

Police Aviation News

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IPAR



**WILDFIRES
CONTINUE
TO GRAB THE
HEADLINES**

Cover image: From 2 July to 7 September 2007, an EC725 from the French Air Force was evaluated for its capabilities in the aerial fire-fighting missions with Securite Civile. See Page 17.

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LAW ENFORCEMENT

AUSTRIA

The Interior Ministry may have ordered a new fleet of Eurocopter EC135s for delivery from next year [see last month] but meanwhile the day to day operations continue using the old fleet. The new orders were about replacing the single-engine fleet, the newer twin-engine fleet is to continue for some time yet. With this in mind, late in September the AS355N OE-BXX returned to Vienna after an overhaul by Eurocopter at Kassel. The machine now wears the new Austrian style of markings. [GH]



CAYMAN ISLANDS

The arrival of the helicopter being shipped to the island by the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service was delayed beyond the date originally mooted and rescheduled for late October. The 1999 Eurocopter EC135T1 stopped off in the US being for reassembly and painting.

The hold up was said to be the result of delays with a contractor the police used to reassemble the aircraft.

Even in the absence of the new 'quieter' helicopter local opposition to helicopter noise is a regular topic in the newspapers serving the islands.

ESTONIA



AgustaWestland has announced that the first of two AW139 medium twin turbine engine helicopters ordered by Ministry of the Interior of Estonia for the use of the Border Guard has entered service. Operational readiness was officially announced during a ceremony held in Tallinn before Jüri Pihl and Kalle Laanet, current and former Minister of the Interior, Roland Peets, Director General of Border Guard, and Fabrizio Piaggi, Italian Ambassador.

This Tallinn based AW139 will patrol and undertake search and rescue operations over the whole of Estonia. The first helicopter was procured with the help of Schengen Facility programme funds but it is believed that the second machine will be wholly funded by the customer. [AW]

MALTA

ARMED FORCES: The European Union funded and co-ordinated patrols in the Mediterranean, aimed at deterring illegal immigration, ended in the middle of last month. **Operation Nautilus II** had been running for more than a month in its second phase this summer, coordinated by the EU's border control agency. [Times]

Ed: The forthcoming Police Aviation Conference at The Hague, in The Netherlands during early November will feature a presentation by the Armed Forces of Malta on their operations in this area.

NIGERIA

CUSTOMS & POLICE AIR SUPPORT: A newspaper Editorial posted in September 2007 took a swipe at the generally poor condition of law enforcement air support in this part of Africa: In highlighting that there are strong indications that the Nigerian customs service has bought two helicopters to support what the paper called their *imaginary* operations they went on to state that they [Customs] have not been able to maintain their fleet of three Dornier 228 aircraft, and one Eurocopter AS355N helicopter that appears to have been grounded since 1992.

They claim that Nigerian Customs has just two active pilots and anyway why can't they return their existing fleet to serviceable conditions before buying new ones that will in turn be grounded?

The same news organ has upset a number of those in charge of the Customs Air Wing in previous articles on the grounded fleet of federal government aircraft - featuring the various customs airplanes that have been abandoned for over ten years.

They state that they do not write to impress or castigate any one in office, but to educate

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people of the wastefulness of some of the decisions and ventures of some government organisations.

The same article highlighted that a FCTA helicopter that was donated to the Nigerian police is wasting away with out any fuel, engineer or pilot to keep it flying. [Abuja]

Ed: The Nigerian Police took delivery of two Bell 427 helicopters in 2005. The article does not mention either of them. In the wake of the recent reports from Jamaica where it was suggested that they could not cope with supporting their sophisticated twin-engine AS355Ns and were replacing them with Bell 407s and then last months announcements on the sale of sophisticated new helicopters to Botswana and Namibia someone needs to ask questions about product support. This is not a swipe at the product, its more a swipe at manufacturers playing on customer expectations. All the oil companies are having to pay through the nose to get pilots and trained engineers to keep their operations going in Nigeria – currently a very dangerous territory. So who is it that thought that the problem would be less for the police?

POLAND



BORDER GUARD: Two Griffon 2000TD MkIII's are now being operated by the Polish Border Guard in Gdansk. The Mk III has the new water-cooled V6 Deutz 1015 engine. Externally the only noticeable difference is a restyled engine cover which houses the charge-air cooler.

The accommodation is entered via a gull-wing door on either side of the air-conditioned wheelhouse which is equipped with 3 crew seats. Aft of an internal bulkhead and door is a load space with removable seating for 12 passengers. Behind this is an external load deck to carry either two motorcycles or bicycles. Griffon Hovercraft Ltd. is based near Southampton, UK

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UNITED KINGDOM



UAV ACTIVITY: The onward march of that unlikely £30,000 police UAV the MW marketed SkyEye continues. Beyond the already reported demonstrations to Merseyside and Staffordshire Police and West Midlands Fire Brigade other dates have been set up for Cheshire & Dorset Police. Yet more diary slots are being sought to fit in Hertfordshire and the Metropolitan Police, South Wales Fire, the Environment Agency and the Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL). Some were to have taken place in October.

The craft was used in Operation Skywatch based in Wolverhampton, West Midlands, in an exercise designed to try out over city streets to track suspects and gather evidence. The machine has a 500-metre range and weighs less than 1kg [2.2 pounds], and is capable of beaming a live video feed to ground officers and can scan a large area in less time than an officer on foot and at the same time reducing the number of calls upon the £4M EC135T2i operated by the West Midlands Police.

Merseyside Police [the first public users in the UK] are continuing to assess the craft. One of their officers gave a presentation at the recent Helitech show in which the machine was flown inside the lecture theatre to demonstrate its relative safety in and around people. They hope that their researches will lead to the putting into place deployment protocols meeting with CAA approval to provide the bench-mark for best practice for other UK forces.

Ed: Operations by this new resource a ramping up and the number of potential uses explored. Various news reports relating to it being used for 'scouring large areas for missing people' must be qualified by line-of-sight operations within 500 metres of the operator [or whatever restrictions the CAA finally impose on them]. Other remarks about it looking for suspects in the minutes after a robbery must also be qualified by availability. It is small and handy but not exactly fit in the pocket. Useful if the carrier vehicle is on scene and the machine ready assembled – otherwise forget it.

Where this type of craft can certainly undertake a useful service to the emergency services is in building search. See them as the airborne alternative to the UAS mini-tanks seen the world over approaching suspect vehicles to blow windows and locks. The little helicopter would not manage the gun-firing bit but as long as it keeps in range of its controlling radio signal it could look high and low over the roughest terrain.

It may be worth reading the PAN report on the live demonstrations at the Milipol Show in Paris and the recently issued US edict on the use of UAV's [see later in this issue]. Currently the slow move towards police use of the UAV in both the USA and UK are very similar.

CHESHIRE: Not exactly related to the current police operation but just to record that the former BN-2A-21 Islander c/n 2011 operated by the Cheshire Police as G-CHES was wrecked in a fatal accident whilst operating in Spain for Auxiliar de Actividades Aerea on October 17. The crash was in mountainous terrain 5km [3 miles] from Guadalcanal. Although owned by Barcelona based Auxiliar de Actividades Aerea the aircraft was wearing its British police registration. [[Aviation Safety Network](#)]

METROPOLITAN: The London police operator has placed all three of its surplus Eurocopter AS355N helicopters with an agent for sale in the near future. [MP]

UNITED STATES

UAV's: The mission operator of an unmanned Predator B aircraft that crashed last year whilst operating on behalf of the US Customs and Border Protection agency was fired and most of the safety recommendations made by crash investigators adopted in the recently published report on the loss.

The National Transportation Safety Board [NTSB] released its findings on the April 2006 crash of the drone used to scan the border for illegal immigrants and drug smugglers.

Investigators said the crash of the Predator B aircraft near Nogales, which injured no one, probably was caused by the ground-based pilot's failure to use checklist procedures as he switched control from a console that had locked up to a secondary panel.

The poor procedure shut the fuel valve and cut the engine's power. The pilot was going through refresher retraining while actually flying the Predator on a mission along the border



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— a regulatory violation not assisted by the fact that his flight instructor was absent when the crash occurred.

