

Police Aviation News

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LAW ENFORCEMENT

AUSTRALIA

NEW SOUTH WALES: The Dubbo Regional Educational Police Training Academy (RETC) has been officially opened in Dubbo.

Sitting alongside the NSW Rural Fire Service training academy and Aviation Centre of Excellence, the state-of-the-art police facility will help all agencies work even more closely during future emergencies.

The purpose-built \$41M facility is a fantastic addition to the region and contributes significantly to the emergency services hub at the Dubbo airport precinct. The RETC houses all training facilities on the one site delivering compulsory, core, specialist and leadership training. It also features a purpose-built Active Armed Offender training venue with augmented reality technology, multiple simulation training rooms, outdoor area for vehicle movement training, classrooms, and lecture rooms.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: The Western Australia Police Force (WAPOL) is expanding its use of drone technology for its first responder programme. In September WAPOL was testing its own version of 'Drone in a Box' technology at Yanchep Police Station, 25km north of Perth.

WAPOL contracted with Sphere Drones to provide the drone-in-a-box systems. Stored in a portable dock, this kind of drone can be launched remotely and get to an emergency first to live stream to officers' mobile phones, along with other agencies at the State Operations Command Centre (SOCC).

The drones, along with compatible drone docking stations, will be used in a wide range of airborne law enforcement operations. The Remotely Piloted Aircraft systems are designed to help improve the police force's effectiveness in tasks ranging from monitoring remote areas to emergency response. [PSNews]



BENIN

NATIONAL: With the participation of two Cavalon Sentinels the National Day Aerial Parade on August 1st in the West African country of Benin officially presented their AutoGyro Sentinel fleet for the first time.

In June AutoGyro GmbH, the world-leading gyroplane manufacturer from Germany, handed the first batch of specialised Rotax 916 iS powered Cavalon Sentinel gyroplanes to the government representatives of the West African Republic of Benin. These are the first of a major order for a large fleet of AutoGyro Sentinels which will soon be performing aerial surveillance tasks and ensuring safety from the air fitted with a customised package of police systems, including state-of-the-art avionics and autopilot. Some of the gyroplanes also carry a specialised 4K and infrared camera with live downlink to the control room.

AutoGyro will be supporting the operation for several months in Benin with flight crew training and building up the associated infrastructure for the new gyroplane fleet. Maintenance courses for the aircraft service team took place at AutoGyro facilities in Hildesheim as part of a full turn-key package. In early October handed over three Cavalon Sentinel and two Calidus Sentinels fully equipped with a unique package of law enforcement systems and camera-ready to the Benin Government.

The Cavalon_Sentinel is a premium side-by-side seat model where the Calidus Sentinel is a tandem seat variant.

The first batch of aircraft are already deployed in Cotonou, from where these AutoGyro aircraft will support border monitoring and aerial surveillance in rural and urban areas. The first four Beninese pilots are already exploring the capabilities of these aircraft in service. The training program extends into 2025 to cope with the number of pilots and skills required, including night and mountain operations.

The Airbus Helicopters H125 continues to attract new operators across the United States. This example N982HP c/n 8187 serves in the San Francisco area of northern California. The Mutt is Sully, a 4-year-old Alsatian, partnered with California Highway Patrol (CHP) Officer Eric Rosales of the Golden Gate Division. Sully was one of nine CHP canine (K-9) units graduated in 2022. [CHP Image]

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Editor: Autogyros, also known as gyroplanes, are a unique type of rotorcraft that combine the features of both aeroplanes and helicopters. While they have been around since the early 20th century, their use in law enforcement is relatively recent but growing in popularity due to their versatility and cost-effectiveness in manned aviation. The helicopter may remain the preferred vehicle, but it is claimed that as technology continues to advance, the use of autogyros is expected to grow. [AI]

BULGARIA

BORDER GUARD: Airborne Technologies has been selected to service and modernize all special mission equipment on the entire fleet of the Bulgarian Border Guard over the next four years.

This marks the second time that the Austrian-based company has been chosen to enhance the Bulgaria aerial surveillance capabilities. Following a successful collaboration in 2019, where the Border Guard's helicopters were outfitted with state-of-the-art cameras and workstations, this new contract is set to complete the modernization of the complete fleet with the latest technology.

The helicopters will be equipped with the FLIR Star Safire 380 HD EO/IR camera, an ECS Line of Sight Downlink, and a carbon fibre tactical workstation. Airborne LINX, ABT's Mission Management System completes the integration and guarantees a smooth and easy-to-handle interplay of the sensors on board the platform. [ABT]

CANADA

ONTARIO: A further announcement has been made in Ontario regarding the order for five helicopters announced in July for law enforcement work. Two Airbus H135s are intended for Toronto and Ottawa, but it has become clear in a very recent statement that these have not yet been officially ordered. Speaking to the press this week, Ontario Solicitor General Michael Kerzner said he had recently been at Airbus Helicopters Canada's HQ in Fort Erie with Premier Doug Ford. One of their points of inquiry was to ask the question "As soon as the order's placed, how soon can we get the helicopter?".

Toronto Police Chief Myron Demkiw said the force is anticipating receiving the helicopter in 12-18 months, although he did not make it clear whether that is an "arrive in the country" date ready for completion at Fort Erie, or when the fully equipped helicopter will first be put into service. The province will also be funding five net new positions to support the new air unit in Toronto.

In the July statement, Ford announced the province would buy the helicopters for five police forces in Ontario, including Toronto, Ottawa, Durham Region, Halton Region, and Peel Region. However, it now turns out that the Ontario Provincial Police will own and operate the H135 helicopters in Ottawa and Toronto only, while the three remaining regions will own and operate the aircrafts themselves. A cost figure of Can\$36M has ballooned to Can\$134M over three years after the province decided to buy the aircraft, instead of leasing them - it is unclear as yet how these figures are made up, and what period they expected to lease the aircraft over.

We have also had confirmation from Durham Police that they will acquire a single turbine helicopter, and no final decision has yet been made on the OEM, let alone the model, although they did confirm it would be from Airbus or Bell - hardly a surprise given the presence these two have in Canada. Durham Police currently fly a Bell 206B3 C-FASU c/n 4568 which they purchased new in 2003. No doubt further details will appear from Durham, Halton and Peel Regions in due course. The other Region within Ontario is York, and the York Regional Police currently flies an Airbus H125 which they started operating in March 2023. [Helihub.com]

MANITOBA: Winnipeg police are working on replacing their current 2010 Eurocopter EC-120B Colibri surveillance helicopter, C-GAOL c/n 1608 'Air-1'.

The City of Winnipeg posted a tender online late in September for a lease-to-own police helicopter. The current helicopter is now no longer produced and that has seen spares and support costs rise. Replacement parts have become increasingly hard to find. It is looking to buy an Airbus H125 with thermal-imaging cameras, a searchlight and other equipment. Rather than purchase the helicopter outright, the city wants to acquire it through a lease-to-own agreement. Earlier plans to acquire a second helicopter are in abeyance and the new helicopter will replace the current one.



