

Police Aviation News

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PAR



UK unveils 'GAP' SAR

Police Updates on Belgium - Germany - Russia

Two New Police Aviation Conferences announced

Irish EMS debate

Sterling being liquidated

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EDITORIAL

In the days before the *PAvCon 2012* event was officially launched the dire state of the World's economy was making itself evident. The European Union desperately trying to decide how to bail its member nations out and the USA going down to the wire on its own financial disagreements that left the FAA itself inoperative for many days.

To add to the negative vibes a handful aerospace industry events were suddenly withdrawn or rearranged months later, some at short notice. Three of these events were to be held in the Malay peninsular – tending to disprove the contention that the Asia should provide the best hope of a revival in fortunes. Most cancellations had at their core the inevitable inability of industry to support expensive events – there is a message there. Only one cancellation affected the UK – the Waypoint AirMed & Rescue Conference, airshow and exhibition that was due to take place in September. This airborne emergency services event has been cancelled before—this time it is rescheduled to May 2012 at the same Oxford Airport venue. It remains to be seen how *PAvCon 2012* fares in these difficult times.



Bryn Elliott

LAW ENFORCEMENT

AUSTRALIA

QUEENSLAND: Police officers in Queensland have refused to fly in the helicopter preferred by the Gold Coast mayor for a six-month police trial. Reports claim that officers say the standard Robinson R44, has been branded a death trap.

It has been claimed that officers are unwilling to crew the R44 because it is petrol-engined and have claimed it is not capable of doing the tasks.

Conditions of the tender, due out now, include a flying time of 520 hours over the six months, based on an modest average of 20 hours flying time a week. It is expected that it will be in the air by November 1.

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BELGIUM

FEDERAL POLICE: Last month, ten months after it was acquired, the most recently acquired helicopter Explorer helicopter G-16 has entered service after an extensive role fit. The helicopter is the first MD902 to enter service – all the previous machines being of the MD900 specification.

Currently the 902 retains the striking colour scheme applied by the previous owners and earning it the nickname 'Black Thunder' although it is in fact a very dark blue. It is intended to replace the blue with the more familiar white in the due course of time but it will be retained for a while as it is relatively young and an unnecessary repaint is not economic.

This helicopter, c/n 00132, was manufactured by MD Helicopters in the USA and first flew in October 2008 as N40216. Two years ago it was OY-HMS with CASA Air A/S at Horsens, Denmark where acquired its all blue scheme.

Acquired by the Belgian's it arrived as G-16 in October 2010 and was displayed in temporary marks at its new home base at Melsbroek (the military side of Brussels National Airport). See PAN November 2010 page 3.

In the intervening months the extensive role conversion was undertaken in Belgium at the European Support Centre of MD Helicopters at Zwartberg airport.

Visually the new fit that will presumably be common to all of the Explorer's moves the standard SX-16 searchlight mount from the chin/nose and replaces it with a chin mounted Zeiss Leo III sensor turret. It is not clear whether the mounts for other types of sensors held by the police have been included on G-16. As the existing fleet has this option it may be retained on them alone.

The Spectrolab searchlight is now replaced by a Trakka searchlight mounted on an extension to the left step at the rear. New cable cutters have been added above and below to match those already fitted to the MD900 fleet.

The MD900 fleet, consisting of G10 c/n 00034, G11 c/n 00045 [both acquired in 1997] and G12 c/n 00038 [acquired in 2001] will now be progressively withdrawn from service for extensive makeover to the demanding MD902 specification and role equipment to the new standard exhibited by G-16.



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GERMANY

BUNDESPOLIZEI: The facilities at the Bundespolizei base at Sanckt Augustin near Bonn are being refurbished over the coming years and to facilitate the work a number of temporary hangars have been erected on either end of the apron area. A complete rebuilding of the roomy hangars was contemplated but it was eventually decided that the less drastic option would best meet the needs of the operation. The work will be underway during the PAVCon 2012 event next June.

Meanwhile part of the Super Puma fleet is progressively having the air intakes reconfigured. Although the home base for the Bundespolizei fleet is nominally central Europe past operational experience has amply illustrated that elements of the federal helicopter fleet regularly finds itself in hot sandy environments undertaking some unusual missions. In order to allow the Super Puma's to operate efficiently in both the temperate and sandy environments a new filter arrangement has been developed and is currently being retrofitted to the fleet. Both old and new systems employ significantly extended air intakes over the cockpit; it is the mechanics of the devices that have changed. Visually the difference is clear.

The new configuration employs a cone plug that moves forward and shuts off the direct ram air to the engines in the presence of sand and ice. Air for the engines is then pulled in through slots and through filters set around the assembly. As an answer to the filtered sand building up beneath the filters a small fan sucks the sand lying in the bottom of the assembly and regularly blasts it out from the side of the device.

In spring next year the current fleet re-equipment plans will come to an end. The final deliveries will be of the last four of the Eurocopter EC155 models and these will be configured for maritime operations. Among other features an advanced automatic pilot is integrated, which should be the first having a hover mode without the need of a Doppler radar.

Earlier this year, on March 16, the German Federal Police celebrated its 60th anniversary. The operation – originally as the militaristic Federal Border Protection Force Bundesgrenzschutz or BGS – has been linked with the products now classed as Eurocopter produced from the start.

Currently Eurocopter claim that 83 of their helicopters are operated [20 Super Puma, 16 EC155, 41 EC135T2 and 6 EC120] but beyond these are a number of earlier airframes tucked away [‘preserved’] in various corners or displayed on poles. Of the operational total in excess of 40, including the older types retained, are usually to be found at the Sankt Augustin base at any one time and might be expected to be viewable at the PAVCon next year. The Federal Police has over 900 staff including 200 pilots and 113 flight technicians. [PAR]



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GREECE

There are plans to acquire new helicopters for the Greek police air support operation.

Ed: Despite the dire state of the Greek economy the contract appears to be going ahead and is well known across the industry. On a national level the general lack of finance negatively affects the potential for financing the operation of the existing aircraft and equipment let alone supporting new aircraft and equipment. Serviceability of the existing helicopters is unknown but the previously delivered Wescam 12DS sensor turrets are known to be out of service and in need of overhaul or replacement – leaving the police air support resource effectively blinded in a modern operational sense.

Fortunately there is sufficient money to be had from the Schengen funds and it is expected that the existing fleet of BO105 and EC135 helicopters will shortly be joined by something entirely new.

Schengen is of course primarily EU border protection money and therefore nothing more than another stream from that finance expected to bail out the defaulting nation. What may also be controversial is an expressed preference to acquire the Bell 429.

JAMAICA

JDF: Although they have a fleet of helicopters of their own the Government of Jamaica has requested assistance in the provision of helicopters during the upcoming hurricane season. Canada is deploying three CH-146 Griffon tactical helicopters and 65 Canadian Forces personnel to support the Jamaica Defence Force. The Griffon is a variant of the Bell 412.

The request from Jamaica addresses a specific capability gap in the Jamaica Defence Force, which currently does not have helicopters suitable for tasks such as search and rescue and medical evacuation flights. While in support of the Jamaican Defence Force, Canadian Air Force personnel will also take this opportunity to conduct Search and Rescue

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(SAR) training activities in order to meet essential Canadian Forces SAR training requirements in support of domestic SAR capabilities. [Helihub]

Ed: The JDF has three Bell 412EP helicopters of its own – although they are not specially configured for SAR – and they were delivered a dozen years ago. In the past there have been signs that the JDF struggles to keep technology flying, in 2007 they got rid of AS355N's and replaced them with 'simpler' Bell 407's. Perhaps they are having difficulty in keeping their own 412s airworthy.

KENYA

We have heard it all before – the last time was in 2008 - but perhaps this time the dream will be realized. The Kenya Police Force maintains five fixed-wing craft and seven helicopters at its Wilson Airport hangars, although three of them, including two helicopters and one fixed-wing plane, are unserviceable after crashing. The past incidents included a Mi-17 helicopter that crashed in Rift Valley on May 11, 2009, and a Bell 206 Long Ranger that crashed in Tana River on February 7, 2007.

Last month it was reported that the Kenya Police Air Wing has set aside around \$176M for new aircraft, operations and salaries during the next four years.

The current Air Wing has ten helicopter and thirteen fixed-wing pilots, eighteen engineers and seven crewmembers. Of eight helicopters, five are unserviceable and, of the seven Cessna fixed-wing aircraft, four are grounded.

Despite contrary indications from the past performance it is predicted that the fleet will increase to sixteen in four years and will provide 9,850 flight hours availability compared to 1,914 flight hours by the Air Wing last year.

MALAYSIA

RMP: the Royal Malaysian Police Air Unit are working with event organisers Tangent Link to run a 'first ever' Police Aviation Asia Conference in the Prince Hotel, Kuala Lumpur on November 30.

The programme for this event is still forming but it will embrace helicopters, fixed wing, sensors and vital operational technologies in the region. Malaysia is intending to grow its current Police Air Wing by procuring and operating a mixture of light and medium twin-engine helicopters - the plan is to increase its aviation fleet by 27 over the next 4 years.

