

# Police Aviation News

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IPAR



## Bell 206 swan song

Austria - Long serving single in sell-off

Diamond co-operation *page 15*

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# LAW ENFORCEMENT

## INTERNATIONAL

**GULF:** A new anti piracy move early last month the European Union launched a security operation off the coast of Somalia to combat growing acts of piracy and help protect aid ships. This Operation Atalanta is the first of its kind. The mission will be led by Britain, with its headquarters in Northwood, near London but it is seen as a symbol of the evolution in European defence, the coming together of an operation involving at least seven ships, three of them frigates and one a supply vessel backed by surveillance aircraft. The ten Nations involved include France, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands and Spain, with Portugal, Sweden and non-EU nation Norway also likely to take part.



It is claimed that Somali pirates were now responsible for nearly a third of all reported attacks on ships, often using violence and taking hostages.

One absentee nation is Denmark and yet it was the cargo ship of a Danish operator that was seized off the Somali coast by pirates just the week before Atalanta commenced. The operator has received demands relating to the return of the vessel and its thirteen crew members but was being reticent about making them public. Denmark is prevented from contributing to the mission because of a joint defence agreement signed in 1992.

The International Maritime Bureau said 63 of the 199 piracy incidents recorded worldwide in the first nine months of this year occurred in the waters off Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden. The Somali figure is almost double that of the same period last year.

France, which has a major military base in neighbouring Djibouti, is so far the only country to have used its firepower against the pirates, in April and September operations following hostage-takings but under the rules of engagement, EU nations that capture any pirates will not be allowed to hand them over to a state where suspects could face the death penalty, torture or degrading treatment.

India and Russia have also sent ships to the area on anti-piracy duties and only the day af-



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ter the EU operation was set in motion there were reports of a patrolling Indian Navy vessel thwarting an attack by pirates by sending ahead its armed helicopter carrying marine commandos to repel a group trying to board an Indian merchant vessel, the Jag Arnav in the Gulf of Aden. After the warship closed with the MV Jag Arnav 60 miles off Aden it escorted the craft out of the danger area.

The Tabar encountered what it took to be a pirate vessel, 285 NM South West of Salalah (Oman) on the evening of November 18, with two speed boats in tow. This vessel was similar in description to the 'Mother Vessel' mentioned in various Piracy bulletins.

INS Tabar closed the vessel and asked her to stop for investigation. On repeated calls, the vessel's threatening response was that she would blow up the Naval Warship if it closed her. Pirates were seen roaming on the upper deck of this vessel with guns and Rocket Propelled Grenade launchers. The vessel continued its threatening calls and subsequently fired upon INS Tabar.

On being fired upon, INS Tabar retaliated in self defence and opened fire on the mother vessel. As a result of the firing by INS Tabar, fire broke out on the vessel and explosions were heard, possibly due to exploding ammunition that was stored on the vessel. Almost simultaneously, two speed boats were observed breaking off to escape. The ship chased the first boat which was later found abandoned. The other boat made good its escape into darkness.

It was unfortunate that the sunken vessel turned out to have been a Thai fishing vessel that had itself been hijacked earlier and had its crew locked below.



NATO says a Italian naval destroyer responding to a merchant vessel's distress signal prevented a likely pirate attack in the Gulf of Aden off Somalia.

The military alliance says in a statement that the Panama-flagged merchant ship Kirti was sailing toward Suez on Saturday afternoon when it reported two skiffs attempting to approach it at high speed.

The Italian destroyer Luigi Durand de la Penne was patrolling nearby as part of NATO's anti-piracy operation and immediately scrambled its helicopter. NATO says the skiffs changed course and left after seeing the helicopter.

Somalia has become a world piracy hotspot, with at least 85 attacks on ships this year. Twelve vessels remain in the hands of pirates along with more than 200 crew.

Suspected pirates apprehended by crew members from HMS Cumberland off Africa's east coast were handed over to the custody of the Kenyan Police last month.



Above RN photo

But all this International naval presence failed to halt the attacks by pirates and a giant Saudi Arabian tanker Sirius Star was hijacked by pirates on the high seas and held to a massive ransom.



Left Sirius Star

## AUSTRALIA

**CUSTOMS:** The Minister for Home Affairs officially opened the Customs and Border Protection Command's 24 hour Integrated Operations Centre (IOC) late last month. The IOC will play an important role in developing and maintaining awareness of offshore activities and will identify and assess security threats, estimate the potential consequences and control response activity.

The IOC combines elements of Customs, the Department of Defence, the Australian Fisheries Management Authority and the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service to manage and coordinate the Government's response to maritime incidents. It will access information from surveillance aircraft, Customs and Defence patrol boats, satellite surveillance and other sources, including commercial parties and a range of Government agencies.

Data collected by the IOC would be shared across a number of Government agencies and would assist Border Protection Command and Customs in making operational decisions that are vital to protecting Australia's borders.

## AUSTRIA

**BMI:** As the European requirement for twins to serve as emergency services helicopters gains wider acceptance the interior ministry in Austria has placed up for disposal some of the the remaining Agusta-Bell 206 helicopters in the police fleet. The aircraft include the 1981 S/N 8613 OE-BXA, 1982 S/N 8644 OE-BXB, 1982 S/N 8618 OE-BXC and the 1983 S/N 8666 OE-BXE, to which has been added as a separate lot a selection of component spares. [GH/BMI]

*Soon leaving—the BMI Bell fleet  
[Image Michael Mau]*



## CANADA

**RCMP:** After a decade of operations with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police the Pilatus PC-12 is being replaced in service by new-build Pilatus NG aircraft. The first of the replacements has already been delivered and fleet renewal will continue into 2009. [RCMP]

## CAYMAN ISLANDS

An Auditor General's report on acquisition of a Eurocopter EC135T1 for the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service has declared that poor communication was at the heart of a dispute over the machine's operational capabilities. At the core of these assertions is a lack of briefing papers on the subject. The aircraft was due to be withdrawn from UK police service because it lacked an autopilot and was therefore due to be declared unfit to fly at night and in poor weather conditions – and it seems that no-one had made the connection that the same restrictions will apply in this British Protectorate.

The Auditor General Day Duguay declared that it was the lack of clear documentation about what the aircraft role was that lay at the heart of the very public arguments between politicians and the Police Commissioner Stuart Kernohan earlier this year. Kernohan, a former Merseyside Police officer, is currently suspended and on 'Gardening Leave' while the storm subsides.

The Auditor General basically laid out much of what is already known about the restrictions on the EC135T1 – an assumed inability to be used over-water and between islands in its current configuration. He adds though the possibility that some of the restrictions relating to whether the helicopter is allowed to legally fly between Grand Cayman and the Sister Islands and the use of an auto pilot could be resolved between the RCIPS and the Civil Aviation Authority of the Cayman Islands. Beyond that the sale of the aircraft remains an option. It is possible that they might see the return of most, if not all, of the \$2.96M spent buying it from the East Midlands ASU in the UK.

The helicopter is expected to remain in Louisiana, USA, until that question is resolved. Meanwhile a number of potential Unit Executive Officers have been interviewed with a view to acceptance in the post on contract to the Cayman Islands. These include officers currently in UK police air support due to retire around this time. This will greatly improve the knowledge base in the Cayman Islands but it seems extremely unlikely that this matter can ever be resolved without a change of airframe or an expensive modification upgrade to that existing airframe. On the face of it the upgrade seems out of the question as it might involve the fitment of low skids and the installation of an autopilot. [CC/IPAR]

## CHINA

SHANGHAI: It is expected that Shanghai will be taking delivery of the three Eurocopter helicopters it ordered this month. One helicopter has already been on trials at Shanghai Hongqiao Airport.

The Shanghai Public Security Bureau signed a purchase contract with Eurocopter in April 2007 for two EC135s and one EC155. The helicopters first major operation will be in association with security during World Expo 2010 but meanwhile they will work up undertaking standard police operations. [Shanghai Daily]

## CZECH REPUBLIC

The Czech Police Aviation Service received the last of the eight Eurocopter light helicopters ordered in 2003. It seems likely that one of the eight - one equipped for medevac missions - will be disposed of in view of a recent decision to halt police EMS operations and transfer them to the private sector next year.

