

Police Aviation News

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PAR



KAZAKH EMERCOM MIL's IN TRAINING

ANGOLA FLEET COMPLETE

*EC135 DELIVERIES IN AUSTRALIA
and MORROCCO*

UK POLICE ADJUST TO NPAS

US DELIVERIES AND DELETIONS

CHILDREN'S AA - NETS SPEAK OUT

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LAW ENFORCEMENT

ANGOLA

Eurocopter has delivered the tenth AS350B3 Ecureuil (Astar) helicopter to Angola's National Police Force's Helicopter Unit, strengthening its airborne law enforcement capabilities and at the same time, expanding its modern and versatile rotor wing fleet.

This latest delivery concludes the 2009 contract to supply a fleet of 10 AS350 B3s delivered between June 2009 and May 2011. The air support capability reinforces the long standing status of the Angola National Police Force as one of the best-equipped law enforcement agencies in Africa.

Angola, which is situated in South Western Africa is a minerals and oil-rich country with a population of around 18.5 million people.

Powered by its Turbomeca Arriel 2B1 engine, which generates greater power, the AS350 B3 can carry heavier and versatile payloads (including sling load capacity) and fly at a higher cruising speed in comparison with other similar size machines.

The AS350 B3s join the Helicopter Unit's growing and exclusively Eurocopter fleet, which currently includes six Dauphin AS365 N2 (with emergency medical service capabilities) and 15 AS350 B2/B3 used primarily for surveillance missions.

[EC]



Front Cover: *Mi-171 helicopters were involved in Kazspas 2011 manoeuvres of Kazakhstan rescue units earlier this year. The 16th international gathering of rescuers took place at As-tana City training range of EMERCOM of Republic of Kazakhstan.*

AUSTRALIA

NEW SOUTH WALES: The force has taken on strength its new EC135P2+ VH-PHM c/n 0914. Early in June the NSW Police Force Commissioner, Andrew Scipione APM, welcomed the latest addition to the Aviation Support Branch, and announced that it will be known as 'PolAir 4.'

The EC135 will include an option for Night Vision Goggles operations, and will be role equipped to allow winching and the carriage of a FLIR HD camera and Nightsun searchlight.

As only a handful of EC135 helicopters are operating in Australia specialised pilot training was conducted at the Eurocopter factory in Germany. This is ongoing for additional pilots and full operational capabilities for the EC135 are therefore being termed as in 'the next few months' after final training and certification of crew, equipment and aircraft are completed.

Close behind 'PolAir 4' is 'PolAir5' a replacement for the current BK117 helicopter assigned to anti-terrorism missions. Delivery will be later this year.

FRANCE

GENDARMERIE: Eurocopter is to deliver three additional EC135 helicopters to the French Gendarmerie, and will continue supporting this police force's current 12 EC135s through an extension of the company's existing contract.

This new acquisition agreement will allow the Gendarmerie to further expand its multi-role, twin-engine EC135 fleet, which is principally used for police and medical evacuation missions. [EC]

LUXEMBOURG

Aircraft operating on behalf of Luxembourg have flown 2,500 hours during anti-piracy operations as part of the European Union Naval Force's (EU Navfor's) Operation Atalanta.

The Luxembourg government funded CAE Aviation to fly two Fairchild SW 3A Merlin aircraft equipped with a comprehensive suite of sensors from Mahe in the Seychelles in support of the EU Naval Force. Since the first flight on September 29, 2009, 440 sorties have been flown in support of counter-piracy operations.

The main tasks of the aircraft are to perform monitoring to locate designated or suspected pirate vessels, mother ships and skiffs and to help build up a complete maritime picture.

As of June 13 pirate have hijacked 26 vessels out of 243 attempts this year. Somali pirates have been responsible for 21 of those successful hijackings and are currently holding 23 vessels and 439 hostages, according to the International Maritime Bureau. [EU Navfor/Defence Web]

MOROCCO

The Gendarmerie has started taking delivery of new role-equipped EC135 helicopters. Late last year two EC145's CN-BZE (9344) and CN-BZF (9369) were delivered and it is believed that [c/n 0986] the first of three EC135T2 due in service, it has already arrived in the initial batch of deliveries. [AFM/Helihub]

SEYCHELLES

L-3 Wescam has announced the receipt of an order from CAE Aviation for one MX™-15 electro-optical/infrared (EO/IR) imaging system. The long-range imaging system is being utilised by the Republic of Seychelles onboard a Twin Otter airborne platform in support of maritime surveillance, fisheries protection and anti-piracy missions.

The MX-15 imaging system is configured with a large format thermal imager, daylight spotter and zoom TV, and lowlight spotter TV. The system is also fully equipped with a wide-angle laser illuminator, which allows for long-range subject identification in total darkness. [L3W]

UNITED KINGDOM

NATIONAL: In an exclusive move Alex Marshall, the Chief Constable of Hampshire and the ACPO Air Support Lead has written an article outlining the thinking on NPAS for the general police news audience on the *Police Oracle* website. The original is a fairly lengthy piece that goes over ground previously aired in PAN so what follows is précis. The original may still be found on the Police Oracle website—www.policeoracle.com.

In the article he speaks of plans to maximise efficiencies and save money with the creation of the NPAS – and he acknowledges that the development is ongoing.

It is hoped that NPAS will ‘ensure the continued delivery of efficient and effective air support – and it is an innovative development.’

NPAS grew out of a 2009 review found that the 31 air support units were all operated independently of one another and were not benefiting from economies of scale in terms of maintenance, pilots or procurement. Their use was regularly restricted to operations within a particular force or consortium area.

Under NPAS all these restriction on the availability of service will be removed and a national despatch system added. Once sent out it would fall under local police control as is current. Having reserve aircraft available will allow the surviving assets to be replaced when off-line for scheduled maintenance.

Forces are expected to purchase flying hours, and these will be available for both planned and unplanned events managed locally. [Police Oracle]

Ed: There are various items in the article that can be queried, for instance the 2009 report's slanted statement that the units were not buying equipment together [seven identical EC135P2+ cannot lie] and that all the 31 units were operating independently. There were a number of consortia operating very efficiently at the time of the October 2010 launch and some of those were working with other groups to cover regions in the same way as it is suggested NPAS will work. The ones that spring to mind are Eastern, North West, Midlands and Yorkshire. Each worked together in varying degrees but it was an ongoing cooperative and progressive endeavour – and most of it stopped quite abruptly last October.

For example, under the day-to-day arrangement of the Eastern Consortium the Essex based office of PAN occasionally saw the Cambridgeshire Police MD902 operating in support of local policing here even though the base for the Explorer is 40 miles distant. That underlines cooperation – but the Explorer is scheduled to depart leaving Cambridgeshire with significantly less cover.

Where dispute could be raised is why the Explorer was ever here so far from home when the Lippitts Hill base of the Metropolitan Police is just 2 miles south. Before a policing 2000 boundary change Waltham Abbey was ably served by the crews of Lippitts Hill because it was part of the Metropolitan Police, but since then the residents can hear the helicopters start up on their pad in the early hours of the morning and then listen to the rotor beat receding as they head away towards central London. That is one inefficient use of resources that NPAS looks likely to resolve.

The point here though is that while there were many shining examples of doing it well there are questionable examples of aircraft and units not pulling their weight. Why are West Yorkshire and others ramping up in excess of 1,000 hours each year on an airframe and yet others [Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, Dorset, Sussex and Wiltshire for instance] are able to underuse a similar value asset for just 5-600 hours a year and often without ever leaving the home county.

The area of argument here is not whether the ideals of NPAS are wholly wrong, simply whether the NPAS surgery is simply too drastic and poorly directed. Keyhole surgery may well have been more efficient, evolution was apparently looking after the rest.



DORSET: The police are feeding material to their local press apparently getting the public used to a downgrading in capability in both aircraft and boats. The result is a storyline that seems to have missed the mark but prepared the press and local people for actually losing their aircraft to NPAS.

Dorset has already found administrative savings – including 104 voluntary redundancies among staff – but continues to look at significant cuts which ‘could’ include reviewing the future of the force helicopter and reviewing the future of the marine section, even though the county is gearing up to host the 2012 Olympic sailing. The police are facing budget cuts of 20% by 2014.

The storyline repeatedly states that Dorset Police ‘could’ axe its helicopter and instead sign up to a national police air service but falls short of stating that it is going to NPAS and they have little choice in the matter.

ESSEX: Chelmsford Museums Service is running an exhibition on the history of Boreham Airfield through into late August.

