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LAW ENFORCEMENT

CANADA

BRITISH COLUMBIA: In the town of Saanich, Victoria BC police have taken to the sky to search for homeless people camping in local parks. Officers used one of the RCMP's provincial helicopters to scour the more than 150 municipal parks. It was the first time they've used aerial surveillance to spot hard-to-see camps of homeless people. As warm summer weather increases, police are concerned campers pose a serious fire risk in wooded areas. [Times]

CAYMAN ISLANDS

It may be another two or three months before the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service's [RCIPS] long awaited helicopter arrives on the island.

The RCIPS Acting Commissioner David George has told legislators the helicopter is still in the US, but added the RCIPS now has someone working "to tie up all the loose ends" to speed-up its arrival.

There have been conflicting accounts of what has delayed the arrival of the 1999 Eurocopter, which the Government allocated \$1.8M toward in May 2007.

Before his suspension over allegations of misconduct, Police Commissioner Stuart Kernohan had said the delay was partly due to the tendering process for the helicopter's maintenance, hangar construction and piloting services. Another source suggested that it was being refitted and needed extra parts as the Government worked with the CAA to get all the necessary authorisations to bring the helicopter from the US. Now the RCIPS are saying it is all of those reasons. There are delays in the tendering for the maintenance and pilotage of the helicopter, certification and the airframe works. Even those myriad of reasons are being disputed by other bodies including the CAA.

The RCIPS originally expected delivery of the former UK East Midlands ASU helicopter by September 2007. Meanwhile they continue to use an AS350 operated by a private contractor.

Front Cover: The German manufactured Microdrone MD4-200 micro-UAV seen at the GPEC Show in Munich last month. This craft was also on view at the UAV specific Parc Aberporth event in Wales last month but in that instance the weather severely curtailed the scheduled flight demonstration element..

CYPRUS

NICOSIA: The grip of the US government is causing concerns in the ranks of Cypriot officials tasked with ensuring their police air unit remains capable.

As recently reported the air operation is now totally reliant upon its two Bell 412 helicopters since the BN Islander was effectively retired from service. Now looming maintenance needs of the helicopters are being threatened by a perceived Congressional arms ban that in 1988 banned the export of US weapons to war-divided Cyprus, to avoid an arms race.

The fear is that the ban might mean that sending either of the Bell helicopters to the US for deep maintenance faces the retribution of US Officials that might perceive the airframes break the 1988 arms ban and result in confiscation.

Cypriot Justice Ministry Permanent Secretary Andreas Tryfonides has said that the two US-made Bell 412's had been fitted with night-vision equipment since they were delivered in 1990 and 1997 and it was thought that US officials might consider these banned military applications and refuse to send the helicopters back. [PR Inside]

FINLAND

BORDER GUARD: AgustaWestland has provided more detail on the previously announced the sale of AW119 helicopters to the Finnish Border Guard [see last month]. A total of three AW119 Ke Koala single turbine powered helicopters have been ordered with an option for one additional aircraft. These helicopters will be used to perform various tasks including border patrol, special operations and fire fighting. These new helicopters will be delivered in 2010 and will operate from Helsinki and Rovaniemi (Polar Circle) bases, flying in the harshest environmental and weather conditions and covering the entire Russian border.

The AW119 Ke was selected as the best helicopter in its class capable of carrying out a variety of demanding missions following a rigorous and comprehensive evaluation process by Finnish Border Guard officials, particularly focusing on performance and costs. The customer will also be provided with a dedicated training and support package.

This order marks the entrance of AgustaWestland's AW119 Ke helicopter into the European law enforcement and homeland security helicopter market and continues the tradition of this operator in choosing Agusta products. Recently the accomplishment of 100,000 flight hours with its Agusta supplied AB206 and AB412 helicopters was marked.

The Finnish Border Guard's AW119 Ke helicopters will be fitted with dedicated tactical equipment and certified to perform NVG-capable missions. The AW119 Ke's law enforcement and homeland security variant has a patrol time of approximately 5 hours and also has the largest cabin in its class which can be quickly reconfigured for different missions.

The Finnish Border Guard is responsible for Finland's internal security, reporting to the Ministry of the Interior. The main functions of the Border Guard are guarding Finland's land bor-



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ders and territorial waters, carrying out passport control at border crossing points, ports and airports, as well as law enforcement, maritime safety and performing search and rescue operations, especially at sea.

Ed: The selection of a single engine helicopter for emergency services operations in Europe is most unusual.

FRANCE

French police arrested several people after intercepting a black Eurocopter EC120 helicopter arriving from Morocco with more than half a tonne of cannabis on board. The arrests took place near the town of Beziers. The haul had a street value of around 600,000 Euros (\$900,000).

The head of a helicopter transport company was among those arrested, as well as several people from the French Mediterranean island of Corsica, the sources said.

GUYANA

Although they recently bought in two admittedly elderly Bell 206B3 JetRanger helicopters to undertake surveillance work in support of police the government continue to face a barrage of often misplaced criticism.

When one of the pair went unserviceable all the stored up ire was let loose about the inability of the craft to do their job.

The main cause of the problems relates to the perceived inability of the two helicopters to halt a series of damaging attacks on government buildings and police stations. On top of that some politicians have questioned why the two chosen helicopters are configured for surveillance and not able to insert troops.

JAPAN

AgustaWestland and Kanematsu Corporation have announced a further contract with the Japan National Police Agency (NPA) to supply a further five AW109E Power helicopters in the law enforcement role.

The order represents selection of the 109 Power for the fourth consecutive year and demonstrates the Police's satisfaction and confidence in the aircraft type and the product support by Kanematsu in Japan. This order will bring the total number of AW109 helicopters in service with the JNPA to

twenty-one and continues AgustaWestland's growing share of the Japanese light twin engine market. [AW]

Ed: In many ways it is the same old tale. If you look at the composition of the Japan Police air fleet of a decade ago you were likely to see virtually every type used was a Bell [though some were Kawasaki produced Bell] but now after flirtations with a number of different types the fleet is clearly going in a European direction and recently all sales have been Agusta related.



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UNITED KINGDOM

CAMBRIDGESHIRE: One year on from the launch of the Eastern Counties Police Maintenance (ECPM) engineering operation the time has come for the Cambridgeshire MD902 Explorer to join it. The county's police helicopter will now be serviced by an in-house team to save costs.

ECPM was formed by Cambridgeshire, Essex and Suffolk forces working together to reduce costs and share air services. The ECPM directly employs its own engineers.

Under the manufacturers warranty Cambridgeshire's aircraft - call sign QH88 - was previously serviced at Staverton airport in Cheltenham by Police Aviation Services - a 45 minute flight away, and a two-and-a-half hour drive back.



Consortium engineers stand with officers from Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and Essex.

Pictured, from left to right are Dom Francis ECPM engineer, Sergeant Gordon Murray, Superintendent Jon Everett, Detective Chief Superintendent Stewart Gull, Chief Superintendent Andy Hebb, Superintendent Mike Shields, Sergeant Ady Powell, Nick Cushing maintenance manager, Nick Kempson ECPM engineer.

The ECPM service is based at RAF Wattisham - a 20 minute flight and one hour and 20 minutes' drive. The new maintenance service will save the force money, as well as officers' time in taking the aircraft to and from the servicing base.

Editor: Inspector Paul Marrion the Unit Executive Officer for the Consortium is to give a presentation on ECPM at the forthcoming Shephard Police Aviation Conference in November this year.

GREATER MANCHESTER: Last month a 21-year-old man from Greater Manchester who temporarily blinded a police helicopter pilot with a laser pen was jailed for four months. Dean Bottomley, of Stockport, pleaded guilty to endangering an aircraft during an earlier hearing at Manchester Minshull Street Crown Court.

The court heard he bought the £30 pen on the Internet and pointed it at the aircraft to see how far it reached.

The helicopter was flying over Heaton Norris in Stockport on 16 April when it was targeted by a bright green laser. The light was being shone from the back bedroom window of a house lit up the whole cockpit, leaving the pilot unable to see properly.

Bottomley "zapped" the aircraft up to 10 times with the laser.

After the first incident the pilot Captain Westwood had to fly blind, taking emergency evasive action to position the helicopter out of the beam.

Captain Westwood said the helicopter had earlier been zapped by another laser pen a few miles away and aircraft were increasingly being targeted by people with the devices.

After the pilot called for back-up, officers were directed to the house on Larwood Avenue and Bottomley admitted he was responsible. [BBC/MEN]

LONDON [METROPOLITAN]: In the middle of last month London ground to a halt in a manner that was probably as bad as any terror attack. This time it was not bombs but a US President that virtually shut down airspace over London after insisting that he fly into the extremely busy London [Heathrow] Airport rather than some 'safer' and less frenetic military



air base The disruption that followed was not greatly appreciated by the travelling British at large even though it is quite common in the US for air exclusion zones to be put in place to 'protect' the being of their own national President.

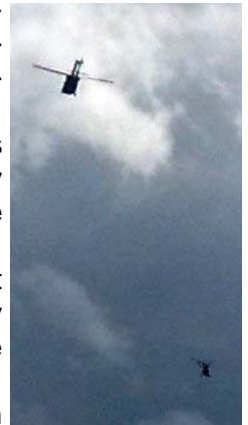
On day two of the visit Central London was again in a state of gridlock thanks to the effects of the visit but that is to be expected from all and every visit by a high profile Head of State. What did raise many eyebrows though was the air security afforded to the visit.

The Metropolitan Police has three Eurocopter EC145 helicopters and yet someone saw fit to allow what appeared to be an American military Sikorsky helicopter to trail the civil police helicopter through the skies as if they were not deemed capable of securing the Capital on their own.

That is of course the same London that every British politician, The Queen and the members of her family crisscross daily virtually unseen and with little in the way of overt security.

A great number of ordinary people were incensed by this taking over of what is supposed to be a Sovereign role and not a few wonder whether this is a sign of the times where even a third world President might also be allowed to insist on bringing along their own airborne security.

Ed: Perhaps there are plans to have an RAF Puma flying shotgun over Washington DC next time a British Prime Minister visits!



NORTH MIDLANDS: Two police officers and a helicopter pilot who saved the life of a woman have been nominated for a national bravery award.

Last July the EC135 police helicopter, owned jointly by Derbyshire Constabulary and Nottinghamshire Police, responded to a report that there was a person floating down the River Derwent.