In the wake of this incident the agency has just started training its own pilots and Congress has provided funds to expand the two-aircraft fleet to six. [Arizona Daily Star]

The complete accident report can be accessed at: http://www.nts.gov/nts/brief.asp?ev_id=20060509X00531&key=

In the US and Europe the acceptance of UAV's in the commercial sphere remains slow and grudging. In the wake of a report into the loss of a Predator Unmanned Aircraft System being flown in support of the US Customs & Border Patrol the Department of Justice has issued guidelines to potential law enforcement users in the USA. Comments from UK sources suggest that their thinking is currently on similar lines. A précis of the Bulletin the DoJ issued is reproduced below.

The operation of a UAV by a public agency, whether it is Federal, State or Local Law Enforcement, is enforced by FAA regulations and Federal statutes. With the increase in use of UAS by the military in overseas operations, there has been a significant increase in the number of vendors both producing and marketing these same units to law enforcement. Prior to purchasing or leasing a UAS please consider the following:

For a public aircraft operation, the FAA holds the position that a Certificate of Authorization (COA) is required to operate UAS in the National Airspace;

The FAA has stated publicly that COAs would not be issued for use of a UAS over populated areas.

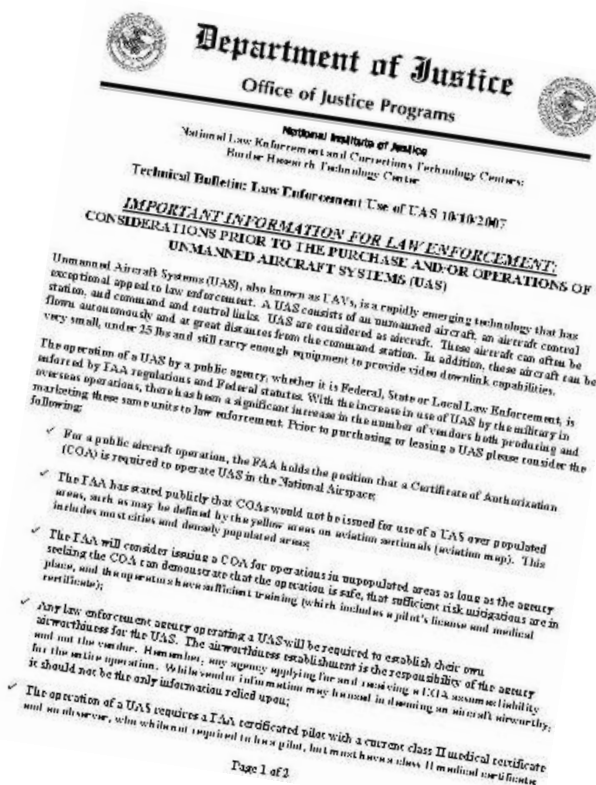
The FAA will consider issuing a COA for operations in unpopulated areas as long as the agency seeking the COA can demonstrate that the operation is safe, that sufficient risk mitigations are in place, and the operators have sufficient training (which includes a FAA Certified pilot's license and current medical certificate).

Any law enforcement agency operating a UAS will be required to establish their own airworthiness for the UAS. The airworthiness establishment is the responsibility of the agency and not the vendor.

A vendor approaching a law enforcement agency offering to demonstrate a UAS to an agency must have an experimental airworthiness certificate issued by the FAA prior to the flight. A vendor cannot rely upon an agencies COA to fly the aircraft. COAs are only issued for aircraft that qualify as "public" aircraft;

The rules allowing the recreation use of model aircraft by hobbyist *DO NOT* allow law enforcement agencies to use a UAS without a COA.

There are currently no studies that confirm the safety records or vendor published data regarding the use of UAVs. Problems identified by military evaluation have included radio interference, unexplained control loss, and the durability of the units for repeat flight operations. The military rarely get 10 or more missions accomplished with one unit due to crashes;. It is not expected that the FAA will change their current stated position before 2010 but in the meantime experimentation will continue in two places—Miami/Dade and the City of Houston.



www.policeaviationnews.com



BORDER PATROL: Reported results of the attempt to seal the US borders suggest that the 28-mile network of satellite-linked cameras and sensors dubbed a virtual fence has been dubbed a failure. It was supposed to be operational in June but is not yet working because of technical glitches.

Congressional requirements back in 2005 that the Border Patrol was to add 2,500 agents by this month and 6,000 by December 2008 have failed to meet targets. The Border Patrol says it has hired 2,400 new agents but will not say how many trained operatives have left in the same period. Raising suspicions that growth has been near negative.



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The June 2006 injection of 6,000 National Guard troops is now being scaled down with no plan to replace them.

So it looks as if law enforcement agencies working along the border will continue to be overwhelmed and undermanned until a change in the strategic approach to immigration changes. [Tucson Citizen]

COAST GUARD: The US Coast Guard's fleet of Eurocopter HH-65 Dolphin helicopters has passed its one million flight hour milestone, marking another key operational achievement for the twin-engine rotary-wing aircraft that perform patrol, law enforcement and rescue missions throughout the United States.

From the helicopter's first delivery in 1985, HH-65s have become a key element of Coast Guard aviation, with 96 Dolphins currently in the service's inventory.

HH-65s currently operate from 17 Coast Guard Air Stations throughout the continental United States, Hawaii and Puerto Rico. [Turbomeca]

ARIZONA: In Phoenix last year, helicopters answered 17,218 calls and assisted in 1,929 arrests, mostly felonies, according to Phoenix police's annual departmental summary. The city has seven helicopters, with plans to add two more. The aviation budget for fiscal 2008 is \$8.4M.

CALIFORNIA: In Sacramento the Police Department has announced its own urban unmanned aerial vehicle programme and showed off a small UAV at the Versadex 2007 Conference it was hosting in Sacramento.

The mini airplane on display was one of two aircraft in the development stage designed to enhance the department's existing airborne technology programme. Currently two helicopters provide video downlink to stream data to police cars and mobile command vehicles.

The UAV alternative is expected to give the department an affordable and quieter alternative to the hovering helicopter during incidents.



The 5-foot-long hand-launched aircraft weighs about 12 pounds and can carry multiple video cameras. It can circle autonomously for 45 minutes at about 30 mph. The aircraft is battery operated, flies autonomously for the most part and even calculates the direction and speed of the wind while in flight. The next step is to pursue Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certification and authorisation. [SPD]

Photo: Sacramento Police Dept.

CALIFORNIA: As the pressure to remove from service the Eurocopter EC130's grows air patrols have been cut back. Less than a week into the current fiscal year, budget cuts have eliminated regular helicopter patrols and staff.

The eight-seat helicopters were originally acquired about five years ago in replacement for MD500 helicopters and plans are that new MD500s will in turn replace them.

The EC130 was purchased to meet a new perceived role that the city needed helicopters with more capacity than the MD500s to meet a range of scenarios that included high rise fires and other disasters. It was perceived that the EC130s could lift fire fighters into hard to reach locations. Although the role has not gone away fiscal pressures have led to them being sidelined.

Another problem has since arisen in that [with the troubles at MD] there is now an 18-month waiting list for the replacement MD500s but a letter of intent has been placed with MD.

An impending major overhaul due on one of the EC130s is adding further problems to the authorities wishes to rid itself of the EC130s. The craft will require the engine to be completely overhauled, possibly even replaced, within the next few months at a cost estimated as being \$300,000 to \$700,000.



Image: G D Grossman

In an effort to defray the problems the department is looking at contracting helicopter services from other law enforcement agencies and civilian companies to get them over the capability gap. There is an existing mutual aid agreement with the Los Angeles Police Department and the Los Angeles County and Orange County sheriff's departments.

CALIFORNIA: In a story that contrasts quite a lot with the Long Beach experience the Anaheim City Council unanimously approved the request by Police Chief John Welter to purchase a second new Eurocopter AS350B2 helicopter for the Anaheim PD.

In his request to council Welter asked for \$2.4M to acquire the new aircraft. In defraying this it was predicted that the sale of an existing MD helicopter into the private market would net about \$400,000. The old MD helicopter N1607A/0375E was acquired in 1990 and has already flown some 18,000 hours. It is approaching the point at which it would need an extensive overhaul that would cost significantly more than it's currently worth.

Welter said also in his request that the purchase would help toward the department's goal of a uniform fleet. The department currently has three helicopters, two of which will now be the same up-to-date model.

It has been a period of significant investment in air support in Anaheim. Last year the City paid out over \$400,000 to FLIR Systems for two 8500 sensors to ensure all three aircraft had their own cameras. Then in August 2007 City officials dedicated a new 30,000 sq ft \$4.5M hangar at the Fullerton Airport for the department's Air Support Detail.

