

Police Aviation News

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Number 123 July 2006

IPAR

WALES HEMS 3 LIFT-OFF



CAMBRIDGE EXPLORER LAUNCH

THE RISE OF THE UAV - LATEST
FARNBOROUGH AND PARC ABERPORTH

PAN – [POLICE AVIATION NEWS](#) is published monthly by
INTERNATIONAL POLICE AVIATION RESEARCH
7 Windmill Close, Honey Lane, Waltham Abbey, Essex EN9 3BQ UK
+44 1992 714162
[Editor](#) Bryn Elliott

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LAW ENFORCEMENT

ARGENTINA

MENDOZA: Two new helicopters for the police were to have been delivered to the Provincial Police last month. Both helicopters of an as yet unidentified type were acquired some time ago but have been delayed in Brazil by customs. [Journada]

FRANCE

SECURITE CIVILE: In the wake of a fatal accident in the Pyrenees of a Securite Civile Eurocopter EC145 early last month [see under accidents] there were reports in the French media that there was significant disquiet among Securite Civile staff about the safety of the aircraft type in the mountain rescue environment.

The same article suggested that there were also perceived problems with the recent acquisition of fixed wing Bombardier Q400 in a fire fighting role. Pilots were stating that the aircraft was unproven in the role and therefore likely to be returned to the manufacturer if found to be wanting.

Although the allegations were not stating that either of the aircraft was dangerous it was being suggested that there were questionable aspects relating to both, especially after two allegedly similar accidents to the EC145. The helicopter type was perceived to be at risk operating in a mountain rescue environment.

The gist of the media allegation against the helicopter was put to Eurocopter and within a week they updated the information.

'In the aftermath of a meeting he had with elements of Securite Civile and the Gendarmerie – the main French operators of the EC145 - the French Minister of Interior Nicolas Sarkozy has set up two working groups in order to review the technical aspects of the EC 145 helicopter and to investigate 'the training given to the different actors operating in high mountain areas and the regulations concerning the operational use'.

Others at the meeting included high-mountain rescuers, State Security Policemen (CRS), fire-fighting service representatives and emergency medical staff.

The Ministry does not question the current use of the EC 145 and has cancelled the helicopter use restrictions put into operation on 10th of June, 2006. These only affected high-altitude area missions and obliged the crew to stay 30 metres from any rock faces and to lodge crews on free areas.

The French Gendarmerie uses this aircraft for the same high altitude missions as the Secu-



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rite Civile and the previous fatal incident involved one of their crews.

Of course the official BEAD Investigation Commission is underway with the full collaboration of Eurocopter.'

The Bombardier situation is slightly different in that this is a conversion rather than a pure Bombardier product. Two pre-owned SAS Q400s were ordered in 2004 from Cascade Aerospace in Canada to be modified for France's Sécurité Civile as fire-fighting water bombers in fire season and as transport aircraft off season. The Airtanker can drop 10,000 L (22,000 lb) of water in this role compared to Bombardier's CL415 dedicated water bomber which can drop 6,140 L. The latter, however, is amphibious and requires less infrastructure. [Bombardier/JLE/ECF]

PARIS: The City is again reported to be using an airship – albeit on traffic control missions. Last month a white Zeppelin dirigible has been floating over the city to serve experiments for the City Police. Chartered by Sofema it is undertaking the supervision of the road circulation. [Leblogauto]

Ed: It is interesting to note that the article compared the new airship with the more familiar helicopters by noting that the airship could provide a potential 24 hour service [where helicopters were not doing so].

GREECE

A helicopter helped two prisoners escape the high-security Korydallos jail in Athens Sunday 4 June.

Police said the men, a Greek and an Albanian, boarded the helicopter after it landed in the prison courtyard and were whisked to a cemetery in a nearby working-class suburb in west Athens, where they fled with two accomplices on motorcycles.

They were identified as Vassilis Palaikostas, 40, serving a 25-year sentence since 1999 for the kidnapping of a Greek businessman, and Albanian Alket Rizai, 32, serving a life sentence since 2003 for manslaughter.

Police said one of the men who had helped them escape was Vassilis Palaikostas's 46-year-old brother, Nikos, one of Greece's most wanted men who escaped prison himself in 1990.

Police caught the helicopter pilot, who said two men with guns and a grenade had forced him to carry out the mission. [Telegraph]

GUATAMALA

The Civil National Police (PNC) has announced the purchase of two helicopters. Two small helicopters of a type not yet disclosed will be used for pursuit and patrolling according to Carlos Vielmann a Government Minister. The craft will be role equipped with what described as 'nocturnal viewfinders, lights and sirens' at a cost given as 8M Quetzal. [approx \$1M].



Reims F406 Land & Sea Surveillance

Vielmann did not specify a delivery date but it is said to be short-term. [PrensaLibre]

Ed: In the past [2000] the PNC has rented a Bell 206L-3 Long Ranger helicopter TG-PNC.

JAPAN

Just a year on from the last major Agusta 109 order was announced AgustaWestland has been awarded another contract by the Japan National Police Agency to supply four A109 Power helicopters as part of an on-going programme to modernise the police helicopter fleet. Earlier this year three A109 Powers and one AgustaWestland AW139 were delivered to the Japanese Police.

The repeat order this year demonstrates the Police's satisfaction with the aircraft, the cost effectiveness of the aircraft, and their confidence in the product support infrastructure in Japan. This order will bring the total number of A109 helicopters in service with the Japanese Police to eleven, and this figure will grow significantly over the coming years. {AgustaWestland]

LATVIA

AgustaWestland announced that the Latvian State Border Guard representative, Gen. Eriks Ivanovs, Chief of Central Board of the Border Guard, belonging to the Ministry of the Interior, signed a contract for two A109 Power helicopters. Procurement of the helicopters is being financed by the European Community using Schengen Facility programme funds. The A109 Powers will be used by the State Border Guard Aviation Service for patrolling the eastern European border and other law enforcement missions.

The Central Board of the Border Guard, under the Ministry of the Interior, launched the state tender competition for the acquisition of light twin helicopters in late 2005 and the A109 Power was selected as the helicopter that best met the requirements and conditions set out in the tender. The Border Guard helicopters will be equipped with latest generation FLIR, radar, dedicated mission console, rescue hoist, search light and a Night Vision Goggles compatible cockpit.

Baltijas Helikopters, the official representative of Bell Helicopters in Latvia, is currently training border guards as pilots. The target is to have more than ten able to fly patrols and five have already finished their training. Baltijas is responsible for maintenance as well as supplying the pilots and instructor support for the Latvian Border Guard. [AW/AvWeb]

MEXICO

The pilots and crews of two privately owned Bell 206 helicopters [XA-UEE and XA-UCJ of SCALA] are at the centre of an apparent furore over their June 14 activities over a gathering of thousands of teachers and civilians in a city centre.

It is alleged that the Bell's were being used by the authorities and although unmarked launched tear gas grenades against the crowd. [Media]

SPAIN

In response to a Spanish request to countries of the European Union to send border guards to the Canary Islands to help deal with a flood of over 10,000 illegal immigrants there the Finnish Broadcasting Company broadcast news that Finland plans to send personnel trained in debriefing new arrivals, as well as a Dornier air surveillance plane and crew to the Spanish islands off the west coast of Africa.

According to the report, Finland could send the border guard personnel within a month. If it does take place it would be the first time that Finnish have been deployed to help another country in patrolling its borders.

The Border Guard Dornier Do 228 was expected to take part in the Canary Islands operation for a fortnight, beginning late June. In addition to the aircraft crew, two to four experts are to be deployed in the Canary Islands.

A number of other EU countries, including Austria, Britain, France, Germany, Greece, Italy,

The Netherlands and Portugal have also reportedly taken a positive stance on Spain's request.

It would also be the first time that the EU's Border Management Agency implements a concrete operation. In a separate move the cabinet committee on EU affairs has recommended that Finland take part in border control in Malta by sending two officials there. [STT/media]



CAMBRIDGESHIRE: Cambridgeshire Police took delivery of their new MD Explorer G-CMBS on 23 May, following an intensive two-week period of pilot training and acceptance testing, at Gloucestershire Airport. It was officially launched as operationally ready on June 20.

The aircraft was supplied by Police Aviation Services Ltd, who have fitted the aircraft with the very latest specification in police role equipment, which includes a Wescam MX15 thermal imaging camera system with night vision goggle trial operations planned for later in the year.

G-CMBS, replaces the force's older generation AS355F2 G-CAMB, which has been in service with them for ten years. The new helicopter will provide significantly improved capability as a police aircraft.

In taking delivery of the aircraft, Capt. Tony Cowan, the Unit Executive Officer (UEO) for Cambridgeshire Police's Air Support Unit stated "It gives me an enormous sense of satisfaction to take delivery of a very fine aircraft with an excellent suite of police role equipment".