They found that there was a woman in the water and that she was alive. A rescue attempt was started and with the pilot, Captain Eric Church, steadying the aircraft in the hover close to power lines, Constable Graham Fish threw out a C-buoy but the lady could not reach it. She was floating on her back and the officers feared she could go under at any time.

As Captain Church used the downwash of the aircraft's main rotor to blow the woman towards the river bank the two police officers readied themselves to enter the water to save her. Sergeant Ian Worthington and Constable Fish jumped from the aircraft into the water and despite wearing heavy gear and a helmet, Constable Fish swam ten metres [30 feet] to hold on to her.

Both officers swam with her to a fallen tree and reassured her for almost half an hour before the fire service arrived by boat. Undoubtedly, the heroic and skilful actions of all three men saved the life of this lady.

The Police Bravery Awards are hosted in partnership with *The Sun* newspaper and honour police officers across England and Wales for their actions to tackle criminals and keep the public safe. This year marks the 13th anniversary for the Police Bravery Awards. The ceremony will take place at the Dorchester Hotel London on July 10.

SOUTH & EAST WALES: It turned out to be one of those stories that all the media covered but none believed when a police helicopter in Wales reported an encounter with a type of aircraft the crew was unable to identify.. The crew spotted and reported the unusual aircraft in the Vale of Glamorgan.

The helicopter was airborne over St Athan, which is home to both an RAF base and the police helicopter and close to Cardiff International Airport awaiting clearance to land.

Despite all of the technology on-board, the expensive pod mounted FLIR and video cameras and less leading edge still cameras the three-man crew did not capture any images before the 'object' vanished over the Bristol Channel on June 8.

True to form the recent change in aircraft used by this unit led to a myriad of less than accurate illustrations of the 'Unidentified Flying Object' and the police helicopter. Although the BBC accurately reported the police helicopter as a Eurocopter EC135T2 they showed an image of its old AS355F2 G-SEWP where others went way off-beam by illustrating other AS355s or even MD Explorers as being involved. Having got the easy bit wrong they went on to dream up what the police had seen and done on the day and 'identified' the UFO as being a flying saucer shaped craft. All of the consequent reports appear to have been greatly enhanced by a willing queue of the Welsh section of the 'I was abducted by an alien appreciation society.' [Media – BBC, Mail, Sun etc]

Ed: Having digested all of this media hysteria the South Wales Police subsequently issued a statement:

'South Wales Police can confirm the South & East Wales Air Support Unit sighted an unusual aircraft. This was reported to the relevant authorities for their investigation. In today's skies, there are a wide variety of aircrafts which come in a range of different shapes and



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sizes and in all probability, this sighting has just confirmed that one of these was in the area at the relevant time.'

It was not a flying saucer and has not been described as so.

The helicopter did not chase it.

The police helicopter was not attacked.

The unusual aircraft did not speed straight at the helicopter.

The helicopter did not have to swerve sharply to avoid being hit and the crew would not have been "dead" as stated in The Sun.

The helicopter did not follow it, or chase it, across the Bristol Channel and the North Devon coast.

We haven't confirmed any of the details in The Sun story and a lot of the details are inaccurate.'

UNITED STATES



FLORIDA: United Rotorcraft Solutions (URS) delivered a new law enforcement role equipped Eurocopter AS350B2 N792JD c/n 4310 to Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office [HCSO] last month. HCSO acquired and registered the helicopter late last year and it has been with URS undergoing completion since that time.

The URS completion resulted in the airframe being delivered a FLIR 8500 sensor system, Spectrolab SX-5 searchlight, BMS downlink system, Goodrich hoist, Onboard Systems cargo hook with load cell, Avalex moving map and recording systems and a Lojack locator system.

The AS350 has STC'd night vision lighting modifications and designed and certified an extended instrument panel [see above]. The avionics and communications systems installed include Garmin Comm/Nav/GPS; Honeywell Comm, Sandel EHSL, Free Flight Radar Altimeter and a Technisonic FM transceiver, Macom 800 Mhz radio, Nat Audio Panels, TCAD and an Air Data Computer.

The airframe was also equipped with air conditioning, LED belly and fin strobes, LED Nav Lights, AKV cycle counter, AFS inlet barrier filter, airframe fuel filter and engine oil filter. URS painted the HCSO scheme in-house.

This helicopter will be the third AS350 and fourth helicopter for the Hillsborough County Sheriff, one of the ten largest Sheriff's offices in the USA.

ILLINOIS: Mike Bitton, Director of Operations, for the Law Enforcement Aviation Coalition (LEAC) was flying in support of Milwaukee PD during an event involving 250 policemen escorting over a thousand marchers. Bitton landed at command post in a baseball field that already had some thirty police in it – clearly a venue that seemed as safe as they come. But no-one noticed the guy who was running towards the helicopter, including the cop with the video camera trained on the rotors-running helicopter. Bitton is stuck in the cabin hands firmly on the controls and unable to fend away the approaching menace of the man who was yelling obscenities clearly heard over the sound of the whining engine. Fortunately he was intercepted at four feet distance by the TFO who had just realised the danger, knocked back four times and eventually disappeared under a pile of six burly men in blue.

Phew that was close!

For Bitton being attacked in the cabin of his helicopter was a first in 35 years. Unfortunately the video camera missed the attack ... but managed to catch the bit where the knifeman went under the of defenders.

It turned out that the irate citizen had a 9 inch open razor-blade knife in his hand so he appears to have meant business! His beef was that the police helicopter flew over his house.

www.AirSupport.org

NEW YORK: Suffolk County Police Department operating helicopters using County Police Officers as pilots, and State of New York, University Hospital Paramedics has recently

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concluded [and lost] a court case where it was suing its partner in the venture. In the case, an aircraft was damaged by FOD on final approach and the County decided to sue the state for damage.

Suffolk County's claim sought recovery for cost of repairs to the helicopter when it sustained damage when an object struck the helicopter as it landed at a State helipad back in 2004.

On the afternoon of July 3, 2004 Suffolk County was delivering a patient onto the helipad at Stony Brook in an MD902 Explorer N3PD.

Whilst still some 25-50 feet short of the pad and flying over the doctor and emergency room parking lots the helicopter was struck by a flying object. The helicopter landed successfully. Upon landing and after inspection, it was determined that the helicopter had been damaged by the flying object, that one of the helicopter's rotor blades had abrasions and that another rotor blade was missing a piece, approximately 6 inches by 1½ inches in dimension, rendering the helicopter inoperable.

Several witnesses observed the object which struck the helicopter, both while in the air as the helicopter was landing and on the ground after the helicopter had landed. Both the pilot in charge and the co-pilot of the helicopter saw the object for the first time in the air, flying within the downwash created by the rotor blades of the hovering helicopter.

The object was retrieved after the helicopter landed and it turned out to be a lightweight foldable car sunscreen of the type placed in the front window or on the front dashboard of a car to reflect the sun's heat outward, preventing the interior of a car from becoming overheated.

Because this object had a wire frame to help maintain its shape it had proved quite lethal to the MRB on the Explorer.

Clearly this incident was expensive for Suffolk County and they created quite a stir and blamed the owner/operators of the car park for not ensuring that there was no debris in the car park that might be lifted up into the helicopter rotors on final approach. Naturally the state and its employees defended themselves and denied being negligent over ensuring that debris lay in the car park and seven witnesses were called to that effect in all. None was aware of any previous problem with loose debris in the last segment of the flight path [but in court of course they said they had regularly patrolled to look for it – in some cases for decades – as part of their duties!]

Anyway to cut a pretty long story short the court did not think that Suffolk County had a case proving that the State was guilty of failing to look for and guard against flying debris within the final approach area of the car park close to the heliport when such debris had not previously been noted. As for the sunscreen no-one ever worked out where it came from and the claim was dismissed.

NEW YORK: *I guess I felt a little awkward about criticising that story on the New York secret helicopter last month but perhaps I was wrong to be uneasy. On revisiting the subject a few days later via a similar but different US newspaper story I was surprised to see the invective that the story stirred up. Like most stories on-line the newspaper offered an added option to comment on the story. Most times one, maybe two people may drop a word or two into the web page. That story brought about dozens, mainly negative reaction and ostensibly from New Yorkers. It seems that whatever forces nudged NYPD into releasing the story and images on their 'new' and 'secret' helicopter [neither now relates, it was in NYPD service more than two and a half years ago and the secret is clearly no more] drew so much negative invective that they would probably have been better advised never to have trailed their coat so provocatively in the dirt.*



AIR AMBULANCE

AUSTRALIA

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: The regions first long-range air ambulance service to transport sick or injured people from South-East Asian regions back to Perth for treatment was launched last month.

Care Flight Air Ambulance's Perth base will have a Westwind II jet to fly out to countries such as Indonesia on medical retrieval missions for Australian and overseas-born residents providing a rapid response medical team to emergency and critical care situations overseas. It will operate in partnership with Pel-Air Aviation and doctor-nurse teams on roster from the Joondalup Health Campus and will complement the State's existing aero medical services.

Care Flight, a registered charity, has been operating for 27 years in the Eastern States, and would be available for small or serious incidents such as the Bali bombings or the Garuda Indonesia crash last year. Aid agencies and governments had used the service in the past, an average mission to Indonesia and back could cost \$60,000 and Care Flight has not received any State Government funding but has its supporters.

Care Flight already has bases in Darwin, the Gold Coast and Sydney, in the past there had been operations in support of the needs of the Royal Flying Doctor Service [RFDS]. The 'top up' for the RFDS operations meets occasional needs for twin-engine aircraft for over-water operations that their primary single engine RFDS fleet would not be suitable for. Beyond that the Care flight service complements rather than supplants RFDS operations in the state. [TheWest]

MIDDLE EAST

QATAR: The National Health Authority (NHA) is planning to introduce 24 hour helicopter emergency medical service in Qatar beginning September. This follows a successful six months trial of a daylight only NHA HEMS service operated in conjunction with Gulf Helicopters. NHA has now launched the service, named Life Flight on a permanent basis and plans to make it round-the-clock from September.

The pilot project using an MD902 Explorer helicopter began the trial operation on October 12 last year, that period ended in April this year. The helicopter proved to be safe, with an excellent operational track record, and capable of operating in a range of terrains, and climates making it the best option to operate in Qatar's sometimes hot climate. During the trial period, the helicopter team conducted 427 missions of which 111 were medical and 316 were trauma cases.