International experts will be invited to share their knowledge and experience with regional police aviation delegates and to debate current technologies, training and tactics being employed by Police Aviation units from around the world. [Tangent Link]

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NORWAY

The continued disclosures of detail surrounding the use of police air support in support of operations against mass killer Anders Behring Breivik has proved very negative. Senior Norwegian police figures have raised questions about the level of available resources after it emerged that the police's only helicopter remained grounded for most of the time during the Oslo and Utøya attacks. The crew of the only police helicopter was stood down during the terrorist incident. The helicopter was eventually in the air two and half hours after the Utøya shootings began, and it was evident that the one hour road journeys undertaken by the police arriving on scene could easily have been accomplished by helicopter in around eight minutes. The contrast is that the Norwegian broadcasting news helicopter was able to fly over the island around five minutes before the capture of Breivik where the emergency helicopter was only to appear much later.

It has emerged that the police do not have the resources to keep their one helicopter in continuous operation. Figures suggest that its level of availability may be as low as 33% this year. The annual cost of the helicopter currently available to Oslo police is \$7.4M.

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RUSSIA

Very little news comes out of Russia about 'police' helicopters and hopefully this overview from a correspondent there will fill some of the gaps.

As has taken place in recent years in Europe the status of the police is changing and taking on a new more civilian mantle. All police vehicles still carry the inscription "Милиция" which means militia, rather than police. The Russian militia has been renamed just recently - and so far the inscriptions have not yet been changed – this relates not only to aircraft, but also on automobiles, buildings etc.

In 2010 Aviation Department of Russian Police operated more than 30 medium and light class helicopters, including various Mil and Kamov models, a single blimp, one Yak-40 business jet, five tethered high-altitude surveillance systems, and a mixed fleet of six fixed and rotary wing unmanned aerial vehicles [UAV's]. Since that time the size of the police aviation fleet has not grown significantly. Also in 2010 an experiment was set up in the cities of Moscow and Kazan to create the first official aviation units operating regular city patrols and promoting a range of operational research activities.

There are 5-7 helicopters assigned to this tasking - mostly Kamov Ka-226 – and they are based in specialized areas near the city borders. One of the main tasks of these units is the delivery of operational teams to crime scenes.

According to plans announced by the Aviation Centre of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the coming years the number of light class helicopters, unmanned aircrafts and tethered balloons will significantly increase. Also likely to see expansion is the wider use of airborne video surveillance systems. The expanded availability – believed to include digital technology – will allow for the downlink transmitting of images in real time.

It is expected that by 2015 there will be sufficient resources to enable the patrolling of about 70% of Russian territory. By then the number of aircraft in the Russian Police Department should increase by a quarter. Currently the percentage of the area covered is just 40%. In accordance with the plans it is intended that they create five units of special purpose aircraft.

According to official data, the use of police aircraft and helicopters over the past six years has resulted in aviation assets being involved in more than fifteen hundred crimes, the detection of nearly a thousand stolen vehicles, the capture of more than 300 federal fugitives and also the detection of 300 thousand units [weapons] of munitions. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, since 2003 police aircraft have been credited with preventing about 800 cases of poaching and approximately the same number of biological resources theft. So far, the economic effect of police aircraft use has been assessed as about 4 billion roubles (US\$143M), a figure that is twice the cost of acquiring, maintaining and maintaining the fleet.

The aviation fleet of the Russian Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES) is significantly larger. Currently MES have six Mil Mi-26, forty Mil Mi-8, six Kamov Ka-32 and four Eurocopter's. According to the estimates of MES specialists if the air fleet is going to be developed into a meaningful rapid reaction to incidents system there is a need for more than 150 helicopters patrolling the main highways and another 200 helicopters over the rest of Russia's vast territory.

The current programme for providing MES with new helicopters in three phases does not meet the numbers aspired to. In the first stage it will set up a group of two dozen light helicopters assigned to patrol the major federal highways. The second phase sees plans to buy about eighty medium helicopters for different roles, and the third stage should see an addi-



tional purchase of forty-three medium helicopters and thirty-eight light helicopters. This programme encompassing 200 airframes should be implemented through to 2020.

After that air-rescue units will cover all major highways of the country with a system of newly built helipads along all major roads. The current development programme involves purchasing new models of aircraft; with the MES having plans to receive several types not yet in service including the Ansat, Ka-226T, Ka-32 and new versions of the Mi-8. [Vladislav Nikolaevich]

SAUDI ARABIA

BORDER GUARD: Saudi contracting firm Abdullah A M Al Khodari Sons Company claims it has received a contract award letter for a SR120.7m (\$32.1m) from the Ministry of Interior to build the second phase of the Border Guard Airport in Umm Almelh.

The letter specifies that construction must be completed within 720 days from the date of contract signing.

Three examples of the new S-70i™ BLACK HAWK helicopter have been delivered to what Sikorsky states is an *undisclosed customer*. The helicopters — assembled, completed to customer specifications, and flight tested at Sikorsky's production facility in Mielec, Poland — are the first-ever deliveries of the international variant of the S-70. The Saudi Arabian Border Guard are the launch customer for this variant of the Blackhawk so despite the manufacturers lame attempt to hide where they are headed it is certain that the news release relates to this contract..

They departed Poland's Rzeszów-Jasionka Airport inside an Antonov An-124 Ruslan cargo aircraft following a week of flight acceptance activities in the skies over Poland.

The three aircraft acquired by Saudi's Interior Ministry are serialled MOI-31, MOI-32 and MOI-33. They are serials 3652, 3660 and 3699 off the UH-60 production line, and were test flown in Poland on local registrations SP-YVA, YVB and YVC. This completes the initial order announced by Sikorsky last year — an option for 12 more of the same type remains.

[Sikorsky/Helihub]

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UNITED KINGDOM

NATIONAL: The severe riots that hit London in early August tested a number of interoperability issues that might be expected to become important in the future, the Olympics and NPAS. It has long been held that although it is the largest unit in the UK, the three aircraft it operates are insufficient for purpose when the worst happens. By contrast US major cities with a similar population of 8 million, New York and Los Angeles, field in excess of seven aircraft although there are significant differences in topography and operating styles.

On Saturday August 6, following the shooting of a man by police in the Tottenham area two days earlier the neighbourhood became tense and eventually erupted in serious disorder after what had been a peaceful daytime protest. Buildings were looted and some were fired into the night. The key to overcoming the trouble and the wider disorder that followed lay with the officers on the ground but air support was a key element in interpreting and controlling the mayhem that broke out in widespread areas of London.

Under normal circumstances the Met ASU only has two aircraft available but can arrange for all three to be on line and manned for special short-term events including the visit of the US President; this though was not a planned event and normal applied. One aircraft was in maintenance but air support resources were ample to deal with the problem in Tottenham – effectively at the unit's doorstep. Even so there were conversations with adjoining air support operations and as a result the Chiltern Air Support helicopter normally based at Henlow sat at Lippitts Hill for a few hours of the Sunday and

Lippitts Hill



WAFW2009

looked after nearby Hertfordshire whilst remaining available to help out in London. They were not needed but they covered a very real crew time gap that had arisen in meeting the air support needs of the previous night.

Later in the day though the situation took a turn for the worse as more areas started copycat attacks, looting and fire raising. Nearby Enfield was close enough to handle but in turn trouble erupted south of the city and became more difficult to cover. The copycat behaviour spread like wildfire across a number of unconnected areas. All this time the cover arrangements were handled simply and efficiently by telephone – an almost casual arrangement that acknowledged a likelihood that London was soon to need help.

Long before the government and senior police planners were fully aware of the worsening situation these casual arrangements, the changes in duty rosters, on line maintenance and a variety of communications patches were being put in place as insurance in case it became a need.

Sussex Police offered their services to cover the south, and shortly afterwards Surrey Police let it be known that they too were available in the west, meanwhile each of the other surrounding air support groupings was kept informed.

The trouble continued for the best part of two days with the resultant media images being beamed across a surprised world. Such things



© ComminPAR

do not happen in London was the general reaction, but they do and it is only a little over two decades ago that those same areas were burning on another cause – albeit the flames, damage and looting were a little more subdued back in 1977 and 1981. Neither of those instances had access to a great deal of air support.

As a small part of London burned the media images flashed around the country were picked up by like minded criminal minds and soon other major cities were facing similar scenes of destruction. The recently launched North West consortium was in action with Greater Manchester being able to call in the new Cheshire helicopter to provide back-up.

Over the few days of disturbance a great many lessons were learned and, insofar as the future is concerned a number of pertinent questions raised.

Across the UK every force nominally has the same Airwave radio system but it is not truly identical across the country as each area has its own talk groups and it is too complex for them to be included in each airframe. If the Sussex aircraft had been utilised it would have been most effectively employed in the south of London simply because it carries the full complement of talk groups for that area, and the others immediately adjacent to Sussex. All helicopters can communicate with every force HQ but not with each of the local controls – operationally that can be a significant disadvantage.