Henry Ford purchased Boreham House Estate in 1930 and established the Henry Ford Institute of Agricultural Engineering to teach British farm workers the use of farm tractors and innovations. The Second World War made this work vital as the site became a temporary training ground for the Women's Land Army.

In 1943 the ground was cleared for a new airfield. Thousands of Americans came to operate B26 Marauder Bombers to attack military targets in France and Belgium ready for the D Day landings. The airfield was also used to launch airborne landings at Arnhem and for the Rhine Crossing.

Peace-time brought a crisis in housing. All over the country, airfield Nissen Huts stood empty. A community grew up within the Boreham huts.

Rural peace was once more shattered when Boreham Airfield became a motor racing circuit. Runways were pounded by stars including Stirling Moss, Mike Hawthorn and John Surtees, cheered on by thousands of enthusiastic fans; however it came to an end in 1952.

Ford arrived in 1955 to use the site for vehicle testing with their motorsport team joining them in 1963. Innovation and development changed the fortunes of Ford and the history of rallying. In recent years, Essex Police air support moved into the wartime control tower, they were later joined by the Essex Air Ambulance although they have now moved on to a new base.

During the run of the exhibition a special event marking the Ford Escort RS2000 is expected to attract a major international audience to the centre of Chelmsford.

The museum is at Oaklands Park, Chelmsford CM2 9AQ. www.chelmsford.gov.uk/museum

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NORTH MIDLANDS: The North Midlands Helicopter Support Unit [a consortium of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Police] has joined Eastern Counties Police Maintenance organisation since its previous provider [McAlpine Helicopters/Eurocopter UK at Oxford] significantly raised its rates.

Established in April 2007 to provide aircraft engineering services to the Eastern Consortium (Essex, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk Forces) ECPM offers substantially reduced costs when compared to NPFA Framework prices for like-services supplied from industry.

In mid-March 2011, ECPM was approached by the North Midlands ASU to provide aircraft maintenance services for one year to their EC135 T2 aircraft. The approach was approved by the Nottinghamshire Police Authority in April and ECPM have obtained the necessary approvals from the CAA.

For ten years North Midlands have had their aircraft maintained by McAlpine Helicopters – now Eurocopter UK – and were told of a ‘reduction in the service provided and a significant increase in costs’ at the end of the £88,000/850hours Framework contract [31/3]. Alternative commercial sources were tried but the price/service structure was similar and in the range of £120,000 to £144,000. Faced with these steeper costs the far cheaper [under £100,000] ECPM route was investigated and found to offer significant reductions in cost to all of those involved.

The agreement [not a contract] with the North Midlands ASU gives them a lesser service at lower cost than is currently provided to existing Consortium members, which for them represents ‘an acceptable position.’ There is provision to employ an engineer at the base in Ripley.

Meanwhile the police in Cambridgeshire have announced that they intend to withdraw their MD902 Explorer aircraft from service and seek to obtain their 600 hours of air support from Chiltern in the West and Essex in the East. It is not certain whether this is intended to take place before April 2012, the original date of the aircraft being withdrawn, but the newly announced policy is in line with the NPAS project. [Pprune/Essex Police/Notts Police]



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SOUTH EAST: The aircraft assigned to the current South East grouping - the EC135T2 G-SURY and the MD902 G-SUSX are now registered to "South East ASU" on the CAA register. To date no other region has apparently formalised their fleet ownership in this way. The only link to add to this though is why spend the money if one of the aircraft is to be removed under NPAS and also how does this stack up against a paper issued by Sussex Police last year that states that the definitive South East is to include Chiltern Consortium.

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: Reports from the USA state that the County of Los Angeles has approved the acquisition of a new large rescue helicopter by the L.A. County Sheriff's Department Aero Bureau of three previously owned Eurocopter AS332 L1 Super Puma helicopters. These will replace the aging ex-United States Navy Sikorsky H-3 Sea Kings currently operated by the department.

The three H-3s are becoming more expensive and spares difficult to obtain, the replacement Eurocopter's will undertake the same role and bring improvements in capability.

The AS332 L1s will increase the safety and capabilities of Air Rescue 5 and will have external hoists, nose-mounted forward-looking infrared cameras, and night-vision compatible cockpits to meet the primary SAR task. [Vertical/PAR]

Ed: The three, as yet unidentified, pre-owned AS332 helicopters are to replace the small fleet of DoD surplus SH-3H Sea King helicopters acquired in the late 1990's from desert storage. The vintage airframes have served the county for a dozen years now and aside from the running costs face the expiry of their current certification at the end of 2013.

Early in November 1997 Lt. Di Giovanna and a delegation of others from the LACS travelled to Davis Monthan Air Force Base in Arizona and took possession of four Sikorsky SH-3H Sea King helicopters from the US Navy. The surplus quartet were towed to a maintenance facility adjoining the base and the first of them N240HJ/N8139T c/n 152139 was serviced



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and made flyable for a ferry flight to the Long Beach, CA for immediate use, the remaining three Sea King's were removed by road to undergo refurbishment and spares retrieval. In February 1998 they took delivery of the minimum standard machine with military mission equipment removed intended for crew and mechanic training the in-service airframes were in place by the end of 1999 and the earlier Sikorsky S-58T's withdrawn.

American Eurocopter announced that it has delivered the 12th and final AS350 B2 to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. This completes the order signed in August 2010 as part of an upgrade program for the department's Aero Bureau fleet. The airframe still has to undergo a role conversion completion.

The final delivery was celebrated with an event at American Eurocopter's Delivery Center in Grand Prairie. Captain Louis Duran and other members of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Aero Bureau participated.

This delivery marks the 194th AStar helicopter in the U.S. airborne law enforcement force.



In photo (Left to Right) Mark Cohen, LASD Surveillance Operations, John Byus, American Eurocopter Regional Marketing Manager; Chuck Gonzalez, LASD Tactical Flight Deputy; Dale Ryken, LASD Pilot / Operations Deputy; Dennis Thompson, LASD Aero Bureau Director of Maintenance; Louis Duran, LASD Aero Bureau Captain; Marc Paganini, American Eurocopter President and CEO; Anthony DiNota, American Eurocopter Vice President, Commercial Sales, Marketing and Customer Support; Casey Downing, LASD Aero Bureau Operations Sergeant & Pilot; Ed Van Winkle, American Eurocopter Law Enforcement Market Manager

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Costa Mesa residents will still have a police helicopter overhead after July 1, thanks to a deal with neighbouring Huntington Beach. The City Council have contracted with the Huntington Beach Police Department so that Surf City's helicopter can respond to Costa Mesa calls for \$700 an hour for the rest of 2011 – subject to a maximum of \$150,000.

ABLE's helicopters were costing about \$1,800 an hour to operate. Aid from Huntington Beach gives ABLE commanders more time to find a permanent solution. The city is exploring partnerships with the private sector to provide air coverage.

The presumption is the city will use the helicopter on an as-needed basis. Newport Beach is pursuing its own partnership with Huntington Beach as well.

Costa Mesa can start to sell ABLE equipment July 1, the day after the program ends, but can't officially execute the sale until October, it is thought that the city likely wouldn't offload the equipment until next spring.

From time to time a story hits the newspapers purporting to show that air support can cost nothing whereas we know there are many collapsing every month just because they most certainly do not cost nothing or anything close to it. I well recall writing an article a few years ago for JAES that stated categorically that it was possible to operate an Alabama State Police Bell OH-58 for just \$10 an hour! The next story is in the same vein.

In the midst of budget deficits the Merced County Sheriff's Department's aviation fleet has been proven to cost the local taxpayer nothing. The real cost for the helicopters and planes in fiscal year 2009-10 was \$49,921.72, sheriff's department records state. Fiscal year 2010-11 totalled \$112,300.83 but all the expenses were offset by various grants and federal funding – so there was a cost but someone else is paying it [which is not quite the same]. The various avenues of funding support include surveillance, search- warrant cover and searches. From fiscal year 2009-10 to fiscal year 2010-11, the two planes and two helicopters that make up the aviation unit have been used 219 times, according to flight logs from the sheriff's department. That is 110 times a year or twice a week. The individual airframes are so little used that there is a system in place to ensure each airframe is 'run' once each fortnight to keep the engine components from drying up.

The article left it right to the end to let a little light onto the real cost of air support in Merced when it stated '...funding the sheriff's department gets for its aviation unit can't be used for personnel...' [or I suspect buildings, or rental etc] [Sun-Star/PAR]

FLORIDA: The Bay County Sheriff's Office nearly made a move from its old hangar to a new one unnoticed. Unfortunately in moving the unit from its original base at the old Panama City airport and transporting it to the agency's new launch pad at the Emergency Operations Center in Southport they left one of their aircraft, Air 1, a Bell OH58, without its ground support equipment. It was all about some piece of paper that stopped the full move taking place and left the operational Bell at the old base days beyond the move.