Two new helicopters (one acting as a back-up) are being purchased and should arrive in September. More staff is being trained, so that after the summer this round-the-clock operation can start.

Currently the service does not undertake sea rescues. However, NHA is having discussions with the Oil and Gas sector to introduce the service offshore. [The Peninsula]

DUBAI: Reflecting an area of growing HEMS operation growth the Dubai Helishow in November is to be operated in conjunction with an Air Medical & Rescue Show. The growth of international health care needs has spurred the growth and evolution of the air medical and rescue services in the Middle East utilising private, medically equipped, fixed wing and rotary aircraft.

Dubai Air Medical & Rescue Show will provide a unique and





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highly specialised exhibition that brings together the key players in the Air Medical and Rescue sector.

The show will focus on technologies and services involved with transporting patients by air. It will demonstrate the crucial role air transportation plays in transferring patients when other modes of travel by land or sea would prove difficult or dangerous.

Key professionals are to be invited from the emergency medical and critical care sectors from both hospital and independent providers of air and ground medical transport services including: Senior Management, Programme Directors, Medical Directors, Doctors, Paramedics, Pilots, Aircraft operators and manufacturers, Specialist role equipment, Communications, Interiors, Medical Evacuation equipment, Air Ambulance, Emergency Medical Technicians and EMT Vehicles.

The two shows will combine to provide a 'one-stop' shop for all requirements relating to helicopter technologies & operations and air medical & rescue sectors.

POLAND

NATIONAL: The Polish Ministry of Health has signed a contract for 23 Eurocopter EC135 helicopters to serve its nationwide Emergency Medical Services (EMS) network. The aircraft will be delivered between 2009 and 2010. The state-of-the-art EC135s, which will replace an ageing fleet of Mi-2s, will enable Poland's air rescue system to become fully compliant with European JAR OPS-3 standards and to offer to its population the world's most widely used EMS helicopter of the new generation. An EC135 flight simulator is also part of the contract.

The selection of the EC135 follows an international tender, according to public procurement law, issued by the Polish Ministry of Health. The fleet of 23 helicopters will serve bases all over Poland and will be operated by the Ministry's Lotnicze Pogotowie Ratunkowe (LPR) organization.

The LPR's EC135s will be supported by Heli Invest of Warsaw, with whom Eurocopter has a Distributorship Agreement which includes the full scope of customer support services and maintenance under Part 145 regulations. Heli Invest's service to LPR includes a 24/7 service hotline in Polish language, warranty support, full maintenance services as well as on-site customer support at the LPR's bases all over the country. [EC]

UNITED KINGDOM

AirMed 2011: Further details of Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance successful bid to host the next [2011] AirMed World Congress in the UK has emerged.

David Philpott, Chief Executive of the Air Ambulance said 'It is such an honour to be asked to put on this fantastic event – in the aero-medical world; it is like winning the bid to host the Olympics. However, I must pay tribute to the Chairman and board of trustees of this Charity, whose diligence and attention to detail enabled us to put together such a well thought-out proposal.'

Even though the event is 3 years away, sponsors, exhibitors and delegates have already begun to register their interest at

www.airmed2011.com

The Congress will be held in Brighton with events focused around the Brighton Centre, the Royal Pavilion, the Museum and numerous hotels. Jill Playle, who is the main organiser said 'We looked at lots of places in the South East, but chose Brighton because of the tremendous support and enthusiasm of the City Council and in particular "Visit Brighton" who will be helping with all the accommodation arrangements'.



Chief Executive David Philpott [left] in conversation with President of the Czech Senate, Dr. Premysl Sobotka [right].

FUEL COSTS: Spiralling fuel prices are hitting all air operations Worldwide and no less so than among the charity sector that provides HEMS services in the UK.

County Air Ambulance operating three helicopters in the west midlands has reported being hit hard by the sudden leap in direct operating costs. They report that at current levels additional costs are amounting to some £130,000 a year.

County Air Ambulance, which covers the Midlands and Welsh border region, requires £5.6M a year to run its life-saving service. Although none are in any immediate danger thanks to their reserves each operation is having to ramp up appeals to ensure that charitable funding continues to meet the costs.

Similar pleas for additional support have been issued by other UK HEMS charities.

GREAT WEST: The new air ambulance operation that is being blamed for putting so much pressure on the joint police/ambulance operation in Wiltshire finally launched from Filton in the first week of June using Bond Air Services aircraft. The first airframe used was unusual in that it carried the blue and yellow 'Conspicuity' scheme of a police helicopter. The former police helicopter, G-SPHU, until recently being operated by the Strathclyde Police in Glasgow, Scotland and usually now seen as a spare airframe for Bond's police contracts in South Wales and Strathclyde. The police in Glasgow now have an updated airframe.

NORTH WEST: As expected the air ambulance service launched its appeal for a second helicopter at the Cheshire Show starting on June 17.

The extended service is to cover Cheshire and south Manchester and needs to raise £3.3M annually to keep the two aircraft airborne.

SCOTLAND: Last month's news story about members of the Scottish Air Ambulance being up in arms about the reduced manning of air ambulances resulted in a couple of reader comments on the subject. The tale was that helicopter crews were being reduced at certain times of the day and that move would lead to the pilots being obliged to assist the paramedic with stretcher loading from time to time.

It seems that this 'reduced' manning is not exactly a new thing in the region. When Loganair had the self same air ambulance contract using the [much missed] BN Islander aircraft it was quite usual to carry just one paramedic.

Out of hours most operations would be transfers anyway and the pilot was expected to assist with transferring the patient between the land ambulance and the aircraft as a matter of course. Industry sources suggest that no-one was ever noted as suffering any injuries when transferring the patient in and out of the aircraft – and that was in the days when it was rare to find a wheeled litter. It has been pointed out that then as now in addition to the aircraft crew there is usually plenty of help on hand from the crew of a land ambulance and many other willing hands so the number of occasions where the pilot may have to 'soil their hands' is likely to be few.

Daytime operations are a different matter and the requirement for two paramedics, or a doctor and a paramedic when attending a serious incident – potentially at a remote location - remains. The question is whether a very able doctor might also take issue with the lifting task – a scenario also likely to thrust the pilot into the lifting role.

THAMES VALLEY: The Thames Valley & Chiltern Air Ambulance (TVAC) flew its 10,000th mission early last month.

The RAF Benson, Oxford, based emergency helicopter passed the magic number of missions when it was called to a three vehicle traffic accident just North of Aylesbury on the A413, a patient was flown to Stoke Mandeville hospital with multiple injuries.

TVAC was established in 1999 as one of six air ambulance charities sponsored by the AA for a period of three years while the charity itself was incorporated in 2000.

The 10,000 milestone has been flown primarily on two Agusta A109E Power helicopters and the current BO105DBS4 helicopter.

TVAC is expecting delivery of a new emergency helicopter this month. The new aircraft is a Eurocopter EC135T2+ role equipped for air ambulance duty and has many advantages over the ageing Bolkow 105 currently funded by the charity and deployed by South Central Ambulance Service.

Anyone interested in seeing the new EC135 helicopter can get a good look by visiting the Ferrari Fun day at Newbury Showground on Sunday 20 July which is raising funds for TVAC www.ferrarifunday.co.uk

The new EC135T2 c/n 664 G-HBOB will be based at RAF Benson and will be liveried in a distinctive red and yellow colour scheme. The registration of G-HBOB reflects the counties it serves [Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire].

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Comparison of MX-15 True HD Output Formats

As part of a total re-branding of TVAC the charity launched a new website last month. The new website can be found at www.tvacaa.org

UNITED STATES

The war in Iraq is creating what some see as a major - and perhaps deadly - shortage of night vision goggles for civilian pilots who fly medical helicopters in the United States.

The National Transportation Safety Board has encouraged the use of such equipment since 2006 to reduce the risk of night-time crashes during emergency medical flights. But it appears that air ambulance services are stuck in a queue of a year or more by makers of night vision equipment because the US military has priority for the war in Iraq.



The NTSB has gone on record to state that the technology could have prevented 13 of 55 crashes of medical helicopters it analysed in its 2006 report into the high levels of accidents in the industry. Since the study period five more HEMS have crashed in the dark and might therefore have made use of the technology.

Air Methods Corp., in Denver, one of the biggest operator of HEMS said its plans to install night vision goggles in its fleet of 348 had been slowed by the shortage. About 40% of its fleet now have them with plans in place to have the rest of the fleet so equipped

by the close of 2011. Law enforcement agencies are also facing delays.

US companies such as ITT have boosted production capacity to try to meet the additional demand for domestic users but this is clearly failing to meet a level of demand that saw over 250,000 goggles ordered by the military since 2005. Northrop Grumman is selling its night vision goggles unit to L-3 Communications Corp. Neither company was commenting.

[San Francisco Chronicle]

ARKANSAS: The pilot of a private air ambulance company was arrested on an alcohol-related charge at a Kentucky airport just before he was to fly. The 51 years old man was arrested at the Blue Grass Airport after the wife of the patient has was about to fly to St Louis for treatment reported noticing alcohol on his breath. The arrested man flies for James Flying Service in Mena. [Lexington Herald-Leader]

FLORIDA: Air Trek the air ambulance company based in Punta Gorda for 30 years had its operating license revoked by federal officials.

The action by the Federal Aviation Administration came less than a month after the agency suspended Air Trek's carrier's license on May 23.

Further inspections, which turned up more serious problems than those cited, previously, led the agency to revoke Air Trek's license on June 10.

The FAA's emergency revocation letter cited 14 air traffic safety regulation violations, including flying aircraft that had not been deemed safe, failure to follow weight guidelines, deceptively recording maintenance shortfalls, allowing pilots to make international flights without proper training or certification, and letting pilots fly after they had failed required tests.

Once a company's carrier license is revoked, it must wait a year to reapply but Air Trek has appealed the decision to the NTSB and will go before an administrative law judge on July 8.

ILLINOIS: AeroCare Medical Transport System, Inc. has added a Lear 55ER jet aircraft to its fleet of aeromedical aircraft. This aircraft will allow Aerocare to provide worldwide service.

The Lear 55, N40DK, is a long-range stand-up cabin aircraft equipped with an airliner style washroom and can accommodate a stretcher patient and up to five medical crew/passengers.

