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IPAR



**ALEA Northeast
- event report**

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LAW ENFORCEMENT

INTERNATIONAL

PIRACY: With piracy generating big news and attracting large multi-national fleets in the Gulf of Aden, another less recognised multilateral partnership is claiming to have brought piracy to a virtual halt in the strategic Strait of Malacca.

The commander of the US Pacific fleet Admiral Timothy J. Keating claimed last month that a partnership among Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and, increasingly, Thailand and the Philippines, has boosted security in the region to such a degree that the once endemic piracy has backed off.

About 50,000 vessels each year, some 40% of the worlds trade, transits the narrow Strait of Malacca linking the Indian and Pacific oceans. Until three years ago there were around 50 pirate attacks annually. Now that has dropped by 90%.

US funding has brought highly sophisticated radar and radio capabilities allied to strict training regimes that have boosted all the local forces capabilities and raised levels of enthusiasm to a point where local forces are able to work together to damp down the threat.

Although this is seen as one area of success, many of the difficulties being experienced in the Gulf off Somalia are different in that weak or non-existent government means there are no local forces and all the effort is imported to the region. [AFPS]

Royal Australian Navy [RAN] image taken last month as the MV Dubai Princess came under threat 170km south of Yemen. Two RAN Frigates, HMAS Sydney and Ballarat, sped to her aid. The MV Dubai Princess claimed it was under attack from pirates, who were reported to be firing rocket propelled grenades and attempting to board the vessel by force.

The image shows clearly the non-lethal defensive measures being deployed by the vessel to thwart such attacks in international waters.



COVER IMAGE: The US Park Police, were the co-hosts of the May 2009 Northeast ALEA Safety Seminar in Alexandria. One part of the event was an excellent meal in the hosts hangar. Sponsored by Bell Helicopter but prepared by the unit. Fortunately it was not a Bar BQ as the weather outside was warm but very very wet! [PAN image]

ANGOLA

NATIONAL POLICE: Reflecting the recent acquisitions of other police operators in southern Africa [Botswana, Namibia, image below - and South Africa] the air support command of the National Police took delivery of four examples of the Eurocopter AS350B3 last month.

The new additions were handed over by the general commander of the National Police, Ambrósio de Lemos Freire dos Santos, in a ceremony held at their main base at Luanda's '4 February International Airport'.

At the event Superintendent Domingos Gomes spoke the new fleet of helicopters as a first instalment in a general expansion of air support in Angola that would seem to double the existing fleet and set up three new regional commands with helicopter teams. Those regional commands will be based in the provinces of Huila, Huambo, and Lunda Sul. No dates have been put forward for the setting up of these additional bases but the first is to be built in Huambo Province. .

Currently the police operate ten helicopters flown by 25 pilots. A further 25 members of the police are training in Brazil, ten of these will be pilots including one woman.

The fleet currently consists of five Eurocopter AS365N2 Dauphin, one of which is used as an ambulance and the others are AS350's. The four additions to the fleet are 1997 models sourced in France imported via Eurocopter in the Republic of South Africa. Sud Alouette III helicopters have now been retired.

The helicopters section of the National Police was created back in 1992 and came to prominence in support of the security for the first multi-party elections in the country and during the visit by the late Pope John Paul II to Angola. Throughout this period various models of the Dauphin have been the mainstay of the fleet. *[BBC/Luanda O Pais/Media]*

Eurocopter has authorised the expansion of its customer-support facility in Gauteng, which is currently located at Lanseria Airport, south-west of Tshwane/Pretoria and north-west of Johannesburg.

The company is considering the possibility of establishing a dedicated training centre in South Africa (currently, training is provided by two support centres).

With its European and North American civil and parapublic (police and EMS) markets near saturation, Eurocopter is looking to expand in emerging markets, including Africa and South Africa in particular. But the company expectations are being



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realistic in that it will take time.

Eurocopter activities in South Africa are carried out by a wholly-owned subsidiary of the group, Eurocopter South Africa Ltd (Esal). Esal undertakes a wide range of activities at its Lanseria and Cape Town facilities, including the assembly of helicopters after their arrival in South Africa; maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) of Eurocopter helicopters; servicing and support of Eurocopter helicopters; the supply of spares; and the marketing and sale of helicopters.

Another important task, mostly carried out at Lanseria, is the customisation of Eurocopter helicopters to meet the requirements of customers – that is, special and specific mission equipment is fitted in South Africa, not in Europe (where the helicopters are manufactured). For South Africa, the main market has so far been in the parapublic sector, with the South African Police Service (SAPS) currently operating 28 Eurocopter helicopters of three different types (the BO105, BK117, and AS350). Botswana recently set up its own Police Air Wing, with three AS350s, and Namibia has done likewise, with one AS350.

AUSTRALIA

NEW SOUTH WALES: Emergency services mounted a three-hour operation involving a helicopter and a fire truck to rescue a man who got stuck on the roof of a factory in Sydney that he was allegedly trying to rob. New South Wales State Police were called to the joinery factory where a 53-year-old man was stuck on the roof, apparently unable to move because of wet weather and steep angle.

Numerous rescue attempts were made, and emergency crews eventually used a fire truck with a tall ladder to retrieve the man while a helicopter illuminated the rooftop. Police arrested the man and charged him with trespassing, possession of housebreaking imple-

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ments and attempted breaking-and-entering. He was carrying a helmet with a light, bolt cutters, a small ladder, backpack, tarpaulin, ropes and harnesses.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: Western Australian Police have secured \$24M funding for an additional helicopter. Primarily seen as a back up to the existing machine the new helicopter would ultimately be based at the Police Air Wing in Jandakot.

The Minister said although the specific type of helicopter to be purchased was yet to be finalised, it would be a twin-engine turbine helicopter. Consultants are to advise on the type and a report is expected from them by July.

CHILE



CARABINEROS: The President of the Republic, Michelle Bachelet, officiated at a ceremony to welcome a new \$7M Beechcraft King Air 200G aircraft C-52 into Carabineros de Chile service. The event took place at the base of Grupo 10 de la FACH at Arturo Merino Benítez airport, Santiago in April.

The King Air is equipped with a FSI Star SAFIRE III and a BMS downlink system able to send digital images to a ground station in real time using the Wescam Wisard downlink system from L3 Communications. The King Air will be stationed in Iquique, from where it will scan the Atacama Desert for drug traffickers and illegal immigrants.

CHINA



SHANGHAI: Priority 1 Air Rescue out of Mesa, Arizona recently completed a two week advanced helicopter training programme providing Eurocopter and the Shanghai Aviation Police Force with advanced helicopter rescue hoist training, SAR fundamentals and planning, and Goodrich factory-approved hoist maintenance training.

The Shanghai Police recently took delivery of the Eurocopter EC-155 Helicopter to accomplish a range of operational missions including security, surveillance, and inland/offshore SAR missions.

Priority 1 Air Rescue provided the complete FAA approved mission package needed to get Shanghai Police SAR operational on the EC155.

Since the training session Shanghai Police put their first helicopter team into the air on a public demonstra-

tion of their skills.

The city has received three helicopters so far, and another is on order. They'll be used as eyes in the sky during major events such as next year's World Expo, for fire and accident rescues and for deploying officers quickly against criminals and terrorists.

The operation has two Eurocopter EC135s and one EC155. Fifteen pilots are trained up and there is a support team of 35 others. The team is expected to double in the near future. A fourth helicopter, a locally built EC120, will arrive later this year but are considered only to be the first stage of an expansion.

Shanghai has identified the need for a heavy-duty, multi-task helicopter for fire emergencies. The largest current machine doesn't have the lift power to carry water tanks and other heavy fire fighting equipment.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Last month the police aviation department was offering for sale two of their BO105CBS-4 helicopters c/n 865 OK-BYX and c/n 878 OK-BYY. Both of the seventeen years old airframes are dual pilot IFR, have under 5,000 hours TT and under 16,700 landings. [GABuyer]

FRANCE

SECURITE CIVILE: On May 2 an Open House was held at Versoud aerodrome marking a final tribute to the passing of the Alouette 3 from Securite Civile service after nearly 46 years. The type has now been replaced by the Eurocopter EC145. During its service the Alouette 3 has been credited with the rescue of 40,000 people.

IRELAND

GARDA AIR SUPPORT: Although it has been out of service for a while now the Garda only recently started moves to dispose of their Eurocopter AS355N helicopter 255. The operation now relies on two Eurocopter EC135T and a fixed wing Defender.

In April An Garda Síochána invited tenders for the appointment of an Agent to handle and conduct the sale of the AS355N that was in service with the Air Support Unit. The tender closed on April 23.

LATIN AMERICA

ZACATECAS, MEXICO: It was a helicopter prison break with a difference when suspected drug traffickers swept into the prison in Zacatecas state on May 16 and freed 53 inmates, many cartel gunmen.

It was quickly ascribed to being an inside job resulting in the prison warden and two top guards being arrested. Forty more guards were questioned.

Security camera tapes showed a convoy of seventeen vehicles, backed by a helicopter, approached Cieneguillas prison. About 30 men, some in police uniforms, entered, rounded up the prisoners, loaded them into the cars and sped away. The use of a helicopter was especially worrying to investigators, because they are not common in the region. It was the third prison break in Zacatecas in recent years but the first with helicopter back up. [LAT]

SAO PAULO, BRAZIL: And not that far away another prison became the object of interest as far as mini-UAV's are concerned.

A plot to smuggle cellular phones into a prison yard using a remote-control model helicopter

was foiled after local police discovered the toy in a car outside a maximum-security prison, the Presidente Venceslau penitentiary in Sao Paulo state. Four people in the car were arrested.

Attached to the helicopter's base was a basket-like container containing nine wrapped cell phones, five more phones were found alongside the craft in the car trunk.

Two months ago police discovered an attempt at using carrier pigeons to fly cell phones into a prison near the south-eastern city of Sorocaba. Guards spotted a pigeon resting on an electric wire with a small cloth bag tied to one of its legs. Luring the bird down with food, they discovered components of a small cell phone inside the bag.

One of the suspects arrested in the latest incident has admitted to receiving \$5,000 to prepare the helicopter, with the promise of a further sum on delivery.

Imprisoned Brazilian gangsters use cell phones to coordinate criminal activity outside and inside the overcrowded prison system.

UNITED KINGDOM

NORFOLK: One of the areas with a low key police air support presence is that operated by the Norfolk Constabulary in the rural areas of East Anglia. They have access to a leased helicopter but the availability is lower than most operations.

It was in this scenario that a helicopter owning businessman and local resident turned himself into the saviour of his own needs last month by chasing a burglar 50 miles in his private helicopter - after spotting him stealing logs from his timber yard.