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In attempting to take off from within its hangar at the old base the Bell was severely damaged after it hit something and crashed, turning over.

No one was hurt in the incident but it looks as if there are plenty of embarrassed red faces in Bay County.

Lt. Larry Kennedy, who has 5,000 hours flight time, had taken the helicopter about three feet off the ground and was flying forward, out of a large hangar, when the incident happened. Various ideas are being put forward including the possibility that the downdraught dislodged part of the front of the building or that the MRB hit the building as it cleared through the front.

The sled used to tow the helicopter out of the hangar had already been transported to the new launch pad along with Air 2 but it is unclear whether the jockey wheels were available but unused. The manoeuvre had been undertaken before without incident.

The Sheriff's Office still has one other working helicopter, Air 2, adding but officials have not yet made the decision on whether or not to replace Air 1. It cost \$250 when they obtained it in 1995 and because its hull was not insured it looks as if the 'incident' will leave them down by half their fleet – permanently.



NEW JERSEY: The use of police aircraft as personal transport for political figures has hit the headlines again in the USA. Chris Christie—widely mentioned as a potential Republican candidate for president—was heavily criticised for taking a state helicopter to his son's high school baseball game and initially refusing to reimburse the state for the costs.

Christie, his wife, Mary Pat, and an aide arrived by helicopter just before the game between Delbarton High School and St. Joseph's of Montvale began in Montvale. The couple stepped off the aircraft and into a trooper-driven car that drove them just 100 yards to watch the game while flanked by state troopers. The Christies left during the fifth inning, and play was stopped briefly while the helicopter took off.

Well known for his budget-cutting Gov. Chris Christie was swiftly portrayed as a hypocrite, given his tough talk about runaway spending by others.

The police joined the fray and were defending their passenger but soon found that this was a horse they should not have backed. State Police Superintendent Rick Fuentes went so far as to claim that giving Christie a lift did not cost taxpayers anything extra because the pilots need to put in flying time anyway to keep their skills sharp.

According to the police, Christie has been aboard state police helicopters 35 times since taking office a year and a half ago, including quite acceptable flyovers to survey flood and storm damage. They did not clarify which of the trips was personal or political or whether the governor has ever reimbursed the state.

This bit of police support was quickly dismissed when, although there may well have been nothing illegal about someone in his position taking a State helicopter ride, it soon became clear to Christie that it was time to dig his hand deep into his pocket and pay in excess of



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\$2,000 for the trip. It seems that no-one questioned the 100 yard cruiser trip.

The use of aircraft at state expense has caused problems for other State Governors around the United States.

Last year, former South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford reimbursed the state \$8,795 for personal use of state planes. Former acting Massachusetts Gov. Jane Swift was criticized in 1999, when she was lieutenant governor, for taking a state police helicopter home to the Berkshires for Thanksgiving. And former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin repaid about \$8,000 for nine state trips she took with her children.



NEW MEXICO: Bernalillo County Sheriff Dan Houston said the department will sell its 2008 AS350B3 N911ZZ helicopter because it's too expensive.

The \$3M AStar was purchased during former Sheriff Darren White's time in office and is seen at ALEA 2008 in Houston above. Sheriff Houston said the department can do without it, and has plans for buying cars and a less expensive helicopter with the proceeds from its sale.

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TEXAS: As predicted, in the wake of the recent Super Bowl held in the city the police in Dallas, Texas put their Bell 407 up for sale by auction last month and it sold for a little under \$1.5M.

The 2007 Bell Helicopter Model 407 single engine, seven seat helicopter is currently role equipped but sold assuming it will be returned to standard civil configuration. The serial number 53748, tail number N2592T. Total engine time to date is 1928 flight hours, with an overhaul at 2,000 hours of flight operations or 66 starts (engine cycles) whichever comes first. The aircraft will include the Chelton flight display system, KY-196 navigation radio and Garmin transponder but much of the law enforcement role equipment will be removed – including: DS650 camera and mount, Spectrolab SX16 Nightsun, Garmin 530 navigation radio, Technisonic TDFM 7000 police radio, Avalex mapping system and displays, LoJack and an Electronic Tracking System.

On auction ran from June 7-28 and the winning bid was \$1,467,500.

VIRGINIA: Fairfax County lying immediately west of Washington DC in northern Virginia, an urban area covering some 400 sq miles, home to more than a million people is purchasing a Bell 429 helicopter.

Fairfax County has selected the Becker Avionics' DVCS6100 Digital Audio System for integration into their new Bell, undergoing completion at Paradigm Aerospace Corporation (PAC) in Mt. Pleasant, PA. It is expected to go into service by the end of summer.

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The Fairfax County Police Helicopter Division was initially launched in 1972, but has had a full-time aviation unit since 1982. The unit has been flying two Bell 407's for more than ten years utilising six pilots (two sworn officers and four civilian), 10 flight officers who serve as EMTs and operate the helicopter's thermal cameras, a mechanic and unit Commander, Lt. Andy Hill. Their unit flies between one and two regular patrols daily and sometimes gets called for medevac missions several times a day. In 2010, the unit airlifted 92 patients to local hospitals. In 2010, the unit flew a total of 1,204 missions. Medevac operations run at around 10% of their total unit missions.

Ed: Bell Helicopter state that they will be issuing a full press release on this sale as soon as the airframe is completed and delivered.

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AUSTRALIA

VICTORIA: A new fleet of four Beech King Air 200 ambulance aircraft is entering service in the State of Victoria. The four new air ambulances feature the ability to carry extremely sick babies and heavier patients than previously.

The first of the new fleet was launched at Essendon Airport Ambulance Victoria and Victoria Police Aviation Facility last month by Minister for Health David Davis.

"The four new King Air B-200s replace the existing fleet of 16-year-old aircraft and will provide transport for urgent and non-urgent patients," Mr Davis said.

"The new planes will commence from July 1 and are custom designed with a modern fit out to maximise patient safety and care.

"This will assist paramedics and doctors in the treatment of patients in flights across Victoria, Tasmania and southern New South Wales."

Air Ambulance Victoria fixed wing aircraft transported 4,383 patients in 2009/10, with most trips from regional Victoria to Melbourne.

The revised interior layout of the new fleet mean the aircraft can now transport two neonatal emergency cots used for the sickest babies and an upgraded stretcher system, which allows the carriage of patients weighing up to 240 kilograms, 50 per cent more than the previous set up.

Pel-Air, a subsidiary of Regional Express Holdings will provide the new aircraft along with pilots and aircraft maintenance. Pel Air controversially replaced a long standing service provided by the Royal Flying Doctor Service. [AV]

Since April this year people seriously injured in car accidents have been given a greater chance of survival with a world first programme in place that now sees blood administered by MICA Flight Paramedics on Victoria's ambulance helicopters.

Installation of specially designed blood 'shippers' occurred first on the two Melbourne based helicopters, as well as a blood refrigerator at the base was made possible by a \$55,000 donation from VicForests.

Victoria believe that it will be the first time in the world helicopter paramedics will have their own supply of blood to administer to patients. Until now, blood products from local hospitals were sometimes brought to the scene of serious accidents.

Paramedics routinely provide fluid through a drip to help stabilise injured patients, but the most effective way of treating significant blood loss is with a blood transfusion.

The blood has a shelf-life of 42 days but will be changed every fortnight to ensure that the freshest supplies are available to intensive care flight paramedics highly trained in the handling and administration of blood to critically ill patients.

The decision to have Ambulance Victoria helicopters carry blood products fulfils a 2010 coroner's recommendation that Ambulance Victoria and the State Government implement a system to be able to provide blood services anywhere in the state, after the death of a woman from an ectopic pregnancy.

Blood fridges have been progressively installed in Ambulance Victoria's helicopters based in south-west Victoria, Bendigo and the La Trobe Valley. [AV]



Victoria

SWITZERLAND

REGA: the Swiss Air Ambulance operator, has broken ground on a new base for Ticino, the southernmost canton in the mountainous land-locked country. Located at Locarno airport, the new facility is expected to be operational in June 2012.

