

# Police Aviation News

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Number 156 April 2009

IPAR

**REGA AW109 DaVinci  
Jumbo firefighter  
SAR-H choices**

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PAN – [POLICE AVIATION NEWS](#) is published monthly by  
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# LAW ENFORCEMENT

## INTERNATIONAL

**PIRACY:** The build up of the forces ranged against the piracy attacks on shipping in the Gulf area continues. One of the latest nations to send resources is Japan, a nation that has despatched naval vessels with a representative contingent of Coast Guard personnel, said to be the first real collaboration overseas between the MSDF and coast guard.

An eight strong team headed by Superintendent Yukihiro Takeuchi of the coast guard's CID are joining a 400-strong MSDF (Navy) contingent on two destroyers, each carrying two patrol helicopters. Due to the legal restraints that still curtail some foreign activities by Japanese forces the operation was ordered under the maritime police action provision of the Self-Defense Forces Law, but the government is also drafting a new permanent law that would enhance rules of engagement against pirates. [Media]

## AUSTRIA

E-mail addresses for the police air units under the Bundesministerium für Inneres are changing. Previous E-mail addresses in the style of flug[place]@aon.at have now changed to [place]@flugpolizei.at

## AUSTRALIA

**QUEENSLAND:** Politicians in Queensland have been making promises about police helicopters for years and the latest reported verbal activity is that the Liberal National Party [LNP] has promised to base one of two new police helicopters on the Gold Coast - if they win government.

LNP Leader Lawrence Springborg made the announcement while campaigning on the Gold Coast. The LNP would buy and operate two Robinson Raven II helicopters at a cost of \$2.94M over four years with a view of patrolling the 80km of roads between Brisbane and the Gold Coast. [Media]

*Cover image: In the past we have illustrated expensive to acquire multi-screen arrays for the use of crew. There are alternatives. Here, captured over California in February this year, this Orange County Sheriff's Office TFO is using a hand held Panasonic Toughbook as a supplement to the fitted screens © Alan Norris*

## CANADA

**SASKATCHEWAN:** The Saskatoon Police Service in the heart of Canada has been operating a Cessna light aircraft on a full time basis for a couple of years since trials were undertaken in 2005 and 2006. The 3 month evaluation in 2006 saw the ASU respond to hundreds of calls for service, was involved in over 150 arrests and was directly responsible for 53 arrests.

The Air Support Unit's priority is supporting patrol members. ASU also provides support to other sections and units within the Saskatoon Police Service as well as other police agencies around the Saskatoon area.

The latest development in Saskatoon will see the service begin testing a small UAV to do aerial photography of crime scenes and traffic collisions.

The force is to test the Draganfly X6, a mini-helicopter and the brainchild of a local company, Draganfly Innovations Inc. that has been making remote-control flying machines for more than a decade. They will become the first police service in North America to use such a device to aid investigations inside a city. Inspector Jerome Engele is undertaking the research work leading up to the flights this summer.

The small remote-control helicopter, which uses six horizontal blades, has a built-in camera to help with aerial photography and video. Up until now, police have had to rely on beam trucks to take aerial photographs and capture images of an entire collision scene.

The \$15,000 Draganfly X6, though compact, is still regarded as an aircraft and comes under the oversight of the aviation authorities. The company needs to demonstrate it can be operated safely in cities and has utility for police in investigating crimes.

The X6 has been used by Canadian police before but the earlier instance was when the Ontario Provincial Police [OPP] used it to photograph a homicide scene in rural location. [see image right] <http://draganfly.com>

[Leader]



[www.pavcon.org](http://www.pavcon.org)



[www.policeaviationconference.com](http://www.policeaviationconference.com)

### CALL FOR PAPERS

A new Police Aviation Conference is to be run in Woodford, east of London UK, in September 2009. There is already a new exciting programme planned for this event but the organisers welcome any additional ideas for papers at this and subsequent events.

Full details of the event will shortly be released so please look out for announcements or visit the web sites related to it.

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## MEXICO

In the USA members of foreign aid committee expressed disappointment over DoD reports that helicopters purchased to aid Mexican counter drug efforts could take more than two years to be delivered.

According to the report, it will take at least 18 months for the Bell 412 helicopters to be delivered, and even longer for a batch of Sikorsky Blackhawks.

The helicopters are an integral part of the Merida Initiative, a \$1.4 billion assistance programme set up under the Bush Administration to assist anti-drug activities in Central America.

## NETHERLANDS

KLDP: The first Dutch Police EC135 helicopter [PH-PXA] is flying as D-HCBO on test at Donauwoerth in Germany. [Jan Makkus].

## UKRAINE

Police in the Poltava region of central Ukraine have plans to purchase helicopters in the coming year. Two locally produced helicopters will be handed over, one to the traffic police and another to the police of public security.

The helicopter type involved is the Ak-1, a small two-seat machine designed and manufactured in Poltava by Aerocopter. Uses are likely to be restricted to visual patrol and recon-

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naissance purposes, with pilot training an added capability.

Enterprise Aerocopter was founded in 1999 with the aim of creating a design office and pilot production for the development and establishment of a helicopter.

The AK1-3 conforms to FAR, Part 27 for normal category rotorcraft and is certificated under State Administration of Ukraine for Aviation Safety Oversight. The weight of the empty helicopter is 390 kg allowing it to be transported on a small trailer.

## UNITED STATES

**FEDERAL:** A few years ago light aircraft were a regular feature running drugs across the southern borders of the US but then they fell out of favour and it was the days of the 'Go-Fast' boats and then the semi-submersible craft supplementing the primary transport of mule and truck sneaking across the more remote parts of the border. From recent reports the pendulum has swung a little more towards trying the aerial route once again. It may just be circumstances but the number of reports of ultra-light aircraft running across the border has peaked in recent months.

Smugglers facing strengthened border defences have turned to an old and risky tactic — using single-seat ultra-light aircraft to fly marijuana loads across the border into the country. There will be some that made their way unseen but at least three such attempts ended badly for the smugglers and brought them to notice of the authorities. At the moment no-one is sure whether this is a new trend or just a few isolated attempts at returning to an old means of delivery.

The failed flights were all undertaken in darkness above the Arizona-Mexico border. One pilot was caught near Tucson, one crashed and died in a lettuce field near San Luis and a third was paralysed after crashing into power lines.

In each case the ultralights were loaded up to 200 pounds of drugs.

Ultralights were common before traffickers switched to larger aircraft to ferry contraband between clandestine and often crude border runways.

The airplane flights flourished until the mid-1990s, when radar-equipped Aerostats tethered along the border closed that method of entry down. The ultra-lights are harder to detect but the loads they are able to carry are negligible, even though they are attractive for their cheapness and ability to be flown by uncertified pilots. [USBP/media]

An ultralight aircraft which crashed fatally in a lettuce field north of San Luis, Ariz on November 17 last year is shown in this photo provided by the US Border Patrol.



ILLINOIS: A 1971, Vietnam era, Bell UH-1 Huey helicopter has been added to the fleet operated by the Law Enforcement Aviation Coalition [LEAC] in association with the Winthrop Harbor Police Department. The group assists 30 police and fire departments in the region by providing SAR missions and for moving people and supplies. The Huey N67PD was donated by the Department of Defense and will be the fourth helicopter assigned to the LEAC fleet. The Illinois Law Enforcement Support Office (LESO) in Springfield made the arrangements for this transfer, as it has done for the previous three helicopters.

The UH-1 Huey was transferred to WHPD, which received a Bell OH-58 Kiowa helicopter in November 2006 and two more OH-58 Kiowas in 2007 were transferred to Illinois agencies, one to the Byron Police Department and another to the Stephenson County Sheriff's Office. [www.airsupport.org](http://www.airsupport.org)



*The Huey currently sports a military scheme but artwork on their web site suggests something more colourful for the future.*



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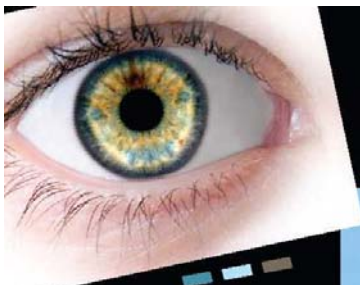


**NORTH CAROLINA:** Sheriffs from four local counties unveiled a new ultra-light aircraft for use in law enforcement air support in the region.

The aircraft, provided by the Department of Justice and financed by monies raised in the wake of drug arrests will be housed at Piedmont Triad International Airport and assist the Alamance, Guilford, Davidson and Randolph County sheriff's departments. The two-seat, single propeller Sky Arrow ultra-light plane, N437SA, is expected to be on one-hour readiness in local police service. Three Guilford County Sheriff's Office pilots are currently being trained to fly the aircraft, and they will fly all missions with the agency requiring assistance providing the rear seat observer.