The EC135's replace BO105's and join five medium lift Bell 412 helicopters.

## FRANCE

GENDARMERIE: Enterprise Control Systems Ltd (ECS) has received an order for digital downlinks from the Gendarmerie to equip the new fleet of Eurocopter EC135 helicopters.

The new contract agreed with the Direction generale de la gendarmerie nationale will include, but not be limited to, 12 helicopter downlink transmitters, complete with all accessories for installation on a new fleet of Eurocopter EC135 helicopters, along with a range of ground based receive systems. ECS will be providing a wide range of receive equipment to include portable, hand held systems, Pelicase mounted, transportable systems and rack mounted fixed station utilising antenna diversity improvement to achieve maximum range of operation.

This contract relates to the twelve EC135 helicopters on order for delivery between now and 12/2010. It might be expected to extend to equipping over thirty airframes if the whole of the Gendarmerie EC135 fleet receives the same level of equipment but the additional [25] aircraft are not expected to be ordered for delivery commencing in 2012. [ECS/PAR]

With the EC135 deliveries now under way and the final example of 15 EC145's now in service the last Alouette is expected to be withdrawn from service in 2009.

## GERMANY

FEDERAL POLICE: On September 29 a ten day abduction of eleven European tourists and eight Egyptians in the Egyptian desert on September 19 came to an abrupt end when a German police operation swung into action. The Federal Police moved three of its Super Puma helicopters by air freight from Germany to Egypt and carried GSG9 commandos to



overcome the captors. All of the hostages were freed unharmed in the rescue operation in which several of their terrorist kidnappers were killed in a fierce struggle. The hostages were taken to Cairo aboard an Egyptian military plane.

The ordeal is said to have deeply embarrassed Egypt which has few resources to look after this type of incident itself. The Government has vowed to coordinate with security agencies to make sure this doesn't happen again. This might suggest the creation of an air mobile anti-terror squad in the country as a matter of urgency. This is not the first instance where GSG9 has assisted the Egyptian authorities, the last known case was in 2001 when four tourists were released. Formed in the wake of the 1972 Olympics attacks on April 17, 1973 as a part of Germany's federal police agency the then Bundesgrenzschutz (*border guard*) now *the Bundespolizei*.

The German helicopters returned to Germany by flying themselves north from Egypt and up the Adriatic Sea to northern Italy.

## NIGER

As reported in the June issue of PAN the government in Niger has now taken delivery of twin-engine Diamond DA-42 aircraft to undertake a surveillance role primarily aimed at thwarting smuggling activities. The aircraft carry the Carl Zeiss Optronics Goshawk 350 sensor system transmitting the images to the ground using the Scotty Satcom system. [Diamond]



# A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words!

A firefighter in full gear is shown from the chest up, holding a handheld device. The device's screen displays a live feed of a helicopter in flight. The helicopter is white with black accents and has the registration number 'N119SP' on its side. In the background, a large building with a sign that reads 'Friedman's Supermarkets' is visible. The scene is set outdoors, and the sky is overcast.

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## SOUTH AFRICA

The South African Police Services (SAPS) Air Wing has concluded a contract with Carl Zeiss Optronics (Pty) Ltd in South Africa to acquire eight LEO-II-A5-EP Extended Performance (EP) Airborne Observations Systems.

Zeiss won the R100M tender to supply the Police Air Wing with the systems and related airborne and ground equipment.

The LEO-II-A5-EP – now the system of choice for the SAPS Air Wing is the most advanced of the Carl Zeiss Optronics LEO Airborne Observation Systems. Up to three high-performance optical sensors (essentially video cameras) with ultra-long focal lengths are simultaneously available in the electro-optic stabilised LEO turret. The turret is manufactured from composite materials, making it lighter and more robust than other similar systems. The Air Wing has specified geo-pointing and downlinking, which provide distinct operational advantages. This combination provides the system operator in the aircraft with the best picture performance in all operational conditions, even at high altitude and over long

distances where the object of interest is viewed at a flat or slanted angle. The system allows for excellent haze penetration and performance in lowlight conditions, as well as both day and night operations.

The equipment will be operational for some important future events in the region including the 2010 Soccer World Cup events in South Africa, as well as Search and Rescue (SAR) missions, border and coastal patrol, disaster response and general surveillance and reconnaissance operations. The LEO-II-A5-EP will be retrofitted to the SAPS' existing BO-105, Eurocopter AS35B3 helicopters and PC-6 fixed wing aircraft.

Last year both Botswana's and Namibia's police services also bought the LEO-II-A5-EP for their own Eurocopter AS350 B3 helicopters. The SAPS Air Wing's decision to acquire the same system now helps to further standardise police helicopter equipment in the region, which allows for greater mission cooperation across the entire Southern African region.

[Zeiss]



## SPAIN

Although the process is still in its early stages it is expected that the Basque Police will be seeking to replace its current fleet shortly. The first to be replaced will be the 21 years old AS365C and the replacement is likely to be an AS365N3. The two EC135's are early models that were delivered without any IFR provision eleven years ago [c/n 016 and 017] but upgraded to a dual pilot IFR specification in the UK over 2001-02. They are expected to be replaced in due course by more capable by EC135T2+.models.

## UNITED KINGDOM

**GREATER MANCHESTER:** At last month's Police Aviation Conference it became clear that the initial reservations voiced by the GMP about endorsing its new equipment options on its new Explorer helicopter have been dropped. Although it was expected to be the New Year before GMP's thoughts on the capabilities of the Trakkabeam searchlight and Sonix PA system were to be known it has now been stated that both are meeting, if not exceeding, their expectations. [PAS]

**SUFFOLK:** A new Eurocopter EC135P2+ c/n 0730 arrived at Oxford in late October just as the last edition of Police Aviation News was sent for publication. Shortly afterwards it received the registration G-SUFK.

This is the first airframe in a block of [six] identical airframes being purchased for UK police air support operators through the Chiltern Consortium and will be test flown in a number of equipment configurations in order to provide the customers with data upon which to base the final equipment configuration of this fleet. This will primarily relate to whether the craft will appear in high skid or low skid configuration.

**METROPOLITAN:** After nearly a year has passed the clear area take-off 'runway' feature alongside the pad at the Lippitts Hill base has been completed. Early last month the feature was completed but not in use as the works settled and gave the grass the opportunity to take hold. Its availability will enhance the performance of the EC145's.



Currently underway the Metropolitan Police is accepting upgrades to its Wescam MX-15 sensor turrets. In early November one was completed and ready for service with the other two expected to be incorporated by year end.

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## UNITED STATES

**CALIFORNIA:** With budget cuts whittling the amount of time the Contra Costa (CA) County Sheriff's Office Air Unit's two Bell helicopters can fly, many of its services will be scarce in the coming year.

The air support budget cuts have resulted in the sheriff's office reducing its daily patrol from four-and-a-half hours to just one-and-a-half based on a reactive rather than proactive operational profile.

The unit currently operates a Bell 407 and 206 with two pilots and two TFO's to operate over Contra Costa's 750 square-mile area. The operation has an annual cost of about \$800,000, but a 20% reduction in funds is expected this year as the sheriff's office claws back an \$8.3M overall budget reduction. For many neighbouring police departments the Contra Costa STARR operation is their primary air support and this move can only increase pressure on other local air operations in this part of the state.

**KENTUCKY:** It is reported that the Louisville Metro MD520N helicopter [N520AP LN095] that was damaged in an accident in August 2006 is to return to Louisville this month after a protracted rebuild. The helicopter ended up on its side in a crash in Spencer County. While the damaged airframe was away there was a budget shortfall and the other MD520N in service [N510AP c/n LN056 Air 10] ended up being sold to a buyer in Hawaii for \$800,000 last summer.

While they hope to have the LMPD chopper back by the first week of December there is a continuing budget crunch facing Metro Government and a danger that the helicopter will be sold off to defrays the shortfall. [Wave 3]

**MARYLAND:** A Maryland medevac pilot, Peter Peterson was fired by the State Police for refusing to cooperate with an internal safety probe stemming from a warning he gave to the Federal Authorities last September. He plans to appeal.

Peterson sent an e-mail to the US Transportation Department days before a helicopter crash killed four people in Prince George's County. Now there is a fear that the MSP want to conduct an investigation behind closed doors and it is this that the pilot does not want to cooperate with, a position that is being supported by some significant public figures.