EMS cover began in Ticino in 1980 with a small hangar, an Alouette III and two pilots. The new building will not only meet their current requirements, but also ensure they are safe from the flooding risk. From a construction point of view, it will be a modular design

TURKEY

The fleet of eight AW109 Power light twin helicopters of Koçoğlu Aviation Inc. of Turkey has achieved the milestone of 10,000 flight hours in just two years. The eight AW109 Powers, operated by Sky Line Transportation Trade Inc., a Koçoğlu Group company, have been successfully operating across Turkey in demanding hot and high conditions, achieving an exceptional 97% dispatch availability rate. Within this 10,000 hour total over 3800 EMS missions have been performed. Three Izmir based AW109 Power's pilots, out of the total of 73 pilots employed by Skyline Aviation, have now logged more than 1200 flying hours each on the AW109 Power.

The AW109 Power helicopters perform EMS missions for the Turkish Ministry of Health from bases throughout Turkey. Koçoğlu Aviation was awarded a contract by the Turkish Ministry of Health to provide EMS helicopters as well as doctors and paramedics, for a sun-up / sun-down service, following a tender process in 2008. The Ministry of Health contract



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established the first EMS helicopter service in Turkey to serve a large part of the community utilising bases in 16 cities. The AW109 Power was selected following a rigorous and comprehensive evaluation process for the supply of a new EMS helicopter.

UNITED KINGDOM

DEVON: Turbomeca are losing out again. Despite already owning and operating having a Turbomeca powered EC135 Devon Air Ambulance join the others in a growing trend and go for Pratt & Whitney engines.

The Devon Air Ambulance Trust [DAAT], which funds the EMS coverage in the county of Devon, was one of the earliest to take to the air in the UK and has been one of the most successful too. They operate two EC135s, a 2003-build EC135T2 leased from Bond Air Services Limited [BASL] and a newer EC135T2+ which the charity bought themselves for operations from September 2008.

The change in engines reflects what has happened in the police market – the early years of the EC135 in the UK were all Turbomeca aircraft but since 2007 new EC135 airframes have been PWC powered. To date BASL have remained true to the Turbomeca brand across their large fleet and as a company they continue to drive much of the direction in the EC135 for Eurocopter except in the field on engines.

It was HeliHub that learned that the new DAAT airframe due for delivery in July 2013, and set to replace the leased aircraft, will be PWC powered and they have also extracted figures from DAAT that suggest why they are buying rather than leasing. DAAT have been able to directly compare the costs of their one owned and one leased helicopter and found that they have saved £12,000 per month on the owned machine over leasing. The charity is currently £289,000 short of what they require for the new purchase but are confident of reaching the funding required. [HeliHub]

Ed: The gap between owning and leasing – the suppliers costs, profit and depreciation allowances – was bound to be there. The assessment that needs to be made is whether the overall additional costs of operation when owning stack up. Operations including Great North, Yorkshire and Devon have multiple aircraft fleets and their financial balancing act suggests that having 'spare' aircraft allows them to avoid lease payments for filling in when the aircraft are unavailable for maintenance [about a month each year]. For that though the operation has to be able to continue a viable service with the aircraft extracted. Many leases place the onus on the airframe supplier to find a spare aircraft, and that is just a small part of the BASL £12,000 a month margin. Ten years down the road the airframes will need replacing and the existing fleet will only be worth say 10% of its original value. As a broad rule operating a single airframe militates against buying but even some multiple operators – Midlands AA & Wales AA each with three leased BASL airframes - continue with the leasing model.

Some air ambulance charities, currently the majority, stand back from coal face operations leaving the supplier to meet all operational needs – the charity simply raises the money. Others, Devon included, take the bull by the horns and partake in operating the complete service. [HeliHub/PAR]

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GREAT WESTERN: Even as the operation heard that its Filton base is to close the Great Western Air Ambulance (GWAA) took delivery of a brand new £50,000 helipad, paid for and built by building firm Benson Bros.

The helipad will enable the air ambulance to take off more quickly when called to attend one of its 130 call-outs a month. Previously the helicopter had to take off from the airfield's taxi way, which could delay the crew if there was already a plane landing or taking off.

GWAA has been in service for three years offering a daytime-only service covering Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, the Cities of Bristol and Bath and parts of North Somerset.

John Christensen, chief executive for the charity said the helipad was just the beginning of a number of changes planned for the service, which include a new helicopter and potentially a new home, because of the closure of Filton airfield next year.

SCOTLAND: The air ambulance contract for the Scottish Region is up for renewal. In order to inform the procurement of air ambulances for 2013 – 2020, the Scottish Ambulance Service has been engaging with patients, clinicians and other partners to identify whatever the new system will require.

The current programme utilises Eurocopter EC135T2 helicopters from Bond Air Services Limited [BASL] and Beech King Air fixed wing assets from Gama. Two additional bidders are vying for the new contract. They are a wholly Scottish team of PDG Helicopters who are teamed up with local airline Loganair – the latter used to fly the service before BASL moved in. The third contender is Medical Aviation Services with CEGA.

Medical Aviation Services (MAS), part of the Staverton based Specialist Aviation Services Group and Hurn, Bournemouth CEGA Air Ambulance announced the signing of a teaming agreement between the two companies at the AirMed 2011 World Congress in Brighton in May.

The Specialist Aviation Services Group, operates and maintains approximately twenty MD902 helicopters used in the Air Ambulance role, in the UK and internationally on behalf of its air ambulance customers.

CEGA Air Ambulance, part of the CEGA Group, based in Bournemouth operates King Air air ambulances undertaking repatriation work across Europe.

The agreement will enable MAS and CEGA to support each others' sales and marketing activities as well as to take advantage of opportunities to deliver joint operations where there may be a requirement for combined fixed and rotary wing air ambulance work.

As Henk Schaecken, MAS MD explains "Our two companies have been in discussion for quite some time regarding our complimentary capabilities and we have been enjoying working closely together on this project."

For more information visit www.medical-aviation.com and www.cega-air-ambulance.com

Meanwhile the long term base for BASL – and formerly Clyde Helicopters – is to close and relocate in 1-2 years.

The Glasgow City Heliport is a small helicopter operating base operated by Bond Helicopters. It is situated in the grounds of the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre (SECC) which in turn is less than a mile to the centre of the city.

A new site has been identified just up the river Clyde from the current heliport, close to the Clyde Tunnel and on the south side of the river. Last December a planning application was submitted by the SECC for the formation of a new Glasgow heliport intended to serve the City's emergency services including Scottish Air Ambulance Service, Strathclyde Police, Strathclyde Fire & Rescue and the Northern Lighthouse Board; with occasional business



flights. The application covers the erection of associated buildings and hard standing, lighting, fuel storage, rescue boat hoist, fencing and access roadways.

The existing site will be used for housing but is also being compromised by road access works being planned by the harbour authorities.

The application site comprises 1.66 ha of vacant industrial land situated on the Clyde Waterfront between Linthouse Road and Holmfauld Road in Govan; part of larger industrial site which extends south to Govan Road; formerly part of the Linthouse shipbuilding and engineering works. The conjoined sites are owned by Thales Optronics Ltd (formerly Barr & Stroud) who occupy the modern factory premises situated to the west of Linthouse Road.

The site at SECC site at Stobcross Road dates back from the mid-1980s and by the end of the decade Clyde Helicopters, later taken over by Bond, were operating police and air ambulance helicopter operations from there. The prime aircraft was a BO105 but they also operated Bell JetRanger and LongRanger singles.

In 1993 a contract was awarded to Bond Helicopters to provide air ambulance cover for the Scottish Ambulance Service using two Bo 105Ds, one based at Inverness (Raigmore Hospital) and the other at Prestwick Airport. The second helicopter later moved from Prestwick to the heliport in Glasgow.



UNITED STATES

FLORIDA: Lee County Emergency Medical Services (LCEMS) implemented a “stand down” of its MEDSTAR flight operations for a safety review on June 22. They will resume operations on August 1 using a recently acquired Bell 430 helicopter.

Bayflite has agreed to relocate one of its helicopters to Fort Myers to provide air support during the safety stand down.

Lee County MEDSTAR is the critical care transport service, air and ground, which operates within the division of Lee County Public Safety-Emergency Medical Service (LCEMS).

Lee County is bordered by 75 islands in the Gulf of Mexico with only four of the islands having bridge access to the mainland. Due to this unique geographic layout and other geographic challenges, Lee County established an air ambulance program in 1978. In May of 2004, Lee County received the Eurocopter EC145; the aircraft was lost in a crash in August 2009.

The EC 145 helicopter, crashed into the Gulf of Mexico while responding to an incident on

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Upper Captiva Island. Fortunately, the three crew members survived, but the helicopter was a total loss. In LCEMS' efforts to restore flight operations back to a pre-crash level, it was determined that a safety stand down would be the most effective way to review the operation. Personnel, operations and administrative recordkeeping will be assessed.