The 2006-model Sky Arrow 600 Sport N437SA was one of two similar aircraft previously in use with the Department of Justice in Texas and seen as an economical means whereby small departments can enter airborne law enforcement at minimal cost. The two-seater would have cost around \$85,000 new, and is paid for by a National Institute of Justice aimed at getting law enforcement agencies into using light sport aircraft. An added bonus to using this type is that there are fewer restrictions on how it can be used.

The Sky Arrow was designed by Italian manufacturer Meteor S.p.A. and is of carbon fibre sandwich construction throughout. With an empty weight of 405Kgs [890 pounds] the type has a useful load of 245Kgs, [540 pounds]. [PiedmontChannel]



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**KANSAS:** The Shawnee County Sheriff's Office is said to be teaming up with the Topeka Police Department to get the police helicopter unit back off the ground.

The sheriff's office and police department have entered into a partnership to operate a combined Shawnee County Law Enforcement Aviation Unit. It is expected that the sheriff's office will pay part of the costs and help provide staffing for the unit, which probably would have one helicopter.

It is proposed that the city sell the grounded, 15-year-old Schweizer helicopter it currently owns and pay cash to buy a used but more up to date police helicopter that was not either the Schweizer or the previously operated Robinson. The police helicopter unit has been grounded for a year since its new Robinson R-44 Raven was destroyed in a crash.

A subsequent report highlighted some 150 points and as a result to new unit is envisaged to operate in a different manner to the now grounded operation – including improvements to the competency of the pilots.

**LOUISIANA:** In Baton Rouge the Mayor-President Kip Holden has reported that the authorities' finances are in good shape and that he was proposing that the Baton Rouge Police Department should be given a helicopter to help in its operations.

**TEXAS:** A row is growing over the basing of helicopters in the state. Recently purchased helicopters were supposed to be used for border security but a state audit noted that some of the crime-fighting tools never made it to their intended locations.


The State Auditor's Office released a report detailing how the Texas Department of Public Safety \$79M between September 2005 and November 2008. Last year, legislators allotted \$110M for border security and this year's request is for \$135M.

The DPS used \$15M to buy four helicopters that were supposed to be stationed along the border, according to the audit. Three of the new helicopters went directly to the border, including one in El Paso County. But the fourth helicopter remained in Austin while DPS sent an older aircraft to Laredo.

The reason given for the retention of the helicopter was that it was needed to train pilots and for that reason it was indirectly supporting border operations.

The complaint is not just about helicopters though, when the DPS bought 105 new cars using border security money the department sent 106 older cars to border counties and assigned the new ones to other places across the state. It seems that the 106 were also new, well nearly new, and they were fitted with equipment but the border security batch had to be retained as they 'were waiting to have equipment installed.'






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# AIR AMBULANCE

## CANADA

**QUEBEC:** Montreal is lacking an emergency helicopter system, according to the head of the trauma team at the Montreal General Hospital. There is no medical helicopter transport system in the region or in western Quebec.

The problem hit the headlines after actress Natasha Richardson suffered a tumble on a beginner ski hill; the fall resulted in a serious brain injury. She was not wearing a helmet and she refused on-the-spot medical aid until it was too late.

After her condition became serious it was her subsequent journey by road that was taken as illustrative of the problem. The road trip took about an hour while a helicopter ride would allow her to be in Montreal in 15 minutes. Paramedics and trauma experts have been warning of the problem for years but this high profile incident is being taken as useful for the campaign.

## GERMANY

**ADAC:** Pratt & Whitney Canada Customer Service Centre Europe GmbH, a joint venture between Pratt & Whitney Canada and MTU Aero Engines, signed a 16-year Fleet Management Program agreement with Germany's renowned Automobile Club ADAC to provide comprehensive maintenance support for PW206B2 engines installed on their fleet of 19 Eurocopter EC135P2 helicopters.

P&WC has been supporting ADAC's fleet of PW200-powered helicopters since its first flight and the new arrangement is an extension of that.

## IRELAND

Moves towards the creation of a permanent civil air ambulance capability in region has seen an Agusta 109E Power helicopter G-MEDX visiting ahead of launching a full service in September this year.

Ireland Air Ambulance (IAA), which will only be operational during daylight hours, requires funding of approximately £1.5M annually to operate from a base in Omagh carrying a trauma surgeon at all times. The service will be funded directly by the people in a manner similar to that found in mainland Britain.

The advertisement features a central image of a person's hand interacting with a Honeywell Observer mission system interface. The interface includes several circular inset images and labels: 'SEARCH & RESCUE' (showing a helicopter and a boat), 'SHIP TRACKING' (showing a large cargo ship), 'TRAFFIC PROXIMITY' (showing a yellow helicopter), 'VEHICLE TRACKING' (showing a yellow sports car), and 'CAMERA LOCATION' (showing a landscape view). The Honeywell logo is prominently displayed in the bottom right corner. Below the logo, the text 'Honeywell Aerospace' is followed by contact information: 'Tel: USA: +1 800 601 3099 International +44 1243 783763', 'Enquires: mission.systems@Honeywell.com', and 'Website: www.skyforce.co.uk'. At the bottom left, the text 'OBSERVER (MKIII Mission System)' and 'ON TRACK ON TARGET ON TIME' is displayed.

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**TRAFFIC PROXIMITY**

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**OBSERVER (MKIII Mission System)**

**ON TRACK ON TARGET ON TIME**

# SWITZERLAND



REGA: AgustaWestland unveiled the Da Vinci version of its A109 Grand helicopter developed for Swiss air-rescue operator REGA during an official ceremony held at AgustaWestland's Vergiate plant on March 4.

The project was aimed at selecting a light twin aircraft capable of performing high altitude rescue missions as well as the rapid hospital-to-hospital transfer of severely injured patients and providing them with specialised medical treatment in flight. The customer selected the developed 109 in late 2006 following an extensive evaluation process and subsequently placed an order for eleven aircraft plus four options.

REGA previously operated the outwardly similar A109K2 from the early 1990s for many years but when it came to upgrade the fleet Agusta was unable to replace that type with a similarly capable production variant of the 109. The 109K2 was a specialised high altitude rescue capable type developed for REGA from the existing A109. The result was a type that enjoyed a very short production run. As a result when examples of the A109K2 fleet were discarded to other operators the replacement was by the Eurocopter EC145. The latter 'did what it said on the label' but was not capable of undertaking the high altitude mission that the 109K2 had been developed to meet.

An answer to the high altitude mission problem was sought from industry and it was again Agusta that stepped up to the table with a promise to upgrade the capabilities of an existing type.

The Da Vinci machines have an EMS interior developed by REGA and Aerolite, state-of-the-art avionics incorporating a dual duplex four axis digital AFCS, EFIS with an embedded Flight Management System and TAWS, Euronav V digital map and EVS. The helicopter is also equipped for single pilot VFR operations and has a Night Vision Goggle (NVG) compatible cockpit.

The EVS incorporated is from Max-Viz. Eleven EVS-1000 infrared sensor systems are on order for the REGA aircraft with initial deliveries having already taken place.

Bob Yerex, Director of Sales and Marketing at Max-Viz states. 'The addition of EVS in addition to TAWS integrates two of the most critical safety specific technologies to this impressive Grand airframe. REGA and AgustaWestland have cooperatively set an enviable technological benchmark for the helicopter industry, and one that should garner some serious looks from the HEMS industry, as well as the most fly-safe oriented Corporate / VIP operators worldwide.'





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## UNITED KINGDOM

**ESSEX & HERTS:** Having already announced its intention to move out of Boreham the charity behind the Essex Air Ambulance is working to alleviate worries in Earls Colne over plans to combine its operations at the village airfield.

Under a proposal, to be submitted to the local Braintree Council, the helicopter would switch from the current base to make way for the ongoing gravel extraction taking place there and join up with a similarly relocated administrative and fundraising team, currently in offices half a mile away at the Earls Colne Business Park.

The plan has raised concerns locally about possible noise and the number of flights and as a result the charity is diverting its efforts away from fundraising to placating both the local authority and local pressure groups.

Last year, the EAA attended 774 life-threatening emergencies, an average of two daily but with some days flying far more than that and others none at all. The site at Boreham is fairly isolated and established but the move to Earls Colne faces new neighbours unused to the potential nuisance the flights present. [ECS]

**GREAT WESTERN:** GWAA has placed into service the old North Devon BO105DBS helicopter repainted in GWAA colours. The aircraft replaces the Eurocopter EC135T2 the service started with because the supplier Bond was unable to allow GWAA its new extended 7-day operations. The EC135 acts as spare airframe to the police lease contracts up to two days a week.

Because the new aircraft is cheaper than its more modern predecessor, the charity will be able to provide the service 10 hours a day, seven days a week from April 1 and will also be able to downgrade its fundraising target from £1.3M annually to a more manageable £1M.

**NORTH WEST:** From April the North West Air Ambulance (NWAA) has directly employed its own paramedics as it flies into a new era. It will take over full responsibility for operation and staffing of its two helicopters under a deal struck with ambulance bosses. Previous arrangements saw the paramedics on the helicopters seconded from the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS).