In a two hour flight the businessman, Jeremy Taylor, went back to basics in a VFR surveillance flight above the winding lanes of Norfolk. The end result was that the burglar abandoned his van and the booty and Taylor got back his stolen items - worth £400.

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Various versions of the story were reported but it seems that Mr Taylor lifted off from his home helipad in his private Agusta A119 Koala with the personalised identity N119JT and simply stumbled upon the theft in progress as soared upwards on a business flight to Northern Ireland. At 200 feet he noticed the gates to his yard were open and that there was a strange white van present.

The thief quickly realised he was under observation but for two hours tried to shake off the annoying 'all-seeing eye' above him. At one stage he tried to hide in a wood but Mr Taylor simply sat there hovering over the trees for 20 minutes.

As he was flying solo a couple of calls on his satellite phone brought his mother and sister in on the chase across the Norfolk countryside. They joined in using their cars.

The van was probably going at about 50 to 60 miles per hour but the helicopter was more than capable of keeping up with it as he tracked the van along a circular route from Binham to the seaside town of Wells-next-the-Sea, and then to Fakenham where it tried to lose its self in heavy traffic.

To meet the minimum requirement of 1,500 feet over a congested area the Agusta was flying over Fakenham at about 2,000ft – easy enough to do with the naked eye and still flying the Agusta. But there were a lot of white vans in the town. The two women caught up with the quarry near the town and noted the registration number down. That was to seal his fate. Out in the countryside things were easier and the follow often went down to 500ft and keep up the pressure. '

The burglar eventually abandoned his van at the village of Stody and fled on foot to his home in Briston.

Was it worth the time and trouble? Well he got £400 worth of wood back, but it cost him at least £2,500 in fuel let alone the other DOC's. The magistrates gave the thief only a conditional discharge [in effect a slap on his wrist]. Fortunate, although disappointed at the lenient outcome Taylor said it was the principle of trying to catch the thief that was important. [Mirror/MoS]

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NORTHERN IRELAND: According to the politicians the 'Troubles' may be all but over bar the shouting but the realities of day to day life in the Province are that there are tensions in spite of tremendous progress towards that political nirvana.

In recent weeks use of the PSNI helicopter doubled after the murders of two British soldiers and a police officer.

Deployments of the helicopter in support of actions against the dissident republican threat have increased to an average in excess of seven flights a day.

Figures released under Freedom of Information legislation show the helicopter was used 73 times in January, compared to 107 times in February and 223 flights in March.

British soldiers Cengiz 'Patrick' Azimkar and Mark Quinsey were killed in Antrim on March 7, which was followed two days later by the murder of PSNI constable Stephen Carroll.

In addition the helicopter has been the subject of a number of the laser attacks mentioned in last months issue of PAN. One prosecution is ongoing under the Air Navigation Order for endangering aircraft.

The helicopter was acquired in 2005 to supplement the fixed wing Islander, primarily because the military was being withdrawn from the area as a result of the 'peace.' As the military withdrawal gathered pace an increasing level of service was thrust upon the EC135. In its first year it was flown 980 times, rising to 1,282 flights the following year and 1,463 flights last year. [Irish News/PAR]

SOCA: The international cocaine market is "in retreat" after a year of successful operations around the world, the Serious Organised Crime Agency claims.

It says its undercover work has helped send wholesale prices soaring. Prices per kilo have risen from £39,000 in 2008 to over £45,000 (50,000 Euros), but street prices have remained stable only because the purity has fallen away, almost a third of police seizures are now less than 9% pure.

Conversely wholesale prices of cocaine are rising in some areas of Europe, in Spain and Belgium. SOCA think that is due in part to the strategy of working in South America, the Caribbean, across the Atlantic and with European partners.

SOUTH & EAST WALES: Bond Air Services [BASL] is currently in the process of changing the primary back-up aircraft for the leased EC135T2 G-WONN from G-SPHU. The latter has now been resprayed from its former blue and yellow scheme to an overall yellow to undertake air ambulance operations in the North West.

The police user see the benefits of a corporate image for all police aircraft in terms of pro-

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viding an easily identified means of airborne reassurance in retaining the blue and yellow even for the relatively short maintenance downtime but there is a tradition in BASL that the general back-up machine [G-BZRS] is red and this covers all company roles including utility, police and air ambulance. [GS]

Ed: See also the image under Great West Air Ambulance and the item on North West AA.

SURREY: After their Eurocopter EC135T2 G-SURY was vandalised last month the resultant reticence to announce the story led the International media to publish a range of spurious storylines as rumours and speculation ran rife.

After the attack during the evening of April 30 Surrey remained silent about the absence of their aircraft so as not to draw attention to the significant reduction in local air support capability.

After the single aircraft operation had been out of service for a week sections of the media picked up on rumours and this led to a variety of not totally inaccurate storylines reciting a war between the police unit and local caravan dwellers, variously referred to as gipsies and Pikers. There was talk of an axe attack on the windows of the helicopter and of a stand-off between unarmed crewmen and the axe wielding interlopers said to dislike the police helicopter watching over them..

Finally, and very reluctantly, the police released a version of the story.

'Damage was caused to the Surrey Police helicopter during an incident at its base at Fair Oaks Airport, Chobham just before 10pm on Thursday 30 April. Five windows were smashed by unknown offenders and the value of the damage is being determined. The incident is part of an ongoing investigation and security measures are being reviewed as part of this. Surrey Police is working with the maintenance contractor to ensure the aircraft is back on line as soon as possible. We continue to have access to air support through agreements with surrounding Forces.'

The meagre release led to even more speculation.

Sufficient to say that the attack led to thousands of pounds worth of unscheduled cost and effectively burst the bubble that it was safe this unit to park the EC135 out in the open at night. The grounding exceeded two weeks because of the extent of the work required to repair the damage. The aircraft returned to service 20 days later.

What made the attack worse was that this had been the second similar event in less than 7 months. In the first attack the damage had followed a similar pattern but was not quite so serious.

Surrey Air Support has been at Fair Oaks for over a decade with little or no security in place and little reason to set it up. The police helicopter is kept on a concrete pad in front of the combined hangar and control room located on the edge of a public airport but is across an active perimeter taxi-way and easily far enough away to be totally immersed in the darkness. There are no additional physical security barriers – fences or blockades – to stop anyone on the airfield approaching the aircraft pad. It could not be secured without massive cost.

That long standing bubble of security is now burst for all time and something will have to be done.

Taking a purely financial viewpoint it is probable that the cost of setting up physical defensive measures at Fair Oaks over the last decade would far outweigh the actual cost of the damage now suffered.

Criminal attacks on police aircraft are not unknown and many units operating from public venues include anti-ram protection as a matter of course. Surrey had been fortunate for many years.

One of the foremost UK examples took place at Liverpool [Speke] Airport [now John Lennon Airport] in January 1990. On that occasion – again at 10pm – an attack was made on AS355F1 G-BOOV by three masked men in a car who managed to breach the airport security and get to the helicopter armed with an axe and fire bombs. The polycarbonate windscreen was struck with the axe, but the handle broke during the attempt. Having succeeded

in breaking one of the flimsier side windows the trio had even less luck with inserting the fire bombs into the cabin. One missed the hole completely and the other struck the side of the fuselage and bounced off harmlessly.

In the event that time the helicopter shrugged off the damage, remaining airworthy, and was back in service very quickly. The dented windscreen remained in service for many years as a triumphant battle scar. The 'criminal endorsement' of that one attack sealed the decision of both Liverpool and Greater Manchester to buy into air support.

And that is where all the negative aspects of this attack should be set aside. Like the attack in Liverpool 19 years ago this costly incident PROVES the worth of air support in the eyes of the criminal.

During the enforced downtime Surrey received air support through the favours of its near neighbours, primarily the Sussex Police MD902 Explorer 'H900' based at Shoreham Airport on the south coast but also involving other near, and not so near, neighbours.

The arrangement displayed one of the many flaws of such relatively long distance mutual assistance in that the Sussex MD902 was said unable to attend when help was requested following a raid on a jewellery store in Cranleigh, because the Sussex helicopter was grounded by localised poor coastal weather conditions.

Police records show that the Surrey helicopter went up 214 times during April – an average of just over seven flights per day, clearly even with the mutual aid much of that capability was lost in the downtime. [Media/PAR/SC]



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UNITED STATES

NATIONAL: The Airborne Law Enforcement Association [ALEA] is currently in talks with their political representatives in Washington with a view to bringing about Federal funding wholly aimed at air support.

The plan is to bring about 50% funding for legacy aircraft [FAA certified airframes over 15 years old or having in excess of 15,000 hours] and the former Department of Defense Public Use airframes [Bell OH-58/MD OH-6 etc] and 100% funding for technology equipment [FLIR etc]. This is an ongoing task and is expected to take some years to bring about. [JDG]

ALABAMA: The Coffee County Sheriff's Department [CCSD] took official delivery of its newly renovated Bell OH-58C helicopter at the Double Bridges Aviation Hangar in Enterprise last month. The will supplement the previous air support provided by the Dale County Sheriff's Department helicopter.

Sheriff Dave Sutton said the helicopter will prove to be a useful tool in crime investigation as well as SAR. During the summer and early fall months, the unit will focus largely on marijuana eradication efforts. The CCSD helicopter will also assist in SAR through Project Life-saver utilization of electronic wristbands fitted to locate those who habitually wander from their familiar surroundings and becoming lost. These may include adult Alzheimer's or children diagnosed with Down's syndrome or autism.

The helicopter was donated by Dale County to the CCSD and immediately began an role equipment fit at Double Bridges Aviation. The alterations included new paint, glazing, Rolls Royce 250 engine and high skids funded by private donations.

The CCSD helicopter will be manned by Fort Rucker civilian instructor pilots J.J. Johnson and Frank Albright, according to Sutton. [Southeast Sun]

FLORIDA

The paragliding operation is termed SOAR, Search Operations Aerial Response. The Palm Bay Police Department will use the aircraft for search and rescue operations involving missing endangered children and adults, surveillance and reconnaissance, locating stolen and discarded vehicles and other property, identifying hazards within the City, photographing crime scenes, and damage assessment after disasters. There are also plans to use the ultralight aircraft for crime prevention through routine aerial patrols over sections of the City that experience higher numbers of residential burglaries and other similar crimes. Although the craft is slow the crew can see a lot from the air and with this setup it's an easy and inexpensive way to bring aerial search capabilities to everyday law enforcement. Lt. Joe Eakins and Lt. Mark Renkens worked to develop the new aerial deterrent for use by the Department. Four officers are currently training.



