

Police Aviation News

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PAR



NPAS Regionals fire up
US ALE winners & losers
Welshpool goes full time
AW169 makes UK HEMS sale



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LAW ENFORCEMENT

AUSTRALIA

QUEENSLAND: It has been a long time coming but finally it seems that the State of Queensland is going to set up a proper helicopter trial.

Back in July 2003 Galen Gunn a helicopter pilot in Australia for over 10 years running a business engaged in providing survey services to the government worked with the Police in Queensland to provide them with an airborne platform for their security needs mainly relating to the world cup rugby that year. Gunn sought the help of ALEA in the USA to get the equipment and an MD500 helicopter together. The operation used a pre-owned [ex-North Wales Police UK] Wescam sensor and was seeking other options after the trial via ALEA but there was no longer term activity.

Until that time air support was a fixed wing transport service mainly transporting officers across the vast state and after the helicopter trial it returned to that model.

In January 2004 the Queensland Opposition was promising a helicopter for the police service if it won the upcoming election. The promise was made late in the campaign as the opposition performed badly in the polls.

In August 2006 individuals in the Queensland Police Service were gathering information on the AStar B2 and B3 in relation to the preparation of submissions based on the West Coast US model of air operations but although positive articles appeared in local police magazines but there were no signs of an alteration in the negative official position.

Last month, in an apparent easing of the negativity, it was announced a six-month trial of a police helicopter is being financed by Gold Coast City Council. The city has 530,000 residents but entertains some 11.4 million visitors each year. The 'Council is spending \$500,000 on the helicopter trial, which Police Minister Neil Roberts says could lead to a permanent service.

There is no long-term commitment for council funding apart from the trial period which will be for six months, starting before Christmas. Operational parameters have yet to be decided but it is expected that the commercial operation will provide a basic observation platform with recourse to a rescue hoist. Police will provide an officer to accompany each flight as well as communications equipment. [GCCC/PAR]

FRONT COVER: *An unusual front cover this month! The Goodwood Festival of Speed in Sussex put on an associated air event on the airfield but it was not well promoted or a sparkling success for the exhibitors! The stars of the day were not the likes of Beechcraft, Honeywell, Powervamp and Red Box—indeed they were largely ignored by the truly massive crowd especially as they were being entertained by the Red Arrows over the main show and did not need to traipse all the way to the landing ground! The event may need tweaking if it is to continue with an air element! [Image:PAR]*

BAHRAIN

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR: Honeywell/Skyforce has delivered four Observer Mark III mapping systems for use on the police helicopter fleet. Mainly comprising Bell 412 helicopters it is believed that a system is also for the Bell 427 delivered in recent years.

ESTONIA

BORDER GUARD: The Estonian Police and Border Guard have recently have taken delivery of a COFDM Microwave Downlink System designed and manufactured by Enterprise Control Systems Ltd (ECS) to equip their new AW139 medium twin helicopters. . The COFDM system includes the capability to uplink tactical information such as real-time video, JPEG files, and camera telemetry such as Pan, Tilt and Zoom and data to the source. This latest sale confirms the growing success of ECS's range of COFDM Uplink/Downlink systems, which are currently supplied to a large number of International helicopter providers and Police Forces alike. [ECS]

FRANCE

The French Gendarmerie, long standing customers of ECS COFDM helicopter downlink equipment, have recently enhanced their communications capability by taking delivery of the new ECS Handyview portable COFDM receiver. This is a fully integrated unit which provides instantaneous monitoring of COFDM modulated signals.

ECS has provided the Gendarmerie with an extensive range of COFDM equipment in the past to assist in the varied air surveillance and SAR missions of their EC135 helicopters. The Handyview is the latest in its range of portable monitoring terminals and has the benefit of being fully compatible with all previously supplied ECS COFDM equipment.

The Handyview can be used in the diversity operation using two separate antennas for a 6-8 dB signal improvement with the addition of an external antenna and block down-converter. It is available in standard frequency bands between 1.3 and 5.3 GHz. At a nominal weight of 2.6 kg it is one of the lightest professional receivers on the World market. [ECS]

Meanwhile the arrival of the new EC135 fleet is progressively displacing the long standing fleet of Eurocopter [Aerospatiale] AS350BA Ecureuil helicopters. Next month one of the old fleet comes up for sale by tender. Serial number 1809 acquired for Gendarmerie service in the summer of 1985 and operated as JCJ throughout its service is being offered for sale by tender on September 20 by the Directorate General of Armement [DGA].

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MALTA

AFM: The second example of the Hawker Beechcraft B200 King Air D-IMPB [c/n BB-2018, N8018J] was delivered to Aerodata, Braunschweig, Germany via Glasgow in June 2011. It is due for delivery to the AFM in March 2012 and to take up the marks AS1227. The first of the pair of King Air aircraft AS1126 was delivered earlier this year and appeared at the recent Paris Air Show. See the report on the aircraft at the event on the *Police Aviation News* web site. [AFM/Iain Mackenzie]

NORWAY

OSLO: In the wake of the car bomb explosion and mass shooting questions are being raised as to why it took Norwegian police and special forces an hour to reach the island of Utoya - as gunman Anders Behring Breivik indiscriminately opened fire on his victims – and that included the only police officer on the island at the time. It transpires that an off-duty plain-clothes officer died in the gunfire.

The police addressed the questions as best it could; a spokesman pointed out that the dedicated police helicopters are only useful for observation, not for transporting groups of armed police. Only a single police helicopter covers Norway, when the EC135T2 is unavailable it has an AS350 back-up – neither can ferry more than one or two armed officers. For air transport the police rely upon the military.

Special forces in Oslo did not have an operative helicopter available that could take them straight to the island and rather than wait for one to be ferried to them they elected to travel by road. When they arrived after a 28 mile trip by road to Hoenefoss, opposite the island they could not find a suitable boat to use.

Ed: The police put an observation helicopter up over the island but it was unable to intervene. Police air operations in the region only started in 1999 but it was not until 2004 that the EC135 entered service under a 5 year contract with Pegasus Helicopters in Oslo. No significant progress has been made since. Whether this unique event will lead to the police and special forces receiving enhanced air support remains to be seen.

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PARAGUAY

The Policia Nacional Paraguay took delivery of its first helicopter in April 2010 the fleet of three Robinson R44 fleet are fitted with FLIR 8500 sensors and were operational from last summer under the Agrupacion Especializada [Specialised Group] with a staff of 15, one storage hangar and another set aside for maintenance. The Spanish company Intercopters based in Madrid claim to be operating the three R44s on behalf of the Paraguayan Police.

More recently two examples of the UH-1H were handed over to the Agrupacion Especializada on June 13, 2011. The pair were originally manufactured in 1963 and 1966 and are the first of four purchased. The helicopters were prepared by US company Northwest Rotorcraft LLC.

PHILIPPINES

NATIONAL POLICE: Enquiries continue in the Philippines as it is alleged that Senator Panfilo "Ping" Lacson, a former PNP Chief, claims that the three Robinson R44 helicopters purchased in 2009 were not up to the task they were acquired for. The trio of light helicopters for use by the Specialist Action Force [SAF] cost 100M in local currency.

Lacson said the used light police operational helicopters bought from Manila Aerospace Products Trading Corp. (MAPTRA) were misrepresented as brand new.

The PNP started talks with MAPTRA for one equipped light police operational helicopter (LPOH) and two standard LPOHs, it is claimed that the requirement of the SAF was for three equipped LPOHs. During the negotiations the requirement for role equipment was downgraded on two airframes – but they were supposed to be new airframes. It seems that the two R44 Raven I helicopters have evidence of prior ownership and use as far back as 2004.

The two helicopters were allegedly overpriced and unable to be used in their intended flight



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profiles since they have no role equipment capabilities.

Lacson claims that the two airframes were supposed to be priced at US\$100,000 each but the amount paid was around seven times greater, a figure higher than the list price for new examples direct from Robinson [US\$348,000].

The allegations have been directed towards former President Jose Miguel Arroyo and his wife Gloria Macapagal Arroyo who own LTA Inc, a company which allegedly has links to the deal. The Arroyo's have previously been linked to money laundering allegations.

The three aircraft have been taken from service while the arguments continue.

SEYCHELLES

Two examples of the Harbin Y-12 have been donated by the Chinese Government to the Seychelles. As reported earlier this year in PAN there is an increasing threat to the islands from sea pirates and as a result better able neighbours are donating equipment and resources. India has already deployed maritime surveillance aircraft and has a new Dornier 228 and a pair of Chetak helicopters assigned to bolster the current depleted fleet. Meanwhile the existing fleet is reliant upon a single DHC-6 Twin Otter. In June L-3 WESCAM announced an order from CAE Aviation for one MX™-15 for the Twin Otter in support of maritime surveillance, fisheries protection and anti-piracy missions.

China delivered the two Harbin Y-12 fixed wing in June, one will be used for patrol and the other by the Island Development Company.

In the past the Seychelles has used a variety of aircraft that are no longer in service including examples of the B-N2A-21 Maritime Defender, Socata Rallye 235E, Cessna Citation 560, HAL Chetak, Swearingen SA226T Merlin and Cessna F406 Caravan II.

