core of it are nowhere near the dream team they are being promoted as.

The national solution has been a long time arriving. It should have commenced years ago under the ACPO Aviation lead of Chief Constable Alastair McWhirter [Suffolk] but it only begrudgingly started to move under a successor, Chief Constable Bernard Hogan-Howe [Merseyside]

This publication does not seek to rubbish the principle of ‘nationalisation’ but it does draw into question the manner in which this is being achieved. The plan as laid out is apparently wasteful in disregarding expensive existing resources, both facilities and expertise, and may ultimately prove misguided.

It seems the team was selected by people with no axe to grind but also with no knowledge of the product. The selected few appear to have been chosen because they too have no preconceptions of what air support is about and how it works when it works well. Unfortunately this is the very mixture that brought us such as ‘hands off’ policing and a communications system that cannot communicate simply because it is so remote [and recently reported as very expensive to run].

The chosen few are the incumbent ACPO lead, the Chief Constable of Hampshire County. Hampshire had an air unit with limited funding, availability and as a result capability. The officer in charge of the day-to-day researching of the way the NPAS will form is a nice

Front Cover: This recently delivered MD902 Explorer is the second operated by the Lincolnshire & Nottinghamshire Air Ambulance. They have been more than happy with the first aircraft and as a result re-selected the same model with a large number of technical improvements. They expect to operate it for ten years.

enough chap but he is from the Kent County Constabulary who have never had an air support operation except for operating an occasional rented Cessna 172 on a derisory £25,000pa budget ten years ago. Add to the team the well qualified former Home Office Police Aviation Advisor who someone accidentally 'lost' off pay for a few weeks before bringing him back at a fraction of the number of hours he really needed to work, to bring a sense of realism to the whole project.

The plan the team came up with was to use the British Transport Police to control the operation based solely on them having an existing national control room – currently used only for dealing with crime on the railways. The railway police were only allowed air support for a few hours a year when Jarvis Engineering, now defunct but then an operator of a helicopter, were not using the helicopter to see whether their infrastructure was working. They seemed to do little more than make TV films designed to scare children off the railways during the school holidays. Once the TV crews had finished so had all pretence that there was some serious work to be done.

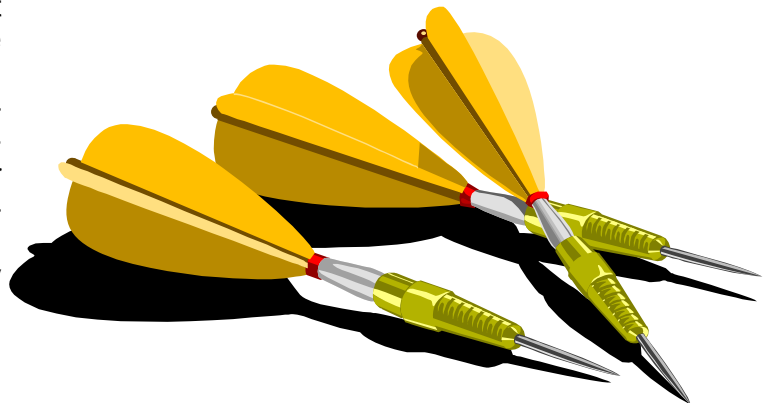
On that basis you could equally use the central control room of any major national supermarket, its staff would be just as likely to have no preconceived ideas about the subject and might be just as easily trained up.

Now which bit of that rich mixture is exuding experience of the wider product? Who in this group has experience of running a 24/7 helicopter unit, setting up and operating the required training and arranging the purchase and maintenance for one or more helicopters with a contractor who might be expected to want to extract every penny profit they can?

Based on their 'experience' this team has decided that there will be savings of some 15M of a £59M budget. The figure appears to be a crude multiple of 10 [aircraft deleted] x the generally agreed average of £1.5M each unit costs to run each year. If it is the key that is far too simplistic a formula.

There is talent out there, and it might yet be involved, but the initial game plan, the proposed bases, and the level of expected savings was based upon the secret deliberations of a group with little or no experience of the job at hand. That is a major flaw that might yet be seen to be bordering on farce.

Perhaps the answer might lie in simply 'nationalising' the operation as it is – with or without the aircraft deletions – and then decide what needs to move where based on experience. The present plan looks like it was arrived at by throwing darts at a map.



Bryn Elliott



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LAW ENFORCEMENT

BRAZIL

STATE OF GOIAS: AgustaWestland has announced that the State of Goiás, in central Brazil, has ordered three AW119Ke single engine helicopters for law enforcement, fire-fighting and transport missions. The contract is worth \$11M including training for both air-crew and maintainers, with all three aircraft scheduled for delivery this month.

Synergy Aerospace, a division of Synergy Group, signed a multi-year contract and distribution agreement in July 2006 for AgustaWestland commercial helicopters in Brazil and this sale by Synergy marks the entry of the AW119 into the Brazilian law enforcement market.

The aircraft will be based in Goiânia, the state capital, and will be equipped with rappelling gear, wire strike protection system, a cargo hook, search light and Bambi fire fighting bucket. AgustaWestland's Brazilian subsidiary, AgustaWestland Do Brasil Ltda, will provide support for the helicopters from its new facility in San Paulo. The new facility, located approximately 30 km west of the city centre, provides a complete range of support services including maintenance, logistics, spares, repair and overhaul and customization for the AW119 and other AW types.

Goiás State and Military Police have operated aircraft in the past. Since the 1950s they used a number of fixed wing transports and helicopters the latest being examples of the HB350B and AS355N.

CANADA

WINNIPEG: The new Eurocopter EC120B helicopter for the police is expected to arrive in the city around December 15 Mayor Sam Katz has disclosed.

The Winnipeg Police Service's \$3.5M Colibri is still being outfitted in Fort Erie, Ontario but will be in Winnipeg and available for training. Officials are uncertain how the new service will be launched, or when. Training flights will take place before the helicopter begins responding to incidents, police Chief Keith McCaskill said last month. This is likely to push back entry into service to the New Year. It will cost \$1.3 million a year to operate. [Winnipeg Free Press]



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CHINA

GUANXJ: The Police of the Province of Guanxi in China has placed an order for an AW139 medium twin helicopter. This aircraft will be used to perform a number of roles also including law enforcement and civil protection/disaster relief across the Province. The AW139 adds to the AW109 Power light twin helicopter recently delivered to the Nanning Public Security Bureau further strengthening the operational capabilities in the area as well as in Nanning, the capital of Guanxi Province.

This new contract is part of a helicopter fleet modernization and expansion programme which will include further units to even better serve the local community. This is the third AW139 ordered in China for law enforcement duties following the one purchased by the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau and the one ordered by the Shenzhen Public Security Bureau, confirming the reliance of law enforcement operators in China for the best selling medium twin helicopter on the global market.



The first light civilian helicopter developed and manufactured in China made its successful maiden flight in northern port city of Tianjin early last month.

The two-tonne AC311 helicopter, developed and manufactured by the Aviation Industry Corporation of China (AVIC), has a seating capacity of six and can be used for flight training, policing, communication command, aerial photography, medical aid, power line patrol, forest fire prevention and pest control.

The first two have been purchased by police from Tianjin's Binhai New District and Guiyang (capital of southwest China's Guizhou Province). Similar in design to the EC120 the AC311 is expected to obtain a type certificate from China's civil aviation authorities in October 2011 and go on the market in 2012. [AVIC]

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LIBYA

AgustaWestland announced that the General Security of Libya has taken delivery of its second AW139 medium twin engine helicopter. The aircraft is part of a total order for five AW139s sold in Libya to perform a range of roles also including border patrol and Search and Rescue and was delivered by the all new LIATEC's (Libyan Italian Advanced Technology Company) facility at Abou Aisha airport.

The AW139 adds to other AW types sold to Libya in recent years, namely the AW119Ke single engine for emergency medical service duties and the AW109 Power light twin for border patrol missions [AW]



NETHERLANDS

PACE CONFERENCE: Early last month the PACE conference was held in Amsterdam, hosted by Netherlands Police aviation and air support unit [KLPD]. There were 40 delegates from 12 European countries present.

Many interesting topics and presentations were given during conference and visit to unit was organised too, where new Dutch police fleet was presented. Also a DA-42 observation airplane was there for static display. [Miha Avbelj]

A few weeks later an article on Helihub confirmed that there is still a hostage MD900 'helping the Dutch police get their money back' from MDHI as part of the 2001 order for Explorer's. It was one of two loaned aircraft operated by the police for type familiarization. One returned to the manufacturer but N9201U (00042) never did. It has been at the police base in Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport since early 2002 and some believe it will never return to the skies.