The city bought its current Air-1 helicopter for \$3.5M in 2010. Operating costs have fluctuated over the years, rising from just over \$2M in 2018 to \$2.64M in 2022. Winnipeg police began adding drones to their arsenal in 2019 but recognises that drones are limited in how much area they can cover. Drone regulations in Canada still require line-of-sight for the operator. [CBC]

CHILE

CARABINEROS: Following our report last month, we can confirm that the new Airbus H135 for the Chilean Carabineros has now been shipped from the factory in Germany and will likely go to Airbus subsidiary Helibras in Brazil prior to delivery to the purchaser. It is expected to operate in the Maule region in South Central Chile, specifically covering the Arica and Parinacota region in the far north of the country. [Parapex Media]

CROATIA

MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR: The first of two Bell 412EPX helicopters has been fitted out by Bell at their completion centre in Piney Flats, Tennessee and has now been shipped to Bell's European Centre at Prague. Further test flights have been made there from October 18.

While carrying the "RH-MUP" logo of the Croatian Ministry of the Interior, the helicopter is not in the usual POLICIJA colour scheme, and we can only assume that it will generally not undertake law enforcement work. The helicopter is fitted with a hook and mirrors suitable for firefighting, and a hoist on the starboard side which could suggest rescue work.

Bell announced the order for two 412EPX helicopters in September 2022, citing an expected delivery date of the aircraft as October 2023.

The airframe still carrying its US marks [Milan Cibulka]



FRANCE

GENDARMERIE: Even though their days in service are now numbered with the acquisition of additional and more modern H135 and H145 helicopters, the Forces aériennes de la Gendarmerie continues to fly 26 of the AS350BA and B2 versions of the Aerospatiale Ecureuil. More than 300,000 flight hours have been flown on them since they were introduced from 1982, more than four decades ago.

The Gendarmerie has entertained senior figures at what is now Airbus Helicopters to mark the continued operations of a type that was originally delivered at a time when air policing relied wholly upon human eyesight rather than sensors of ever-increasing complexity and weight.



Praising the old—the new is coming

GERMANY

FEDERAL POLICE: Motorflug Baden-Baden GmbH announced that they have supplied the Federal Police Aviation Group a pre-used EC135 helicopter for training.

Following the purchase of the 2013 build helicopter in Malaysia, as 9M-SSH, it was transported to Germany by sea container. After import and registration, it was converted to meet the Bundespolizei fleet standard in Rheinmunster, the HQ of Motorflug.

Last month, on October 11, Motorflug handed over the helicopter c/n 1150 as D-HLFS at the Fluplatzgesellschaft Hangelar.



Maintaining fleet standards sometimes requires buying pre-used

BRANDENBURG: The Polizeipräsidium des Landes Brandenburg in Potsdam have been seeking a contractor to maintain the police helicopter Airbus EC135P2+. They have identified the selected contractor as ADAC Luftfahrt Technik GmbH based at Richthofenstraße 126, 53757 Sankt Augustin near Bonn. This is the civil airfield alongside the Bundespolizei main base.



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TURKEY

JANDARMA: AutoGyro GmbH from Germany, who market themselves as a world-leading gyroplane manufacturer, have seen success in the law enforcement market in Turkey. Flight and maintenance costs of the helicopters in service are quite high. The small gyro offered a cost-effective aerial vehicle capable of performing helicopter tasks and transmitting images from the air and the combination of attributes have led to the Interior Ministry aligned Jandarma to buy a substantial number – believed to be 15.

In 2022 initial trials of the diminutive autogyro aircraft was successful enough to convince the Jandarma Havacilik Turkey hierarchy to invest in a fleet of them. The role allotted to the side-by-side two seaters included searching for accident victims, drug cultivation areas, illegal immigration, tracking and locating criminals, the provision aerial security for VIPs and ensuring security of natural gas & oil pipelines. The main Jandarma fleet consists of large military helicopters, only a few of which carry EO/IR cameras. The gyro offers both economy of scale, low cost in flying and support and provides an additional camera platform with downlink capability.

Last month three additional Cavalon Sentinels were handed over to SkyOlympos, the AutoGyro Turkish partner, in readiness for camera fitment and Jandarma deployment. Turkish Jandarma is very proud of their Sentinels and displayed them recently in the official Ceremony of Commissioning of their 7204 new vehicles. Because of this success, AutoGyro products are now part of the NATO parts catalogue, available to all NATO services.

Currently, the Jandarma have over 16 Gyrocopter pilots and more than 28 Gyrocopter trained technicians. The first 'traffic patrol' flights were carried out during the Eid al-Adha holiday in June this year. Since that day, other skillsets have been investigated.

The operational endurance is four hours or approximately 600 km range at up to 225 km/h / 120 Kt / 140 mph. They have a UK Civil Aviation Authority approved autopilot, customised avionics with a capability to operate in IFR conditions.



UNITED KINGDOM

NATIONAL: No news emanating from NPAS towers this month, the long expected new aircraft buy has now been pushed off into the long grass for now – or at least 2025 (and counting) and, other than the interminable advertising for new pilots for both rotary wing a fixed wing the only regular ‘news’ comes from Facebook and X.

FLYING FOR THE NYPD

No, not the New York bunch, the North Yorkshire Police Department based in Northallerton.

Despite being England's largest policing county, it has never had its own air support operation. It covers 8,320 sq. km (3,212 sq. Miles) which is mainly rural, has a population of 818,300 people including 202,800 within the City of York. What support it has had – even since of arrival of NPAS – has been at best ad-hoc but still costs them a stiff £500,000 annually. Prior to NPAS there was a tendency to make use of volunteer private pilots but that was largely stamped on by those great supporters of aviation the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC). Fortunately, that bit of red tape did not destroy all links with volunteer pilots – but it made a damned good attempt at it. North Yorkshire Police have been using drones since 2018 to assist with searches, examining crime scenes and at road traffic collisions. The drones use thermal imaging technology and are able to take photographs and videos. They work in partnership with the local fire and rescue operation.

What follows is a tale of just one missing person (MISPER) search.

Missing person, Victoria Taylor, aged 34, was reported missing on October 1, she was last seen on September 30 walking towards the River Derwent in Malton. Some of her possessions were found near the river. Family, the public and the police had been looking for her for over two weeks by the time an air search was added to the resources. Finding those possessions has led to a presumption that she may be in the river. At the time of the manned air search there was an expectation that if she were in the water, at over two weeks it was time for the body to surface.

Poster campaign for Victoria Taylor posted outside the Derwent Arms, Norton-on-Derwent.



Officers from NYPD have been out on the waters of the River Derwent for many days using a sonar to try and spot the assumed body. [NYPD October 4] Officers from the Underwater Search Team continue to use specialist equipment to scour the murky river water. On land, the Operational Support Unit searched areas close to the river.

On October 17 an air search using a two-seat fixed wing manned aircraft to sweep the River Derwent was set up to operate in favourable weather. The search was commenced near the Riverside Playground, near the centre of Malton/Norton-on-Derwent. This was the same playground where items of property belonging to Victoria were found after she was reported as missing.