The safety stand down is a common practice in the airline industry, providing the opportunity for a flight program to review all aspects of its operations. Any areas for improvement will be identified and acted upon accordingly. Expert consultants in the air medical industry will be on site to assist with safety training and perform safety audits. In addition, crews will be interviewed and provided with additional counselling for any lingering post-crash issues. During this time, flight staff, operations staff, communications staff and administration will gather to conduct focused quality and safety reviews.

The 2002 Bell 430 helicopter will provide MEDSTAR with the opportunity to resume its Part 135 instrument flight rules operation that was suspended when the back-up helicopter went into operation after the crash. All of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) post-crash recommendations were incorporated in the aircraft upgrade of the Bell 430.

MICHIGAN: The University of Michigan's Health System, American Eurocopter and Metro Aviation are all very excited to announce that the first EC155 in U of M's order of three has shipped to Metro Aviation for completion. We just announced this at the Paris Air Show and I wanted to make sure that you had a chance to look at the release. When it is completed, this aircraft will be the first EMS-configured EC155 in the United States. I have included the text of the announcement below. I have also attached a 3D artist rendering of the final paint scheme, so you can get an idea for how the aircraft will look when it is completed.



TENNESSEE: Air conditioning in air ambulances has become a talking point in the state. It's accepted procedure in Tennessee for helicopters without air conditioning to fly critically ill patients to hospitals, even though ground ambulances are required to have the cooling systems. This year the state of Alabama implemented rules that do not require air conditioning.

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Air Evac one of the local air ambulance provider has been resisting efforts to mandate the use of air conditioning on helicopters before a state Board of Health committee in the face of opposition from another provider Vanderbilt LifeFlight. Most of the air ambulance services licensed in Tennessee do have air conditioning on their fleets and Vanderbilt is promoting the requirement.

Robert Byrd of Air Evac told the committee that making the fitting of air conditioning mandatory would stop the company from doing business in Tennessee. Air Evac specialises in serving rural areas with sixteen ambulances of which only a handful have air conditioning fitted. To retrofit air-conditioning could cost between \$25,000 and \$400,000 depending upon the helicopter model.

Part of the problem is said to revolve around difficulties Air-Evac is having with getting FAA approval to add air conditioning to Bell 206 helicopters reconfigured as air ambulances.

The Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems have a set of guidelines that effectively accepts cabin temperatures of 95°F but does require the operator to show how they are going to mitigate the risks to the patients but many others are insisting that the patients are likely to suffer if getting overheated and you cannot fly a helicopter high enough to effect a substantial drop in temperature within the cabin. The U.S. Department of Transportation state that Tennessee has the authority to implement cabin temperature requirements as long as the rules are based on patient-care needs. [The Tennessean]

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WESCAM's MX-10 is a small ball that is visually as powerful as its predecessors – the MX-20 and MX-15. With 6 sensor options, and weighing in at under 37 pounds, this turret would be your best investment to date. For more information visit wescam.com or call 1-888 668 4355

FIRE

FRANCE

Perpignan-based service Departmental d'incendie et de securite [Departmental Fire and Rescue in Pyrenees-Orientales] or SDIS 66 has acquired a turbo-charged GippsAero Airvan for surveillance missions associated with fire fighting and prevention in the region. The aircraft commenced operations last month after local role equipment modification.

UNITED KINGDOM

AVON: Firefighters took to the air early last month as part of a trial to find out whether a helicopter could be used by Avon Fire & Rescue Service (AF&RS) to respond to certain emergencies in the future.

From Monday 6 June AF&RS trialled the Eurocopter EC145 D-HTCL at a series of simulated rescue incidents in the area. The five day trial used a helicopter which, along with a crew and fuel, was being provided free of charge by Eurocopter for the two missions a day operated. The EC145 arrived the previous week and operated Monday to Friday as "Redfox 01."

In addition to the 4,000 fires attended by crews last year, firefighters were also called to 2,500 rescue type incidents. And it is at this type of emergency that officers think a helicopter could have a cost effective and life saving impact.

A crew of four AF&RS firefighters and rescue equipment were flown to the scene of ten simulated emergencies across the Avon area. These included road traffic collisions, water rescues, building collapses and fallen climbers. Once on scene the firefighters will be able to use specialist equipment to begin a rescue or render first aid.

In December 2009, Chief Fire Officer Kevin Pearson put in a request to the Fire Authority for a "feasibility study to consider how air support could be used to enhance operational capabilities as well as contributing to efficiency savings", and recommended that "the Chief Fire Officer to undertake a feasibility study on Air Support for Avon Fire & Rescue Service, and to report back on the findings in 2010"

Following the acceptance of this feasibility study, AF&RS moved on to securing an actual demonstration with a helicopter. No other fire service in the UK currently operates a helicopter, although London, Strathclyde, Sussex and Wales are known to have had sponsored demonstrations in the past. The majority of these were 15 years ago and under the sponsorship of McAlpine Helicopters – then at Hayes, West London – now Eurocopter UK.



AF&RS are facing a backlash at even considering a helicopter, with loud concerns being raised by both the public and the Fire Brigades Union centring on the cost of operating a helicopter at a time when salaries are being held and redundancies being made. Mr Pearson is adamant that the benefits of a helicopter would outweigh the costs but as the previous trials have ably demonstrated the pressure by the unions is very strong and so far unmoved.

Local media sources suggest that he needs to find cost savings of £2.6M as well as fund any helicopters. He attempted to diffuse this three months ago by voluntarily cutting his own salary by 22%. [AF&RS/Helihub]

Ed: Even within the industry questions have been asked as to why yet another trial was undertaken as it is unlikely to throw up a great deal that is new over the trials of 15 years ago. So far there has been little evidence that any of the number of UK fire services hankering to get a helicopter [South Wales and Essex have been other areas where recent interest has been expressed] have been in a position to put up their own money for trials or operations. Without the continued largesse of Eurocopter over the last two decades I suspect nothing would happen at all.

UNITED STATES

ARIZONA: It may not have any glowing press reports the last time it was out but it seems the people that matter still have a belief in the DC-10 based large air tanker aircraft for water bombing fires. Even the larger Boeing 747 based water bomber owned by Evergreen was in use again recently in the Mediterranean region last month.

Tanker 911, the only DC-10 Very Large Airtanker currently in the USA was deployed from Victorville, California to assist in fighting a raging wildland fire in Arizona. The request was made by the United States Forest Service.

The Forest Service is accessing the DC-10 through a 'call when needed' contract CAL FIRE has with 10 Tanker, the company that operates the only two DC-10 Very Large Airtankers in the world. During peak fire season, CAL FIRE has an exclusive use contract with 10 Tanker to enhance its aerial firefighting fleet. The DC-10 made its debut in 2006.

The DC-10 aircraft are fitted with three external tanks that are mounted along the centerline of the plane. Together, the tanks hold 50 tons of water or retardant. The tanker can drop as much as 12,000 US gallons of retardant in as little as eight seconds through its computerized gravity fed water dump system. It is used primarily to lay down long lines of retardant.

SEARCH & RESCUE

CANADA

In order to overcome a supposed dearth of spares the Canadian Government has purchased the remains of the EH101 based US Presidential VH-71 Kestrel helicopter programme.

The nine airframes built have been sold as a single lot to Canada to be stripped down for parts to support their CH-149 Cormorant SAR fleet. The airframes originally cost in the region of \$3Billion but no price have been released indicating what the Canadians paid. [Helihub]

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KAZAKHSTAN

RESCUE: Mi-171 helicopters manufactured by Ulan-Ude Aviation Plant, JSC, a part of Russian Helicopters holding, were involved in Kazspas 2011 manoeuvres of Kazakhstan rescue units earlier this year. The 16th international gathering of rescuers took place at Astana City training range of EMERCOM of Republic of Kazakhstan. The purpose of these manoeuvres was to improve rescuers' professional skills in severe environment conditions and to train rescue and other emergency operation methods using different equipment.

The Kazakhstan EMERCOM has been successfully operating Mi-171 helicopters for many years, and the helicopters have proved their outstanding characteristics, such as high performance, reliability, and ease of operation.

INDUSTRY

Heli-One continues to cement its reputation as a leading helicopter integrator after winning a contract to upgrade the Lithuanian State Border Guard's fleet of EC-135 helicopters.

Heli-One will begin integrating new mission communication equipment in the EC-135 helicopters as a part of a two-aircraft upgrade, set to commence in June. The total value of the contract is USD \$2.85 million. The project is funded by the EU Special Transit Scheme programme under external border funding.