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## UNITED STATES

MARYLAND: Last month a Maryland House of Delegates work group recommended that the state-run medevac program close at least one of its eight bases and reduce its fleet of helicopters to fewer than 10, in addition to increasing many of its safety and flight standards to meet or exceed those of commercial medevac companies.

The panel stopped short of calling for a company to take over medevac operations, as has been proposed by some. Members found no compelling reason to privatise medevac services but it remains to be seen which of the groups proves to be the victors in this battle of wills. [Washington Post]



## UNITED STATES

FEDERAL: Evergreen International Aviation's B747 Supertanker won certification for operation this fire season after receiving its interim approval letter from the Interagency Air Tanker Board. The aircraft received its STC from the FAA in November 2008. It is now available to assist world fire fighting agencies during the 2009 season and beyond. The award is unique because the Supertanker has an 8:1 drop ratio compared to that of all other current fire fighting aircraft, meaning the Supertanker will offer a chance to change the way wildland fires are fought. The plane is the first of a fleet designed to accommodate the needs of US and International private and public agencies.

The multi-role B747 Supertanker is the largest tanker aircraft available today. With a payload of more than 20,000 gallons and a response speed to the scene of the fire of 600 mph, it has more than eight times the drop capability and twice the speed of any other federal air tanker currently fighting fires. The Supertanker's patented pressurised system has the capability to disperse product at high pressure for an overwhelming response, or disperse at the speed of falling rain in a single or several segmented drops. This pressurised system will also allow for drops at higher altitudes, creating a significant safety buffer and enabling the Supertanker to fight fires during the day and at night, when they are most vulnerable. Evergreen International invested five years and \$50M of its own funding to develop this next generation of fire fighting aircraft.



There are reports that a strong case is being put forward to put the North American OV-10 back into production. The Vietnam era spotter aircraft was withdrawn from service many years ago but has never been directly replaced in military service.

On disposal the fleet spread around the world to operate in a variety of roles from target tugs in Germany to fire spotters in the US and elsewhere. Currently the fourteen of the type are used by the CDF alongside a fleet of 23 Turbine S2 and eleven helicopters.





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# SEARCH AND RESCUE AUSTRALIA

AgustaWestland has presented the AgustaWestland Pilot Award 2009 to Captain Trevor Wilson at the Australian International Air show. The award to Captain Wilson was delivered during an official ceremony held at the company stand and recognises his efforts to establish and develop the first AW139 medium twin helicopter in Australia. Wilson was the Chief Pilot for Emergency Management Queensland (EMQ) for EMS-SAR operations and became the first Australian pilot and certified instructor in Australia.

His Organization, Emergency Management Queensland, based in Cairns, Brisbane and Townsville presently employs 3 AW139s and remains one of Australia's busiest emergency helicopter networks with in excess of 2500 hours annually. Presently Trevor is defining and managing the recurrent training for his flight crews, with the aid of the AW139 Full Flight Simulator. Trevor Wilson has also given valuable contribution in rescuing and saving human lives operating with Police and SAR in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland for more than 20 years.

Orders for more than 430 AW139s have been placed by over 100 customers from more than 40 countries for several applications including EMS, SAR, offshore transport, VIP/ corporate transport, law enforcement, fire fighting, utility and other commercial and government roles.

## MALTA

Maltese, Israeli, Bulgarian and Ukrainian students who took part in a training programme at the AFM Search and Rescue (SAR) Training Centre in Safi have been presented with graduation certificates.

The US has strong methodology links – and a financial stake – in the SAR training undertaken in these central Mediterranean islands and endorses its multi-national appeal which is very much based upon US Coast Guard practices.

The AFM's Search and Rescue Training Centre is modelled on the United States Coast Guard's own SAR School, which is widely regarded as the world's premier source for SAR training. USCG methodology and International Aeronautical and Maritime SAR manual standards shape the training programmes. The SAR Training Centre was created with as-



## Reims F406 Land & Sea Surveillance



sistance from the U.S. Embassy in Malta, and course instructors have been trained at the US Coast Guard's National SAR School in Yorktown, Virginia.

Since 2006, the SAR Training Centre has opened its doors to other countries seeking its specialised four-week training. The USCG provides additional instructional staff to assist with the three courses per year offered to maritime officers from all over the world. To date more than 50 students, from African, Middle Eastern, and European countries, have been fully trained at the centre using AFM and Italian aircraft based in the islands. The US provides financial and administrative assistance, allowing some of the foreign students to attend the SAR Training Centre on full scholarship.

More than 80 AFM personnel, some of whom now maintain a constant SAR watch at the AFM Rescue Coordination Centre, have also been trained at the centre [US Embassy/TOM]

## UNITED KINGDOM

**LONG RESCUE:** In the middle of last month a mission taking a fisherman to hospital became one of the longest medical evacuations carried out by UK coastguards.

Stornoway Coastguard was called by a fishing vessel just before 8am when one of the boat's crew crushed his hand and lost a finger. The fishing boat, registered in the Faroe Islands, was 233 miles west of Benbecula, only 54 miles short of the longest distance yet travelled by a civilian rescue helicopter operating from the UK. The fisherman was taken to the Western Isles Hospital after the helicopter completed a five-hour round trip to rescue him.

A coastguard spokesman said the furthest distance a rescue helicopter can travel is 275 miles, but that would only allow the rescue team 10 minutes to pick up a casualty.

In 2002, a man was rescued from the trawler Nуска 287 miles north-west of Lewis in the UK's longest rescue mission carried out over sea. On that occasion the Stornoway Coastguard helicopter had to refuel twice on an oil rig in the Atlantic to carry out the rescue of Albert Okori after the crewman fell and his hand went into a fish skinning machine. The crew of the Stornoway Coastguard helicopter received awards for their bravery after that mission. In last month incident, the coastguard helicopter refuelled in Benbecula before carrying out the rescue to make sure it had enough fuel to carry out the mission and return to the Western Isles Hospital.

*Ed: Longer rescue missions have been undertaken by military crews. Where the capability is particularly stretched it is usual for the US to assist using their UK based Jolly Green Giants.*

**SAR-H:** In a surprise move, the two bidders in the UK's Search and Rescue - Helicopter (SAR-H) programme have simultaneously announced their preferred choice of aircraft.

The Soteria Consortium, comprising of CHC, Thales and the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) have chosen the Sikorsky S-92, the aircraft currently being used by CHC for the five-year long interim Maritime and Coastguard Agency contract for SAR operations from Sumburgh in the Shetland Islands and Stornoway in the Outer Hebrides.

Airknight, consisting of Lockheed Martin UK, VT Group and British International Helicopters have chosen the Eurocopter EC225 Super Puma design. [TO]

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) and Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) together provide a 24-hour military and civil helicopter Search and Rescue (SAR) service for the UK SAR Region from 12 bases around the UK. Currently this SAR helicopter service is provided by Royal Air Force and Royal Navy Sea Kings and a civilian helicopter service under contract to the MCA using the Sikorsky S-92A and the AW139. [Ed: It may be noteworthy that neither of the bidders in SAR-H makes mention of the AW139].

SAR-H is a MoD and MCA PFI project to replace this capability with a single contract that will still retain a proportion of military aircrew alongside civilian aircrew trained to the same high standards. From 2012, SAR-H will see a new harmonised helicopter service operated under the joint management of the MOD and MCA being progressively introduced across



the 12 UK bases.

The Sikorsky S-92A fleet was grounded for a short while last month after a gearbox retaining stud was found to be fractured in the wreckage of a crash off Canada. Although the link between the damage and the crash was not proven conclusively the grounding was to allow operators to change the existing studs in the main gearbox filter bowl from titanium to steel. The S-92A gearbox has suffered some issues in recent months with doubts being cast on its capability to run dry [devoid of oil] and then an accusing finger being pointed at the existing studs.

On January 28, 2009, Sikorsky issued an alert service bulletin, or ASB, indicating the bowl assembly problem should be fixed, by replacing titanium studs with steel studs. That ASB sent by Sikorsky directly to owners and operators advised that the fix should be completed within one year, or the next 1,250 flight hours, whichever came first. In the wake of the fatal Canadian S-92A accident a grounding order from the FAA required the improved studs be installed in all Sikorsky S-92As before they could fly again.

Fortunately because the ASB was already in train and the replacement studs being manufactured the actual groundings were relatively short affairs.

Crash investigators know the studs of the crashed Cougar S-92A failed in flight and that the gearbox lost oil pressure but it is by no means certain that these elements caused the crash.

This is not good for the SAR S-92 at a time when SAR-H is being considered as a straight battle between the S-92 and the older established 225 design. The recent textbook ditching of an EC225 in the North Sea might have the same effect as the Tiger crash during a demo to the Australian army. The Tiger was flown into the ground at high speed by the Australian test pilot. Both crew climbed out of the wreck which then caught fire. That demonstration of crash survivability was followed by a sale. The EC225 floating right-side up after what appears to have been a fairly difficult entry into the water could have a similar effect on SAR-H given the right conditions.