This brings to a total of 14 the number of MD Explorers operated by the UK's emergency services and reinforces the strength of belief that operators have in the aircraft which is achieving leading availability levels in its class. [SAS]

Ed: Beyond the press release the official ceremony at the Cambridgeshire Police HQ in Huntingdon provided other details on the aircraft. Naturally there have been detail improvements over the years but the basic SAS role fit remains fairly standard, This latest machine does have some additional detail improvements including a 15 inch display in the front cabin and of course the NVG lighting fit. The SX-16 searchlight includes an IR filter, probably the first police aircraft to be delivered with one since the 1980s Bolkow's carried them.

SAS are still tinkering with that to ensure that the subdued lighting remains readable without NVGs. Always a matter of balance. These details will be ready for NVG training to start as the nights draw in. UEO Tony Cowan believes the crew has enough to handle in the coming months with all the new systems without worrying about NVG before winter. The unit may become the 3rd or 4th unit in the UK to go NVG and will be the first on the Explorer.

With the local air ambulance service announcing their intent to operate two helicopters this summer the police unit has added to this by stating that their aircraft will also offer a HEMS



capability. A local volunteer group of trained doctors and paramedics - Magpas - is co-located with the police unit at RAF Wyton and is available for transportation to major incidents. They have their own vehicle for use in transportation to most incidents but the additional passenger carrying capabilities of the Explorer will allow greater flexibility in attending major events. Arguably Cambridgeshire should never have gambled on purchasing the Explorer. At the time of the signing things were looking bad at the manufacturers MDHI and they quickly got a great deal worse. Fortunately the passage of time, late delivery and major changes in Mesa have turned the situation around just in time for the new aircrafts arrival. If it had been delivered even six months ago there would be lots of bravado but a great deal of wringing of hands in high places.

I suspect the gods will smile on the operation and that things will turn out well enough. The latest reports are that the final spares problem – the 'Flex Beam rotor head parts – now have an assured availability so at least groundings should be less endemic in the fleet and it should get better.

The extended tailboom is reported to be FAA certified now with EASA certification to follow in a few months assuming the European authorities countersign the existing FAA work. The promised fleet wide free re-equipment programme should take place early in 2007 and confer a significant increase in capability.



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CHILTERN: As predicted in earlier issues the Luton based police helicopter plans to move its base away from the airport this year. A BBC report gives the reason for the move as being because the airport is 'getting too busy.'

Plans for a new base for the helicopter at RAF Henlow have been submitted to Mid Bedfordshire district council with a view of getting the operation up and running in a purpose built office, heli-pad and hangar by October.

According to the BBC report the EC135T2 aircraft, currently based at Luton airport, would be able to deploy more quickly from RAF Henlow because there is less air traffic.

Eight police officers and three pilots would provide 24-hour cover for the area covered by Thames Valley, Beds and Herts police [BBC]

Ed: Clearly this report has reduced this event to one of a minor inconvenience. The truth of the matter is that you just do not put in plans to build such a complex just three months before the moving date!

As suggested in previous reports Luton Airport arbitrarily pulled the plug on an existing building programme that had progressed well beyond the planning stage and precipitated this move to Henlow. It might be expected that the operation will be in temporary accommodation until next summer.

PSNI NORTHERN IRELAND: Ulster's first police helicopter, an EC135T2 G-PSNI, has now been operating a year. In that time, it has attended more than 800 incidents and clocked up 1,200 flying hours.

PSNI's highly-specialised air support team is based at a purpose-built base in RAF Aldergrove. The head of air support, Detective Inspector Roger McConnell cites an increasing role in air-lifting casualties as one of the reasons for the operation being so active. With no real air ambulance capability in the Province since the stand-down of the 72 Squadron Westland Wessex helicopters some years ago the police helicopter stepped into the outstanding need.

The unit carries out casualty evacuation in emergency circumstances - not typical air ambulance work but a life-or-death situation resource.

Being based at Aldergrove the helicopter can get to Belfast in a few minutes - it takes about 15 to 20 minutes to reach the north coast and about half an hour to get to Fermanagh. The coastguard calls out the police machine from time to time because they have the thermal imaging camera capability.

As with the other UK police operated aircraft a civilian pilot flies the helicopter, while two PSNI officers act as observers operating the cameras, navigate and communicate with police on the ground.

The air support team's most high profile incident this year was when they chased a suspected robber on a motorbike for an hour and 20 minutes, one of the longest air pursuits in UK police history. The incident started in Belfast and ended in Omagh. [Sunday Life/IPAR]

SOUTH & EAST WALES: The police helicopter operation cost £760,000 to operate last year. The average cost per flight was £505, it was deployed 1,597 times and was credited with 295 arrests.

The AS355F2 helicopter operation flying from Cardiff is headed by Inspector Steve Flynn, and serves both Gwent and South Wales Police, an area of 1,372sq miles, populated by 1.8M people. [IC Wales]

UNITED STATES

FEDERAL: Bell Helicopter in Ozark has delivered their 100th helicopter to the state department. The Huey 2's will be used for the DOS Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement to keep drugs and crime out of America.

The Huey 2 upgrade kit adds more powerful engine, new navigation system, special mission systems and extends the life of the aircraft 20 years.

ALABAMA: In what is probably a unique arrangement the Sheriff's Offices of Conecuh County in eastern Alabama and Escambia County in west Florida have put a Bell OH-58 helicopter in service for their joint use. Using the federal surplus programme resources the single Bell helicopter will be used by the Emergency Management Agencies from both counties. The title is registered to the Conecuh County Sheriff's Department under the Conecuh and Escambia Aviation Division.

The authorities hope that the airborne resource will be used to alleviate illegal dumping, SAR, drug eradication, aerial surveillance and general patrol. [Brewton Standard]

Ed: The Escambia County Sheriff's Office Aviation Unit based in Pensacola and has been in the air support business for a few years now and is effectively supporting Conecuh alongside it. In late 2001 the Sheriff had two OH-58 helicopters and hired two high hour civilian pilots.

In April 2003 Escambia received a \$387,000 Homeland Defense grant which was used to revamp air surveillance and rescue capabilities, allowing the installation of new role equipment on the department's helicopter.

CALIFORNIA: The previously reported Los Angeles County Sheriff's [LASD] UAV continues to attract a strange level of interest that clearly is very selective in its marketing.

As previously reported in PAN elements of the LASD have been experimenting with the SkySeer, effectively a remotely controlled model aircraft. It has a wingspan of 6.5 feet (1.98m) and weighs 4 pounds (1.81kg). A camera is attached to its belly and a small battery powers it. It has a video link that sends data in real time to a ground station. At 250 feet above the ground, it can clear a 25-storey building and is almost invisible.

At a cost of approximately \$25,000 - \$30,000 (£13,400 - £16,000), the UAV is considerably cheaper than a helicopter and yet it appears to offer the persuasive ability to hover in virtual silence over an incident without any risk to a pilot.

The craft can carry a range of different cameras - colour, low light and or infra-red - and promises to provide an attractive cost-effective means of getting an aerial view.

According to the latest storyline the conventional approach to get an aerial view of a tall structure [the roof of a tall building is cited] requires the call-out of the fire department to bring in ladder trucks, allowing officers physically to climb onto the top of a building. This line of course quite deliberately discounts the availability of the Sheriff's extensive air support capability.

In the scenario the SkySeer will be used to back up officers on the ground if they are pursuing a suspect on foot. Flying at a speed of about 30 mph (48 kph), the police believe it will be impossible for a suspect to out manoeuvre the UAV.

LASD has the only prototype SkySeer at the moment for tests with its SWAT [Special Weapons and Tactics] unit.

Ed: Which member of the LA SWAT team will be struck off normal duties to learn to fly this 2kg missile around the skyscrapers of Los Angeles safely has not yet been announced but in view of the troubles experienced by the Border Patrol flying a 'real' UAV in open spaces I guess that there is very little real danger of this lethal lump colliding with any reader visiting LA in the short term.

These negative thoughts have also invaded the FAA and it is reported that the LA flights have been curtailed - reportedly on the grounds that they appear to be unauthorized 'Aerial Work.' The agency has reportedly told Sheriff Lee Baca and company to keep their drone grounded pending the result of an investigation. The department could face disciplinary action for the SkySeer's inaugural flight - authorisation had not been requested for the trial.

NEW MEXICO: The Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office has received the go-ahead to buy a helicopter to replace one shot down last year.

County commissioners approved the \$3M purchase plan for a Eurocopter that will be built in Mississippi and role equipped in Texas. Delivery is expected to take 18 months.

The department's old Hughes 369HS helicopter N500SD was hit by gunfire early last Au-

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gust while deputies searched for burglary suspects. The pilot and a deputy were injured in the subsequent hard landing into trees and a fence in northwest Albuquerque, New Mexico. [FAA/Media]

NEW YORK: Suffolk County has authorized the purchase of an EC145. The aircraft will be used by the Suffolk County Police Department for medevac, law enforcement and over-the-water search and rescue. The county will trade in one of their two MD-902 Explorers toward this purchase.