The police have said Peterson was fired for refusing to provide investigators with maintenance records he told federal authorities would document safety dangers across the entire 12-helicopter fleet rather than simple lack of cooperation.

Peterson has come to notice before for bringing to light safety concerns during the nine years he has been with MSP. Two years ago he e-mailed 30 other civilian helicopter pilots a copy of an Aircraft Safety Report he wrote raising his concern about a cracked frame on a helicopter. For the unauthorised circulation of the report, Peterson was docked a days paid leave. [Baltimore Sun]

**Reims F406 Land & Sea Surveillance**

TEXAS: The introduction to service of a new Eurocopter AS350B2 fleet into the Texas Department of Public Service continues with one of the more recent deliveries N244TX being placed on station last month. The helicopter is now serving the Panhandle and is based at a hanger located next to the Randall County Jail operated by three crew officers. The hanger and the aircraft were purchased with seized drug money. The helicopter joins 14 other DPS helicopters in use around the state.[KFDA]

|        |         |           |                        |
|--------|---------|-----------|------------------------|
| N130SJ | Ce 206H | c/n 08130 | [2000-]                |
| N140BJ | AS350B2 | c/n 3211  | [2000-]                |
| N140TX | AS350B2 | c/n 3496  | [2002-]                |
| N35440 | Ce206H  | c/n 08327 | [2002-]                |
| N40TX  | AS350B2 | c/n 3586  | [2003-]                |
| N2145R | Ce 206H | c/n 08427 | [2004-]                |
| N204TX | AS350B2 | c/n 3711  | [2004-]                |
| N114TX | Ce 206H | c/n 08579 | [2005-]                |
| N207TX | AS350B2 | c/n 3951  | [2006-]                |
| N702TX | AS350B2 | c/n 4026  | [2006-]                |
| N1727L | Ce 206H | c/n 08791 | [2008-]                |
| N124TX | AS350B2 | c/n 4405  | [2008-]                |
| N145TX | EC145   | c/n 9166  | [2008-]                |
| N90TX  | AS350B2 | c/n 4401  | [2008-]                |
| N244TX | AS350B2 | c/n 4408  | [2008-]                |
| N405TX | AS350B2 | c/n 4476  | [2008-] <i>pending</i> |

# AIR AMBULANCE

## FRANCE

SAMU: To meet the needs of the French public health system, Eurocopter has teamed up with the hospital in Dreux, the French association of helicopter emergency medical services (AFHSH), and the French civil aviation authority (DGAC) to conduct a series of instrument flight tests that will, in the near future, allow patients to be transported by helicopter from one hospital to another even under poor weather conditions.



The current reorganization of the French public health system involves concentrating specialist medical services in a reduced number of hospitals. This will inevitably augment the need for air ambulance services, which in turn depends on the development of a medical transport network capable of providing an even more efficient service. Without this, the principles of a universal health service for all citizens can no longer be upheld.

Until now, the helicopters operating on medical missions only flew under visual flight conditions but this limits their ability to deal with emergency situations including nighttime patient transfers.

These are the first trials in Europe to test the use of helicopters operating in an instrument flight rules (IFR) configuration to perform medical transport flights – a major innovation. They demand that the Eurocopter EC145 should complete a flight entirely under GPS navigation, from takeoff to final approach, confirming the helicopter’s ability to follow a predefined flight route even in the event of unfavourable meteorological conditions.

The experimental trials were conducted during November 24 - 28 between the hospitals of Nogent-le-Rotrou and Dreux in the Eure-et-Loir region, the latter being designated as the pilot center. If all goes well, it should be possible to set up a regular transport service on this route on a permanent basis towards the end of 2009.

## IRELAND

**RALLY IRELAND:** On November 15, the key personnel from Rally Ireland met in Sligo for the Officials Briefing Day as the build up to Rally Ireland in late January gains momentum.

The subject matter covered a range of expertise including marshalling, safety and rescue, communications, timekeeping, setting up and running stages and the recruitment of marshals to run the rally. It is expected that over 2,700 marshals will be used, in 2007 they came from the UK, Netherlands, Belgium, Finland and the United States. There will be approximately 3,500 volunteers helping to run Ireland's biggest sports event in 2009.

Rally Ireland 2009 takes place from the 29<sup>th</sup> January to the 1<sup>st</sup> February travelling through seven counties in the north and south of Ireland. It is expected that in excess of 250,000 people will attend the event which is replacing Monte Carlo as the first round of the World Rally Championship in 2009.

The air ambulance facility will be provided by Coventry based Amber Aviation and Paul Forster who has a long involvement with this type of work through air ambulance operations with both Cabair Initially and then Sloane where he operated the Thames Valley Air Ambulance for a few months before establishing the Warwickshire and Northamptonshire Air ambulance from scratch.

Paul has undertaken the rally GB contract for the last 6/7 years and will be doing the next event. He was called in at short notice to undertake the last Rally Ireland after the previous arrangements they had fell through.

Amber provide a fully equipped AS355 aircraft with HEMS approval and both a Doctor and paramedic with extensive experience and understanding of motorsport and the related injuries / mechanism of injuries for the rally events.

Amber Aviation is based at Coventry airport and provides the complete range of Air Ambulance services including both rotary and fixed wing aircraft. Paul is expecting a Piaggio P180 to become available in the New Year. This superb aircraft type was available for air ambulance work with another Coventry based organisation, Euroskylink, some years ago for a short while but was disposed of [2004].

While Amber currently use the AS355 it is hoped that a second generation helicopter will be available to them in the New Year.

One of Paul's long term projects that has yet to come to fruition is the 'The Children's Air Ambulance' which will be a dedicated aircraft purely for the retrieval of critically ill children, the aircraft will be a Sikorsky S76.

## KENYA

**MOMBASA:** A third Cessna Citation Bravo jet has been acquired by charter and maintenance organisation Phoenix Aviation. Based at Wilson Airport Phoenix will be using the long range twin engined aircraft will join an existing fleet of Citation Bravos and Beechcraft King Air on its ambulance and charter flights. It is capable of reaching destinations in Europe with only one refuelling stop.

## UAE

**ABU DHABI:** Prestige Jet the fastest-growing private jet operator in the region, has launched a new subsidiary company, Prestige Flight Ambulance (PFA) to cater for the massive surge in demand for its medical evacuation and repatriation services from the region.

The new company underlines a successful operation that was launched earlier this year to offer a worldwide air ambulance service for patients to transport them from/to UAE and any destination in the world.

The company has won a tender with the UAE Ministry of Health to provide an ambulance transport service using a fleet that includes two dedicated aircraft permanently positioned in Abu Dhabi, a Challenger 604 and a Lear 55. So far this has been used 45 times.

## UNITED KINGDOM

**NATIONAL:** The organisation representing the UK air ambulance industry is now the Association of Air Ambulances [AAA] after it was agreed that two former organisations [the AAAC and CHAS] would come together under one name.



Actor Sir David Jason has accepted the role of patron of the AAA, created to represent the UK's 18 independent air ambulance charities and the 13 NHS Ambulance Trusts in England, Scotland and Wales. Between them, the charities operate 27 helicopters and have to raise £35M annually to operate the aircraft and provide the advanced medical equipment they carry.

Sir David, a keen helicopter pilot himself, became patron of the AAA after he was approached after visiting one of England's air ambulance charities, the Norwich-based East Anglian Air Ambulance in August.

Sir David's new role as patron of the AAA was officially announced at a re-launch meeting in Redditch last month. The AAA exists to provide a forum for its 18 member charities through which they can share best practice and communicate more effectively with their various external stakeholders, including the NHS, government, the various Royal Colleges, the Charity Commission and the aviation authorities. [AAA]

**DERBYSHIRE:** UK aerial survey specialist Bluesky is making a valuable contribution to the life-saving work of Air Ambulance services. In lieu of the more traditional festive activity of sending Christmas cards and gifts Bluesky has made a donation to its local air ambulance charity, the Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Rutland Air Ambulance (DLRAA).

The DLRAA is a new air ambulance service that took over from County Air Ambulance in April 2008. Based at East Midlands Airport the DLRAA's primary response area is the 2,100 square miles of Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Rutland, serving in excess of 1.4M people.