If the crash investigators are correct in their preliminary assessment of that EC225 splash-down it can only underline that the helicopter was not only swimming well but not actually to blame for the incident either.

Offshore operators have decided personal locator beacons will not be issued to workers flying to platforms, after the beacons were found to interfere with equipment on helicopters and it looks as if someone has made the connection between that interference and what appears to have been an uncommanded entry into the water of the North Sea by the EC225.

The offshore operators came to their decision after concerns were raised by the Civil Aviation Authority following the crash. Operators and the Health and Safety Executive have decided not to issue the beacons until a solution can be found.



# INDUSTRY BRIEFS

**L-3 Wescam** has been selected to provide an MX-15 True HD electro optical/infrared (EO/IR) imaging sensor to Eurocopter, in support of North Sea Search and Rescue (SAR) missions.

Delivery of the turret to Eurocopter for installation upon an EC 225 will take place in 2009.

MX EO/IR turrets used for North Sea SAR applications can be found on the Icelandic and Swedish Coast Guards' Dash-8 Q300's, Norway's P-3's, the United Kingdom's interim SAR platforms – S-92 and AW139, and the United Kingdom's Nimrod.

The item in last month's edition repeating a story about **AgustaWestland** that first appeared in Flight International was the cause for an e-mail from AgustaWestland within hours of publication.

The item said that AgustaWestland is cancelling orders with Poland's PZL Świdnik as it has lost any chance of taking over the firm. AgustaWestland was now said to be looking elsewhere for potential suppliers of fuselages.

The company states that contrary to that report it has not cancelled any orders with PZL Świdnik nor does it feel that it has lost any chance of taking over the firm. In the last few days it has been reported on the newswires that AgustaWestland has significantly improved the level of its offer to purchase the company.

The process can therefore be taken as very much a case of negotiations in progress.

Meanwhile PZL Mielec, **Sikorsky Aircraft Corp.**'s affiliate in Poland, has been celebrating the rollout of the first Blackhawk helicopter cabin produced at the facility. The event took place on the second anniversary of the acquisition of PZL Mielec and is the first of the initial group of 200 such helicopter cabins to be built in Mielec.

PZL Mielec is Poland's largest fixed wing aircraft manufacturer. PZL Mielec's best-known aircraft are the M28™ Twin-Turboprop Utility, M28B BRYZA™ Maritime Patrol & Reconnaissance and M18 DROMADER™ Ag & Fire-Fighting plane. The company also supplies aero structures for Pratt & Whitney Canada, Spirit Aero systems (formerly BAE), SAAB Aviation, GKN Aerospace, on a subcontracting basis.

More than two years ago at a Parc Aberporth UAV event in west Wales we were introduced to the **Galileo Avionica** Falco as the first UAV aircraft to obtain the 'Permit to fly' from ENAC, the Italian Civil Aviation Authority. It flew for the first time in the British sky at Parc Aberporth after an approval by the British Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). That development was said to be an important goal confirming the technical excellence of the aircraft.

Falco is a fairly large, sophisticated and expensive military system, but it did not have the systems required by the CAA installed for flights in a wider environment. After the Parc Aberporth the Falco appeared at other shows that year - including Farnborough and I guess we were to assume that it went back to Wales to continue its flights.

Now it seems that the assumptions were wrong for a recent report coming out of Parc Aberporth talks of the Italian company having plans to send two Falco's to Wales to commence operations by this summer. UK CAA certification to actually fly from the site is still not in place.

**Eurocopter** is offering its customers around the world the opportunity to use an EC135 flight simulator at its site in Donauwörth (Germany). The flight simulator at the Donauwörth Training Academy serves to train helicopter pilots.

The fully manoeuvrable flight simulator features a full motion system with six degrees of freedom. It has a visual-system field of view of 160° horizontal and 80° vertical and can visualise daylight, twilight and night conditions as well as any weather situation. Its mission spectrum includes, for example, rescue operations in high snowy mountains. Landscapes



and buildings are displayed realistically in 3D. The simulator was developed by Eurocopter in collaboration with CAE and Indra.

Certification according to JAA FTD Level 3 will begin this month so that the simulator can be used in JAR FCL 2 training courses. There are also plans to certify it to FFS Level B at a later date.

Eurocopter has a portfolio of training means, including full-flight simulators, flight-training devices, avionics trainers and computer-based training devices on offer to customers. Another EC135 simulator at American Eurocopter (AEC) in Dallas (USA) recently obtained its FAA certification whilst AEC has also announced at Heli-Expo Air Show in February 09 an AStar/Ecureuil simulator which will be available in late 2010. An EC225 simulator operated by HeliSim has been in operation near Marseille, France, since late 2008. In 2010, another EC225 simulator will be available for training in Aberdeen, Scotland. In addition, two new simulators will be set up for the EC225/725 helicopter: one in Brazil at the end of 2010 and one in Malaysia in 2011.

**Detectagas**, a market leader in cutting edge instruments for personal and industrial health and safety, has expanded its range with the introduction of Detectapod, the world's smallest and lightest fully featured carbon monoxide (CO) detector and dosimeter.

Detectapod is a potentially life-saving device for pilots, providing an instant indication of dangerous CO levels on an aircraft. It is also being targeted at first response attendees to a potential CO poisoning incident, for example airborne emergency services, fire officers, paramedics, doctors and health and safety officers.

The portable key fob size alarm weighs less than one ounce and can be attached unobtrusively to a uniform or carried anywhere on the person, providing immediate identification of CO levels.

Its patented nanocell sensor technology provides fast effective measurements and alarms at three pre-set levels using a loud buzzer, bright LED and vibrator alert combination. An optional first alarm activates if CO levels reach 50 parts per million (PPM), a second alarm sounds at a serious level of 125 PPM and a third alarm if measurements reach a dangerously high 400 PPM.



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**Sandblaster**, a project utilising the talents of Sikorsky Aircraft, Honeywell International and Sierra Nevada Corp., have demonstrated a new 'brownout' solution to the US Army.

A Blackhawk helicopter outfitted with the prototype Sandblaster system executed landing approaches in a variety of terrain, including slopes containing potentially dangerous obstacles to safe landings.

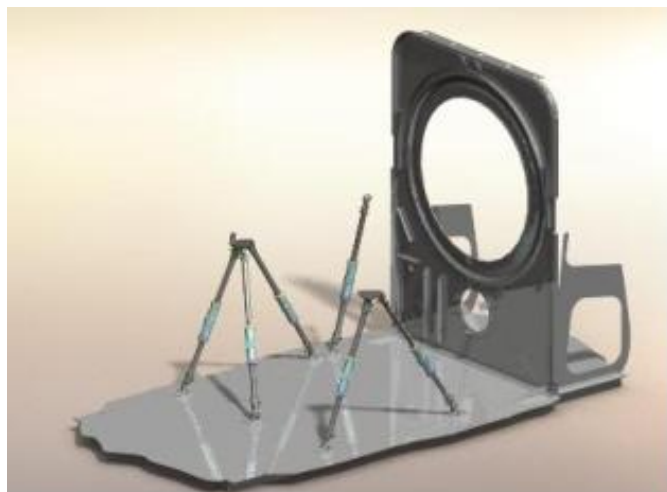
The system integrates several technologies, including advanced flight controls, a see-through sensor, advanced synthetic vision, and data fusion, allowing the pilot to locate and touch down on level landing terrain free of obstacles.

Using the system, a pilot presses a single button to engage the automated flight controls, developed by Sikorsky. These controls bring the aircraft from en-route flight to a low hover with little-to-no drifting over a pre-programmed landing point. During the landing approach, Sierra Nevada's three-dimensional radar, capable of penetrating sand and dust, detects terrain and objects within the intended landing zone. Using radar and other data, Honeywell's Sensor-driven Localized External Evidential Knowledge (SLEEK) and Synthetic Vision System (SVS) displays on a cockpit screen a three-dimensional view of the landing zone and surroundings. The pilot is able to monitor progress during the automated approach by viewing an electronic representation of the landing zone. The pilot also is able to view and adjust the precise landing point in relation to slopes and other objects while the automated flight controls maintain stability. The system includes a 360-degree view of terrain and objects in relation to the intended landing point.

In a differing, less hi-tech, answer to the same problem France's DGA procurement agency recently ordered ground mat kits to improve the safety of military helicopters landing under "brownout" conditions. The DGA awarded **Deschamps** an €2.5M (\$3.4M) contract covering the delivery of 25 so-called anti-sand carpets for delivery this year. The new equipment enhances operating safety and maintenance by reducing the effects of sand and dust landings on helicopter engines and rotor blades, the DGA says.

**Dart Aerospace** has received Transport Canada's approval of the Replacement Engine Mount Kit for the Bell 205 series aircraft. FAA and EASA approvals are still pending.