'We're very excited about our new EC145,' says Sgt. Brian Barrett, unit commander for the SCPD. 'We currently operate two AS350 B2s and we are very satisfied with the AStar's, and with the exceptional customer support we receive from American Eurocopter, and that's what we wanted with our medevac aircraft.'

Suffolk County covers about a 1,000 square mile area on Long Island, and is a suburb of New York City. The SCPD Aviation Section performs about 500 medevac missions per year for the over 1.4M county residents. They also work with US Coast Guard on water-related search and rescue operations. [AEC]

Ed: Notwithstanding the ongoing improvements at Mesa this move cannot be unexpected. Suffolk replaced an earlier, highly prized, BK117A4 with the Explorer's in 2001, the unit was one of the first to 'break cover' with criticism of the Explorer availability. One result of the situation was the rapid purchase of their second AS350B2 a year ago to get them out of a very difficult situation.





AIR AMBULANCE

CAYMAN ISLANDS

In the wake of recent reports that the 'Islands are seeking to set up an air ambulance service one company in Canada has responded in a positive manner with a proposal to send two fixed wing air ambulance aircraft to the region for a trial period.

Skymedical Emergency Services has been in discussions with both the Health Services Authority and Chrissie Tomlinson Hospital about bringing down two air ambulance planes with a trained support crew including pilots, mechanics, nurses and paramedics that would be available around the clock as early as mid-July. [Cayman News Net]

CANADA

CALGARY: The STARS Air Ambulance and the fire department in Calgary have formed a new alliance to strengthen the local SAR resources. The collaboration is expected to greatly enhance the response levels to such as tornadoes or major incidents.

The arrangement is part of a federal task force arrangement intended to facilitate deployment to disasters provincially, nationally and internationally. [770]

CHINA

NANJING: Potentially life-saving helicopter rescue operations in East China's Jiangsu Province have started.

The new helicopter serves remote locations from the No 454 Hospital of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in provincial capital Nanjing. The hospital, equipped with a roof-top helipad, is the only hospital in the city authorised to offer the air ambulance service at the moment. The hospital purchased a Robinson R44 helicopter, which can seat four people including the pilot. The craft is fitted with medical equipment to enable doctors to treat and stabilise patients at the scene of the incident. A bigger helicopter that can seat 10 people is expected to replace it in about a year.

The air ambulance is mainly intended to service emergencies occurring at locations inaccessible for land vehicles. Attendance at regular emergency situations in which it is convenient and efficient to use a road ambulance will not be approved.

Even if the medical care fee is exempted, the flight fee for one rescue task is likely to be in the region of 20,000 Yuan (US\$2,500).

Use of the relatively small R44 is not unique a similar set up operates in Kessin, Germany using the Robinson for that purpose. The crew consists of a pilot, a doctor and a paramedic, and the idea behind the operation is to get medical help to the patient as quickly as possible. [media/IPAR]

FINLAND

In mid-June Medi-Heli, an association that runs a medical helicopter service in the Finnish capital region and in Turku was obliged to shut down operations following a shortfall in funding.

Finland's Slot Machine Association (RAY) stopped funding Medi-Heli earlier this year when helicopter operators Copterline and Skärgårdshavets Helikoptertjänst, long locked in a fierce battle over the Medi-Heli contract, failed to settle the row.

Flight operations were resumed in time for the Midsummer weekend when Finns flock to their summer cottages in sparsely populated areas thanks to last minute Government funding. [STT]

TURKEY

AgustaWestland, a Finmeccanica company, is pleased to announce that Medair, a subsidiary of the Turkish Esas Holding, will start operations with the new A109E Power. This is not a dedicated air ambulance operation; the aircraft will enter service providing an air taxi and VIP services as well as EMS activities. An A119 Koala will also join the MedAir fleet later this year. [AW]

UNITED KINGDOM

DEVON: The Devon Air Ambulance Trust (DAAT) working with the Peninsula Neonatal Network has taken delivery of a specially designed neonatal incubator which will potentially reduce the time it takes for infants to receive specialist care by hours.

The incubator will be officially handed over to the Peninsula Neonatal Transport Service by representatives of DAAT at the helipad, Derriford Hospital early this month. It is the first custom built air transportable incubator to be available in the south-west.

Originally developed by the Scottish Ambulance Service and specifically designed for the Eurocopter EC135 operated by HEMS operators in the region the incubator provides rapid and safe deployment and includes a customised trolley, on board tracks to move and secure the heavy equipment and a sophisticated monitor with dedicated neonatal/paediatric modes of operation.

The Peninsula Neonatal Transport Service supports babies who need to be transferred between hospitals in the Peninsula or to other hospitals offering specialist care such as Bristol or Southampton. Based in the neonatal unit at Derriford, the transport service ensures that if a baby needs to be moved a trained team with appropriate equipment is available to accompany the baby and provide the best possible care en route and while transferring the baby between hospitals.

The system is expensive with the total cost of all the equipment exceeding £40,000. Lexus UK have paid half the costs of the incubator (£15,000) while the Gawthorn Cardiac Trust, a South West based charity which supports the development of equipment for diagnosis and treatment, contributed a further £10,000 to acquire the specialist Propaq monitor. [DAAT]

EAST ANGLIA: Two live-saving air ambulances will operate in the skies above East Anglia for the first time this summer.

The East Anglian Air Ambulance has raised enough cash to fund Anglia One - its new Bolkow BK117 helicopter - and Anglia Two - Bolkow 105DBS5, the region's former air ambulance which is now used as a back-up. Keeping both airborne will cost £170,000 a month. The two-helicopter service will start on Friday, July 7 and end on Monday, September 11. It will operate on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays, traditionally the busiest days for the air ambulance.

The new aircraft will be on standby at RAF Honington during the day and the second will be based as usual at Norwich Airport. [Evening News]

Ed: In addition to this the new Cambridgeshire Police MD900 Explorer G-CMBS will provide a HEMS facility in the west of the region from its base at RAF Wyton, Huntingdon.

ESSEX: The air ambulance operation has taken delivery of Pilot Pete their new character mascot for the Essex Air Ambulance kids club 'Copter Kidz'.

Pilot Pete will be flying into schools, courtesy of Eastern Helicopters, to meet children

around the county to educate them about the work of the Essex Air Ambulance. He will also be out and about with the Essex Air Ambulance fundraising team at the many events they are supporting – including the Waltham Abbey Town Show on 22-23 June.

'Copter Kidz' is open to children age 5 – 11 years, membership is just £10 for which they will receive a Copter Kidz bag (great to use for swimming!) a membership card and newsletter, bendy pen, pencil and rubber, mini notepad, rucksack key ring, and mini slime. Details at www.copterkidz.co.uk

Pilot Pete, supplied by Genies Costume Hire in Great Clacton, is a US creation who started his journey to Essex from Chicago and arrived in the UK via a quick stop in San Antonio.



Kim from Genies Costume Hire hands Pilot Pete over to Wendy Byland of the Essex Air Ambulance fundraising team.

With the busy summer event period just around the corner the Essex Air Ambulance faced a problem. How to get all the necessary branding and merchandise to the events.....a van would be the answer!

Fastrack Vehicle Hire based in Braintree and Witham came up with the solution. They have agreed to supply a van to the Essex Air Ambulance so that the many fundraising events can be attended throughout the summer.

The Essex Air Ambulance fundraising team will use the van to attend the 100's of events around the county they are involved in over the coming months. Fastrack will also be helping to raise funds for the Essex Air Ambulance by donating 15% of any hire or labour rates booked on production of the promotional leaflets which will be distributed by the events team.

GREAT NORTH: Hard on the heels of last months story that the former London Virgin HEMS AS365N Dauphin was returning to service in the UK in its familiar role were reports that the craft had suffered serious, terminal, damage whilst being moved on a low loader by road a month ago.

As PAN went to press it was learned that the damage to the tail of the machine was not as serious as had first been thought.



The damage to the tail was limited to the three top fin spars above the fenestron. These were fixed at Inverness by technicians from Eurocopter.

The whole airframe has been stripped back to bare metal and washed down. There is fortunately little corrosion - a bit on the front oleo and some cracks under the pilots seat pan but otherwise little of note. The overall condition is said to be 'tatty' but PDG are well experienced in rebuilding Dauphins and the end result is unlikely to be anything but pristine.

The current flooring will be replaced with a hard wearing cover incorporating all important blood dams and the seats re-upholstered to match exterior paint. The colour will be GNAAS dark green tail, white front with swooping yellow band between. It will again carry the G-HEMS registration and the 'Pride of Cumbria' name and Great North colours rather than the London red. It will have a dedication to the memory of Dr Rupert Bennett below the water line. Rupert was crew member killed on Ben Nevis in January 2006.