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SWEDEN

NATIONAL POLICE: Night Flight Concepts has been selected to provide its NVIO™ NVG (Night Vision Goggle) Computer-Based Training to the Swedish National Police, National Bureau of Investigation. The National Bureau of Investigation includes the Police Helicopter Service which is tasked with providing search and reconnaissance aircraft and personnel in support of the day to day operations and mission of National Bureau of Investigation.



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UNITED KINGDOM

NATIONAL: Last month Helitech announced that Chief Constable Alex Marshall, Hampshire Constabulary, Chief Constable and Lead on National Police Air Support (NPAS) is to address the conference at the event on the morning of September 29th. This is not a police aviation conference but it includes a token three items linked by name to the 'Blue Light' sector. In addition to Chief Constable Alex Marshall there are papers by Carl Crenshaw a representative of Bell Helicopter who are sponsors and another from Richard Folkes, AgustaWestland. The Marshall paper is a Keynote address and should provide an opportunity for a

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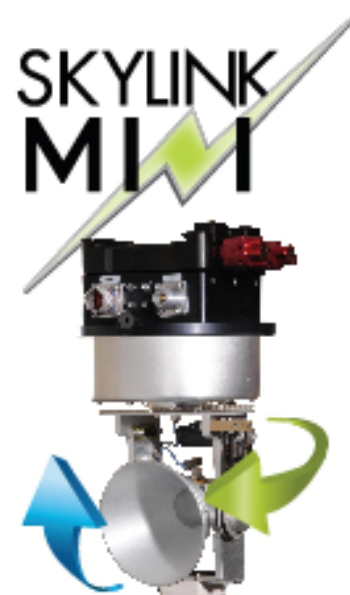
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highly interesting piece but the other two are likely to be simply sales pitches from two companies not currently enjoying a presence in UK police aviation.

Whether this event will provide open discussion on the progress of the still controversial NPAS remains unclear.

Meanwhile Alex Marshall has been ramping up the NPAS story via the BBC and receiving some positive feedback from his own and surrounding forces.

Dorset are already talking themselves into devolving air support to NPAS – their MD902 helicopter is due to leave the force HQ in Devizes and move to Hurn Airport, Bournemouth. The move promises to improve the air support for the western section of Hampshire police area [the first one to place its BN2 Defender based unit on the altar of NPAS cuts]. The plan saves Dorset police around £1M per year, halving its current £2M cost in covering about 1,000 incidents each year.

The Chief Constable, Martin Baker backs the scheme but there are words of dissent from Clive Chamberlain of the Dorset Police Federation, he cautions "It's a vast county. To cut back could put lives at risk."

In contrast John Apter the Chairman of the Police Federation in Hampshire who held similar views when the Hampshire fixed wing was closed down has been won around and now says that since the changes took place he has had good feedback from his members. "I would try and reassure my friends in Dorset that we have seen an increase in air support."

On checking with John he told PAN...

"... Yes ... following feedback from those I represent the current structure of air support is being greeted positively.

"The only issues for me were the potential limited response to the IOW and the far Western areas of the New Forest, what I am told is that under the National project we (Hampshire and IOW) would have the use of the Dorset aircraft, so for us we 'should' have good cover."

Meanwhile during last month the Warwickshire Police Authority agreed to sign up to the

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NPAS. If as expected all Police Authorities across England and Wales ratify the proposal the new service will launch from April 1, 2012.

This proposal could result in savings of £85,000 based on the provision of the current 309 flying hours per year. Warwickshire currently enjoys over 300 hours annually provided by a single Eurocopter EC135 which was purchased in 2007. The aircraft is managed through the East Midlands Air Support Unit, a consortium arrangement between Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire.

CLEVELAND: At a local level there are rumblings about the cost of the existing arrangements for air support in Cleveland. There is little doubt that the small force is feeling the strain of operating an expensive and sophisticated twin-engine helicopter as major cuts are being called for. The cuts are resulting in manpower being reduced and some believe that removing air support might alleviate those reductions.

In the past the small force was one of three in a three force consortium called North East with two aircraft – a helicopter and a fixed wing located at separate bases in the north [Northumbria] and south [Durham and Cleveland] of the area covered. That arrangement evolved to a similarly based pair of EC135T helicopters. When it was decided by other partners in the operation that one EC135 should go Cleveland Police demurred as they saw that it was their machine that was to be taken away, not the northern one. After much argument between the original partners Cleveland decided to go-it-alone with the older EC135T1 in 2009. That aircraft was replaced by a new EC135P2i earlier this year.

Despite the split the helicopter is still used by other forces and between January and June this year it was used 39 times outside the Cleveland area under mutual aid agreements. Cleveland Police has previously declined to explain whether this is a cash arrangement and how much money, if any, exchanges hands towards the running costs of the helicopter.

According to figures released it costs £1.685M to operate the helicopter which includes piloting, ten police officers who work in the unit, insurance, fuel, maintenance and the cost of the base. Figures suggesting that each flight cost in the region of £150 appear erroneous.

It has been calculated that the helicopter's contribution towards saving police time between January and June this year amounts to 275,436 officer hours – this is based upon the O'Donnell Theory whereby a ten minute search by helicopter is calculated as taking one or two hours for officers on foot.

The new aircraft based at Durham Tees Valley airport cost around £4.98M and attracted a Home Office grant of just over £1.5M and £1M for the trade in of the previous helicopter to help pay for it. Between January and June this year the helicopter flew for 375 hours, attended 1,047 incidents and made 199 arrests. These incidents have included 152 burglaries, 163 vehicle crimes, 151 drugs incidents, 38 involving fire arms and eight search and rescue calls. [Gazette]

DEVON & CORNWALL: NPAS seems to be raising hackles wherever it goes but time is clearly a healer in the West Country. A few months from an apparent failure to get on with all that NPAS threatened has become muted in Exeter. The authorities at Devon & Corn-

Reims F406 Land & Sea Surveillance

wall Police seemed to take exception to having their air support operation whisked away from them. It is currently located at the police headquarters Middlemoor, Exeter, Devon and co-located with the Devon Air Ambulance.

At a meeting late last year the Police Authority identified '...a risk that the land that the helicopter uses at present could be seized by Government for the provision of the National Police Air Service.' That would result in having NPAS on their extensive and well kept lawns and they seemed not to want that. As a direct result they sought to relocate the helicopter off their green fields thereby enabling '...the continuity of the Middlemoor site.'

Negotiations commenced with Exeter Airport but there were fears that the move would require substantial investment to provide the necessary infrastructure.

Six months later the mood had changed. By joining NPAS the business case was showing a saving of £320,000 per annum over existing air support costs. The Police Authority is to transfer the assets and existing staff over to NPAS and will in turn pay an annual running cost and contribution to capital costs. In return the authority is to receive a credit from NPAS for the remaining 7 years of the life of their EC145. NPAS requires a final decision by the end of September.

Ed: An instance where a Police Authority has bowed to the inevitable - as no doubt all will in due course. The lawns at Middlemoor will return to grass.

NPAS can perhaps be blamed for putting the mockers on the UK police aviation future for the AgustaWestland A109, the MD902 Explorer and the EC145 as there is a clear preference being suggested for a single type and it does not require too much intelligence to say that the type of choice is the EC135P2.

The direct losers in this process at Exeter are of course the Devon Air Ambulance – and the same can be said for other air ambulance operations under NPAS threat at Wiltshire and perhaps even Sussex. The DAAT charity are working with these ongoing plans to move [back] to Exeter Airport and are being fully informed on the plan. A new build base is planned.

MIDLANDS: One element of progress that the launch of the NPAS stalled and potentially modified was a cooperation programme involving all the police aviation units in the Midlands. Finally the NPAS agreed version of this cooperation plan got under way early in July. Borderless air support in the Midlands known as CRASU - Central Region Air Support Unit – amounts to four ASU's covering all the Midlands area. Eight forces in the region are combining their air support responses by operating a nearest to task system. The forces involved are: West Midlands, West Mercia, Staffs, Warwickshire, Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire.

NORTH WEST: Another new regional police air operations service took to the skies across the North West last month to offer the region a 'flexible, cost-effective, cross-border helicopter fleet.'

The North West Air Operations Group is a regional collaboration between five forces and police authorities, and will operate four helicopters. The new service will dispatch the aircraft from a regional command desk to incidents across Cheshire, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Merseyside and North Wales.

The collaboration will cut one helicopter and base [nominally 20% of overall resources] and allow for around 11% savings, while offering an 'improved' air support service. Benefits of the new arrangement include the facility to



have the closest helicopter deployed quickly to any incident and if there are two incidents in the same force area, then two helicopters can be deployed as necessary.

The new arrangement also prepares the North West for the National Police Air Service, which is set to launch in 2012.

Merseyside Superintendent, Chris Markey, is the regional lead for the North West Air Operations Group and Merseyside Police the lead force for the command and control of the fleet. Merseyside Police Authority is accountable for the finances of the Group.