The DART Replacement Engine Mount Kit replaces the OEM Tripod Assembly (P/N 205-060-105-001, Bipod Assembly (P/N 205-060-106-001) and Tube Assembly (P/N 205-060-107-001) that is used to install the T5317A/B/BCV engines & T5313B engines in 205A1/B helicopters. The kit features adjustable turnbuckles to make engine alignment easier and stainless steel construction. All of the traditionally welded joints have been replaced with one-piece machined components.





The company has also received FAA approval to add certain UH-1 model aircraft to existing STC's for cross tubes. The UH-1 models included are those that have been FAA certified for civil use.

Dart currently offers replacement low narrow, standard low, standard high, 31" extended height, and 39" extended height cross tubes for Bell 204/205/210/212/214/412 & UH-1 model helicopters. The extended height landing gears provide extra ground clearance for the installation of water bombing or other belly mounted equipment. These specialised landing gears, which are only available from Dart, are between 4" and 12" higher than standard high landing gear.

The cross tubes have been designed to be compatible with both Dart Round-I-Beam™ and OEM skid tubes and are easily installed using a thru bolt system. Dart cross tubes are not life-limited; they have been engineered to be replaced on-condition according to a max spread criteria.

Dart subsidiary **Apical Industries** Inc., has received EASA approval of their Replacement Lower Forward Fuselage Panels for Eurocopter AS350/355 model helicopters. FAA and Transport Canada approval have already been received.

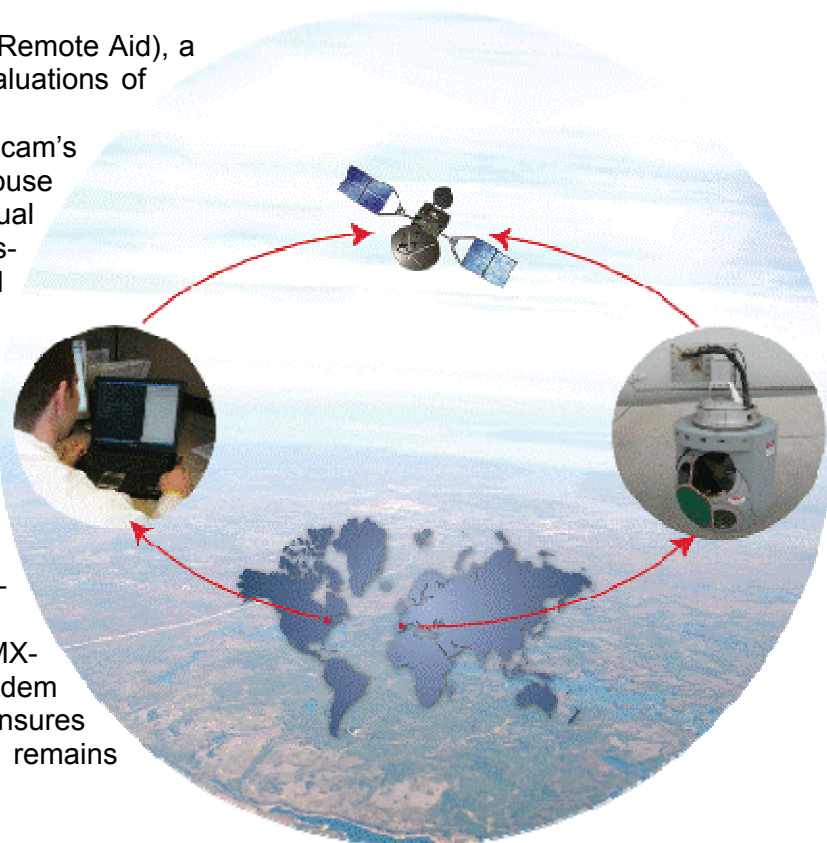
The Apical Replacement Fuselage Panel uses high strength carbon fibre and a closed cell foam core to improve the service life and resistance to in-service damage. Apical's panel mounts in the original location using existing fasteners and is available in two different finishes, clear coat or primed. The panels include ground plane improvement to allow antenna mounting and the core is absent in the locations of frequently used optional equipment for ease of installation. Additionally, the Apical panel has been designed for easier removal and is less susceptible to damage from the latches.

**L-3 WESCAM** has introduced MX-RAid (Remote Aid), a new service kit for remote diagnostic evaluations of fielded MX-Series EO/IR imaging turrets.

This exclusive capability provides Wescam's customers immediate access to an in-house factory technician who can diagnose actual system faults from afar. As a result, customer operational availability is increased and, repair-cycle times and overall system support costs are reduced.

The MX-RAid represents an advancing stage in ensuring customers achieve the maximum availability and performance from their systems. They no longer have to rely solely on the ready availability of field support representatives to diagnose potential issues. With MX-RAid, the testing can begin immediately.

The remote diagnostic capability of the MX-RAid is established over a SATCOM modem and it contains a security feature that ensures the location of the turret and end-users remains confidential. [www.wescam.com](http://www.wescam.com)



In Latin America the Mexican Ministry of Defence has placed an order for six **Eurocopter** EC725 helicopters. The medium-lift helicopters will mainly be used for transport and civil security missions.

This new order—the first ever placed with Eurocopter by the Mexican Ministry of Defence—will help reinforce the European helicopter manufacturer's presence in Mexico. The Mexican

Naval Ministry already operates Panther helicopters manufactured by Eurocopter, and the EC225 and Super Puma currently serve the Mexican President. Some 350 Eurocopter helicopters are in service in the region, and the Group's market share has progressed steadily to more than 50% today.

**Outerlink Corporation**, a provider of satellite-based mobile asset management solutions, has teamed up with the DHS AMOC at March AFB in Riverside, CA to provide satellite tracking data from all commercial satellite tracking systems in domestic use today. OuterLink will integrate satellite data feeds from MSAT, Iridium and Inmarsat based tracking systems. The programme will allow aircraft operators who use differing satellite tracking systems to voluntarily share position and unit ID information data to the Customs & Border Protection's Air & Marine Operations Center. The purpose is to assist Customs & Border Protection in quickly identifying radar tracked aircraft and reduce costly intercept operations. For more information visit: [www.outerlink.com](http://www.outerlink.com)

**Enstrom Helicopter Corp.** Has announced a number of new aircraft deliveries outside the USA. The first 480B destined for Ukraine went to Rotor Ukraine, LLC, Enstrom's newest dealer in Europe. The aircraft will be used as both a sales demonstrator and for commercial purposes such as tours and photography. A delegation from Ukraine, including Rotor Ukraine Director Valerii Gromov, recently visited the factory for pilot and maintenance training.



Enstrom also delivered another 'first' 480B destined for Bulgaria to Fortuna Air, based in the city of Veliko Tarnovo. The black and gold turbine helicopter will be used primarily for agricultural spraying, and is equipped with the first production 480B ag-spray kit from Isolair Inc. When not spraying crops, the helicopter will do duty as a commercial aircraft and search and rescue ship, equipped with pop-out floats and a cargo hook for short-haul rescue. Monarch Aviation has announced the sale of two more 480B turbine helicopters to India. Both will see corporate use.

The first airframe for the new build Dornier 228NG programme has been completed in India and sent to **RUAG** in Germany for completion. The NG version of this type will introduce a number of improvements including a glass cockpit.



The PAN HAI Heli-Expo 2009 report [still online] carried images of the type of **Meeker** mount recently selected for use on UK EC135 and EC145 helicopters.

Elsewhere in the vast halls of the show other examples of Cal Meeker's engineering were to be found including this Bell 212/412 nose mount with an Axsys V14 mounted.



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**Diamond Airborne Sensing** GmbH of Wiener Neustadt, AUSTRIA and **SPECIM Spectral Imaging** Ltd of Finland are offering the industry an open door workshop promoting their Hyperspectral Remote Sensing later this month.

A workshop and group shoot will take place between April 21–30 at Airfield Wiener Neustadt, in Austria. Through this event interested customers will have a chance to acquire hyperspectral and laser scanning data for different applications and locations across Europe at reduced cost.

The flights will make use of the Diamond DA-42MPP designed for the integration of different sensor payloads in the belly or nose pods.

The different sensors and navigation equipment in the belly pod of the MPP-aircraft will include the SPECIM AisaEAGLET Hyperspectral scanner operating in the visible to near-IR range of the spectrum (400 to 1000 nm; up to 410 spectral bands), the SPECIM AisaHAWK Hyperspectral scanner operating in the Infrared range of the spectrum (970 to 2500 nm; up to 254 spectral bands), the RIEGL LMS Q-560 Laser scanner providing up to 8 laser points per sq m in full-waveform mode and each will be integrated with an INS and GPS to precisely monitor the flight path of the aircraft. All the other necessary equipment for data storage and flight and data acquisition control is stored in the rear compartment of the aircraft.

Until April 15 customers are invited to propose applications and test sites they are interested in. Based on their specifications the airborne MPP platform will be available to acquire hyperspectral data and topographic data. The data acquired will be processed using the CaliGeo software package provided by SPECIM.