Even after the recent trauma Great North are aiming to launch at Carlisle in the late summer. [Pprune/IPAR]

ISLE OF MAN: South of England based Atlas Helicopters undertook air ambulance support for the annual TT races this year.

Two ambulance-fit AS355s G-ORMA and G-BYPA were leased in from Atlas Helicopters arranged by the Department of Tourism and Leisure's helicopter liaison officer, Kit Pemberton. Pemberton used to own Aeromega Helicopters at a time when they operated both the Essex Police operation and carried out the IOM TT flights directly.



During the races the pair were based on a rugby pitch next to the police station on Glencrutchery Road. That location has a connection also. [IOM Motorsport Medical Services <http://www.mms.org.im/mms/airmed.shtml>]

FARNBOROUGH AIR SHOW

Atlas Helicopters are to also undertake air support for this years SBAC Farnborough Air Show. After a fairly lengthy history of air cover, mainly police, at one stage two helicopters were used to provide emergency cover for ambulance [A109E] and fire [AS355] cover. Two years ago there was no air cover but this line of economy has now been revoked.

SURREY: The new air ambulance service should have its own helicopter operational by springtime next year.

So far, £100,000 of the £250,000 total has been raised in order to buy and equip a specialist helicopter for the county.

A fundraising dinner held for the charity in Reigate last month raised £3,000 donated by diners. TV actress Penelope Keith, the chairman of the fundraising committee, attended the meal and highlighted the importance of the appeal.

An air ambulance helicopter from Marden, Kent, is currently deployed to emergencies across Surrey, but a new one is needed to help speed up response times. [media]

SUSSEX: The Sussex Air Ambulance Appeal continues to raise funds. Air ambulance flights are now being made into Sussex using the Kent Air Ambulance Trust MD900 Explorer G-KAAT and the appeal is half way towards the £250,000 target needed to order a dedicated air ambulance for Sussex.

The joint police and ambulance service, which uses police funds only and is not charity based, continues running out of Shoreham using an MD900. [media]

WALES: A third Bolkow air ambulance on call in Wales this summer will use a Powys company's helipad to provide emergency cover.

The red helicopter, covering mid and south east Wales, will be based at electronics firm Control Techniques in Newtown in the day and stored at Mid Wales Airport in Welshpool at night.

The two existing leased helicopters are based at Swansea and Caernarfon and serve with help from a County Air Ambulance helicopter in England. Nearly 20% of Welsh helicopter call-outs are in mid Wales and remote areas in the regions can be difficult for road ambulances to access.

Pierre Sarre, the president of Control Techniques, said: "We are delighted to be able to help the Wales Air Ambulance, we always try to give back to our community, and this is a great way to do this - benefiting all the people of Mid Wales."





The new helicopter commenced operations last month and are intended to continue through the summer for three months at a rate of five days a week. Based on the number of calls to the region by the existing resources there is sufficient work for the aircraft. In the end further or repeated use of the facility will depend on the level of new fundraising. The BO105DBS4 G-BTHV is one of the cheapest aircraft available for a start-up operation and it is known that the owners Bond Air Services of Staverton are usually very accommodating to all start-up operations in the expectation that they can grow up to an EC135.

As if to underline the need the third helicopter was quickly in operation. The air ambulance was called out four times on its first day of operation. One of the calls was to Welshpool High School when a 13-year-old pupil seriously injured his arm during sports day. Its first call was to a road accident half a mile out of Newtown early in the day. [Shropshire Star]

WARWICKSHIRE AND NORTHAMPTONSHIRE: The growing number of charity air ambulance operations mean that some areas are served by more than one helicopter. This can also create fundraising problems.

Milton Keynes is one major conurbation lucky to have at least two directly serving its growing population and at a recent scaffold collapse the Thames Valley and Chilterns BO105 and its Warwickshire and Northamptonshire Air Ambulance counterpart were on the scene within minutes using their Agusta 109E Power.

The latter wants to increase its coverage beyond daylight and has now launched a £2M

'Cloud 999' Campaign to see it turn into fruition. Currently, due to cost and capability considerations all charity HEMS services operate from 8am to 6pm - effectively daylight hours. Daylight remains the best time to have an accident.

With another £2 million the little used all-weather capability of the Agusta could be utilised to fly transfers at night. [MK Courier]

YORKSHIRE: The operators MD900 Explorer helicopter was grounded temporarily after it and the pilot were stoned by youths during a call-out. A door was chipped by a chunk of rock and the machine had to be stripped and checked after the incident in case smaller stones had lodged in its engine or controls.

The attacks happened after the helicopter landed on Woodhouse Moor, in central Leeds, to transfer a critically ill patient to a road ambulance for transport to the city's general infirmary. Police were called and the youths, aged between 12 and 14, ran off. [Guardian]

UNITED STATES

FLORIDA: Pensacola based AIRHeart, Sacred Heart Health System's air ambulance service, has been awarded the Igor Sikorsky Award for Humanitarian Service for its role in airlifting critically ill patients and exhausted staff from New Orleans hospitals after Hurricane Katrina. The award is given yearly by Helicopter Association persons and organizations which best demonstrate the value of helicopters in saving lives, protecting property and aiding those in distress.

AIRHeart was recognized for its participation in relief efforts for New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina this past fall. AIRHeart crew members aided in the evacuation of patients and staff from Tulane University Medical Center and transported them to hospitals in Pensacola and Lafayette, La. Participating crew members included Tim Keohane, RN; Dave Dunlap, paramedic; Dan McDonald, pilot; Karen Tayes, RN; Chuck Jeter, paramedic; and Chuck Lancaster, pilot.

Following the hurricane, AIRHeart, Coast Guard and other civilian helicopters landed on rooftops and parking garages to evacuate medical facilities that were flooded and without power. Helicopters also were instrumental in airlifting food, water, supplies and emergency responders to the flooded city.

AIRHeart is dedicated to transporting critically ill or injured patients to health care facilities throughout Northwest Florida, with two helicopters based in Walton County and Marianna, Florida.

FIRE

SPAIN

The 2006 Fire Fighting Season would start soon. Although Helisureste operates thirteen aircraft all year long for fire fighting missions, it is June when operations reach a peak.

Helisureste operate the heavy Kamov Ka-32 A11BC as well as the Bell 407 single and the modern Bell 412 twin to serve several Spanish Regions like Valencia (7 aircraft), Aragón (8), Balearics (4), Murcia (3), Andalucía (4) and Extremadura (8). For the Ministerio de Medio Ambiente, Helisureste operate an additional eight helicopters, including six Kamov Ka-32 A11BC and 4 light aircraft for command and control.

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PORTUGAL

The National Service for Fire and Civil Protection has awarded Beriev a 62-day lease contract for the operation of a Be-200ES amphibian in the country from July 1. [Flight]

UNITED STATES

USDA: IntelliTech Microsystems, Inc. (IntelliTech) has completed a successful demonstration of its Vector P unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) in a live fire monitoring application at the USDA Forest Service/NASA UAV Demo at Fort Hunter Liggett Army Garrison, California.

The Vector P completed four day and night missions over controlled fires set at distant locations on the grounds of the 165,000 acre garrison. Carrying both standard and thermal infrared video cameras, the Vector P autonomously sought out fires set at locations five miles from the airport and transmitted the video back to a crowd of over 70 government observers, there to assess the practicality and value of UAVs in fire monitoring applications.

The Vector P system is a COTS UAV targeted at applications requiring high performance at low cost and is capable of carrying a wide variety of payloads for up to 6 hours. The Vector P has broad applications, including border patrol, search and rescue, environmental monitoring, and precision agriculture, among many others. www.VectorP.com.

CALIFORNIA: On June 8 a trial began over the deaths of three Los Angeles Fire Department [LAFD] employees in an LAFD Bell 205A-1 in 1998.

The case, Butler, et al., v. Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc., commenced in Los Angeles Superior Court over three wrongful death claims against Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc., Bell Technical Services, Inc. and the Estate of Robert A. Gustafson.

On March 23, 1998, a Bell 205A-1, Registration No. N90230, was airlifting an injured child when the tail rotor yoke failed and caused the aircraft to crash, killing four and injuring two. Punitive damages are being sought in this case.

Ed: At the end of June it was reported that a settlement had been reached between the widows of three firefighters who were killed in the helicopter crash and an aircraft parts manufacturer after the trial had run 11 days.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

AUSTRALIA

QUEENSLAND: The Queensland Government is to spend more than \$48M replacing its helicopter rescue fleet. Three AgustaWestland AW139 helicopters will be bought over a four year period, with the first to be operational next July. Two of the three will be delivered in 2007. Altogether \$64M will be allocated to emergency management in the latest budget, including \$5M for the network of community helicopter providers, and more than \$2M million for rescue services in the Torres Strait. [Media]

BOLIVIA

Two Super Puma helicopters and 22 Venezuelan soldiers have arrived in the country to instruct Bolivian soldiers in how to use the aircraft in the rescue role.