The subject helicopter was mid-way through a record-breaking round-the-world flight when it was grounded in Siberia after US airspace was closed in the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. It eventually made it to that years Helitech Show in the UK and a few months afterwards it moved to its next, and possibly final, base in a Netherlands police hangar.

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UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

ABU DHABI: Sheriff Leroy D. Baca, head of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and a delegation of key members of his staff were met at Abu Dhabi airport by members of Abu Dhabi's International Liaison unit last month. The delegation arrived for a tour and Police Diplomacy exchange at the gracious invitation of H.H. Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

The purpose of the visit focused on International Police Diplomacy, exchange of tactics, techniques, procedures, ideas and local culture.

The delegation was lead by Brigadier General Staff Pilot Ali Al Mazroui, commander of the Air Wing, who went to Los Angeles this summer leading a delegation from Abu Dhabi police visiting the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD). Sheriff Baca and Commander Ali united and agreed to work together.



The visiting leaders were given extensive tours of General Headquarters Central Operations, Forensics and the Air Wing. Rounding out the three-day tour from the United States were visits to the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, local cuisine and an aerial tour of the UAE. Officer exchanges were discussed providing the opportunity of Abu Dhabi police and LASD cross training. This means that selected Abu Dhabi police would travel to Los Angeles and work directly with LASD. They will embed with specialized LASD units becoming part of the LASD team and conduct actual police missions. Deputies from the LASD will be afforded the opportunity to train with the Abu Dhabi Police

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KOREA

NPA: The first production version of FLIR Systems' new Star SAFIRE 380-HD system was installed and flight-accepted by the Korean National Police Agency on its Bell 412ST this autumn. The sensors' single-LRU configuration and FLIR's new common interface is the latest in FLIR's Star SAFIRE line of full-HD systems.

Introduced by FLIR in 2007, the full-HD Star SAFIRE is the first and only system that provides full high-definition, digital video from all its sensors, including daylight color, infrared and low-light TV. [FLIR Systems]

NIGERIA

POLICE AIR WING: Last month it was reported that the Police Air Wing is to re-equip with new helicopters and a fixed wing.

The federal government is acquiring five Bell helicopters and a fixed-wing aircraft, bringing the total fleet to 10 aircraft. Charles Cole, Commissioner of Police in charge of the Air Wing Command, made the announcement at a training session for senior police officers. Cole said the helicopters are due to be delivered before March 2011. The fixed-wing aircraft will replace the two that were acquired about 30 years ago and were no longer serviceable.

Bell helicopters are preferred and in the past the Nigerian PAW have operated the Bell 206 JetRanger. In April 2004 it was reported that the Federal Government had approved the purchase of two Bell 427 helicopters for delivery that year. Two more were added to them later.

In late October 2006 the Nigeria Police Force took delivery of two helicopters from Ukrainian government.

All this activity is to be set against a background of regular reports suggesting that the helicopters are not being flown because there are no pilots. In one case, where an R44 was donated, there was no pilot and no suitable fuel. Recently acquired Bell 412 helicopters were said to be in use with a contractor on commercial operations, partly because they alone have pilots available.

No details of the five Bell helicopters is known but there have been recent rumours of a Bell 429 purchase. [The Compass]

UNITED KINGDOM

NATIONAL: Official figures state that Police Air Support in England and Wales costs £59.1M/year (source: NPIA/NPAS). There is an official desire to reduce that by 29% to £42M.

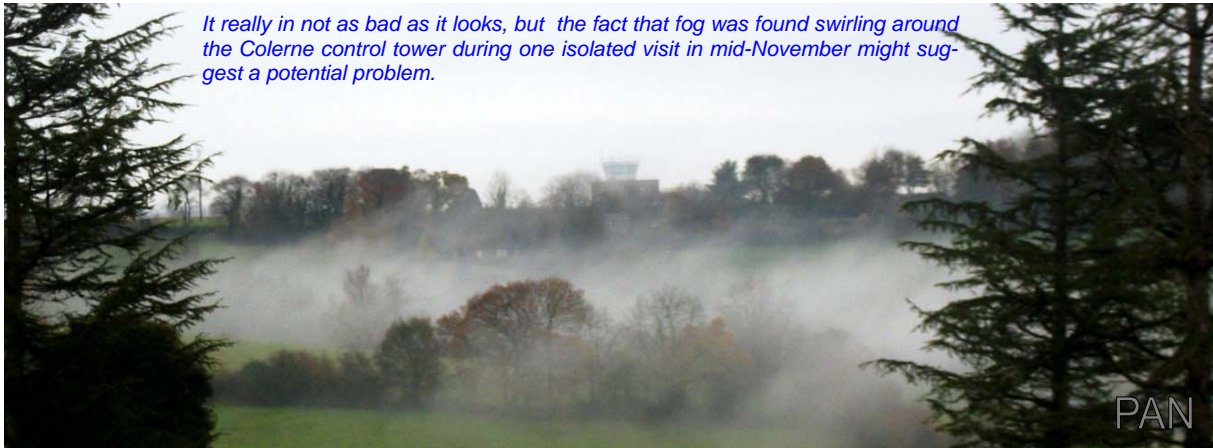
The Internet forums are full of difficult to prove leaks about the proposed NPAS but much of the leakage of information has been anecdotal so the details are from one highly upset and threatened area of industry using the only avenues available to them. No further information is coming from the official side – that is contained and currently restricted to the October statement made by ACPO. There may be nothing in the way of official communiqués on paper but there have been sightings of members of the research group at public and private meetings.



Bases

There are various queries asking whether the number of new bases identified in the ACPO information were fully researched prior to selection. It seems clear that partners in the operations – the air ambulance charities – had not been approached prior to the announcement so including the management of the proposed new sites in pre-announcement discussions seems unlikely.

The editor was able to fit in a visit to RAF Colerne one of the new proposed bases last month. With an altitude of nearly 600 feet above mean sea level the projected new base in Wiltshire has been pointed out as regularly suffering from foggy conditions in winter months and might therefore be an unsuitable flying ground.



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The site is an airfield operating RAF Grob trainers of the Bristol University AS and has a communications role that might ensure it surviving closure. Meanwhile the vast space is difficult to get to by road and fairly open at the extremities with just hedges surrounding it along Fosse Way. Various military areas have substantial fencing but overall security at what is now a military/civil mixed user field seems lacking. Poignantly a prior helicopter occupant lies burned out within one of the fenced off perimeter areas. I have been assured it is a fire department playing not in any way a portent to the future!



The high cost of abandoned police air support facilities continues to rankle many. Potentially the worst instance is the recently launched base for the Dyfed-Powys Police AW109E Power helicopter. Occupied this summer the base was taken over as the aircraft quietly moved away from the Llangunnor, Carmarthen police HQ base the unit has occupied for around 20 years. The project to take up residence at Pembrey, Carmarthenshire was started in 2008 long before NPAS was in the offing. The dedicated police air support hangar, associated offices, apron, landing pad and parking is located in a secure area at BARC, Pembrey Circuit, uncontrolled airspace within the Pembrey Airport traffic zone and the Ministry of Defence Air Weapons range. The building cost of £813,000 according released figures.

Another base to be abandoned under the published plans is that of the West Midlands Police. This year the Home Office put £100,000 into the provision of security facilities and the upgrading of an existing hangar at the airport. The financial provision will have required at least a similar sum in match funding from the police force. You can add to these proposed sites for discarding the three-years old £1M unit facility built at RAF Henlow [below], the re-

Chiltern [N] Air Support base at RAF Henlow [File Photo]



cently acquired and upgraded facilities at RAF Odiham by Surrey, ditto Merseyside's recently built facilities. Again most of these facilities have a £1M price tag. It is contended that these buildings have no alternative use, much of the cost is the provision of specialised police communications and aircraft support equipment at what are mainly remote sites. The local farmer is unlikely to want a fully lit remotely switched helipad at his new highly insulated cow shed.

Conversely the brand new Cheshire Police helicopter is based in less than ideal temporary buildings at an airport in North Wales and provides echoes of earlier makeshift accommodation when Cheshire officers flew alongside those of Merseyside at Speke Airport as junior partner a decade ago. Now it seems the situation is to be reversed.

Assuming that the management and residents at each of the projected new facilities at Bournemouth Airport, Dorset; Colerne, Wiltshire; Dunsfold, Surrey; RAF Honington, Suffolk and Southend Airport, Essex agree to the newcomers taking up residence each of the five facilities is likely to have a near million pound price tag. Southend Airport is in the throes of pushing through planning on a major air travel expansion project and adding the police site to that might just be a complication too many.