Superintendent, Chris Markey, said:

‘The new arrangement for police helicopters in the North West prepares us for the future of air support nationally, while offering a high-quality, flexible, cross-border service with the ultimate aim of making the North West a better and safer place.’ [Merseyside Police]

Ed: Merseyside closed their unit in the middle of last month and the ‘new’ replacement service Northwest Air Operations commenced a couple of days later. The new entity is simply the old with one less airframe and some extensive hype. The Merseyside EC135T2 will be retained tucked away in its hangar to see if the scheme works but as this is actually just an existing entity given a name [but one less airframe] there is little doubt that it will work.

A concurrent anonymous forum posting suggested that resources were somewhat stretched for the start – just one of the four helicopters being on-line as it commenced work. No mention has been made about the Greater Manchester Defender and its role in this consortium.

Previous page Lancashire EC135T2 G-LASU, this page top: North Wales EC135P2+ G-NWOI, Greater Manchester MD902 G-GMPX and Cheshire EC135P2+ G-CPOA [Police Images]



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PSNI: It is claimed by the Chairman of the local Police Federation that PSNI needs to re-configure its operations in the wake of recent events and an ongoing terror threat.

Terry Spence says that the Province was facing the most difficult situation for many years, and that the Service had to be resourced to deal with it. He has repeatedly warned of the threat from a new generation of dissidents.

Already more than 30 officers and their families had been forced from their homes by terrorist threats in recent months, Constable Ronan Kerr had been killed and other officers injured in attacks. [Police Oracle]

UNITED STATES

NATIONAL: To coincide with the annual Airborne Law Enforcement Association [ALEA] convention – this year in New Orleans - American Eurocopter [AEC] and Bell Helicopter made training announcements primarily aimed at the US ALE community.

AEC is introducing a new safety innovation for helicopter operators: an Inadvertent Instrument Meteorological Conditions (IIMC) Training Course in the AS350 Level B Flight & Mission Training Simulator. The course is applicable to all mission environments and American Eurocopter elected to introduce the course at ALEA in light of the recent NTSB recommendation for ALEA to require Inadvertent IMC recovery training in its accreditation standards.

American Eurocopter's Indra AS350 flight and mission simulator was designed to provide training for aircraft emergency procedures, NVG training, Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (HEMS) mission training, and Airborne Law Enforcement (ALE) mission training. With its full cabin, the simulator is also ideal for Crew Resource Management (CRM) training.

The AS350 simulator programming can be customized to accommodate various settings and scenarios. With the new Inadvertent IMC course, the simulator can incorporate inadvertent IMC conditions into customer-specific missions and environments.

Bell Helicopter announced that the Bell Helicopter Training Academy (BTA) has launched a new Tactical Flight Officer course.

Designed as a two-part training programme including an on-line academic session and resident hands-on training, the Bell Helicopter Tactical Flight Officer course presents officers with the practical skills and active engagement needed for aerial mission success in a safe and controlled environment.

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approach to training that is self paced and provides maximum flexibility. Academic course topics include an introduction to Airborne Law Enforcement; Helicopter Safety and Operations; Crew Resource Management and Mission Decision Making; Helicopter Systems; Basic Helicopter Operations; Aeromedical Factors and Knowledge; Night Operations and Introduction to Patrol, and Tactical Procedures.

Conducted at the Bell Helicopter Training Academy in Fort Worth, Texas, the resident portion of the course uses a FILR equipped Flight Training Device (FTD) to provide realistic, action-based scenarios in a various environmental conditions. The benefits of using an FTD include allowing for Tactical Flight Officer and Pilot coordination training in confined area approach, obstacle clearance, inadvertent IMC procedures and instrument approach procedures. [AEC/Bell]

CALIFORNIA: The annual American Heroes Air Show scheduled for July 16, 2011 at the Hansen Dam Sports Complex, Los Angeles was called off due to difficulties with ensuring the stars of the show – the helicopters - were able to attend and the likelihood of severe traffic congestion.

At the core of the closure was the closure of the 405 Freeway in late May. It was initially believed that attendees would get around the closure but it later became clear that many law enforcement organisations who have over the years provided a significant presence at the event were being extracted to provide an active standby and to fly surveillance missions to assess traffic flow during the same weekend. Others, including Search & Rescue teams and aircraft declined to attend so they too could be on active standby for any issues that may arise due to increased traffic flow as people use the canyon roads for alternative routes.

The American Heroes Show has been held in and around Los Angeles since 1993.

Ed: Subsequent feedback relating to the actual effect of this road closure on traffic suggests there was an over-reaction by the authorities. Traffic difficulties were not as severe as expected.

The California Highway Patrol has awarded Soloy Aviation Solutions a contract to supply and fit Soloy's wing mounted observation camera platform on their Cessna Ce206 "Sentinel" turbine conversion fixed wing patrol aircraft.

Until now, CHP has been using a camera mounted to the airframe's empennage, forward of the tail section. Relocation of the camera to the wing was prompted by significant airflow disturbance over the tail which produced undesirable structural loading of the empennage. Soloy's solution utilises the C-206's stout high wing, their STC'd wing mount places the camera outboard of the wing strut in a more robust location and minimizes vibration to/from the airframe. This location further allows a wider unobstructed viewing angle to the ground and visibility for the camera operator. It also places the camera away from the hot exhaust trail emitted from the turbine engine.

The mount is adaptable to virtually all the common sized cameras manufactured by all ma-

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major camera manufacturers such as FLIR and L3. Installation is clean and very straight forward and can be readily removed for camera maintenance. The CHP contract is Soloy's first for their new camera mount.

The camera wing mount is one element to Soloy's total airborne observation platform. Although adaptable to piston powered Cessna 206 aircraft, Soloy offers a revolutionary and complete airborne 206 observation package on their Mk II turbine powered "Sentinel" aircraft, which begins with an engine conversion replacing the piston powered Continental platform with the FAA certified Mk II turbine conversion featuring a 450hp Rolls Royce 250-B17 engine.

In addition to the camera mount and turbine conversion, the Sentinel observation package offers an ergonomically designed rear observer's station with 270 degree articulating seat, full length LH observation window, raised headliner, four point harnesses for pilot and co-pilot as well as a much larger generator to power the additional electrical needed by law enforcement operations. [Soloy]



California's ABLE programme is now grounded for good but in the background there are moves for the potential commercial operation of some or all of the same three EC120 aircraft in support of air support in the area.

Meanwhile both cities will begin contracting police helicopter services with the Huntington Beach (CA) Police Department.

GEORGIA: Fayette County Sheriff's Dept., has acquired a modern replacement for its military surplus Bell OH-58C N338SP. The unit based in Fayetteville, GA selected a 2006 AS350 B2 helicopter c/n 4188 N1012K – now N338FC – for role equipping to perform a wide variety of missions that include daily patrols and traffic enforcement for Fayette County. It is equipped with a sensor turret and searchlight.

"Our previous aircraft was in service with the U.S. Army long before it served the citizens of Fayette County, and we were running into high maintenance costs and down time issues," explained Captain Greg Craft, Fayette County Sheriff's Office Aviation Unit. "We selected the AS350 B2 because it provides performance and durability that has been proven throughout the U.S. law enforcement community." [AEC]



NEW JERSEY: The State Police have been trying to sell off its existing fleet of Bell and Sikorsky S-76 helicopters to defray the cost of a new fleet of five AgustaWestland AW139s it has already ordered at a cost of \$63M.

To date the customers have been hard to find. The Department of Law and Public Safety thought it could sell two of the old fleet in the last fiscal year for \$7M, and had already allocated the expected windfall to pay salaries. But it sold only one, a small Bell model used mostly for training, on an online auction website for just \$642,000. As a result taxpayers were faced with meeting the \$6.4M shortfall.

During a budget hearing in May 2010, Assemblywoman Joan Quigley asked the Attorney General if the state would really get \$3.5M for each of the four old helicopters and was assured that the market was still 'very active and vibrant.' By this year doubts had set in as the market plummeted and interest in the expensive S-76's waned. Now the talk is of 'fantasy budgeting' rather than vibrancy.

In the recent past the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey sold off its two Sikorsky helicopters, the 2003 craft sold for \$3.3M and the 1984 craft sold for \$1M. The five Sikorsky's owned by New Jersey are more than 20 years old.

Three of the new helicopters are in service but not yet certified for MedEvac missions by the Federal Aviation Administration. Two more are expected by early next year.

TEXAS: The Arlington Police Department has commenced an experiment in using unmanned aircraft to assist in law enforcement.

The department has been testing and evaluating two battery-operated, remote-controlled aircraft over a small, restricted airspace near Lake Arlington Dam, away from populated areas.

Restrictions in place are significant. The aircraft are flown only in daylight and within a restricted airspace – remaining within the pilot's line of sight and up to an altitude of 400 feet. The operators have to hold the same license as a commercial aircraft pilot.

The drones being used in this experiment look like nothing more than 20 inch long model helicopters weighing in at 11 pounds.

The aircraft are capable of carrying cameras that shoot high-quality still pictures and video and have night-vision capability. The aircraft also have heat-sensing technology the fire department can use.