Worth \$14M the two helicopters are on loan and part of an aid package from the government of Venezuela to the administration of the Bolivian government. One Super Puma will remain in the government headquarters city and the other will be transferred to the city of Cochabamba. [Media]

SWEDEN

Keystone Helicopter, part of Sikorsky Aircraft, has completed installation of role equipment and delivered the 10th and 11th S-76C+ SAR aircraft to AB Norrlandsflyg located in Galivare, Sweden.

AB Norrlandsflyg has been a civil pioneer in both SAR and EMS activities in Sweden and is one of the leading air ambulance helicopter companies in the country with SAR and EMS machines around Sweden. [S]

UNITED KINGDOM

RAF SAR: Since moving to Wattisham Airfield from RAF Manston, Margate, Kent in July 1994, B Flight 22 Squadron has carried out 2,000 'scrambles' and provided assistance to over 900 people. The unit was formerly C Flight of No. 202 Squadron when it was based at Manston on the Channel Coast.

B Flight's first Scramble was a relatively low key call-out to a rubber inflatable reported by a fishing vessel.

Much has recently been made of arrangement to fly out firefighters to fires at sea but over twelve years ago, and not for the last time, B Flight was on hand when 19 fire fighters were put aboard a burning ferry 'Sally Star.'

Thankfully the sortie that took the Flight into its 2,000th scramble on June 23 was something a little unusual. More than 20 firefighters were drafted in to tackle a blaze on a former Second World War gun emplacement called Sealand some 7 miles off the coast of Felixstowe, Suffolk.

Eight people from Suffolk Fire Service were flown on to the platform – long accepted as sufficiently far off the coast to be considered an independent principality in the North Sea – whilst an RNLI lifeboat and a firefighting tug from the port of Harwich also joined in the rescue.

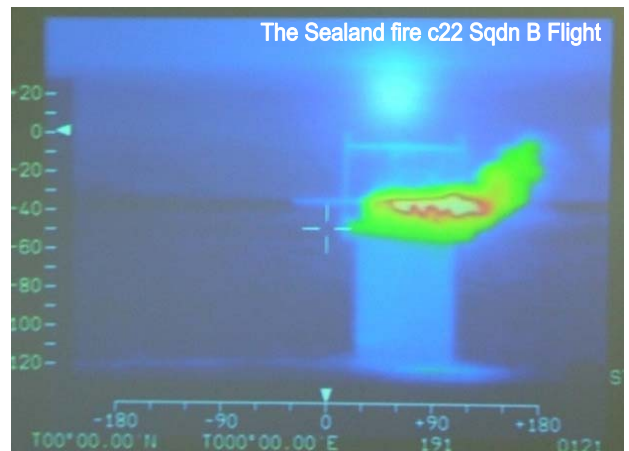
One man from Sealand was airlifted to hospital after trying to tackle the fire which broke out in a generator and eventually gutted that section of the structure. One of the RAF Sea King's from Wattisham piloted by Flt Lt Dave Kay diverted to the fire from a training sortie.

But no sooner had they returned from the incident than call-out 2,001 came - a man on a yacht in the Orwell, suffering burns after the coolant system exploded. He was too badly burnt to be winched up, so the crew got him onto a waiting lifeboat and picked him up again from the river bank to take him to hospital.

Marking this significant milestone in the Wattisham unit's operations Squadron Leader Neil Robertson, Officer Commanding B Flight and his air and ground crew invited members of the press to Wattisham Airfield on June 26. After a long dry period that had threatened drought even in the greenness of England on the day the weather was not kind and the sun failed to make even a fleeting visit.



Sea King ZH540 22 Sqdn B Flight





Of wider interest B Flight is currently hosting a three year exchange posting from the US Coast Guard. The pilot [P1] during the June 26 flights was Lt Tyson Weinert from San Diego, California. Tyson [2nd left above] is currently living in picturesque [and damp] Needham Market just a few miles from the base. He is now half way through the posting and is now settled beyond learning the numerous cultural and operational differences between the aircraft and crews he works with. The other half of the mutual exchange is Flight Lt Tony Gear who is currently flying a USCG Sikorsky Jayhawk out of Clearwater, Florida. The pair, who have never met, will return to their respective home countries in the Autumn [Fall] of 2007. [MOD/PAN/EADT]



INDUSTRY *from the factory floor*

The German LBA has certified **ecms Aviation Systems'** new fast roping and rappelling system designed specifically for the SA 365 Dauphin. The EDX02 is a highly advanced system that immensely increases the safety and efficiency of helicopter missions. The Hannover Police in Germany is the first to receive this system for their SWAT operations. The Hannover police worked with ecms during the design process allowing ecms to develop a system that is user friendly and takes into consideration the needs of all crew members involved in the operation from the pilot to the board technician and SWAT team itself. www.ecms-gmbh.de.

A report has confirmed earlier suggestions that poor communications and a lack of basic medical supplies hampered the emergency response to last July's **7/7** suicide bomb attacks on London's transport network that killed 52 innocent travellers.

Amid a great deal of publicity London's emergency plans have been tested, practised and refined, but when they were put to the test on July 7 it was clear that they focused on incidents but not the individuals caught up in the attacks.

Police, fire brigades and paramedics were unable to talk to each other because there was no shared radio network - even though one was recommended 18 years ago by the inquiry into the King's Cross fire disaster. The report, by a committee set up by the London Assembly, said this delay was unacceptable.

Above ground, emergency staff tried to contact each other by mobile telephone but the network was under so much pressure that police in one area of the city had to ask for it to be switched off for ordinary calls.

The geographical extent of the attacks at four separate points and the number of casualties quickly threatened to overwhelm the London Ambulance Service, which ran out of stretchers and other basic equipment. One paramedic said he had to dash to a department store to get extra bandages.

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The report also criticised the post-attack planning, which allowed hundreds of people to walk away from the scene without any personal details being recorded. [Daily Telegraph]

The leadership of the Romanian state-owned helicopter manufacturer **IAR Ghimbav** has suggested the winner of the tender to supply public institutions with helicopters be compelled to also take over IAR Ghimbav.

The Ministry of Administration has already announced an intention to acquire over 80 civil helicopters for frontier surveillance, medical services, natural disaster intervention and other activities. [Bucharest Daily News]

The Kustbevakningen or **Swedish Coast Guard** are advertising for sale their existing fleet of three CASA C-212 surveillance aircraft pending the arrival of a replacement fleet from Field Aviation in Canada.

The three airframes SE-IVE, SE-IVF and SE-KVG are civil registered and fully equipped with FLIR, SLAR and a IR/UV camera system.

14,000 to 16,500 hours. The web site www.fmv.se includes a downloadable PDF describing the three airframes in detail.

The same Swedish disposals web site is also offering one 1986 Swedish Air Force CASA C-212 aircraft in a 'Not Airworthy' condition. This is a standard transport machine and not civil certified. Bids close on that on August 10 with a September 2006 disposal period.

The European Aviation Safety Agency [EASA] has issued an STC to **Metro Aviation** for the installation of its mechanically driven vapor cycle air conditioning system on all models of the Eurocopter EC 135 helicopter. The system was originally certified in the United States under a FAA STC.

It is a dual evaporator system with separate cockpit and cabin controls. Cold air is delivered

by twelve variable outlets located throughout the aircraft interior, which provides a rapid cool down of the cockpit and cabin.

The low electrical load places no power or electrical limitations on the aircraft which allows full operation during take-off, flight, landing, and hot loading and unloading of personnel and cargo. Contact Milton Geltz, Metro Aviation at +1 318-222-5529.

A new partnership will see the creation of a national UAV centre that will provide operators with the advice and clearances required to fly unmanned air vehicle (UAV) systems from West Wales Airport near Aberporth in Wales. The centre will operate in the form of a working partnership between West Wales Airport and **QinetiQ**.



Located on ParcAberporth, the recently launched technology park, the West Wales UAV Centre will provide the necessary advice and guidance on all matters relating to deployment of UAVs. The ultimate goal of the centre is to facilitate routine UAV operations beyond the line of sight and outside segregated airspace. [see New Events below]

Gyrocam Systems of Sarasota, Florida has been awarded a contract of up to \$43M for the implementation of gyrostabilised camera systems to be mounted on armoured vehicles in Iraq and Afghanistan. This Marine Corps contract is for the procurement, integration and support of 67 camera systems for a fleet of Joint Explosive Ordnance Disposal Rapid Response Vehicles to be used to search for and identify Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) on roadways in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Ministry of Defence has begun providing free high-visibility jackets to horse riders in a bid to make them more obvious to low-flying military aircraft. The initiative, launched in partnership with the **British Horse Society**, is designed to help pilots spot riders before they fly too low and spook the horses.