Bluesky is a UK-based specialist in aerial imaging and remote sensing data collection and processing, working with Google, the BBC and Government Agencies, Bluesky creates seamless, digital aerial photography, 3D landscape/cityscape visualisations and prints and also runs a national mapping centre, providing digital mapping, satellite imagery and aerial photography including ultra-high resolution imagery of cities and towns.

**GREAT NORTH:** For three years the Cumbria based HEMS helicopter and crew were based in the grounds of the Cumbria police headquarters at Carleton Hall, in Penrith operating a BO105 helicopter. When the larger Eurocopter AS365N aircraft G-HEMS was acquired by the charity its base was moved to the airport in Carlisle but that helicopter has now taken up residence at a new home at Langwathby in the Eden Valley. The host on this occasion is a local businessman who has declined publicity.



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**HERTFORDSHIRE:** The new air ambulance completed its first mission with the rescue of a woman who had been knocked over by a dog at a field in King's Mead, Hertford on November 10, five days after the official launch event but only two hours after the service went live from its North Weald airfield base. The woman, who had been walking her dog, was found to have broken her leg in an area of rough terrain and poor access to the patient.

**LONDON:** A new aluminium rooftop helicopter landing platform is taking shape on the roof of the new build extension of the Royal London Hospital in East London. On existing plans the 28-metre square Bayards platform will be additional to the original landing platform visible to the front of the hospital building and towering over both the Whitechapel underground station and the street market.

The new structure being constructed at a height 93 metres [300 feet] by Skanska will be set back from the busy roadway and railhead.

Bayards has a high profile track record in the production of its aluminium helicopter landing platforms. In 2002 the company designed one for the University Hospital Dresden [Germany], but more recently has projects and builds in Barcelona, Spain, Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle UK, Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham UK during 2007 and the hospital in Sondrio, Italy this year.

## UNITED STATES

**NATIONAL:** The National Transportation Safety Board [NTSB] will hold a public hearing on the safety of Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (HEMS) operations. The three-day hearing will begin on February 3, 2009, at the NTSB's Board Room and Conference Center, 429 L'Enfant Plaza, SW, Washington, DC.

A perceived 'alarming rise' in the numbers of EMS accidents has led the Safety Board to believe some of the accidents could have been prevented if its recommendations are implemented.

The NTSB issued a Special Investigation Report on EMS Operations in January 2006. The report involved the analysis of all EMS-related aviation accidents that occurred from January 2002 through January 2005. There were a total of 55 accidents that occurred during this 3-year window; 41 helicopters and 14 airplanes. These accidents killed 54 people, and seriously injured 19. Analysis of the accidents indicated that 29 of 55 accidents could have been prevented with corrective actions identified in the report.

In 2008 alone there have been 7 fatal accidents with 28 fatalities. This is a drastic increase in accidents since the Special Investigation Report and this has prompted the hearing. An agenda and webcast details will be posted on the Board's website, [www.nts.gov](http://www.nts.gov) when available.



Essex Air Ambulance was operating out of the Royal Gun Powder Mills heritage site after a workman had fallen and broken his femur on November 25 [www.royalgunpowdermills.com]

FLORIDA: The EMS, Fire and Aeromedical Academy of the Americas is setting up a branch in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, USA and will be opening up early 2009 with courses including aeromedical certification, airport rescue technician [TRA II - Deals with the ICAO Emergency Plan for International Airports, EMT, EMT-I and EMT-P courses in English and Spanish and ACLS, PALS, NALS, PHTLS in English and Spanish. The courses will be held at the Fort Lauderdale facility or at other venue convenient to the trainees. This month they are running a Aeromedical Course in Buenos Aires Details at <http://aeromedicina.org/prensa.aspx>

FLORIDA: Over in the USA Rock O'Neal formulated the concept of a charity air ambulance service based in Florida. Now Faith Charity Flights USA has a team of pilots to hand awaiting the all important money and an aircraft.

Unlike the high cost twin-engine powered helicopter based charity air ambulances in the UK the Faith organisation believes that the operation can get into the air for as little as \$10,000 by using a fixed wing solution based upon an Mitsubishi MU-2 or a Cessna 400 light twin.

O'Neal believes that \$10,000 will allow initial operations to use leased equipment as early as the first quarter of 2009.

Funding is church orientated and O'Neal and other members of the organisation's board of directors are visiting churches and other groups in the Tampa Bay area in an effort to raise enough money for the first flight and then look to purchasing an aircraft at a cost of about \$700,000 for an MU2 and about half that amount for a Cessna. Just \$200,000 would cover a deposit on a loan.

One of the open options is to partner with a commercial company to also use the aircraft for company flights and as an air ambulance with church funding to the tune of about \$15,000 a month covering the charitable air ambulance activity.

For additional information on Faith Charity Flights USA, go to [www.FaithCharityFlightsUSA.org](http://www.FaithCharityFlightsUSA.org)

# FIRE

## AUSTRIA

On November 5 forest rangers detected a fire at an altitude of about 800m on the steep forest slopes of the Schneeberg (Lower Austria). The volunteer fire brigade from Wiener Neustadt's southern base group and the specially requested airborne fire service successfully brought the fire under control despite difficult terrain and poor visibility.

With the help of the DA42 MPP, equipped with infrared sensors, the success of the fire extinguishing activities on the ground were verifiable and any remaining hot spots detected. The Diamond DA42 MPP flew twice before it was able to confirm the fires and hotspots had been dealt with.

[www.diamond-sensing.com](http://www.diamond-sensing.com)

*Multi-faceted cooperation between the volunteer fire department, the police and a commercial enterprise demonstrated the potential of airborne resources.*



## UNITED STATES

**NATIONAL:** An 'Aerial Firefighting USA' Conference is scheduled to take place in Anaheim, California from February 19-20, 2009 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. It will precede the annual Heli-Expo exhibition later that month. The event is supported by UN-ISDR and the Global Fire Monitoring Center, and sponsored by Bombardier.

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# SEARCH AND RESCUE

## CANADA

OTTAWA – It has been proposed that Canada should either buy more CH-149 Cormorant SAR helicopters or cut back on inspections in the existing fleet in order to meet the original expectations in the fleet.

A study by Defence Research and Development Canada says the fourteen existing Cormorants are in maintenance or inspection half of the time and is therefore failing to meet the SAR capability goals set when the fleet was planned. In 2002 Cormorants replaced 40-year-old Labrador helicopters that were old and maintenance hungry and it was assumed that the new aircraft would provide an availability level in the region of 75% but in practice this actually varies between 37% and 50%. The main reason for this lack of improvement has centred on initial service entry problems with cracked windscreens and other minor structural defects but made worse when long-term problems associated with persistent cracks in the tail rotor hubs and a critical shortage of spare parts arose. The manufacturer replaced the hubs but the cracking persists and has been added to with corrosion near the fuel tanks.

## CHINA

China Southern Airlines' Zhuhai Helicopter Company accepted two Sikorsky S-76C++™ helicopters to support offshore oil projects in the South China Sea and Bohai Bay last month. This delivery follows earlier civil aircraft sales into the region for Sikorsky. Last month, Sikorsky signed an agreement with the Rescue and Salvage Bureau of China's Ministry of Transport (MOT) for four S-76C++ helicopters to enhance the MOT's maritime and search and rescue capabilities, bringing the fleet's total to eight and making it one of the largest operators of Sikorsky S-76® SAR helicopters in the world.

## MALAYSIA

As mentioned in last month's issue AgustaWestland has now publicly announced that the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) has signed a contract for three AW139 medium twin engine helicopters plus options for several additional aircraft. These helicopters will be used to perform search and rescue, coastal patrol and law enforcement duties around Malaysia's extensive coast line. This order marks the entrance of the AW139 helicopter into the Malaysian government market and follows the earlier success of the aircraft in the Malaysian commercial market.

## SPAIN

ARMY: Eurocopter has ordered Wescam MX-15i electro-optical and infrared [EO/IR] imaging sensors for fitment to new Eurocopter EC135 and AS532AL Cougar helicopters destined to serve with the Spanish Army Disaster Response Unit [UME].

Lutz Bertling, President and CEO of Eurocopter and Juan Carlos Martinez Saiz, CEO of Eurocopter in Spain, handed over the first of the UME EC135's to be manufactured in Albacete to the Ministry of Defence last month.