Aside from the financial considerations many see some apparently inconsistent basing decisions. RAF Honington, currently the home of the RAF Regiment, ten miles to the north of Bury St Edmonds is supposed to get the current Suffolk helicopter. The Suffolk EC135P2 is currently based in an old hardened hangar at the former RAF Wattisham, a secure location with bought and paid for and wholly adequate facilities co-located with an Army helicopter base just south of Bury St Edmonds. Once a fully operational RAF Station, Wattisham's RAF component is now appropriately a search and rescue helicopter unit, 'B' Flight of No 22 Squadron, equipped with two Sea King HAR3A helicopters. The old site is around 10 miles the other side of the town so the distance between the old and proposed new is 22 miles by road, less than ten minutes by air. A move is likely to require new facilities to be built.



Opinions

Enquiries made by PAN of a number of police representative bodies elicited some fairly reserved reactions to what is still a developing storyline.

Metin Enver of the Police Federation states that they '... don't have a specific position statement on this issue.'

They understand the difficulties forces are facing with chief officers having to deal with a 20% cut in policing budgets and are supportive of greater collaboration between forces of police resources so long as there will be no detriment to the service provided to the public.

They do however believe that it will be '... hugely unfortunate if any planned changes will result in a poorer service for some parts of the country.'

The reaction from the Police Superintendents Association is similar, supportive and welcoming of the NPAS in principle. Chief Superintendent Alan Horton, a member of the National Executive believes they recognise there will be some forces who perceive they are losers and others will see a gain from this, however, overall [they] believe air support will be delivered more effectively and more efficiently than hitherto.

There is some measure of localised official dissent though and the Member of Parliament for Bristol was raising a question with the Home Secretary questioning the moving of the Western Counties EC135T2 to Colerne further away from the high activity centre of Bristol.



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The air ambulance complications

As revealed last month a number of air ambulance operations are being affected by this move and they are taking a watching brief on developments. Wiltshire has already signified their intention to fund raise to commence a new air ambulance operation wholly operated by them from December 2014. Meanwhile the Wiltshire Chief Constable Brian Moore said Wiltshire Police is committed to co-operating on a police/air ambulance helicopter until then.

Over in Devon & Cornwall it is a little more complicated. There the Devon Air Ambulance has two contracts with the police covering its Exeter base and maintenance of its based and owned EC135 aircraft.

Heléna Holt, Chief Executive, Devon Air Ambulance Trust tells PAN that the trust have a 21 year lease covering their offices and other buildings at the Police HQ in Middlemoor. They are around 5 years into this so they have security into the mid-2020s. In addition they have an operational contract with the police covering maintenance and pilots that will see them through to September 2013. They

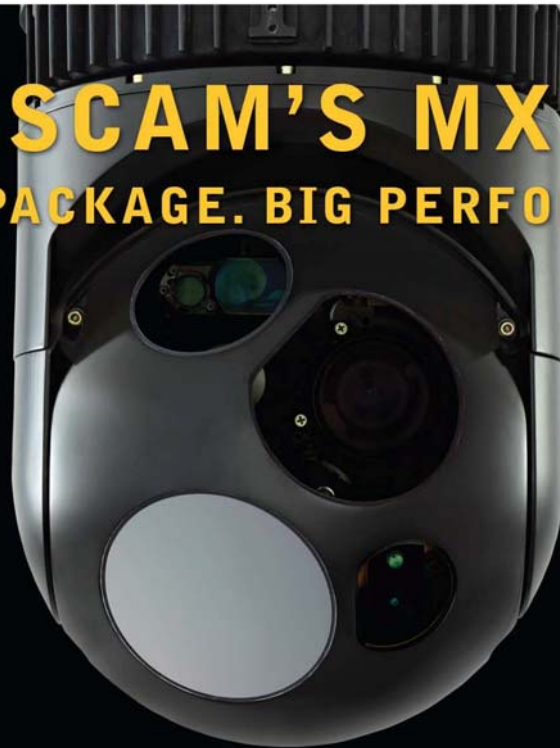
do not envisage any change to operations prior to this and for the moment at least are, like everyone else, interested bystanders.

Currently the Cambridgeshire police helicopter operates out of a long standing base unit on the edge of RAF Wyton near Huntingdon. For a short while longer they will be co-located with the East Anglia Air Ambulance, that moves away to Cambridge Airport in the New Year. Medical crew members for both helicopters is undertaken by Magpas a volunteer group based locally and the group is fund-raising £1M to bolster its long term capabilities locally.



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GREATER MANCHESTER: It started as a story in the Manchester Evening News [MEN] written by John Scheerhout and then it whistled round the national newspapers like a rash. The police played it down but clearly lost control of the storyline.

PAN carried a story on the acquisition of the surveillance balloon by the GMP in May 2009 and an earlier story on the equipment on display by Birmingham based Sonic Communications on their stand at Aberporth a couple of years earlier. Attempts to run product interest stories on the device by PAN and local newspapers [including the MEN] were put off when the police decided it was a 'covert' device [despite being regularly used at major sporting events with a clear police support staff] and they would prefer not to highlight it.

Now it has been broken up and parted out to the highest bidder mainly because it could not cope with the wet weather in Manchester.

The helium filled Israeli Eagle Eye aerostat was used to monitor people from the air at large-scale events since it was acquired early last year. It has been reported that it was used eighteen times in total including football matches and a Oasis pop concert at Heaton Park. The police suggest that they acquired the Eagle Eye to save money on using their manned aircraft [an MD902 and a BN Defender] but it did not fare well in the British weather and there were numerous instances of its envelope being damaged.

The price paid seems something of a mystery. The MEN claim they found a list price of \$1.5M and that they were initially told that GMP paid a wholly consistent £800,000 for the supposed manufacturers price for the rig. Shortly afterwards GMP came back with a really low new purchase cost figure of £80,000. To either figure was presumably added a significant operating crew training cost. Sonic Communications teamed up with an Israeli company Topivision to make available the helium filled airborne blimp that can be deployed within 20-30 minutes to provide a static surveillance system.

The £80,000 purchase cost was said to have included camera equipment and the vehicle that transported the balloon and which operated as a studio where five officers viewed footage. The standard equipment offered by Sonic a few years ago consists of a box trailer articulated lorry in which the partially deflated aerostat body was stored, a fully equipped transmit/receive control room in the same truck, gas, cables and an underslung surveillance camera pod so it would appear the same.

It has now been sold at a loss, but the force was unable to confirm the precise figure. One figure that was bandied about was £20,000 but enquiries by the MEN suggest that the auction figure was actually £13,000 but what items this included is unsure.

The head of Greater Manchester police's specialist operations branch, Chief Superintendent Dave Anthony, said: "We experienced a number of technical and other problems with the blimp and it was decided, especially in the current climate, that it was neither cost effective nor operationally viable to maintain."

Prior to the GMP purchase the Eagle Eye had been successfully used operationally with other police forces – primarily West Midlands – on lease but this was the first sale to a UK police force.



PAN



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There have been a number of camera carrying helium blimps offered to police over the years and most have originally been offered for sale. The spasmodic nature of the need for the type of static surveillance they offer, the size of the ground crew required and an assumption that a large building is needed to house this type of craft militated against ownership and it has proven time and time again that short-term leases from a contractor make more sense.

Sonic were able to demonstrate to GMP that the ground crew requirement was manageable and the likely high workload locally clearly demonstrated that purchase was viable. The need for a large building to house the blimp has been overcome by transporting it to the operational site partially deflated in a mid-sized articulated vehicle [‘semi-trailer’] that acts both as protective hangar and control room. Despite the disparaging police comments on the ruggedness of the aerostat Sonic has stoically maintained its silence on this matter. [MEN/ GMP/PAR]

WILTSHIRE: Although there had been no prior consultation on the matter the county air ambulance will stay in the air with or without support from the police. David Philpott the boss of the air ambulance charity vowed in the wake of the ACPO announcement of cost-cutting measures that would see the number of police helicopters in England and Wales reduced by a third to save money.



The proposals would mean Wiltshire Police sharing a helicopter with forces in Avon and Somerset and Gloucestershire and for it to be based at RAF Colerne. The current contract runs until the end of 2014 and the Police Authority chairman Christopher Hoare has said police are committed to retaining the service and its current police HQ base until then.

Philpott said: “My information is that Wiltshire Constabulary will be staying in the contract with Great Western Ambulance Service for the next four years and not relocating the helicopter to Colerne and if that is the case the constabulary should be congratulated.

“We have to plan for what I consider is the inevitable, which is after 2014 there will be a stand-alone air ambulance for Wiltshire but this gives us plenty of time to gear up our fund-raising efforts.”

The running cost of the joint helicopter is £1.3 million a year, with the police paying £800,000 and the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Appeal charity contributing £500,000, which includes paying the wages of the paramedics. Mr Philpott said a stand-alone air ambulance would cost between £1.5 to £2M a year to run.