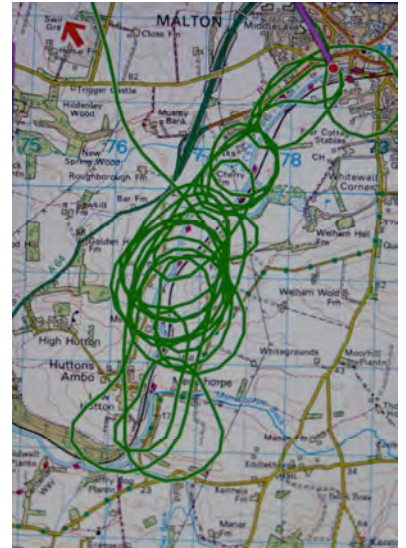
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The aircraft then searched downstream for some 3 miles, for 30 minutes, from the playground, south, past the railway bridge, which crosses the River Derwent, to the sharp bend in the river, south of Huttons Ambo.

Track of aircraft flying an air search for Victoria Taylor - 17 October 2024

The section of the River Derwent that was searched that day was also being searched by the police using a boat carrying sonar. It is lined by trees on both banks, these obscure the view of the river from the air. Where there were fewer trees, the river was placed at the centre of an orbit to permit close scrutiny of the river from the air. The crew of the aircraft also looked for any unusual bird activity. Large numbers of birds, seagulls and crows for example, at the same location would be worthy of a closer inspection. On this occasion there were no sightings of a person in the river and no sightings of any unusual bird activity.



The River Derwent, south of Malton, has lines of trees on both banks which obscure the river from the air. These trees may also become a deposition site. The police launch, using sonar, is at the centre of the photograph.

The body of Victoria Taylor was recovered from the river a few days after the air search. It was close to the park where her property items were found.

With a narrow, slow-moving river, with trees on both banks, the best search vehicle, in addition to people on the ground (with search dogs?) is, most probably, a canoe. Also, those searchers with drones may wish to operate the drone from a slow-moving boat travelling along the river, with observers searching the river at the surface and from the air, both at the same time. Nevertheless, a further search with a manned aircraft, an aeroplane, may be arranged, if the evidence supports the view that Victoria Taylor entered the River Derwent after she was reported missing on the 30 September 2024.

On this occasion the aircraft was flown at 1,000 feet above sea level, approximately 850 feet above ground level, with a basic radar service provided by the military air traffic controllers at RAF Leeming, also in North Yorkshire. This was primarily a safety feature to ensure that the search aircraft was aware of any transiting civil or military traffic, or drones. On this occasion none were highlighted.

Hopefully, the family and friends of Victoria will have seen the aircraft, and it is hoped that they may have gained some comfort from the fact that the search for Victoria, then in its third week, was still very active.



Many a police force makes use of light manned aircraft with no aspiration to 'better' themselves. For day-light and good weather operation they are an economic solution and have been supporting law enforcement for 110 years now (where helicopters have been available for just 70 years). The Victa T5 Super 150, with its large, bubble canopy, a relatively short wingspan (26 feet), a large fin and rudder, for directional stability, and with docile handling, has proved to be an excellent aerial search vehicle, an excellent 'spotter plane'! There is no technology involved, vision is wholly the 'Mark 1 Eyeball,' perhaps enhanced with binoculars. In good visibility, the eye is often far more flexible than any electro-optical camera turret fitted [to manned aircraft or drones] as any aid severely restricts the area under surveillance to 'tunnel vision'.

UNITED STATES

NATIONAL: APSA conducts Safety Stand-To's on an on-request basis for members at their facility. Last month three such in-person events were scheduled in. In Washington State the Spokane Regional Air Support Unit (SRASU) hosted a Safety Stand-To on October 9, in Calgary, Alberta (Canada), the police service hosted another event on October 17 at the Calgary Police Service Headquarters and finally on October 23, APSA conducted their annual live, online Natural Resources Aviation Safety Stand-To.

On December 9-11, 2024, APSA will offer a new 2.5-day course combining key elements of the Tactical Flight Officer (TFO) Course and the Airborne Thermographer Certification Course (ATCC) conducted annually during APSCON.

The Tactical Flight Officer portion of this course will be instructed by Clay Lacey (Texas DPS) and is designed to provide aircrew members the tactical skills and information necessary to safely and successfully support ground units engaged in a variety of law enforcement missions. This 16-hours of instruction will cover helicopter patrol tactics, air support to K-9 operations, suspect behaviour & perimeter containment, and vehicle pursuit management. The 4-hour Airborne Thermographer Certification portion of this course is an in-depth study of airborne thermal imaging technology and theory presented by Brian Spillane, Teledyne FLIR, who is a Certified Thermographer Instructor. All combined, this course offers certification as an Airborne Thermographer to qualified students who attend all 20 hours of training and pass the written exam.

The training will take place in Orlando, Florida, at the Rosen Centre Hotel. There is a discounted room rate of \$149 and you can book directly at +1 800-204-7234. The deadline to reserve a room at the host hotel is November 18, you can also book via the APSA website.

ARIZONA: Last year the Pinal County Sheriff's Office, based in Florence, was in the news for acquiring new equipment from Trakka Systems to improve the operational capabilities of their aged DoD surplus fleet of helicopters.

In August Pinal County Board of Supervisors granted approval to the Sheriff's Office to acquire a new Airbus Helicopter H125. For economic reasons the helicopter will be procured using a lease - purchase ar-



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rangement. The Sheriff's Office received a grant of \$9.4M from the State of Arizona to put toward the purchase, equipping, and operation of a helicopter. Hangar One Avionics in Carlsbad, CA received the contract to purchase the base aircraft, mission equipment and to perform the completion. Pinal County will lease the new H125 for three years after which they will be able to purchase it for one dollar from Hangar One. Currently the Pinal Sheriff's Office operates a mixed fleet of U.S. Army surplus Bell OH-58 and UH-1H helicopters.

Pinal County's fleet encompasses two OH-58s, one equipped with the TLX HISL, and one with a Total Mission Solution, which includes the TC-300, a 4-axis stabilized long-range EO/IR camera system, TLX searchlight, and Trakka's TM-100 mapping and video management software. The fleet also includes a Cessna 206 outfitted with TrakkaMaps TM-100 equipment. The acquisition of the TLX has significantly enhanced Pinal County's search and rescue operations and surveillance activities / capabilities, using its HISL and EO/IR technology.

CALIFORNIA: In the wake of the ten years upgrade the Stanislaus County Sheriff's primary helicopter, Bell 407XP N407SH has returned to full service. The 407 was back with the unit in late June and declared fully operational some weeks later.