According to their report it is clear that Anaheim represents one of those in US law enforcement that has yet to be convinced that MD has turned the corner in their recovery. They say that there are three significant factors that make the AStar superior to the MD 500 for the law enforcement mission: size, performance and solvency of the company.

On the third factor they say that the Eurocopter is the best choice for the City based on the availability of parts and service. Eurocopter [is] the industry leader in terms of number of aircraft delivered and number of aircraft ordered. That translates into long term solvency, a claim that MD cannot make with any degree of certainty. In their eyes 'the future availability of ... components is unknown.'

The rest of the current fleet includes N1726B an MD500E acquired in 2001 and N226PD the 2005 AS350B2. [Orange County Register/CoAPD/IPAR]

CALIFORNIA: Kern County Supervisors have agreed to allow the Kern County Sheriff's Department to spend more money on a new Bell Huey helicopter after it was found that the original \$3.9M cost of the helicopter jumped to \$4.49 million through sales tax, price and equipment increases.

Supervisors approved the request after discussing why the county didn't try to purchase a helicopter refurbished by a local company. They called on county staff to look locally next time they propose such a purchase.

GEORGIA: In spite of increasing difficulties with ensuring the supply of suitable spares former Department of Defense Bell helicopters continue to expand the number of police aviation units in the USA. An operation styling itself as the Metro Narcotics Task Force unveiled it's first ever helicopter in Columbus, GA last month. The machine will provide a 24/7 support service to the people living in Muscogee, Harris, and Russell counties from its base at the Columbus Metropolitan Airport. Two pilots will be on standby. Although 'new' in the news sense the craft has already been used by police. Within the last few months, it has already been used in Harris County twice.

The funding for the Bell was all paid for with seized drug money with an application already in for a further \$300,000 'all-hazards' grant money intended to pay for additional equipment – a searchlight, TI and mapping systems. The 1970 vintage Bell was delivered a year ago in its original green and orange military scheme. The airframe has about 4,600 hours of use, but the motor and the main and rear rotors are new.

The users of the resource will be the sheriffs from Muscogee, Harris and Russell counties and police chiefs in Columbus and Phenix City but it is envisaged that it will be available for use across 29 local county areas. The helicopter will not be a patrol asset and is unlikely to see very high utilization under stated plans.

Columbus Police Cpl. Keith Slay is piloting the helicopter and Russell County Deputy Sheriff Brent Crock, an instructor at Fort Rucker, is backup pilot.

Although not a perfect set up for air support in the region, before the arrival of the OH-58 law enforcement agencies in Georgia would turn to the state to obtain use of a helicopter, which could take precious hours in emergencies. The helicopter usually would come from Perry, at least a two-hour flight.

TEXAS: At the end of the sale of the former Bell helicopter fleet at Dallas the City pulled in \$850,000.00 for three birds. The sums realised were quite a bit higher than many expected considering their age and high time.

WISCONSIN: Jackson County Sheriff Duane Waldera has announced that the Illinois based volunteer law enforcement helicopter AIR-ONE is being made available to agencies in Western Wisconsin. Because of the distances involved the helicopter can be overhead in 60 minutes but all agencies have to do is put a call in.

The Illinois based Law Enforcement Aviation Coalition is funded completely by donations and is manned wholly by volunteers. Jackson County only expect to use the helicopter about twice a year. The Eau Claire County Sheriff's Dept has also expressed an interest in the programme.

Ed: AIR ONE is based upon a mission dedicated 1970 vintage Bell OH-58 Kiowa helicopter but is closely linked to plans to acquire additional Kiowa's and the use of a number of private helicopters based in Illinois. These include an EC135 and a Robinson R44

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AIR AMBULANCE

IRELAND

Plans have been unveiled for an Air Ambulance for County Wexford. The helicopter being proposed for the operation is a new Eurocopter EC145. The service will cost well in excess of €10M, with running costs put at around €1.5M annually. [New Ross Standard]



Although the Air Corps in the Republic have a new fleet of Eurocopter EC135's with an air ambulance capability the actual availability to the civil population is very low. [www.norrpress.co.uk]

Another new helicopter air ambulance service, HeliMed, will be available to west of Ireland patients from March 2008. This will be the first air ambulance service available in Ireland and it will be operated by Executive Helicopters and Blackrock Ambulance Service, the helicopter will be available for hire to the Health Service Executive as well as charities, special events and individuals.

This is not a charity funded service as can be found in the UK and other parts of Europe, anyone using the service will do so at a cost of approximately €4,000 from Galway to Dublin and €5,000 from Castlebar to Dublin. Meanwhile the company will be actively seeking corporate sponsorship to cover the fixed costs of the service, thus significantly reducing the cost to the patient.

A IFR capable Bell 222 helicopter based at Galway Airport will be operated in daylight hours by Executive Helicopters, which is an Irish Aviation Authority/Department of Transport – approved helicopter operator. And medical staff will be provided by the Blackrock Ambulance Service with specialised nurses available on request.

With Irish Aviation Authority approval expected in February, the service is due to commence in March providing 24-hour seven days a week emergency call-out through the Blackrock Ambulance control. [Mayo Advertiser]

MALAYSIA

From January this year until December 31, 2010, three helicopters are being used for the flying doctor service and another two for emergency services but the country has still not resolved its problems in getting doctor services into rural areas.

The Health Ministry cannot force doctors to serve in the rural areas for fear they would resign from government service. Family pressures are tending to stop them serving in the remoter areas including Sabah and Sarawak. [Bernama]

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POLAND

To the great surprise of other contenders for the contract Poland is reported to have selected Eurocopter as the provider of its future air ambulance helicopter fleet. Eurocopter is set to provide 23 helicopters to the Polish emergency medical services, the health ministry has announced. The financial details of the contract have not been revealed.

The Polish emergency helicopter service already has one 2005 Agusta A109 Power and several obsolete Soviet-built Mi-2s, whose use will become impossible after 2010 due to European Union rules.

SAUDI ARABIA

Five King Air 350-C aircraft are to be purchased to boost the air ambulance fleet. The delivery of the aircraft is scheduled to commence within six months and will boost the fleet assigned to air ambulance work to more than 30 planes.

Since the air ambulance division was set up in 1980 the department has transported 28,140 patients.

UNITED KINGDOM

KENT, SURREY & SUSSEX: The Kent Air Ambulance has suspended all flights to Maidstone Hospital following a critical report into the NHS trust's handling of a superbug. The Healthcare Commission said the 'poor handling' of Clostridium Difficile at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust resulted in 90 deaths.

The air ambulance service said it had 'a duty to patients' to suspend flights until the problem was under control.

The Trust said its suspension of flights would not apply to the two other hospitals run by the trust, the Kent and Sussex or Pembury hospitals, as they had no helipads. The new MD Explorer delivery to Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance is planned for this month. This will compliment the Air Ambulance Service in the South East being provided by Kent Air Ambulance Trust and bring the number of MD Explorers in the UK operating as Air Ambulances to a total of nine aircraft.

EAST MIDLANDS: Apparently resolving the problems besetting the provision of air ambulance services to Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Rutland the East Midlands NHS Trust has asked the neighbouring Warwickshire & Northamptonshire Air Ambulance [WNAA], one of the UK's busiest air ambulance services, to provide a new service to cover the three counties from early next year. The new service will be called Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Rutland Air Ambulance (DLRAA).

Like WNAA the DLRAA will use the Agusta 109 supplied by Northampton based Sloane Helicopters. The service will remain based at East Midlands Airport.

In a major new development for the counties, DLRAA will carry at least one doctor on board every mission in addition to paramedics. This means that the most appropriate medical treatment can begin at the scene of the accident, rather than having to wait until the patient

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Andy Williamson, Director of the existing WNAA service, has made a public appeal to the people of Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Rutland to raise £300,000 in the five months to launch date to pay for the helicopter and running costs.

Henceforth DLRAA will be providing local fundraising support to people in the area who want to organise events, fundraising drives and donations in support of the new service from a temporary address c/o WNAA, Fire and Rescue Building, Baginton Airport, Coventry, CV8 3AZ

Ed: A great deal of media interest and reported rhetoric has surrounded the developments over the future of the East Midlands Airport based air ambulance helicopter in recent months and not all of it has been exactly truthful. With so many organisations involved in the situation it has been near impossible to pin down the exact turn of events so the following should be taken with a pinch of salt.