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UNITED STATES

FEDERAL: Helihub has reported that the US Customs & Border Protection “CBP”, part of the Dept of Homeland Security, have put their entire MD600 fleet into desert storage. They are located at AMARC – the Aerospace Maintenance And Regeneration Center facility managed by the US Air Force Material Command located in the town of Tucson, Arizona, USA.

In 1997, CBP originally ordered 45 MD600s, but ended up taking just 11, and these were issued FAA registrations N602BP through N611BP, plus N613BP. Nine of these remain on the FAA register – N609BP and N610BP having been cancelled thus far. It is suggested that these have been damaged as there would be no other logical reason for removing such young airframes.

The MD600N fleet was allegedly ordered against the then US Border Patrol’s wishes at a time when Eurocopter were under investigation by US authorities for some inappropriate trading deals. When the manufacturer was subsequently cleared the contract switched to the AS350. [HH/PAR]

ARIZONA: The Yavapai County Sheriff’s Office (YCSO) received a very big donation to help with daytime search and rescue efforts. Guidance Helicopters, Inc. gave the department a 2005 model Robinson R44 Raven II helicopter.

Commander Scott Mascher, a fixed-wing aircraft pilot, said he had talked with John Stonecipher, the president and CEO of Guidance Helicopters, about YCSO contracting with Guidance Helicopters for a pilot and helicopter to help during searches. Stonecipher suggested his company donate a helicopter to YCSO instead.

The donation, valued at \$180,000, is the single largest donation ever to be given to the

An advertisement for the AgustaWestland AW139 helicopter. The background is a photograph of a purple AW139 helicopter in flight, performing a hoist rescue over a grassy field. Two rescuees are suspended from the helicopter's hoist. The text is overlaid on a dark red vertical bar on the right side of the image. The text includes the website 'agustawestland.com', the model 'AW139', and several key selling points: 'WHATEVER THE MISSION DEMANDS AGUSTAWESTLAND CAN DELIVER', 'Operational effectiveness in all weather conditions', 'Real value for money in both acquisition and direct operating costs', and 'Safety for the crew and the public they serve'. The AgustaWestland logo and 'A Finmeccanica Company' are at the bottom right. The phrase 'Towards a wider world' is written in white across the middle of the image.

agustawestland.com

AW139

WHATEVER THE MISSION DEMANDS AGUSTAWESTLAND CAN DELIVER

Operational effectiveness in all weather conditions

Real value for money in both acquisition and direct operating costs

Safety for the crew and the public they serve

AgustaWestland
A Finmeccanica Company

Towards a wider world

YCSO. The Sheriff's Office has now applied for \$100,000 in grant money from the Public Safety Stabilization Program through the Arizona Governor's Office of Economic Recovery and plans to use \$150,000 in drug seizure money to refurbish and outfit the aircraft. [Prescott DC]

Ed: Seven years ago the Chino Valley Review reported that Guidance Helicopters was flying ad-hoc operations for Yavapai CSO using examples of the R22 and R-44 helicopters. They help with smoke patrols watching for fires in the local forest, help search for lost and missing hikers and hunters or other investigative things. The primary function is to support the ground personnel and lead them to where they need to go. At that time the Sheriff's Air Group and Search and Rescue were all volunteers.

American Eurocopter has announced that it has delivered another AS350 B3 N357FB to the Phoenix Police Department's Air Support unit. This is the fifth AS350 B3 in the unit's fleet of helicopters.

The Phoenix Police Department's Air Support Unit was established in 1973 and was closely associated with the MD520N for many years. It was severely affected by the support problems at MDHI. The unit's decision never to be reliant upon one manufacturer again led to a mixed fleet that, from 2005, included the AS350 operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year and covers an area of more than 500 square miles with over 1.5 million residents.



CALIFORNIA: The Long Beach Police Department air detail has proposed a solution to their current problems that includes the sale of their two eight years old EC130B4 helicopters.

Unit covers 55 sq miles, including 10 miles of beachfront and port security. They acquired the EC130s new but have suffered funding difficulties for some time. These were highlighted when one of their aircraft was damaged in a foam incident in 2008 – a hangar the aircraft was kept in filled with fire fighting foam when the aircraft was in for maintenance.

The latest proposal is that they dispose of the EC130 helicopters and replace them with two AS350B2 helicopters declared surplus by the Los Angeles County Sheriff. The two units are located next door to each other so the relative costs of the two will be well known. The EC130 costs the department \$740 for each hour where the former LACS aircraft would cost \$445 an hour. The EC130 designation disguises what is a nominally similar AS350B4 but the differences – larger cabin, fenestron and other new technology – have a price that can be trimmed away by having a B2 variant.

First cost of a brand new AStar B2 would cost the department \$3M, but buying them from the sheriff's department will reduce that cost by about half and much of that will be recouped by selling the existing airframes. There is also money in the asset forfeiture fund.

KANSAS: Another unit operating in its 40th year is that of Wichita Police Department [WPD]. The anniversary was highlighted by MD Helicopters as the PD uses their aircraft.

The WPD Air Section is one of the original 13 charter members of 'Operation Sky Knight,' the first formal police helicopter patrol operation in the United States. The programme was initially launched as a trial by the Los Angeles (CA) Sheriff's Department. Wichita, located in

south central Kansas, is the largest city in the State, with a population in excess of 375,000 and a geographic area over 150 square miles.

Currently the Air Section owns and operates an MD 500E and is budgeted to fly up to 1,000 hours annually. The unit's full-time staff is comprised of Lt. Paul J. Shields (Supervisor/Pilot); Officer Peter D. Dolieslager (Pilot); Officer Bradley E. Carver (Tactical Flight Officer); and David L. Frye (Director of Maintenance). Since its inception, the unit has logged over 50,000 flight hours.

The Air Section's motto is "A Proud Tradition of Providing Airborne Public Service since 1970." They became operational in January of that year flying Hughes Model 300B/C piston powered helicopters; this types was operated for 33 years until the WPD upgraded to the current MD 500E.

With a five-bladed main rotor and the choice of a 420-shp Rolls Royce 250- C20B or 450-shp Rolls Royce 250-C20R turbine engine, the MD 500E cruises easily at 135 kt (250 kph) over a range of 258 nm (478 km). For applications where noise is a concern, the MD 500E can be equipped with a four-bladed tail rotor for quiet performance. [MD]

MARYLAND: The State Police Aviation Command has advertised for a Program Manager Senior II, a post that functions as the Deputy Director of the Maryland State Police Aviation Command attracting a salary range of \$68,692 to \$110,297.

The holder of the post is directly responsible for the overall administration of the entire Aviation Command. The Deputy Director has direct oversight and management of the Command's financial resources and \$25M annual budget. The Deputy Director has direct responsibility for ensuring the guiding values, principles and key business drivers of the State's Air Medical system are upheld, assists the Commander in all functional areas including Flight Operations, Support Operations, Maintenance Operations and Safety management by ensuring daily continuity of effort in the accomplishment of aero-medical, law enforcement, Homeland Security, Executive and Prisoner Transports Search and Rescue and disaster assessment missions.

TEXAS: The Dallas Police Department's three year old Bell 407 is to sold off. The disposal proposal for the Bell was included in the FY2011 City of Dallas financial budget (which began October 1).

Mark Duebnar, the Dallas Police Department Financial Contract and Management Divison Executive General Manager (a civilian executive level position) slipped it into the budget and the City Manager signed off on it. No one on the City Council made an effort to stop it. Duebnar felt the City just couldn't afford to maintain the machine any longer. Duebnar has not been particularly friendly towards the whole operation in the past either. Three years ago when he was in Purchasing at City Hall he tried to civilianise the air operation and the maintenance, with an idea to acquire Robinson R-44s instead of buying three new turbine machines.

So far the 407 remains around the unit but it is residing in the hanger and not operational. Various attempts to save it have at least stalled the disposal process but few believe it will ultimately survive beyond the Super Bowl in early February next year.

This will reduce the DPDF fleet to just two Bell 206B3 helicopters. That alone is not a problem but the lack of investment in support for the operation is. Many are predicting the air



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operation will be grounded for extended periods. The unit does not have access to some important resources including engine leasing. Engine overhauls take months and the airframe remains grounded during the time the work is undertaken. With the operation flying 200 to 250 hours a month with a regular flight schedule they are losing each airframe for a week at a time just for 100 hour inspections. Having the third helicopter offered the engineering department flexibility that resulted in DPD rarely needing to go out of service.

Operations like neighbours Fort Worth rent a loan engines so they don't experience this problem on their two Bell 206B3s but so far the City of Dallas do not appear likely to embrace the same forward thinking.

Ed: Another option which appears to be a non-starter is getting the engine overhauled by the manufacturers. Because they are used to undertaking the work they , this would reduce times in maintenance but increase direct costs.