Arlington hopes to move to the next phase by September, which, with FAA approval, would expand the airspace in which the unmanned aircraft can fly. The next stage 'mission ready' would hopefully be by next January - with FAA approval police could use the craft in emergency situations.

The City of Houston's money-saving cuts continue, this time essentially grounding the police department's helicopters. Officials have stated that the department's helicopter time in the sky has been cut from about 20 hours a day to less than three hours a day. The fuel budget has been slashed by 75%.

Mayor Annise Parker has defended her police chief's decision to scale back the flying time for HPD's helicopters. The helicopter fleet is not grounded, it is still being dispatched to emergencies, backing up officers. The cuts are to limit the amount of general flight time.

The Houston Police Officers Union has pointed out that the 28 pilots will be underutilised.

Ed: In recent times HPD has had more than its fair share of problems. In 2008 MD Helicopters and the Houston Police Department announced that the department would be purchasing 8 new MD500E helicopters. In addition to the new MD 500s, the department also recently ordered 3 new Schweizer 300 helicopters for training. Subsequently MD failed to deliver and some of the 500E orders were cancelled



VIRGINIA: Completion centre, Metro Aviation, Inc., was showing their latest comprehensive EC145 customisation for the Virginia State Police [VSP] Med Flight during the ALEA Annual Conference and Exposition in New Orleans, Louisiana last month.

Metro Aviation received a competitive bid award to provide wide-ranging completion services to the State of Virginia for their two new EC145 helicopters received in a "green" condition. The aircraft is one of a limited few operated in the United States in a dual role of AMS and law enforcement and is equipped with a full complement of tactical communications equipment, hoist and other law enforcement equipment along with complete medical mission package. Additional features include a single pilot IFR cockpit and night vision compatible pilot and crew stations. The aluminium air medical floor designed and manufactured by the company now includes longitudinal aircraft datum reference points milled into the surface to aid crews in quickly determining weight and balance parameters during hoist operations. Conversion from an air medical role to an airborne law enforcement mission can be accomplished quickly and easily.

Ed: The VSP Med Flight currently operates two BO105 and one BK117C1. Plans have been extant for the Bolkow's to be replaced since 2004.

VIETNAM

SEA POLICE: At a meeting at the summit of Asian sea police forces in Hanoi on July 7 Lt. General Pham Duc Linh spoke of his hopes and aspirations for the aviation capabilities of the force. The sea police force was established in August 1998, under the management of the Ministry of Defence and has fisheries and coast guard duties in Vietnamese waters.

The size of Vietnam's waters has placed undue strain on existing resources so the sea police force cannot reach remote waters often. Existing vessels are not safe in bad weather and inappropriate for long voyages and this reduces effectiveness to around 30-40%. The limitations have obliged the main agencies - the Sea Police, the navy, the border guard and the Agency for Aquatic Resource Development and Protection to cooperate with Chinese counterparts to increase capability.

The future plan will see the sea police force obtaining ships of over 2,000 tons, which can make 40-day voyages in very bad weather, salvage ships, heliports, medical cabins which can provide first aid to 120 people at the same time and aircrafts to patrol the entire continental shelf of Vietnam from early 2012. The best known air resource awaited is a new build Viking Series 400 Twin Otter amphibian.

Six examples of the Twin Otter have been ordered from Viking Air of Victoria, BC, Canada and the Vietnam Navy finalised a purchase agreement for six DHC-6 Twin Otter Series 400 aircraft – the first ever western built aircraft, and forming the Navy's initial fixed wing aircraft Air Wing.

The Series 400 Twin Otters are scheduled for delivery between 2012 and 2014, and will be equipped for amphibious operations. The six aircraft will be configured with convertible interiors covering VIP, commuter, and utility layouts, with three of the six designated "Guardian 400" maritime patrol variants, ideally suited for maritime operations.

Also included in the agreement are sensor package options, air conditioning, galley and lavatory installations, and a comprehensive spares support package. All technical and flight training from ab-initio through commercial multi engine, and including Twin Otter Series 400 amphibious float operating experience will be provided by Viking's sister organization Pacific Sky Aviation, a flight training unit located in Victoria International Airport, Canada.

Representatives of the Vietnamese Navy, in collaboration with the GAET Company from the Ministry of Defense, have been working with Viking and its local representative Canam Active Enterprises Inc. over the past several years to develop the contract. Following an extensive evaluation and configuration phase, the DHC-6 Series 400 was selected as best suited to meet the operational requirements of the Vietnam Navy.



AIR AMBULANCE

GERMANY

Eurocopter has delivered the 1,000th EC135 to its new owner fifteen years after the first of these helicopters rolled off the production line at the Eurocopter plant in Donauwörth, Germany.

Peter Meyer, the President of ADAC, Germany's largest automobile club and one of Eurocopter's longest-standing major customers accepted the aircraft on behalf of the organisation. The new arrival brings the organisation's air rescue fleet up to a total of 51 aircraft, including BK117 variants and the EC135.

Right from the start ADAC has operated Eurocopter helicopters including the MBB BO105 over 40 years ago, followed by the BK117, introduced in 1984, and the EC135 in 1996.

In 1996 ADAC was one of the first operators to fly this type of aircraft, which was later to become the world's most popular light twin helicopter, with no less than 220 customers worldwide. ADAC has clocked up over 95,000 flight hours with its fleet of 32 EC135s. [EC]

IRELAND

A family was left distraught after their 14-year-old daughter missed out on a life-saving liver transplant operation in London because the Irish government's health service couldn't find a suitable plane to transfer her to England.

Housebound Meadh McGivern has been waiting on a suitable liver organ donation since last August. The family received a call to tell them that a suitable liver had become available at the Kings College Hospital, London, England and they were rushed to Sligo airport under a police escort and about to board a Coast Guard helicopter when health department officials cancelled the trip due to transport difficulties and a lack of suitable aircraft from government and commercial sources.

The only helicopter available wouldn't have made it to London in time while a plane offered by the Irish air force was rejected by the health officials. An air force helicopter normally used was on a rescue mission elsewhere and the health service then declined the offer of a fixed-wing plane from the Irish Air Corps and opted instead for a Coast Guard helicopter that was unable to get the girl to London in time.

PHILLIPINES

A fixed wing air ambulance service to be manned by volunteer doctors has been set up at the Asian Hospital in Alabang. A company called Cargohaus, part of the Lina Group, is fielding a newly acquired convertible Cessna 208B Grand Caravan RP-C 6021 to undertake the operation.

This operation was launched at the hangar used by the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) last month. The aircraft's first official flight was on July 23 when it transported several doctors and specialists to Caticlan to conduct a free medical-dental mission. [Malaya]

SOUTH AFRICA

De Beers and Netcare911, a subsidiary of the hospital and doctor network Netcare Ltd., recently launched an initiative to use De Beers chairman Nicky Oppenheimer's long-range twin-engine AgustaWestland AW139 helicopter for health and emergency services in South Africa. The initiative was the brainchild of Oppenheimer and Dr. Anchen Laubscher, who is the medical director of Netcare 911.

The helicopter has been reconfigured to take three patients and eight medical professionals and provides IFR capability and a significant option to extend range. It will be flown by six US pilots and they are familiarising themselves with the ten most-frequented hospital sites in Gauteng province.

SWITZERLAND

REGA: The rescue service has received authorisation to carry out all weather approaches in Bern. The federal office of the civil aviation (OFAC) has just granted – for the first time to civil helicopters – the authorisation to carry out new procedures to enable them to fly into the hospital helipad at the Ile of Bern.

During the next few years Rega will train more of its pilots in instrument flying to include a growing number of hospitals in all weather service. [REGA]



The crew based at Locarno carried out a spectacular rescue at Lavertezzo, in the Verzasca Valley last month. Two young Swiss German's stranded on a boulder right in the middle of the river winched to safety by an A109 crew.

The two youths who were on vacation with some friends had climbed on a big boulder in the middle of the river Verzasca but became stranded when the level of the river unexpectedly and quickly rose. Their friends, still on the river bank and safe, raised the alarm. [REGA]

UNITED KINGDOM

NATIONAL: Across the air ambulance community there have been stories highlighting interlopers taking advantage of one stream of charity fund raising. Countrywide there are reports of a company – or companies – often with East European links intercepting old clothing supplies by calling door-to-door. Many air ambulance charities rely upon other than doorstep collections leaving the way open for such as 'Air Ambulance' to misrepresent an otherwise regularly used and lucrative fundraising activity.

BASL: A former ADAC *Luftrettung GmbH* [German Civil Air Rescue Service ADAC] 1998 EC135T1 (0044) D-HJAR arrived at Bonds at Staverton on July 6. BASL state that its use is to cover a short term air ambulance contract as all their resources are currently in operation. [Helihub/BASL]

A banner for the SAR & CSAR ASIA exhibition. On the left, the logo features the word 'SHEPARD' in a small red box above 'SAR' in large orange letters, with '& CSAR ASIA' below it. To the right of the logo is a collage of four images: a red helicopter, a white stretcher, a person in a red jacket, and a white boat. Below the logo and collage, the text reads 'Exhibition & Conference | 6-7 December 2011 | Holiday Inn Atrium Singapore, Singapore'.