From various sources it appears that the main culprit has been the recent boundary changes to the National Health Service. It is the boundary changes that have brought about suggestions that money would be denied to such as the Wiltshire Air Ambulance and that their money would instead be allocated to a [new] Bristol based air ambulance operation that has so far failed to materialise.

It appears that following the boundary changes some in the West Midlands NHS were unhappy about them servicing a East Midlands Airport operation that lay outside their area and under the control of the East Midlands NHS. The three existing West Midlands helicopters are fund-raised by County Air Ambulance. Historically County has raised funds from all across the Midlands and east Wales rather than wholly within their 'catchment' area.

An answer to the perceived problem was to move the machine to Staffordshire. There was some media talk about them not getting enough financial help from Derbyshire residents to pay for its running costs but as the local helicopter had already been upgraded from a BO105 to an EC135T2 this may not have been a serious shortfall.

Suffice to say that initial plans to move the helicopter out to an as yet to be identified Staffordshire base before the end of the year were halted by outside intervention. It is suggested that the Charity Commission pointed out that the locally raised funds would have to stay local and could not migrate to Staffordshire.

The intended move of the helicopter to Staffordshire has now altered to a new timeline of March 2008 giving the East Midlands NHS Ambulance Service time to negotiate with surrounding air ambulance charities to provide new cover for Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Rutland. Meanwhile emergency air ambulance cover remained assured even after the current aircraft moves thanks to the closeness of other resources including Lincolnshire & Nottinghamshire [MD902], WNAA [A109] and County [EC135].

Public domain negotiations do not appear to have involved more than WNAA and County.

In the wake of the decision to create DLRAA with an Agusta A109 Bond Air Services Limited the provider of the current EC135 have lost nothing – their aircraft will remain gainfully employed in Staffordshire – although County will no doubt have to dip into their reserve funds until the money 'lost' from Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Rutland fundraisers is made up elsewhere. The gain is to Sloane Helicopters who have effectively doubled their footprint in the UK air ambulance network at a stroke.

I suspect that the attempts to raise '£300,000 by April' are just fundraising rhetoric. The operation is clearly set to proceed and it seems likely that County will have to cede that level of funding to DLRAA [WNAA] from the original funds. Meanwhile there is a potential problem of educating the local populace in the three counties to pass their air ambulance fundraising to DLRAA rather than County in future.

YORKSHIRE: Medical Aviation Services subsidiary of MD Helicopters Distributor, Specialist Aviation Services has delivered Yorkshire Air Ambulance's second Explorer G-CEMS. The first day on line out of Leeds was Saturday October 13. Scheduled operations will be out of the Leeds base at weekends and from Sheffield on weekdays using the call-

sign Helimed98.

Following acceptance, the aircraft was ferried from MAS' Gloucestershire base to Sheffield City Airport for an official inauguration by the Charity's Honorary Chief Pilot, HRH the Duke of York.

G-CEMS is fitted with an Air Ambulance Technologies medical interior and is now operating in conjunction with its Leeds-based stable mate Explorer G-SASH, providing increased coverage across Yorkshire.

Yorkshire Air Ambulance's proposals for a new £2.4M headquarters near York may not now be submitted to planners until the New Year.

Proposals for the new helicopter rescue service base were revealed some time ago but they have not progressed since. The plan is to move from its traditional base at Leeds Bradford Airport to the Tockwith area.

A two-storey building incorporating a visitor centre, conference and training facilities, sleeping quarters for air crews landing late in the evening and an engineering workshop so that the helicopters could be serviced on site.

In July this year the board was expected to decide on the go ahead and submit an planning application for a site.

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FIRE

FRANCE

SECURITE CIVILE: From 2 July to 7 September 2007, an EC725 from the French Air Force was evaluated for its capabilities undertaking aerial fire-fighting missions. During a joint experiment between Eurocopter and the Ministry of Interior (Direction de Sécurité Civile), the helicopter was operated by Eurocopter’s flight test team and customer support department, who were responsible for the helicopter. It was stationed at Bastia-Poretta airport, a strategic point from which it could be deployed anywhere on the island of Corsica. All equipment serving a purely military purpose (weaponry, optronic turret, countermeasures, etc.) was removed from the aircraft, which then corresponded to an EC225 configuration.



The aircraft was fitted with a fire-fighting system developed by Eurocopter which consists of a flexible 4,000-litre tank attached to the floor of the cabin and a scoop and water jettison kit. The entire system located in the cabin can be assembled and dismantled in less than twenty minutes, thus ensuring the helicopter’s use in a waterbomber version or in a transport/medical evacuation version.

The trials in Corsica began with the exploration of the helicopter’s flight envelope when equipped with the fire-fighting system, thus allowing the EC 225 to be engaged on different forest fire sites. After this initial phase which lasted for the whole month of July, the trials moved on to the operational evaluation phase in the beginning of August. The second phase, during which the helicopter was fully integrated as part of the Sécurité Civile’s air operations alongside the water bomber airplanes, served as a test of the helicopter’s flight behaviour in a water bomber configuration under real-life conditions.

The EC225 consistently demonstrated flight characteristics that qualify the helicopter as a unique and useful fire-fighting platform: by dropping water from a lower altitude and at a lower speed than a fixed-wing aircraft, it can target a fire with greater precision, especially in mountainous terrain. Furthermore, its ability to pump water onboard in hover mode enables the helicopter to make use of water supply points in close proximity of the disaster area. Even though the pumping of water from the sea, lake or watercourse remains an extremely delicate operation, it is nevertheless facilitated by the helicopter’s enormous power capacity. In the course of ten weeks of operations, the helicopter carried out 23 fire-fighting missions during which it undertook 310 water-drops, a total of a little over 1,000 metric tons of water,



Reims F406 Land & Sea Surveillance

and refilled its tank with seawater more than 80 times. This positive assessment shows the efficiency of the fire-fighting system used during the trials. The system is currently being certified and the first deliveries of the helicopter equipped with these kits will take place in 2008.

The operation was originally scheduled to end on 31 August but was extended after several Sécurité Civile Canadair CL415 were sent to Greece. [EC]

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: The Board of Supervisors has approved the Los Angeles County Fire Department's request to spend \$10.2M to purchase a new Bell 412EP water-dropping helicopter.

The fire department's current helicopter fleet consists of three Sikorsky Firehawks, six Bell 412s and one Bell 206. The two oldest Bell 412s don't have the same engine performance as the newer Bell 412s, and the Bell 206, a single-engine craft that can carry a maximum of three people, is currently used only as a command ship and infrared mapping platform. The Bell 206 and one of the oldest Bell 412s have no night-vision goggle compatibility and cannot be flown during most night missions.

The new Bell 412EP is capable of performing the fire department's full multi-mission services, including night time water drops on brush fires.

One of the oldest Bell 412s and the Bell 206 will be traded in through Bell to return to the department an estimated \$1.64M to be put toward the purchase price of the new helicopter. The fire department will sell the other oldest Bell 412 through the county's established surplus sale bid process once the new Bell 412EP becomes operational. The fire department's new fleet will then comprise eight helicopters, all of them capable of performing the full scope of the department's services.

The recent wildfires devastating California involved over half a million acres of land, destroyed: 1,790 homes, killed seven directly due to fire and another seven due to associated issues including infirmity, age or accident among those fleeing the fires. A total of 71 firefighters and 27 civilians were injured.

In the aftermath of the fires tales of some difficulties arose in the media. It seems that after the fires broke out, it took as long as a day for Navy, Marine and California National Guard helicopters to get clearance to take off because of rules requiring all firefighting helicopters to be accompanied by state forestry "fire spotters".

But by the time the spotter aircraft arrived, the winds fuelling the fires had made it too dangerous to fly. The spotter-accompanying rule was eventually waived, allowing flights to begin three days after the first fires broke out. This resulted in the area burning quadrupling.

It was not all local red tape that caused problems. The National Guard's Lockheed C-130 Hercules cargo planes, among the most powerful aerial firefighting tools, were held back awaiting delivery of the giant tanks needed to carry gallons of fire retardant that were promised by Congress four years ago. This left the West Coast without any C-130s capable of fighting fires.