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AIR AMBULANCE

AUSTRIA

AIR AMBULANCE OPERATIONS: The arguments over the continuation of air ambulance services in Austria by the ÖAMTC [Oesterreichischer Auto-mobil und Touring Club] continue to rumble on. Ten years ago Pan carried a front page story of how the Interior Ministry had handed over some HEMS services to ÖAMTC. Previously services had been operated by a mix of the police and ÖAMTC aircraft.

The current argument is effectively a refusal to continue these country-wide services without a significant increase in financial contribution from the Interior Ministry. At present the operations are costing around €1.8M of the ÖAMTC own funds to maintain. The BMI is not disclosing the current state of negotiations but says that there are ongoing talks aimed at finding resolution.

Some provinces have come to separate agreements with ÖAMTC and the shut down set for December 2010 looks like it has an extension into the middle of next year.

The original transfer commenced from January 1, 2001 and was undertaken in three stages ending in July 2001. This is presumably the basis of the latest deadline set. ÖAMTC has been operating EMS operations since September 1983 and originally used five bases for primary operations and another two for seasonal and specialist flights. The 2001 deal extended their area of operations across Austria but was already causing problems by 2008 when the ÖAMTC declared that it would not continue and dissolved the contract. [Standard/PAN]

UNITED KINGDOM

CAMBRIDGESHIRE: Fund-raising efforts by the Emergency Medical Charity, Magpas, are being supported by former Olympic swimmer, Mark Foster. Foster, who lives in Cambridgeshire, is helping raise awareness of the charity's 'One in a Million' campaign. The Magpas Helimedix team is based at RAF Wyton and needs to raise £1M to keep its service in the air.

Magpas and the East Anglian Air Ambulance (EAAA) combined their services in 2008 to improve emergency medical provision across Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire. The Helimedix team use rapid response vehicles, the police helicopter and a helicopter operated on behalf of the EAAA. The latter now plan to relocate to Marshall Airport in Cambridge, giving up free volunteer Magpas staffing in favour of a new costly commercial contract.

Meanwhile all is not sweet in the East Anglia Air Ambulance [EAAA]. The Chief Executive has gone and there are strong rumours that Mint Green the finance behind Sterling Aircraft/Helicopters, Fast Helicopters and Alan Mann continues to have cash flow problems with unpaid wages.

Sterling supply and operate the two EAAA BK117C-1 helicopters. This long standing trouble



is not likely to be terminal but it must be causing sleepless nights here and there.

The EAAA may have signed up with EMSC to solve the doctor problem and provide training but sources state that there remain occasional difficulties in sourcing sufficient paramedics to fly so the aircraft crew can still sometimes be facing shortfalls.

Because of the unique association with the Cambridgeshire Constabulary helicopter Magpas can fly at night and no other air ambulance in the region can currently offer that service. With the NPAS budget and airframe cuts predicted within the police force, Magpas is concerned that it might soon lose the use of the constabulary helicopter as well. They will continue their road response capability but feel that the slower response times will put some patients at risk.

Magpas is solely reliant on public donations and it costs in the region of £550,000 a year to provide its free at the point of contact emergency medical services. The charity hopes that Mark Foster's high profile will help it to raise its target of £1M.

Ed: It is noteworthy that the scale of the fundraising efforts at Magpas places in front of them the option of setting up a rival air ambulance in the county if a suitable arrangement is not agreed with the existing provider.

DEVON: The Devon Air Ambulance Trust have announced that Exeter based company Bluegrass Computer Services have been awarded the contract for their IT requirements.

Heléna Holt, Chief Executive of the Devon Air Ambulance Trust said 'We are very much looking forward to working with Bluegrass, who have been awarded a 2 year contract. In this age of the internet and IT development, including social media, it is essential that we have the right equipment, software, together with the back up to ensure that we and our staff utilise our time to the best of our ability. This of course also ensures the most cost effective working environment possible.'

David Thomas, Managing Director of Bluegrass Computer Services added 'Over the past 2 years we've worked with Devon Air Ambulance Trust on a number of special projects, including the Steve Ford airbase development and their approach has always been refreshing. This is an exciting opportunity to help them achieve significant benefits from developing their IT and telephony systems in innovative ways.'



EAST ANGLIA: Last month the East Anglian Air Ambulance [EAAA] announced that the charity's Chief Executive Simon Gray was to leave the charity at the end of January 2011. He was predicted to be taking up a new role at the Association of Air Ambulances (AAA), subject to ratification at its forthcoming AGM. The AAA is the representative body for all 18 air ambulance charities in England and Wales.

Andrew Egerton-Smith, chairman of the East Anglian Air Ambulance board of trustees, said: "We're hugely indebted to Simon for the commitment he has shown to making the charity one of the most effective air ambulance services in the country.

"He has made an outstanding contribution to the development of the air ambulance service in our region. The charity has made great progress under his leadership." Mr Gray's deputy, Steve Whitby, will take on additional responsibilities while the trustees begin the search for a new chief executive. [EAAA]

Ed: Besides being the CEO at EAAA Simon Gray was the AAA Vice-Chairman this year. The normal progression is that he would take up the position as Chairman next year and the EAAA statement clearly suggested that the Chairman of the AAA is a 'real job' with a stand-alone pay structure.

The current AAA constitution clearly states that 'The Chair must be a senior figure in a member organisation' and yet the EAAA announcement stated clearly that he would not be employed by them in the New Year.

A week later the AAA held their AGM in Redditch. The AAA were unable resolve that Chair-

manship at he meeting and will be having an EGM shortly to decide whether the change the constitution or select an alternative person.

At the meeting Simon Gray publicly stated that the parting of the ways came about through a disagreement between himself and the Trustees. At the core of this disagreement was the previous announcement that Magpas were to be dismissed as the free providers of doctors and Clinical Governance in favour of a commercial provider called EMS Consultant Ltd., [c/ n 07179442] who would be charging a commercial rate for their services covering both helicopters. This move would bring the in line with neighbouring operators [Essex, Herts and Kent].

The disagreement is quite fundamental, the Trustees believed that they are a helicopter provider and that the medical services should be furnished by the National Health Service and that the financial risk of Clinical Governance was not theirs to take. No figure has been provided stating the true cost of the EMSC agreement.

GREAT NORTH: Officially into service last month was the second Multiflight AS365N2 G-NHAB. This now carries the 'Pride of Cumbria' logo on its tail fin. The third airframe of the



fleet has yet to be sourced. Meanwhile the first of the breed, and the previous 'Pride of Cumbria' the venerable G-HEMS has returned to PDG Helicopters the previous contractor. www.ukemergencyaviation.co.uk



Gifts for Policemen





LNAACT CEO Peter Aldrich, Chief Pilot George Phillips and Medical Aviation Services CEO Henck Shaeken

LNA

LINCOLNSHIRE & NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: Last month the air ambulance charity officially launched its new MD902 Explorer based air ambulance.

The helicopter G-LNCT offers an enhanced medical fit and extended range thanks to an additional fuel tank.

The helicopter completed its maiden flight from Nottingham Castle to Tattershall castle in just 18 minutes, the 'castle to castle' flight being chosen as a suitable PR flight..

And although most hospitals in Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire do not yet have lit helipads, the new Explorer is equipped for the future with a high-powered Nightsun searchlight and night vision goggles for its pilots.

Chief executive of the air ambulance Peter Aldrick said: "We're looking forward to another 10 years with this helicopter, as we did with the last one.

"While the helicopter looks identical to the last one, apart from the registration, internally there have been many improvements to benefit the patients we carry.

"We also have the opportunity to fly at night and there are already lit helipads at hospitals in Derby, King's Lynn and Grimsby.

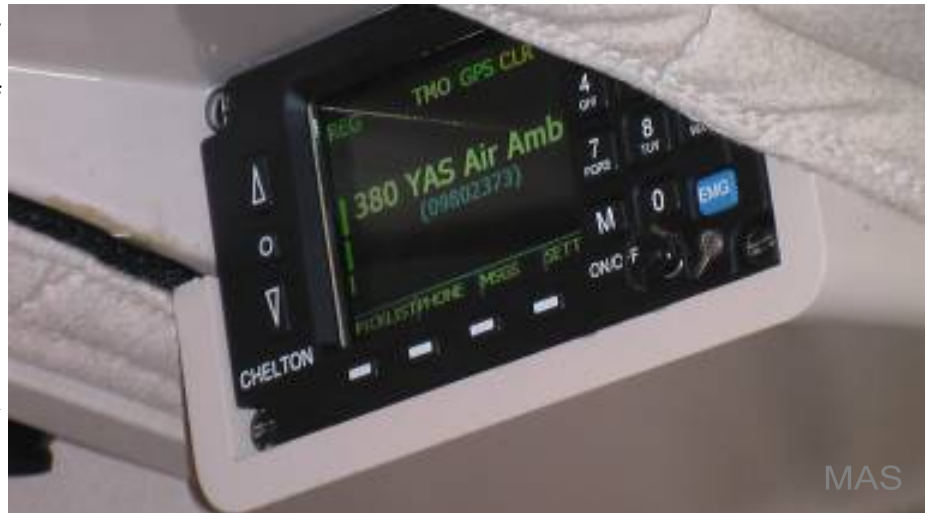
"So we are future-proof and ready for when we have lit helipads across Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire."