A powered paraglider is probably the most portable and inexpensive manned motorised aircraft available. It requires no airport, hangar or runway and can be packed so small that most units can fit on the rear seat of a patrol vehicle. A paraglider flies up to 42 mph but is significantly affected by a tailwind or headwind. Fuel capacity is limited to 2-3 gallons, allowing for a maximum flight time of up to three hours giving a range of about 70 miles.

Palm Bay Police acquired two

aerial units from Ray MacMahon Powered Paragliding Equipment based in Cocoa Beach. A Polish company Dudek Synthesis manufacture the reflex wings used on the SOAR aircraft.

Dudek has applied a custom logo on the underside of the Synthesis glider specifically for the Palm Bay Police Department. This logo will distinguish the Palm Bay Police Department's ultralight aircraft from the recreational users. Part of the objective is let residents know the craft is in the air and patrolling.

The motors being used are the Paratoys Mz 100, which will be used for foot launch and the Paratoys Mz 34, which will be used on a quad buggy. The Cocoa Beach based company is donating the initial start up equipment for the first 6-8 months of programme testing after which the Police Department may use donated funds and funds from forfeited assets seized from criminal suspects to purchase the units at a cost of approximately \$25,000. [PBFP]

MARYLAND: The Maryland State Police has been selected by the US Homeland Security Department to trial a computerised system designed to 'assist' in the performance of Airborne Critical Infrastructure Patrols [ACIP].

At last months ALEA Northeast region Safety Seminar the new system was presented as 'work in progress' that might be expected to see wide adoption across the US ALE community.

Currently the majority of operators add ACIP to existing sorties – both patrols and return from mission – and the results are usually simply noted on paper and filed. The new system computerises the effort by providing the crew with images and information on the target, pointing out what it should look like and providing a number of 'tick box' stages of the inspection process. In this manner it is seen that total strangers to the target will have some background information on the structure to assist them with their first inspection.

Ed: Where this system, as proposed, is flawed is that it goes beyond information into a 'requirement.' Even crews familiar with the target are expected to 'tick the boxes' – performance indicators - intended to show they have been there and inspected the target in a manner acceptable to a, presumably office-bound, reviewing supervisor. This computerisation of ACIP inspections may not be a bad idea to inform strange crews and keep an overall view on when and where the schemes targets are inspected but the underlying aspect of supervision suggests that while a team of police officers can be trusted to fly a \$5M helicopter they cannot be trusted to look out of the window with the eyes of a law enforcer. Devalue the trust in a crew and you stand to lose the team.

The current equipment utilises a separate hand held laptop which clearly adds to the cockpit clutter and currently makes use of the third crew member Maryland SP can field in their Medevac AS365N helicopters. Most US units do not have that luxury. It is envisaged that after the bugs are worked through the system might be incorporated into a more small crew user friendly mapping system attracting Federal funding.





Helitech

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NEW JERSEY: The State Police has named their new helipad facility in Monroe after Dr. Jerome Quint a 72-years old divisional physician with the NJSP. Although retired from his private practice in Warwick, Quint remains assistant division physician of the State Police.

To underline the worth of the elderly doctor receiving this recognition Capt. Stephen Nevins, the commander of the State Police barracks in Monroe invited around 200 guests to the naming event. Many of the guests were members of the NJSP simply there to mark the day the man who made them well was recognised [NJSP]

NORTH CAROLINA: The Brunswick County Sheriff's Office is pulling out of a multi-agency agreement in which area police agencies share two DoD surplus Bell OH-58 Kiowa helicopters, and it is arranging to get one of its own.

Brunswick's Chief Deputy Charlie Miller has confirmed that the sheriff's office has sent a letter to the Wilmington Police Department, giving it 60 days' notice that it will be pulling out of the contract. The cost of Brunswick's share of the helicopters is about \$20,000 a year and they believe going it alone will save them money.

The agreement, called Southeastern North Carolina Airborne Law Enforcement, or SABLE, is a partnership between the Wilmington and Leland police departments and the sheriff's offices in Pender and Brunswick counties that started in January 2007. The New Hanover County Sheriff's Office has had its own helicopter since 2006.

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The Leland Police Department will continue with SABLE, at least for the 2009-2010 fiscal year, at a cost of between \$6,000 and \$7,000 a year. It is expected that Brunswick County dropping out will affect the financial shares of others in the SABLE agreement.

TEXAS: The Comal County Sheriff's Office received approval last month to take part in the National Institute of Justice Law Enforcement's Aviation Technology Program, giving the Sheriff's Office a small, fixed-wing airplane of Italian origin called the Tecnam Eaglet.

The scheme is a federally supported initiative designed to explore how useful alternative types of aircraft can be in assisting local law enforcement agencies. The plane is being paid for entirely by the grant with the exception of fuel costs.

Both Hays and Comal counties will share the use of an Eaglet, a small, single-prop plane. The Sheriff's Office currently has aircraft it can use through other law enforcement agencies, but this will be the first to which it will have direct access.

Tecnam designed the P92 Eaglet after re-examining the light aircraft market and determining a significant need existed for a robust trainer for all levels of flight.

The Eaglet features increased side visibility, smooth aerodynamic lines, a low profile modular panel able to accommodate a wide range of avionics, and comfortable seating with excellent leg room and support. Its roomy cabin with in flight adjustable seats, steerable nose-wheel, toe brakes, all aluminum construction, and spring steel landing gear.



SEARCH & RESCUE

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AIR AMBULANCE

GERMANY

DRF: Developments in the emergency and intensive care medicine were the focus of the Annual Medical Meeting of the DRF Luftrettung. Around 100 participants, including leading paramedics and paramedics of the HEMS bases of the DRF Luftrettung as well as guests from the Federal Police HEMS bases met at the end of March in Bad Saarow. The event offers an important discussion forum and spreads new professional knowledge and is aimed primarily at the 42 HEMS operated in Germany, Austria and Italy with more than 50 helicopters for emergency rescue and intensive care transport between hospitals. Approximately 700 emergency physicians, 400 paramedics, 200 pilots, and approximately 100 engineers are on duty for the DRF Luftrettung. Three ambulance aircraft are used for worldwide patient transport. www.drf-luftrettung.de

NORWAY

CAE has signed contracts to design and manufacture two full-flight simulators (FFS) and associated CAE Simfinity™ training devices for Lufttransport AS and an undisclosed customer from the Middle-East. These contracts include the first two FFS sales that CAE has announced for fiscal year 2010.

Lufttransport AS, a Norway-based airline that flies primarily air ambulance services has purchased a CAE 5000 Series Beech King Air B200 FFS. This marks the first time Lufttransport has ordered its own simulation equipment, which will be installed in Oslo, Norway. The CAE 5000 Series Beech King Air B200 FFS will be delivered in early 2010 to Lufttransport.

Lufttransport AS, based in Tromsø Northern Norway and established in 1955, is a specialist in evacuation medical services (EMS/HEMS) on contract with the Norwegian government as well as sea pilot and arctic operations with a modern fleet of both rotary and fixed wing aircraft. Lufttransport in 2009 will operate the largest fleet of new Beech King Air B200 aircraft with the Proline-21 cockpit.

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO: The newly commissioned \$3.7M National Helicopter Services Limited (NHSL) Foreshore Helipad is a significant feature in the Government's overall waterfront development plan off Audrey Jeffers Highway in Mucurapo.

The helipad, which was opened three years after receiving Cabinet approval, had the potential to deliver tremendous value to air transportation as well to the energy, trade tourism, health and social services sectors. One of its immediate benefits was the removal of Medevac flights from the Queen's Park Savannah, a public recreational area, which was not available on a number of days due to high activity (Carnival, cricket and kite-flying) and which was also not suitable for night-time landings. The helipad is not primarily an emergency services facility however and it will serve as a drop-off point for ministers of Government and senior officials.

From a commercial and business perspective the helipad would allow the NHSL to provide services between the north and south of the country without the need for the added commute to its main base in Camden, Couva.



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UNITED KINGDOM GREAT WEST



Seen here on May 16 at the Helicopter Museum, Weston-s-Mare, Avon the former North Devon Air Ambulance has now reappeared as the air ambulance serving the next county north – the Great West Air Ambulance and in a new colour scheme. The 1974 vintage BO105DBS4 S.135/914 still carries its former personalised marks. Owned and operated by Bond Air Services Limited [BASL] under lease prior to the Devon contract it was G-WMAA with the West Midlands Air Ambulance .[information and image by Alan Norris]

The last new-build Bölkow [Eurocopter] BO105 has been delivered from the Eurocopter plant in Canada. Initially developed in the mid-1960s by Bölkow Engineering of Ottobrunn near Munich, Germany, the light twin engine, multi-purpose utility helicopter, performed its maiden flight in 1967, Production began under Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm (MBB), which later became a part of Eurocopter. Eurocopter continued to produce the BO105 until 2001. Production passed to the plant in Canada where the type was received certification in 1987. It is believed that some 1,008 BO105's remain in service from the total of 1,407 built and delivered to 190 customers in 52 countries. The recipient of the final BO105 is British Columbia based Dam Helicopters Inc., a company that performs a number of roles including fire fighting and air ambulance. [Shephard]



MIDLAND: Charity street collections for the Midlands Air Ambulance have been suspended amid allegations that donors were not being told that half of the money collected was being retained by the commercial collecting company.

The company – the JHP collection agency – stopped collections some time ago after a ‘whistle-blower’ revealed the scale of the rake-off being taken from collections. The agency was said not to be issuing solicitation statements to each donor explaining the level of the levy small team of dedicated volunteers on behalf of the charity. This type of active collection, used for some 15 years since the operation was set up, is distinct from the usual collection tins where 100% of the contents go to the air ambulance.

The air ambulance was already planning to cease agency collections over the next 12 months, which it said were a mainstay of many large-scale charities’ fund-raising operations. Street collectors have been instrumental in raising the annual £5.6M cost of running three life-saving helicopters and halting them now will place a significant strain on funds.

NORTH WEST: The acquisition of a second aircraft for the region is underway. Bond Air Services [BASL] has withdrawn the second police contract back-up EC135T2 G-SPHU. This has now been resprayed from its former blue and yellow scheme to an overall yellow to undertake air ambulance operations in the North West. It is currently at Blackpool relieving the primary aircraft but is expected to start up a new operation at Barton Airport, near Eccles, later in the summer.

Undertaking the task of overseeing the aircraft fleet is Andy Adamson, the former Unit executive Officer of the Merseyside Police helicopter unit.