The military tasked RQ-4 Global Hawk and U-2 mapping aircraft from Beale Air Force Base, California, and a Navy P-3 aircraft flying out of Naval Air Station North Island, California, to provide still photos and video to firefighting commanders and civil authorities on the ground. The Global Hawk firefighting mission was the time he type has been flown in the US on a Defense Support to Civil Authorities mission.



SEARCH & RESCUE

CHILE

The Chilean Navy has purchased three EADS CASA C-295 configured as maritime surveillance aircraft with an option for another five. They will be used to survey maritime areas of national interest and to safeguard human lives at sea.

The medium transport aircraft CN-235 was purchased by Chile and operated by the Army since 1989.

SPAIN

AgustaWestland say that Sasemar, the Spanish Marine Safety Agency, has signed a contract for two AW139 medium-twin helicopters to operate in the Search and Rescue (SAR) configuration. This order is the second placed by Sasemar for the AW139, having signed an initial contract for three aircraft in February 2006.

Sasemar's AW139s will be used for SAR and water pollution detection missions and they will be equipped with rescue hoist, Forward Looking Infra-Red (FLIR), a search/weather radar, emergency flotation system and a four-axis autopilot with SAR modes. [AW]

UNITED KINGDOM

COASTGUARD: Shetland's SAR helicopter, Oscar Charlie, left the islands for the last time last month after almost a quarter century of service. The aircraft, on contract from Bristow Helicopters, was involved in the rescue of more than 2,000 people over almost 24 years, clocking up more than 4,000 flying hours in the process.

It will be replaced by a Sikorsky S-92 helicopter from Canadian company CHC Scotia, which took over the search-and-rescue operations contract from Bristow on July 1. The technologically advanced helicopter start service officially on January 1 next year after the crews complete their training. A standby helicopter from Stornoway will be used in rescues in the meantime.

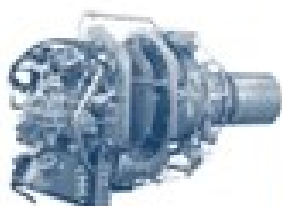
Bristow will continue to operate Oscar Charlie in the Netherlands but meanwhile they are understood to have reached a support agreement to assist CHC and the Marine and Coastguard Agency until January 1.

The replacement helicopter features a number of practical improvements, including two auxiliary fuel tanks and a dual hoist with longer cable. [North Scotland]

The first of four brand-new Sikorsky S92 helicopters, configured entirely for SAR completed its maiden mission for Stornoway Coastguard last month. The helicopter airlifted a 77 year old woman from Kinlochbervie who had been suffering with chest pains and took her to Raigmore Hospital at Inverness. The Coastguard helicopter was used as the doctor advised that she should be taken to hospital as quickly as possible.

The new helicopter is being operated on behalf of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency by CHC Scotia who won the interim contract to supply aircraft to the MCA from 2007 to 2012.

The interim contract provides for commercial search and rescue helicopter services from four civilian-operated bases - Sumburgh, Stornoway, Lee-on-Solent and Portland - for a five-year period from July 1, 2007.



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INDUSTRY BRIEFS

Air Methods Corporation has completed its acquisition of 100% of the outstanding common stock of FSS Airholdings, Inc. (parent company of CJ Systems Aviation Group, Inc.) based in Pittsburgh, PA early last month.

The final cash purchase price was \$25M and was primarily financed through a new five-year, \$50M term loan and a new five-year, \$50M line of credit with a commercial bank group. www.airmethods.com

In a further round of EASA certifications of Dart Group products **Apical Industries** have received EASA certification of their Utility Fixed Float System for Eurocopter AS 350D/B/B1/B2/B3/BA model helicopters. The design of the Utility Floats for the AS350 provides for permanent inflation and full time buoyancy for helicopters assigned to off-shore or other over-water activities. Abrasion-resistance chafing material located on the underside of each float and the reinforcement of the personnel walkways are incorporated to provide additional abrasion protection. Each float consists of six separate air-holding chambers. The chambers are separated by bulkheads made of the same urethane nylon as the tube to minimize the loss of buoyancy in the event of a puncture or tear. Each chamber contains a topping valve for manual inflation and a pressure relief valve (PRV) to prevent over-pressurization. Apical has also added the Tri-Bag Emergency Float Systems for Bell 212, 412CF and Agusta AB412 and AB412EP to their growing list of EASA approved float systems.

In a recent newspaper article the Education/Training Officer of the **Airborne Law Enforcement Agency** [ALEA], Jim Di Giovanna, says the more than 800 US law enforcement agencies now have aircraft. Di Giovanna is the recently retired aviation commander at the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office.

He says that there has been a rapid growth in law enforcement aviation over the last 20 years, the surge began in the mid-1990s when surplus US military helicopters became available to police for free.

Di Giovanna says an ALEA survey shows that enforcement helicopters outnumber fixed-wing planes by a 2-1 ratio. US police copters cost from \$500,000 to \$3M fully equipped. Flying costs range from \$200 to \$400 per hour.

To celebrate his 100th anniversary on September 23,-2007 **AgustaWestland** organised a great "family day" opening the doors of Cascina Costa plants to workers and selected guests.

The first flight of an Agusta project took place on 1907, when Giovanni Agusta (the founder) built and flew the AG-1, a glider.





In the following years the firm was also busy in repair and maintenance activities for other aviation industries as Caproni, Breda, Fiat, and Siai. After the Second World War the Allies imposed limitations to Italian aviation industry to produce aircraft, so the Agusta firms diversified their field of activities, and founded MV Agusta to produce motorcycles famous around the world after winning 279 Grand Prix, and 76 World Championships.

From 1952 a milestone agreement was set up with Bell to produce helicopters under license. Agreements with other US firms, Sikorsky, Boeing and McDonnell Douglas followed. These were duly followed by in-house designs culminating in the Agusta 109.

During the family day all models produced in Italian plants were on display on ground and in flight. Displayed side by side were historical motorcycles and helicopters, and flown at the same time were the new 609 Tiltrotor flanked by a restored AB-47 - the first helicopter model produced by Agusta. [DM]



Keystone Helicopter Corporation has been granted an STC permitting installation of a Chelton Flight Systems' Synthetic Vision EFIS system in Bell 427s. The STC will be available in a standard, two-screen system with a Primary Flight Display (PFD) and Multi-Function Display (MFD).

The Chelton EFIS uses 3D graphic technology to translate the terrain ahead of and around the helicopter into a simple, real-time visual picture. This helps the pilot "see" aircraft position in relation to its surroundings regardless of darkness or weather conditions. This display reduces instrument scanning and pilot fatigue by consolidating readings of several instruments into one efficient tool, resulting in safer execution of flight plans and procedures. Each EFIS features primary flight instruments, GPS (Global Positioning System) with WAAS (Wide Area Augmentation System), moving map, terrain display, optional weather and traffic display, fuel totalizer, and easy push-button flight planning. The system also fulfills the FAA's TAWS (Terrain Awareness Warning System) mandate for fixed-wing turbine aircraft. Class A and B Helicopter TAWS (H-TAWS) are also available with the EFIS. The system is compatible with NVG equipment.

Chelton's EFIS is also available on an STC basis for installation in Bell 204, 205, 206, 210, and 407; Eurocopter AS350/355, EC 120B; and MD520N. Shortly the MD902 will be added to that list. www.keystonehelicopter.com

Bell Helicopter are to expand their Amarillo, Texas production facility starting in July 2008 in order to increase production capacity for both V-22 and H-1 lines in the coming years. They expect to spend \$22M on adding 180,000 square feet of space. Bell expect to increase staffing levels by 50%, taking the total from 800 to 1,200 once it is fully on stream. [SP]

The **European Commission** has reportedly dropped the idea of a European coast guard and a single EU ship registry in an action plan for maritime policy.

The **Royal National Lifeboat Institute** has started running Corporate Day events as a means of fundraising. The charity's first ever 'Corporate crew for a day' experience was a huge success with delegates experiencing first-hand what it is like to be part of a world-

class rescue service. £16,000 was raised and all the proceeds from the event will go to the charity's Train one, save many campaign, which supports lifeboat crew training. Business representatives enjoyed the opportunity to engage in hands-on training at the RNLI's award-winning Lifeboat College in Poole, Dorset. The £16,000 raised will enable the charity to train 16 volunteer crew members and equip them with the skills they need to save lives at sea.