The group shoot (data acquisition) is scheduled to last for two weeks (April 21 to April 30). The MPP platform and crew will be on stand-by to guarantee that data acquisition can be performed under optimum weather conditions. During the group shoot the aircraft can cover all locations within the European Union.

The demonstration and workshop are free of charge to observers but the participants will be responsible for their accommodation, transportation and other expenses.

Last month, the **US Coast Guard** announced that due to economic conditions, they would be closing down the 24 LORAN-C (Long Range Aid to Navigation) stations operated under the auspices of the USCG. LORAN stations provide navigation, location and timing services for both civil and military air, land and marine users. According to the USCG, LORAN-C is approved as an en route supplemental air navigation system for both Instrument Flight Rule (IFR) and Visual Flight Rule (VFR) operations. The LORAN-C system serves the 48 continental states, their coastal areas and parts of Alaska.

LORAN-A stations were developed beginning in World War II, and signals were transmitted on frequencies in and around our present-day 160 meter band. LORAN-A was responsible for reduced amateur radio operations, including frequency and power limitations, on 160 meters in the United States. In 1979, the Coast Guard phased out the LORAN-A stations; they were replaced by LORAN-C stations. The newer stations operated on 100 kHz, enabling the restrictions on the 160 meter amateur band due to LORAN functions, to be dropped. The Coast Guard will continue to operate the current LORAN-C system through fiscal year 2009.

**AgustaWestland** has announced that the AW109 Power Level D Full Flight Simulator located at the Alessandro Marchetti Training Academy in Sesto Calende, Italy, has received Brazilian Agência Nacional de Aviação Civil (ANAC) approval.

For a matter of hours it was a major news story when the media announced that the FAA was grounding 2,800 **Bell** 206/407 and 427 helicopters as a result of the fitment of improperly installed bearings that could cause the co-pilot controls to malfunction. The suspect bearings were in the co-pilot cyclic controls.

Within hours it became clear that the story had been hyped up and the fault related only to a limited number of airframes with less than 50 hours since work was undertaken on them. The figure was variously said to relate to 50 or 110 airframes.

**Universal Light Source**, Inc. based in San Francisco has received an all important US FAA PMA for its helicopter searchlight replacement bulbs. [www.ulsi.net](http://www.ulsi.net)

**United Rotorcraft Solutions (URS)**, and partner Ahlers Aerospace were awarded their eighth FAA STC for their Night Vision Lighting modifications on the Bell 430.

As with the others, this modification incorporates externally mounted filters that improve day light readability. The size of the 430's cockpit and the number of switches involved did cause some challenges meeting compatibility requirements, but these challenges were met. The URS/Ahlers design reduces installation time and cost. The external filters allow the modified component to remain generic thus retaining the advantages of local repair and/or overhaul.

URS and Ahlers now hold FAA certification on the Bell 206, 407 and 430 models and the Eurocopter AS350B2/B3, BK117, EC130 and EC135. STC's are pending for the Bell 412 and the Eurocopter EC120 and EC145 with award expected in the near future.

**Piaggio Aero Industries** has a new logo that better portrays the importance of the Piaggio brand and has at the same time, signed a sponsorship agreement with Scuderia Ferrari the F1 Constructor's World Champions The Piaggio Aero new logo will feature on the racing helmets of both Ferrari "pilots" during the 2009 Formula 1 world Championship which will commenced late last month with the Australian Grand Prix.

Piaggio sponsored the Ferrari's drivers for many years, Michael Schumacher, then Felipe Massa and Kimi Raikkonen; they are now official sponsor of the Scuderia Ferrari, the Ferrari Racing Team.

## ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

*Listed below are a large number of similar incidents relating to the UK AW139 Coastguard fleet. Their repetition serves little purpose other than to highlight the problem at a time when neither prospective SAR-H bidder made mention of the type when they announced their choice of helicopter. Is there a connection between these incidents recorded by the CAA and the decision by the competitors not to order the AW139?*

**29 January 2009 Agusta AW139 G-CGIJ.** UK Coastguard/CHC Scotia. A flight control problem was reported while operating at Lee-on-Solent. Double pitch trim failure. Nr1 autopilot engaged first on start up. Approx 35 mins into flight, while in coupled hover at 40ft, 'Nr1 P Trim Fail' caution illuminated. EOP carried out when appropriate. Approx 25 mins later, during manual handling, 'Nr2 P Trim Fail' caution displayed. EOP carried out. No further similar problems during rest of flight. [CAA]

**27 January 2009 Sikorsky S-92A G-CGOC.** UK Coastguard [CHC Scotia]. Bird strike during cruise near Lerwick. Return to base initiated. Nr2 engine TGT observed to be approx 80deg C higher than normal. A/c landed safely. [CAA]

**3 February 2009 Eurocopter EC135T2 G-WMAS.** West Midlands Air ambulance operated by Bond Air Services Limited. Whilst operating in the vicinity of Solihull PAN was declared due to increased vibration/noise and 'Rotor Brake' caption. Precautionary landing carried out, after which smoke was observed coming from main gearbox. The gearbox cowling was opened and smoke dissipated with no fire observed. Rotor brake allowed to cool and investigation traced fault to brake calliper. It was found that one piston assembly failed to fully retract when hydraulic pressure was relieved. The pad was pressing more firmly than usual on the disc causing heat and smoke. [CAA]

**4 February 2009 Agusta AW139 G-CGWB.** UK Coastguard/CHC Scotia. A flight control problem was reported whilst operating over the English Channel. Nr2 collective failure warn-



ing. Whilst in a fully coupled hover during winching training, nr2 'COLL FAIL' caption illuminated. Emergency procedures actioned, caption cleared and flight continued without further incident. [CAA]

**5 February 2009 Lear 25 N143LG.** Air ambulance of Lifemed Alaska, LLC, Anchorage, Alaska, operated by Aero Air, LLC. While taxiing from home base ramp in inclement weather the aircraft ingested red construction barrier tape into both engines. The tape was unsecured on the roof of a hanger under construction across the ramp from our hanger. The tape had unspooled in the wind and was streaming across their ramp, over a chain link fence, and across the ramp. The PIC noticed the tape just as it was hitting the nose of the fuselage. He immediately shutdown both engines and the aircraft was towed back to base. After inspection the number one engine was found not to be damaged and the number two engine was replaced. [Concern]

**9 February 2009 Agusta AW139 G-SARD.** UK Coastguard/CHC Scotia. A flight control problem was reported on the approach. Multiple pitch trim failures - during SAR winching training sortie, nr1 pitch trim failed twice and nr2 pitch trim failed three times; pitch trim re-engaged successfully on each occasion. [CAA]

**15 February 2009 Agusta AW139 G-CGWB.** UK Coastguard/CHC Scotia. A flight control problem was reported. During SAR training sortie, four successive trim failures occurred in a variety of flight regimes including coupled flight in the hover and straight and level manual flight. Sequence started with nr2 pitch trim failure followed (on completion of emergency checklist) by failure of nr1 pitch trim, then nr2 roll trim and finally by nr1 roll trim. [CAA]

**11 February 2009 Agusta AW139 G-SARD.** UK Coastguard/CHC Scotia. A flight control problem was reported. Pitch trim failures. During SAR training sortie nr1 pitch trim failed in coupled cruise and nr2 pitch failed in a coupled hover. Both trims re-engaged correctly. [CAA]

**13 February 2009 Agusta AW139 G-SARD.** UK Coastguard/CHC Scotia. A flight control problem was reported whilst operating near Old Harry Rocks near Studland, Swanage. Trim fail' CAS message activated. Whilst recovering a winchman and starting to move to the right, 'Altitude, Altitude' aural warning sounded as the aircraft started to descend. Height recovered. '1R Trim Fail' and 'Mistrim' CAS messaged then displayed. Action taken, autopilots restored and no further messaged activated. [CAA].

**14 February 2009 Agusta AW139 G-CGIJ.** UK Coastguard/CHC Scotia. A flight control problem was reported whilst operating at Lee-on-Solent. Nr2 pitch trim failed during coupled go-around. Checklist actioned and nr2 autopilot re-engaged. [CAA].

**17 February 2009 Agusta AW139 G-CGIJ.** UK Coastguard/CHC Scotia. A flight control problem was reported whilst operating over the English Channel. Nr1 pitch trim failure passing 50kts at 200ft on coupled fly-away with HOV engaged following winching exercise during SAR training sortie. Emergency checklist actioned and nr1 autopilot re-engaged. [CAA]

**26 February 2009 Bell 430 N430UT.** Air ambulance of AirMed University Health Care, University of Utah operated by Air Methods. While landing at the University of Utah hospital helipad a large piece of black plastic sheeting, approx. 10-15 feet long by 2-3 feet wide, was drawn up towards the helicopter by it's rotor wash and the prevailing winds around the pad.