Another problem that has raised its head from time to time is that of the mix of different sensor downlinks. The majority of UK air support units have Enterprise Control Systems [ECS] equipment where London has selected a different supplier for its digital downlink – Gigawave, a situation that some say is at best unhelpful for a unit that has a national responsibility beyond the London area. But that is too simplistic. The ECS equipment is actually a mix of analogue and digital so even all of the operators with ECS kit cannot talk to each other.

As the effective 'odd man out' the London police have put in place a range of effective solutions that overcomes the most obvious drawbacks of their position. As a result they can set up compatible links quickly and easily and, although they have never been used there is always the option of sacrificing ultimate security and sending the signal via 3G Internet.



Police issued thousands of video and still images captured by both ground and air cameras during the disturbances and the quality was so good that the courts had little difficulty in using them in convicting many of the looters and fire raisers. One sequence was of shots being fired at a police helicopter [images Metropolitan Police and West Midlands]



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In this instance both Surrey and Sussex having ECS analogue equipment proved to be no trouble at all. The analogue equipment used prior to the transfer to digital technology remains in place and was available for reactivation – at the flick of a switch.

Another unusual element marking these disturbances was the revelation that masked men were seen by airborne cameras firing guns at unarmed officers and the police helicopter flying over the city of Birmingham. Nearly two weeks after the images were captured West Midlands Police released footage of the men firing shots and said 11 shots were fired.

Although no injuries or aircraft damage were cited Chief Constable Chris Sims called it "a concerted and organized attempt to kill or injure police officers."

Thousands of people have been charged over the disturbances that flared in London and other English cities over four nights, and two-thirds of them have been jailed. The flood of new inmates has brought the total prison population in England and Wales to a record 86,654, according to official figures -- just 1,500 places below the countries' declared operational capacity.

Ed: All this activity will, or should, lead to a national debrief on the whole affair. The vast majority of the arranging was undertaken by relatively low ranking officers simply calling and e-mailing each other without the need for pre-written protocols or tripping over their egos. Front end policing does not often rely upon the pre-written and a well oiled professionally run air support operation operates on similar values.

The story I get back is that far from the actions of PM's and ACPO's on Monday/Tuesday mere sergeants were making it work on Saturday and Sunday while they all had the week-end off in peace and quiet of their Home Counties piles!

The question that remains to be clarified is whether NPAS which is currently being organised by non-police aviation professionals can step up to the table and put in place a team of able leaders of men able to undertake exactly the same service to the British people as was evident in early August 2011.

The request for information on these events was directed at the Press Office and units of all of the police forces likely to be involved in the disturbances. Some replied quickly, some not at all. Cheshire for instance treated the 'immediate news' request under the Freedom of Information regulations with a promise to reply by mid-September. Too late.

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CLEVELAND: In the wake of the troubles quoted in last month's issue days later the Chief Constable of Cleveland Police and his deputy were arrested as part of a corruption probe into Cleveland Police Authority.

Sean Price and Deputy Derek Bonnard were questioned by detectives at a police station in North Yorkshire on suspicion of misconduct in a public office, fraud by abuse of position and corrupt practice. A woman was also arrested on suspicion of the same offences.

In May, Warwickshire Police were brought in to oversee a wide-ranging corruption investigation after allegations were made against present and former members of Cleveland Police Authority - the force's governing body.

UNITED STATES

FEDERAL: A C-130 fixed-wing aircraft first spotted a self-propelled semi-submersible (SPSS) close to the water's surface on July 13 near the Honduran province of Gracias a Dios. A Coast Guard cutter was called to intercept the vessel, after US Customs and Border Protection crews also noticed it.

When intercepted the suspected smugglers jumped into life rafts after pulling a valve inside the SPSS to sink it with nearly seven tones of narcotics worth \$180M on board. The crew were arrested as the vessel sank but FBI divers recovered the rest of the drugs about 70ft (21m) below the water's surface

SPSS vessels are regularly used to transport drugs along Central America's Pacific Coast.

Earlier reports based on statements made by Honduran government indicated that the SPSS was carrying 2.5 tonnes of cocaine.

Lockheed Martin recently delivered its third P-3 Orion with a new Mid-Life Upgrade (MLU)



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kit to US Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

This P-3 Orion joins two additional upgraded P-3s that CBP is currently operating to support its critical homeland security missions. Lockheed Martin delivered the first CBP MLU P-3 in July 2010 and the second airplane in April 2011.

CBP is under contract with Lockheed Martin to deliver 14 of its 16 P-3 Orion's outfitted with MLU kits. Deliveries will occur through 2015. [Lockheed]

Although there are plenty of aviation projects to show for the efforts of the first decade of the 25-year, \$24.2 billion 'Deepwater' project to overhaul the USCG, its systems and elderly equipment the intention to add or upgrade more than 250 vessels to the Coast Guard's ageing surface fleet, has just two new ships to show after spending more than \$7 billion; it should have at least eight.

Now the USCG faces an uphill battle persuading Congress to keep pouring money into a project plagued by management and cost problems.

The modernisation begun in 2002 was designed to replace ships and aircraft but some of the funding was diverted to other areas in the wake of 9-11 after the Lockheed Martin led programme was deemed to be off beam in the new scenario.

Elsewhere the war against drugs is taking on the threat from small, single seat aircraft resembling motorized hang gliders. They fly low, evade radar detection, drop their loads and return to Mexico without ever landing on American soil. These small craft are the latest aerial asset in the arsenal of smugglers hauling drugs into the United States from Mexico. A downed ultra light with 134 pounds of marijuana attached to its underside was recovered last month days after legislation was introduced to provide harsher prison terms for smugglers who use this type of aircraft.

The ultra lights are not classified as aircraft by the Federal Aviation Administration, so drug-traffickers who use them are not subject to stiffer penalties under aviation smuggling provisions.

The new legislation closes that loophole and makes the maximum penalty the same as that for smuggling by plane or automobile - up to 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

Government officials have said it appears drug-smuggling organisations have turned increasingly to the use of ultra lights to haul and drop drugs in the United States as border security has tightened with thousands more Border Patrol officers and the addition of border fences and vehicle barriers. There are no official figures to back this up but the Los Angeles Times has claimed that the year from September 2009 to September 2010 saw 228 cross-border incursions by small aircraft in the Southwest - almost twice as many as the previous year. [Albuquerque Journal]



An earlier crash [CBP file]



Reims F406 Land & Sea Surveillance






There are three upcoming LETA Thermographers Seminars in North America in the next two months:

20-22 September 2011 LETA Basic & Advanced Seminar hosted by the Collier County Sheriff's Office, 250 Patriot Way, Naples, Florida. Contact Lt Mark Cherney +1 239 252 0369

27-29 September 2011 LETA Basic & Advanced Seminar hosted by the RCMP, Prince George, British Columbia, Canada. Contact person Kirsten Dunsford +1 250 649 4031

25-27 October 2011 LETA Basic & Advanced Seminar hosted by the South Carolina Governors Counter Drug Task Force, Charleston, South Carolina. Contact Person Lt. Trey Bruner +1 803 530 0525

All of these events have a common contact E-mail of admin@leta.org

CALIFORNIA: – American Eurocopter announced today that the Ontario (CA) Police Air Support Unit has taken delivery of its third AS350 B2. The aircraft is scheduled to join the fleet in December when it will go into service performing patrol and surveillance missions for the City of Ontario, California.

Each of the Air Support Unit's B2s are equipped with Spectrolab searchlights with 30 million candlepower, L-3/Wescam forward looking infrared (FLIR), and avionics for communication and navigation. Seventy to 80% of the Unit's missions are flown at night, so outfitting their helicopters with additional high-tech equipment is a necessity, including NVG capability. Carrying a modern mission equipment suite may have been a problem for smaller, less

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powerful helicopters, but the AS350 B2 is able to do so with useful load to spare.

The Ontario Police Department's Air Support Unit was founded in 1989 and it converted to Eurocopter and the AS350 B2 in 2002. In addition to performing the normal patrol and surveillance missions, the Unit's helicopters also provide assistance to the Identification Unit for aerial photography, the SWAT Team for their specialized operations, the Detective Bureau, the Narcotics Unit, and they occasionally assist other agencies within the City of Ontario.

IDAHO: The use of UAV's by law enforcement agencies in the USA remains a difficult problem – but it is easing. The Twin Falls County Sheriff, Tom Carter is getting around some of the remaining difficulties surrounding law officers 'hands on' use of small unmanned craft by contracting the supply and operation of the device to a local property developer who also happens to fly both full size and model helicopters - Mike Shetler.

With Shetler's help, the county is now able to experiment the flying of a radio-controlled helicopter with a mounted camera, giving deputies a bird's-eye view. Carter hopes to use the technology to spot marijuana grows concealed in crops, or assist in some SAR missions.

Mike finds that his flying activities – both large and small – are his way of giving back to his community in being made available to police.