The NWAA is a charitable organisation that provides airborne and quick-response emergency medical services for more than 7 million people in 5,500 sq. miles of north west England. The area is noted for its uneven terrain, remoteness and poor weather conditions.

Events are currently underway to fund both helicopters and the running costs of a new road vehicle for those days and nights where flying is not possible. A specially-equipped Jeep Grand Cherokee is put into use as an ambulance. The Jeep SUV is equipped with the Quadra-Trac II four-wheel drive system and a 3.0L V-6 CRD with 215 hp and 376 lb-ft of torque, allowing it to tackle off-road conditions to reach where standard ambulances cannot go. Fuel consumption is a key point for the Jeep, as it is able to achieve a mixed rating of 23 mpg. The Grand Cherokee was donated earlier this year by Jeep.

On average, the NWAA is called out four times a day, with the number of calls rising to 10 per day in the summer.

UNITED STATES

NATIONAL: US based Air Med News has said that they believe that the FAA reaction to the high level of air ambulance crashes in the recent past is to introduce voluntary regulations intended to improve the safety of helicopter emergency medical services from 2011.

The proposed regulations, which should be available for public comment by the end of this year or the beginning of 2010, will incorporate a range of safety initiatives, such as additional pilot training and the installation of safety equipment. Each of these will rely upon voluntary acceptance of measures already recommended by the FAA, but not taken up widely, over a number of years.

Despite again embracing voluntary compliance John Allen, director of the FAA's Flight Standards Service, admitted to a House of Representatives subcommittee that it might not be enough. The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee's Subcommittee on Aviation is investigating the increase in crashes.

Between 1998 and 2008, there were 146 helicopter EMS crashes with 131 fatalities. The greatest number of crashes in any 11-month period occurred between December 2007 and October 2008, killed 35 people.

FLORIDA: Punta Gorda, Florida based Air Trek has been grounded since May 24, 2008, when the FAA first issued an emergency order indefinitely suspending its certificate, pending compliance with the federal aviation regulations. On June 10, 2008, the FAA withdrew the suspension and revoked the licence instead. Prior to the revocation, Air Trek had been in operation for thirty years with no history of violation.

The revocation order contained over 50 allegations and violations but when it went to court in April the vast majority of them was withdrawn leading the judge to turn on the FAA's attorney and his case against the air ambulance provider.

The NTSB ordered the FAA and Air Trek to work together to resolve the FAA's concerns and demonstrate that Air Trek can properly operate in accordance with its certificate and regulatory requirements. As of April 30, 2009, the FAA had not established a schedule for Air Trek to demonstrate compliance. [media]

PENNSYLVANIA: Chautauqua County's Starflight medical helicopter service unveiled two replacement helicopters last month. The identical early model McDonnell Douglas built MD900 Explorers were built in the mid 1990's and had been used by the Allegheny General Hospital Development Authority in Pittsburgh. When they became available, Starflight decided to buy them to replace an earlier helicopter and an army surplus Bell UH-1 Huey that will now be used only as a backup. Chautauqua County government provided a \$3.7M loan to buy the helicopters.

Starflight is a joint operation between the Chautauqua County Sheriff's Office and WCA Services Corp. responsible for an area of more than 15,000 square miles in the Southern Tier.

Starflight currently averages about 300 flights a year but that is expected to increase with two much newer helicopters available to transport critical care patients to Erie, Buffalo and other trauma centers on the shores of Lake Eyrie.

FIRE

This Ayres S2R-550 Thrush 5B-CKQ [c/n T65HG-019DC] is operated by the Cyprus Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment as a water bomber alongside a number of seasonal loan resources including Kamov helicopters. The Larnaca based aircraft is seen here at RAF Akrotiri involved in training the airport fire crews in replenishment. C Dave Hedges AB



CYPRUS

The operator is due to take delivery of a new two-seat Air Tractor AT-802 from Air Tractor Europe in Spain in October or November. This new delivery will offer an increase in payload of roughly 50% compared to the Thrush. www.airtractoreurope.com [Dave Hedges/AB/ATE]

At the Paris Air Show in June Air Tractor will be displaying two examples of the AT802. One will be an amphibious single seat AT802A and the other a new armed and armoured version, the AT802J.

UNITED STATES

It is difficult to predict wildfire suppression needs early in the season and in the past available funds have proven inadequate.

The supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2009, has included the sum of \$50M, the requested amount, to be set aside for the wildfire suppression and emergency rehabilitation activities of the Department of the Interior. This funding will only be accessed if other funding streams become exhausted. The funds are available to transfer to the Secretary of Agriculture for fire fighting activities. [HAI]

SEARCH AND RESCUE

CANADA

COAST GUARD: Members of the 103 Search and Rescue Squadron, Canadian Armed Forces and other agencies--who were involved in a 2008 search and rescue operation of a French vessel--received medals from French officials in recognition of their efforts during a ceremony at the Canadian Coast Guard Station in St. John's, N.L., on April 24.

In the early hours of December 2, 2008, 103 Squadron was informed of an overdue vessel, the *Cap Blanc*, from Saint-Pierre et Miquelon.

Within minutes, a Cormorant helicopter and its crew were on their way to the last known position of the *Cap Blanc*. Upon arriving at the scene, the crew saw that the vessel had capsized with only the upturned bow visible.

The Canadian Coast Guard Cutter *W. Jackman* and the RCMP police vessel *Murray* were at the scene as well. A second Cormorant was launched; the plan was for the SAR techs to dive to the overturned vessel and search for the four crew members who may have still been inside. As the SAR techs were preparing for the dive, the *Cap Blanc* suddenly slipped into the ocean and sank.

The search for the missing crewmembers went on for three days. Crews from 103 Squadron and 413 Transport and Rescue Squadron in Greenwood, N.S., along with members of the Canadian Coast Guard and the RCMP, searched the Placentia Bay area with hope of finding the *Cap Blanc* crewmembers. Unfortunately, the search was officially called off after three days. [CAF]

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UNITED KINGDOM

SKY WATCH: The Suffolk Unit of Sky Watch Civil Air Patrol has been established at Beccles. The Chief Pilot John Elliot, operating an MT-03 autogyro, ex RAF Avro Shackleton pilot and the driving force in setting up the new Unit. The Training Officer is Joe Marden, he now flies a Eurostar but has a background in the Army Air Corps where he flew the Westland Lynx.

Of the other pilots in the unit Ken Duffy is a Flying Instructor with access to various aircraft types, Bo Maggs brings a Schweizer 296C helicopter, Peter Taylor a Rans S6 and Terry Powley another Eurostar. Five Observers include an ex RAF navigator and all of have undergone Observer Training.

The Unit is already engaged in air observation and search flying and has carried out two missing person searches with Suffolk Police.



PICTURE : SWCAP President Wing Commander Ken Wallis, MBE (standing) cuts the ribbon opening the Beccles Unit's office and crew room. Chief Pilot John Elliot is seated on Ken's left and Michael Powell (Chief Pilot SWCAP Norfolk Unit) is sitting on Ken's right.

UNITED STATES

FEDERAL: The first production MH-60T Jayhawk Medium Range Recovery Helicopter, tail number CG6028, completed its first flight on May 5, in preparation for delivery to the US Coast Guard. The MH-60T project will upgrade 42 in-service HH-60J helicopters with an enhanced Electro-Optic/Infrared sensor system as well as a radar sensor system, and airborne use of force (AUF) capability to enhance Coast Guard mission requirements. The MH-60T is scheduled to achieve initial operational capability (IOC) this fall/autumn at Coast Guard Air Station Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

Two HH-60J helicopters, tail numbers CG6017 and CG6027, have already been converted to the T model by the Coast Guard. These aircraft are being used to support crew transition training at the Aviation Training Center in Mobile, Alabama.

The Coast Guard now possesses one of the most powerful tools in SAR today with recent equipment upgrades to its Lockheed Hercules fleet. All operational HC-130H (26 examples)



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and HC-130J (3 examples) aircraft are now equipped with the Rockwell Collins DF-430-F Multi-mission Direction Finding (DF) system, which has already enabled Coast Guard aircrews to save 47 lives since its introduction to the service in 2006; a number of these SAR cases occurred after searches with older style direction finders were unsuccessful.

The DF-430 is a proven, off-the-shelf, multi-purpose direction finding system that can home on both the 406 MHz signal as well as the legacy 121.5 MHz signal; these two signals emanate from an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) when activated in an emergency situation. Older style direction finders could only detect the weaker 121.5 MHz signal, the range of which is approximately 5 miles. In comparison, Coast Guard aircraft have locked on to the more robust 406 MHz signal from up to 160 miles away (at altitude).

Currently, 89 Coast Guard fixed-wing and helicopter aircraft are DF-430 equipped:

- 31 MH-65C "Dolphin" Multi-mission Cutter Helicopters
- 20 HU-25 "Falcon" Medium Range Surveillance Aircraft
- 26 HC-130H "Hercules" Long Range Surveillance Aircraft
- Seven HC-144A "Ocean Sentry" Maritime Patrol Aircraft
- Three HC-130J "Super Hercules" Long Range Surveillance Aircraft
- Two MH-60T "Jayhawk" Medium Range Recovery Helicopters

The Coast Guard's Assistant Commandant for Capability has cleared the HC-144A Ocean Sentry Maritime Patrol Aircraft for some operational missions. The IOC clearance is a major step forward for the HC-144A project, which will deliver 36 new aircraft and associated Mission System Pallets by 2020. The HC-144A is replacing the Coast Guard's aging fleet of HU-25 Guardian (Falcon) jets.

INDUSTRY

In the past month the two UK based airborne sensor suppliers opened significant enhancements to their support operations.

FLIR Systems introduced its newly-expanded service centre at 10 Kings Hill Road, in West Malling, Kent, UK on April 30. The event was treated as a military event with Admiral Tony Johnstone-Burt, commander joint helicopter command, formally opening the facility but the guests were a mix of military, commercial and police.

The investment in FLIR Systems' UK service centre enhances support for more than 450 systems in the UK and 20 other countries across Europe. As became evident on the day this is not a modern equipment only facility and side by side with the latest sensors a single example of the venerable BSS 400 sensor turret stood awaiting its turn in the refurbishment cycle. Broadcast Surveillance Systems [BSS] was the original UK company incorporated into FLIR

The improved facility is incorporated within the existing and familiar building West Malling. No additional space has been taken up but the area has been rethought and the equipment levels improved to enhance the efficiency of the support service.

Although a service facility was recently brought on line in Dubai – primarily to support mili-



tary requirements in Iraq and Afghanistan - this UK based facility is at the core of the FLIR Systems support for many areas of the World. Its position as a centre of excellence led them to pull in some of their key US staff members to ensure the guests received accurate briefings.