The move is the result of an investigation launched after the death of novice rider Heather Bell, who was killed when he horse was frightened by a low-flying Chinook helicopter in Lincolnshire in June 2003.

The provincial government of the Basque Region is to stage a UAV demonstration from next month. The prime use of this civil **Aerovision Fulmar UAV** is seen as fisheries protection and surveillance.

Fulmar is a 20kg [45lbs] 3m [10 ft] span flying wing augmented with two cranked tail surfaces powered by a pusher propeller. [Flight]

Enstrom Helicopter Corporation has announced that the Bringer Corporation, first established in the US in 1983, is to represent it in Brazilian market.

The Bringer's sales office for the Enstrom product line is strategically situated in the heart of

the city of Sao Paulo.

Bell Helicopter has announced they have selected Aurora Flight Sciences of Manassas, Virginia as the airframe provider of the Bell Eagle Eye TR916 Unmanned Aircraft System. Bell Helicopter is a subcontractor to Lockheed Martin, a partner in Integrated Coast Guard Systems, a part of the Integrated Deepwater System for the US Coast Guard.

In 2003 Bell was selected to develop and produce the Eagle Eye to provide surveillance and reconnaissance as part of Deepwater. Bell will deliver 45 Eagle Eye UAVs and 33 ground control stations (GCS) to Lockheed Martin who will integrate the UAV system. Current plans call for first flight of the first TR916 Unmanned Air Vehicle system in 4th Qtr 2008. www.aurora.aero.

Saab is to acquire **Ericsson Microwave Systems**. The \$522M deal is expected to subject to European regulatory approval is nonetheless expected to be complete in September. Saab has unveiled a new UAV craft. The Skeldar V-150 is a vertical take off and landing derived from the earlier CybAero Apid 5 series UAV. [Flight]

Frasca International, Urbana, IL is to take a new deployable helicopter flight training device (FTD) to ALEA (Airborne Law Enforcement Association) July 19-21 in New Orleans.

The helicopter device at ALEA is a new model from Frasca, designed specifically for single engine, turbine helicopter training. The new device is compact in size to allow for ease of transport for training in multiple locations. Features include Frasca's TruVision visual system and Graphical Instructors Station (GIST). The device will be used by launch customer Bell Helicopter for cockpit and operating procedures familiarization on the 206 and 407 aircraft - the FTD can easily be shipped to customers in advance of a new aircraft. The device will be available for test flights and demonstration. The Frasca booth number for ALEA is #1014. Contact Bob Summers for advance booking of time on the device at the show. Email: bsummers@frasca.com or +1 (217) 344-9200. www.frasca.com.

Sikorsky Aircraft has announced the first deliveries of a new ergonomically enhanced crew seat for the S-92™ helicopter that improves pilot comfort without compromising crash protection.

The new design comes in response to S-92 offshore oil customers who are flying the aircraft for up to eight hours per day. The new seat features recline, headrest, adjustable armrests, thigh support and improved seat padding while meeting all FAA safety and crashworthiness requirements.

Sikorsky and seat manufacturer Martin-Baker worked with three early S-92 customers to define the new high comfort crew seat features and to benchmark the seat during development and design reviews. Certification testing was completed in late 2005, and the FAA Technical Standard Order was awarded in April 2006.

Martin-Baker is responsible for crew, passenger and utility seats for the S-92 platform.



It may be a thirty year old design but the AS350 series seems to go on from strength to strength. This French design was already being built in Brazil before the US started building them and now a production line is set for India.

Eurocopter has entered into a global industrial cooperation partnership agreement with Bangalore-headquartered **Hindustan Aeronautics** Limited for joint production of the civilian/military Ecureuil and Fennec family of helicopters for the world market.

EC has set its sight on expanding its footprint in the Indian subcontinent through a series of measures, including the production of the AS350 B3 in collaboration with HAL.

The defects on indigenous **Dhruv** helicopter have been rectified and it is flying again. The entire Dhruv fleet was grounded after one of the helicopters, meant for the Jharkhand Government, crashed due to problems in the tail rotor.

HAL is now planning to clear orders for 72 Dhruv helicopters placed by the armed forces. [The Hindu]

A **Robinson** R44 Newscopter was serving as the aerial platform for Dallas Morning News photographer Smiley Pool while he took his Pulitzer Prize winning photographs of hurricane-devastated New Orleans. The Newscopter, piloted by Ken Pyatt (president, SKY Helicopters) was designated by the FAA as the shared helicopter for still photographers.

Pyatt to maneuver the aircraft safely in and around the city for up to three hours at a time, twice a day for two continuous weeks.

The R44 Newscopter became an important tool in reporting the crisis and in helping the Dallas Morning News earn the Pulitzer Prize for Breaking News Photography. [Robinson]

On June 22 a military **Predator UAV** crashed in a remote area within the Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada. An Air Force safety board is investigating the crash on the Nevada Test and Training Range. [Media]

Police Aviation Services has been granted Part 147 Training Organisation approval and is providing MD Explorer maintenance type rating courses that meet the new EASA requirements.

The group employs around 40 licensed maintenance engineers, and currently maintains over 30 aircraft in the UK and overseas. As well as the Explorer, types maintained include the EC 135 and Bell 206 Jet Ranger series.

In the last two months, the company has signed two new MD Explorer maintenance contracts, bringing the number of Explorers for which it is responsible to 15.

Halfway through 2006, **Aerospace Filtration Systems, Inc. (AFS)** is celebrating record sales, new products, and a recent milestone delivery of its 2000th Inlet Barrier Filter (IBF) system.

Sales have increased by more than 500% since the company was founded in 1999, and today AFS is an industry leader in the design, development and manufacture of high-performance IBF systems for commercial and military rotorcraft. Since 1999, AFS has designed and military qualified or commercially certified more than 12 new products. Its 2,000th IBF system was delivered in June to U.S. Army, in addition to 15,000 filter assemblies to military and commercial customers.

Commercial IBF demand has also been strong, with more than 100 Bell 407/206L-1/3/4, 100-plus MD 500 systems, 50 Bell 205/210/UH-1 systems, and more than 50 Bell 206B/OH-58 systems produced since 2003.

AFS currently produces certified commercial filtration systems for the Bell 206B, Bell 407, Bell 206L and MD369 with certification imminent for systems for the Eurocopter AS350, Augusta A119 and Bell 205/210 helicopters. [AFS]

Eurocopter is to implement a full scale Maintenance Center to provide Maintenance Repair and Overhaul services for Eurocopter helicopters in Russia. The Center is based on the premises of Ostafievo airport located near Moscow. This is the first Western aircraft manu-

facturer to implement such a facility. It will be certified under European standards, another first in the country. This will allow the provision of MRO services of the highest quality level. [EC]

ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

16 May 2006 Eurocopter AS350B3 N183AE US Customs and Border Patrol Air Operations. Was substantially damaged when it impacted the parallel taxiway to runway 28 at Dona Ana County Airport (K5T6) near Santa Teresa, New Mexico while practicing emergency governor failure procedures during a differences training flight. The flight instructor received minor injuries and the student pilot received serious injuries. The helicopter landed hard in a level attitude and slightly tail low. The skids collapsed on impact causing the lower vertical fin and tail rotor to contact the ground. The helicopter slid on its fuselage 250 feet from the point of impact and came to rest in an upright position. The left pilot seat attenuated as designed but there was no evidence of attenuation on the right pilot seat. [NTSB]

29 May 2006 Bell 206L N110AE. Air ambulance. Air Evac Lifeteam. Helicopter operating with pilot, flight nurse, flight paramedic at Fayette, Alabama, en route to Birmingham, AL Airport to refuel when they heard a sound they thought to be gunfire. Upon inspection, two bullet holes were found in the tail boom of the aircraft. Taken out of service. [Concern]

30 May 2006 helicopter. Federal Mexican Police helicopter exploded then fell into the Phillips maquiladora lot in Southwest Juarez whilst on patrol.

Witnesses heard two explosions and saw the helicopter burst into flames, then crash. The aircraft landed among empty semi-truck trailers. Three people were confirmed dead, the pilot of the helicopter, Sergio Ovideo; a mechanic Manuel Garcia Ramirez; and a Mexican Federal Agent, Carlos Hernandez Lopez. Preliminary reports state the crash was a result of mechanical failure. [KFOX]

30 May 2006 Eurocopter EC135P1 N601FH. Air ambulance Medstar operated by C.J. Systems Aviation Group. Was transporting a patient from Greater Southeast Community Hospital to the Washington Hospital Center when it crashed down on the golf course of the U.S. Armed Forces Retirement Home on North Capitol Street NW, about one mile from its destination. The pilot, a paramedic and a flight nurse were injured. The hospital reported later that evening that the critically ill 51 years old patient being transported had died. Witnesses reported the 1998 build helicopter having apparent engine problems hearing 'a large metal object hitting cement.' After the crash, the helicopter came to a rest on its side, next to a tree with its rotor separated from the fuselage. A small fire broke out. [Media]

2 June 2006 Mil Mi-8 Russian Interior Ministry. Four people died and seven were injured in the crash near Kemerovo. The dead included the pilot, an engineer and an Interior Ministry trooper. At least 18 people, including the crew, were on board. The helicopter of the Novosibirsk air wing of Interior Troops was hovering above the ground, it lost balance and fell. After hitting the ground it caught fire. There were two crewmembers and 16 Interior Troops, three of them officers, onboard the helicopter.