The craft are not \$100 examples from a hobby shop, the usual craft are more in the \$30,000 class. The latest example is battery-powered with an onboard computer and a custom-built aluminium and carbon-fibre mount for the digital camera. The helicopter kit comes from Germany, weighs about 7 pounds, can reach speeds of 130 mph with a range of more than a mile.

Shetler bought the first of the craft about 6 years ago to take aerial shots of his properties. The camera can stream a live picture wirelessly to a modified set of glasses or a small LCD screen, so he can share the view with deputies. [Times]

TEXAS: The sale of that Dallas Police Department [DPD] Bell 407 continues to attract attention. The on-line auction was held as reported last month but the release for sale at \$1.5M was not finalised in retrospect until last month.

The In a memo to the City Council DPD defends the decision to sell the department's largest helicopter. Police Chief David Brown contends the department's policy that greatly limits vehicle pursuits lessens the need for the third helicopter. He says that since there are fewer times when the helicopter is called out for vehicle chases, then there are fewer starts on the helicopter, which then reduces frequency of required maintenance.

US based aviation experts contend that Dallas places itself in a precarious position in operating only two airframes. If one breaks down while the other is on maintenance that will

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leave no cover. This contrasts with the position of the chief that states that the department doesn't need the larger helicopter because it hasn't been used for its main intended purpose, which was to transport emergency workers in an emergency situation and that there are other state, local and federal assets in a real emergency scenario. [Dallas News]

Ed: And of course the developments in London UK early last month where they have three helicopters but were severely embarrassed by a lack of resources when riots broke out tend to underline the worries of the few who say that DPD will be sorry that they disposed of their third airframe.

In June 2008, Robert S Hauk retired from LAPD and moved to Texas, and took up a post as chief of police in the City of Tomball, a middle-class, rural suburban community situated in northwest Harris County near Houston. When he joined the Tomball Police Department it, like the majority of US police organizations, had no air support.

In May 2010 Chief Hauk was at a conference that included a presentation by Mike O'Shea on the US Department of Justice's (DOJ) Law Enforcement Aviation Technology Program designed to bring low cost assets to smaller police and sheriff's units.

The City of Tomball worked with the DOJ and German manufacturer AutoGyro in providing an MTOsport for air operations over the city and the nearby Texan border. The project has proven very successful and shows, how a low cost gyro supports professional missions perfectly.

The Rotax 912ULS powered Auto Gyro GmbH MTO Sport N250TX was delivered this spring and was FAA certified from June.

AutoGyro GmbH, based at Hildesheim, Germany is a world leader in the development, production and distribution of gyroplanes and has been producing gyros in series since 2007.

www.auto-gyro.com



Kneeling (Left to Right): Sergeant Keith Bitz (Tomball Police Department), and Officer Bobby Sellers (Tomball Police Department)

Standing (Left to Right): Sergeant Donnie Plant (Harris County Sheriff's Office), Deputy Lynn Harvey (Harris County Sheriff's Office), Officer Jason Smith (Tomball Police Department), Sergeant Danny Arriaga (Tomball Police Department), and Chief Robert Hauk (Tomball Police Department).

AIR AMBULANCE

IRELAND

In the wake of last month's story of an air ambulance flight from Ireland to the UK that simply did not happen the father of Meadhbh McGivern has said his family now has its own back-up plan in the event that his daughter receives another call for a liver transplant and is failed by State agencies.

A report by the Health Information and Quality Authority [HIQA] into the Maedhbh McGivern transplant flight highlighted the lack of a single authority in Ireland tasked with organising emergency air transport for those who may need it. The Crumlin Children's Hospital had been able to source a private flight to fly her to London where a donor organ had become available – but was ultimately unable to pursue its plans. The Authority found that there was an absence of a plan. This lack meant there was no knowledge about the transport of patients by air and how long it would take, neither was it highlighted that there could be checks to ascertain whether state aircraft were or might be available to undertake the flight.

One of the key recommendations of the report is the establishment of a National Aeromedical Coordination Centre, within the HSE National Ambulance Service, which will coordinate all of the transport of patients by air and will be the single point of accountability for this process. It will be provided by people trained in the required skills and competencies in aeromedical logistics 24 hours a day. This will be established with the support and assistance of the Air Corps, Irish Coast Guard and other service providers.

Meanwhile as this plan will take time to put in place the family retained an air ambulance company based at Weston airport near Dublin to take Miss McGivern to London if the various State agencies were unable to provide an aircraft in the event of receiving word of another liver becoming available for transplant.

Meanwhile the air ambulance company the family retained, AeroMedevac Ireland, moved out of Weston to ensure they do not get grounded by being based on an airfield without 24 hour facilities. They have now moved to Dublin Airport, freeing their air ambulance configured Cessna Citation jet, EI-MED from restrictions. [HIQA/Media]

The Sunday Business Post claims that the Irish Government is now looking to set up its own helicopter air ambulance service.

Government ministers are under pressure over the planned closure of 24-hour emergency care and acute clinical services at ten hospitals and, it is said that the health minister, is in discussions with a major helicopter provider [Bond Air Services] with a view to providing the service but no details are known about the funding model to be utilized.

Meanwhile the only reliable helicopter air ambulance option available in the country – that provided by the Air Corps AgustaWestland AW139 fleet – has itself hit problems with a short fleet wide grounding.

All AW139 flights had been "temporarily suspended" as a precautionary measure in response to a technical bulletin issued by AgustaWestland following an AW139 crash off Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The flight crew had reported a problem with hydraulics before ditching. AW directed owners to conduct an inspection for rotor and rotor blades.



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JAPAN

DOCTOR HELI: The organisation currently flies a fleet of 15 Eurocopter EC135s and 5 MD Explorers on EMS work across Japan and is about to add a third type – the AgustaWestland AW109. It is believed that at least one GrandNew is on order for delivery and more are expected to follow.

Meanwhile an EMS 109E Power is being acquired from the UK for training. This was previously G-WNAA operated by Sloane Helicopters for the Warwickshire & Northamptonshire Air Ambulance. It is leaving the UK next month and already sports full Doctor Heli colours whilst undergoing some final avionics modifications prior to export. This is not the first time that Doctor Heli have operated 109s. Between 1999 and 2003, Nakanihon Airlines flew an A109K2 for them, serial 10028 carrying registration JA111D. [HeliHub]

UNITED KINGDOM

EAST ANGLIA: Last months item relating to the appearance of a German registered Eurocopter EC135T1 with Bond Air Services [BASL] in Staverton has now been explained. The former ADAC air ambulance has now been UK registered and will cover a shortfall in available BASL resources operating with the East Anglia Air Ambulance [EAAA]. The aircraft leased in from German operator ADAC was previously registered D-HJAR, and is now registered in the UK as G-CGXX. As the 44th EC135 off the production line it is significantly different to the rest of the BASL fleet [now all EC135T2 standard] but close enough to enable BASL to temporarily upgrade one of the even older BO105s serving EAAA.

Meanwhile the EAAA charity continues to be embroiled in the aftermath of the Sterling Helicopters insolvency. Sterling operated the EAAA and Norfolk Police Air Services until February 2011. Accountancy firm PKF has been appointed as liquidator after creditors Toby Blackwell Limited and the EAAA applied to the court. PKF are controlling Sterling and offering the operation for sale and otherwise breaking up the assets. Meanwhile EAAA are having to spend precious funds fighting to get the complete engine and parts that sit on one of the two Sterling BK117s they had used for their operation. When Sterling were having cash flow problems they talked the EAAA into purchasing expensive aircraft parts which now have a significant less value because they are not part of a flying BK117. Getting them back will be costing money and then they will have to sell them on – a set of moves likely to be attracting significant and wasteful lawyers and agents fees.

Ed: The provision of the ADAC aircraft to the BASL fleet may provide a breathing space for both EAAA and BASL while the situation surrounding the two marooned BK117s is settled.

Will the recent moves have an effect on Euro interest? At the moment we have BASL, now part of the Spanish INAER Group, and SAS/PAS/MAS with ownership in the Netherlands Antilles as the main players. Who is to say that when the next European tender hits the market that we will not have ADAC not only thinking about supplying spare aircraft but also considering a serious bid? There is a precedent in that already DRF has tentacles in the air rescue services of a number of European countries beside its native Germany.

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MIDLAND: THE Midlands Air Ambulance has spent hundreds of thousands of pounds on a much-needed new base to replace its existing facilities. The base, at Tatenhill Airfield, in Needwood, now has a brand new hangar, crew accommodation and helipad.

The air ambulance moved to Tatenhill from East Midlands Airport in 2008 in order to better serve the Staffordshire area. The move led to the creation of a new air ambulance service in Derbyshire. [Burton Mail]

WILTSHIRE: It is expected that the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Appeal will become an independent charity during this month. The long held ambition will soon be realised after Great Western Ambulance Service (GWAS) agreed last month to relinquish its sole trusteeship of the appeal.

GWAS appointed David Philpott as chairman of the air ambulance appeal last July with the remit of establishing the appeal as an independent charity.