The Eurocopter plant in Albacete (south-east of Madrid) opened in March 2007, the plant now employs 400 people and is scheduled to have a workforce of 700 by the end of 2010. It was designed to incorporate the highest levels of technology with the aim of developing a permanent helicopter industry with full manufacturing competence in Spain.

The EC135 assembly line in Albacete is one of Eurocopter's two final assembly lines for this light twin-engine helicopter, the other being in Donauwörth (Germany). More than 700 units have been delivered to 160 clients in 40 countries, 40 of the type are currently operated in Spain.

## UNITED KINGDOM

**COAST GUARD:** It is said that the MCA 139 IFR issues originated from CHC pilots and the company [CHC] agreed to accede to them and instructed the MRO to meet the pilots requests. The aircraft meets its original specification but as they got used to it the MCA/CHC pilots started requesting various fixes that made sense but were effectively beyond that original specification. As the number of 'requests' grew the situation was seen by some as getting 'out of hand' but rather than making an issue of the situation and court a potential pilot revolt CHC asked for the fixes. One aircraft at a time is offline while the fix is sorted at Lee with the S61 fill in off course as required. At first an S-61 aircraft was brought in from Eire [EI-CZN] but that was later withdrawn in favour of a Shetland based Sikorsky S-92. The main Shetland helicopter will continue to operate search and rescue missions whilst this second Shetland helicopter is stationed in the south.

**SCOTLAND:** The Red Cross in the region have taken delivery of a new rescue hovercraft. The Hov Pod SPX craft customised to meet their specific rescue and communications requirements is now available for service. The hovercraft hull is Hov Pod Rescue Orange - a special colour to designate rescue craft operation. The Hovercraft has been brought in to help Highland rescuers operate in flooded areas, on frozen lochs, sand bars and mud flats.

The vessel Greer, named from Old Scots meaning watchful or valiant, was unveiled by the Red Cross and is based in Inverness.

Hov Pod have now announced a new model to their range of patrol hovercraft, the Hov Pod SPX 120 Turbo, which utilises a 120 HP 4 stroke Weber engine. This engine delivers a quieter yet improved performance and greater operating range per tank of fuel. The additional power enables the operator to lift a heavier payload from an on-water start. The Hov Pod is a 3-man hovercraft manufactured from rugged HDPE (High Density Polyethylene).



## UNITED STATES

**FEDERAL – USCG:** Deepwater, one of the biggest projects ever undertaken by the Coast Guard continues its downward spiral allegedly caused by mismanagement of the giant project.

Last month the US Department of Homeland Security stripped the Coast Guard of acquisition decision authority for expensive projects, including Deepwater. The decision was made on the basis of a Government Accounting Office recommendation.

Coast Guard officials will now have to prove to DHS that projects are on track and that future steps are clear. Deepwater was launched in the wake of 9/11 and was intended to meet a raft of USCG requirements designed to update equipment including sea vessels, helicopters, planes, and unmanned vehicles and to integrate them all under an umbrella technology at a cost of \$17billion. Unfortunately that figure has inflated to over \$24billion since 2002.

There have been a range of technical errors to further damage the programme including communications gear that was easy to intercept, radios that were not waterproofed, failed refits of ships and bad design flaws that resulted in new craft being unfit for operations. A new glass-reinforced plastic meant for use in hulls of newer ships failed during testing and was abandoned, with \$38M lost.

The Coast Guard's has now taken delivery of its sixth HC-144A Ocean Sentry Maritime Pa-

rol Aircraft (MPA), Tail Number (CG 2306), was formally accepted—recognized by the signing of the DD-250 document—at EADS construction facility in Seville, Spain, on November 5. The aircraft is scheduled to depart Spain for the Coast Guard Aviation Training Center in Mobile, Ala., during the week of December 12-19, 2008. Two additional aircraft are on contract and scheduled for delivery to the Coast Guard by April 2009. Service plans call for a fleet of 36 fully missionised HC-144As by 2020.

## PRODUCTS



**Meeker Aviation** and **AirFilm Camera Systems** have announced two new EASA/STC's, EASA.IM.R.S.01490 and EASA.IM.R.S.01489 for their EC135 and EC145 (UH-72) utility step mounts.

The step mounts provide an unprecedented 1/2/3 or 4 simultaneous payload capacity and other distinct features:

- max single payload weight 125lbs
- 4 styles of payload arms to accommodate all the most popular sensor/cameras/searchlights
- available in left / right or set as well as standard length boarding step version
- designed to use our family of Dovetails / Quick disconnects / vibration isolation devices
- proven and tested on four continents.



The Sky-Y unmanned aircraft manufactured by **Alenia Aeronautica** is the first European unmanned aircraft of the MALE (Medium Altitude Long Endurance) class to have completed a series of ground surveillance missions using a European-made electro-optical sensor, to have transmitted data to the ground through a satellite system and to have accomplished missions in any weather condition. The Sky-Y aircraft was at the Vidsel testing range in Sweden.

Sky-Y has been developed as a demonstrator for innovative technologies created for unmanned aircraft in its class and the aircraft has made six flights testing the electro-optical sensor EOST-45 developed by SELEX Galileo, a mission computer developed by Quadrics, a new datalink used for the sensor's remote control and for sending images to the ground, and new functions of the Tactical Control Station with a Remote Sensor Operator Station. All of these products are from companies associated with Alenia Aeronautica.

**Vector Aerospace** Helicopter Services North America (Vector), one of the largest inde-



# Press Release



*Entente cordiale*

## Enterprise Control Systems Ltd (ECS) has great pleasure announcing a new contract agreed with the Direction generale de la gendarmerie nationale.



The contract will include, but not be limited to, 12 helicopter downlink transmitters, complete with all accessories for installation on a new fleet of Eurocopter EC135 helicopters, along with a range of ground based receive systems. ECS will provide a wide range of receive equipment to suit the wide and varied requirements of the Gendarmerie. The receive equipment will include portable, hand held systems, pelicase mounted, transportable systems and rack mounted fixed station utilizing antenna diversity improvement to achieve maximum range of operation. The equipment to be provided as part of the contract has been further detailed below:

### Downlink Transmitter

The system is fully modular and uses four main component parts. The modulator, power amplifier, antenna and controller. The modulator contains two MPEG 2 encoders, which accept up-linked signals, or signals from on board cameras. The system can be configured for two-channel operation with 16QAM modulation, or single channel QPSK. The signal(s) are multiplexed onto a single radio bearer along with GPS information to be carried over the link. This information is used to switch the multi-sector receive antenna, on the ground.



Downlink Transmitter

The multi sector antenna uses no moving parts to allow long-term reliable operation. The system is now also available to carry High Definition signals.

### Fixed Base Station Receiver

The GPS signal coming down from the helicopter is used to steer a multi sector receive antenna operating in the required band. The antenna will lock onto the signal and track the helicopter within a period of 5 seconds.

To ensure fluency of the signal each sector of the antenna array will make contact prior to break of the existing signal.

The antenna array, model number MSA6, is fixed vertically on a 54 mm pole and connected via a multi-way cable to the antenna controller. The antenna controller is housed in a 19 inch x 1U rack mount format and features a display of the sector in operation as well as the facility to override the GPS control signal, or operate in omni-directional mode.

The receiver is housed in a matching 19 inch x 1U unit. In order to overcome the difficulties normally experienced associated with insertion loss at higher RF frequencies the first phase of down-conversion is undertaken in the outdoor antenna unit. The resultant UHF signal can then be carried up to 200 metres to the indoor receive equipment via low loss co-axial cable.

### Handy View Receiver

The Handy view receiver has been designed for highly portable reception of downlinked data signals. Utilizing the latest technology in miniaturization the fully integrated receiver incorporates a down-converter, demodulator and decoder with a high quality LCD display.

The unit is normally used to receive over a range of up to 10 nautical miles, which can be extended with diversity reception via an external down-converter and antenna system.



Fixed Base Station Receiver

Handy View Receiver

### Portable Briefcase Receiver

For medium range operations (typically 20 nautical miles) a pelicase-mounted receiver has been offered, this also forms part of the long-range system described below. The pelicase has a built in ruggedised LCD display and audio loudspeaker. The display is switchable to display either of the down-linked channels, as required.