Following the retrofit the 407 completion at Hangar One Avionics, based in Carlsbad, California, has installed a L3 Harris MX10 on Airfilm Camera Systems camera mount, the Shotover Augmented Reality System, Macro-Blue monitors, Technisonic Communications TDFM radio and remote, Jupiter Avionics radio and Bluetooth adapter, Alpine Aerotech drop cords, AEM Audio and PA system, Onboard Systems cargo hooks, and a selection of Luminator Aerospace lights including a searchlight, taxi and landing lights, and custom lights that illuminate straight down for cargo missions, they were fabricated by Hangar One. Several other modifications were put together by Hangar One mounts for the monitors, passenger centre console for avionics and external wiring harnesses. [Josh Colborn LI]



FLORIDA: Last month two Sheriff's Office Aviation units took delivery of new Bell helicopters in Florida. A new Bell 407GX_i helicopter, registered as N401H, was delivered to the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office in St. Augustine. The aircraft will join the Aviation Operations Unit to serve the citizens of St. Augustine and surrounding counties. St. Johns County selected the Bell 407GX_i to replace its surplus Bell OH-58 aircraft, which marks a significant advancement in capability and safety.

The unit has been operating surplus airframes since the mid-1990s. In March last year Bell announced the purchase agreement for the new 407GX_i aircraft. The two-helicopter operating unit based at the St. Augustine Regional Airport shares a hangar with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), which also has two helicopters. The aviation unit is under the Operations Division, has four pilots with the lead pilot holding the rank of sergeant. In 2023 the unit flew 475 flight hours; and so far, this year it has accrued 590 hours. The unit also has two full time mechanics and a part time mechanic.

St. Johns has partnerships with local agencies such as St. Johns Fire and Rescue, St. Augustine City Fire Department, and surrounding municipalities. They provide mutual aid for Clay, Flagler and Putnam counties as well as St. Johns County municipalities, Florida Highway Patrol, and FWC. They work with the city of Jacksonville as well. Since the closest US Coast Guard Search and Rescue is in Savannah, Georgia, they add to their SAR attempts. They can often get to the scene quicker locally and drop a raft, if necessary, but cannot hoist. They patrol 221 square miles of water in St. Johns County in addition to our 42 miles of beaches.

The current fleet includes a 2013 Bell 407 bought used from the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office and a 1969 Vietnam-era Bell OH-58 that acquired in the 1990s under the 1033 program. The 2024 build airframe, destined to replace the Kiowa, was registered as N401H, c/n 56387 on October 17.

Meanwhile, the Volusia County Sheriff in Deland, Florida has also received a new Bell 407GX_i registered as N618DS against an order announced in 2022. The Volusia County Air One program is a long-time user of the Bell 407, and the new aircraft is replacing an older legacy 407. Volusia County had previously taken delivery of a new Bell 407GX_i last year. This allowed the Bay County Sheriff's Office in Florida to purchase their used 407 (N802DS) to replace surplus Bell OH-58 equipment.

HAWAII: Maui Police has taken early steps in the hope of procuring an Airbus H145 to undertake law enforcement missions in the County of Maui.

The proposal includes acquiring a role fit that sees the acquisition of a complete mission package from Trakka Systems and a rescue hoist to support a primary mission of SAR over land and water. The county is made up of several islands and the prospect of much flying over water makes the selection of a twin advisable.

LOUISIANA: The Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance has awarded \$500,000 to the East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office to acquire a new digital high-definition camera system for the Air Support Unit's helicopter. [US Attorney's Office]

NEBRASKA: The Omaha City Council approved a multi-million-dollar federal grant from the US Department of Justice in September to upgrade equipment.

Some \$3.7M of the \$4M grant goes towards a new helicopter role equipped with a searchlight and infrared system. This brings the fleet up to three helicopters. [KETV]

NEW YORK: Erie County has been operating an AS350 helicopter N338SD that is now 23 years old and suffering significant unscheduled downtime. The helicopter, "Air 1", undertakes the full range of police roles and SAR/Rescue.

The case for a replacement helicopter has been made and the \$11M funding assured to purchase an Airbus Helicopter H135 helicopter. A down payment has been made but no date of arrival for the new helicopter has been announced. The sheriff has stated that he hopes to see it in service late next year but others closer to the purchasing say it is too early to set the date.

Current plans suggest that the existing helicopter may be retained as a maintenance spare. Its value is now low, and it may be considered that it has greater useful value to the county in being available as a backup.

Westchester County Police has taken delivery of a new Bell 407GX_i N536PD to replace the 2006 model that was sold by auction recently (see last month's issue)

The completion was undertaken by Bell at Piney Flats, Tennessee but no images or role equipment details are yet available. [CS – Facebook]

VIRGINIA: The State Police will be returning to an all-Bell rotary fleet line up with the delivery of a new Bell 407 GX_i and a 412EPX. The latter displaces a 2011 EC145. They also use Cessna fixed wing aircraft.

The new role equipment fit for the two airframes comes mainly from Trakka and includes a Trakka Cam TC 300 camera, TLX searchlight and TM-100 Moving Map System on the 407 along with a LifePort EMS kit and a Breeze Eastern 300-pound capacity hoist, where the 412 will be fitted with a United Rotorcraft EMS interior and a TrakkaBeam TLX_c searchlight and Goodrich 600-pound capacity hoist.

WASHINGTON: King County Sheriff's Office Air Support Unit has taken delivery of their first glass cockpit helicopter, a brand-new Bell 407GX_i, N422CT.

Unit pilots flew the aircraft over four days from Bell's completion centre at Piney Flats in Tennessee, arriving on September 22 at Renton Municipal Airport, where the Air Support Unit is headquartered. It represents the first helicopter acquired new by King County Sheriff, who had previously relied on federal grants or ex-military disposal programs.



Bell 407GX_i N422CT [KCSO]

The KCSO law enforcement fleet now numbers two Bell 407s (the second was acquired in 2008), and two elderly UH-1Hs. The Sheriff additionally has three TH-67s - originally from the military training fleet in their white/orange scheme - but there is no evidence that these have been put into law enforcement use, although some press reports refer to the unit having "a training helicopter" and we have been unable to trace any flights of the other two.

The new aircraft cost close to \$5.5M, with Washington state contributing \$1.0M instead of the \$2.7M that King County originally requested in early 2023. KCSO apparently removed around \$1M of specialist equipment from a 1973 B206 to be transferred into the new aircraft. Following that, the JetRanger N411KS was sold to Northwest Helicopters. The role equipment carried on the launch day included a FLIR 380HD and a Trakka searchlight. This is the first time that the local taxpayers have put out any money to buy an aircraft, and this unit has existed since 1991.

In May, US Rep. Kim Schrier, a Democrat whose 8th Congressional District includes portions of eastern King, Pierce and Snohomish counties, requested \$2 million from the appropriations committee next year for upgrades to one of the two Huey's in the KCSO. The money would be used to upgrade the transmission, rotors, electronics and avionics because in its current state, the Huey has diminished stability, lift and hoist capabilities.

The KCSO helicopters are kept at the Renton airport, but they could get to Federal Way in 10 minutes, or to Leavenworth to save someone in the mountains in 20 minutes, and back to the hospital in another 20 minutes. Although they are the King County Sheriff's Office, they are available to go and rescue people everywhere in the state of Washington. [Helihub/Reporter]

Editor: A short version of this news story appeared on page 12 in the September edition of PAN.