The pad is situated on the roof of a five level parking garage adjacent to the main hospital. There is currently an ongoing expansion project near to the pad. The plastic reached the level of the helicopter on short final and was separated laterally by approximately 50 feet. It originated from the fenced in construction storage area in the middle of the parking lot just below the approach path. The appropriate construction managers were immediately contacted and the hazard was removed. Hospital safety department and AirMed's safety committee were notified and investigating incident. [Concern]

**3 March 2009 Bell UH-1 Huey II.** Colombia's Antinarcotics Division of the National Police (ADNP). The police helicopter crashed in South Colombia killing all four people on board. The helicopter had been missing and was by SAR teams in southern Colombian province of Putumayo, a few miles from the town of Villa Garzon and 310 miles southeast of Bogota. The Huey was returning from transporting workers with the government programme to manually eradicate illegal coca crops in the region. The fatalities were given as Lts. Juan Valero and Hernan Leal – the pilot and co-pilot, and agents Yesid Vidal and Gustavo Ibañez.

**3 March 2009 Bell 206 N.** Jacksonville Sheriff's Office. The helicopter made an emergency landing at a school on Golfair Boulevard near Interstate 95 after a warning light came on in the cockpit and the pilot set the helicopter down. After mechanics checked over the aircraft, it was able to fly off. It was on the ground about 90 minutes. [Media]

**5 March 2009 Eurocopter EC135 N136DU.** Air ambulance of Duke Life Flight, Durham, North Carolina operated by Air Methods. The helicopter was en-route to airport for fuel when it suffered multiple bird strikes to rotor system. Pilot landed safely at the airport and was taken out of service for inspection. [Concern]

**6 March 2009 Agusta A109E Power N911UF.** Air ambulance of Shands Teaching Hospital and Clinics, based Gainesville, Florida. The helicopter suffered a bird strike when a duck crashed through the windshield. Pilot Don Irving's eye was injured in the collision, but he managed to land safely. The Power was flying at an altitude of 700 feet and 160mph and just a few minutes from the hospital, preparing to land on the rooftop helipad, when the bird flew into the windshield. The bird clipped off several switches on the overhead instrument panel before landing on the foot of one of the medical crew. [Media]

**10 March 2009 Eurocopter AS350B1 OE-BXL.** The 21-years old police helicopter of the Bundesministerium für Inneres [BMI] Austria is believed to have struck a house and fallen to the ground whilst conducting a search. The 39-year-old pilot was seriously injured and subsequently died some hours later. Two further persons, one said to be from mountain rescue, survived the accident, one with critical injuries. The helicopter, Martin 4, was based at Graz Thalerhof. [Media]

Image: G Hossli



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**10 March 2009 Eurocopter EC145 N145SU.** Air ambulance of Stanford Life Flight, Stanford, California. Operated by Air Methods. At 1528 the aircraft had a bird strike. Pilot observed sparrow sized bird followed by sound of bird strike on the nose of the aircraft. No other symptoms of bird strike followed. Pilot diverted to nearest suitable landing area to confirm bird strike and to ascertain if the aircraft had sustained any damage. After landing the aircraft was inspected by both the pilot and Flight Nurse. No evidence of a bird strike was discovered. Mission was continued to destination hospital. Later a closer inspection revealed a smear on the centre support between the two front windscreens. Above the smear the remains of a finch sized bird were found in the wiper blade. [Concern]

**13 March 2009 Hughes 500 Colombian Police.** Two journalists and two police officers were on board the Hughes when it went down into the roof of a house in Bogota. The pilot was trying to make an emergency landing when it crashed. It remained upright and largely intact. All four victims were rushed to the hospital. [AP]

**17 March 2009 Eurocopter EC135 N137LN.** Air ambulance of JeffSTAT, Philadelphia operated by Air Methods. Helicopter departed from its base located along the Delaware River at Sterling Aviation for an inter-facility transport when the crew saw a large seagull approaching the helicopter. The bird flew into the main rotors. The Pilot was able to maintain full control of the aircraft and returned to the helipad without incident. The bird was located on the adjacent deck area of the helipad. Multiple feathers and blood spatters were identified on the aircraft but no damage. [Concern]

**19 March 2009 Helicopter. Air Ambulance Eagle III.** The medical helicopter hit by a seagull was diverted to Outagamie County Airport as a precaution. The helicopter was transporting a patient from Green Bay to Froedtert Memorial Lutheran Hospital in Wauwatosa when the bird hit and damaged the wind screen. The helicopter was about five miles from the airport at the time. It landed safely with no injuries to the pilot, patient and two nurses on the craft. The patient was transferred to another helicopter for the rest of the trip.

## FLIGHT SAFETY

Sikorsky has alerted operators that certificated aftermarket cast acrylic windscreens built by Aeronautical Accessories are less tolerant to impact damage than the heavier original equipment glass and stretched acrylic windscreens built by Sikorsky.

This is as a result of result of a fatal accident to an S-76 in January. A Petroleum Helicopters S-76C++ crashed en route to an oil platform in Louisiana. Both pilots and six of the seven passengers on board were killed after the helicopter descended into a swamp after a loud noise was heard in the cockpit and the torque to both engines subsequently dropped to zero.

Bird remains were subsequently found in the wreck leading to speculation that a birdstrike may have caused the windscreen to shatter or implode, incapacitating one or both pilots and causing, directly or indirectly, an engine power reduction and subsequent crash.

As a result of the findings, Sikorsky issued a letter revealing that the cast acrylic windscreens, available to operators under a STC held by Aeronautical Accessories, provide the equivalent level of impact tolerance as Sikorsky-provided glass and STC stretched acrylic windscreens only at speeds below 109kt. The helicopter was flying faster.

Petroleum, per normal procedure, had removed the original laminated glass windscreens after the helicopter was purchased two years ago to convert the aircraft to operational mission status, which includes the lighter cast acrylic replacement.

Given its need to certificate helicopters for North Sea operators Sikorsky had designed and tested the original glass and stretched acrylic windscreens to handle collisions with 1kg (2.2lb) birds at the helicopter's top speed of 155kt according to more stringent UK civil airworthiness standards.

The survivor is currently suing the manufacturer of the aircraft and the replacement windows along with the operator PHI.

## PEOPLE

The new Executive Vice President, Marketing and Sales of Piaggio America is **Mr. John Bingham**.

A Naval helicopter pilot now serving at Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose has been awarded one of Britain's top military decorations – the Air Force Cross – for bravery and determination in the face of a difficult rescue.

When serving at HMS Gannet, near Prestwick in Scotland, Lieutenant Mike Paulet and his SAR crew were scrambled to the aid of a stricken ferry near Blackpool. In addition to HMS Gannet's SAR helicopter, a helicopter from RAF Valley and the Coastguard helicopter from Belfast were tasked to assist 23 people on the Roll-On-Roll-Off ferry, MV Riverdance.

Between them the helicopters lifted the all the survivors from the ferry, which was listing to 45 degrees in heavy seas and howling winds, and each rescue had to be precise, quick and safe.

Crewmate Leading Aircrewman Kevin Regan was awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal (QGM) for his part in the same rescue.

Regan was set down on the deck of the stricken ferry, which was listing to 45 degrees, and he began to winch people off two at a time. The whole incident was conducted at pace, as conditions were so tricky. Full crew: **Lt M Paulet (captain), Lt O Milles (co-pilot), Lt A Sherwin (observer) and LAcw K Regan (aircrewman)**.

**David Siegler**, a retired consultant physician in Chest Medicine who served at the Luton and Dunstable Hospital until his retirement from the NHS in 2006, has been appointed as a trustee for the East Anglian Air Ambulance (EAAA), the charity which provides the air ambulance service in Bedfordshire. As a member of the charity's board of trustees, David will play a key role in setting its strategic direction, agreeing policy and evaluating its performance.

The Chairman of the New Zealand's based Life Flight Trust, Bill Day, has announced the appointment of **David Irving** as the Trust's new Chief Executive. Mr. Irving replaces Kevin Allan who has held the position for the past seven years. Life Flight operates a national air ambulance service and the Wellington Westpac Rescue Helicopter. Mr. Irving was previously a consultant/director and former CEO of Synergy International Ltd (Now Fronde). Mr. Irving takes up his role on 14 April 2009.

## RECENT EVENTS

### BBGA 2009

The British Business and General Aviation Association Conference was held at Sopwell House, St. Albans, Herts UK on March 3.

The programme was opened by the association's patron HRH Prince Michael of Kent GCVO and he was followed by an impassioned Keynote address given by Lord Carlisle of Berriew Q.C on Security for business and general aviation.

The Liberal Democrat Peer Lord Carlisle of Berriew Q.C., better known under his former identity of Alex Carlisle MP and Barrister, pressed upon the audience the need for a strong self motivation towards security within the industry lest a more difficult to administer regime be forced upon them. Pressing upon the audience the need to cooperate with the police and other agencies at all times he pointed out that it was no good stating after a criminal or terrorist incident that the stranger carried as a passenger was an unknown quantity – let alone acting in an odd manner. The bona-fides of every new customer should be questioned and checked to a level that left the service provider happy that they had done their best.