A new charity, the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Charitable Trust, will be set up with a new bank account for the acceptance of donations. The new charity will have to increase fundraising from the current level of £750,000 a year to £2M to cover the expected cost of a stand-alone air ambulance helicopter from 2015.

The £1.2M reserves in the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Appeal will be frozen and set aside for GWAS to use to pay the ambulance service's part of the contract with Wiltshire Police for the joint helicopter/air ambulance through to December 2014.

YORKSHIRE: As revealed in recent editions of Police Aviation News, Yorkshire Air Ambulance [YAA] has awarded its new contract for maintenance of their helicopters to Yorkshire based aviation management company, Multiflight.

The contract commenced on August 20, will see Multiflight take control of all the maintenance of the two MD902 Explorer helicopters the YAA operate. Ironically, the YAA has been based on Multiflight's site at Leeds Bradford International Airport for over ten years now, but previously had been tied into a maintenance contract with Medical Aviation Services based at Staverton, Gloucestershire.

Peter Sunderland, Chairman of the YAA comments: "The YAA are proud of our Yorkshire heritage and enjoy building partnerships with other Yorkshire based companies. We are therefore delighted to be developing our working relationship with Multiflight who will now be maintaining our two helicopters, as well as us operating from their site at Leeds Bradford International Airport."

The YAA is an independent Charity who operate two life-saving helicopters across the Yorkshire region. The Charity need to raise £7,200 each day to keep both of the state-of-the-art helicopters in the air and maintained – this is equivalent to £2.6M each year.

Steve Borrowdale, Managing Director of Multiflight also added; "Multiflight is delighted to be awarded the new five-year Yorkshire Air Ambulance contract and to be the company chosen to manage and maintain the aircraft for the charity. Yorkshire Air Ambulance provides a valuable service to our region and Multiflight is pleased to be able to help and support the charity. The new Yorkshire Air Ambulance contract further cements our reputation for delivering a complete turnkey solution for the customer."

The two YAA helicopters are operated from Leeds Bradford International Airport and Bagby Airfield near Thirsk offering the people of Yorkshire the best possible Air Ambulance service across the region. They operate seven days a week, 365 days per year covering a vast landscape that covers not only rural and isolated locations, but also some of the busiest motorway networks in the UK. www.yaa.org.uk.

Ed: The MAS contract was unexpectedly extended after one of the aircraft suffered an incident that saw the Explorer trans-



Photograph(L-R): Miles Beecham (Finance Director, Multiflight), Peter Sunderland (Chairman, YAA) and Steve Borrowdale (Managing Director, Multiflight)

ported on a low loader to Staverton in the closing days of the contract. There was a failure of the front landing gear support tube and it is expected to be repaired sometime this month.

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: CALSTAR the California based air ambulance operator has started a rationalisation of its eighteen strong helicopter fleet in preparation for incorporating a common new aircraft type. CALSTAR has now been operating for over 26 years as a community benefit corporation, with a mission to provide emergency air medical transport services to Northern and Central California. The helicopter fleet is a mix of six MD902 Explorer's, four Bell 222 [three U and one A], two BO105CBS-5 and a single Agusta A109A operating alongside three fixed wing. The operator transports more than 3,000 patients annually.



NEW MEXICO: San Juan Regional Medical Center in Farmington, New Mexico has taken into service a Bell 429 N431VA c/n 57031 [previously wore N911NM] as its new air ambulance. The AirCare Bell helicopter replaces the hospital's previous Bell 222 model, which was leased for 17 years and safely transported patients for over 13,000 flight hours. Among the safety features available on the hospital's new air ambulance is a Helicopter Terrain Awareness Warning System (HTAWS), which alerts the pilot to possible terrain hazards and obstacles. This technology has

just become available within the past year and a half for helicopters and is a recommended component by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). Other NTSB recommended safety enhancements included on the Bell 429 are an on-board system that will alert the pilot of nearby aircraft and a mechanical component monitoring system.

San Juan Regional Medical Center purchased the new air ambulance at a cost of \$6.3M. The hospital's AirCare department serves the Four Corners region of New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and Colorado. [SJRMC]



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FIRE

UNITED KINGDOM

Although the UK search for an operator of a fire configured helicopter remains pretty much in the doldrums last month AgustaWestland managed to lease in an AW139 helicopter to demonstrate to interested parties in one corner of RAF Waddington. Hitherto the idea of UK fire departments using helicopters, mainly in the logistic support role, has rested with Eurocopter – and various demonstrations have taken place in the past 15 years.

The AW139 was brought in from the Defence Helicopter Flying School at Shawbury and the audience comprised a mix of would be airborne emergency services.

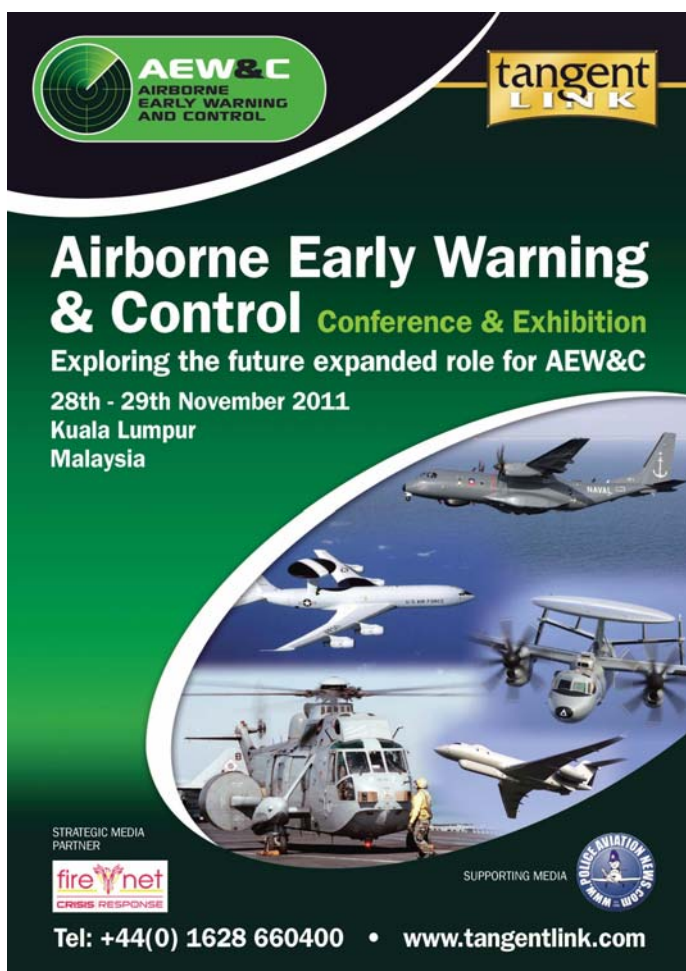
SEARCH AND RESCUE

JAPAN

COAST GUARD: Following intensive relief operations after the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, the Japan Coast Guard, Eurocopter Group and Eurocopter Japan have signed a tripartite contract for the supply of three additional EC225 helicopters to the Japan Coast Guard. These aircraft will be the first civilian helicopters to be equipped with the most advanced mission system, to be deployed for search and rescue as well as law enforcement missions that now include a new anti-piracy role.

The procurement is to replace some of the aircraft lost in the earthquake and tsunami but these have not been specified.

The Japan Coast Guard initially purchased two EC225s in 2006 through an open tender, complementing their existing AS332 L1 fleet for long range all-weather SAR missions as well as for ship-borne operations.