Today the primary military and law enforcement sensor for promotion into Europe is seen to be the Star Safire HD. FSI sees itself well placed in the quest to gain acceptability on the forthcoming SAR-H competition based on the very high current percentage of market penetration of the UK military SAR.

Across in the US smaller sensors are the rule – the standard gimbal on all newly upgraded US Coast Guard aircraft is the 9inch FSI ‘Talon’ – the growth product of the original Inframetrics production line out of Boston.

FLIR Systems continues to work very closely with the independent Zeiss, formerly Denel, in South Africa but the recent reacquisition of the Polytech brand has brought another line of small specialist sensors to the wide FSI product line. Cobalt is a 7 inch sensor weighing just 17 pounds ideal for the lighter end of the market. There are 8,000 UAV cameras out there.

A major product in the Middle East is the static surveillance camera system. Used for border surveillance as well as on war front these machines sit in direct sunlight in positions open to the blast of sand and get devoid of cooling airflow. Having re-engineered the cooling system in the light of experience these systems are expected to survive unattended for 6,000 hours at a time.

L3 Wescam, the other major provider of sensors to the airborne emergency services in the UK has also enhanced the quality of its support services. The Defence Support Group [DSG], an existing Ministry of Defence facility located at Donnington near Telford, Salop and previously primarily associated with military contracts has widened its capabilities to encompass the service and repair of sensors for civilian operators in the region. DSG brings together under one organisation the merged ABRO and DARA business units and effectively now supports approximately 100 turrets in the UK, and orders placed for more.

DSG has been a certified Wescam Service Centre for the past 5 years. In July 2008, L-3 WESCAM

expanded DSG’s service capabilities to create a service facility that offers MX-Series customers within the United Kingdom an enhanced level of service. The expanded capability of the facility will allow deep maintenance of systems that previously had to be shipped back to the factory in Canada.

Until recently, Wescam MX-Series customers in the UK (excluding the MoD) received their service support through a combination of HeliMedia (located at Staverton Airport, Gloucestershire) and Wescam (in Burlington, Canada). HeliMedia provides the first level, in-field support with Wescam trained technicians responding directly to faults or concerns reported by the customer. HeliMedia’s technicians are trained and equipped to resolve approximately 2/3 of faults either in the field or at the HeliMedia facility in Staverton. For the remaining third, the turret has previously needed to be returned to Canada. Despite the average repair turnaround times in the Canadian facility being quoted as just 30 days, the shipping of the turrets across the Atlantic and the hassles of dealing with customs could lead to the customer being without their turret for considerably longer at times.

Wescam recognised this as an area for improvement for UK customers, and commenced expansion of the DSG facility in Telford last year to minimise the occurrence of a turret needing to be returned to Canada for a repair.

When it was set up the Wescam Service Centre at DSG was exclusively for UK MoD, with all MX-Series repairs taking place within the facility and no in-field support. To improve the facility’s quick repair-response and further decrease service turnaround time DSG introduced new equipment including a collimator & IR camera test station and additional trained staff.

The collimator is a system of optical benches and infinity mirrors that allow the payload to be repaired, and the replacement units to be re-aligned to the highest tolerances that deliver

the rock solid stabilised images for which Wescam are renowned. DSG are now able to complete at least 95% of repairs on site.

Towards the end of 2008 a trial period began and, where possible, all MX-Series repairs on UK-owned turrets were completed in the UK.

In one recent instance a customer reported that their IR concentricity between 27 and 135 FOV was misaligned. A HeliMedia technician went to the customer and conducted an on-site appraisal on the turret. Through various diagnostic trouble shooting it was decided that the turret should be repaired by DSG. It was transported back to Helimedia that evening (March 17, 2009). The following morning it was taken to DSG. At 16:00 the same day (March 18) DSG contacted HeliMedia to report that the fault was repaired and that HeliMedia could collect the system the next day, post sealant and purge. The turret was collected on the 19th and delivered back to the customer at 14:30 the same day. The turret was tested with the customer present, and the repair action was completed with HeliMedia issuing of a Certificate of Conformity.

With the trial period completed, and teething troubles with the new set-up resolved, Wescam held the official launch day on May 6.

The launch day comprised of short presentations on Wescam, DSG and the capabilities of the new Service Centre followed by a tour of the facility. The tour took in repair and service rooms and provided an opportunity for the visitors to talk with the engineers, see the spare parts inventory and the new test equipment, including the collimator.

People were introduced to the MX-15i, an integrated turret, and the 3rd Generation InSb IR camera with PLAP (Pixel-based Local Area Processing).

There was a demonstration of MX-Raid a remote diagnostics capability primarily aimed at customers with turrets in inhospitable places where the potential to resolve an issue immediately from Canada instead of sending an engineer out into a potentially unsafe environment is of benefit to all parties.

A MX-15 turret was connected to the MX-Raid unit and live via satellite an engineer in Canada controlled the turret showing how he was able to diagnose faults remotely. The MX-Raid capability is not envisaged as being a required facility in the UK Mainland just yet!

Soon the DSG facility will be made available to other European customers, as part of a strategic increase in the global service and support provided by Wescam.

Coming up this month – and the page 7 advert in this edition says pretty much everything there is to say on the product at this stage – L3 Wescam are launching a new sensor to the market at this month's Paris Air Show. You can expect more details on the yet to be publicly announced MX-10 next month.

The MX-10 is not the only recent addition to the L-3 airborne sensor fold. At the Northeast ALEA event last month L-3 Sonoma EO were standing next to L-3 Wescam as a separate entity and marketing their own product. L-3 Sonoma EO has continued development of the Model 12 line and the current offering, brought out last year, is the Model 12 DS/TS 650.

The 12-650 is next step in the evolution of the Model 12 family of surveillance turrets. Based on the 12-DS/TS-200, the 12-650 utilises MAST (Multi-Axis Stabilization Technology), a high performance 5-axis stabilisation design. The 12-650 is equipped with the latest sensor technology and the M12 family has proven its exceptional reliability, flying for over fifteen years on rotary, fixed wing and unmanned platforms. Our low cost 12" surveillance system is specifi-



cally designed for platforms that require lower weight solutions without sacrificing imaging performance.

The 12-650 Dual Sensor system combines a 640x512 3-5µm Thermal Imager with an advanced off the shelf visible camera to provide high-resolution daylight colour television images and clear night-time thermal viewing.

Ideal for Mass Screening. In today's world of fast transit global travel, outbreaks of infectious disease will cross national and international boundaries in a matter of hours. The SARS, Bird 'Flu and Swine 'Flu viruses have affected tens of thousands of people and businesses with massive disruption to all people in all walks of life.



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The camera can detect temperature differences as small as 0.05°C and with its high resolution 110,000 pixel detector and lens options, covers a wide or narrow field of view as required for transit monitoring.

Dart Aerospace Ltd. has received EASA approval of their Protective Trim Kits for the Bell 204, 205, 212, 214 and 412 models. Transport Canada approval has been previously received; FAA approval is currently pending.

DART Protective Trim Kits feature stainless steel doublers that protect aircraft skin and structures in often damaged areas.

The Door Sill Protective Trim Kit is designed to protect against damage to the crew door sills from traffic or from impacting with door. This kit completes both the crew doors and installs easily into existing rivet locations.

The Step Protective Trim Kit consists of two stainless steel doublers that install around the RH post steps between the crew and hinge panel door to protect the aircraft skin on the post from damage during maintenance or daily inspections.

The Fuel Panel Protective Trim Kit installs easily into existing rivet locations and consists of a stainless steel doubler that protects the aircraft skin below the aircraft fuel cap from fuel cap damage during refuelling.

All kits are available separately and may be painted to match the aircraft's paint scheme.



Goodrich Corporation has acquired **Cloud Cap Technology**, Inc. [CCT] and this will now become part of Goodrich's ISR Systems business unit. Cloud Cap will continue to provide the same focus on customers with product development and technical support - enhanced by the additional support of Goodrich and its wide range of technical expertise.

The acquisition provides Goodrich with an increased presence in the rapidly growing small military UAV market, and also expands its ability to offer complete imaging solutions for these platforms. CCT see themselves as having been successful in building themselves up but Goodrich can provide the support needed to grow the business.

Ten years ago Ross Hoag and Bill Vaglianti signed the original articles of incorporation for Cloud Cap Technology, Inc. Since that time Cloud Cap has grown into a 25 person company with over 200 customers in over 28 countries. The Piccolo autopilot has achieved over 2,000 unit sales, is featured on over 40 unique platforms and has become a standard of excellence in the UAS world. The TASE gimbals are featured on manned, unmanned, boat, and aerostat platforms in applications as diverse as forest fire management, law enforcement, environmental monitoring, utility inspection and surveillance, with sales topping 250 units. Crista sensor heads are featured on manned and unmanned platforms, renewable energy applications and athlete motion research applications, with sales in excess of 4000 units. Innovative R&D has been at the core of Cloud Cap's success for more than 10 years and will continue to be the driver for future growth and success.

As reported in PAN, in March CCT flew down to the Redlands Police Department to test updated scene steering and object tracking algorithms in the ALE environment. TFO's reportedly noted the reduced operator workload created by the new scene stabilisation software and were able to lock on a scene and "scene steer" allowing immediate support of ground officers in performing their duties.

The US Coast Guard is still in the market for a tactical unmanned aerial system (UAS) to extend the surveillance reach of the new National Security Cutter fleet.

The Coast Guard terminated a planned vertical takeoff UAV, the Bell Eagle Eye, but has since monitored other options with the Schweizer 333 based US Navy **FireScout** pilotless helicopter appears continuing to attract as it moves through its development.

As with all other operators the Coast Guard continues to probe the area of flight rules in National Air Space with the FAA. In the meantime the unmanned mission will fall to manned helicopters and perhaps high altitude UAS, like the Predator B being used by Customs and Border Protection. Any real progress is expected to be at least two years away. [AvWk]

Aero-Composites Limited on the Isle of Wight has announced the opening of a new state of the art aircraft paint facility on the island.

The facility has been built with a view to providing greater availability to the aircraft refinishing market whilst ensuring the best value for money for customers.

The company utilises the latest in horizontal linear flow filtration systems to ensure the highest quality paint finish. The paint facility, which is fully climate controlled, was custom designed and built for the company by AJW Construction and can accommodate a range of general aviation aircraft up to the size of a Twin Otter or helicopters up to the size of a Sea King.

The first customer to have his aircraft painted at the new facility was Piper owner, Peter Jenness. His aircraft visited the facility for a full strip, primer and refinish in a bespoke scheme.