This is also removable and can be used on a cable outside the briefcase, if required. The receiver powered from on board Lithium Ion batteries, with facility to power from an external vehicle supply or AC charger. All video and audio signals are presented on the front panel for recording or external display.

### Transportable Receive System

This is suitable for obtaining long-range transmissions of 50 to 200 nautical miles, depending on frequency. The upgrade system uses a five-sector antenna (six sector above 4 GHz) with directional antennas seamlessly switched to receive the signal from any direction. An uplook antenna is also fitted to receive from the helicopter if flying above the antenna. The portable antenna controller controls the antenna, this can be DC powered to be used alongside the briefcase receiver for long-range operations.

The antenna system is mounted on a tripod to gain elevation and ease of operation. The antenna does not use any moving parts allowing long-term reliable operation. The whole system can be provided in rack mount form as a fixed installation. In this case the antenna can be installed high on a tower or mast for maximum range.



Transportable Receive System

For further information of any of the equipment please do not hesitate to contact us:

[www.enterprisecontrol.co.uk](http://www.enterprisecontrol.co.uk)

Tel: + 44 (0) 1327 860050 email: [sales@enterprisecontrol.co.uk](mailto:sales@enterprisecontrol.co.uk)

pendent providers of helicopter maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) services for customers around the world, announces it has been granted EASA Part -145 Approval under the terms of the Bilateral Aviation Safety Agreement (BASA) and associated Maintenance Implementation Procedures (MIP).

As a result of this approval, Vector now offers its considerable support services; which include engines, dynamic components, structures and avionics on a variety of Sikorsky, Bell and Eurocopter operators in the region and countries governed by EASA.

Eurocopter has set up **Eurocopter Indonesia**, bringing the number of its subsidiaries to eighteen worldwide.

Eurocopter has been present in the country for more than 30 years through a partnership with PTDI which began in 1976, with the licensed manufacturing of 118 BO 105 helicopters. This first joint cooperation was followed in the 1980s by a full licensed production of 11 Puma SA330 and 19 Super Puma AS332 helicopters.

On October 21 Eurocopter and PTDI signed a partnership agreement which aims to set up a local assembly line for the manufacturing of Super Puma helicopter airframes.

Based in Jakarta, the subsidiary aims to have a staff-strength of 70 – 100 employees by end of 2009. The subsidiary is in charge of all sales and customer support activities in Indonesia, in cooperation with PTDI for the governmental operators.

Indonesian Armed Forces and law enforcement agencies as well as major governmental and commercial operators all fly Eurocopter helicopters. With ageing fleets in the country, Eurocopter anticipates numerous perspectives of helicopter acquisitions in the near future in order to modernise the existing fleets.

**American Eurocopter** delivered the 14<sup>th</sup> AS350B2 to the LAPD's Air Support Division today. They have chosen the AS350B2 as an integral member of their fleet because of the aircraft's performance, durability and reliability. I have included the text of our press release below. Let me know if you have any questions. Also, take note that this aircraft will be finished with a new paint scheme as part of an ongoing initiative with the LAPD's Air Support Division.

**Pratt & Whitney Canada** has received Transport Canada type certification for its new PW207D1 and PW207D2 engines selected to power the Bell Helicopter 429.

NAASCO Northeast Corporation has announced its "Mercury Mod" Configured Starter Generators have accumulated over one million combined flight hours on Eurocopter products including the AS350, AS355, AS365, EC120, EC130, EC135 and EC145 Helicopters. This milestone was made possible by the extended life achieved by the "Mercury Mod" and NAASCO's proprietary 1,000 hour brush life guarantee.

The Mercury Modification aids in cooling of the starter generator incorporating an improved fan cover, modified end bells and an improved brush grade also allowing for slower commutator wear. Visit NAASCO's web site for more information on the Mercury Mod at [www.naasco.com](http://www.naasco.com).



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**United Rotorcraft Solutions (URS)**, and partner **Ahlers Aerospace** were awarded a FAA Supplemental Type Certificate for their Night Vision Lighting modifications on the Eurocopter EC135. The STC, awarded on October 24, incorporated the modification design utilizing filters that are externally mounted reducing installation time and cost. The external filters allow the modified component to remain generic thus retaining the advantages of local repair and/or overhaul. The filter material used greatly improves day light readability.

During this STC approval process the FAA required the use of the only TSO'd Night Vision Goggles for flight evaluation. These goggles are the NIVISYS NVAG-6 Night Vision Aviator Goggles of which URS is the preferred distributor.

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

At the recent AMTC event held in Minneapolis URS offered a draw for a pair of the NIVISYS NVAG-6 Night Vision Aviator Goggles and the winner was Eric Pangburn, the Chief Pilot for Omniflight Helicopters located in Dallas, Texas.



All **Cessna** Citation owners, crew and passengers will receive access to an upgraded, life-saving **MedAire** medical kit, due to its recent partnership with MedAire Inc.

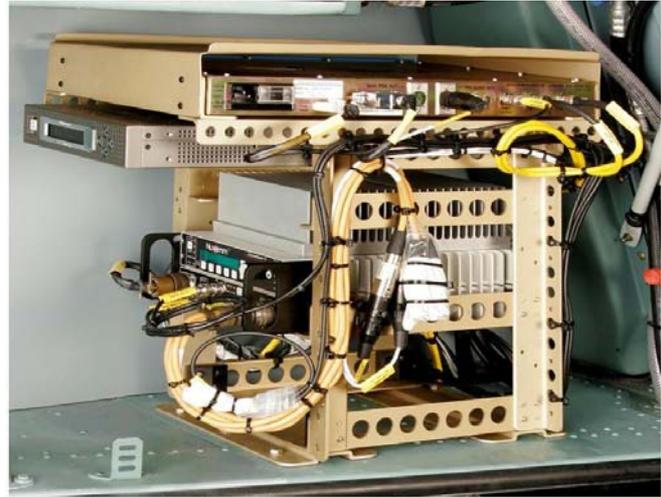
Cessna will offer specialty medical kits from US company MedAire who manufacture aircraft medical kits for business and general aviation, either as standard equipment or as an option on Citation business jets.

A MedAire-manufactured Aircraft First Aid Kit will be placed on the Cessna XLS+ with the rest of the fleet adding the kit in 2009. When the kit medications expire, MedAire can refurbish each kit with current supplies.

Owners and crew will also have the opportunity to purchase additional medical offerings from MedAire including training, an advisory service, automated external defibrillator and alternate kits with prescription medications. [www.medaire.com](http://www.medaire.com)

**Geneva Aviation**, a member of the DART Helicopter Services family of companies, has received Transport Canada approval for its Video System for Eurocopter AS350/AS355/BO-105 and Bell 206/ 407 helicopters. FAA approval has been previously received and EASA approval is pending.

The Geneva Aviation Video System provides video routing for television, video and microwave communications for crewmembers as well as reporters, photographers, and engineers. The system is designed to support various cameras or sensors and a variety of recording and communications equipment. The system may be configured to meet specific customer requirements and Geneva technicians are available to support the system installations.



Sub-components of the Video System may be purchased separately such as the P180 Camera Control Box Installation and the P160 Microwave Radio Rack (shown above).

In a newly ratified agreement, all private jet passengers flying in and out of **Oxford Airport** will have ready access to Oxford Air Services' (OAS) fleet of executive helicopters. *Oxfordjet*, which recently opened its brand new business aviation terminal, will market OAS helicopter services as part of its new customer services offering. All bookings and enquiries will be processed by the *Oxfordjet* Customer Services Team, located at the new facility.

*Oxfordjet* provides passengers with luxurious facilities, including VIP and VVIP zones, private shower rooms, a bar, meeting rooms and customs and immigration facilities. The terminal overlooks the main business aircraft apron, providing easy access to aircraft.

OAS will run shuttle services from Oxford Airport to the primary business airports around London, including The London Heliport (approximate 25 minutes' flying time) Farnborough, plus the major London terminals at Heathrow, Gatwick, Luton, Stansted and across the Channel to Paris and other European destinations. OAS also provides helicopters for sporting events and race days throughout the UK.

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According to Eurocopter China's helicopter market has the potential to rival the USA's if its government takes steps to help the sector.