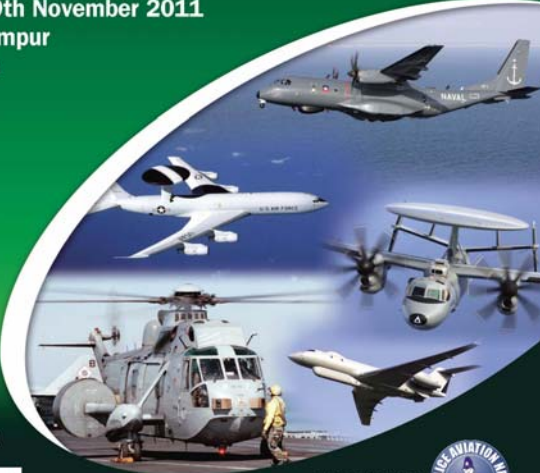


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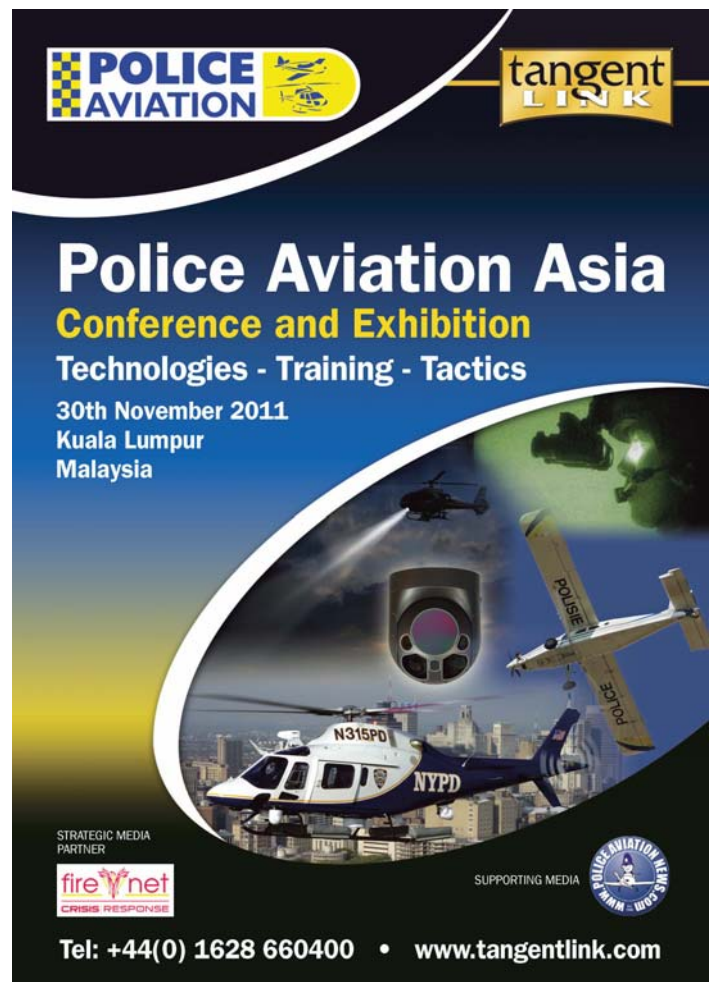
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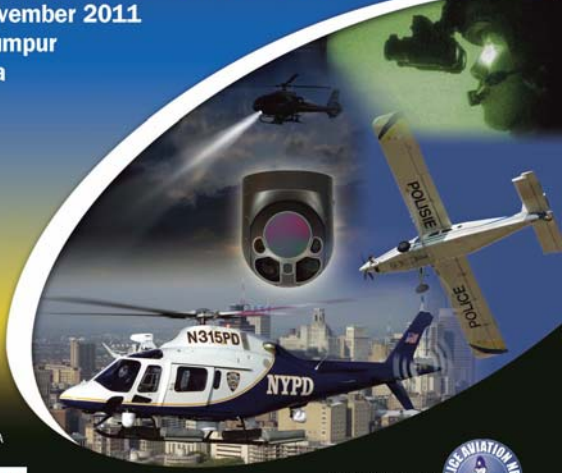


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*A picture of an EC225 in flight
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When the earthquake struck in March and triggered destructive tsunami waves, Eurocopter Japan immediately set up round-the-clock maintenance shifts to support helicopter operations, ensuring maximum availability of the helicopters to perform their missions. More than half of the helicopters used by fire-fighters, police and coast guards during the disaster relief operations were of Eurocopter origin.

To date, a total of 240 EC225s and EC725s have been ordered, of which approximately half have been delivered. The annual production rate will be increased by 60 percent over the next two-year period to meet market demand. [EC]

AgustaWestland and Mitsui Bussan Aerospace have announced that the Hiroshima Prefecture of Japan has signed a contract for an AW139 medium twin helicopter. This aircraft will be used by the Hiroshima Prefecture Disaster Relief Department to perform fire fighting and disaster relief missions. The helicopter is due to enter operational service in 2012. This AW139 sale follows an order for the same helicopter type by the Saitama Prefecture in November and by the Fire and Disaster Management Agency in April this year and continues the success of the AW139 in the Japanese market for fire fighting and disaster relief applications.

The Hiroshima Prefecture's AW139 will feature a comprehensive mission-dedicated fit including a "belly tank" fire fighting system, Bambi Bucket, weather radar, search light, cargo hook, rescue hoist, dual rappelling hooks, loudspeaker system and main rotor blade high visibility painting. The advanced avionics systems selected include a nose mounted FLIR camera and downlink transmission (air-to-ground) capability, which will be installed in Japan.



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SPAIN

One year from now Eurocopter Spain is to deliver a EC225 Super Puma to replace the Sikorsky S61N that has been based in La Coruña Alvedro airport since 1991. The Maritime Safety Agency (Sasemar) announced the contract with Eurocopter last month and added some details of how the competition was scored.

In the evaluation the Eurocopter scored 9.20 against 6.77 for the Sikorsky despite the latter being €338,536 cheaper. Among the reasons the proposal was rejected was that the American company only included in its bid the training of two pilots and two technicians, when the contract specified a minimum of eight pilots and 12 technicians (four complete crews). Also rejected was the AgustaWestland AW 139 as it was clear that it, and others in its weight class was not directly comparable with the Sikorsky S61N being replaced.

UNITED KINGDOM

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT: The DfT has issued tender documents for a contract to cover the end of the existing Coastguard helicopter service. This was supposed to be embraced by the ill-fated SAR-H project to combine civil and military SAR assets which has now gone.

The tender is the provision of SAR helicopters, air-rescue services, air-sea rescue services, the hire of helicopters with crew, pilot services, equipment, base construction work. The contract will be for the provision of the 'Gap Search and Rescue Helicopter Service' on behalf of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) to cover all MCA coverage areas. This service will require an all-weather SAR Helicopter Service able to operate throughout the UK in the maritime environment and with limited overland capability. The service is currently based at Portland, Lee-on-the-Solent, Sumburgh and Stornoway, operates 365 days a year on a 24hr basis (apart from Portland which operates on a 12hr daytime basis). Service de-



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livery shall continue from Lee-on-the-Solent and Portland. Bidders can consider alternative locations for service delivery on the Isle of Lewis and The Shetland Islands.

Parties will be required to tender for a 6 year contract period with the option to extend a further 12 months.

As worded the service could be let to more than one provider which may be taking note of a potential to cut costs by embracing the existing oil industry SAR services operating off Scotland by Bond [Jigsaw utilising Super Puma's].

The DfT state that they value the North and South options together at between £200M and £235M. The Department may require an option for the assets under this contract to be transferred to the resulting contract of a further long term SAR competition in due course. The assets would be expected to be transferred at current market value at the time of transfer. www.dft.gov.uk



INDUSTRY

Recent infighting in the US Government resulted in the shutdown of the FAA and other departments. The crisis in monetary activity had a knock on effect on industry.

FLIR Systems blames both the financial budget problems and a slowdown in US military orders in laying off nearly 100 people, including about 40 at its Wilsonville operations.

Around half of FLIR's revenues come from the US military normally but in the quarter ending in June, the federal government accounted for only 23% of the company's sales, its lowest percentage in eight years.

Nightline, Inc., a US Small Business Administration HUBZone certified, veteran-owned defense company, and a global supplier of Generation III Night Vision Equipment, was awarded a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Repair Station in accordance with Part 145 regulations.

Nightline will perform evaluations, repairs and maintenance on NL949B and AN/AVS-9 style aviator's goggles. To learn more, visit www.nightline.us or contact its headquarters at +1 423-727-5900.

Airwave has announced that the private mobile radio (PMR) service infrastructure for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games is ready for service. The PMR network, named Apollo, will provide voice communications for over 18,000 staff and volunteers from the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) during the 2012 Games.

Apollo has been purpose-built to provide mobile radio to all London 2012 competition venues from the Olympic Park itself to sites across the country from Glasgow and Manchester to Coventry and Weymouth. The stand-alone network is now ready for operation and will be used by Games staff and volunteers, from stewards and security personnel to anti-doping officials, from now until December 2012.

Bell Helicopter has been named number one in product support in Aviation International News' 2011 Product Support Survey for the sixth consecutive year.

As the top scorer in eight of the 10 categories surveyed, Bell Helicopter strengthened its position as the industry leader in customer support. Earlier this year, Bell Helicopter re-

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ceived top honors by the readers of Professional Pilot in their annual independent customer support survey.

"These survey results are proof that Bell Helicopter's long-term customer support strategy and comprehensive service model are on-track and meeting our customers' requirements," said R. Danny Maldonado, senior vice president of customer support and chief services officer. "We are honored to receive this recognition and will continue to raise the bar in terms of supporting our customers – finding new and innovative solutions that add value and ensure mission success."

AgustaWestland has signed an agreement with AVIASUR appointing them as Independent Sales Representatives for Chile and Peru for AgustaWestland commercial helicopters. The agreement follows the entry into the market of the AW119Ke single engine helicopter and the best selling AW109 Power and GrandNew twin-engine helicopters in 2010. The agreement was signed at the 8th Latin American Business Aviation Conference & Exhibition (LABACE) in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Sitting signing from left to right Mr. Emilio Dalmasso, SVP Commercial Business Unit, AgustaWestland and Mr. Cristian Matetic – Director Ejecutivo Aviasur From the right - standing: Mr. Jorge Porras, Gerente General, Aviasur; Mr. Fabrizio Romano, Head of Region South America Commercial Business Unit, AgustaWestland and Mr. Ruben Cespedes, Regional Sales Manager, AgustaWestland



AgustaWestland have also appointed **Helipark** in São Paulo, Brazil, as an Authorised Service Centre for its range of commercial helicopters.