CHILDREN'S AIR AMBULANCE: The original south Devon based TCAA continues to seek funding from charitable sources. In its latest move families, schools and groups in the Droitwich area of Birmingham are being encouraged to hold a teddy bears picnic this summer to help launch England's first ever air ambulance for children.

The TCAA hopes to put the first paediatric service in the air to help transfer seriously sick children, from newborn to 16-year-olds, to specialist children's hospitals across the country. The Teddy Bears Picnics Project has been launched to help raise both awareness and funds for the service in a bid to ensure it launches this year – a similar message to that being put out for a number of years.

Nicola Howkins, TCAA chief executive, said: "We want to launch our first helicopter later this year with the longer aim of having three aircraft in the air providing 24-hour emergency transfers 365 days a year."

Ed: PAN is unaware of any contract being in place with any manufacturer or agent able to provide an aircraft within the next six months of this year.

Enquiries to some of the most likely sources of an aircraft 'later this year' suggest that while there are discussions taking place with existing operations to undertake meaningful paediatric operations well into the future there is nothing in place that would seem to meet the Howkins statement.

It may be assumed that this should be taken as a statement of intent to launch such a service and order an aircraft for 2012-13 entry into service.

ESSEX: On Friday (8 July), the Essex and Herts. Air Ambulance Trust (EHAAT) hosted a special event at the Essex Air Ambulance Air Base on Earls Colne airfield to celebrate the official launch of the NEW Visitor Centre and the new home of the life-saving aircraft. VIP guests will be joining EHAAT representatives to officially open the new Air Ambulance Visitor Centre, which is one of the first of its kind in the UK.

John Webb (Provincial Grand Master of Essex) presents a cheque to Jane Gurney (EHAAT Executive Director) and Brian Shipley (Chair of Trustees)



The Visitor Centre has been made possible with a grant from ICAP following their annual Charity Day in 2009. This new facility, which includes a number of interactive initiatives, is designed to empower visitors to find, explore and learn about the work of the Trust. This is an important milestone for EHAAT as it is the culmination of a 5 year long journey.

Jean Robinson, who led the relocation project said: "We are very excited to have officially opened the Visitor Centre alongside the newly relocated Essex Air Ambulance Airbase at Earls Colne. It has been an incredible five year journey from the outset. The Visitor Centre will enable all of our supporters of any age to see the work of the helicopter from a new perspective. We do hope that the educational visits and tours will encourage people to help support the Charity in lots of new ways. I am extremely grateful to everyone, but especially ICAP who has played such a crucial role in allowing us to build this once in a lifetime project."

Anyone wishing to visit the EHAAT Visitor Centre in Earls Colne, whether it be individuals, businesses, school groups or social groups will need to pre-book by calling the Fundraising Office on 0845 2417 690.



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The Essex Air Ambulance can now benefit from the use of a helideck at Broomfield Hospital, Chelmsford which has now been declared operational.

The need to transport patients with severe burns or trauma injuries to an acute hospital as quickly as possible means the helideck is an essential part of the new hospital wing at Broomfield. Badly injured patients are taken directly from the helicopter, with a Doctor and Paramedic in attendance, to lifts that will take them directly down to the emergency department, where they can be treated instantly by the surgical teams.

The helideck is situated on the roof of the new hospital wing and is managed by an operations officer, with the support of two other highly experienced full time members of staff, and the additional support from Trust staff volunteers who work on a rota basis. The volunteers have all had intensive training to CAA (Civil Aviation Authority) standards prior to taking up their support roles.

WALES: The charity expanded its Welshpool-based operation from a five-day service to seven days a week last month. This takes the three helicopters operated by the ten-year old service to full daylight operations with two EC135 helicopters based in Swansea in the south of Wales and Caernarfon in the north and a BO105 based at Welshpool in the central



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area close to the English border.

From its three air bases an air ambulance can be anywhere in Wales within 20 minutes of an emergency call. The cost of sustaining the three helicopters currently stands at over £5M each year. As a registered charity the service is wholly dependent on public donations, and does not receive any support from the national lottery or the government.

To date, Tuesdays and Wednesdays have been covered by the charity's aircrews in the north and south of Wales. The expanded service will ensure that the whole of Wales receives full emergency air cover week in, week out as long as fundraising is sufficient to support the flying. The seven-day operations in Welshpool will trial for six months with the aim of continuing indefinitely.

Chief executive Angela Hughes added: "The last ten years wouldn't have been possible without whole-hearted support from the people of Wales. This is an incredible landmark for the charity but our next challenge is to keep the service at seven-days and we will need your help to do that – even the smallest of donations will help to make a lifesaving difference."

WARWICKSHIRE & NORTHAMPTONSHIRE: AgustaWestland has announced that the Warwickshire & Northamptonshire Air Ambulance (WNAA) has signed a preliminary sale contract for two AW169 helicopters. The contract was signed by Andy Williamson, CEO, WNAA and Bruno Spagnolini, CEO, AgustaWestland, during a ceremony at AgustaWestland's Yeovil facility in the presence of the Rt Hon Dr Vince Cable MP, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation & Skills. The aircraft will be delivered in 2015 specially configured for the WNAA's air ambulance mission requirements.

The contract marks the entrance of the AW169 into the UK public service market and represents another outstanding success for the all new AW169 model, just a few months after its commercial launch earlier this year. A significant number of firm orders have already been logged worldwide for a range of commercial and public service applications. The AW169 helicopter was unveiled at the Farnborough International Air Show in July 2010 and is a 4.5 tonne competitor to the EC145 helicopter in weight class. New generation technologies are incorporated in the rotor system, engines, avionics, transmission and electric power generation and distribution systems. The AW169 is designed to be the most advanced and cost effective helicopter in its class for EMS, SAR, law enforcement, passenger and offshore transport and utility missions.



AgustaWestland held a launch event for the UK production of the AW169 last month. With the help of a UK Government loan production will take place in Yeovil as well as Italy.


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PAR

YORKSHIRE: The charity funded operation based in a former mill at Elland near Huddersfield and operating two owned MD902 Explorer helicopters based at Leeds/Bradford Airport in West Yorkshire and Bagby near Thirsk, North Yorkshire are moving forward in their operational objectives.

The Yorkshire Air Ambulance [YAA] HQ and both aircraft are owned and currently maintained by Specialist Aviation [MAS] at Staverton, Gloucestershire. From this month maintenance passes from MAS to Multiflight in whose hangar's the aircraft are currently located at Leeds/Bradford International – a detailed press release will accompany the day of transfer.

The charity having experience in operating leased and supplier maintained airframes has moved on to purchasing its own aircraft on mortgage, whilst retaining the same maintainer and later from the position of owning both aircraft outright. Owning rather than leasing the pair of Explorer's has saved YAA £1M each year despite having to bite the bullet on unscheduled replacement gearboxes [2] and rotor head parts. As with most operators of the Explorer there is strong brand loyalty in the face of on-going maintenance issues.

As stated the overall owner experience has led them to decide to move maintainers from MAS – the main agent for MD Helicopters in the UK – to Multiflight, the supplier of aircraft and maintenance to Great North Air Ambulance, who also own their AS365N2 helicopters.

The move requires the new provider to source suitably qualified MD engineers and will eventually free YAA from dependency on Staverton as the source for spares. Whether this will lead to keener pricing from Staverton or a need to trade directly with MD or another off-shore source remains to be seen.

Pilotage has always been MAS supplied but moves are taking place that may alter that too. They are currently looking to apply for their own AOC and are looking to recruit a Chief Pilot to develop the application, manage the operations of the helicopters and work within the Senior Management Team. The applicant will require a current JAR CPL (H) to include an existing rating on MD902 helicopters, a minimum of 2,000 hours as a PIC and 500 hours flying in a UK HEMS or similar environment. Fuller details can be found in an advert in this issue.

Facilities at the northern base at Bagby will be enhanced in time but the much lauded earlier base plans for a combined YAA HQ and operational base location near York will not be happening. Although a great deal was released on these plans at the time the whole idea was a non-starter – certainly as far as the CAA was concerned but also in financial terms. The base operations centre at Leeds/Bradford International comprises some well equipped rooms offering offices, a control and ready room and



PAR

changing and storage facilities primarily operated by National Health Service ambulance staff in a facility owned by Multiflight on the edge of the airport. It is manned during operating hours, basically the hours of daylight, year round. The multi-screen control desk is hot wired to Bagby and keeps a secure eye on that facility by CCTV as well as assigning them operationally.

The seven screens provide a range of information ranging from every call for an ambulance in Yorkshire to a group photo via mapping, EasyTask/Observer Pro and the quadview CCTV overseeing security at Bagby.

There are on average three calls a day, a tiny but important proportion of the daily ambulance tasking in the region. Many criticise the perceived level of lifesaving compared to the high cost resources involved but YAA and all the other charity air ambulances prove conclusively that the public votes overwhelmingly with its money for air ambulances year on year.

UNITED STATES

NEVADA: AgustaWestland announced that Intermountain Healthcare has taken delivery of the first of five GrandNew helicopters. The aircraft is both the first of its kind to be completed in Philadelphia with an EMS configuration and to enter operations with a US customer.