The aircraft is operated on the FAA Part 135 certificate of R&M Aviation, a wholly owned subsidiary of AeroCare Medical Transport System, Inc. R&M Aviation was performing prov-

ing runs late last month with the FAA in order to obtain worldwide operating authority. Entering its 15th year of operations, AeroCare is a CAMTS (Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems) accredited fixed-wing provider with bases in the suburban Chicago land area, Scottsdale, Arizona and Indianapolis, Indiana. AeroCare utilises a fleet of aeromedical equipped aircraft including three Beechcraft King-air 90's a Beechcraft B200, Lear 35A and a Lear 55ER.

MALAYSIA

KUALA LUMPUR: The government is to buy two more large helicopters for the Fire & Rescue Department to facilitate aerial monitoring and search and rescue operations. The purchase will cost around RM100M [\$30M].

The government had yet to decide on the make of helicopter to buy. The Fire & Rescue Department currently has six helicopters, two Agusta and four Russian Mil Mi-17. Other air assets include hovercraft and Canadair fixed wing water bombers.

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SEARCH & RESCUE

INDIA

COAST GUARD: Last month the Minister of State for Defence M.M. Pallam Raju commissioned a Coast Guard air unit at Porbandar on the Gujarat coast to increase surveillance in India's exclusive economic zone in the Gulf of Kutch area. The base will operate one Dornier fixed-wing aircraft and one Chetak [Alouette] helicopter on air-sea patrols, SAR and medical evacuation missions in the Gulf of Kutch region as well as in the waters adjoining the coastal state of Gujarat.

Prior to the new base being available the Coast Guard operations were flown from Daman and entailed long transit times to arrive on station.

Porbandar is 88 miles from Karachi and is located near two refineries at Jamnagar and Vadinar.

Coast Guard air operations commenced in 1982 with two ship-borne Chetak helicopters and currently include rotary and fixed wing elements. Today the Coast Guard has seventeen Chetak helicopters, 24 Dornier Do-228 aircraft and four HAL Dhruv advanced light helicopters.

MALTA: Apart from moving it from law enforcement to here in SAR I make no excuse for running yet another story on Malta so soon after the article in the May edition. Things are hotting up in the Central Mediterranean.

On June 7 another group of 56 migrants were rescued by Armed Forces of Malta. In the morning the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre [MRCC] in Rome informed the Armed Forces of Malta's Operations' Centre at Luqa Barracks [by the Malta International Airport] that an Italian fishing-vessel, the Priamo, had reported a boat with some 28 illegal migrants on board in a position 50nm south of Malta. The Maritime Squadron's Protector-class patrol vessel P-52 was immediately dispatched to the area to investigate.

A short while later the Italian tug-boat Capo Mulino informed the AFM of yet another boat with another 28 illegal migrants onboard had capsized near them and that they occupants had sought refuge on one of the many fishing pens that lie off the Maltese islands. To make matters worse the tuna fishing pen they had chosen was one that the Capo Mulino had in tow. This second incident was only 6nm from the first incident. The P-52 was diverted towards the tug with the AFM's Air Squadron scrambling an Islander aircraft to the scene as well to assess the gravity of the situation from the air.

By mid-afternoon P-52 was on scene recovering the first group of 28 migrants from the water. At 17.20hrs, P-52 had reached the second position and recovered a second group of 28

migrants. The vessel was obliged to call in an immediate air medical evacuation of one of the females taken onboard and one of the winch equipped Alouette helicopters lifted her off to hospital.



Pictures taken of the incident by Lance Bombardier Rohan Dallia of the Maritime Squadron can be found at [http://s52.photobucket.com/albums/q18/MALTASWIFTS/023 2008 MIGRATION/07 JUN 07 2008/](http://s52.photobucket.com/albums/q18/MALTASWIFTS/023%2008%20MIGRATION/07_JUN_07_2008/)

And the stories keep rolling in about other similar incidents being fielded by this tiny island in the front line of plugging the southern borders of Europe against economic migrants.



PHILLIPPINES

COAST GUARD: In the wake of the latest marine tragedy in the region under funding of the Coast Guard [PCG] service has been thrust into stark relief.

Last month the Princess of the Stars sank off Sibuyan Island last month was said to be more than 25 years old. Its sister-ships, Dona Paz, Dona Marilyn and Princess of the Orient, were around 25 years old when these too were involved in tragedies that claimed thousands of lives.

Dona Paz collided with an oil tanker in 1987 resulting to more than 4,000 fatalities. Dona Marilyn, on the other hand, was battered by a strong typhoon on its way from Manila to Tacloban. Princess of the Orient went to the depths of Manila Bay shortly after it set sail for Cebu City. The death toll in Dona Marilyn was around 250 while 150 were killed in the Princess of the Orient incident.

Initial reports suggest that the latest tragedy to the Princess of the Stars related in some way to the engine failing at the height of typhoon Frank.

The tragedy underscores the flawed state of the inter-island ferry system and the inability of Coast Guard authorities to enforce safety at the sea.

Most of the inter-island ferries are practically floating coffins, ageing and with questionable seaworthiness, while the Philippine Coast Guard does not have the logistics to enforce maritime safety regulations. Many of the ships in the country are second-hand, with an average age of 25 years.

The bulk of the Coast Guards annual budget goes to the salaries of its personnel, leaving a tiny amount for acquisition of new equipment. In 2003 and 2004, its capital outlay was only \$227,272. In 2005 and 2006, it had no budget for capital outlay. In 2007, its capital outlay rose but declined this year to \$586,181.

Because of its limited budget, the Coast Guard can only afford to keep 4,000 people on its payroll, when its actual requirement is 25,000 personnel. The PCG has 12 search and rescue vessels, and 12 vessels for maritime surveillance and four helicopters. [abs-cbn]

UNITED KINGDOM



SKYWATCH: Sky Watch now has two MT-03 Gyrocopters at its York (Rufforth) Unit where they have proved exceptional in the air observation role. The voluntary service charity whose pilots donate their time and aircraft free of charge in service to the community now has six MT-03 gyrocopters on its fleet. Kai Maurer's MT-03 is working in co-operations with Thames Coastguard and Norman Surplus' MT-03 works with Northern Ireland Coastguard.

The present priority of the York Unit is the farming community and

horse owners of North Yorkshire where horse and farm equipment theft is rife. The gyro's are regularly in the air keeping an eye out. Anything suspicious seen is radio'd in to ATC for an onward 999 call to the emergency services.

In one forty minute sortie a gyrocopter can check out over a hundred farms.

Sky Watch in Yorkshire have recently called in a fire, a road traffic accident, a farm tractor accident in a remote location, assisted in a maritime emergency and carried out a search for a missing woman.

INDUSTRY

Although none of their helicopter types is known to figure in the current submissions for the post 2012 SAR proposals **Eurocopter** continues to promote their corner in the market.

On June 5 Eurocopter undertook an international customer seminar in Brighton, Sussex, on SAR solutions onshore and offshore. It featured presentations on all their helicopter types currently used in SAR missions around the world and a presentation on the yet to appear EC175.

The presentation was similar to that given in the May 2008 Shephard SAR Conference near Bournemouth Pier but this time to underline the message the audio visual displays were fully supported at Brighton Racecourse by a full size EC725 of the French Army 2630/BJO F-ZKCG, an AS365 marked 'Secretaria General de Pesca Maritima' [the Spanish Fish Patrol] F-WQDN and the EC175. The EC725 was on site for SAR demo flights.

Interestingly Eurocopter state that 'the British SAR-H requirement was not the focal point of the seminar' but it is an awful lot of effort to take a mock-up and two pre-delivery aircraft to on a mere whim!

Over 80 delegates attended the first **AgustaWestland** Oil & Gas Industry Seminar held in Singapore last week. The focus of the event was on oil and gas industry helicopter operations in Asia and Australasia and was deemed a great success by those attending. Delegates attended from a number of service providers and operators such as Heli-One and ERA Helicopters, together with representatives from several regional operators.

The delegates were able to listen to briefings by aviation experts, helicopter operators, regulatory authorities and oil companies and to share views about offshore operational safety, regulation and future challenges facing aviation support for the oil and gas industry.

Briefings were also given on operators "real-life" experiences of introducing and operating the AW139 in the offshore oil and gas support market. The AW139 has, in just a few years,

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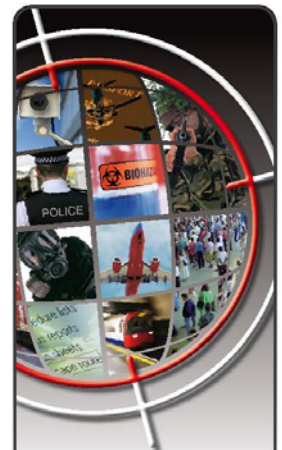
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Although it has not been the subject of a press notice at any time the former Middle East representatives of MD Helicopters, **Action Aviation**, and the manufacturers have parted company. **MDHI** now represent themselves in the areas formerly covered by Action Aviation and will be representing their own interests at the forthcoming Dubai Helishow. Action Aviation were a major force in the success of MD sales into the Middle East and shared a large stand at the last Helishow in 2006 promoting all of the MD helicopters range and the Sino Swearingen SJ30 jet.

MD Helicopters and Action Aviation announced the appointment of the latter as a distributor responsible for several territories in the Middle East including the United Arab Emirates, the Indian Sub Continent and Scandinavia just prior to the Dubai Helishow in November 2006 [above].

The initial 8 year contract covered the territories of Dubai (UAE), Sharjah (UAE) Ajman (UAE), Umm al - Qaiwain (UAE), Rasal - Khaimah (UAE) Fujairah (UAE), Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, India, Bangladesh, Maldives, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland.

Industry sources suggest that the split was not by mutual consent and follows moves by MD to curtail dealer margins across the board. [RH]



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WHAT IS ON THIS MONTH

10-11 July 2008 UV Europe 2008 and Air Power 2008 Olympia Conference Centre, London
www.shephard.co.uk/events

14-20 July 2008. Farnborough International Air show [FIA]. Farnborough, Hampshire. From Monday 14 to Sunday 20 July 2008, the Aerospace community will congregate at FIA.
www.farnborough.com

16-19 July 2008 ALEA Annual Conference and exposition. Houston, TX www.alea.org

As this edition closed it was learned that the new Sikorsky S-92 SAR helicopter fleet operating in Scotland have had some problems in undertaking their full role requirement. To date the new craft have not been able to fly long range missions – eight months after being brought into service.