5 June 2006 Eurocopter EC145 F-ZBPC Securite Civile. Three people were killed and another critically injured after their helicopter crashed during a police rescue exercise in the southwestern Pyrenees mountains near the resort of Garvarnie.

The helicopter's two crew of a pilot and a mechanic picked up members of the CRS Mountain Rescue for a joint exercise.

According to police in the town of Saint-Lary, the crash occurred shortly after the helicopter picked up the CRS officers from the crest of the Astazous mountain, at an altitude of more than 3,000 metres (6,600 feet).

The helicopter burst into flames and its passengers were ejected from the aircraft, according to three other officers who were present for the exercise. [Media]

6 June 2006 Schweizer 269/300C N54LC Lake County Sheriff's Indiana. Made a hard landing during autorotation training exercise two miles south of Griffin Airport, Gary, Indiana.

The incident happened at 73rd and Burr near Schererville. News report state that the senior pilot, Lt. Rick Bruner, was showing Sgt. George Nistorovich how to perform an auto rotation when the engine failed to restart. One person was injured and taken to hospital with a laceration to the head.

Television images from Chicago station WLS showed the helicopter upright in a recently planted field with a small amount of debris around the site. [Media FAA]

June 2006 Cessna Citation N435UM. Air ambulance. Survival Flight, University of Michigan Health System, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Marlin Air fixed-wing flight with patient on-board departed Hancock County, MI en-route to Willow Run. While climbing through fourteen thousand feet, the aircraft lost cabin pressure and the flight crew descended to ten thousand feet. The decision was made to continue to the destination. After landing the main cabin door seal was found to be separated from the door causing the loss of cabin pressure. [Concern]

14 June 2006 Eurocopter AS365N VH- Victoria Police Air Wing Australia. A police air wing helicopter pilot was hit in the eyes by a high-intensity laser beam as he took off from Melbourne's Essendon Airport. The laser beam was pointed into the pilot's eyes but there were no injuries and the flight proceeded without further incident. [Media]

22 June 2006 Eurocopter BK117 N913EF Air ambulance. Aircraft substantially damaged and the three occupants were slightly injured after the tail rotor hit a tree as the craft came in to land at Ponce de Leon, Florida. [FAA]

ADDENDUM

On the afternoon of 25 June 2006 two helicopters collided while taking off from a police station at the D'Herbouvillekaai, Antwerp, Belgium, injuring three people. Based on this initial information visions of the police losing two aircraft were obviously raised.

It soon transpired that the, other than the location, the crash was not police related. The helicopters involved were AS.355F2 Ecureuil OO-HSH and Bell 206B2 Jetranger OO-SKE both of Heli Service Belgium employed filming a bicycle race in Antwerp.. Both were destroyed. One of the injured suffered serious trauma the other two were only slightly hurt.

PEOPLE

ACROHELIPRO Global Services Inc., has announced the hiring of **Mike Pirang** in the role of Customer Support Manager, Airframe Group.

Mike has 16 years of experience in a variety of helicopter operations and has extensive Sikorsky S61/S76 product knowledge.

In Australia **David 'Jibbo' Jibson** has become the first helicopter crewman in Queensland to receive a national medal recognising his hard work.

Emergency Services Minister Pat Purcell presented Mr Jibson with his medal at the official launch of the service's new Bell 412 helicopter. [Mercury]

HEMS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

As briefly reported in the last issue, at the end of May the annual Czech Helimed and Conference took place at Hradec Kralove near Prague. For some years the authorities there have been trying to grow the event with little success, too far east out of Prague and limited finance to send EMS aircraft from such as the UK and France. It is then a largely Eastern European experience, one full day of conference and another of flight demonstrations. This may change with the intention of running a larger conference in the City of Prague.

Correspondent Heike Eisele of IHA highlights some of the items from the compact conference event at which a large number of papers were given a short airing.

- A public relations programme aimed at local students has produced a DVD that uses the talents of Czech movie stars. The response to this has been tremendous with over



- 72,000 sold in just two months.
- In a presentation on Operational Heliports near medical facilities Petr Civiš reported that a great number of public complaints about excessive noise levels were being generated by the Police Bell 412 fleet.
- Four Czech HEMS pilots talking at the event see little need to upgrade to Cat A1 procedures in their country mainly on the grounds that weather requiring that level of capability should always lead to a 'No fly' decision in the first place.

AEROEXPO WYCOMBE AIR PARK 23-25 JUNE 2006

The first Aeroexpo, effectively a replacement for the North Weald based Aerofair was almost wholly a GA Trade fair. Partially bedevilled by the pressures on the audience to pay an undue amount of attention to the ongoing World Cup Football it held its head above the water and attracted a significant audience.

The organiser, Paddy Casey now of the GA Buyer magazine, cut his teeth on the early Aerofair's so knew what he was about and managed to attract a good range of exhibitors. It was not a police or ambulance aviation event by any means but there were a significant number of representatives from that area of the industry.

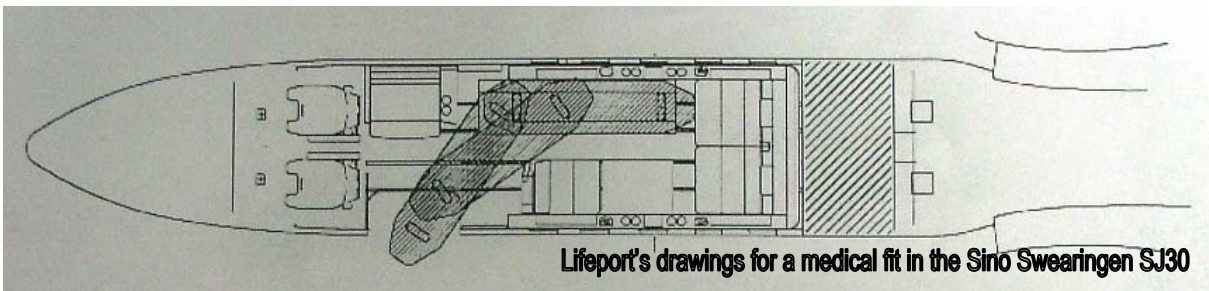
The British Helicopter Advisory Board [BHAB] has a number of emergency services units among its members and no flyers can long escape the interest of the Civil Aviation Authority [CAA] which still wields a significant clout as the as yet tiny EASA finds its footing. The next significant talking point might yet be whether the police [who appear to have been asking many questions on the subject] will get past the current negative attitude to UAV operations in a civil environment.



Luton based **Action Aviation** are the UK representatives for the Sino Swearingen SJ30 high performance business jet. The long range high performance jet offers jet capability at a competitive price and the company has already declared 33 orders for the aircraft.

With an aircraft that promises sea level pressurisation up to 41,000 feet or the equivalent of 1,800

feet altitude when cruising at 49,000 feet there is already some interest in the medical evacuation role. **Lifeport** are already working on a modular system that can quickly replace the standard executive trim for 2007 introduction to service. The system will include a number of integral systems including oxygen. Installing and removing the single litter system is facilitated by an unusually wide 32 inch wide entry door. Mike Creed the Sales Director for Action Aviation predicts the Lifeport will be offering a fully integrated system by the end of 2007 for 2008 delivery.



Lifeport's drawings for a medical fit in the Sino Swearingen SJ30

Marketing the lower cost products of their product line **Skyforce Honeywell** were doing brisk business with potential new customers and coaching existing customers on the opera-

tion of the product – including in one case actually taking it out of the delivery box and fitting it!



From left) Aleida Restrepo, Stuart Metcalfe and Bob Berry at AeroExpo 2006.

The Bournemouth based **Pilatus PC-12** distributor for the UK, Ireland and Spain returned from the AeroExpo exhibition with the booking of three demonstration flights.

"We are pleased with the interest shown," says Bob Berry. "We hoped that AeroExpo would be worth our while supporting and were pleasantly surprised with the leads generated at the show that was pitched towards the smaller general aviation market."