Delegates took part in a series of dynamic teamwork and leadership based scenarios, including search and rescue techniques, and sea survival training. They demonstrated their new-found expertise in water-based exercises, which were held in the Lifeboat College's sea survival pool. A training exercise out at sea in a training vessel was a particular highlight of the day.

For more information about RNLI 'Corporate crew for a day' experiences please contact Lesley Feldwick on 01202 662264 or lfeldwick@rnli.org.uk www.rnli.org.uk/tosm

It's that time of year when thoughts turn to Christmas and the prospect of present purchasing looms large. Each of the **Charity Air Ambulance** operators operating in the UK offer a wide range of gifts via their on-line shops [you can find links to them on the Police Aviation News links page] and the Royal National Lifeboat Institution has a wide range of Christmas gifts available via its mail order gift catalogue (0870 600 1824) or online at www.rnlishop.org.uk

But there are always those that set out to spoil the good will of many by extracting charitable giving for their own ends. One '**rogue trader**' group I have a personal knowledge of have recently been taken out of business.

They used to ring me regularly trying to sell me advertising in a 'Chief Constables Annual Report.' Very plausible stuff if I had not been ex-police and had never heard of the publication.

Three companies that claimed to have signed up businesses to advertisements which were to appear in a variety of publications designed to support the work of the emergency services, including the Air Ambulance Service, have been wound up in the High Court following an investigation by the Companies Investigation Branch (CIB) of the Insolvency Service. Investigations found that Wirral based KDM Publishing UK Ltd, Trinity House Publishing Ltd & Regency Advertising (UK) Ltd all issued invoices and demands for payment in connection with advertisements that had never been ordered and which were to appear in publications that were never produced. The companies' registered offices were no more than mail drops, company officers had given false addresses to Companies House and that statutory filings were not being made. In less than 18 months the companies had collectively received and disbursed sums totalling almost £300,000.

The **Helicopter Museum** (THM) at Weston-super-Mare in Somerset, UK the world's largest dedicated rotorcraft collection, is to take on two additional exhibits from other museums shortly.

From the Museum of Flight in Scotland THM is receiving a rare tandem-seat Air & Space 18A autogyro, built in Muncie, Indiana in the mid 1960s to a design originated by Raymond Umbaugh.

The second aircraft joining THM is a Bristol Sycamore Mk14 helicopter, previously displayed at the Bristol Industrial Museum and the last to be retired from Royal Air Force service in December 1971. This aircraft, XL829, was originally built at Weston-super-Mare and is therefore returning home. It is expected that XL829 will replace an existing Sycamore Mk14 on loan to THM, which is due to go to an overseas museum in exchange for another future exhibit.

SELEX Sensors and Airborne Systems, a Finmeccanica Company, has received an order from Kelowna Flightcraft of Canada to supply Titan 385ES EO Turrets for onward sale

to Kazan Helicopters of Russia. The multi-sensor turrets will be installed on Mi-17-V5 helicopters manufactured in Russia for delivery to the Kazakstan Air Force Titan 385ES is the first Western built Electro-Optic (EO) system to be officially certified by Kazan for the Mi-17 class of helicopter. For SELEX the sale represents a first major Russian order and builds on work with Kelowna and Kazan in promoting the Mi-17 fitted with an avionics package.

Titan 385ES is the latest SELEX Multi-Sensor Turret system and incorporates high performance infrared staring focal plane array sensors technology. The 385ES combines high performance sensors to create a single Line Replaceable Unit (LRU) solution which meets today's operational airborne needs for observation, surveillance and reconnaissance needs.

As **UAV** use slowly builds up among law enforcement organisations across the world last month some pressure was exerted with the discovery that a remote controlled aircraft and helicopter were found in two terrorist boats captured at sea off the coast of Talaimannar, Sri Lanka.

After a two-and half hour confrontation 5 miles out to sea the Sri Lanka Navy captured the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] boats.

The craft were a six and half feet [2metre] long remote-controlled plane with about 6ft [1.9 metre] wingspan, a 1 foot [0.3 metre] long remote-controlled helicopter, as well as ten hand-held Global Positioning Systems (GPS), four satellite phones, 45 radio antennas, 100 electronic circuit boards, battery charges and large quantity of hydraulic oil cans. [Asia Tribune]

The navies of both Sri Lanka and India have stepped up vigil along the maritime borders following the deadly attack by LTTE on an airbase in Anuradhapura in North-Central Sri Lanka which left 33 people dead.

In a two-pronged attack last month Tamil Tiger rebels backed by aerial bombings attacked an Air Force base leaving 13 soldiers and 20 guerrillas dead.



Bell Helicopter has completed a further milestone in the development of the 429. The final exterior profile design has now been frozen based upon months of development flight testing. Since the first flight of the 429 two prototypes have accumulated over 400 hours of rigorous flight testing. One aircraft is in Colorado performing high altitude testing and the other is in Arizona doing high temperature testing. To date Bell has received over 240 customer purchase agreements for the Bell 429. The first delivery is scheduled to take place at the end of 2008. By 2011 production is expected to be 60 aircraft per year. www.textron.com.

Leading content management systems provider, **OITUK** has received an award at the 2007 Document Management Awards. The award in the Best New Projects category was for its work in developing a cutting edge information management solution for London's Metropolitan Police at New Scotland Yard.

The TIMS (Telecommunications Intelligence Management System) enables the force to collate, store, index and disseminate intelligence gained from telecommunication sources including mobile phones, quickly and effectively, enabling them to access information during rapidly moving investigations.

OITUK also featured as runners up in the Best Company category of the Document Management Awards. www.oituk.com

ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

3 September 2007 Sikorsky CH53G German Army [HEER] MTHR25 Laupheim and MTKR15 Rheine-Bentlage Whilst operating in support of the fires in Greece at Larissa, Greece, two of the five helicopters sent by the HEER operated too close to each other struck their main rotor blades damaging them and the fuselages. Both repatriated to Germany as hold freight in an Antonov.

20 September 2007 Bell 407 N101HF. Air ambulance of HALO-Flight, Inc., Corpus Christi, Texas. Upon the return flight from a local hospital to home base the illumination of the Transmission Oil Pressure warning light. The pilot made a precautionary landing in an open field. The approach, landing and shutdown were completed without further incident. [Concern]

26 September 2007 Sikorsky S-76A N763MH. Air ambulance of Cleveland Metro Life Flight, based Cleveland, Ohio operated by EraMED. Aircraft was involved in a near miss while on short final to Burke Lakefront Airport (BKL) Cleveland, Ohio with a local news helicopter. The news helicopter was cleared to land number 2 behind the Metro Life Flight Sikorsky helicopter, who was on short final. The news helicopter was on a 90 degree converging track with the Metro Life Flight helicopter to the runway and came within 200 feet, potentially cutting off the landing aircraft. An evasive manoeuvre was performed by the Metro Life Flight pilot at approximately 300 ft AGL to avoid contact. [Concern]

28 September 2007 Sikorsky S-76C N760AF Air ambulance of Angel One, Arkansas Children's Hospital, Little Rock. The helicopter was transporting a patient from Baxter Regional Medical Center back to Arkansas Children's Hospital. While departing the hospital helipad with a patient on board, the aircraft experienced a power fluctuation and an unusual vibration. The crew took immediate action and landed the aircraft at the Baxter Regional airport. No injuries or damage were sustained. Investigation by maintenance staff in conjunction with Sikorsky engineering revealed a problem with the collective position indicator for the number 1 engine. While the faulty collective position indicator was running sluggish and caused the low side RPM problem, it was not giving enough of a Delta factor to cause a computer failure light. The collective position indicator was replaced, engines inspected and aircraft returned to service October 1. [Concern]

30 September 2007 Schweizer S269D N8374F Houston Police Department helicopter had a rough landing from the hover near its base hangar at Hobby Airport. Pilot walked away without injuries and the helicopter sustained minimal damage. [Fox/FAA]

1 October 2007 Eurocopter BK117C1 N317MC. Air ambulance of Mayo Clinic Medical Transport - Mayo One, Rochester, Minnesota operated by Omniflight Helicopters, Inc. On departure from Rochester at 800 feet AGL, the aircraft impacted with a goose between the wiper blades and wire strike fixture. The aircraft was performing normally and no caution/advisory lights illuminated. The team aborted the flight and returned to base for an inspection. Post-flight inspection revealed a baseball sized hole in the co-pilot greenhouse window and a damaged and inoperative outside air temperature gauge. The aircraft was taken out of service for repair (24 hours). No debris entered the cockpit. [Concern]

2 October 2007 Aircraft Air ambulance operated by Labrador Grenfell Regional Health Authority. There were no injuries when the air ambulance skidded off a runway and into the grass following a tyre blowout at the Happy Valley-Goose Bay airport. The two pilots were the only people on board. There was no significant damage to the aircraft.