The problem is said to be related to the integration of the long-range tanks but the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) has insisted the problems have all been resolved, saying the tanks are now fully operational.

The two helicopters at Sumburgh do not have the tanks – which can double their range to 400nm – fitted, while the Stornoway aircraft have yet to carry out a rescue using them. Fitting the tanks reduces the space available for crew and casualties.



established itself as the leading helicopter in this market, outselling all other medium twin helicopters on the market. The AW139's superior performance, cabin space and modern technology have proved popular with operators around the world.

In a ceremony held at PZL-Swidnik's facility in Poland last month the 200th AW139 airframe to be manufactured by PZL-Swidnik was accepted by AgustaWestland.

Since **PZL-Swidnik** and AgustaWestland started cooperation in 1996 the Polish company has manufactured nearly 800 airframes for AgustaWestland. Current manufacture and assembly includes AW119Ke, AW109 Power, AW109 LUH, Grand and AW139 airframes, sustaining nearly 1000 skilled staff at its Swidnik plant near Lublin. At current production rates of 15 airframes per month it is expected that PZL-Swidnik will deliver the 1000th airframe to AgustaWestland in the second half of 2009.

Last month the first fatal accident involving a production **AB139** occurred in the Middle East. Industry sources suggest that the VIP configured aircraft, A6-BBB, may not have suffered from any type related fault. Initial reports state that the crash of the aircraft resulted in the death of Sheik Nasser Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, who was the Chief of Police and brother of President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan. The American Captain of the aircraft was in the rear whilst the Sheik was flying alongside the co-pilot.

UC Davis is promoting the range of aviation related courses to be available from late October this year. With NTSB and FAA reports continually point to unsafe aircraft as a causal factor in cases of failed emergency responses. Along with such studies, increasing concerns about the structural health of US public-use firefighting aircraft led to the development of a program that delivers world-class aviation training. A certificate program focussing on monitoring aircraft health, developing effective communications strategies and instituting the principles of safe aviation operations is what is on offer.

A six-course program caters specifically to aviation safety officers, emergency services pilots, forest firefighter aviators, border patrol aviators, medical-air transport personnel, law enforcement, homeland security officers and anyone involved in the field of emergency response aviation. The courses prepare students to coordinate with crew members and management in order to create an environment based on best safety practices.

The Emergency Response Aviation Safety Management Certificate Program can be completed in just five weeks, during two consecutive quarter sessions. Classes can also be taken individually.

The 2008 courses take place from October 28 until November 7:

- Aircraft Health Management, October 28-31, 2008
- Communications: Program Management, November 3-4, 2008
- Communications: Operations Management, November 5-7, 2008

Early next year the winter courses will be taking place between January 27 and February 12:

- Aviation Leadership, January 27-30, 2009
- Human Factors and Operational Risk Management, February 2-5, 2009
- Safety Program Management, February 9-12, 2009

To enrol or request more information, visit www.extension.ucdavis.edu/unit/aviation_safety_management/ or call +1 (800) 752-0881.

United Rotorcraft Solutions (URS), and partner **Ahlers Aerospace**, were recently awarded FAA Supplemental Type Certificates for their Night Vision Lighting modifications for the Bell 206 Series and the Eurocopter AS350B2/B3.

Using new filter material that greatly improves day light readability, United Rotorcraft Solutions and Ahlers Aerospace have designed a modification utilizing external NVIS White filters of glass or poly carbon applied to both instruments and displays. Filter selection is predicated on the light source, whether incandescent, florescent, LCD or LED.

The filters are generally mounted in an aluminium frame and affixed over the instrument's bezel utilizing the existing instrument mounting screws. Mechanical and/or electrical modifi-

cation to the cockpit or airframe is minimized reducing installation charges. The external filters allow the modified component to remain generic thus retaining the advantages of local repair and/or overhaul.

STC's are pending for the Bell 412 and the Eurocopter EC120, EC130, EC135, EC145 and BK117 series model helicopters with award expected in the near future.

Apical Industries Inc. has recently received EASA approval of their Replacement Emergency Floats and Inflation Cylinder for Eurocopter AS332C/L/L1 model helicopters. FAA and Transport Canada approvals have been previously received.

The replacement floats are available for each of the three floats positions (1 Fwd, 2 Aft). Each float is constructed utilising a lightweight urethane coated nylon fabric. Each float bag has five compartments and an inlet check valve, pressure relief valve and a topping valve, except the centre compartment of the nose float which has two inlet check valves.

Weighing the same as OEM floats, the Apical Replacement Emergency Floats can be inter-mixed with Aerazur Floats and do not impose any aircraft limitations. Apical also offer an exchange facility.

The Inflation Cylinder is composite wound and is designed as a replacement for the Aerazur reservoir.

The **RECON Group** based in Berlin are handling a number of sensor turrets for the German market including examples sourced in Russia. As is common in this sector of the industry the casings may well be Russian but the sensors within are sourced from a variety of the worlds industry including FLIR Systems.

The Russian sensor casing offer a low cost base for the best the world has to offer in imaging and offers significant opportunities to cut costs. One of the latest gimbals on offer is modular and offers the opportunity to quickly change sensors. The times given for module change are just two minutes. [Ed: I likened it to the older Israeli POP system that has a following in some law enforcement agencies but was told that it was not in that class. It looks and comes apart in a similar fashion but the sensor fit is far superior and quicker to change.] The RECON Group has agreements in place with YOM3 [the Urals Optical and Mechanical Plant], Indra, Identif Technologies, BFI Optilas, APTA and helicopter operator HELOG in Switzerland. www.recon-group.de

An Ottawa, Canada based group called **WBO - BORDERPOL** are promoting themselves as a means by which governments can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the way they evaluate, implement and monitor policy to deliver modern border security and migration screening services.

The "not-for-profit" fraternal association which became an international organisation WBO - BORDERPOL claims it is able to call upon the expertise of its membership from around the world to provide a wide range of consultancy services including operational oversight, on and off-site training and educational services.

Since formation the association and its members have been actively involved in a wide range of international operational border initiatives including Kosovo, Kazakhstan and educational programs in the United Kingdom in conjunction with Durham University.

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For more information visit: www.borderpol.org

In the USA **NAASCO** has revised and relaunched its web site. The company claim that the new site is easier to navigate and full of new information. They have added some free offers for first time visitors.

NAASCO specialise in the repair and overhaul of Starter Generators and Electrical Power Relay Switching assemblies as well as a variety of aircraft accessories. They also offer a number of PMA parts for helicopter and fixed wing aircraft components.

NAASCO introduced the ETR™-20 and Mercury Mod Starter Generator improvements that deliver 1000 hours of brush life on many helicopter and fixed wing turbine starter generators.

NAASCO are an FAA authorised repair station with additional EASA certification and have FAA authorization for a number of PMA parts. NAASCO has also developed cost effective FAA approved repair processes for a wide variety of LRU's including motors, actuators, fans and micro pumps.

Check out www.naasco.com for brochures, news articles, trade show listings, contact people and more.

MW Power was showing the latest version of the Microdrone MD4-200 [see cover] at the annual **Parc Aberporth** Unmanned Systems event last month. Although the days preceding the show were fine and bright this years event was adversely affected by the weather so outside flight demonstrations were curtailed—suitably underlining not only the frailty of the small class of craft like the Microdrone but also their larger and supposedly more robust cousins!.

After securing further HM Government orders a combination of Remote Zoom, Target stand-off and Fully-autonomous Waypoint Navigation have been integrated for the first time in micro UAV.

These features were demonstrated recently on Avon Fire & Rescue 'Digital Fire Ground' demonstration hosted by DOMO (Cobham)

The Microdrone has been flown for twelve fire authorities all interested in practical uses for the DOMO COFDM digital system.

Late last month **FLIR Systems** announced it has received a \$6.7M order from the Colombian Ministry of Defence for its Star SAFIRE HD stabilised, multi-sensor surveillance systems. The units delivered under this order will be installed on fixed-wing surveillance platforms for use in counter-narcotic and counter-terror missions within the Republic of Colombia.

Since 2001, FLIR has delivered more than 70 airborne sensor systems to the Colombian Ministry of Defence while developing and maintaining an active and fully equipped service and completion centre in Bogota. The recently expanded capabilities of this centre provide support for all regional users of FLIR's thermal imaging equipment.

In the wake of their recent announcement that they are to move the majority of their fixed wing operations to **Oxford Airport** PremiAir is now seeking to recruit qualified fixed wing engineers to join the company's new base.

PremiAir is an Authorised Service Centre for Hawker Beechcraft business aircraft - its core fixed wing activity. It has secured the former CSE Aviation Hangar 1, a 20,000 sq ft facility which is to be fully refurbished to meet its engineering requirements.

Barry Stone, PremiAir's Engineering Director, said: "We looked at other business aviation

airports but determined that Oxford Airport offered us the best opportunity to expand our fixed wing business. We very much hope to fill many of these engineering vacancies from the strong Oxfordshire catchment area.” PremiAir will initially be appointing 10 additional engineers to complement its current maintenance team.

The successful applicants will provide high-quality engineering services, initially alongside PremiAir’s existing team at Blackbushe, before moving to Oxford in October. PremiAir Engineering will provide specific aircraft type training for Part ‘B1’, ‘B2’ and ‘C’ licensed engineers to enable them to carry out base maintenance on Hawker Beechcraft products including Premier 1 and 1A Executive Jets, King Air turboprops, plus the Baron and Bonanza.

PremiAir’s new Oxford Airport base will be home to 35 employees. It will feature new offices, workshops, reception areas and car parking. In addition the hangar will be fitted with new electrics, lighting, heating and modern insulation. PremiAir anticipates the creation of 20 new jobs in total at its Oxford facility by year end.

Pratt & Whitney Canada and **MTU Aero Engines** GmbH have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to jointly pursue business opportunities in the growing unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) market in Europe. Under the five-year agreement, P&WC and MTU will cooperate in positioning themselves for participation in future European UAV programmes.

Era Training Center LLC has opened a new 7,694 square-foot facility located in Lake Charles, in proximity to Era Helicopters’ headquarters in Lake Charles, Louisiana.