Even in these supposed difficult times the gathering of a hundred or so from the BBGA still attracted sponsorship by the presence of a small industry exhibition including Gasco,



EBAN/BGAD, Adams Aviation, R F Saywell, AQMS, Coplan and Bombardier and additional funding from Cessna, Gama, Flight Safety International, Air bp, Gates and Partners, Hawker, Rockwell Collins, Martyn Fiddler Associates, Signature Flight Support and Net-Jets..

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**The BAPCO 2009 Conference and Exhibition** is fast approaching and promises to be the central debating and learning event of the year taking place from 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2009 at the Business Design Centre, Islington, London.

'Sharing Information for the Future' is this year's theme making BAPCO 2009 a must attend event for all professionals engaged in improving and delivering public safety-civil contingency services, through the effective use of integrated communication and information management technologies.

A new dual stream conference format for 2009 offers a wide range of discussion topics under 4 key streams Resilient Communications, Communications & Command Centres, Next Generation Networks and Operational Data, all with a highly educational focus.

Richard Bryan, OSD Project Director, Deputy Assistant Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service will close the conference on 23<sup>rd</sup> April with an outline of the planning process and strategy designed to ensure that the London Olympic Games in 2012 take place without major incident.

For the full conference programme visit [www.bapco.co.uk](http://www.bapco.co.uk).

With over 100 exhibitors showcasing their latest products and services at the BAPCO 2009 Exhibition from 22<sup>nd</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> April, there will be plenty of new launches and technologies for public safety officers and civil contingency professionals to see, compare and gain expert advice on, direct with the suppliers. Entry to the exhibition is free.

New exhibitors for 2009 include Blackberry, Custom Antenna Systems, Ericsson, GGP Systems, Helimedia, Multitone Electronics, Priority Dispatch Corporation, Wey Technology and many more.

Here are just some of the highlights you can expect to see from exhibitors:

**Helimedia**, better known in aviation circles for their L3 Wescam camera agency are in this instance primarily displaying their hand held writing tablet, Form Patrol. This equipment provides an electronic forms solution which replaces traditional bulky pads and eliminates manual paper processes. It is the first mobile data application in the UK to issue Fixed Penalty Notices and is also able to issue other types of e-forms including Stop and Search. It is designed for local police officers to complete any form on mobile data devices such as PDAs. Form Patrol was voted Winner of the Equipment and Technology Innovation Award for 2008.



**PageOne**, the UK's leading mobile messaging company to the public sector will be giving BAPCO attendees a sneak preview into an exciting new development – the news that 2-way paging will be available to UK customers for the first time within the next few months. This unique new service to the UK mobile messaging market will provide the two-way response element that paging has never had and administrators will also be able to detect a pager's location within different zones, an extremely useful security feature for lone workers out in the field. (Stand 427)

On their stand **Brother** are exhibiting the Brother MPrint MW-140BT mobile printer - the world's smallest mobile printer, previously featured in PAN reports on earlier events. They will be showing how it has been successfully used by Transport for London, British Transport Police, Lothian and Borders Police and Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Ambulance and Paramedic Service and how it might benefit you. (Stand B41)

The **National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG)** is the definitive, national address list that provides unique identification of land and property and conforms to BS7666. Emergency services also have access to the National Street Gazetteer (NSG) that extends on the street information held in the NLPG. Both are available to the emergency services free of charge under the Mapping Services Agreement.

BAPCO 2009 is a trade-only event organised by Brintex Events on behalf of the British Association of Public Safety Communications Officers. Delegates and visitors can register online by visiting [www.bapco.co.uk](http://www.bapco.co.uk)

**22-24 May 2009 AeroExpo Europe 2009** Letnany Exhibition Centre, Prague, Czech Republic. Letnany Airfield (LKLT) where the exhibition halls are situated boasts two excellent 800m grass runways on firm, well maintained and drained ground that offers ideal landing for all ranges of aircraft. Larger Jets and any aircraft not wishing to land here can use the 2000m tarmac runway at adjoining airfield 'Kbely'. Visiting aircraft will remain on Kbely, and their passengers and crew will be transported to the exhibition site by bus. Exhibiting corporate aircraft will all need to be at Kbely Military Airfield by Wednesday 20th May 2009. During the day the aircraft will be towed from Kbely to the Letnany exhibition centre.

The indoor display will be in Exhibition Halls 3 which offer all the comfort and facilities expected from a modern Exhibition centre. The static display is located outside the main entrance of the exhibition hall on 20,000 metres square of tarmac ground.

The Letnany Exhibition centre is located only 250m away from a new metro station which takes you into the centre of Prague in less than 10 minutes. A main bus terminal is located next to the metro station and the motorway is in easy reach. [info@avbuyer.com](mailto:info@avbuyer.com)  
[www.expo.aero/prague](http://www.expo.aero/prague)



Plans are underway to hold a **Police Aviation Conference** on **16-17 September 2009** - the week prior to Helitech 2009

The venue is the Menzies Prince Regent Hotel, Woodford Green in the east London suburbs.

There are new dedicated contact points  
+44 (0)20 8144 1914  
E-mail of [admin@pavcon.org](mailto:admin@pavcon.org)

Two new web addresses:  
[www.pavcon.org](http://www.pavcon.org) and  
[www.policeaviationconference.com](http://www.policeaviationconference.com)





**TranSec World Expo 2009**

TranSec World Expo now in its 7<sup>th</sup> year is the only international event dedicated to manufacturers, end-users and integrators working in the fields of Aviation, Maritime, Supply Chain and Mass Transit Security.

TranSec World Expo's 2009 Conference Programmes features the strongest line up of topics and industry leaders to date.

The aviation content of the conference programme includes papers from **Mr Antonio Preto**, Head of Cabinet for Commissioner of Transport, European Commission - Opening the Pandora's Box of a More Open Security Regime.

**Mr Ian Hutcheson**, Security Director, BAA Airports Limited presents The Changing Face of Aviation Security in 2009

**Mr George L Zaur**, Senior Science Advisor, Transportation Security Administration presents a paper entitled Liquid Detection & Screening Proposals. Harmonisation between the EU and US.

**Mr Christian Dupont**, Head of Unit, Maritime Security, European Commission has a paper on Current Threats and How Can Current Maritime Security Regimes Protect Against Terrorist Attacks, Piracy and Mode Failure?

## DIARY

- March 30 – April 1st, 2009 at the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver in Vancouver, BC, Canada. An International Summit focusing on The Future of Human Error Management in Aviation. For more information, or to register, to go: [www.chcsafetyqualitysummit.com](http://www.chcsafetyqualitysummit.com).
- 21-23 April 2009 BAPCO, Islington. The Annual International BAPCO (British Association of Public Safety Communications Officers) Conference and Exhibition will deliver more variety and a greater choice of sessions for practitioners at the Business Design Centre, Islington, London.
- Alongside the conference, the free to attend, BAPCO exhibition (22<sup>nd</sup>- 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2009) enables delegates and visitors to meet over 100 specialist suppliers of tried and tested technologies, and to see brand new product launches and future public safety communications systems. BAPCO 2009 is a trade-only event. Delegates and visitors can register online by visiting [www.bapco.co.uk](http://www.bapco.co.uk)
- 22-24 April 2009 EUROPOLTECH 2009 Centrum Expo XXI, Warsaw, Poland. The 4<sup>th</sup> International Police Conference and International Fair of Technology and Equipment for the police and National Security Services. [www.mtgsa.pl](http://www.mtgsa.pl)
- 27-29 April 2009 Airborne Law Enforcement Association (ALEA) Tactical Flight Officers Course, Calgary, Canada. Link: <http://www.alea.org/public/seminars/TFOCourse.aspx>
- 28-30 April 2009 Combating Piracy. The Grosvenor Victoria Hotel, London, UK Hanson Wade Ltd. 83 Victoria Street London SW1H 0HW Tel: +44 203 178 3420 [info@hansonwade.com](mailto:info@hansonwade.com)
- 6-8 May 2009. INTEGRA + SEGURIDAD 2009 (Security & Emergency Global Encounter) EXHIBITION + CONGRESS FERIA DE ZARAGOZA, SPAIN. Including CONJEPOL The 6<sup>th</sup> International Congress for Local Police Chiefs & City Councils and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Big Cities Open Forum, DIRSEG The 5<sup>th</sup> International Congress for Security Managers, CONGRESO EMERGENCIAS The 4<sup>th</sup> International Emergency related Congress.
- 11-14 May 2009 IFSEC at the NEC Birmingham. [www.ifsec.co.uk](http://www.ifsec.co.uk) including International Fire Expo 2009 Organiser: CMP Information Ltd Tel: +44 20 7921 8066 Email: [richards@cmpi.biz](mailto:richards@cmpi.biz) Website: <http://www.fire-expo.co.uk/>



[www.acpo-apa.co.uk/](http://www.acpo-apa.co.uk/) Manchester UK