The GrandNew will be operated by Intermountain Life Flight, Intermountain Healthcare's aviation division. The aircraft will join two A109 K2's already in service performing critical medical evacuation missions in Utah and Northern Nevada.

Intermountain Healthcare's GrandNew is equipped with a modern, comprehensive EMS interior featuring single and dual stretcher configurations, wire strike protection, snow skis and NVG compatibility. [AW]

FIRE

ITALY

After a winter season full of activities for the fire-fighting fleet of Protezione Civile, marked by the grounding and then the return to operation of the Canadair, Franco Gabrielli Head of the Civil Protection Department launched the summer forest fire campaign 2011. The campaign, *Aib 2011*, was launched at Karol Wojtyla airport in Bari and runs from June 15 through until September 30.

A fleet of thirty four aircraft will be available to the COAU, Unified Air Operations Centre: twelve Canadair amphibians, four Sikorsky S-64 helicopters and ten Fire Boss float versions of the Air Tractor AT-802 by Protezione Civile and eight medium/large helicopters (AB412, AB212, AB205, CH47) provided by the Fire Brigade, Army, Navy and Coast Guard. In total the fleet has a capacity to drop about 130 thousand litres of water and fire extinguishing fluid.

The coordination of the national territory of the State Fire fleet lies with the Department of the Civil Protection via COAU. The fleet will be spread over 16 bases so that they can reach any part of the national territory in no more than 60-90 minutes from take-off. The aircraft bases were established on the basis of different elements including climate, weather forecasts, historical statistics, availability of an efficient regional fire fighting aircraft and distance from available water sources.

The aircraft will be available to operate outside national borders within the European Civil Protection Mechanism or on the basis of specific bilateral agreements with the intent of mutual support.

Present at the ceremony were leaders of the armed forces and all government agencies involved in the *Aib* campaign, voluntary associations and the diplomatic representatives of countries with which Italy has cooperated in the fight against fires. [Tommaso Munforti]

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: A \$21M contract funding the use of a DC-10 jumbo jet air tanker to fight wildfires has been dropped within weeks of being announced.

The company operating the DC-10 and a backup plane out of Victorville informed the local media that the deal failed.

The three-engine converted airliner is able to carry nearly 12,000 gallons of fire retardant on each mission. The three-year contract would have paid \$7M. [SacBee]

SEARCH & RESCUE

EUROPE

Early last month EASA issued an AD on the Eurocopter [MBB] BK117A-1, A-3, A-4, B-1, B-2 and C-1 helicopters, all serial numbers.

The reason cited was that in an unspecified recent incident with a BK117C-1 helicopter, the cable cut-off function of the rescue hoist was triggered uncommanded and the hoist cable was cut. The subsequent investigation revealed that this was caused by a malfunction within the remote control handle of the rescue hoist system, when extending the hoist boom.

A corrective action is under investigation but currently not available. The same Part Number (P/N) 117-80403 and P/N 117-804061 hoist systems are known to be installed on other models of the same type design. The AD required deactivation of the affected external hoist system by pulling and securing the related circuit breakers, or by removing the hoist boom. Pending the results of the

Investigation, this AD prohibits installation of an affected external hoist system on any other helicopter. [EASA]

UNITED KINGDOM

SEARCH & RESCUE: Last month the UK Government announced preliminary plans for continuing UK SAR pretty much as it currently operates.

The existing Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) contract is set to expire at bases at Portland in Dorset, Lee-on-Solent in Hampshire and at Shetland and the Isle of Lewis in Scotland.

The Department for Transport will run a competition to procure an interim service at the bases for a period of up to five years. The move follows the announcement in February this year that the Government was halting a £6 billion procurement programme for UK wide SAR because the preferred bidder had admitted it had access to commercially sensitive information.

That wider plan remains on ice and RAF and Navy operations will continue while consideration was given "to the long-term provision of search-and-rescue helicopter capability". That may come later in the year.

Meanwhile, on the horizon are threats to turn all SAR resources in Europe over to the European Union. There are fears that if the British Government does not get its self sufficient act together quickly this new power hungry surge by the politicians in the EU will gobble up yet another element as it wallows in indecision.



INDUSTRY

Last month **Cessna Aircraft** marked 15 years since opening its manufacturing facility in Independence, Kansas where the company has since produced nearly 9,500 single-engine pistons and more than 350 Citation Mustang business jets.

The Independence facility undertakes the assembly, paint, installation of interiors and delivery of seven single-engine piston aircraft models — 172R Skyhawk, 172S Skyhawk SP, 182T Skylane, T182T Turbo Skylane, 206H Stationair, T206H Turbo Stationair and the Corvalis TTX — as well as the Citation Mustang entry-level business jet. Additionally, Independence employees provide Garmin G1000 avionics pilot training and manufacture small parts for propeller aircraft and for some business jets that are built at Cessna's headquarters in Wichita, Kansas.

The facility sits on a 213-acre site adjacent to the Independence Airport (KIDP), which is about 125 miles southeast of Wichita.

Cessna discontinued single-engine piston aircraft production in Wichita in the 1980s — due in part to rising product liability costs — and re-entered the market after the 1994 passage of the US General Aviation Revitalization Act. The company broke ground for its original 400,000-square-foot Independence site on May 19, 1995, and dedicated the facility July 3, 1996.

UK based **Ovation Systems**, designers and manufacturers of specialist video surveillance products have launched a Blu-Ray drive version of their well established and successful automated flash memory card archiving system for backing up sensitive media card evidence to disc – Portable Universal Media Archiving – PUMA.

PUMA is a rugged, automated, media card archiving system that has been developed in conjunction with the UK Police and meets the “Digital Imaging Procedures” laid down by the UK Home Office. Ovation's

PUMA offers fast and secure archiving of video, audio and picture evidence gathered on removable flash memory cards and USB memory sticks to DVD and now to Blu-Ray.

Previous procedures for archiving evidence required a standard PC, a number of software packages, and specialist training. Whilst evidence is on a PC and being played several times, and can be easily manipulated.

PUMA is a quick and easy to use system that requires the minimum amount of training.

A simple flash memory card is inserted, a single button is pushed, the contents are then transferred to memory and that data is then burnt to Blu-Ray, producing a bit-for-bit master copy of evidence. Every bit and bite on the memory card is copied. It is not selective about what it takes; every image, every sound is duplicated onto the master copy, offering complete trustworthy evidence for use in criminal and civil courts.

The Blu-Ray version holds an astounding 50 gigabytes of data; can convert camera images to JPEGs, can clone flash cards, and USB drives.

Once archiving is complete, PUMA can securely erase the card by over-writing each and every bit of data.

PUMA complements Ovation's FlashBack, as it offers the option of archiving recordings to a video DVD rather than a data DVD, which means that the disk is playable on any hardware DVD Player. Additional details can be obtained from www.ovation.co.uk



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Specialist Aviation Services "SAS", the British commercial operator better known for its subsidiaries Police Aviation Services [PAS] and Medical Aviation Services [MAS], has been sold. Few details are currently available, and while Financial Director Jim Webster confirmed the change of ownership, he declined to provide any information to *HeliHub.com* beyond what is already public domain. The selling shareholders of the company were Specialist Aviation Holdings BV, registered in the tax haven of the Netherlands Antilles. Another Netherlands Antilles company Ehte Holding NV was the ultimate parent undertaking in 2009. It is uncertain whether the owner Joep van den Nieuwenhuyzen had transferred ownership to his brother Jeroen as an industry source has suggested. Mr Webster is not saying too much.

What has happened is that Jerome and Tom Pirin [sic], the Belgian with MD sales, have been added as directors. Although this seems to have been little more than a paper exercise with documentation catching up with long standing non-attendance at meetings, non-executive Director Michael Hayle ceased to be a Director of SAS according to paperwork filed last month with the Companies House regulatory office. Based on the Annual Return, that would leave just three other directors for SAS, Jim Webster in the UK, and two others with Arizona addresses – Henk Schaeken and Richard Cobbold, the President of Flight Trails Helicopters Inc in Mesa. [via HeliHub]

Across the USA thousands of remote controlled model aircraft enthusiasts are awaiting word from the **Federal Aviation Administration** on pending regulations regarding small, unmanned aircraft systems that could greatly impact their multimillion-dollar industry.

The FAA has not revealed the exact language in the new rule for Unmanned Aircraft Systems until a notice of proposed rulemaking is released. That release is not expected until late summer and may be delayed by the ongoing closure of its facilities due to under funding issues from central government.

Currently the FAA guidelines for UAS are advisory, created by a rule established in 1981 that advises unmanned aircraft to stay below 400 -feet and away from active airports and outside of the Washington DC Flight Restricted Zone.

Just before the *News of the World/News International* situation got to be really serious the ACPO Lead on Media said he will act after journalists raised concerns about relationships between reporters and Police Service press officers.

Andy Trotter, the Chief Constable of **British Transport Police**, said that he had taken on board comments from senior media professionals following a break-out session at the Police Summer Conference in Harrogate – and pledged that he would do all in his power to strengthen relationships.