The three main problems are the regulations that restrict the use of low-altitude airspace, insufficient investment in helicopter infrastructure, and a shortage of pilots, engineers and maintenance workers.

The first fuselage of the advanced medium-sized multi-purpose EC175 [locally designated Z15] helicopter, jointly developed by China and France, was delivered at Harbin Aircraft Industry (Group) Co. on November 15.

The fuselage will be sent to **Eurocopter** for general assembly and related experiments. The first flight is expected to take place by the end of 2009 with EASA certification slated for 2011 and CAAC certification in 2012. The hope is that the design will attract some 800 sales over 20 years.

The mock-up of this type was launched at the HAI Heli-Expo in Houston this year – at that time a total of 111 orders were announced.



**Scottish Fisheries** have operated two Reims F 406 aircraft s/n 0064 G-SFPA and s/n 0065 G-SFPB for over 18 years and have flown in excess of 28,000 hours patrolling five days a weeks as far as Rockall., these have now given way to new aircraft of the same type.

Their second new aircraft s/n 0095 G-SMMB which has a nose mounted FLIR in addition to the Telephonics RDR 1500B 360 deg search radar will be delivered in December and will replace G-SFPB which Reims will take in part exchange.

*Cephas Ralph - Director of Operations Controller of Air and Sea Operations for Scottish Fisheries Protection Agency accepting delivery of the Reims F406 Vigilant c/n 0094 G-SMMA from Bob Crowe of Bob Crowe Aircraft Sales Ltd the Cranfield based International Distributor for Reims Aviation Industries.*

**Caledonian Airborne Systems** Ltd based in Aberdeen have purchased the former Scottish Fisheries Reims 406 aircraft G-SFPA c/n 64 for trials work, it will be re-registered to G-CVXN. Caledonian is an independent Scottish Aerospace Design manufacture and maintenance organisation and is probably best known within the rotary wing market for its multi-function displays. The aircraft – which they call their Caledonian Vixen – will be used for airborne systems development for twin turboprop maritime patrol aircraft. The company has advertised for structural design/stress and avionics engineers in relation to this extension of their business. [www.caledonian-airborne.com](http://www.caledonian-airborne.com)





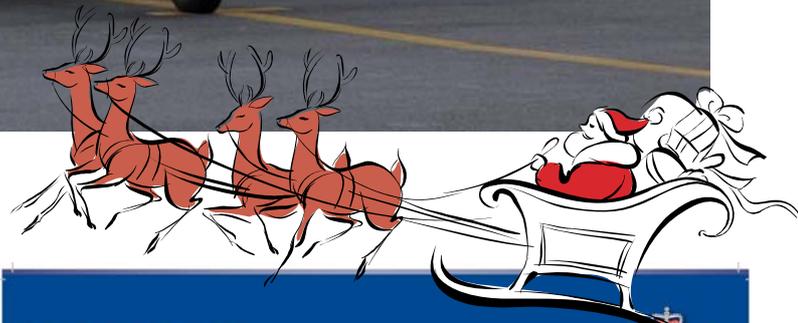
# CHRISTMAS SPECIALS

Following on from the success of its previous two Christmas Special 'Kids Go Free' Fun days, The **Helicopter Museum** in Weston-super-Mare is making this years event on Sunday December 14 even bigger and better.

All the annual events popular activities will still be taking place on the day including several open cockpits, face-painting, helicopter flights, competitions, cake and book stalls as well as the children's favourite of meeting Santa Claus in his very own helicopter!

However this year the museum has teamed up with West Country Fairs to fill one of its vast aircraft hangars with over sixty art and craft stalls. Visitors to the museum will not only be able to view the Worlds largest collection of helicopters but also a wide range of craft work ranging from cushion makers , glass painting and handmade soap and pottery to a more unusual display of locally crafted wooden helicopters.

The event will also feature a live performance by Lyrica, an ensemble of professional female singers who specialize in jazz and opera concerts.



ESSEX POLICE

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Museum Curator, Becky Latchford

Tel: 01245 457 150  
Fax: 01245 453 456  
Website: [www.essex.police.uk/museum](http://www.essex.police.uk/museum)  
Email: [museum@essex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:museum@essex.pnn.police.uk)

Essex Police Museum,  
PO Box 2,  
Headquarters,  
Springfield,  
Chelmsford,  
Essex CM2 6DA

# ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

**22 October 2008 Cessna P210N, N731NX**, registered to and operated by Mesa County Sheriff's Department, Grand Junction, Colorado and Cessna 180 N3389D registered in Monte Vista, Colorado, collided over western Colorado. Both landed safely and no injuries were reported. The Cessna 210 was carrying two inmates, a deputy and a pilot, the other carried two people.

The collision took place in mid air approximately 14 miles south of Grand Junction. N3389D was substantially damaged; N731NX sustained minor damage. N3389D was on a personal flight that originated at Del Norte, Colorado, and was en route to Aberdeen, Idaho. N731NX was a public use (prisoner transfer) flight that originated at Grand Junction and was en route to Florence, Colorado. N3389D was descending westbound from 16,500 feet to 8,500 feet. At approximately 10,000 feet the passenger yelled a warning and the aircraft was dived as N731NX approached head-on. There was an impact followed by a forced landing in a field and the airplane nosed over. The top two-thirds of the vertical stabilizer was missing.

N731NX was climbing eastbound between 9,500 and 10,500 feet when there was an impact thought to be a bird strike as the other aircraft was not seen. On making a precautionary landing the nose gear was found to be retracted and it skidded on its nose for approximately 300 feet before coming to a halt. [NTSB]

**24 October 2008 Eurocopter EC135 N135ED** of Carilion Clinic Life-Guard at Roanoke, Virginia operated by Air Methods. The helicopter based out of Carilion New River Valley Medical Center in Christiansburg, VA was dispatched to Twin County Community Hospital in Galax, Virginia to transport a patient to Forsyth Medical Center in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. On the transportation leg of the journey the pilot aborted the flight while in the Roanoke, VA area due to worsening weather. The patient was returned to original sending facility without incident and ground transportation arrangements were made. The helicopter returned to its base without further incident.

It was subsequently learned that staff at the original sending facility had already been refused by staff that another air medical operator on the grounds of poor weather. The other operator is VFR with NVG access but Carilion is IFR with NVG. On this occasion the duty pilot was not certified IFR. In future the parties concerned will be logging all weather turn downs into [www.weatherturndown.com](http://www.weatherturndown.com). [Concern]

*Ed: In case this looks sort of familiar this same aircraft was involved in an incident on 18 October 2008 and that was reported in the November issue.*

**30 October 2008 Cessna Citation Bravo N10UH**. Air ambulance of Critical Care Transport, attached to the University Hospital Birmingham, Alabama and operated by Life-Guard Transportation Services. Upon take-off from Birmingham airport, the tower reported seeing smoke coming from one of the engines. They did a fly by and no smoke was seen; nothing of significance appeared on the aircraft instruments. The aircraft returned to land at Birmingham and after a thorough inspection found no problem was returned to service.

[Concern]

**3 November 2008 Eurocopter BK117 C-FIOM**. Air ambulance of STARS based in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. The aircraft was dispatched on a Medevac from Grande Prairie Alberta to High Prairie, Alberta. Immediately upon take-off the Master Caution Light illuminated along with the #1 Engine Chip Caution Panel Segment. Checklist procedures were carried out and the engine was shut down. The aircraft returned to Grande Prairie airport and landed without further incident. The engine was removed. [Concern]

**5 November 2008 LearJet L45 XC-VMC** Mexican Government Interior Ministry. Crashed into a mixed residential/commercial area near Reforma avenue in Mexico City, Mexico killing all nine persons on-board, including Mexican Interior Secretary, Juan Camillo Mourino and other important persons in the fight against drug crime. Total death toll given as fourteen persons. e country and abroad, including from those who had worked with 37-

years olds Interior Minister Juan Camilo Mourino, the nation's second most powerful official after the president. [Media]

**5 November 2008 MD500 N.** Las Vegas Police Department. A Las Vegas police helicopter was forced to land in a vacant lot due to a mechanical failure on the southeast corner of Bruce and Fremont streets, Las Vegas. [Media].