"We are extremely enthusiastic about our newest contract with the Lithuanian State Border Guard," said Larry Alexandre, President, Heli-One. "We are honoured to be chosen as a partner for such an important project and we will ensure we live up to our reputation for quality."

Heli-One's Stavanger base is also integrating a modern Electro Optical/Infra Red Camera System into RNoAF fleet of helicopters to enhance the visual capabilities during Search and Rescue. Heli-One also supplies the Norwegian Airforce with state of the art EO/IR system in Wescam MX10, and associated cabin mounted mission console. The total value of the contract is USD \$2.4 million.

In addition to the contracts with the Lithuanian State Border Guard and the Norwegian Airforce, Heli-One Norway has designed major modifications for the installation of Star Safire II FLIR system and Goodrich dual rescue hoist for German Bundespolizei's Super Puma helicopters. The contract is valued at US\$4M.

Heli-One has also secured a nose-to-tail PBH support agreement for one, S76C++ operated by Thai Aviation Services. The contract has been placed for a period of six years with a value of \$7.6 million.

Heli-One is the world's largest, independent helicopter support company, providing engine and component repair and overhaul, modifications, inspections, completions and logistics support for 20 different aircraft types, operated by customers around the world.

From June 1 the company Agusta S.p.A changed its name to **AgustaWestland S.p.A.** The new name has been filed with the Companies' House to replace in full the previous regis-

tered company name. This formal step completes alignment with the long-standing AgustaWestland brand image.

This is just a change of registered name with no change of our business or organization. Our legal status, address, tax identification codes and contact details will therefore remain the same and all existing contracts will remain in full force. Any future reference to Agusta S.p.A. shall be taken as a reference to AgustaWestland S.p.A.

For decades Canadian company NAT - **Northern Airborne Technology** was the byword in airborne law enforcement communications this situation changed somewhat in the 21st Century as other companies vied successfully for the a slice of the market sector. In the last two years Anodyne Electronics Manufacturing Corp (AEM Corp www.aem-corp.com) started in late 2009, when NAT, now part of Cobham, elected to close manufacturing operations in Canada, creating an opportunity for a new, 100% employee-owned company to emerge.

AEM Corp, in cooperation with Cobham Aerospace Communications, is offering even more NAT products due to the License Agreement the two companies signed in December 2010 which they continue to build upon. AEM Corp's licensing agreement for the various NAT products makes them the only source for many of these items.

AEM Corp have announced that they have completed a distribution agreement with Adams Aviation (www.adamsaviation.com) located in the United Kingdom. [AEM]

Dave Stauffer, **Soloy's** CEO claims that the company is seeing increased activity both in sales and inquiries for the company's latest variant of Soloy's turbine engine conversion to the Cessna 206 airframe, the Mark II. Soloy is realizing benefits globally due to the price and availability of 100LL fuel and the pressure that it is putting on both recreational and business users of piston powered aircraft. The Mk II conversion creates what many have discovered is the world's premier single engine turboprop from the standpoint of overall utility, efficiency and performance.

Soloy recently delivered its 85th turbine conversion to the missionary operator JAARS in April 2011. It will be operated in Cameroon, Africa.

The Soloy Mk II was given FAA certification late in 2008 and is the second variant of the 206 Soloy conversion, following the introduction of the Mk I in 1984. The Mk II features a 450hp Rolls Royce 250-B17 that turns the venerable Cessna 206 airframe into an unmatched performer. Soloy also provides state of art flight instrumentation and a Garmin G500 avionics to its Mk II package.

Soloy recently released a Mk II conversion outfitted for law enforcement observation dubbed the Sentinel. Aside from the Rolls Royce turbine conversion the Sentinel package features a wing camera mount designed to accommodate virtually any camera, an ergonomically designed rear observer's station with 270 degree articulating seat, full length LH observation window, raised headliner, four point harnesses for pilot and co-pilot as well as a much larger generator to power the additional electrical requirements.

Next month we expect to have news of a US law enforcement contract utilising this type and fitting an uprated camera. [Soloy]



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Police Aviation News includes materials produced for it by Ian J Commin of Insight Design of North Burnham, Slough SL1 6DS. This includes the banner titles and the PAvCon logo. In addition from time to times images specifically altered by Insight Design and others but originally produced for McAlpine Helicopters [now Eurocopter UK], Oxford, will appear with permission of the original owner. In some cases it may not be possible to indicate the source of this material directly associated with the images used.

Air Methods Corporation has entered into a definitive merger agreement to acquire OF Air Holdings Corporation and its subsidiaries, including Omniflight Helicopters, Inc. Omniflight provides air medical transport services throughout the United States and provides these services under both the community-based and hospital-based service delivery models, utilizing a fleet of approximately 100 helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft. Omniflight is headquartered in Addison, Texas, with operations in 18 states involving over 75 base locations.

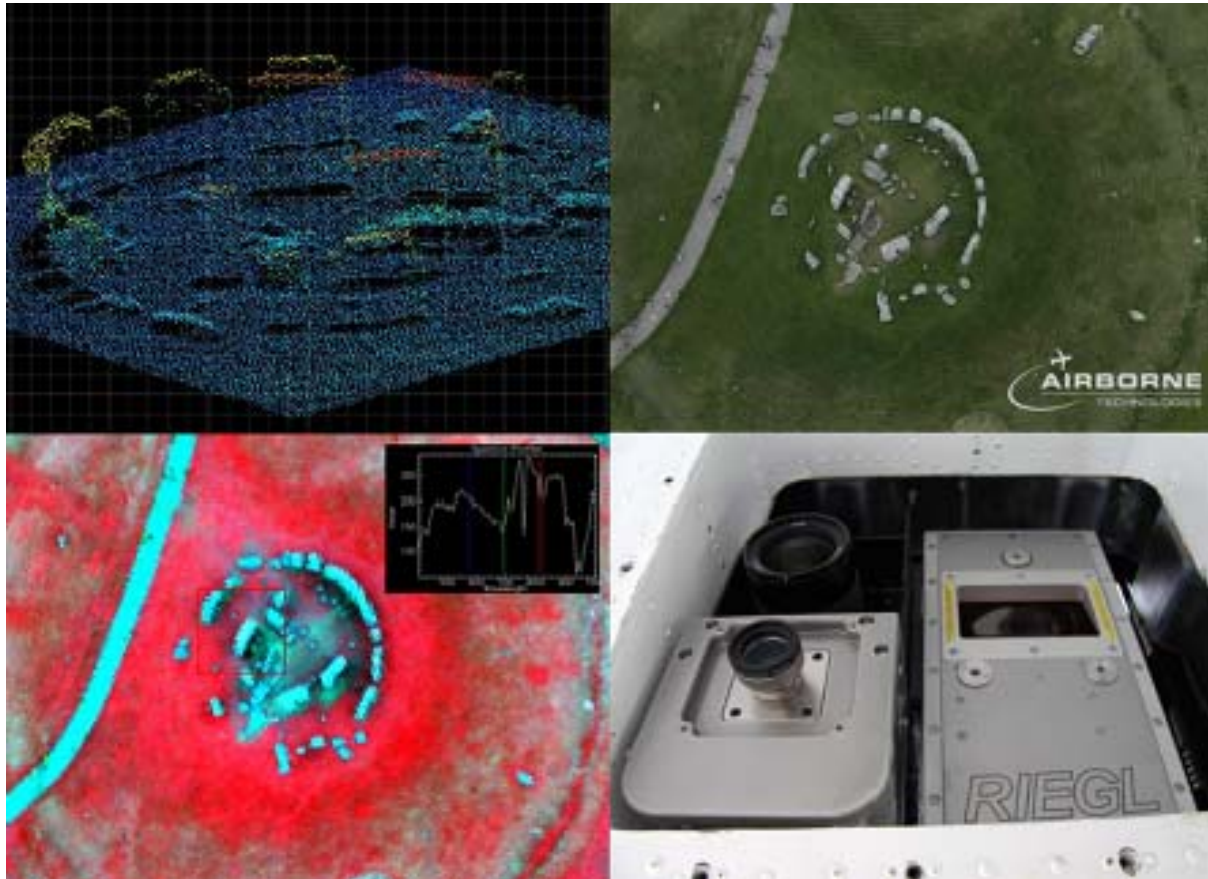
Air Methods will acquire Omniflight for an aggregate purchase price of \$200M in cash on a cash-free, debt-free basis, subject to working capital and other adjustments as provided in the Agreement. Upon closing, Omniflight will become a wholly-owned subsidiary of Air Methods. The Agreement has been unanimously approved by the boards of directors of both companies. The transaction is contingent upon clearance under the Hart-Scott Rodino Anti-Trust Improvements Act and certain other closing conditions. The transaction is expected to close in July 2011. [AM]



Last month **Piaggio Aero** started work on a new facility at Villanova d'Albenga and due to be operating in 2013.