Part funded by local grant financing the Training Center features two new state-of-the-art flight-training devices (AS350B2 and EC135 CPDS P2+), classrooms, custom briefing areas and administrative offices. The Era Training Center will be used by several hundred professionals from Louisiana and around the world annually and will offer a diverse array of training programs for corporate aircraft owners, medical flight services, airborne law enforcement personnel and other rotorcraft professionals.

Era Training Center’s wide range of courses will test and hone the skills of helicopter pilots to specific aircraft and missions. Real-time training using Era’s diverse fleet of light, medium and heavy aircraft can also be incorporated into a program of instruction.

The Training Center’s Grand Opening coincides with Era Helicopter’s 60th Anniversary in 2008.

Cardiff Heliport has been acquired in a management buyout – led by the man who established the business in the 1980s.

The team behind the MBO of helicopter operator Veritair and Cardiff Heliport from British International, headed by Captain Julian Verity, will aim to capitalise on a growing sector.

Veritair provides contractual helicopter and pilot services to customers such as QinetiQ for offshore missile retrieval at the Ministry of Defence base at Aberporth and digital calibration services to the BBC.

The deal also includes the acquisition of three helicopters and use of an additional helicopter from non executive director Professor Jeremy Stone.

The heliport, which is based two miles from Cardiff city centre, includes VIP lounges aimed at serving a growing helicopter and business community in South Wales. Until this year it was also the base for the South & East Wales Police Air Support Unit.

Geneva Aviation has received EASA approval for its Modular Equipment Rack for AS350/AS355 series helicopters.

The P142 Modular Equipment Rack mounts avionics in a convenient, uniform rack that includes 6.25” and 12” module widths. The entire rack weighs less than 12 lbs (including all hardware) and can hold up to 60 lbs of equipment. Its modularized design allows you to easily reconfigure the equipment sequencing and layout.

The P142 rack is mounted to spring isolators which reduce vibration and prevent damage to electronics. The Modular Equipment Rack mounts in the LH or RH side baggage compart-

ment and there are optional mounting boxes and trays available which are designed to easily mount your electronic devices. Geneva Aviation: Geneva Aviation Inc. is a wholly owned subsidiary of DART Helicopter Services LLC. For further information, please call +1 (800) 556 4166 or +1 (613) 632 3336

Lockheed Martin and Kaman Aerospace have demonstrated to the US Army and Marine Corps the feasibility of transporting supplies to ground troops by an unmanned helicopter. During 45 minutes of operation an unmanned K-MAX[®] helicopter demonstrated autonomous take-off and landing, pick-up and delivery of a 3,000-pound sling load, and the ability to autonomously re-plan and detour from its designated route to accommodate changes to mission requirements. The demonstration also illustrated the ability of a single ground operator to use both spoken and data commands to control the aircraft via data link, perform precision manoeuvres at the pick-up or drop zones, and easily transfer control to another ground operator for maximum interoperability.

US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will make it mandatory for travellers from the 27 countries in the Visa Waiver Programme (VWP) to submit biographic information online three days before they fly to America.

All nationals of the relevant countries – which include the UK - visiting for business or pleasure under the VWP will need to receive an electronic travel authorisation prior to boarding a US-bound aircraft, meaning they will need to complete an Electronic System for Travel Authorisation (ESTA) form online which asks for similar information to the current I-94W form completed by travellers in-flight – biographical data and details such as flight numbers and an address in the US.

ESTA applications can be submitted any time prior to travel – although it ‘recommends’ not less than 72hrs before - and once approved will be valid for up to two years if the individual’s passport does not expire in the meantime.

FLIR Systems Inc. and VISLINK Plc in association with BATTLESPACE Publications undertook Live Filming and transmission of the Off-Road driving Demonstration during annual mobility service expo DVD 2008. The event held annually at Millbrook, Bedfordshire, England. The event is a defence and emergency services get together typically attracting more than 3,000 visitors, all of them would-be purchasers and users of the latest mobility equipment, from radio technology and lighting all the way up to heavy construction plant and armoured transport.

Wireless cameras mounted on vehicles transmitted live video from the off-road driving course to the Concept Centre and the Off-Road Reception Area

The touch off-road driving scenario provided an excellent opportunity to put both manufacturers systems under extreme pressure. Both are designed for use in the harshest environments so this was a great opportunity to demonstrate their resilience.

New versions of that often maligned, Australian aircraft that has been out of production for almost a quarter of a century are scheduled to re-enter production in Australia ‘soon’ it is claimed. The new airframes are expected to appear in 2010.

Not happy to settle with the international success of their own Airvan, **Gippsland Aeronautics**, based at Morwell Airport, outbid several international companies last year to take over the type certificate from Boeing Australia Limited. The financial terms were not disclosed. Boeing acquired the type whilst taking over companies in Australia and has supported it since. The purchase of all the technical and spares sales support and all intellectual property for the Nomad aircraft worldwide will allow the resumption of the manufacture of the twin-engine, 17-seat Nomad. A market study convinced Gippsland that there was a potential market for some 170 new generation Nomads — the same number that were built until production stopped in 1984.

The new project launched officially last month is expected to create at least 150 new jobs and generate turnover of between \$200M and \$300M in the next few years.



The new version of the Nomad will be significantly upgraded and offer new Rolls-Royce 250-17F2 engines that will produce 12.5% more power than the previous Allison engines. This will provide greater operating capabilities for the short take-off and landing design, and better fuel efficiency. The new engines and a glass cockpit will require extra certification but the major parts of the airframe are well understood...

Of the 170 Nomads built, 95 served the military in Australia, Thailand, the Philippines, PNG and Indonesia, with the remaining 75 operated as civilian airliners, freighters and surveillance aircraft. About 56 Nomads are still in service.

Gippsland Aeronautics own design, the GA8 Airvan, is an eight-seat utility aircraft; it has already sold about 130 and they have been exported to 26 countries.

DART Aerospace Ltd. has received EASA approval for their GPS Gimbal Mount for the 204B/205A-1/205B/212/214B/214B1/412/ 412CF/ 412EP model aircraft. FAA and Transport Canada approvals have been previously received.

Weighing in at only 1.4lbs, this mount installs easily and can be used with the Garmin 150 XL/100 GPS or any similar receiver unit. The GPS Gimbal Mount receiver housing pivots and rotates so that the receiver can be custom positioned, and is easy to reposition if needed.

It is available in two different installations

Bottom-mounted installation off the glare shield which improves GPS receiver visibility.

Top-mounted installation off the windshield centre post.



Bell Helicopter has reported seeing an increased interest in their Huey II kits as operators around the world look to upgrade hundreds of their older UH-1 Huey helicopters around the world for extended life and improved performance.

The kits represent a major upgrade that involves roughly 9000 piece parts and 900 part numbers and include a new tail boom, rotors and modifications to the engine for enhanced performance.

Peli Products (UK) Ltd has announced the launch of a unique and innovative lighting range. The Advanced Area Lighting Group provides mobile/emergency lighting where mains power may not readily be available. This new division is a result of the recent acquisition of innovative lighting manufacturer, Blue i UK Ltd, by Pelican™ Products Inc. Through this acquisition, Pelican™ Products will be manufacturing in the UK for the first time.

Blue i UK is a leading designer and manufacturer of maintenance free, portable lighting with an enviable background of award winning products and services. Their expertise in LED, cordless, portable technology is an ideal addition to Peli's Advanced Area Lighting Group. With more products to follow soon, the 9430 and 9450 Remote Area Lighting Systems are the two debutants of the range.

The 9430 mobile lighting station is self contained, easily transported and offers a high intensity, 2000 lumen light output. The retractable mast extends to almost 1 metre in height and can be rotated 360°, the head also pivots to angle

The 9430 features a 12-volt Rechargeable battery, which provides up to 15 hours of light in economy mode and 8 hours in high output mode from one charge. The unit also has a low battery warning system, is lightweight, at less than 10kg and is ideal for military and emergency services operations.

Combining Peli's innovative lighting technology and the rugged dependability of Peli™ cases; the 9450 RALS is the first product to marry the two high quality product ranges.

The 9450 offers up to 17 hours of remote area light with no trailing wires to cause a further hazard. Featuring 16 x 1 watt LEDs, which produce 1280 lumens of clear, white light, the 9450 is housed in the tough 1510 Protector case.

The removable diffuser filter allows the 9450 RALS to give off enough light to cover an entire emergency scene and, if the filter is removed, the light becomes a high-powered spot beam. Additionally, the light can be directed accurately wherever it is required by positioning the adjustable bracket.

FLIR Systems has been awarded a \$23.1M order from the US Coast Guard for the Electro-Optical Sensor System (ESS). The units delivered under this order, variants of FLIR's TALON stabilised multi-sensor system, will be installed on HH-60 and HH-65 helicopters to enhance the Coast Guard's performance of its airborne use of force, interdiction, and SAR missions. Work will be performed in FLIR's facility located in North Billerica, MA.

This order relates to an earlier non-specific contract that made no mention of delivery dates or quantity. Initial units under this contract were delivered to the customer in 2007. [FSI]

Apical Industries has received EASA approval for their Emergency Float System for Eurocopter EC130B4 helicopters. FAA and Transport Canada approvals have been previously received.

The Apical Emergency Float System provides a lightweight and easy to install solution for EC130 operators who routinely or even occasionally fly over water, and want the added security of having emergency floats installed. In addition to the benefit of increased personal



safety in the event of an emergency water landing, the Apical kit has an option of including integrated 6-man life rafts with survival kits on each float. The externally mounted life rafts conserve valuable passenger space and improve safety.

The Apical Emergency Float System consists of two mirror image float bags. Both the float and life raft inflation valves are operated manually by separate pull handles and cables mounted in the cockpit. The mechanical inflation valves have no squibs or electrical requirements. Maintenance and overhaul requirements for the system are minimal, consisting of a 12 month inspection/leak test and a three year inspection and inflation test. The floats do not have an age limitation and are replaceable upon condition. The floats are not required to be returned to the factory for recertification; however an Apical recertification service is available upon request. Apical also offers an exchange program for floats and reservoirs.

Skyquest Aviation a leading designer and manufacturer of specialist equipment for airborne surveillance aircraft based in the UK has announced it has started deliveries of its new 20" widescreen HD video display technology for helicopter users.

Skyquest specifically designed their range of HD displays to match the new generation of HD FLIR and Video cameras coming from the worlds leading gyro stabilised camera manufacturers and have embedded various new features to maximise the use of the display in the aircraft.