A new name in the police aviation market place is **Express Hi Fold Doors** based in Bridgenorth, Salop www.hifolddoors.co.uk They have just agreed a couple of contracts with UK police forces in southern England. One is the replacement of conventionally folding doors to a September deadline and the second will be integrated into a new build project. Hi-fold doors are manufactured in the UK and are said to optimise space. The Express range of Hi-fold doors has all the advantages of maximum accessibility at up to half the cost.



Ross Aviation are already in the UK police market supporting a range of fixed and rotary wing aircraft with spares. Ross support most helicopter types but specialise in Eurocopter and Agusta helicopters and hold consumable and rotatable parts for these types, First introduced to the British market last year at the Helitech Show by the German manufacturers the **FlyMap** system now has UK representation via flymap.co.uk. This alternative to the offerings from Skyforce [Honeywell] and Euronics has already started the rounds visiting those UK units most likely to require new equipment. Making inroads into a strange market is not as difficult as it was thanks to recent increases in cooperation between mainland and UK police air units. FlyMap already counts a number of the German Police air units as established customers.



Saywell International based on the south coast at Goring by Sea, Worthing is one of the largest providers of spares to the World aircraft industry were doing a massive trade in a particular commodity at the show. In fairness few probably cared about their business when they sought access to the Teddy Bears on offer.

Just for the record though Saywell have now cornered the support sales market for a number of aircraft types including the Worlds Britten Norman BN2 Islander and Defender fleets. That marks a number of law enforcement agencies as their customers.

Hot on the heels of a very positive and friendly editorial in *Flight International* it was somewhat disappointing to see that **Britten Norman** played such a low key part at the show. Many truths were spoken when the company was quoted as stating marketing came by way of word of mouth but actions did not quite underline the statements about marketing on the day. The company flew in to the field and only intermittently manned their stand. The desert camouflaged aircraft they arrived in [described as a bit old and careworn] was kept away from the flight-line – apparently because it did not look good. Clearly to the management it represented only to well the very positive image the BN-2 has in the World – the workhorse. With the professional footfall being relatively low – lots of spotters but they had little interest in the content of the halls – exhibitors like the well stocked pilot shops with goods to get off their shelves were perhaps the most disappointed. Other traders in it for the long game – there were three battery/power pack suppliers in close proximity to each other – will probably have to assess success in a longer timeframe.

From PAN's perspective there was a fair bit of interest in its own stand and displays, lots of interesting people to talk to and at least all of the give-away toffee candy was taken! That should save the editors teeth for another year. Like many others in the hall for PAN it was all about information, that is what Trade Shows are about, anything else is a bonus.

Based upon this start up three-day event I believe the Aeroexpo formula worked and could hopefully grow with a deal of good will from exhibitors with some staying power and the absence of the distortions caused primarily by the football. The next Aeroexpo is set for June 2007.

FUTURE EVENT

This year's ParcAberporth Unmanned Systems [6-7 July 2006] will be an opportunity to showcase UAV's in a dedicated operating environment, situated at West Wales Airport. This flight and ground demonstration, indoor exhibition and static display offers the UV industry direct access to its broadening target audience.

Delegates attending the event on July 7 are drawn from industry, government, military and academic organisations from around the world. The attendees at the last event were restricted to believers but now the organisers are looking to attract a wider audience outside the usual crowd.

Readers will be aware that a number of police forces are taking an active interest in the subject and the organisers are in fact starting to address that market. Clearly from recent stories this remains a bumpy road. In the USA the recent loss of a law enforcement Predator and another military one last month, the FAA stepping into halt the LA project will ring bells but is unlikely to halt progress. Aside from the US activity and the Spanish fisheries item mentioned in this issue PAN is aware that at least three separate UK police forces are seeking information on the use of UAV's so it is clearly a warming topic.

The demonstrations will feature a range of micro systems from AeroVironment Inc that are deployed by the US Armed Forces, including the Raven which has notched up more than 15,000 sorties for the US Army.

In 2005 ParcAberporth Unmanned Systems attracted over 600 participants who observed flying demonstrations of 5 unmanned systems, including the first ever demonstration of the Hermes 450 in civil airspace. The indoor exhibition comprised a total of thirty-two companies in addition to six static aircraft and ground displays, making this annual event Europe's



largest dedicated demonstration of unmanned systems.

ParcAberporth Unmanned Systems 2006 promises to be even bigger and better! This exclusive 'invitation-only' event commences with a practice day for demonstrators at ParcAberporth on 6th July, followed by a VIP Gala Dinner in the breathtaking Banqueting Hall of Cardiff Castle that same evening. On 7th July 2006 the First Minister of the Welsh Assembly Government will host ParcAberporth Unmanned Systems 2006 for specially invited guests drawn from industry, government, military and academic organisations from around the globe.

AND MORE...

- It has been reported that the FAA and the Air Force have reached a preliminary agreement on procedures that would allow unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to be deployed in civilian airspace during emergencies. InsideDefense.com has reported that if a national disaster is declared unmanned aerial systems such as Predator and Global Hawk would be used over a disaster.
- Meanwhile, in Paris, a conference on UAVs worked to plan for integrating the vehicles into civilian airspace by 2008. Four demonstration projects are currently being planned, focusing on affordability, propulsion, logistics and an integrated system demonstration.
- Canada's Department of National Defence is working to award a contract by the middle of next year for five systems of between six and 10 UAVs each to be in service by 2008. The systems would comprise four offshore operations: one each located on Canada's Atlantic and Pacific coasts, one in the north and one for training purposes. [Flight International]
- Responding to the rapid growth in demand for training in the area of unmanned aerial systems, QinetiQ's Empire Test Pilots' School (ETPS), based at the MOD Boscombe Down site, has completed its first 'Introduction to Unmanned Aerial Systems Trials and Evaluation' short course. The course, just one of an expanding number of short test and evaluation training courses now being offered by ETPS, was attended and successfully completed by 14 delegates from the UK Armed Forces and civilian personnel from QinetiQ. Delegates gained a detailed insight into the philosophies and methods which should be applied when evaluating these innovative unmanned aerial systems. Part of the course involved them applying the techniques learned in classroom sessions during a simulated flight trial with an Observer Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV). They also witnessed a live demonstration of a British Army UAV being flown in an operational scenario. These 'hands on' opportunities are unique to the ETPS course and allow delegates to practice the assessment of launch and recovery systems, vehicle flight characteristics and onboard surveillance payloads during live UAV flights. [QinetiQ]

FARNBOROUGH INTERNATIONAL AIR SHOW

From 17th to 23rd July, including public days on Saturday the 22nd and Sunday 23rd July.

Promising to be one of the biggest Farnborough International Airshows in recent history, the new organisers – Farnborough International Limited - report that that over 160 aircraft of all types are scheduled to be on static/flying display during the week of the airshow.

While the Airbus A380 double-deck long-range passenger airliner is destined to be the star attraction at this year's Farnborough International Airshow as it makes its UK airshow debut, there are several other aircraft scheduled to appear for the first time. Among these is the Bell Boeing V-22 Osprey tilt rotor, which is now being delivered to the US Armed Forces.

Scheduled to make its only public appearance outside of its home base of RAF Waddington before entering full operational service, the RAF's Raytheon Sentinel R1 ASTOR surveillance aircraft together with mobile ground stations will be on static display.

The regional airliner sector – which includes a range of specialist airframes like patrol and water

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bomber aircraft – includes ATR demonstrating an ATR-42 turboprop [an ATR-42MP Surveyor sea surveillance aircraft] and Bombardier which is showing its Dash 8-Q400 turboprop. Other utility, transport and special role aircraft will include the Britten-Norman Defender 4000 surveillance aircraft.

There are a number of interesting rotary winged aircraft on display at this year's airshow. From India, Hindustan Aeronautics is displaying its Dhruv Advanced light helicopter, Europe's NH Industries is displaying the NH-90 multi-role helicopter and the usual high profile line-up from AgustaWestland will include the AW139 6-ton medium twin helicopter and the A109.

Martin-Baker are exhibiting a range of seats – including the new one for the Sikorsky S-92- in Hall 4 D4. www.farnborough.com

DIARY

- 5-6 July 2006. Public Sector Security 2006, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, Shrivenham, Swindon, UK. Symposia At Shrivenham eunice@symposiaatshrivenham.com URL: www.symposiaatshrivenham.com/pss06
- 12-13 July 2006 Enforcement Expo. IX Center Cleveland, Ohio. Cygnus Expositions. Burnsville MN. www.enforcementexpo.com
- 15 July 2006. RAF Friends and Families Day. 22 Squadron VB Flight Wattisham. 1000-1700hrs.
- 18-23 July 2006. Farnborough International. Farnborough, Hampshire. From Monday 17 to Sunday 23 July 2006, the Aerospace community will congregate at the 45th Farnborough International Airshow (FIA). FIA offer's Exhibitors and Visitors an exclusive platform to showcase a wide range of products and services and presents an ideal setting for business to be conducted with a global audience. www.farnborough.com



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