Attended by Piaggio Aero's Chairman Piero Ferrari, its CEO Alberto Galassi, top company management and local officials the ceremonial groundbreaking lays the path for the new facility which will be focused on the manufacture of parts and subassemblies for the P.180 Avanti II aircraft and aero engine manufacturing, repair and overhaul. All of these activities are currently located in Piaggio Aero Finale Ligure's plant which will be transferred into the new high technological facility in Villanova d'Albenga while the P.180 Avanti II final assembly line will continue at the company's other production plant in Genova Sestri Ponente.

The new production plant of 49,300 square metres will be located in an area of total 127,000 square meters in a strategic position behind Villanova d'Albenga airport with direct access to a 1,500 metre runway. The investment required for this project is about €100M.



Airborne Technologies has received full EASA certification for a multi sensor installation to acquire simultaneously ground data with airborne laser scanners, hyperspectral scanners, thermal cameras and RGB digital cameras, all in one flight.

Airborne Technologies R&D team overcame a number of challenges to arrange for up to five state of the art, low weight and low power consuming sensors to look through one single fuselage opening in the aircraft. Additionally all sensors must fit together in terms of swath, resolution and flight height and are synchronized by the same geo-referencing system and pilot flight guidance system. www.airbornetechnologies.at

Using Stonehenge in the UK as a target, Airborne Technologies Multi Sensor Suite provides simultaneous acquisition of Hyperspectral, RGB and LiDAR data.

From left to right, top to bottom

1. LiDAR data provides accurate geometrics and geo-referencing ([RIEGL](#) Laser Scanner)
2. High resolution RGB images discover hidden details of the target ([IGI](#) DigiCAM)
3. Automatic material classification using hyperspectral data ([SPECIM](#) AisaEAGLE)
4. Sensors installation in Multi Mission Aircraft

The DA42 MPP, powered by two turbo-charged diesel engines, accomplished the first test flight with the OPTIMARE IR/UV Line Scanner as well as the OPTIMARE VIS Line Scanner at **Diamond**'s headquarters in Austria to detect oil spills.

Reducing the fuel flow, in total, down to 7,2 US Gal/ h at loitering speed, the aircraft can easily provide missions, up to 10.5 hours without refuelling. The demand to support harbour control, monitor illegal tank cleaning or all other kind of environmental protection can be combined with very low operational costs to cover huge areas over water.

Further tests were conducted along the North-German coast in June 2011. Customer presentations are planned for the second half of this year. [Diamond]



After only a very short existence in its own right Britain's **Serious Organised Crime Agency** (Soca) is to become part of an American-style National Crime Agency [NCA] from 2013. Soca itself combined and replaced a number of other agencies including the National Crime Squad [NCS] in 2006 and was just settling down to handling its over generous size when reports of its demise as a separate entity drifted out from political circles. Another new group, the NPIA, which includes many of the R&D support services of the Home Office is also under threat of disruption – again the accusing fingers cite over-generous size as one of its faults. Many were more than happy with its smaller predecessor elements including the PSDB.

The NCA will be able to directly task and co-ordinate police forces as they tackle organised crime and secure UK borders.

Home Secretary Theresa May said too many of the 6,000 organised crime gangs in the UK were escaping justice and a tough new approach was needed. The launch of the NCA is part of yet another politician led 'the most radical shake-up of policing in 50 years' which will see directly-elected police and crime commissioners replace the existing police authorities from next May.

The agency will step in to co-ordinate police work, identify national priorities and ensure those commissioners are "aware of the needs of the nation", she said, even as major cuts in funding were being sought.

Critics say the NCA will be too large to be effective but the Home Office insists it will "strengthen the fight against the serious and organised criminality that threatens the safety and security of the UK". [Oracle]

Ed: In the end the continued disruption serves no-one except the headed notepaper and building name-plate manufacturers. And who believes that 'Its budget will not exceed that of the agencies it replaces.....' for one minute? Oh yes, The Home Secretary does! But no worry she will be a minister for coal mining or buttercup collecting in a month or so.

Bell Helicopter and **Cessna Aircraft Company** have broken ground on a new facility dedicated to service and support for customers in the Asia-Pacific region.

The facility is expected to be complete in the second quarter of 2012 and when fully operational, the facility will employ approximately 90 technicians and office workers.

The new facility at Seletar Aerospace Park in Singapore will replace and augment the existing Bell Helicopter Supply Center and strengthen the company's sales presence in Asia-Pacific, as well as add parts distribution and maintenance capabilities for Cessna operators in the region. Encompassing more than 25,700 square metres (84,300 square feet), the facility includes more than 48,700 square metres (160,000 square feet) of hangar, office, and storage and maintenance space.



Eurocopter has announced that testing of the EC135 main gear box (MGB) incorporating new-style input pinions, introduced in 2010, has shown that the 400-hour interim inspection is no longer required. Eurocopter intend to extend the inspection interval of this MGB over the coming years through its standard 'lead the fleet' approach. The inspection interval for EC135 MGBs with old-style pinions is currently at 3,200 hours.

Atlantic Air Industries (AAI) has chosen the **L3 Wescam MX-10** Electro-Optical/Infrared (EO/IR) imaging system to support maritime and general surveillance activities for an undisclosed customer. Deliveries of the two MX-10 systems, for installation by ASI Innovation, took place in May 2011

Upon installation, the systems will operate from a Cessna 206 variant. ASI's installation design will allow for both WESCAM's MX-10 and MX™-15HDi imaging solutions to be mounted to the aircraft.

The customer for this sensor is not being disclosed but the unidentified Cessna 206 is passing an AS350 F-ZBEK of the French Customs.



Enterprise Control Systems will be exhibiting at the NATIA 2011 Exhibition to be held in Tampa, Florida, USA from July 16 – 22, 2011.

Enterprise Control Systems Ltd (ECS) invites you to visit with them on their stand shared with ESA Inc. **Stand No 1945** (not 809 as previously stated), to view samples of the ECS product range.

To secure a mutually convenient appointment with a member of our sales team during the exhibition, [please click here to contact ECS](#) and they will get back to you as soon as possible.

AIR ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

16 May 2011 Beechcraft B200 King Air N786SR. Air ambulance of North Slope Borough, Barrow, Alaska, sustained substantial damage during a collision with terrain about 7 miles southwest of Atkasuk, Alaska, while on an instrument approach to the Atkasuk Edward Burnell Senior Memorial Airport. The pilot received serious injuries, and the two medical personnel aboard received minor injuries. During the approach to Atkasuk, the airplane accumulated a large quantity of airframe ice, and the pilot decided to discontinue the approach. He then retracted the landing gear, but the airplane failed to climb as anticipated, and struck the ground. [NTSB]

27 May 2011 Bell OH-58C N82772. Bay County Sheriff's Office, Florida. The helicopter took off whilst still inside a large hangar. On exiting the building at about 3 feet height off the ground the main rotor blade hit debris and the helicopter rolled and crashed on the apron outside the hangar at the old Panama City airport. The pilot, Lt. Larry Kennedy and TFO Deputy Kate Lilley were uninjured but the 1968 airframe is a write-off. [Media]



<http://www.isdef.co.il/>

1 June 2011 Bell 206L LongRanger 2025 Pakistan Rangers. The sole military helicopter known to be operated by the user caught fire mid-air and crashed into Indus river today killing all four people on board. The dead included Maj. Gen. Muhammad Nawaz, the Director General of the Pakistan Rangers in Punjab, his son Capt Asif Nawaz, Pilot Lt-Col Aamir Abbas and Technician Subedar Hidayat. The helicopter had taken off from Dera Ghazi Khan and was headed towards Multan. The crash site is in Layyah, 400 km from Lahore. [Media] [1993 model c/n 52025 N206LL]

2 June 2011 Eurocopter EC135T2 G-SASB. An air ambulance was temporarily grounded in a field after its crew became concerned that some of the aircraft's gauges were not working. A patient had been put on board the helicopter after it had arrived at Acheninver, near Achiltibuie, in Wester Ross but the crew decided not to fly to Raigmore Hospital in Inverness. A coastguard helicopter from Stornoway, on Lewis, took the patient to hospital. [BBC/DS]

4 June 2011 Eurocopter AS350B2 N917EM. Air ambulance of Eagle Med, Wichita, Kansas, USA. Aircraft departed helipad vertically. At approximately 25 feet, aircraft lost power. Pilot reduced collective and returned to helipad. Aircraft was taken out of service for inspection. [Concern]