CC Trotter said that he was concerned at the opinion of a television journalist that relationships between the media and press officers was at the lowest point for many years. The journalist, backed up by colleagues, had suggested that forces' heads of media should make more effort to get to know reporters from national print and broadcast organisations.

Mr Trotter was keen to point out that forces were often able to forge strong links with local reporters – and that tensions usually arose when a major story broke.

He pointed out that further issues that now had to be considered included the meteoric rise of social media and the blogging community and concluded in say "Let us not forget that in policing we need the help of the media, and that journalists are invaluable in promoting our appeals and campaigns."

Ed: I guess that the subsequent bumpy conditions pertaining to the Murdoch Empire will have pushed many of his ideas firmly into the background and that officers will feel even less likely to speak to the media.

Although it may change with the arrival of NPAS British Transport Police interface with police air support is restricted to some use of older types such as this AS355 of maintenance contractor Network Rail.



Curtiss-Wright Controls, of Charlotte, N.C., signed a contract with AgustaWestland to create a custom vibration management system (VMS) computer for its rotorcraft technology validation program (RTVP) demonstrator.

Curtiss-Wright said the VMS computer will be low power with high processing capability. The VMS computer, featuring custom I/O and conduction-cooled components, will provide the processing to control vibrations within the main rotor head to reduce the vibration in the airframe.

It will be designed and manufactured at the Curtiss-Wright Controls Electronic Systems business unit in Santa Clarita, Calif.

Hélidax, owned by DCI and INAER, has announced that it has passed the 20,000 flight hour mark with its fleet of Eurocopter EC120 Colibri aircraft—in under 13 months of operations. Hélidax was the first public-private partnership (PPP) to be launched by the French Ministry of Defence.

Since May 2010, Hélidax has trained two graduated students, including pilots from Belgium, meaning some 40 trainees have graduated. A third intake of pilots has just started its ab initio training in the EC120/NHE (New Training Helicopter).

Of Hélidax's 36 aircraft, 32 are made available each morning for students of the French Army Air Corps' training school (EAALAT) in Dax. The utilization rate of Hélidax's aircraft approaches 100%.



Australian software company **Avinet** has been taking aviation safety management to new heights with its online safety application *Air Maestro*.

Launched six years ago, Air Maestro, which is based in the cloud, provides the aviation industry with an innovative means of assisting operators in running a Safety Management System (SMS) effectively.

As Avinet chief executive officer Mike Mulvihill explained, "Cloud computing offers secure Internet-based computing where resources, software and information are shared and provided to computers and other devices on demand, just like so many of our everyday utilities. It is a hot trend in the IT world offering big benefits to businesses."

Adelaide-based Avinet knows the benefits of this 'software as a service' (SaaS) all too well as six years ago they were contacted by then CEO of Heli Air, John Boag to develop a reliable and cost effective aviation safety management system. Avinet delivered to Boag a truly innovative web-based system bringing together safety and compliance.

There is now over 5,000 users of the Air Maestro system around the world – on average, someone logs on to Air Maestro every 22 seconds.

Cloud-computing based software means operators have access to the latest safety and operational information anywhere, anytime via a secure internet connection. Even the smallest of operators can access their data wherever they have an internet connection and know that their data is secure when they are not using it. This reduces lost and incorrect data and minimises risks.

The demand for cloud-based safety and compliance systems in the aviation industry is on the increase, with a range of new software options appearing on the market. Being one of the first cloud-based safety systems offered to the aviation industry, Air Maestro has set a very high benchmark.

Of particular interest to customers is the customisability of the Air Maestro system, which

constantly evolves with industry demand and customer feedback. This means that users of the system worry less about upcoming audits, compliance issues and can focus more of their resources on essential operational activities.

It's not surprising that operators like the Royal Flying Doctor Service (Central Operations and South Eastern Operations), Australian Helicopters and Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service have jumped on board.

SRT helicopters a full service helicopter company based in Bakersfield, California provide a range of initial flight training, specialised training and commercial operations serving the state of California. Additionally they have been involved with training operations throughout North America and in various countries internationally.

SRT are looking for a new mission pilot with a minimum two of years of experience as PIC. The potential applicant will need to be able to show qualification in helicopter underwater egress, a current 1500 hours rotary CPL [I]. The post is not open to all comers it seems as the rest of the must have experience line up comes straight out of the US citizens only handbook - DoD trained in the UH-60 helicopter with a minimum of 1,000 hours in type 250 hours NVG time, US Army Medivac experience, fast rope, rappelling, hoist operations etc. And to cap it all the final line requires that the applicant must have the ability to obtain FBI Top Secret Clearance.

Becker Avionics has announced the delivery of the 12th DVCS6100 Digital Audio System to Hangar One for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Aero Bureau's Eurocopter AS350B2 helicopter fleet replacement. A total of 14 new AS350B2's have been purchased by LA County Sheriff's Department. All 12 DVCS systems have been delivered on time and on schedule.

The DVCS6100 Airborne Digital Audio and Intercom System has gained wide acceptance throughout the Airborne Law Enforcement and Air Medical communities due to its unique features and benefits. Its reliability and flexible performance have made it the best selling digital intercom system on the market.

North American Surveillance Systems Inc., (NASS) is expanding its line of workstations and consoles for fixed-wing and rotary aircraft.

A global leader in aircraft modifications, NASS' new lightweight workstations and consoles are designed specifically to facilitate missions on multi-purpose aircraft.

NASS provides *Fast Eagle* 'Roll on...Roll off' systems and it is being expanded to provide a greater selection of workstations and consoles. NASS designed *Fast Eagle* to offer industry a surveillance system with an ability to allow the rotary of fixed wing carrier aircraft to alter from a full ISR system back to passenger or cargo configuration in less than half an hour.

The new workstations and consoles are built from extruded aluminium and are even lighter and stronger than previous designs. Each console is custom designed and meets the FAA's rigid aircraft structural standards.

NASS continues to provide rapid worldwide deployment teams to clients' locations as well as offering 24-hour aviation access and services at NASS' hangar and operations facility located at the Deland Municipal Airport just north of Orlando, Florida. www.nassusa.net

Wysong Enterprises, Inc., has announced the delivery of the second of four Bell 407 EMS helicopters to Med-Trans Corporation. The completion work included a custom paint scheme, complete avionics system, airframe kits, and numerous safety systems as well as



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a complete emergency medical interior.

The aircraft has an extensive avionics package including a Garmin G-500H EFIS, Technionics TDFM Multi-Band FM Transceiver, Garmin GNS-530W and GNS-430W GPS/NAV/COMs, TRA -3000 Radar Altimeter, Sky Trac flight following system, Garmin GTX-330 Mode S Transponder, GDL-69 XM Weather, and other associated avionics equipment. Several airframe modifications were also completed including an Air Comm dual evap air-conditioning system, Air Comm heater, AFS inlet barrier filter, door openers, snow baffles, and the installation of a lead acid battery.

The Safety equipment included in the configuration are a wire strike protection system; custom exterior scene response lighting, as well as NVG compatible lighting systems to allow NVG goggle operations. The list of avionics safety equipment included Helicopter Terrain Awareness and Warning System (HTAWS) and Helicopter Synthetic Vision Technology (HSVT). Both of these systems are integrated onto the Garmin G500H EFIS displays.

The EMS Interior System installed by Wysong included LifePort provided kits such as a litter system, pilot barrier system, floor barrier tub, along with numerous Wysong custom designed accessories.

Wysong expects all four 407s to be complete for Med- Trans Corporation by the first quarter of 2012. Wysong has completed approximately 25 EMS 407s for various customers throughout the world.

At this year's **Airborne Law Enforcement Association (ALEA) Conference & Exposition** in New Orleans, Night Flight Concepts and Delta P, a consulting company specializing in aerospace physiology, unveiled a new educational website, LaserStrikeProtection.com. The site is dedicated to helping aviation organizations understand and mitigate the impact of unauthorised illumination of cockpits by lasers.



The number of laser strikes into cockpits in recent years continues to increase as does the level of sophistication of lasers readily available to the general public. Government and medical studies also confirm the growing severity of the laser strike threat, revealing that the exposure of air crews to laser illumination can cause hazardous effects (e.g. distraction, glare, flash blindness and even persistent or permanent visual impairment), which can adversely affect the ability of air crews to carry out responsibilities and safely handle an aircraft.

Night Flight Concepts has years of experience in the various issues and challenges associated with conducting night flight operations and they have monitored the growing danger of malicious and accidental laser eye strikes.

LaserStrikeProtection.com is a centralized online resource for educational information about laser strike threats, incidences, protective equipment, training options and operational procedures to help organisations improve safety in night flight.

Helinet Technologies, an international provider of aviation technology solutions to the law enforcement, government and military markets, has announced its selection by the City of Ontario, California to deploy an integrated microwave downlink solution for the Ontario Police and Fire Departments. The multi-ship system enables real-time transmission of HD and SD images to both fixed and portable receive sites and is part of a regional information sharing initiative between the City of Ontario and the cities and counties of Riverside and San Bernardino. In addition to the Ontario PD and FD, participating agencies include the San Bernardino Police Department, San Bernardino Sheriff's Department, Riverside Police Department and the Riverside County Sheriff's Department.