The appointment of Helipark in Brazil will be followed in the coming months by the appointment of additional AgustaWestland Authorised Service Centres in other countries of Latin America, including Argentina, Chile and Colombia further expanding the network of AgustaWestland Authorised Service Centres and bringing maintenance and support services close to its customers.

Helipark is Latin America's largest specialized service centre for helicopters. Its facilities have all the necessary infrastructure, including spacious and modern hangars for carrying out a wide range of maintenance and support services.

Conveniently located in the São Paulo metropolitan area, Helipark is able to handle high frequency helicopter movements, offering comfortable aircrew and passenger facilities.



United Rotorcraft Solutions, a company based in Decatur, Texas recently refurbished two Eurocopter EC135s for Air Methods Corporation.

The renovation included a complete re-upholster of the interior, sanding, repairing and repainting the exterior and performing major maintenance inspections and clearing of discrepancies. The work on both helicopters was completed on schedule.

"Performing the inspections and clearing all discrepancies is important to maintaining and extending the life of a helicopter," says URS President, David Brigham, "and periodically refurbishing the interior and exterior, avoiding any corrosion and allowing for necessary repairs, also extends the life of the aircraft and helps preserve its value."



The current home of the Cleveland Police Air Support Unit, **Durham-Tees Valley Airport** is in danger of closure. Eastern Airways has dealt another UK airport what could be a fatal blow with the announcement that it is dropping its Durham-Tees Valley Airport to Southampton service from next month. The twice daily service routes via Leeds Bradford Airport, which will also lose its Southampton flights. Eastern's four flights a day from Tees Valley to Aberdeen, used mainly by staff in the oil and gas industry, will continue. The carrier has been blamed for the probable closure of Plymouth City Airport where it has also cancelled operations.

The announcement came after airport bosses admitted they were struggling to secure new routes that would turn around the fortunes of the loss-making facility. Peel Airports Chief Executive, Craig Richmond, told *The Northern Echo* last week that the airport will close unless more people use the facility.

Passenger numbers have dropped from about 650,000 in 2008 to an expected 200,000 this year. KLM serves the airport three times daily to Amsterdam and there are seasonal charter flights to holiday destinations including Spain, Italy and Egypt.

Plans to resurrect Northolt as a scheduled service airport would include Durham-Tees Valley, perhaps under its previous name Teesside. This maybe the airport's last hope if it were to happen. www.durhamteesvalleyairport.com

In less than a year from now the **Great Exhibition 2012**, will take place over two weeks in August at Stoneleigh Park, Warwick. Promoting all that is great about Britain, the exhibition will feature three main sections: The Footprint of Britain, The High Street of the Future and The Great Outdoors. The exhibition launch briefly came into doubt in 2011 when the Olympic organizing committee threatened legal action against them for the use of **2012** in the exhibition's name! They later retracted the complaint. Originally planned to run for 90 days, the Great Exhibition 2012 was inspired in part by the Great Exhibition 1851 and the Festival of Britain 1951.

The **International Helicopter Safety Team** (IHST) has launched social media profiles in an effort to increase awareness about the organization's goal to reduce the civil helicopter accident rate by 80 per cent by 2016. American Eurocopter created the profiles in Facebook and Twitter, and has worked with IHST on the development of a social media strategy.

The IHST social media pages provide the global helicopter community with instant access to useful safety toolkits and videos, reports and safety recommendations, and relevant news and event information focused on benefiting helicopter operations. The Facebook and Twitter profiles are also a great platform for the industry community to ask helicopter safety questions and share the experiences and information.

American Eurocopter launched its own social media pages during the Heli-Expo 2011 and has been growing its social media follower base ever since. AE's social media communications include Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn profiles, and social media has been a great avenue for the company to communicate with the customers and followers. www.ihst.org

Cambridge Airport, the East of England aviation hub, is marking a successful first six months following its implementation of a new commercial strategy. With a new dedicated



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airport management team in place, the airport has developed its business aviation movements year on year by 18%, fuel sales are up by 41% and it has seen a jump in parking fee revenue of 50%. Instrument approach training flights have also grown – now currently showing a 5% rise year on year.

The airport has just launched a new website www.cambridgeairport.com, designed to provide improved functionality, clearer navigation for information provision, and gives airport visitors the opportunity to download essential airport documents including Cambridge Airport Safety Operation Procedure details. Content also details information for General Aviation, and material relating to the Major Events Service, an innovative offering aimed at aircraft operators to encourage early Olympics booking.

Cambridge Airport is hosting this year's Business and General Aviation Day, BGAD2011 on September 20th and will be attending NBAA 2011 in October. Booth number **N1622**

With a 1965m/6447ft runway accepting aircraft up to Boeing 757 or Airbus 320 it is suitable for intercontinental business jets as well as small cabin aircraft. It boasts CAA Category 7 Fire & Air Traffic Control status and has full navigational aids and communications, which include radar approach coverage up to 13nm. It has invested in a new GPS approach to complement its ILS system.

Oliver VTOL LLC has announced the "Hexplane," an innovative six-engine vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) aircraft that promises to fly faster, further and safer than any VTOL in the industry. The Hexplane design has three wings and six tilt-able propulsion units that will enable the aircraft to fly above 25,000 feet at cruise speeds greater than 425 miles per hour with ranges exceeding 2,000 miles – significantly more than modern helicopters.

The design will also enable the Hexplane to continue to perform full gross weight vertical operations if a propeller, engine or a gearbox fails – the first VTOL with these capabilities. A planned

Hexplane technology demonstrator is expected to have a ceiling greater than 35,000 feet and carry a load of 1,000 pounds, 1,000 statute miles at 400 miles per hour. This is a capability that the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) has challenged the aviation industry to accomplish.

Ed: *Six engines, six power by the hour maintenance bills, six tilt mechanisms, six gear-boxes, six long interconnecting prop-shafts Historically its is up there with the 24-engine Hughes Spruce Goose flying boat – and the older demonstrators of VTOL technology like the 6 engine VT101 and the 9 engine Mirage Balzac in an industry that strives to get every other machine flying on one or two engines – put it back in the drawer!*



ISDEF

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MEDICAL FITS at the Moscow Air Show

A series of images supplied by US based manufacturer Spectrum of their medical fits in Kamov Ka 32 [above] and the Kamov Ka226 [on right] illustrate the increasing westernisation of equipment fits in Russian aircraft of all types.

Spectrum Aeromed based in Fargo, North Dakota are one of the leading manufacturers of air ambulance equipment for all types of fixed wing and rotor wing aircraft. Spectrum design air ambulance medical interiors for hospital programs, military branches around the world, multi-mission charters and private operators, as well as custom VIP emergency medical interior suites for executive aircraft and heads of state.

[images via Spectrum Aeromed]



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AIR ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

18 July 2011 Eurocopter EC145 N262MH Air ambulance of Metro Life Flight, Cleveland, Ohio operated by Metro Aviation. The helicopter was en-route back to base after completing a mission. Approximately five minutes into the flight the medical crew informed the pilots they smelled what seemed like hot electrical wires. The pilots secured the air conditioning and blower, at which point the smell seemed to diminish, and turned towards the closest airport. Approximately 15-20 seconds later, smoke started to appear out of the aft air conditioning vents. They elected to land at a hospital helipad they were then overflying. The medical crew had to place their faces near the vent openings for fresh air. The helicopter made an uneventful landing. Upon inspection by the on-call mechanic, it was found that the air conditioner evaporator motor was faulty. This was disconnected (MELd) and the helicopter returned to base. [Concern]

27 July 2011 Eurocopter AS350B3 Astar N808LF. Air ambulance of Life Flight Network, Aurora, Oregon. Operated by Air Methods Corp. Following a routine maintenance event (100-hour inspection), the aircraft was repositioning from the Aurora State Airport to the aircraft's home base in Dallesport, Washington. About 15 minutes into the flight, the pilot felt a slight shudder. Believing that he may have sustained a bird strike, the pilot made a precautionary landing at the Portland-Troutdale Airport. A post flight inspection revealed the aft segment of the tail rotor drive shaft cover had separated from the aircraft. Contact damage was noted on the tail rotor drive shaft, the tail rotor blades and one of the main rotor blades. The tail rotor drive shaft cover believed not properly secured following the inspection. [Concern]

1 August 2011 Bell 206L4 N484AE. Air ambulance operated by Air Evac EMS, Inc., Missouri. The McMinn County, Tennessee, Air Evac Lifeteam crew was departing a scene in Polk County, TN, with a patient on board when the aircraft struck power lines. The nose of the aircraft flew between 2 horizontal wires. One wire went up the nose and was cut by the upper wire-cutter, and the second wire went down the nose and was cut by the lower wire-cutter. One wire struck the OAT gauge leaving a small hole in pilot's windscreen. The pilot landed the aircraft safely and patient was transported on to a medical facility by another air ambulance also at the scene. [Concern/Media]