An excellent example of the company's work can be seen in the photograph of the BN2B-26 Islander. The aircraft received a full paint strip, corrosion check and composite components repair. The aircraft was then primed using AkzoNobel primer and was painted using AkzoNobel alumi grip HS Snow white, it was then remasked and painted to the customers paint scheme using DC base coat in tourmarine metallic blue. The aircraft was finished with 2 coats of clear lacquer. The complete work was carried out in 10 days.

Aero-Composites Ltd., T +44 20 3371 4000 fax 4001 www.aero-composites.co.uk

At EBACE on May 11 **Piaggio Aero Industries** launched a completely new web-site reflecting Piaggio Aero's new image. www.piaggioaero.com

The new styling was introduced early in March this year when the company became official sponsor of the Scuderia Ferrari, the Ferrari racing Team. The new Piaggio Aero image is clean, contemporary and displaying clear evidence of the colours of Piaggio Aero's Italian home. The completely new web-site marks an important milestone for the renowned image of the Italian aviation company.

The site boasts a wide range of content that includes full corporate and company product information – covering aircraft and aero engines – including a complete description and a full showcase section of the Piaggio Aero P-180 Avanti II business aircraft.

American Eurocopter has recently celebrated the first US overhaul of an EC135 main gear box. Previously EC135 customers needing overhaul and repair services had to return units to the manufacturer, ZF Luftfahrttechnik in Germany. Now EC135 customers can receive these overhaul and repair services from American Eurocopter.

American Eurocopter received approval to repair and overhaul EC135 main gear boxes at the beginning of April and now offers local repair and overhaul services for all EC135 dynamic components. With this first completion, these high quality services are now available to US customers with a reduced turn around time.

In the United States there are over 200 EC135 that will benefit from the same high-quality, certified overhaul and repair services that they received from ZF.

The preparation to add the EC135 repairs and overhauls to the Dynamic Component Repair facility at American Eurocopter was quite extensive. It included the certification of American Eurocopter staff, and the acquisition of initial inventory and tooling. One of the major achievements was the modification of the company's multi-purpose test bench. In addition to the test bench's existing capabilities for BO105, BK117, AS365, EC120 and EC145 main gear boxes, the scope has been enlarged to include the EC135 main gear box.

In response to market interest for the *Phoenix*^{CRJ} in an air ambulance version, **Project Phoenix**, the Dubai-based specialist in converting airliners for VIP/executive use, has signed an agreement with Spectrum Aeromed of the United States to develop such a variant – as either a dedicated air ambulance version or quick change fit option. Spectrum Aeromed, headquartered at Hector International Airport in Fargo, North Dakota, provides customised air medical and air ambulance equipment for fixed and rotary wing aircraft around the world.

Under the terms of the agreement, Spectrum Aeromed will provide Project Phoenix with a custom-designed medical interior and full range of medical equipment that they can offer to prospective customers who see the *Phoenix*^{CRJ} as a suitable platform for medevac flying. The company will be Project Phoenix's preferred and recommended aeromed provider and Spectrum will refer any interested clients to Project Phoenix.

The two companies have agreed to work together and review future conversion of other (larger) airliner types, such as the Boeing 737 and Airbus A320 series. Currently, Spectrum Aeromed boasts 50-plus STCs on some 250 aircraft types.

The *Phoenix*^{CRJ} programme was conceived to offer buyers of large executive aircraft a viable and cost-effective alternative to new business aircraft models in the 2,200 – 3,000nm range. Jet Asia of Macau is the first operator to fly the Project Phoenix VIP-configured Bombardier CRJ-200 on behalf of owner Ritz Pacific Ltd, accepting its aircraft later this month.

Project Phoenix is bolstering its sales team with two significant appointments. Mike Creed, a well known figure in the business aviation industry, and previously with Action Aviation for three years joins Project Phoenix as Vice President Sales.

David Barker joins Project Phoenix as Sales Director, based out of Tucson, Arizona covering the western USA.

While mentioning Action Aviation brings to mind the **Sino Swearingen SJ30** and its long mooted role as an air ambulance. This remains at brochure level and has yet to be certified, the whole could be done on a Service Bulletin and Action Aviation have already made contact and discussed exactly such a work with an EU based completion company. If the current talks go to plan it is hoped that an installation could be completed and certified in the next 12 months.

The SJ30 is claimed to be an ideal fast medevac equipped aircraft. The speed is M0.83 (486kts) and the range with 3 passengers is claimed to be 2,500nm at FL410 (41,000ft).

The aircraft is single pilot and FAR 23 fully certified status (EASA certification in work and expected by end of the third quarter this year. Production examples have been delivered and the factory in San Antonio, Texas is now re-organised for a gradual ramp up of series production during 2010-2011. [AA]

Policing Minister Vernon Coaker announced in December the allocation of £30M to police forces to further extend the use of hand-held computers by officers.

The programme is managed by the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) on behalf of the Home Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO). The devices allow on-the-spot access to information while on patrol and cut bureaucracy.

Initially, government provided £50M to deliver 10,000 devices by the end of September 2008 for phase one of the programme. This target was exceeded and there are now over 13,000 hand-held computers being used by front-line officers.

The second phase of funding reaffirms the successful completion of the first phase of the mobile information programme. £30M has been made available for phase two and the applications were assessed by the NPIA - 26 forces, the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA), and the Association of Chief Police Officers Terrorism Allied Matters (ACPO TAM) have been awarded funding. This new money building on the existing investment will provide a total of 30,000 handheld computers to be in use by March 2010. All forces across England, Scotland and Wales have now been given a portion of funding to roll-out the Mobile Information Programme. [NPIA]

Eurocopter has signed a contract with **Heli-Union** to supply the first ever simulator for the Dauphin AS365 N3. Developed and built in partnership with Thales, the simulator will be operational from 2011 at Héli-Union's training centre in Angoulême, in the Charente region of France. The project has the support of Angoulême's Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI).

The new flight simulator will be dedicated to the training needs of Heli-Union, and other civil and military customers. It will also have a dual qualification: that of Level 3 Flight Training Device (FTD) and Level B Full Flight Simulator (FFS). The overall target is 3,000 hours of training per year—an average of more than eight hours per day.

The simulator will allow operators to perform several types of training, ranging from ab initio and recurrent training to specific programs covering failure procedures, IFR, offshore and SAR operations, night flight (night vision goggles), flights over mountainous regions and low altitude navigation.

Since the aircraft was launched in 1975, more than 950 helicopters from the Dauphin range have been sold in 64 countries. Some 300 customers operate the Dauphin today, including the US Coast Guard, the French Navy, the Brazilian Army and many offshore operators. Approximately 50 new Dauphin helicopters are sold each year.

Héli-Union, the leading French civil helicopter operator, has a fleet of 30 Dauphin helicopters and its activities range from offshore operations in Africa, Southeast Asia and Latin America for oil & gas companies, to pilot training, helicopter maintenance and technical and logistical aircraft support.

From May 18 **Honeywell Aerospace** has been offering their new phone support operation in Phoenix, Arizona. The focus has been, and continues to be, a simplified and improving

support package consisting of the new centralised 24/7 Honeywell Aerospace Customer Support Operation in Phoenix, Arizona; a team of fully-trained, professional customer service representatives and managers, a single point of entry to ensure a consistent level of service with all calls monitored and tracked until closed.

All contact numbers remain unchanged at +1 800-601-3099 (US/Canada) and +1 602-365-3099 (International).

The **EU executive** formally asked Italy to comply with an EU court ruling over contracts for helicopter purchases, warning it could face a fine if it failed to do so within two months.

In April last year, the EU's highest court ruled that Italy broke EU law by buying helicopters only from Italian company Agusta, without any competitive tendering, to meet the requirements of several military and civilian corps.

The Commission said that if Italian authorities did not comply within two months, it may refer the case to the European Court of Justice and ask it to impose a fine.

Italy has cited national security grounds for not holding public tenders for the helicopters, used in forestry and civil protection as well as policing.

Breeze-Eastern Corporation of Liberty Avenue, Union New Jersey has announced that it has entered into a lease agreement for the relocation of its corporate offices and manufacturing facility to an existing facility located in Whippany, New Jersey. The lease provides for a term of ten years, with two renewal terms of five years each, exercisable at the discretion of the Company. The relocation will require the build out, within the existing structure, of offices and manufacturing space.

Breeze-Eastern Corporation (<http://www.breeze-eastern.com>) is the world's leading designer and manufacturer of sophisticated lifting devices for military and civilian aircraft, including rescue hoists, cargo hooks, and weapons-lifting systems. The Company, which employs approximately 180 people at its facility in Union, New Jersey, reported sales of \$76.0 million in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2008.

In support of its increasing business activities in Portugal, **AgustaWestland** has announced the opening of its new regional business headquarters in Lisbon, following the establishment of its in-country subsidiary AgustaWestland Portugal S.A.

The group has a long and successful presence in Portugal; as a supplier of helicopters to both the commercial and government markets where it is the market leader with a long established industrial relationship with Portuguese companies such as OGMA. Over 20 commercial and military helicopters have been ordered and are in service including AW101, Lynx, AW139, AW109 Power and Grand models, while 10 NH90 helicopter are also on order for the armed forces.

One of the problems with attending a major show such as the HAI Heli-Expo as a solo journalist is the only a percentage of the information being put out by the industry gets noticed and as a result many otherwise worthwhile information streams get ignored. It is in that vein that three months after HAI an **American Eurocopter** technical presentation paper came to my notice. The core subject is the EC135 and some of the information among its 67 slides is worthy of extraction – if only to address some of the issues that have more of a UK rather than US slant of interest.



Up to the end of 2008 a total of 741 EC135 helicopters had been delivered and 719 of those were still in service across 219 operators in 46 countries worldwide. The fates of the missing 22 are not explained but it is fair to suggest that most of them were written off.

This large fleet of modern helicopters is generating around a quarter of a million flight hours each year [254,110 in 2008] to be added to a total now said to comfortably exceed 1.3 million flight hours. If production of this type were to stop tomorrow the spares support of this level of activity would keep Eurocopter out of penury for a long, long time.

With the primary EC135 operators being the military and emergency services – groups associated with high flight hours – the ongoing downturn in ‘executive’ flight will have a lesser effect on the type than might be expected on say the Agusta A109.

In recent months there have been reports of high time claims by a number of light helicopter operators and the presentation gives a list of the high time EC135’s across the world. Except that in truth it is not quite that expansive. The top ten high time EC135s, with hours between 7,000 and 11,000 hours, includes six UK based police aircraft. The exceptions are three Metro Aviation models and, in position five the 8,285 hour EC135T1 ‘operated’ by the Royal Cayman Islands Police! The latter has of course yet to fly with its new owners so the time actually relates to when it was with East Midland’s Police.