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Mahindra Aerospace and Mahindra Satyam – representing the aerospace manufacturing and engineering capabilities of India's industrial house, the Mahindra Group – has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for a trade partnership with the Eurocopter Group and its Indian subsidiary, Eurocopter India.

This partnership will be focused on the manufacture of subassemblies, engineering and customisation of civil helicopters, and the joint development of specific market segments. Details of the partnership's scope and structure will be determined in the coming months.

The cooperation with Mahindra is aligned with Eurocopter's strategy to become a manufacturer in India through arrangements with local partners, thereby improving its knowledge of the market and adapting the company's products to the region's operational needs. In addition, Eurocopter will benefit from the extensive engineering skills of India's workforce, along with the country's network of universities and technical schools.

It is now 40 years since the Australian designed and built GAF Nomad multi role aircraft first flew. A healthy number of Nomads are still active around the world and Australian aircraft manufacturer GippsAero, a Mahindra Aerospace Company, is working hard to bring its Nomad based GA18 twin turbine multi role aircraft into production.

The Nomad began life in the late 1960s at the Government Aircraft Factories (GAF), near Melbourne as Project N. The first prototype (VH-SUP) flew for the first time on July 23, 1971. The aircraft, known as the N2, was aimed at both military and civilian markets. The designation was changed to N22 and became the N22B in production, an 18 seat development was designated the N24 and later the N24A (with an increase in MTOW).

The Australian Defence Forces eventually operated 29 Nomads, including 8 N24s. The Nomad is operated by the military services of the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia, and was also flown by the Papua New Guinea Defence Force. Major civil users included the Royal Flying Doctor Service, Northern Territory Medical Service, Northern Territory Aerial Works, Skywest Airlines, Australian Customs, many Commuter airlines in Australia, Holland, PNG, the USA and the US Customs service. A total of 172 Nomads was built, including the two prototypes.

In 1986, GAF was incorporated into Aerospace Technologies of Australia, which was later sold to the Rockwell-Boeing Australia Limited acquired the Nomad Type Certificate in 1996 after The Boeing Company purchased the Rockwell Group including ASTA. Boeing maintained ASTA's close working relationship with the Commonwealth to support and maintain the aircraft's Type Certificate requirements.

On 2008, GippsAero manufacturer of the GA8 Airvan utility aircraft, announced they had acquired the Nomad's Type Certificate with a view to restarting production and would provide engineering and spares support to the existing Nomad fleet. GippsAero's parent company, Mahindra Aerospace, has since committed funding to return the type to production as the GA18.

The N24A based GA18 will be re-engineered with upgraded engines, new propellers, glass cockpit, weight-saving measures, reduced maintenance requirements and aerodynamic refinements. Following an extensive development and test program, the type will be certificated to FAR 23 at Amendment 59. GippsAero plans to bring the GA18 to the market place in 2014.

As of 20 July 2011 there are several operational Nomads in the armed services of Indonesia (15), Thailand (16) and the Philippines (3), with another 26 aircraft are classed as being in storage. In the civil world there is one Nomad in the UK, three in Sabah and an amphibian in the USA.

In Australia there is one operational Nomad, an N22C VH-ATO, with another four in New Zealand. One of these, a N24A ZK-NMC, has now been purchased by GippsAero and following its return to Australia, will become the developmental aircraft for the GippsAero GA18.

AIR ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

2 July 2011 Eurocopter AS350 AStar. Los Angeles Police. Made a precautionary landing near Broadway and 87th Street in South Los Angeles. [Media]

2 July 2011 Eurocopter BK117 N117UC. Air ambulance of University Hospital, Cincinnati Air Care and Mobile Care, Cincinnati, Ohio operated by Omniflight. While responding to a scene request, the aircraft sustained a bird strike to the co-pilot side of the windshield. The mission was abandoned for an inspection. No damage was found and the aircraft was returned to service. [Media]

3 July 2011 Air ambulance of PHI Lifeflight suffered mechanical problems whilst attending a road accident on the Gulf Freeway, northbound at F.M. 517 in Dickinson, near Houston, Texas. [Media]

5 July 2011 Eurocopter EC135 N406EH Air Ambulance of Life Force Hwy. entrance to Shaffer Quarries 70 E between Crab Orchard and Crossville, Tennessee.

9 July 2011 Eurocopter AS350 AStar. Los Angeles Police. Made a precautionary landing in Van Nuys when a warning light came on in the cockpit. The pilot landed safely at a fire department training facility near Van Nuys Boulevard and Blythe Street. A warning light indicating a possible metal shaving, or some other kind of contaminant, in the oil prompted the landing.

9 July 2011 Pilatus PC-12 N852AL. Air ambulance of AirLink, Bend, Oregon USA, operated by Metro Aviation. While on a repositioning flight from Redmond Airport to the home airport in Bend, the airplane experienced an electrical malfunction that disabled radios, flaps and normal landing gear function. Communication was established by cell phone to the Redmond Airport tower. Due to the inability to confirm that the nose landing gear was down and locked, an emergency was declared. Aircraft made an uneventful no-flap landing. [Concern]

13 July 2011 Beechcraft King Air 200 C-???? Air ambulance of Lifeguard the Saskatchewan Air Ambulance Service, Canada. Aircraft damaged while being towed at the airport in Saskatoon. The aircraft was being moved when the tail portion banged into the hangar door causing severe damage to the fin/tailplane fairing bullet.e been done to prevent the damage. [Media] *Government of Saskatchewan photo*



17 July 2011 Bell UH-1H Huey. Thai Army. The helicopter, from Thap Phraya Sua Camp in Ratchaburi's Suan Phung district, crashed into a mountain in poor weather conditions while on a mission to remove civilians that had been trapped in Kaeng Krachan National Park undertaking a law enforcement mission. The dead were given as: Maj. Kitisak Chin-iam (pilot), Lt. Praty Nualsri (pilot), Maj. Kitiphum Ekkaphan, Sgt. Maj. Rangan Polsaibua and Sgt. Maj. Narongdet Pongnumkul.

Ed: subsequent to this crash two further Thai Army helicopters, a Blackhawk and a Bell 212 crashed whilst undertaking recovery operations in connection with the initial incident. In total 17 died.



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EVENTS

In the same week that Diamond Air announced that it is withdrawing show appearances at all the major air shows in the coming year including such as NBAA they have intimated that they intend to be the primary sponsor of **PAvCon 2012** to be held at Hangelar, Bonn. Meanwhile PAVCon has also received an invitation to be involved in a Far East event later this year.

Transport Security Expo 2011 is now the largest event globally to tackle the key issues surrounding security on transportation networks. With a clear focus on Aviation, Maritime, Supply Chain, Freight/ Cargo and Public Transport security a visit to the event offers an insight into the latest threats posed to Passengers and Cargo from international terrorism, theft, piracy, drug smuggling and immigration. Three high level Conferences to choose from with 50 internationally recognised speakers: Aviation Security – 13 & 14 September; Maritime Security & Counter Piracy – 13th September; Securing & Protecting Public Transport Systems – 14th September. The exhibition showcases the latest technologies including: Access Control; Baggage Screening; Blast Containment; Biometrics and ID Solutions; Cargo Screening; CCTV / Surveillance; Intrusion Detection; Labels and Seals; Passenger Screening; Perimeter Security and Intrusion Detection; RFID and Tracking; Systems Integration; Training and Consultancy. **There are free-to-attend technology workshops** covering a number of airport security related subjects. Details can be seen at www.transec.com/wrkprog

More companies have joined the seventh UK **Business & General Aviation Day** (BGAD11), which takes place on Tuesday September 20 at Cambridge Airport. <http://www.bgad.aero> Recent exhibitor additions include: Weston Aviation, Air Support A/S and SkyNet.

On the static line are Diamond-Executive Aviation the world's largest AOC operator of the carbon-fibred, Mercedes Benz powered, jet-fuelled DA42 Twin Star. In less than 2 years DEA's fleet has grown from an initial one launch aircraft to seven, with operating bases in the UK and Italy. DEA will have the DA42MPP reconnaissance version on show along with a 'normal' DA42.

Marshall Executive Aviation will be showing all four of its fleet of Citation Bravo and XLS jets as well as a Challenger 300.

BGAD's free to attend seminar programme adds considerable value to the day and this year includes a strong panel to discuss one of the most important issues affecting UK business aviation over the forthcoming year.....The Practicalities of the Olympics, will be moderated by Charles Alcock of Aviation International News, and will comprise speakers from all sectors of business aviation - FBO chain ExecuJet, who handled much traffic for the recent World Cup in South Africa, the UK's Gama Aviation Ltd - who have wide ranging special event experience as a charter operator, Air Partner, whose private jet charter services will be heavily involved in Olympics traffic and Cambridge Airport's director Archie Garden. We have also invited a representative of the slot regulator ACL, to complete a panel that will be able to give a well rounded discussion on this vital issue.

Registration and entry to BGAD for visitors is free of charge, and you can do this online at the BGAD web site - <http://www.bgad.aero>



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