Initial deliveries of the 20" display are being shipped to UK and European customers whilst the company expect start shipments to international customers by the end of 2008.

Operators all over the world now benefit from Skyquest airborne surveillance technology and the company supply to both aircraft manufacturers and aircraft integrators.

Skyquest has announced it has received a further 5 orders for complete VMS surveillance mission fits on 5 new UK Police helicopters with deliveries starting later

this year.

This brings the total number of UK police aircraft using Skyquest's integrated system to more than 20 helicopters plus a number of fixed wing aircraft and accounts for more than half of the whole UK law enforcement market.

Skyquest's VMS (video management system) integrates various role equipment into a central processor and distribution system which can then be accessed by any operator in the aircraft, regardless of how the aircraft is configured and delivering complete versatility to the end user.

With Skyquest not being the only user of the name in the international market place [there is for instance a North Carolina-based commercial aircraft remarketing company of the same name the UK Skyquest have now purchased the domain www.skyquest.com and also own www.skyquestaviation.com and www.skyquest.co.uk. Skyquest deal directly with the market in the USA and will be at Heli-Expo for the first time next year.

Ed: Although the company will not be drawn on the matter these deals relate to the forthcoming multi-aircraft purchase of identical Eurocopter EC135P2 airframes for the police of Central Counties, Cheshire, Chiltern, North Wales and Suffolk.

ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

31 May 2008 [updated information on last month] Mil Mi-17I. A Chinese military helicopter involved in relief operations to the earthquakes crashed in a remote area near the town of Yingxiu with around 20 persons, including 14 recently picked up survivors, on board. The crash site was found during June and all were confirmed to have died in the incident. [Media]

3 June 2008 TBM 700 N849MA. Air ambulance of Angel Flight Central, based in Kansas City, Missouri. A two-year-old girl was killed whilst travelling with her mother from their home in Georgia to Iowa City for treatment of the child's clubfoot. The aircraft took off in poor weather conditions from Iowa City Airport to return home, "turned sideways" shortly after takeoff and quickly descended, skimmed across a highway, hit a ditch, skidded about 100 yards, hit a light post that sheared off a wing, and came to rest in a parking lot. The mother and the pilot were injured in the crash. [FAA/media]

6 June 2008 Bell 430 N430Q. Air ambulance of AirMed, Utah operated by Air Methods. While transporting a patient to the University of Utah a laser was directed into the cabin of AirMed 18. It was intense enough to illuminate the entire cockpit. An approximate GPS location was identified near Bountiful, UT and given to local authorities and the FAA [Concern].

7 June 2008 Beechcraft BE-90 N405EM. Air ambulance of EagleMed Wichita, Kansas. During descent from enroute altitude electric trim stopped moving, manual trimming was applied and sparks were observed coming from under console. Electric trim was disabled and landing was made without the use of elevator trim. Post flight investigation revealed broken trim cable. [Concern]

8 June 2008 Bell 407 N416PH Air ambulance of PHI Medical Transport. Four people were killed when the air ambulance crashed in the Sam Houston National Forest in Walker County, Huntsville, Texas. The helicopter was en-route to the Texas Medical Center from a hospital in Huntsville when it crashed. Air Med 12 was located at Coulter Field in Bryan, Texas.

10 June 2008 Helicopter. Search & Rescue operation. A relief helicopter made a forced landing in China's quake-hit Sichuan province, injuring three people. An official with the Shifang Municipal Quake Relief and Rescue Headquarters said a mechanical malfunction caused the forced landing. The helicopter, carrying 13 quake relief workers and crew members, landed in an open field. [Xinhua].

20 June 2008 Eurocopter BK117B2 N955ME. Air ambulance of Air Life of Oregon based at Bend OR. Operated by Metro Aviation. While passing over mountainous terrain in Central Oregon, and experiencing turbulent weather conditions, the nose of the helicopter pitched suddenly and steeply upwards while on autopilot. The pilot was able to correct the condition by thrusting the stick forward and reducing power. A warning light appeared in response to the stress placed on the rotor assembly. A precautionary landing was undertaken. No damage has been identified but the matter remains under investigation. [Concern]

21 June 2008 Eurocopter AS350B2 N900NM. Air ambulance of CareFlight - North Mississippi Medical Center in Tupelo. Operated by Air Methods. The helicopter was pre-flighted in the half light of dawn for a scheduled patient pick-up. The pilot and crew member boarded leaving the paramedic outside to disconnect services. The Paramedic removed the APU and moved the cart off of the helipad and boarded the aircraft. After takeoff, ground personnel noticed a cord hanging from the aircraft; the pilot was notified and returned. It was found to be the shoreline extension cord (which was black in colour) had not been removed. No damage caused. Post incident action includes additional training as well as the addition of a warning flag to both the extension cord and APU. The pair is now also joined together. [Concern]

27 June 2008 Eurocopter AS350 N586AE . Air ambulance. Of Air Evac based at Prescott Arizona. The helicopter crashed in northern Arizona while landing to pick up a motorcycle accident victim. The Air Evac helicopter was responding to a motorcycle accident just

south of Ash Fork at about 4 a.m. Reports suggest that a Brown Out situation prevailed as they tried to land on soft ground and that the helicopter subsequently rolled several times. The airframe ended up on its side with most rotors and fins destroyed. Although fire was mentioned by the media the craft appears not to have extensive fire damage. All crew members were hurt, but none of the injuries were life-threatening. [Media]

29 June 2008 Bell 407 N407GA Air ambulance. Air Methods.

29 June 2008 Bell 407 N407MJ Air ambulance Classic Helicopters. As this edition closed for press it was learned that two medical helicopters collided and crashed into a wooded area near Flagstaff, Arizona. It is said that both helicopters were approaching to land on the same hospital helipad. There was a fire at the crash site. Six fatalities and one other injury were reported. At least one patient was among the fatalities. [AP]

PEOPLE

Schweizer Aircraft is pleased to announce that **David Oglesbee** has been named to the new position of Vice President of Customer Relations effective April 30th.

David will be responsible for all of the programs and functions that interface with our customers. This will include Sales and Marketing, Commercial Programs, Military Programs and Customer Support.

Paul Schweizer will assist David with the transition into the new position. Although Paul has decided to step away from his company leadership position, he will continue to work on a part-time basis with the Schweizer marketing department on the helicopter and surveillance aircraft programs. David Savage and Barbara Tweedt will continue working in their current positions in sales and marketing, reporting to David Oglesbee. Steve Gleason, the interim manager of customer support, will report to David Oglesbee until Rick McFalls returns to the department from his temporary assignment related to SAP implementation.

Prior to joining Schweizer, David owned his own consulting firm, Gauntlet Aviation, which provided management, sales, marketing, engineering and financial services to a variety of helicopter organizations. Prior to that, David was the Vice President in sales and marketing capacities at a number of companies including MD Helicopters and Bell Helicopter. David and his wife Patricia will be moving to the Elmira area and are looking forward to the challenges and opportunities associated with the growth at Schweizer Aircraft.

Please help welcome David to our team. He can be reached at oglesbee.david@sacusa.com or by telephone at +1 607-739-3821, extension 4226.

In an associated story the Pegasus Helicopter Group Plc, a specialist kit helicopter company, that has developed a safe, low-cost, two-seater helicopter based on pressure jet technology has announced the people behind the project.

The directors of Pegasus include Charles Vehlow, who has over 25 years experience with large helicopter engineering companies having held executive positions at both McDonnell Douglas Corp and the Boeing Helicopter Division. CEO Robert Zummo has extensive experience in the aerospace industry, having worked for Grumman Aerospace Corp and Avco Aerostructures among others. Todd Bailey, COO, is a mechanical engineer and designer who has also worked in the aerospace industry for over 15 years.

Of potentially greater interest are those that Pegasus lists as their advisory board and they include **David Oglesbee**, former Vice President of Sales and Marketing at MD Helicopters, Inc, and more recently [above] announced as joining Schweizer, and Andrew Logan who was a former Chief Technology Officer at MD Helicopters, Inc and Vice President and General Manager of both The Boeing Company and the McDonnell Douglas Corporation.

Libby Pearce, formerly Avionics Design Engineer at Eurocopter UK has joined Skyquest as Project Manager.

Following Pierre Fabre's appointment as Chairman and CEO, Turbomeca is bringing in changes to enhance customer focus in its organisation. This focus will be driven through the new organisation by a Vice President & General Manager, Airframers and a Vice President & General Manager, Operators.

The following appointments were effective as of 2 June 2008.

Philippe Couteaux is appointed Vice President & General Manager, Airframers.

Didier Desnoyer is appointed Vice President & General Manager, Operators.

Eric Dalbiès is appointed Vice President, Chairman's office.

Laurent Delange is appointed Vice President, Quality.

Philippe Larrauri is appointed Vice President, Assembly and Repair Operations.

Serge Maillé is appointed Vice President, Customer Support and Sales.

Pierre-Yves Morvan is appointed Vice President, Supply Chain, Purchasing and Information Systems.

EVENTS

General Police Equipment Exhibition [GPEC] Munich, Germany.

GPEC 2008, 3-5 June in the New Munich Trade Fair Centre. The organiser, Exhibition & Marketing Wehrstedt GmbH, moved GPEC® to this internationally important trade fair venue this year.

GPEC® is a closed specialised trade fair exclusively for members of authorities with accompanying congress and lecture programme for business with police equipment, security technology and services. Getting in as a journalist was not exactly a breeze. The German version of GPEC® takes place every two years and reaches politicians, executives, technicians, procurement officers, instructors and users on international, national and regional level.

Possibly best described as Germany's answer to the Paris [France] Milipol exhibition the bi-annual GPEC exhibition in Munich will reappear in Malaysia next year.

Like all such exhibitions it cannot be said to be all things to all men but it did bring together police and security experts from many nations. Primarily for those with their feet firmly on the ground – and very much with a 'shoot-em-up' theme going by the number of stands exhibiting guns, knives and body armour.