4067	Northumbria [now Cleveland]	11,081
4079	Thames Valley	9,249
4040	West Mercia [Central Counties]	8,564
4064	Metro Aviation	8,610
4107	Royal Cayman Islands	8,285
4063	North Wales	8,028
4215	Merseyside	7,828
4018	Metro Aviation	7,700
4209	Thames Valley	7,502
4013	Metro Aviation	7,220

It is not that long ago that the main Achilles heel of the UK based EC135 fleet was the engine mounts, the so called ARIS pots. At one time there was not a month went by that the UK CAA monthly reports reflected the poor serviceability of the type through ARIS Pot issues. There cannot have been a pilot in the UK that was not all too aware of this mount failing either found to be leaking on inspection or sending clear vibrations through his seat whilst in flight.

But now the issue has gone away and in the last year the MTBF leaped up to 4,400 flight hours! You would think that Eurocopter UK would have been shouting that fact from the rooftops, not just slipping the information into a relatively obscure US technical briefing!

Another part currently having its value to the customer enhanced is the tail rotor blade in the EC135 Fenestron. Currently life limited at 8,000 hours EASA are expected to agree a 50% increase to 12,000 hours.

From time to time the Editor notes a new restriction on entry into the USA. In the main these constraints on free travel [fingerprints, mug-shots and endless questions] have to be borne by non-US Citizens. This was a problem rarely encountered on returning home and, we outsiders thought, rarely a problem for US Citizens returning home.

Well if we were wrong before we are doubly wrong now. It looks like its going to get tough to get into the US even if you belong there!

Starting from June 1 the gate guardians to the US are going to accept far fewer forms of identification for cross-border travel under a programme even US lawmakers anticipate will cause massive delays.

The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative is the latest in extreme paranoia created since 9-11. Why it took 8 years to dream this up no-one is saying, but it is a result of the **Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004**. Three years to think about it over

four years to make it happen!

Now US travellers have to have so called 'approved travel documents' and as a result officialdom has had to set up so called 'Passport Fairs' to explain what it's all about. US Customs and Border Protection has been teaming up with the US Department of State to host these events just days before the due date. As May closed the television channels were full of it.

You might think that a passport is what it is all about, but not quite. It is not about simplicity. Not unlike near defunct UK plans for an ID card as well as an ID Card called a Passport [the clue is in the name] travellers are required to present a US passport or passport card, as well as a Trusted Traveller Card (SENTRI, NEXUS or FAST) or an Enhanced Driver's License. It's a home team version of the ESTA recently imposed upon foreigners [who after all are fair game at all times!] but ESTA is free at the moment SENTRI costs \$122 and NEXUS \$50.

If a terrorist can forge a passport in the grand traditions of the Great Escape why not add a NEXUS card as well? Just who is being inconvenienced here?

Having seen this one correspondent commented that if we had invented 'The Penny Post' post 9-11 the government in the US [and probably half of them in the Free World] would have banned the opaque envelope and required see through bags so they could read the contents...

Rhotheta Elektronik GmbH, in Murnau, Germany is offering to the market an advanced multi-band radio direction finding system that includes among its features a possibility of eliminating the existing quad layout of aerials and a dedicated but multi-function instrument bezel incorporating LoJack/Tracker operation. Primarily a Cospas-Sarsat decoder the aerial has been developed for the ALE community to incorporate LoJack and other signal reception. The DF has been successfully working with the ELT for a number of years in Europe and the US and this is an extension of that user group. Harry Staszewski operates the US arm of Rhotheta and was exhibiting the system at the recent ALEA Northeast event. www.rhotheta.com



ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

3 April, 2009 Bell 430 N431SL. Air ambulance of Air St. Luke's, Boise, Idaho. operated by Idaho Helicopters, Inc. On a return night flight from Salt Lake City to Twin Falls, Idaho, Air St. Luke's encountered low visibility weather conditions and a simultaneous loss of satellite tracking and communications. Available weather checks prior to departing Salt Lake International showed an isolated cell over Burley, Idaho. When the helicopter crested a mountain pass, they encountered low visibility conditions. The pilot was under NVG. The pilot climbed to 6100 ft and initiated steps for an ILS approach to Twin Falls, Idaho, but shortly broke out into clear skies. At approximately the same time, Sky Connect satellite tracking and phone communications were lost. Dispatch transitioned tracking to Idaho State Communications Center. There was also a failure of the state microwave tower in the area, so EMS radio communication could not be established. Cell phone communication was successfully established within 10 minutes. The Safety Committee is conducting a separate analysis and action plan regarding both the weather encounter and the satellite and radio communications failures. [Concern]

30 April 2009 Eurocopter EC135T2 G-SURY. Surrey Police air support. Helicopter damaged severely in a criminal attack whilst parked on the ground. [Media]

2 May 2009 Mil Mi-2. Air ambulance. The helicopter crashed in Kazan injuring three people minutes after taking off from a hospital. [Media]

2 May 2009 Eurocopter BK117 C-FKCM. Air ambulance of STARS, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. En-route to receiving hospital after leaving a scene, crew felt and heard a 'thump' as if something had fallen on the floor in the aft cabin. AMC was asked if something was dropped and with a negative answer, the pilots suspected a bird strike. There were no secondary indications, so mission was continued to destination hospital. Approximately 5 minutes later, while on long final to the hospital, a second small bird struck the co-pilot windshield, with accompanying splatter. Aircraft landed with no further incident. Upon inspection of aircraft, no visible damage was found, only debris on the windshield and midway along the rotor blade. [Concern]

6 May 2009 Eurocopter BO105 ZS-H?? South African Police Service. In an incident south of Johannesburg the police helicopter came under fire and the pilot Senior Superintendent Rob Seigrist was wounded in the leg in what some sources have suggested was a volley of rounds. Damage was caused to the communications, the floor, a fuel tank, cabin glazing and a main rotor blade. Despite his injury and the damage the pilot was able to fly himself to Milpark Hospital for treatment. Inspector Piet Maritz accompanying him in the aircraft was unhurt.

The aircraft was observing criminals who had stolen one vehicle which they abandoned in order to take a second. Although sensor equipped it appears that the elderly Leo3 did not allow the Bolkow sufficient stand-off distance to be safe. [Defence Web]

7 May 2009 Bell 430 N433UM. Air ambulance of University of Michigan Survival Flight operated by Air Methods. Upon return, at night, to the University of Michigan Health System, the pilot notice a noise consistent with a bird strike. Upon landing, the pilot inspected the aircraft. A bird strike was confirmed, but no damage was noted. [Concern]

8 May 2009 McDonnell Douglas MD369E N8372F. Houston Police Department. Experienced loss of engine power and autorotated to a landing causing substantial damage at Houston, Texas. No injuries reported to the three persons aboard. [FAA]

9 May 2009 Eurocopter EC145 F- Air ambulance of Securite Civile, France. Whilst operating an EMS mission in Corsica crashed in unknown circumstances rumoured to include poor visibility. Five people were killed including a 20-years old mother and the baby she gave birth to during the flight, two pilots and a female doctor from SAMU. The helicopter was taking the woman to hospital. The flight disappeared from radar screens after taking off from Ponte Lettia when it crashed in a mountainous area near the city of Bastia in fog and rain. [Media]

10 May 2009 Sikorsky S-76C N176AM. Air ambulance owned and operated by Aero Med Spectrum Health, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Damaged in a ground collision at the scene of a vehicular accident in Michigan. The helicopter was sent to the scene of a wrong-way crash at I-196 near the 44th Street exit to assist Grandville Police Department. A ground ambulance re-entered the LZ to assist with patient care needs. The ambulance was initially located well outside the perimeter of the LZ in accordance with procedures. Because of a deterioration in the patient status, the ambulance was summoned to the LZ. The rear of the ambulance impacted the tip of one of the helicopter's main rotor blades, which had previously shut down, resulting in damage to the tip cap. The PIC immediately placed the aircraft out of service. A new tip cap was replaced at the scene. [Concern/Media]

10 May 2009 Helicopter. Air ambulance in Lufkin, Texas. Someone shot paint balls at the medical helicopter as it was being moved off the helipad to make room for another helicop-

ter in West Frank Avenue, Lufkin. The helicopter was grounded awaiting an inspection. [LDN]

11 May 2009 Mil MI-17 5Y-UKW. Kenya Police. The helicopter carrying 28 people including Kenya Police Commissioner Hussein Ali and other government officials was involved in a mishap in Kapsabet, Rift Valley province. Others on board included a team of journalists. Faced with a loss of power after lifting off from a crowded stadium the pilot, Captain Mugane, chose to land on buildings in a prison farm as the crowd had closed in on the lift off point. A number of those on board the helicopter suffered injuries and were rushed to a hospital for treatment. It was said that the Mil lost power as it took off hit hitting Kenya Power and Lighting Company electric cables but narrowly missed an electric post and was written off in the subsequent crash landing. It ended up on its starboard side with the cabin area largely intact. Those that were seriously injured included assistant commissioner of police Mark Opiyo and 14 others. One of the Administration Police officers on board, Mr Pius Ndwiga, died six days later. He was the close protection officer for a government minister.