5 August 2011 Eurocopter EC135 N135AN. Air ambulance of MedFlight. A bullet hole was discovered in the airframe structure whilst the aircraft was being refuelled at Marysville. The time of the incident is given as between 0900 and 2300 as the impact was not noticed at the time it occurred. The crew flew across southern Ohio to Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus and Akron Children's Hospital. The hole was at the bottom of one of the rear clamshell doors with a fragment found in a storage compartment. [Concern/WTAM1100]

6 August 2011 Eurocopter BO105 N911ET. Air ambulance of Air One ETMC Tyler, Texas operated by Metro Aviation. During cruise, BATT 60 and BATT 70 lights illuminated simultaneously. Emergency landing performed without incident. [Concern]

6 August 2011 Eurocopter AS350 GN-928 Argentine Gendarmerie. Helicopter attempting to intercept a Cessna fixed wing light aircraft collided with it at low level and, after losing its tail boom and rotor, crashed. In a unique incident a drug plane taking off from a clandestine strip rammed the helicopter some 200km north of the capital Santiago del Estero. The Cessna came down a few kilometres from the collision point and police found nearby a shipment of 70 kilograms of marijuana. The helicopter remained largely intact and on its side with no fire or serious injuries to the five crew. [Lanacion/Helihub]

8 August 2011 Eurocopter BK117B2 C-GBNH. Air ambulance of STARS of Calgary, Alberta, Canada. During a training flight, the #1 Engine Chip light Caution Panel Segment

(CPS) illuminated. The crew activated the chip burner three times. The chip light illuminated a fourth time and the engine was shut down followed by an uneventful single engine long field landing. There were metal particles in the oil so the filter was changed and the oil system flushed. Although a subsequent ground run showed up no issues, on a later training flight the #1 Engine Chip light CPS illuminated again requiring another precautionary landing. The engine was removed from service. [Concern]

17 August 2011 AgustaWestland AW139 G-110011. Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau [Police]. Four people were killed when the police helicopter crashed into the Miyun reservoir in a northern suburb of Beijing. Five crew members were aboard the helicopter that was returning from a rescue drill above the mountainous region of Miyun County. One crew member has been saved. [Xinhua]

26 August 2011 Eurocopter AS350B2 N352LN. Air Ambulance based in the northwestern Missouri city of St. Joseph and operated by Air Methods. Helicopter crashed in a field a mile north of Midwest National Air Center, Mosby, in Clay County and about 20 miles north-east of Kansas City, Missouri while transporting a patient from a hospital in Bethany some 75 miles to another in Liberty, Kansas City. The crash killed three crew, Randy Bever, 47, a flight nurse; Chris Frakes, 36, a flight paramedic; and James Freudenberg, 34, the pilot and a 57 years old female patient Terry Tacoronte of Colorado. Sources have highlighted low fuel as a contributory cause following reported conversations between the pilot and ground controllers. [Media/AM]

PEOPLE

The Executive Officer for the Northumbria Air Support operation **Nigel Dunnill** has retired. He was formerly a police Inspector Unit Executive Officer and successfully applied for his own job on retirement from the police.

During his time in post Nigel oversaw the transition from operating the AS355 to the EC135T1 and a BN-2 fixed wing in 1999 and then a subsequent move to change the operation to operate two examples of the EC135, disposing of the fixed wing. That series of operations was not without its trauma and he was faced with lots of negative vibes from pilots with different agenda's both rotary [type] and fixed wing. Nigel was one of the greats, quietly achieving his aims despite the pressures. There are others out there made in the same mould but they will soon be gone.

Northumbria will now be administered by Sergeant Andy McMillan, Acting Sergeant Tony Jackson and Inspector Alan Ritson.

Ed: As NPAS looms closer more of the old guard UEO's, many now undertaking their former police roles as civilians will be leaving air operations and everyone will 'roll over' and let the new order hold sway. Who will be the driving figures of NPAS has yet to be decided, the numbers will be reduced and time alone will tell whether they are going to be good individuals for UK police aviation.

Bell Helicopter has announced that **Patrick Mouley** has been selected as the new Managing Director for Commercial Business for the Europe and Russia regions. Moulay's selection was the result of a broad search to find the right talent in terms of knowledge, commitment and energy to

Moulay comes to Bell Helicopter from Eurocopter where he last served as Vice President for Marketing and Sales assigned to the Southeast Asia Region. Patrick will be based out of Bell Helicopter's facility in Prague and can be contacted at: +420 234 624 125 or Mobile: +420 725 098 330 pmoulay@bellhelicopter.textron.com

Dr. David Lockey, London's Air Ambulance [LAA] Consultant & Trustee and Research & Development lead, was made Honorary Professor of Trauma and Prehospital Emergency Medicine by the University of Bristol.

This is believed to be the only Professorial appointment in the UK in the new medical speciality of Prehospital Emergency Medicine. The General Medical Council have now approved, as of 1st August 2011, this specialist field as a subspecialty of Anaesthesia and Emergency Medicine.

Professor Lockey joined the LAA in 1997 and has played a significant role in driving the delivery of advanced care to patients throughout the UK. Professor David Lockey is also an Honorary Senior Research Fellow at Queen Mary College London and has written many papers in this specialist trauma care field.

EVENTS


BGAD

"The Practicalities of the Olympics' for business aviation will be debated at the forthcoming Business Aviation and General Aviation Day (BGAD) to be held at Cambridge Airport on Tuesday, 20th September. An industry panel, together with moderator Charles Alcock, International Editor of *Aviation International News*, will discuss some crucial issues facing operators, charter providers, FBOs and the 30-plus UK airports that have been identified to handle business and general aviation flights for this important summer event.

Industry players have been voicing their concern for some time about the strict restrictions and proposed airspace changes being placed on London airspace to the extent that they are starting to pose the question - has this great opportunity already been missed - or can it be recovered with persuasion to central government? One concession has been the recent move to reduce the timeframe on full airspace restrictions. It is now 14 July to 15 August 2012. Separate, geographically smaller, airspace restrictions will cover the London 2012 Paralympic Games from 16 August 2012 to 12 September 2012. www.bgad.aero.

The new website for The Emergency Services Show and Conference to be held near Coventry in November is www.emergencyuk.com. Visitors to the website can now register online for a free visitor pass to attend this annual show that promotes multi agency collaboration by bringing together everyone involved in emergency situations.

Taking place from 23-24 November at Stoneleigh Park in Coventry, The Emergency Services Show is the key event for anyone involved in emergency planning, response or recovery, in the UK and abroad. Now in its sixth year, this firmly established annual show promotes multi agency collaboration by bringing together all stakeholders involved in an emergency – from the strategic planners and first responders, to the manufacturers and suppliers of equipment and services used by these leading professionals. Especially at a time when budgets are being squeezed, this free to attend exhibition helps facilitate and share information and good practice, and provides a platform to consider innovative and creative ways for emergency personnel, planning officers and resilience professionals to work together in the future.



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20-23 September 2011 The 9th Maritime Reconnaissance and Surveillance Conference, Courtyard by Marriott Rome Central Park, **Rome, Italy. IQPC +44 20 7368 9300** The programme includes a chance to hear how the Canadian Armed Forces, Indian Coast Guard, Philippines Armed Forces, South African Air Force, Turkish Navy and Italian Navy are looking to procure and upgrade reconnaissance assets in light of recent operations to improve Maritime Domain Awareness, Discover how the United Kingdom is looking to repair its position after the loss of Nimrod and expand its maritime ISR capability.
www.maritimerecon.com

In November it is all change in the Far East. Just a few weeks ago there were four PAN market sector events scheduled in Malaysia and Singapore – now most have them have gone and been replaced by others quickly re-scheduled into the void. The events lost include the second edition of Tangent Link's excellent Aerial Emergency Response [AEL] and Shephard's SAR Asia 2011 but Tangent Link have brought in two new events and Shephard have moved SAR Asia to early next year.

The new line up to fill the hotel booking space gap for Tangent Link is Airborne Early Warning and Control 2011 and Police Aviation 2011 both events take place at The Prince Hotel and Residence, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 28-30 November 2011. Police Aviation is a one day event on November 30 [see above under Law Enforcement - Malaysia]. To sponsor, exhibit, or participate in these events please contact: Alison Knapp Head of Business Development Tel: +44 1628 660 400 Email: aknapp@tangentlink.com or visit: www.tangentlink.com

DIARY

11 September 2011 The Emergency Services Show 2011 Hullavington Airfield, Wiltshire. A public PR event that will include a range of emergency services input, including the Wiltshire Air Ambulance, the Silver Stars Parachute Display Team, South West Regional Police Dog Trials, Balloon Release in memory of the 9/11 fallen heroes on the 10th anniversary, 'Hydrosphere water balls' kids challenge plus Arena demonstrations – including 'HART' (Hazardous Area Response Team) and a mock RTC (road traffic collision), plus police demo's such as drugs dogs / firearms. +44 1380 732999

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