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AIR AMBULANCE

AUSTRALIA

NEW SOUTH WALES: Toll Group has signed an agreement to acquire Pel-Air from the struggling Rex Holdings. As part of the acquisition, Toll will acquire Pel-Air's fixed wing air ambulance services currently under 10-year contract terms with the NSW and Victorian governments and assets comprising eight King Air B200/300 series turboprops and two Pilatus PC-24 jets.

The acquisition expands Toll's Aviation division, which is currently contracted to deliver EMS helicopter capability to the NSW Health and ACT Ambulance Service with eight Leonardo AW139s, the ACE Training Centre and Toll Uncrewed Systems.

The transaction is subject to satisfaction of customary conditions for transactions of this nature including regulatory approvals. Subject to all conditions being satisfied, the transaction is expected to close at the end of 2024. [Parapex Media]

BULGARIA

HEMS: Delivery of the country's second and third AW109 air ambulances has been delayed until 2025 due to supply chain issues at the manufacturer Leonardo. This will further delay the setting up of a nationwide air ambulance service.

The helicopters were ordered in 2023 and due for delivery this month and next, the latest estimate is that they will arrive in country early in 2025. The second helicopter had already faced a delay in delivery from its original slot in June this year. [AMR]

GERMANY



ADAC: The Christoph 5 unit in Ludwigshafen has been operational since November 1973, at that time it was a civilian rescue helicopter with the Federal Ministry of the Interior. In 2018 the BG Unfallklinik Ludwigshafen, Mannheim, base was rebuilt and the current based H135 aircraft, D-HDEC, is seen there. [Alan Norris]

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ARTEMIS



Luxembourg Air Rescue is still operating with the MD902 LX-HMS still on post. The type is due to give way to an Airbus Helicopter H145 D3, the first of which LX-HSL arrived with LAR in June 2023. [Alan Norris]

MALDIVES

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE: Mobile phone operator Ooredoo Maldives has announced a further Maldivian rufiyaa MV16M (£0.8M, \$1.04M) support for the national air ambulance service for unspecified medical equipment. The Air Ambulance service, which launched in March of this year, has already proven to be a vital lifeline for those in urgent need of medical assistance. The initial batch of essential equipment, provided by Ooredoo in March, was crucial in enabling the successful launch of this life-saving service. Since its inception, the Air Ambulance has handled 436 cases, transporting 517 patients to the care they urgently required. [Parapex Media]



NEW ZEALAND

The Government is investing in eight new emergency helicopters to replace some of New Zealand's ageing air ambulance fleet, Associate Health Minister Casey Costello and ACC Minister Matt Doocoy has announced.

As well as improved safety, the new helicopters will provide more reliable service, a better capacity to respond in bad weather conditions with new IFR capability, reduced maintenance costs, greater fuel efficiency and better operational performance.

An additional \$14.7M is being invested in the year to July 2025, \$8.2M by Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora and \$6.5M by ACC, to enable New Zealand's air ambulance helicopter service providers to replace ageing helicopters with newer aircraft.

In the last three years, air ambulance use has increased by 21 percent, with the total fleet flying 13,026 hours in the year to October 2023, an average of more than 35 hours every day.

New Zealand's emergency air ambulance helicopter services are currently provided by Northern Rescue Helicopter Limited (for Auckland and Northland), Central Air Ambulance Rescue Limited (for the Central North Island) and Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (for the South Island). These service providers own or lease the helicopters.

Health NZ and ACC are working with the sector to redesign the aeromedical operating model to make the best use of air ambulance resources, including moving to longer term contract arrangements with providers. The first replacement helicopter is already in operation, with the next one due to arrive in New Zealand at the end of the year.

UNITED KINGDOM

NATIONAL: Air Ambulances UK will be hosting the flagship 2024 Annual Conference and Awards of Excellence at the Coventry Building Society Arena, Coventry, on November 28. The event will be at a brand-new location of the Coventry Building Society Arena, home of Coventry City FC. The awards provide an important opportunity to celebrate the excellence of those involved in the life-saving work of air ambulance charities across the UK. Kwik Fit is the principal sponsor for 2024.

The panel of judges faced the challenging task of selecting finalists from an outstanding group of nominees, all of whom represent the remarkable dedication and skill within the air ambulance community.

Judging Panel:

Debra Allcock Tyler, *CEO of Directory of Social Change*
Gill Jolly, *Director, Achieve Consultants*
Dr Syed Masud, *Consultant in Emergency Medicine, Paediatric Emergency Medicine & Pre-Hospital Emergency Medicine*
Paul Westaway, *Director, Blue Light Aviation Limited*
John Christensen, *Vice Chair, Air Ambulances UK*

In no particular order the awards nominee shortlist is:

Campaign of the Year – Sponsored by Kwik Fit

Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex
London's Air Ambulance Charity
Magpas Air Ambulance

Critical Care Practitioner of the Year – Sponsored by Zoll

Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance – Neil Bizzell
Magpas Air Ambulance – Sarah Walker
The Air Ambulance Service – Paul Mullins

Charity Staff Member of the Year

Magpas Air Ambulance – Sam Disney
London's Air Ambulance Charity – Andy Frain
Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Trust – Brenda Playford

Charity Team of the Year – Sponsored by Lottery Fundraising Services

Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Trust
Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex
Magpas Air Ambulance

Charity Supporter of the Year – Sponsored by Tower Lottery Services

Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance – Tom Budgett
East Anglian Air Ambulance – Laura Bird
Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Trust – Steve Dukes

Doctor of the Year – Sponsored by Leonardo

Devon Air Ambulance Trust – Tim Nutbeam
Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance – Laura Bland
The Air Ambulance Service – Dr James Nayyar

Innovation of the Year – Sponsored by Aeroptimo

Devon Air Ambulance Trust
Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex
Magpas Air Ambulance

Lifetime Achievement Award – Sponsored by Airbus

Cornwall Air Ambulance Trust – Mick McLachlan
Devon Air Ambulance Trust – Helena Holt
Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance – Gillian Bryce
London's Air Ambulance Charity – Anne Weaver
The Air Ambulance Service – Dr Matthew Wyse

Pilot of the Year

Devon Air Ambulance Trust – Rich Applegarth
East Anglian Air Ambulance – Steve Norris
The Air Ambulance Service – Captain John McCallion

Breaking Barriers Award – Sponsored by Wel Medical

Devon Air Ambulance Trust
East Anglian Air Ambulance
Great Western Air Ambulance Charity

Young Person of the Year

Shortlist and winners to be revealed on 28 November

Operations Support Staff of the Year

Magpas Air Ambulance – Scott Todd

Devon Air Ambulance Trust – Julia Bradshaw
Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Trust – Paul Thompson
Trustee of the Year- Sponsored by Charisma Charity Recruitment
Cornwall Air Ambulance Trust – Robert Cowie
Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Trust – Anni Ridsdill Smith
Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance – Mike Beale

[www.airambulancesuk.org]



CAMBRIDGESHIRE: On October 7, the replacement helicopter for the Magpas Air Ambulance touched down at the airbase in Alconbury Weald, Cambridgeshire.