3 October 2007 Aircraft. Fire fighting. A fire plane crashed in a lake in Istanbul province of Turkey injuring three crew members. The crash was into Lake Catalca Durusu some 20 metres offshore. [media]

3 October 2007 Eurocopter AS350 N917EM. Air ambulance of Eaglemed, Wichita, Kansas. Suffered a bird strike with a 6 foot [2m] Turkey Buzzard. Suffered a 2 foot by 1 foot hole in nose of aircraft. Feathers did enter cabin, no injuries, all crew wearing helmets.

[Concern]

4 October 2007 Beechcraft King Air C90B N590GM. Air ambulance of Eagle Air Med from Chinle, Arizona went down near Green Lake and Charley's Peak, Colorado while headed to Alamosa to pick up an emergency patient for onward flight to Colorado Springs. The flight originated in Phoenix and was found to have crashed in the rugged area of southwest Colorado in stormy weather. Three aircrew, Ric Miller, Pilot, Ronnie Helton, Flight Nurse and Dana Dedman, Flight Paramedic died when the aircraft crashed. [Concern]

9 October 2007 Eurocopter AS350B2 N71HP. Public Use State of Ohio Highway Patrol. Sustained substantial damage during an autorotation whilst training at the Ohio State University Airport (OSU), near Columbus, Ohio. The certified flight instructor and pilot receiving instruction reported no injuries. [Media/FAA]

13 October 2007 Eurocopter AS365N3 N600LL. Air ambulance of Life Lion Critical Care Transport, Hershey, Philadelphia. Returning from scene flight 5 minutes to the south of Hershey Medical Center, medical crew requested heat for patient, pilot moved heat selector forward and heard the usual rushing noise. About two minutes out from the hospital ED helipad the noise became more pronounced with a high pitch, the noise suddenly changed pitch and debris began to enter the cockpit consisting of what look liked paint chips. The heater was immediately secured and the problem resolved. Patient was delivered without incident to Hershey Medical Center and the aircraft was repositioned to the Life Lion hanger. Post flight inspection revealed that the aft heater duct (co-pilot side) had failed blowing some of the internal lining inside out causing a restriction. When the material gave way it littered the cockpit with rubber impregnated material and fiberglass insulation that lines the duct. [Concern]

16 October 2007 Agusta-Bell AB206 Italian State police. Helicopter from Pratica di Mare air base crashed in the vicinity of Pomezia, south of Rome. The helicopter was piloted by Unit Commander Giovanni Liguori, 50, and second pilot Inspector Eliano Falivene.46. The first died in the crash, the second just after few hours in the hospital. [DM]

16 October 2007 Eurocopter EC135P1 N911SV. Air ambulance of HELP Flight of Billings, Montana operated by Metro Aviation Inc. Five minutes after takeoff the crew heard the sound of something banging against the aircraft. The pilot slowed the aircraft and the source was identified as a cot strap that was shut in the clamshell doors. The pilot continued approx 4NM to an airport and landed. The strap was re-secured. On post flight inspection 4 small dents were noted in the fibreglass clamshell door [Concern]

21 October 2007 Eurocopter BK117 N112LL. Air ambulance of LifeLine, Indianapolis, Indiana, operated by Omniflight. While hovering to the refueling point at Kokomo Airport, Indiana the main rotor blades struck a small light pole. Aircraft landed and was secured. [Concern]

22 October 2007 Eurocopter BK117A-4 N138HH. Air ambulance of LifeStar based in Hartford, Connecticut operated by Air Methods was approaching the hospital helipad when a small plastic bag from an uncovered dumpster blew into the main rotor. No damage found after inspection. Follow-up with hospital security recommended a closed dumpster and closer monitoring. [Concern]

25 October 2007 Bell 206 JetRanger N412KK. San Diego Gas & Electric helicopter on assignment during wildfires crashed whilst restoring electricity to an area heavily damaged by the fires near Ramona, northeast of San Diego. All four people aboard escaped injury. [Media/FAA]



Berlin International Air Show (ILA 2008)
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FLIGHT SAFETY

Doctors want airlines to upgrade them free to first or business class if they agree to treat sick passengers during flights.

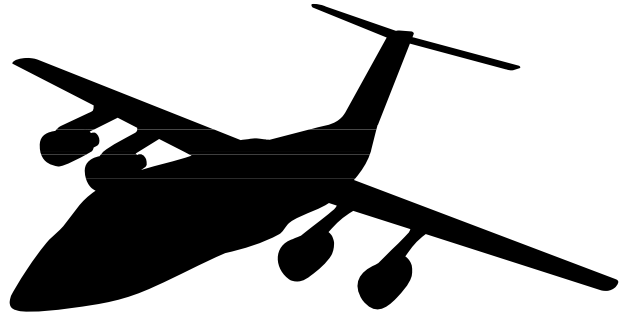
Most carriers rely on medicos' ethical obligations to provide assistance to ill people in any situation, including when they are off-duty or on holiday.

However, the Australian Medical Association says doctors are becoming fed-up with doing unpaid work for airlines and believe they should be compensated with upgrades or flight vouchers.

Associate Professor John Gullotta, of the AMA, said the best solution would be for airlines to employ their own flight doctors rather than rely on the goodwill of passengers.

The proposal came after a Sydney GP endured a nightmare international flight, abandoning her husband and two crying toddlers to treat passengers back-to-back for the entire journey. Dr Matilda Metledge, who was flying Malaysia Airlines from Sydney to Kuala Lumpur assisted a man with a bowel obstruction, a vomiting young woman and a violent young couple believed to be on hallucinogenic drugs.

The quality of the medical kit on the aircraft was very low and there are additional calls for a consistent international strategy to determine the contents of airline medical kits.



PEOPLE

Christian Hamel has taken up the appointment of Chief Executive Officer Microturbo and Turbomeca Limited, in Fareham, Hampshire with effect from the 1st October 2007. Previously holding the position of Director Commercial Strategy Aero Engines at Turbomeca Bordes, Christian Hamel brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the UK market.

Christian Hamel has worked for Turbomeca for 21 years and has enjoyed a varied career history. Employed by Turbomeca in 1986 and in charge of commercial and contract management, Christian became Head of Commercial Programmes in 1992, Head of Military and Cooperative Programs in 1997 and Director for Commercial Aeronautical Strategy in 2002. Christian comes from a strong engineering background having obtained a Masters Degree in Mechanical Engineering.

The Council of the British Business and General Aviation Association (BBGA) has announced that **Guy Lachlan** is joining the Association as Chief Executive, effective December 1st, 2007.

BBGA is the UK's National Trade Body representing companies operating and trading in the Business & General Aviation Industry. The Association supports and promotes the well-being of a profitable General Aviation industry, and believes that the health of this sector of aviation, worth £2.4 Billion pa to the UK in its own right, is an essential enabler for the UK's continued economic growth. Member companies' interests and those of their overseas affiliates are represented by the Association at local, national, European and international levels. Guy Lachlan joins BBGA from Honeywell Aerospace for whom he has worked since 1996.

Conference and Exhibition 18-20 March 2008 Bournemouth International Centre, UK

Mark Townend has been named as the new Technical Sales Account Manager at SkyTrac Systems, the global leader in real time, flight following and SatCom communications systems.

Mark's background is in aviation, he spent 10 years in the Royal Air Force, serving in a number of countries as an Aircraft Airframe Engineer working on such aircraft type as the Puma support helicopter and the Tornado fighter aircraft. Now relocated to Canada he joined SkyTrac.

In addition to other territories he will be attending to the Airborne Law Enforcement sector of North America. www.skytrac.ca mtownend@skytrac.ca +1 250-765-2393

The **Helicopter Association International (HAI)** has announced its latest "Salute to Excellence" award winners. Winners will receive awards during the HAI Salute to Excellence Banquet and Awards ceremony to be held on Monday, February 25, 2008, at HELI-EXPO 2008 in Houston, Texas.