The L&NAA has provided a lifesaving service for the past 16 years, enabling paramedics to reach critically ill patients and the most seriously injured accident victims, including those in the remotest areas of Lincolnshire.

In April, the service completed its 12,000th mission and the previous MD902 has been retired for refurbishment and a future use as the fleet spare air ambulance for Medical Aviation Services. (EMAS).

The aircraft is the latest in a line to be fitted with the Tetra Radio installation. Medical Aviation Services Ltd – one of the UK's leading air ambulance operators - has just completed a major round of Tetra Radio installations on the UK's fleet of air ambulance helicopters on

behalf of SunGard Public Sector Ltd. The contract which MAS won in June of last year is part of the Ambulance Service's "Airwave" programme and has installed digitally encrypted tactical radios in nearly all of the UK's air ambulances. The programme covers MD Explorers, EC 135, BK 117 and AS 365 Dauphins operated by MAS and other suppliers and provides UK helicopter emergency medical teams with a more secure and enhanced radio communications capability than previously.



The programme of installations covering 24 helicopters was completed on schedule by MAS with the re-delivery of the Great North Air Ambulance's Dauphin G-NHAB. The fit to G-LNCT was a follow-up installation with new helicopters being introduced into the UK fleet.

SOUTHAMPTON AIRPORT management is working to ensure it can take more emergency medical flights from Guernsey.

The issue was highlighted on Sunday night when a woman with head injuries had been due to travel on an emergency flight to Southampton, but the airport refused to accept the flight because it would land 10 minutes after the 11pm cut-off.

'On this occasion, NATS were unable to provide staffing cover beyond our closing time and therefore the flight operated to Bournemouth. We are already in discussion with NATS to ensure that medical emergency flights can be accommodated at the airport whenever possible in the future.'

WALES: pilot from Bond Air Services, the UK's leading helicopter services provider, has been commended at a special ceremony in the House of Lords, for his lifesaving role after a gas explosion in South Wales.

Pilot, Capt Grant Elgar, was one of three crew members to have been selected for the prestigious Air Ambulance Team Award 2010, which was presented at the Ambulance Service Institute awards ceremony in London.

The accolade is in recognition of the team's pivotal role in saving the life of a 38-year-old man who suffered serious injuries when a gas cylinder exploded in Bridgend earlier this year.

Despite fading light and difficult weather Capt Elgar, along with air paramedics Phil Thomas and Gareth Williams, treated and flew the patient direct to Morriston Hospital near Swansea, just 34 minutes from the original 999 call.

They arrived on scene in outstanding time and joined the land crew in actively treating the patient. With great skill and professionalism they continued treatment in-flight, while negotiating bad weather and communicating with the hospital. The speed and impact of their ac-

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tion saved the man's life.

This is the crew's second commendation for the mission, after being presented with the Gail Williams Award for Clinical and Operational Excellence by the Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust.

WARWICKSHIRE & NORTHAMPTONSHIRE: A GRANT of £100,000 will help transform the county's air ambulance base at the recently reopened Coventry Airport.

The plans will turn a small work space into a multi-functional area for crews and to provide a hub for the running of the life saving operation as well as a fully equipped training room, with an interactive white board, which will be hired out to third parties to provide additional income for the charity, changing rooms and medical stores.

Grants came from three locally based trusts including £75,000 from the Soroptimist International of Rugby Charitable Trust. This brings to £250,000 the total raised by the group for the air ambulance over the last three years.

There are reports that on November 19 the pilot of the W&NAA, called to the site of the crash of a Cessna G-VUEM at Birmingham West Midlands airport was able to shut down fuel and electrical systems in wreck thereby reducing level of destruction and easing the rescue efforts of fire crews rescuing the two trapped pilots in the Cessna.

Emergency services at the scene of the plane crash at Birmingham Airport. Photos by Aaron Manning of West Midlands Fire Service.



FIRE

CHINA

A Russian multi-role heavy transport helicopter Mil Mi-26TC manufactured by Rostvertol JSC, a subsidiary of the Russian Helicopters holding company, was officially delivered to its customer and arrived in China not long before Airshow China 2010 last month.

The contract for the delivery of the heavy Mi-26TC to the People's Republic of China was signed between Rostvertol JSC and Lectern Aviation Supplies Co., Ltd. (China) in March 2010. This is the third Mi-26TC sold by Rostvertol in the PRC. The Mi-26TC was completed three months ahead of contract date. The new heavy Mi-26TC is scheduled to serve in one of the fire-hazardous regions of China and put out forest fires. A new contract is in the works with Lectern Aviation for the purchase of another Mi-26TC. [RH]

Simplex Manufacturing and Eurocopter have completed a demonstration of Simplex's newest High Rise Firefighting system for the Eurocopter EC225 in Hong Kong as part of the China Air Show. Simplex developed the system for the EC225 after a successful develop-

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ment and deployment of a high rise fire fighting system on an AVIC H-425 [Z-9/AS365N development] in China last year. Simplex will continue to expand its fleet of high rise fire fighting systems to the Russian build KA-32, China built AC313, and other helicopter models in the coming months. The High Rise Firefighting systems utilize Simplex's extensive fleet of certified fire fighting tanks. The system developed for the EC225 utilises the Simplex fire fighting tank for the EC225 in addition to the Simplex Hydra Foam Cannon. The foam cannon is the result of several years of research and development on the best methods for aerial fire fighting from a helicopter and integrates technologies including a FLIR EVS3 infra-red camera to assist fire-fighters in seeing the fire through smoke. The boom extends outside the rotor tips for the best possible effectiveness in fire fighting.



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SEARCH & RESCUE

CHINA

SAR: Sikorsky Aircraft Corp. has delivered nine new S-76® and S-92® helicopters to China in 2010 – the most ever in a single year for China – through a steady stream of deliveries that include the delivery of two S-76C++™ search and rescue (SAR) helicopters to the Ministry of Transport (MOT) China Rescue and Salvage helicopters last week and two S-76C++ to Eastern General Aviation Company (EGAC) currently being delivered. Sikorsky announced the deliveries from the China Air Show.

The China Rescue and Salvage has been operating the Sikorsky S-76 helicopter in the SAR capacity since 2001 and it has developed into a skilful search and rescue agency, responsible for the entire coastline of China. The Director General, Bureau of Rescue and Salvage, Captain Song Jiahui personally accepted the aircraft from the Sikorsky Global Helicopters facility in Coatesville, PA., USA.

China Rescue and Salvage, which established its aerial search and rescue capability with the S-76 helicopter, will celebrate its 10th anniversary flying Sikorsky helicopters in 2011.

INDUSTRY

Bell Helicopter and the U.S. Army Aviation Applied Technology Directorate have signed a \$30M Technology Investment Agreement to develop state-of-the-art drive system technology under the Future Advanced Rotorcraft Drive System (FARDS).

FARDS is focused on critical performance and affordability enhancing drive system technologies for the U.S. Army's Current/Future Force fleet of rotorcraft, as well as commercial rotorcraft. It is targeting a 55% improvement in drive system power-to-weight ratio, a 35% reduction in production, operating and support costs, 90% automatic detection of critical failures and an 18 decibel reduction in drive system-generated noise.

The agreement, worked through Bell's Xworx organization, brings together a diverse group of subcontractors with unique expertise in the fields of materials, processing, heat transfer, diagnostics and more, complementing Bell's design and manufacturing strengths.

The five year FARDS project will develop more than 18 new technologies resulting in full scale demonstrations of a main rotor gearbox and tail rotor driveshaft system.

Vector Aerospace Corporation (Vector), an independent provider of aviation maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) services has announced the grand opening of Vector Aerospace Engine Services-Atlantic's newest engine repair, overhaul and test facility, located in Lan-seria, South Africa.

This new engine facility will offer operators throughout the region field service and engine repairs on the Pratt & Whitney Canada (P&WC) PT6A, JT15D and PW100 engine series; as well as complete overhaul and test capability for the PT6A engine.

During Airshow China in Zuhai, **Turbomeca** (Safran group) announced the signature of a contract for 80 Arriel 2C engines kits with AVIC International (AVIC International Holding Corporation) under the witness of SAIC (South Aero-engine Industry Corporation). First deliveries are scheduled for 2011.