This new aircraft, a 2013 Leonardo AW109 Grand New registered as G-MPAS, is supplied by Castle Air of Liskeard and replaces the charity's previous AW169 helicopter, which was unable to fly when the service's aviation provider SAS of Staverton was suddenly sold in a pre-pack administration deal earlier this year. It is understood that new financial conditions associated with the lease were untenable.

Since then, Magpas Air Ambulance has continued to provide lifesaving pre-hospital emergency care to patients 24/7 using its fleet of rapid response vehicles (RRVs), just as it normally would when the helicopter is unavailable due to maintenance or weather, and when it is quicker to reach patients by road. Despite this temporary change, Magpas Air Ambulance's service has remained as busy as ever, with the charity responding to 1,903 patients in the past financial year.

Magpas Air Ambulance CEO, Daryl Brown MBE, explains "After the sudden and unexpected news that we were unable to operate using our previous aircraft, we worked around the clock to find a new helicopter provider, whilst also putting measures in place and working with partners to continue saving lives while we awaited delivery of our new aircraft.

"We look forward to the return of air operations now we have the new Magpas Air Ambulance helicopter at our airbase.

"Magpas Air Ambulance is incredibly grateful to the community for their support of this vital service, allowing us to continue saving lives every day, no matter the circumstances."

Following a period of training for Magpas Air Ambulance's doctors and critical care paramedics to familiarise themselves with the new AW109 SP airframe, the charity was expecting to be operational later last month to cover calls, mainly in Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire.

Editor: The 109, c/n 2298, was previously used by Cornwall Air Ambulance registered as G-KRNO and was one of the last static stars at the Helitech Show in 2021, shortly after it had been imported from the USA. It was noted circuit bashing in the vicinity of Cambridge Airport [Marshalls] in the days after delivery to Magpas.



GREAT WESTERN: The air ambulance returned to its former base at Filton early in October to temporarily take over the museum hangar housing the preserved BAC Concorde at Aerospace Bristol for their Clinical Symposium!

The biennial event, organised by crew members, provides medical professionals with an opportunity to come together and discuss all things regarding Pre-Hospital Emergency Medicine.

This year's theme was team performance, with a range of speakers from within the medical world and even from other high performance team environments, such as sport.

"We've said quite a few times how good value it is, it's got good talks, it's a great location, the food and everything, it's been a really great day, I highly recommend" - Ben, third year medical student at University of Bristol

KENT, SURREY & SUSSEX: Incredibly over 80,000 people have taken part in CPR and defibrillation training sessions across the South-east in a week thanks to the series of livestream and in-person events held by Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex (KSS) to support national Restart a Heart Day. This far exceeds last year's total of 17,000 people.

As part of the charity's biggest ever education and awareness campaign its expert air ambulance doctors and paramedics provided free online and in-person training sessions tailored to every age group from four years old to 80+. Those learning included thousands of school children, families, individuals, businesses,



shoppers and holiday makers, equipping them all with the vital skills to help save the life of someone in cardiac arrest.

Across the Southeast an average of 24 people a day experience a cardiac arrest. Surprisingly 80% happen to people while they are at home – and so they are likely to be with a family member, friend, or someone they know well, at the time. Currently only 1 in 10 people survive but KSS wants to change that by training an army of lifesavers so that people can be a lifeline for a loved one when they need it the most.

Face-to-face sessions ran throughout the week at Gatwick Airport, Shepherd Neame pubs, Cobham Services on the M25, the Orchards Shopping Centre in Haywards Heath and Bluewater Shopping Centre, with further training available online.

LONDON: In the last edition of PAN, the two Airbus Helicopters H135 for the London Air Ambulance (LAA) played a supporting role in the opening of the new Airbus facility at Oxford Airport. HRH The Prince of Wales was much in evidence.

As October opened HRH The Prince of Wales, visited the LAA helicopter's overnight base, RAF Northolt, to see our two new helicopters: G-LAAA and G-LAAB and to launch their new service as Patron.

During his visit he met with some of the pilots and medical team, discussing the vital role that the helicopters play in delivering life-saving care to London's critically injured.

He also spoke with two former patients, Mark and Claire, who reflected on the impact of the service on their lives.

LAA and HRH were also joined by supporter and former soccer player David Beckham, who gave his backing to the Omaze fundraising partnership which raised £4M of the needed £15M needed to buy the helicopters.



People in high places are useful for fund raising

NORTH WEST: Since 2019 North West Air Ambulance (NWAA) have carried blood on board Helimed 72, their doctor-led aircraft, bringing lifesaving blood transfusions to patients across the region. In early October, the charity has expanded the service by introducing blood on board to all of their vehicles, including three Airbus EC135 helicopters and their four critical care cars. NWAA is indebted to their partners Greater Manchester Blood Bikes and Salford Royal Hospital, both of which have been instrumental in making this expansion possible for patients throughout the Northwest of the UK.

Greater Manchester Blood Bikes is a charity set up in 2012 and in the last five years have averaged close on 3000 jobs per annum. In September 2024 they had a record-breaking month with 397 jobs completed - typically they transport blood, plasma, platelets, samples, vaccines, donor breast milk and any other urgently required medical items to hospitals and healthcare sites. They have been working with Northwest Air Ambulance now for 5 years

Northwest Blood Bikes - Lancs & Lakes is another similar charity in the adjacent region and have also been part of this effort, particularly with NWAA's base at Blackpool - HeliHub.com

A banner for Police Aviation News. On the left is a white helicopter with 'G-11' on its side. The background is blue. The text reads: 'Police Aviation News' in large white letters, 'POLICE • FIRE • AMBULANCE' in smaller white letters, 'EMERGENCY SERVICES' in large blue letters, 'NEWS AND VIEWS - online' in smaller white letters, and 'www.policeaviationnews.com' in yellow letters at the bottom.



COUNTY AIR AMBULANCE (MIDLAND) continue to rebuild their Strensham Airbase ocated on a motorway service area on the M5 Motorway. The modular building sections are in place and the hangar already has its roof! The transformation has been made possible thanks to a generous £1.8M grant from [@HelipadHELP](#) [Posted on X]



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Maritime and Coastguard Agency

UK COASTGUARD: The UK's coastguard search and rescue helicopter service has suspended landings at most of Scotland's hospital helipads because of safety concerns. The Bristow Press Release driven story specifies the Scottish landing sites but there will be some sites in other parts of the country affected.



Operator Bristow has taken the action following a safety review ordered after a woman died in an accident in Devon in March 2022. The airframe involved in the Devon incident was a Sikorsky S-92 which has a significantly more downwash compared to the main helicopters used in HEMS work (H135/H135 and AW169). As far as Bristow is concerned it affects the Sikorsky and the AW189. The AW139 is not mentioned it is not currently in service.