9 June 2011 Eurocopter AS355N N824AH Massachusetts State police state police helicopter made an emergency landing on a baseball field behind Shaw's Supermarket, Water Street, Wakefield, MA due to "mechanical issues." The helicopter, Air 4, landed by Route 129 after two warning indicator lights came on in the cockpit. [7 News]

11 June 2011 Helicopter. Colombian Police. The Antinarcotics Police helicopter crashed, killing nine officers and injuring three others. The helicopter had just taken off from Salinas on a routine transport mission when it went down in a remote region of Casanare in northeastern Colombia, about 155 miles (250 kilometers) northeast of the Colombian capital of Bogota. The crew sent an emergency message to air traffic controllers and that authorities are not ruling out possible mechanical failure. The injured were taken to hospitals in Casanare's capital Yopal and in the neighbouring province of Boyaca. [Media]

11 June 2011 Fairchild Metro ZK-NSS. Air ambulance of LifeFlight, New Zealand. The aircraft was heading from Auckland to Wellington to collect a sick teenager. About 20 minutes out of Wellington the pilots got a fire warning in the right hand engine. They discharged the fire bottle and shut down the engine and called a full emergency, landing at Wellington 20 minutes later. No evidence of fire found. Engineering found it to be a fault in the warning system. Plane returned to service following day. [Media/Lifeflight]

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LETTERS

Fact not Fiction on Paediatric and neo-natal Aero-medical Transport

Following the report in the last edition of *Police Aviation News* I felt it time to put some markers down in the debate on the necessity for aero-medical transport for children and babies. Clearly the arrival of four charities dedicated to developing such a nationwide service has caused alarm amongst my former colleagues in the air ambulance charities.

In reality there is no cause for concern as our proposals will create a radically different service from anything that exists in England today.

Colleagues have asked if such a service is needed. At the recent conference, hosted by NETS UK in Sheffield, there was 100% support from clinicians from across the country for the development of such a service. For a full report on the conference see www.netsuk.org and follow the link.

At the meeting in London last week of the Paediatric Intensive Care Society (PICS), also attended by representatives of the Neo-natal Intensive Care Society (NICS), again there was full support for the development of a national aero-medical service.

Following long research into the subject the clinicians reported that, at current levels, there was a need for over 480 paediatric inter-hospital flights a year and the neo-natalists had identified in excess of 780 flights a year. It must be stressed that these are inter-hospital transfer flights for no-one expects the four charities to be involved in HEMS roles when there is such expertise amongst the air ambulance charities.

Others have questioned why the air ambulance charities could not do the work. The presentation from the Chair of the Association of Air Ambulances at the PICS meeting was very helpful and instructive. Whilst stating that a small percentage of their work was inter-hospital transfers for children she stated that it was something that they were not equipped to undertake. She identified problems in the type of aircraft they had available, in installing specialist equipment and having specialist staff available whilst agreeing that the funding of 'county' air ambulances was by the general public for the provision of an emergency service within their own counties and not for nationwide inter-hospital transfers.

The need for adequate hospital helipads was identified by all as a growing requirement for the future development of both the county HEMS services and the national children's flights. Fortunately the development of a social enterprise led by Barry Johns (formerly CEO, West Midlands Ambulance Service and Chair of the much missed CHAS organisation) and Tony Bateson, formerly of County Air Ambulance, means that the development of such sites is being given fresh impetus at relatively low cost to the NHS.

Finally the issues of funding were addressed. It was agreed that the best model was that already in place for the air ambulances with the charities providing the helicopter, dispatch systems and the aircrew training whilst the NHS should provide clinicians (specialist paediatricians and neo-natologist in our case) and the medical governance necessary to run the service. In this the four charities agreed that approaches to national organisations for the prime sources of funding would not put them into competition with the county air ambulances who largely rely on their local communities.

What happens next? The charities concerned (NETS UK, TCAA and LUCY) will be meeting shortly to plan the way forward whilst the PICS and NICS groups are pressing forward in developing the business case and the clinical infrastructure necessary to develop the service.

In summary the service has strong backing from clinicians, fills a clear gap in service provision, will cater for both neo-natal and paediatric inter-hospital transfers, (a PICNIC service!), will be charitably funded and with clinical direction and leadership from within the NHS.

Martin Eede
CEO, NETS UK



EVENTS



BGAD 2011 the one day General Aviation meeting event taking place as usual at Cambridge Airport on Tuesday September 20th now has visitor booking available on the Internet. Exhibitors at this year's UK Business & General Aviation Day can have internet access on their booth, and there will be no additional charge for this.

BGAD is an informal, yet highly productive day, combining an exhibition, static display and seminar programme - all free to attend. Organised as a partnership between European Business Air News magazine and Cambridge Airport, BGAD has become a major event in the UK business aviation calendar since it was first staged in 2001.

Booths are priced at UK£750 each, and come fully equipped with carpet, furniture, light, power - and internet access. Aircraft can be shown on the static display for only UK£595 each, with no landing or handling fees.

An open forum has been arranged - 'The Practicalities of the Olympics', where the importance of this major event will be highlighted - with airport, operators, regulator and industry involvement. More seminars will be developed before the show takes place in September.

Full information, plus floor plan and other details are on the BGAD web site - <http://www.bgad.aero>.



Since being established in 1998 Shephard's Search & Rescue Europe exhibition and conference, has gained a worldwide reputation as *the* 'event' for networking with members of the SAR community, and learning about the latest developments in search & rescue equipment and operations. SAR Asia will bring SAR and CSAR professionals from the Asia-Pacific region and the rest of world together.

SAR Asia 2011 will provide an opportunity to network with global experts in SAR from throughout the Asia-Pacific and other regions of the world, and learn how they are addressing 'Today's Life-saving Challenges and Solutions'.

The Key speaker is Captain Song Jiahui, Director General, Rescue and Salvage Bureau, Ministry of Communications, People's Republic of China. Other speakers will include representatives from the following organisations: The International Maritime Organisation; Australian Maritime Safety Authority; The Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore; South Korean Coast Guard; The Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore and the Philippine Coast Guard.

Shephard has also announced an intention to take the SAR Conference to Dublin in the future. www.shephard.co.uk



DIARY

- 4 July 2011 American Heroes Air Show. US Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado. The American Heroes Air Show is the nation's premier admission –free, helicopter-only aviation event produced by volunteers from coast-to-coast with a passion for aviation and public service. Details from Details from James D. Paules Jr. Volunteer - Executive Producer, American Heroes Aviation Network. +1 (818) 631-8132 Email: Jim@Heroes-airshow.com www.heroes-airshow.com
- 5-6 July 2011 Emergency Scotland 2011, Scottish Exhibition & Conference Centre [SECC], Glasgow. The Emergency Services Show team is linking up with the Emergency Planning Society (EPS) to organise a NEW joint Exhibition and Conference – Emergency Scotland 2011. Building on the successful formula of the UK Show, this new collaboration will directly address the needs of the Scottish emergency services industry – with a devolved government in Scotland, with separate budgets, Emergency Scotland 2011 will offer buyers and specifiers of equipment throughout Scotland's police, fire and rescue, ambulance, coastguard, mountain rescue, NGOs etc an excellent opportunity to view the latest equipment and services from the leading suppliers to the sector. Carol Fox – carolfox@mmcpublishings.co.uk
- 16 July 2011 American Heroes Air Show. Los Angeles, California USA. The American Heroes Air Show is the nation's premier admission –free, helicopter-only aviation event produced by volunteers from coast-to-coast with a passion for aviation and public service. Details from James D. Paules Jr. Volunteer - Executive Producer, American Heroes Aviation Network. +1 (818) 631-8132 Email: Jim@Heroes-airshow.com www.heroes-airshow.com
- 19-23 July 2011 Fire House Expo. Baltimore, Maryland, USA. Covering the world of Fire Rescue and EMS. Educational opportunities, exhibitors, meet with fire, rescue and EMS professionals. Cygnus Business Media - 801 Cliff Road East, Suite 201, Burnsville, MN 55337 -+1 800.827.8009 www.publicsafetyevents.com
- 20-23 July 2011 ALEA Annual Conference & Exposition,. New Orleans, Louisiana, USA www.alea.org
- 26-28 July 2011 LETA Basic and Advanced Thermographers Seminar. Location: Lawrence, Indiana / Indy. Hosted by Lawrence Police Department. Contact Person: Deputy Chief Gary Woodruff +1 (317) 281-8875 www.leta.org



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