The flight was taking Police Commissioner and Internal Security minister Prof George Saitoti on a tour of various police stations in the North Rift. [The Nation]

12 May 2009 Robinson R44 N7196H. Alaska State Troopers, Fish & Wildlife service. Suffered substantial damage during a hard landing, about 57 miles northwest of Iliamna, Alaska. The flight was a game management patrol. The pilot took off from a ridge, and climbed about 300 feet above the ground. The helicopter was flying about 90 knots indicated airspeed when the pilot felt an unusual medium-frequency vibration in the controls. The pilot was making an immediate precautionary landing during which the vibration increased. On landing hard, and the MRB struck the tail boom. [NTSB]

15 May 2009 MD Helicopters MD902. Air ambulance of CALSTAR - Salinas, California. Aircraft and crew departed LZ and on climb out at 1200' agl a seagull impacted the pilot side chin bubble. The impact was sufficient enough to break out the chin bubble. The bird did not enter the cockpit of the aircraft. The PIC determined that the only damage to the aircraft was the blown out chin bubble. Continued the short flight to the intended destination hospital. [Concern]

16 May 2009 Eurocopter AS350B3 N394LG. Air ambulance of Flight For Life Colorado based in Denver and operated by Air Methods. While flying a patient at night from Lamar to Denver, the helicopter encountered ducks near the town of Simla. One duck struck the nose of the aircraft just above the pilot side chin bubble, bending the plexiglass back sufficiently to enter the cockpit. Debris trailed back through the cabin to the back wall. A second duck struck the left side windscreen and traveled aft along the side of the helicopter, but did not penetrate into the cabin. The pilot made a precautionary landing in a field. [Concern]

17 May 2009 Bell 407 N911GX. Air ambulance of North Colorado Med Evac, Greeley, Colorado operated by Med-Trans Corp. The medical helicopter carrying a patient from Greeley to a hospital in Englewood south of Denver, Colorado made an emergency landing at Centennial Airport after a bird strike with a pigeon left a small hole in the front windshield. The helicopter was about 2 miles from Swedish Medical Center when the bird collided with it. The bird and debris entered the cockpit striking the Pilot in the helmet/visor. The visor was down and none of the four people aboard was injured. [Media/Concern]

21 May 2009 Robinson R44 Astro N7530F. US Fish & Wildlife Main Rotor Blade struck a wire operating near Orient, Washington. Extent of damage unknown. [FAA]

22 May 2009 Eurocopter BK117 D-HUUU. Air ambulance of DRF. Aircraft based at Stuttgart airport caught fire whilst sat on its mobile landing pad as a rescue worker was undertaking early morning pre-flight checks of the medical fit in the cabin. Reports of a flash fire

related to an oxygen bottle he was checking. The 42-years old technician suffered severe burns and the interior of the cabin is gutted. [Media]

27 May 2009 Eurocopter EC120 N197CB. Department of Homeland Security [Customs & Border]. Suffered a wire strike and made an emergency landing west of Yuma, Arizona. [FAA]

PEOPLE

A Boston MedFlight nursing leader has been named the first recipient of the Medical Transport Leadership Institute (MTLI) Scholarship by the Foundation for Air-Medical Research and Education (FARE). Michael Frakes, RN, EMT-P, a critical-care nurse specialist and director of education and performance, was selected for the award based on his extensive experience in the critical-care transport community, his dedication to multiple professional organizations and his research-literature contributions.

The MTLI Scholarship, developed by its sole benefactor, Metro Aviation, is an “I³” – Imagination, Innovation, Integration – award, so named because it embodies the goals of their customer’s vision and imagination coupled with ability to provide the final integration of these requirements.

The competitive two-year MTLI Scholarship will be awarded annually for the next 10 years. Applicants with professional healthcare or aviation backgrounds are eligible. Applications for the 2010 MTLI scholarship will be available at www.fareonline.org in the fall. The deadline for applying is December 15, 2009. Award recipients will be notified by March 1, 2010. To learn more, contact Amber Bullington at abullington@aams.org or +1 (703) 836-8732.

David Philpott the current CEO of the Kent Air Ambulance Trust is to take up a similar position with the London HEMS in July.

David joined what is now the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance from Essex Air Ambulance in 2003.

With the charity in a strong and resilient position, both in terms of its staff and its finances, he has judged that this is a good time to be moving on.

He is to continue to work on the many projects already in hand, including preparations for the important AirMed Congress, which the charity is hosting in Brighton in 2011. From August on, the Management Team will be lead by our Director of Operations, John Tickner, who will be at the helm for the foreseeable future.

RECENT EVENTS

ALEA NORTHEAST REGION SAFETY SEMINAR. May 28-30

I had never attended one of these events before and from afar considered it in many ways more akin to the annual European Police Aviation Conference [PAC] than the Annual ALEA Conference and Exposition. I had visited the latter twice Mobile, AL ten years ago and Houston, TX last year.

Elsewhere in this edition are some important items extracted from the event [see under Law Enforcement USA**], here is just an outline of the mechanics of the event. I may have to be careful here – the last time I compared the PAC against an ALEA event I was ‘excommunicated’ by the ALEA Board!

This Safety Seminar was held in a hotel in Alexandria, to all intents a southern suburb of Washington DC. The ALEA host agencies were the US Park Police [operating Bell] and the DC Police [Eurocopter] but overall ALEA picked up the tab.

The ‘Northeast’ is usually a busy event, often the biggest of the regionals’. On this occasion it looks as if it was reflecting the hard times that the economy is suffering because numbers were down. But it was a time to renew old friendships that have sprung up over the last decade and make many more. As with all such events it is the interaction between professionals that is the primary purpose.



Day one is set aside mainly for water survival training by Survival Systems USA and therefore attracts only a section of the attendees, the 'regular' attendees arrive later in the day for a sponsored reception in the vendor exhibit area.

The following day included presentations – mostly of 50 minutes each - by present and retired police on High Rise Aerial Firefighting and a review of the ASR aspects relating to US Airways 549 [Glenn Daley], Flying while armed [Martin Jackson], Airborne Critical Infrastructure Patrols**, and some thought provoking vendor related subjects on such as Radiological Detection [Dept of Energy], Air Traffic Security [FAA] and perhaps the most thought provoking of all – TAWS.

The latter presented by Navair [nominally subjugated to a Federal programme] was in keeping with a similar presentation given at the 2008 PAC in London. In that case the presentation was given by Honeywell. The Honeywell system is based upon a modification of the civil fixed wing Terrain Avoidance Warning System [TAWS] to meet most rotary wing needs. It seems that this solution has been seen to be wanting by the US military because it gives too many false warnings in tactical flying. Too many warnings will lead to the pilot either muting or switching off the system.

The police role, as perceived by some US police and HEMS operators as being a nap of the earth operation in such as mountainous areas, would face similar drawbacks.

Both the Honeywell and Navair solutions rely upon the availability and accuracy of the database that feeds in the terrain and object avoidance information – neither is designed to warn of an approaching hazard because it can be sensed, TAWS is about what should be there. You can still collide with a jacked up cherry picker that arrived on scene a few hours before. Honeywell and Navair are attempting to meet the accident reduction needs of the International Helicopter Safety Team [IHST] in two different styles. Navair, a software house, has derived a solution that delays and modifies the methodology of warnings to better fit in with rotary wing flight. It is envisaged that the final result may well see a marrying of all the best technology for the standard or extreme mission within existing technology COTS instruments produced by such as Honeywell or Cobham.

By day three, just a morning session, the numbers had thinned to hear Jack Schoneley present on Infrared tactics and officer safety and TFO training and selection. Even with the coffee breaks that was a four hour stint that drew greatly on his extreme enthusiasm. The PAC in Europe tends to limit speakers to 20 minutes but I will say that this event proved to me you can go further with the right speakers. With some it is a drag to listen for a few minutes and some others induce time to simply stand still.



Whilst they are far cheaper for vendors than the annual ALEA conference and trade shows in general these free to membership events place a severe strain on both the attending vendor and the ALEA budget. The fact that there are a handful of events in different corners of



www.acpo-apa.co.uk/ Manchester UK

the US and Canada each year, and that each requires vendor sponsorship all adds up during times of tight budgets. That said the attending vendors did their best to make the system work, whether it was a sponsored cup of coffee from AgustaWestland or a 'home made' meal at the US Park Police facility in Washington DC paid for by Bell Helicopter each plays a role.

Further to the report on BAPCO in last month's edition, the organisers subsequently reported that BAPCO 2009 attracted 1,265 attendees, an increase of 4.5% on 2008, over the 3 days of the conference and exhibition, creating a buzzing environment for the order-writing and business being done throughout the show.

The majority of visitors to the event were from the SE of England and London (58%) but the exhibition boasted a strong international presence with 8.7% of visitors coming from 23 overseas countries in particular Finland, Denmark, USA and Canada.

BAPCO 2010 Conference and Exhibition will take place 20th – 22nd April at the Business Design Centre.

As the ninth European Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition (EBACE) drew to a close at Geneva Airport, Switzerland, event organisers declared it to be the third-largest EBACE ever, with 10,917 registered Attendees. Jointly presented by the European Business Aviation Association (EBAA) and National Business Aviation Association (NBAA), EBACE is the flagship event for the business aviation community in Europe, drawing participants not only from the region, but also from Africa, Asia, the Middle East and North America.

Next year's EBACE, which will mark the 10th anniversary of the event, is scheduled for May 4-6, 2010 at Geneva PALEXPO and Geneva International Airport. EBAA and NBAA have secured dates for EBACE through 2015.

To review highlights from the event, including photos and presentations, visit the official EBACE web site at www.ebace.aero.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

You can still register to attend BGAD09 (UK Business & General Aviation Day), which takes place at Marshall Cambridge Airport, UK on Tuesday June 9th.

BGAD is free to attend, but the organisers ask all visitors to register online at http://www.ebanmagazine.com/bgad_reg.html where information about the event is available.

BGAD takes place on the 90th anniversary of Cambridge Airport and our hosts have organised a special fly past of aircraft associated with the airport. This takes place at 13.00. Among the aircraft due to appear are de Havilland Gypsy Moth, Tiger Moth, Dragon Rapide and Vampire, plus contemporary aircraft from Cambridge Flying Club and Marshall Aerospace.

Registration for DSEi 2009 is now available online. Visit www.dsei.co.uk/apply to apply.

As a visitor you will be able to view the full capability of the international defence industry at a single exhibition, access naval ships berthed alongside the exhibition halls and attend the comprehensive seminar programme. Once your online application is received you will be sent a confirmation email. All applications will be passed through the required registration process and an admission badge will be sent directly to you. *All badges will be mailed from Monday 13th July onwards.* Visit www.dsei.co.uk/apply to apply to attend DSEi 2009

Tangent Link's portfolio of Aerial Firefighting events, are now firmly regarded as the world's leading conference on the subject. The event in Australia will be the third in the series, the last one being held in Anaheim, California where over 200 delegates heard experts from USA and Canada, South America, Russia, Australia and Asia. The speakers discussed and debated many aspects of both fixed wing and rotary aerial fire fighting operations, including how to combat life-threatening wild fires in a world of changing climate conditions as well as maintaining sustainable air fleets during a global economic financial crisis. This event will take place just prior to the Australian AFAC/Bushfire CRC conference 2009 being held in the Gold Coast during the same week.

Aerial Fire Fighting Australia takes the format of a one day sponsored forum and small networking exhibition focussed on aviation.

A banner for the Defence Systems & Equipment International Exhibition 2009. It features silhouettes of various military aircraft against a sunset sky. The text includes the event title, the slogan 'Global Security in Defence', and the DSEi logo. The dates and location are listed as 8-11 September 2009 at ExCeL London UK, with the website www.dsei.co.uk.

Defence Systems & Equipment
International Exhibition 2009

Global Security in Defence

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