Jean Langan, 87-years-old, was walking through a hospital car park close to the helipad at Derriford Hospital, Plymouth when she was blown over and fatally injured while a helicopter was landing. The Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB) investigated the accident and reported late last year. Briefly it transpired that risk and design assessments on both new and old helipads had not taken due notice of the vastly different downdraft pressures presented by ever larger aircraft. Some sites had been set up based on the calculation associated with much smaller helicopter like the Sikorsky S55 and S58 (Whirlwind and Wessex). Such accidents as had occurred had fortunately not been serious enough for the situation to be reassessed.

CAP 1264 first published in 2016 contains comprehensive guidance about downwash risks and states that a downwash zone for large helicopters should extend 50 to 65 metres from the edge of a ground level hospital helicopter landing site (HHLS). The previous advice noted that there should be a 30-metre downwash helipad zone, marked by fencing and signs and kept clear of people, parked cars and buildings.

The 16-page document that accompanies this press release lists incidents that could easily have brought the latent dangers to the attention of the authorities. In Scotland alone there were seven downdraft incidents in the last 15 years. Good fortune meant that the injuries were negligible a therefore underreported. In one case the downdraft blew a temporary metal roadside barrier into a bystander causing minor injury and, in another downdraft, blew a small child up into the air – the child was caught by the father. Each of the others amounted to dents and scratches but if that child had not been caught by the father the situation would have tragically emerged earlier.

Bristow's UK-wide move affects 23 Scottish sites, including helipads for hospitals in Aberdeen, Dumfries, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

The busiest affected sites in Scotland are:

- Aberdeen Royal Infirmary (58 coastguard landings between May 2022-May 2024)
- Western Isles Hospital (52)
- Edinburgh Royal Infirmary (21)
- Glasgow's Golden Jubilee (20)
- Campbeltown (13)
- Ayr (9)
- Dundee (6)
- Dumfries and Galloway (5)

Other locations, but where there was no coastguard landings in the timescale involved, are in Arran (Knockenkelly and Ormidale), Barra, Skye, Fort William, Kilmarnock, Melrose, Millport, Moffat, Mull, Oban, Rothesay and Stranraer.

Ten Scottish hospital helicopter landing sites (H HLS) meet recommendations made by the Air Accident Investigation Branch (AAIB) and recently issued Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) regulations.

Safe zones for the coastguard's large helicopters need to be extended to protect people from the risk of "downwash" from the main rotor blades. The Scottish government said Scottish Air Ambulance and charity air ambulances could still land at all Scotland's helipads.

A series of additional questions to Bristow clarified the detail. This edict applies to the Bristow SAR fleet of AW189 and S92 aircraft. CAA guidelines are for all H HLS. Bristow stated:

"Safety is always our first priority. Guidelines for safe Search and Rescue (SAR) helicopter operations to Hospital Helicopter Landing Sites (H HLS) are set by the CAA. Management of these sites is the legal responsibility of the NHS Trusts. We continue to work with all NHS Trusts to ensure continued safe operations within CAA guidelines at all sites."

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: Air Methods suffered a vandalism attack on their "Mercy Air 44" helicopter at Hesperia Airport in California. Their Bell 407, registered N160AM, had been covered in graffiti on both sides and was discovered at 5.20am on the morning of October 27.

The airport does not have night time security. The matter is being looked into by San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department.

Sadly, not a unique experience in world terms, but it is going to be a very expensive remedial. [HeliHub]



IOWA: A new HEMS air base is expected to be open in Davenport, Iowa in a matter of days. This will be the fourth Air Care base in Eastern Iowa.

University of Iowa Health Care, AirCare, whose flights are operated by Air Methods, is the first hospital-based emergency air medical program in Iowa and one of the first fifteen operations nationwide, providing emergency helicopter and ambulance services to patients experiencing time-sensitive or complex medical conditions that call for quick transport.

The new base joins AirCare's other locations in Iowa City, Waterloo and Dubuque and supports UI Health Care's long-term goals of Supporting access to health care across Iowa. Currently, UI Health Care and Air Methods are recruiting qualified staff for the new base.

AirCare is the only air ambulance in Iowa affiliated with an emergency medicine residency and the only one in the state to supplement its medical crew with flight physicians. The operation is certified by the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems (CAMTS).

The new AirCare helicopter, a Bell 429, N81AM on the helipad at the university campus of UI Health Care on July 26, 2024. [UI Health Care]



Also in Iowa, MedForce has been flying about 1,200 patients every year using its bases in the Quad Cities and Burlington around Illinois and Iowa. The area includes Davenport, Bettendorf, Moline and Rock Island as well as Sterling, Galesburg, Burlington and Clinton.

MedForce has recently been celebrating 25 years' service in the region – now served by four helicopters, the latest of which was a new airframe.

Editor: The Bell presented as the new arrival at the celebration is a 2012 build Airbus Helicopters EC135P2+ N311MF c/n 1069 last noted in PAN July 2021 when they were celebrating 21 years of service. I am sure no-one noticed! Metro Aviation recently delivered EC135P3 N301MF, c/n 2109 to Colona.

MASSACHUSETTS: In Pittsfield, western Massachusetts, Berkshire Health Systems has announced that the helicopter landing zone for Berkshire Medical Center is being relocated to the Hillcrest Campus of BMC in order to enhance and improve safety for helicopter crews and patients. The move was effective October 1.

The move ensures the safety of the patient and helicopter crew and lessen the travel time from Berkshire Medical Center to the landing zone.

The landing zone at the Hillcrest Campus of BMC is located at the rear of the property in a paved area. Critical patients in need of helicopter transport will be stabilised at Berkshire Medical Center, then transported by ambulance to Hillcrest for the helicopter flight to another hospital with higher levels of specialized trauma care. The impact on the neighbourhood surrounding the Hillcrest Campus of BMC is expected to be limited, based on a historical average of about two or three transports per month. [BSR]

UTAH Air Life Utah Helicopters, an Air Methods Company, has been awarded first responder status in Brigham City and Lehi. The operation can now respond to requests from law enforcement, fire or 911 emergency dispatch.

Those two bases serve patients in northern Utah and western Wyoming.

To receive first responder status, AirLife Utah had to demonstrate a need and develop a plan to reduce the risk associated with landing a helicopter in an unsecured area, train its pilots and flight crew to correctly identify suitable landing zones without ground support, and educate ground crew on how to approach a scene when an aircraft is already on site. [AMR]

FIRE

According to new research led by the UK Met Office it has been revealed that wildfires are accelerating carbon loss from ecosystems, reducing the amount of emissions society can release, while still avoiding the worst impacts of climate change.

Wildfires are accelerating carbon loss from ecosystems, reducing the planet's ability to store carbon and complicating efforts to meet global climate targets. Fire is already affecting land carbon sinks, making it harder to slow global warming, even before we reach 1.5°C of warming.

The [study](#), published in Nature Geoscience, concludes that while fire is already reshaping ecosystems, rapid emission cuts and improved fire management could still prevent the worst outcomes.

Editor: Well, that has ruined that ploy used by high mileage fliers! Lots of [rich?] people pumping money into carbon offsets (mainly planting trees on agricultural land it seems) are losing their investments through wildfires! Unfortunately, a wildfire has been a wholly natural event of renewing nature (and therefore nothing to do with man) for millions of years. We are only really spending dollars in controlling it because this natural event is burning the houses built in the trees. A similar process to having to rescue people from flooded houses built on flood plains!