But in among all this officially sanctioned mayhem were to be found instances of exhibits and exhibitors with an airborne theme. There may be money to be made in selling digital downlinks to helicopter operators but those customers in the airborne sector of the industry with inflated ideas of their real worth to the industry at large can soon take on board that they are just a small part of a larger honey pot. Aircraft downlinks are a hard target for the industry to break into – especially in the UK where ECS has pretty much got the aircraft market sewn up – but there is more money to be made selling to the ground troops and their gear was in Munich for all to see. No sign of ECS at this show, but true competition between such as **Broadcast Microwave Services, Domo** and **Vislink** [MRC] on the floor for the far larger covert communications market. Nonetheless, none of these thwarted providers looks likely to cede the UK market to ECS forever! It is not an area of rich pickings but it does have kudos!



Suffering slightly from their mix of marketing names was the **Lojack Corporation**. Across the European Market they are either Lojack or Tracker or Traqueur or Detector and there is no clear definition of the name change. For the record its Lojack in Italy, Poland, Russia [and the USA and Americas], Traqueur in France, Tracker-detektor in Germany, Detector in Spain and Tracker in the UK but there are other world variations to add. I suppose what matters is that if the stolen machine is fitted with the tracing equipment one of the variations on the Lojack original will stand a chance of finding it.

The main airborne content was as ever the mini—UAV, a type which recent years have shown German manufacturers excel at developing and selling. GPEC hosted three principal manufacturers and threw up two new concepts. Prototypes.

Air Robot has a new prototype [right] craft that seeks to address a perceived confined space search problem. Although the high selling standard craft has a useful 'anti-collision' loop fitted as standard it was found that the standard 'average home' door width was significantly less than the span of the existing craft thus significantly reducing its IED search capabilities. The new version is narrower and served by double the engines and lift fans. An added bonus of this new design is that it is more tolerant of the engine out situation. Lose an engine in the standard three rotor version and the craft is unstable, with six there should be no need to abandon the mission.

The main 'new kid on the block' insofar as the micro UAV community was from **EMT** with their **Fancopter**. The new craft looked good and flew very well in a light breeze – its contra-rotating rotors clearly being well suited to the task. Stability is provided by three tiny supplementary rotors on the arms holding the legs. As an aid to operations in confined spaces and structural integrity the whole structure is surrounded by loops of protective spring wire.

I noted potential flaws in its construction. Unlike the two other now familiar mini-copters from Germany the Fancopter places its camera on top of the machine rather than below. This would suggest that either the camera has to look down through the blur of the rotor blades and spring wire loops or has always to fly offset to the 'target' area to get good quality images – thereby extending its range from target. Another potential flaw is that it has far too many parts. Although the whole thing packs away neatly into two tuff cases the pile of disconnected bits of the craft and the sheer number of spring wire loops was disconcerting. As we all know policemen across the world are a robust crowd and I wonder just how long it would take to reassemble the craft and just how many spare wires you would need to pack along in each case!



REIGL were in the hall with the only overtly aircraft related system. The Austrian company offers an airborne laser scanning system [S560] that are becoming familiar slung underneath on the Diamond DA42 surveillance twin.

On a lighter note for what was a very intense and serious venue and event I ran into a 'shop' offering goods that I can say I have never encountered before anywhere in the world. I am quite familiar with the offerings of retailers who have the latest in

heavy leather gear – pouches, wallets, holsters – all that you might want in knives, truncheons, guns, body armour, helmets and the like but never a so comprehensively equipped and pro-police outlet as the Police Fanshop. Across the USA and I love my police may well bring about the odd T shirt, golf cap, badges and other memorabilia but nothing like this. In the UK pewter and plastic policemen, imported plastic cars and helicopters may perhaps be found in handfuls. In Germany this is something that needs to be taken on board as unique. Go look at their website <http://polizei.feuerwehr-fanshop.de>

The next edition of the genre is **GPEC Asia 2009** and that will be held from June 24-26 at the Putra World Trade Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This will be the first GPEC to be held in the region.



AEROEXPO 13-15 June 2008

It is easy to dismiss a show like Aeroexpo held at Wycombe Air Park for the third year in a row, but it is increasingly obvious you should not. Yes it is 'just' a General Aviation show with lots of non-fliers sweeping through the halls simply lapping up the atmosphere rather than buying the aircraft but it is growing into a must attend venue for a whole range of the industry. It is primarily a meeting place, a chance to network, to meet people you might otherwise have missed.

The same can be said of the recent Aeroexpo offshoot in Prague, Czech Republic. That was expected by all [and that includes the organisers] to be a quiet little affair that might lead to something one day. And the naysayers were wrong, it started off far busier and bigger than was ever predicted.

So to this year's London event. An event with its own buzz, greatly enhanced by the presence of 'spotters' collecting their numbers and families soaking up the summer sun. In truth they spent their money here and there buying food and plane related things that may never get beyond being on a bookshelf. Their activity caused queues here and there, stifled boredom and made the core business thread financially viable.

Into this melee stepped two first footers who were tentatively testing out 'Paddy's Show' to see what it might bring – De Vore Aviation and FEC Heliports. There are of course many shows and for some far too many, so missing the occasional event seems to matter little. But from time to time even the most unlikely events bring forth good contacts that may have been missed if the event had been avoided.

A case in point [and there may have been others] affected the US based De Vore. They were persuaded at last year's Helitech to try out this year's Aeroexpo GA Show in Lon-





don. They had doubts but shared a booth with the UK representatives of the Ohio US based FEC Heliports to see how they fared.

Within a short time both had tales of success to report. De Vore had been trying in vain to market their glide scope equipment to a near neighbour company in the US but they never could get to the man at the top. That same elusive figure walked into their booth in the UK. He had been on a vacation in the UK, had heard about the show and took a break from his holiday to see what it was about. You could not make it up.

Similarly FEC's Fraser MacKay was able to report running into a man from very near his Buckinghamshire base that needed his services. Despite their geographical closeness neither knew of the other.

FEC are currently negotiating up to three HEMS helipads in the south of Ireland and working on similar hospital helipad projects in the UK. De Vore will be exhibiting their landing aids at next month's ALEA Exposition in Houston.

Paddy's Show will be back next year, just keep an eye out on www.expo.aero/london

FARNBOROUGH INTERNATIONAL 2008

In light of this year's unprecedented exhibition space and ticket sales, Farnborough International Limited (FIL) has taken the decision to make shuttle bus services between the three closest railway stations and the showground itself completely FREE. FIL is trying to encourage visitors to take advantage of the opportunity to leave their cars at home, and travel by public transport.

The service from the Main Station in Farnborough to the air show, FIA 2008, will run around every 10 minutes from 0730 hrs, through to the last departure from the show at 1915 hrs.

The service from North Camp Railway Station to FIA 2008 will run around every 20 minutes from 0730 hrs, through to the last departure from the show at 1915 hrs. *Disabled passengers are advised to travel via North Camp station.

The service from Aldershot Railway Station will similarly run around every 20 minutes from 0730 hrs, through to the last departure from the show at 1915 hrs.

ALEA HOUSTON JULY 16-19 2008

Coming up this month is one of the more important diary dates in the police aviation market, the Annual Conference & Exposition of the Airborne Law Enforcement Association.

Important or not The Editor has not been able due to a series of diary clashes to get to the ALEA event for some years and as a result juggling this year's diary has resulted in both missing Farnborough and ending up visiting Houston, Texas twice in a year. Houston was the venue for this year's Heli-Expo.

The Heli-Expo was pleasant weatherwise but this time it is going to be hot in Houston.

One of the exhibitors in Houston will be Geneva Aviation, a member of the DART Helicopter Services family of companies. They recently received one of a whole string of additional EASA approvals for its Supplemental Avionics Console for AS350 series helicopters.

The P123 Supplemental Avionics Console is mounted aft of the centre console between the pilot and co-pilot seats and is made of aluminium with a powder coat finish, making it extremely durable. Geneva's Supplemental Avionics Console provides the opportunity not only to increase avionics space by 10 inches, but is a convenient way to mount more radios and controls panels within easy reach of the pilot, co-pilot and rear seat occupants.

Geneva Aviation has also received FAA certification of an advanced version of its popular



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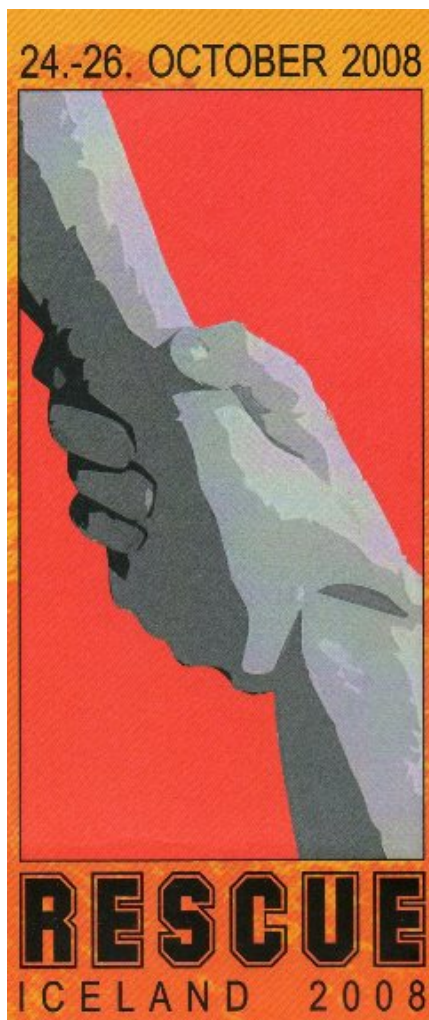
P132 Avionics Switch Console. The console significantly expands the space in AS350 series helicopters for installation of electronic components widely used by airborne law enforcement and electronic newsgathering helicopters.

The new console provides wiring compatibility with electrical system changes recently made by the manufacturer in the latest versions of AS350B2 and AS350B3 production helicopters. It also enables improved compatibility with previous modifications of the AS350B3.

Additionally, the new console includes a collective lock fitting that provides compliance with Eurocopter Service Bulletin SB 67.00.37.

The industry-unique console provides space for a 10-inch stack of avionic components conveniently in reach of the pilot and crew. It can be delivered in a standard configuration or customized for specific mission requirements as a ready to install product. Cannon plug connections make installation and component change functions quick and easy.

The switches and circuit breakers are MIL-STD, eliminating often-unreliable push button switches and fuses. The console provides enough room for up to 60 circuit breakers as well as switches for added equipment. Switch legends are LED backlit and easily configurable when components are replaced. Night vision goggle compatibility is available as an option. The unit has an independent dimmer for maximum crew comfort during night operations.



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