In 2005, a cooperation agreement was signed with AVIC for the delivery of more than 160 Arriel 2C under license. The success of licensed Arriel 2C was confirmed in 2008 through 80 additional orders.

Powering 300 helicopters in China, Turbomeca is the leading helicopter engine supplier in China: one helicopter out of two is equipped with Turbomeca engines or licensed products. Turbomeca has signed a contract with the Civil Aviation Flight University of China (CAFUC),

to develop Turbomeca maintenance training for qualified engineers and an initial training programme to qualify engine maintenance engineers. The new training programmes provide advanced courses in line maintenance and inspection of Turbomeca engines, which power the half of Chinese helicopters fleet with licensed engines.

The training centre will be managed directly by the head of TBHE training recently appointed to ensure continuity of relationships between customers and Turbomeca. Courses will be conducted in Chinese by a CAFUC instructor, trained and coached by Turbomeca.

ZOLL Medical Corporation a manufacturer of medical devices and related software solutions, announced that Swiss Air-Rescue, Rega, of Zurich Switzerland, is the first international air medical service to install the new Propaq® MD Monitor/Defibrillator on its medical helicopters.

Rega partnered with ZOLL over the last year to provide valuable clinical and human factor input into the design of this life-saving device that was developed specifically to meet the special needs of air medical operations. Rega has been a long-standing customer of ZOLL for over 16 years, first using the ZOLL PD 1400 on emergency missions, and more recently equipping its helicopters and jets with the ZOLL M Series® defibrillator.

The Propaq MD is an ultra-lightweight compact device with highly sophisticated, advanced capabilities that combine the well-accepted and proven features of Propaq monitors with the clinically superior therapeutic capabilities of ZOLL defibrillation and non-invasive pacing technologies. The Propaq MD is 60% smaller and 40% lighter than similar monitor/defibrillators. It is two pounds lighter than the current air medical vital signs monitor even with defibrillation and pacing added.



ZOLL also announced that PHI Air Medical of Phoenix, Arizona, is the first major installation for the new ZOLL Propaq® MD Monitor/Defibrillator in North America and will standardise its fleet of air ambulances with the new equipment.

Soloy Aviation Solutions has begun production of its latest variant of their FAA certified Mark II turbine powered Cessna 206 aircraft. Currently being given the working designation of 'The Sentinel', this variant of the incredibly versatile fixed wing turbine platform is being developed for government surveillance use and other law enforcement utilisation.

Soloy converts the standard 300hp piston Cessna 206H model aircraft into its Rolls Royce turbine powered Mark II configuration producing a maximum 417 shaft horsepower.

Soloy will then outfit the Mark II with its newly developed Law Enforcement package which includes:

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The aircraft will be configured with state of the art avionics and instrumentation including a Garmin G500 system with synthetic vision.

Soloy expects the Mark II *Sentinel* to be finished and ready for demonstration by early 2011. Soloy Aviation Solutions at (360) 754-7000 or visit www.soloy.com

Bell Helicopter announced that San Juan Regional Medical Center will add the world's most advanced light twin helicopter, the Bell 429, to its air ambulance fleet. The purchase of the 429 supports San Juan Regional Medical Center's AirCare unit based out of Farmington, New Mexico.

Established in 1992, AirCare has transported nearly 10,000 patients in the Bell 222 since inception. They currently manage the Bell 222 and an airplane, providing patients with critical care services 24 hours per day.

Ovation Systems introduce the new FlashBack-3-C covert surveillance system that is suitable for aviation use. Based on the original highly successful FlashBack-3 range of DVR / streamers, UK based Ovation Systems has introduced a system that reflects customer feedback. With all the features that made the FlashBack-3 so successful, its small dimensions, advanced H.264/AVC video compression and ability to stream video over IP networks, the FlashBack-3-C makes installation quicker, simpler and more flexible.

Each system is provided with a selection of mating cable sets that interface to either bare wires or commonly used video, audio and DC power connectors. To aid deployment, it is a simple operation to extend any cable with the in-line 0.5 or 1 metre extension cables included with each system.

There are also a number of special accessories available using the new connector system, including; a GPS receiver, Knowles microphones and a miniature low-light bullet camera.



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ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

18 October 2010 Beech A100 N1TR. Public Use, operated for unidentified purpose. The aircraft received substantial damage after impacting several birds near Palestine, Texas. The pilot, co-pilot and three passengers were not injured. The airplane was owned and operated by Trinity River Authority of Texas, Arlington, The airplane had departed the Arlington Municipal Airport, Arlington, Texas, for Palestine Municipal Airport. Examination of the airplane revealed substantial damage to the left wing spar and left wing leading edge outboard of the left engine. Bird residue and feathers were observed near the damaged area of the left wing. Additional damage and bird residue was noted on the vertical fin of the tail section.

5 November 2010 Bell 407 N905HA. Air ambulance. On landing at hospital in Madera, California fuel sprayed over 11 persons at the landing area. [FAA]

7 November 2010 Eurocopter AS350. Fishtail Airlines Rescue Helicopter crashed in Nepal when undertaking the rescue of two climbers from Mount Amadablam, a 6812-metre peak near to Mount Everest. The pilot was Sabin Basnyat a Nepalese pilot who performed the highest helicopter mountain rescue in history earlier this year. He was accompanied by an engineer. Fishtail, a privately-owned airline is the only company in Nepal providing high-altitude helicopter rescue. [Media]

10 November 2010 Partenavia P68 N44956. Texas Parks and Wildlife. Aircraft went down in the Franklins, a mountain range in Franklin Mountains State Park near El Paso. AJ Smith the pilot and the two Game Warden passengers were not seriously injured. The pilot reported a strong downdraft; all he could do was level the aircraft into the terrain. [PAR/FAA]

19 November 2010 Cessna Citation Eagle II G-VUEM. AD Aviation operated. Aircraft in transit from Belfast to West Midlands airport carrying a donor organ [liver] struck airfield ILS aerial and crashed on the runway and burned. Fog and/or mechanical failure may have been causal factors. The two pilot crew survived but one was seriously injured. Reports that the pilot of the Warwickshire & Northamptonshire Air Ambulance called to scene was able to shut down fuel and electrical systems in wreck thereby reducing level of destruction.

22 November 2010 Bell 407 N408UH. Air ambulance operating for the University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah, provided by Air Methods. Upon landing on a freeway while responding to an MVA with a prolonged extrication, the pilot decided to reposition the aircraft due to the slope of the road surface. Upon lifting off the tail rotor struck a reflector post along side of the road. The aircraft's tail rotor and tail boom sustained a significant amount of damage. It was transported by ground to the maintenance hangar for further inspection and repairs. [Examiner/Concern]

23 November 2010 Robinson R44 N108DJ. El Monte Police, Los Angeles, California. The aircraft was involved in a bird strike with a pigeon where the bird crashed through the windshield and slammed into the pilot's face. The pilot was forced to make an emergency landing at Holland Middle School in Baldwin Park. The helicopter patrols San Gabriel Valley communities east of Los Angeles. The pilot had minor injuries and he was released after treatment at a Los Angeles hospital. The pilot and another police officer on the helicopter were responding to a robbery call when the impact took place. [Media]



FLIGHT SAFETY

Improved safety checks have been brought in after items fell out of an UK based air ambulance at 700ft (213m), injuring a man on the ground. The incident happened in June, when the Great North Air Ambulance helicopter had taken off from Middlesbrough's James Cook University Hospital.

A door opened and items fell to the ground, knocking a man unconscious. The Air Accident Investigation Branch (AAIB) urged additional door checks are carried out on all air ambulances.

[The AAIB report](#) said the Aerospatiale SA365N Dauphin air ambulance, G-HEMS, was returning to its base at Durham Tees Valley Airport after dropping off a casualty in Middlesbrough, when the incident happened.

Shortly after take-off the helicopter was flying over Thornaby near Stockton when the right rear cabin door opened sending a number of items falling to the ground. A man was struck and was treated by paramedics on the ground. It later emerged that a doctor on board had not properly secured the door before take-off.

The inquiry by the Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB) stated that a stationery folder hit a man below and knocked him unconscious.

This version is disputed by the alleged victim, amateur footballer Kevin Manning, who spoke of all sorts of items, including bottles, raining out of the sky. In his version he was hit by a blood pressure instrument case not a folder of papers.



The now withdrawn from Great North air ambulance service AS365N G-HEMS and its final working crew - Terry Sharp, Andy Dalton, Paul Burnage, James Benson and Jeff Grey on a rainy pad at Langwathby chicken farm.

Image by Al Taylor

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LETTERS

Dear Sirs,

I'm delighted to share with you the *news that I have received a letter* from Major General Amy Courter, the National Commander of the Civil Air Patrol in the USA. The US CAP will celebrate its 70th Anniversary next year, 2011.