**10 November 2008 Eurocopter AS350B2 N556AM.** Air ambulance of Life Flight Network, Aurora, Oregon operated by Air Methods. Enroute to Hospital from Cottage Grove, OR, Life Flight 5 struck a small duck at approximately 2,500 MSL. The impact area was the nose of the aircraft. A precautionary landing was executed at Albany airport. An inspection revealed no damage to the aircraft. [Concern]

**13 November 2008 Eurocopter AS350B2 N911GF.** Air ambulance of Benefis Mercy Flight of Great Falls, Montana. Operated by Metro Aviation, Inc. While returning from a scene call at a height of 4,200 ft (800 AGL) approximately 2km south of highway and local Air Force base, was forced to take evasive maneuver for an unannounced military leaving local Air Force base. At the time crew was searching for 3<sup>rd</sup> helicopter on their 0800 that ATC was tracking and notified to Mercy Flight. FAA then abruptly announced the presence of the unidentified military aircraft. Looking forward the crew saw the Bell Huey less than 1km and closing. With visual contact the two aircraft passed approximately within 100 metres of one another. [Concern]

**16 November 2008 Bell OH-58 Kiowa N153GF.** Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. Forty-five-year-old Sergeant Monty Carmikle died when the helicopter crashed in in a field northeast of Quitman central Arkansas while patrolling for violators of a ban on deer hunting at night. The contract pilot, Jerry Fryar of Ozark, was taken to a local hospital, where he was treated and released. Reports of damage state that the MRB broke off and the fuselage was buckled but remained upright. Deer season began a week ago and wildlife officers routinely patrol for hunting violators, Carmikle and Fryar by air and other officers on the ground. He was the first wildlife officer to die in the line of duty since two officers died in a plane crash in the 1970s. [Media]

**22 November 2008 Eurocopter EC135 N243AM.** Air ambulance of AirCare Critical Care Transport operated by Wake Forest University School of Medicine and North Carolina Baptist Hospitals, in Winston-Salem, NC. Suffered a bird strike on return flight from incident with patient aboard. No problems occurred while in flight due to the bird strike. After landing a hole was found in the pilot's chin bubble. The aircraft was placed out of service for 48 hours for repair. [Concern]

**23 November 2008 Beechcraft King Air A100 C-.** Air ambulance operated by SkyNorth Air Ltd. The aircraft was about 500km north of Winnipeg and en-route to Thompson from the island airport at God's Lake First Nation, Northern Manitoba. The pilot took off and was said to be trying to turn back onto the runway when smoke entered the cockpit, it crash landed into trees on the mainland just a few miles from the airport and about 90 meters from the waters of the lake.



Five persons including an infant patient and his mother were on board. The five survivors crawled away from the plane seconds before it exploded into a fireball. The wreck totally burned out leaving traces of the engines and two pieces of tail section. A search found them five hours after the crash. [Media]

## LETTERS

Hello,

I'm writing from CHC Helicopters in Vancouver, Canada to ask if you would list our 5<sup>th</sup> annual Safety & Quality Summit listed on an upcoming events or events calendar page in Police Aviation News.

To give you some background information, this non-profit Summit is a well respected and well attended event that runs from March 30 - April 1, 2009 at the Fairmont Vancouver Hotel in Vancouver, BC, bringing people from around the globe to share best practices while exploring improved safety through human performance.

This event is using as its theme The Future of Human Error Management in Aviation. For more information, or to register, to go: [www.chcsafetyqualitysummit.com](http://www.chcsafetyqualitysummit.com).

Thank you,

Adrienne White

[awhite@chc.ca](mailto:awhite@chc.ca) +1 604 232 8272

*Ed: PAN is always willing to carry details of safety related events [and a whole heap of others] without charge so send along your notices to see if you fit in with PAN's ever so flexible policy!*

## RECENT EVENTS

Last month PAN reported on the firefighting conference in Portugal but was unable to visit the other such event in Greece a week later. Sources close to the organisers have reported this first **Aerial Firefighting Conference 2008**, organised by Tangent Link Ltd, in Athens as being 'highly successful'.

Attended by twenty-two nations it took place in an Athens hotel in late October chaired by Johann Goldhammer of the Global Fire Monitoring Centre and Rear Admiral Terry Loughran. The agenda covered fixed and rotary winged operations, safety, management and technologies.

Other recent events including the **Police Aviation Conference** in London, the **Dubai Helishow** and the **Emergency Services Show** these are the subject of a separate report published by PAN and on-line now.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Preparation for **HELI-EXPO 2009** in Anaheim, California is well underway. Exhibitor registration has been open for more than three months and attendee registration for one month. All indicators point to another successful convention and exposition. HELI-EXPO 2009, the world's largest helicopter gathering, will be held at the Anaheim Convention Center in Anaheim, California, February 22 – 24, 2009.

HELI-EXPO is the world's largest event dedicated to the international helicopter community. Last year 17,373 aviation professionals, including more than 565 exhibiting companies, attended the show. Sixty-five helicopters shared the showroom floor, which featured avionics, accessories, components, and other related products.

HELI-EXPO 2009 will open on Sunday, February 22, 2009, with the Annual General Membership Meeting and Breakfast where HAI President Matt Zuccaro and Chairman Patrick Corr will deliver their remarks. This will be followed by the annual HAI press conference where journalists from the trade, business, and general media will have an opportunity to ask in-depth questions on pressing issues. The opening ceremony begins promptly at 10:45 a.m.



The banner features the TranSec World Expo logo on the left, which includes the text 'Transport Security Expo & Conference' and the website 'www.transec.com'. To the right of the logo is a circular emblem with a globe and the words 'MANUFACTURER', 'INTEGRATOR', 'ENDORSE', and 'ENGINEER'. Further right are four circular icons: a truck, an airplane, a train, and a ship. On the far right is a large image of a security camera. At the bottom center, the text reads '3-4 June 2009 | Amsterdam RAI'.



HELI-EXPO is a great chance to mingle with other aviation professionals. Social events, parties, dinners, receptions, with much camaraderie keep evenings exciting and great for networking. Other scheduled HAI events include the Membership Reception; the Job Fair, with companies from around the world seeking to fill positions on the spot; and the annual "Salute to Excellence" Awards Banquet, to be held on February 23 at 8:00 p.m. For more information, and to register, go to [www.heliexpo.com/register](http://www.heliexpo.com/register).

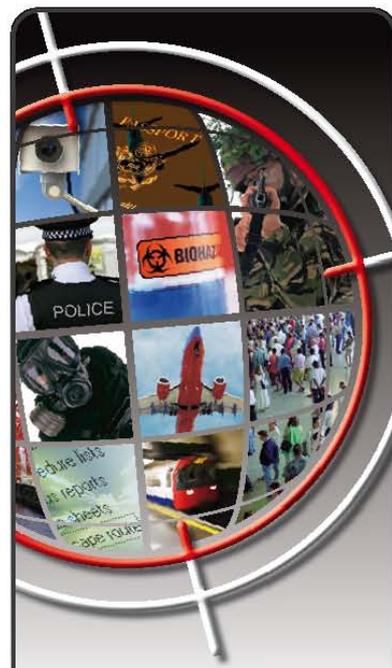
**BGAD 2009**

European Business Air News and Marshall Business Aviation have announced that the fifth UK Business & General Aviation Day - BGAD09 - will take place on Tuesday June 9<sup>th</sup> 2009 at Marshall Airport, Cambridge, UK.

During 2009 the Marshall Group will be celebrating their centenary, and June 9<sup>th</sup> marks the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the first Cambridge aerodrome. To mark this occasion, the day will include a flying display of historic aircraft associated with the airport and Marshall Aerospace.

BGAD will take place in and around the new exclusive Marshall Business Aviation Centre and hangar, which will both be launched in November. A number of new features and events are planned for the day and more details will be released soon.

Allan McGreal, Head of Marshall Business Aviation said that "Marshall is proud to be working alongside EBAN magazine on the fifth BGAD exhibition. Once again this gives Marshall the opportunity to showcase its new state-of-the-art facilities to the business aviation industry."



- Unique, dedicated exhibition for companies of specialist security technologies and solutions
- High-level conference with multiple streams featuring over 50 leading international speakers
- Comprehensive programme of free-to-attend technology and practical workshops
- Networking Functions

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