The PAN area of interest winners are: -

- AVIATION MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN AWARD: **Milton K. Geltz**; Maintenance Director, Metro Aviation Inc., Shreveport, Louisiana
- IGOR I. SIKORSKY AWARD FOR HUMANITARIAN SERVICE: County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Air Operations Section, Pacoima, California
- EUROCOPTER GOLDEN HOUR AWARD: United States Coast Guard HH-65C Crew 6548; San Francisco, California
- MD HELICOPTERS LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARD: **Daniel B. Scwarzbach**; President, Airborne Law Enforcement Association, Houston, Texas

For more information on HELI-EXPO 2008, visit www.heliexpo.com.

EVENTS

Russia's first helicopter industry exhibition **HeliRussia-2008** was launched at the recent Helitech 2007 event. The exhibition is going to be held May 15-27, 2008 in exhibition center Crokus Expo and is being backed by the Russian Federal Agency for industry, OPK Oboronprom, and the Association for Helicopter Industry.

The annual **Avionics Expo Conference & Exhibition** to be held between March 5-6 2008 is moving to the Passenger Terminal, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. The previous venue got into financial difficulties earlier this year.

The 2007 show in March this year saw keynotes from leaders within the UAV community including Peter van Blyenburgh - UVS International; Holger Mattiesen, Eurocontrol; Military Perspective, Wing Commander Mike Strong, military arm of Eurocontrol and Johnnie Walker, (former Director for US Airspace) J S Walker Group.

Demand for more information on UAV technology, especially from within the Avionics community, has resulted in the introduction of a dedicated focus, 'UAV Forum at Avionics 08'. This will look at relationships between UAVs and future non-segregated airspace, the entire systems and technology behind systems, payloads and of course the marriage between them and the avionics community. The Forum is currently in its early stages but has created considerable interest already.

In Olympic year it can be expected that the bi-annual **Asia Pacific China Police 2008** exhibition will be attracting particularly high levels of interest. Being held from April 16-19 2008 at the Beijing Exhibition Centre, China the China Police Expo is co-organized by the Equipment & Finance Bureau, Public Security Bureau, the First Research Institute of China Ministry of Public Security and China



ASIA PACIFIC CHINA POLICE 2008

第四届中国国际警用装备展览会



Conference and Exhibition **7-8 November 2007** World Forum Convention Centre, The Hague, The Netherlands

Promotion Ltd, and has been successfully hosted three times.

As the unique and most authoritative expo in its kind in China, this Expo aims to provide an excellent platform for International industry to exchange ideas as well as products, and thus, making Beijing the exchanging hub for police equipment and technology in the Asia – Pacific region.
www.cpexhibition.com

A full conference programme has now been announced for **International Security and National Resilience** (ISNR) London, the conference and exhibition being staged at Olympia from December 3-5.

Admiral Sir Alan West, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Security & Counter-terrorism and the Honourable Jay M Cohen, Under Secretary for Science and Technology at the US Department of Homeland Security, along with Dr Paul Weissenberg, Director Aerospace, Security, Defence and Equipment at the EU Commission’s Enterprise and Industry DG, will kick off day two of the conference with a plenary session focusing on Interoperability for International Security and National Resilience.

After this session the conference breaks down into five streams: Intelligent Security for Transport and Supply Chain; Critical Infrastructure Protection; Internal Security – Policing and Intelligence; Science & Technology Requirements for Homeland Security; and Integrated Border Management – Tools for Effective Enforcement.

Other high-profile speakers include Borderpol Executive Director, Thomas Tass, talking about ‘Smarter Borders & a Safer World’ and Julie Gillis, Director of the E-Borders Programme at the UK Home Office’s Border and Immigration Agency, who will be discussing ‘Creating an Integrated, Secure Border for the 21st Century’.

The full programme is available at: www.isnrlondon.com/

The next editions of **SICUREZZA** and **SICURTECH** Expo will take place at Fieramilano, Rho, from November 25-28, 2008.

SICUREZZA and SICURTECH Expo will be presented as a new partnership during November 2008 and promoted as a comprehensive business event focusing on security, capable of generating strong synergies and attracting an increased number of highly qualified visitors by creating a rendezvous of excellence for an audience associated with the security and safety sectors.



The dates of the next editions of SICUREZZA and SICURTECH Expo make a break with the past in order to satisfy exhibitors’ wishes by commencing the exhibitions on a Tuesday and finishing on a Friday, no longer including a Saturday, a day which was previously less popular with the visitors.

The events are organised by Fiera Milano Tech. For any further information please contact: Davide Grassi, Head of Communication at Tel. +39 023264393 - Fax +39 023264284 E-mail: comunicazione@fieramilanotech.it

Helicopter Association International **HELI-EXPO** **Houston, Texas** **February 24-26** **50th Anniversary HELI-EXPO 2008 February 24-26 Houston**

DIARY

6-8 November 2007 Police Aviation Conference, Heli-Power 2007 and HMRO 2007, The Hague, Netherlands. 2 day police related conference and exhibition - serving the needs of the Police Aviation community UK and international speakers will discuss the nature of today's international terrorist threat and the vital role of police aviation in support of ground units. Co-located with two other events including the most respected helicopter event in the industry and a must-attend event for those involved with the military rotary wing sector. Find out the latest thoughts, trends and technology related to helicopter training, operations, procurement and maintenance at Heli Power 2006. www.shephard.co.uk www.policeaviationnews.com

7-10 November 2007. Defense & Security 2007 Bangkok, Thailand. Tri-Service Asian Defence And Internal Security Event For Land, Sea and Air. draws closer, international participation in the exciting event is accelerating. To date there are 17 countries that will be represented in all areas of the major tri-service event. As official host, the Thai Ministry of Defence has directly invited Defence Ministers and top military officials from 52 countries around the world and ASEAN nations in particular. The exhibition is expected to draw at least 25 official delegations, especially Asian countries such as Vietnam, Singapore, Cambodia, India, Philippines, Laos, Pakistan and Malaysia. www.asiandefense.com

23-25 November 2007. The Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Kampala, Uganda. Every 2 years, the Commonwealth leaders meet to discuss global and commonwealth issues and agree on collective initiatives and policies. The summits provide an opportunity for a unique forum for consultation at the highest level of government. These are organised by the host nation. CHOGM 2007 will be chaired by President Museveni and attended by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Most of the guests will be staying at Munyonyo Commonwealth Resort and the meetings will be held in the conference rooms at Speke Resort & Conference Centre. CHOGMs bring together almost one third of the world's leaders, mostly Prime Ministers and Presidents. A CHOGM is arguably the only international forum where such a diverse group of countries come together to adopt common positions through consensus.



24 November 2007 The Aviators Ball, The Amadeus Centre, 50 Shirland Road, Little Venice, London W9 2JA. This really promises to be the event of the aviation industry calendar this year, with fantastic food, entertainment and celebrities, a prize draw for a trip on the Orient Express and fabulous auction items. <http://aviatorsball.co.uk/>

28-29 November 2007 The Emergency Services Show, Stoneleigh Park, near Coventry. 2006 saw the first ever Emergency Services Show and the event generated much interest. From the published list of exhibitors this show is not strongly involved in airborne emergency services. Nonetheless the list includes three police forces and input from Airwave, Ferno UK, Helmet Intergrated Systems, NPIA, Peli, RNLI and SP Services.. Details of the 2007 event can be found on www.theemergencyservicesshow2007.com

4-5 December 2007 ISNR (International Security National Resilience) London, conference and exhibition at Olympia. ISNR London is founded on the rationale that there's a paramount need for an integrated approach to security issues. The concept has emerged out of Reed Exhibitions' recent acquisition of the Air, Port and Terminal Security (APTS) exhibition and its co-located events, which include Counter Terror World held in December 2006.

Reed Exhibitions is broadening the scope of these existing events into a single platform that will cover the entire spectrum of the homeland security arena. This includes: intelligence and threat assessment, border & transport security, counter terrorism, critical infrastructure protection, crisis management and resilience, plus emergency preparedness and response.

Each ISNR event will consist of a high-level conference, practical workshops and an exhibition area supported by companies that specialise in high-end security technology, systems and services. ISNR London will be hosted in the UK but is a truly international event featuring speakers and other contributors drawn from around the world, in recognition of the international nature of the issues being discussed.



The Sud Alouette III the type on which Irish police [Garda] air support was based has now been withdrawn from service in Eire. [\[www.norpress.co.uk\]](http://www.norpress.co.uk)