Maj Gen Courter and her colleagues are very supportive of the Civil Air Patrol in the UK and last year they hosted me during my Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowship when I spent a month in the USA learning from their experience of using small aircraft for search and rescue and other air observation activities.

In the UK the Civil Air Patrol has completed a major make-over and we now look forward to working alongside the emergency services with an air observation service that has increased its credibility within a sound organizational structure. Earlier this year we appointed Air Marshal Cliff Spink as our new President and we have a Board of Trustees who are mostly former military and commercial pilots with a great deal of aviation experience. We also have Regional Coordinators who are on hand to provide advice and direction to our operational units, each with a Unit Chief Pilot in charge. Membership shows a healthy increase in numbers and new units are forming in Cornwall, Cumbria, Lancashire and Northern Ireland. In parallel we have a new trading partner, UK Air Search CIC, a community interest company which will establish the necessary funding stream for the Civil Air Patrol charity.

After our successful participation in the LAA Rally at Sywell, together with a stand at the Shephard International Search and Rescue Conference & Exhibition in Aberdeen we are now looking forward to the Emergency Services Show at Stoneleigh Park, Coventry which takes place later this month, followed by 'The Flying Show' at the NEC, Birmingham.

Very best regards,
Tony Cowan

James A Cowan MBE
Chairman and Regional Coordinator (North)
Sky Watch Civil Air Patrol
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www.skywatchcivilairpatrol.org.uk

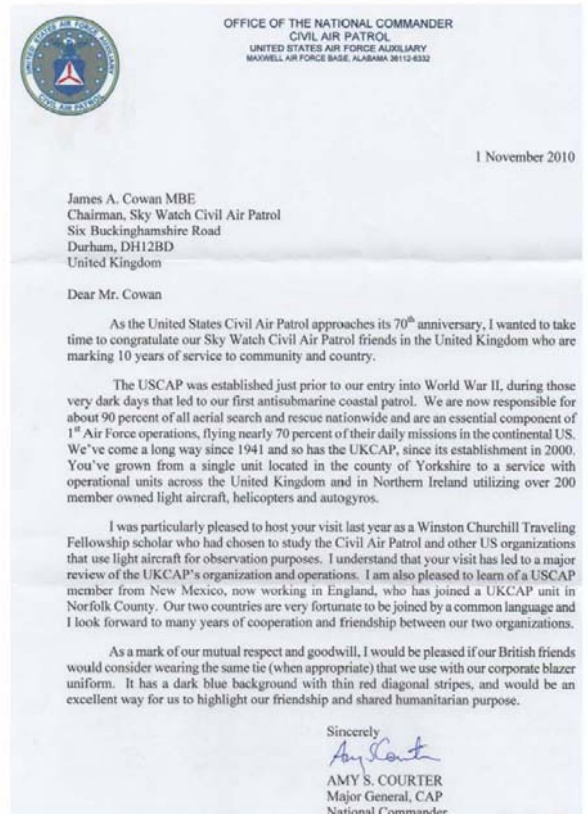
PEOPLE

PremiAir's Group Operations Director, Christopher Forrest, has been honoured with receiving The Eric Brown Award from the British Helicopter Association (BHA) in recognition of his contribution to the UK helicopter industry.

Christopher was nominated for his overall work over many years in the helicopter industry. Christopher is recognised as an outstanding supporter of the BHA and has contributed much time and effort on a professional and voluntary basis to promote the interests of the helicopter operators and users.

Receiving the Award, which was presented by Captain Eric M Brown CBE, DSC, AFC, MA, FRAeS, RN (Ret'd) at the annual BHA Dinner held at [the Institute of Directors] in London, Christopher said: "This is an absolute honour and I'm delighted to have the award presented by Captain Brown himself."

Christopher has a deep knowledge and understanding of the helicopter industry having learned to fly helicopters in the Army whilst on a four-year attachment with the Army Air Corps. Christopher holds an ATPL (H)/IR and has accumulated more than 6,500 hours on various types of helicopter undertaking charter, management, HEMS and Police Air Support



duties. He is the Accountable Manager for both PremiAir's fixed and rotary-wing Air Operator's Certificates, PremiAir's Type Rating Training Organisation and is also responsible for the oversight of The London Heliport, which is managed and operated by PremiAir.

Thales has announced the appointment of Victor Chavez to the position of UK CEO, with effect 1 January 2011. Victor has been Deputy CEO of Thales UK since October 2008.

Alex Dorrian, currently CEO of Thales UK and Executive Vice President (EVP) of Thales SA, will be Chairman of Thales UK Plc as part of his role as EVP of Thales SA. Victor will continue to report directly to Alex Dorrian.

Lord Freeman, currently Chairman of Thales UK Plc, will remain a Director of the Thales SA Board, and the Chairman of Thales UK Advisory Board.

EMERGENCY SERVICES SHOW 2010

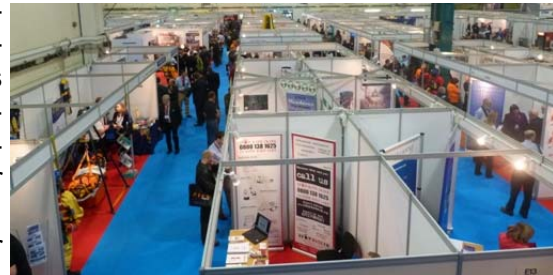
That this two day event survived in the current financial situation is remarkable. That it came across as a busy event attracting those associated with the emergency services from across the UK was equally surprising. Located as ever in basic accommodations in the vastness of Stoneleigh Park between Warwick and Leamington Spa this two day event brings together most of the emergency services in one place.

Winter has arrived, seemingly overnight, and for the first year this has been reflected in the event layout. This year most exhibits were under cover and away from the elements. One hall primarily dedicated to industry suppliers of equipment and services and another holding a vast number of charity groups who provide a worrying number of very specialist services. Without identifying them specifically it does seem strange that a group with rescue responsibility for a short stretch of beach should feel it necessary to turn up in Warwick for two days displaying a few photos of themselves, but they do.

There are ghosts in the hall too. One organisation, there may have been many others, no longer exists thanks to recent Government cuts. They must have been using the last of their budget to be present.... quite how your present yourself when you are about to disappear is unanswered.

Although far busier than many events thanks to the attraction of such as the charity sector this is primarily a meeting place. There cannot be a large amount of money around at the moment so little cash comfort for the paying exhibitors.

With the exception of a small autogyro tucked away in Hall 3 and examples of mini-copters the aviation presence this year was severely restricted. No hovercraft and no air ambulance except in the form of images and representative groups including the AAA and Sky Watch CAP.



Left: The SkyWatch CAP display was staffed by a family orientated group on the first day. [L-R] Roy and Anita Osborne and Tony and Ann Cowan [see also letters]

DIARY

2-3 December 2010 International Aerial Firefighting Conference & Exhibition, Barcelo Hotel, Malaga, Spain. Due to excellent support from the Spanish Government and client feedback, Tangent Link are pleased to announce that the next International Aerial Firefighting Conference & Exhibition is moving from Turkey to Spain. The Ministry of the Environment, Rural and Marine Affairs of Spain (MARM) supports the celebration of the Aerial Firefighting International Conference and Exhibition. The Tangent Link Aerial Firefighting conference and exhibition has travelled worldwide and each time has allowed guest speakers, leading aerial suppression experts, fire management agencies and businesses to exchange information on strategies, technologies and the latest equipment. The event holds the objective of reducing damage and creating well-managed ground, aerial response and fire management policies in countries blighted by wildfire. To Sponsor, Exhibit or attend as a Delegate, please contact: Rebecca Covey, Event Co-ordinator on +44 1628 550047 or E-Mail: rcovey@tangentlink.com

26 February – 2 March 2011. Firehouse World. San Diego Convention Center, San Diego, California USA. Covering the world of Fire Rescue and EMS. Over 100 educational opportunities, including EMS, leadership and terrorism. Over 350 exhibitors on display. Meet with over 7,500 fire, rescue and EMS professionals. Register before January 28, 2011 and SAVE! Cygnus Business Media - 801 Cliff Road East, Suite 201, Burnsville, MN 55337 - +1 800.827.8009 www.publicsafetyevents.com

24-25 May 2011. PAVCon 2011. For the second month running this issue was completed 'on the road'.... With the Editor in meetings with officials of the Basque Region in northern Spain to ensure that the 2011 edition of the PAVCon Police Aviation Conference can take place in the City of Bilbao.

All being well the event will take place close to the city with the attendees staying in city centre hotels close to the magnificent Guggenheim facility [below right].



24-25 May

Bilbao

www.pavcon.org