CANADA

NOVA SCOTIA: Early last month it was announced that the Nova Scotia government is getting new helicopters to fight wildfires, with a contract worth more than \$25M with Airbus Helicopters.

The Natural Resources Department says the aircraft will replace its fleet of four helicopters that are currently used as water bombers. Money from the sale of the existing fleet will reduce the overall cost of the acquisition. The contract with Airbus was signed last winter but it received little media coverage at that time.

The last major fleet renewal was over 2017-8 when Nova Scotia's Department of Natural Resources acquired four new Airbus H-125 helicopters to undertake both the firefighting role and a SAR and ambulance capability and replaced EC120s. At the time it was stated that the new fleet was expected to cost about \$16M, with provincial officials saying it will be at least another 25 years before the new helicopters need replacing. It appears that the 25 years became a figment of someone's imagination and the local media are already asking why they only lasted 6 years.

The current fleet of AS350Bs is C-GYNR c/n 8027, C-GTNR c/n 8042, C-FDNR c/n 8375 and C-GZNR c/n 8412. The last was delivered in May 2018.

The new helicopters will be purchased for Can\$19,105,402.00 over the next four years and will be used for other tasks in addition to firefighting. The funding comes from contributions from both the Nova Scotian and federal governments, which have each committed nearly CA\$13M over the next five years to the purchase of new firefighting aircraft and equipment. Cost figure is \$33.6M, half from the province and half from central Government. The \$16M "cost" figure is thought to be an estimate derived from trading in the existing fleet. This is Canadian Dollars, so \$33.6M is UK£18.87M and \$16M is £8.99M.

The province's fixed-wing water bombers have a 10-year timeline for replacement.

UNITED KINGDOM

IN PARLIAMENT: To a question asked by a member on whether the Home Office had issued guidance on the criteria to be used to determine when to use a helicopter to help put out moorland fires, the Home Office replied that Fire and Rescue Services are operationally independent in England. Each fire and rescue authority is required to plan for the foreseeable risks in their area (including wildfire), through their Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) while having regard to the views of other key local responders. The Government does not issue guidance on the operational use of helicopters.

Fire and Rescue Services undertake a range of activities alongside local partners, including prevention and educational activities. Additionally, Defra encourage landowners and land managers to adopt good quality wildfire management plans, use sustainable land management practices that reduce fuel loads and restore their peatland – wetter, healthy-functioning peatlands are more resilient to the risk of wildfire.

In 2024/25, the Home Office is funding a new National Resilience Wildfire Advisor to assess what additional wildfire national capabilities might be needed to increase resilience to the wildfire risk and to ensure coordination of approaches across the sector.

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: In the September edition of PAN, we reported that the City of San Diego are to acquire a Subaru Bell 412EPX for their Fire Department fleet. We can confirm that this aircraft has now been transferred from the production line in Mirabel, Canada to the US for the installation of its role equipment. This process usually takes 9-12 months, so we estimate customer delivery in summer 2025. [Parapex Media]

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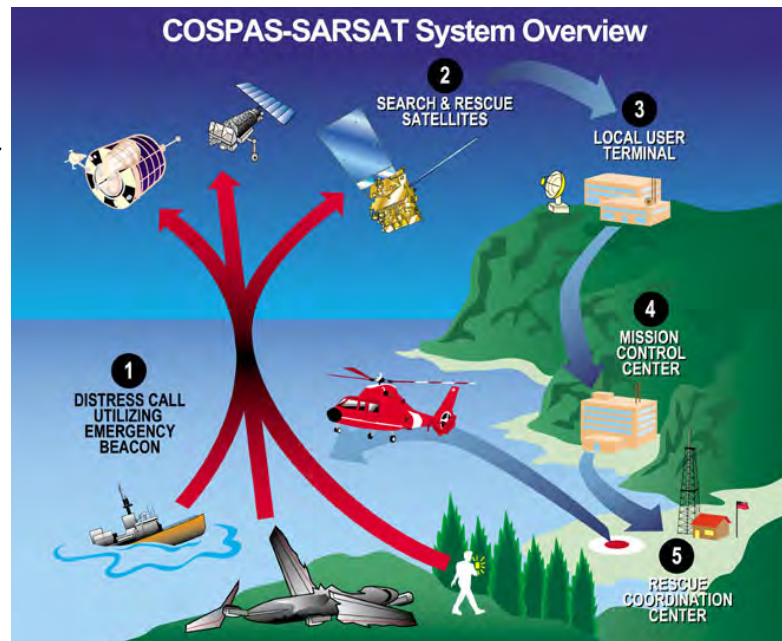
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SEARCH & RESCUE INTERNATIONAL

SAUDI ARABIA: During October, the International COSPAS-SARSAT Programme Council (CSC)'s 71st meeting was hosted by the Saudi General Authority of Civil Aviation (GACA) in Riyadh - the first time CSC has moved away from its Montreal Canada HQ for these meetings.

CSC is an intergovernmental body responsible for coordinating the global satellite search and rescue system, overseeing the policies and operations to timely detect and disseminate distress alerts and support lifesaving conducted by the search and rescue teams worldwide. The COSPAS-SARSAT program is considered in the framework of the United Nations International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). The decision to organize the first CSC meeting outside COSPAS-SARSAT headquarters for the first time in the program's 45-year history is an incentive to enhance the SAR capabilities and leadership role, in the region.

Over 45 States and organizations attended the 10-day conference, with delegates participating in meetings to discuss the management of the Cospas-Sarsat program, review all operational plans, and approve future activities for this critical safety initiative which began in 1979. [Source - GACA press release, heavily edited by Parapex]



CANADA

ONTARIO: Civil Air Search and Rescue Association (CASARA), a volunteer SAR organisation operating across Canada was defrauded of more than \$82,000 by a husband and wife working for it.

The couple, Brian Bishop, 74, and Marina Bishop, 71, have pleaded guilty to taking the money from the volunteer organization in which they held long-time senior roles. The couple pleaded guilty to one count of fraud over \$5,000 at a St. John's court last month.

The fraud spanned a period of more than six years, from April 2015 through September 2021. They have since repaid the full amount they had fraudulently taken. Eleven other charges against the duo — including forgery-related offences and breach of trust — were withdrawn.

The Crown and defence made a joint submission for a conditional sentence of 12 months — essentially, house arrest — followed by 12 months of probation.

Brian Bishop was national vice-president of finance and administration for CASARA until May 2022. He was national vice-president of training and operations for two decades before that.

Marina Bishop was elected as secretary and treasurer for the St. John's zone of the organization's wing in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Bishops admitted to depositing federal cheques into the zone account, then issuing payments of more than \$14,000 to themselves. In addition, there were 56 fraudulent transactions related to falsified expense claims for flights that never happened and charging ASARA nearly \$12,000 in storage fees for a personal aircraft.

Civil Air Search and Rescue Association is the Canada equivalent of the U.S. Civil Air Patrol.

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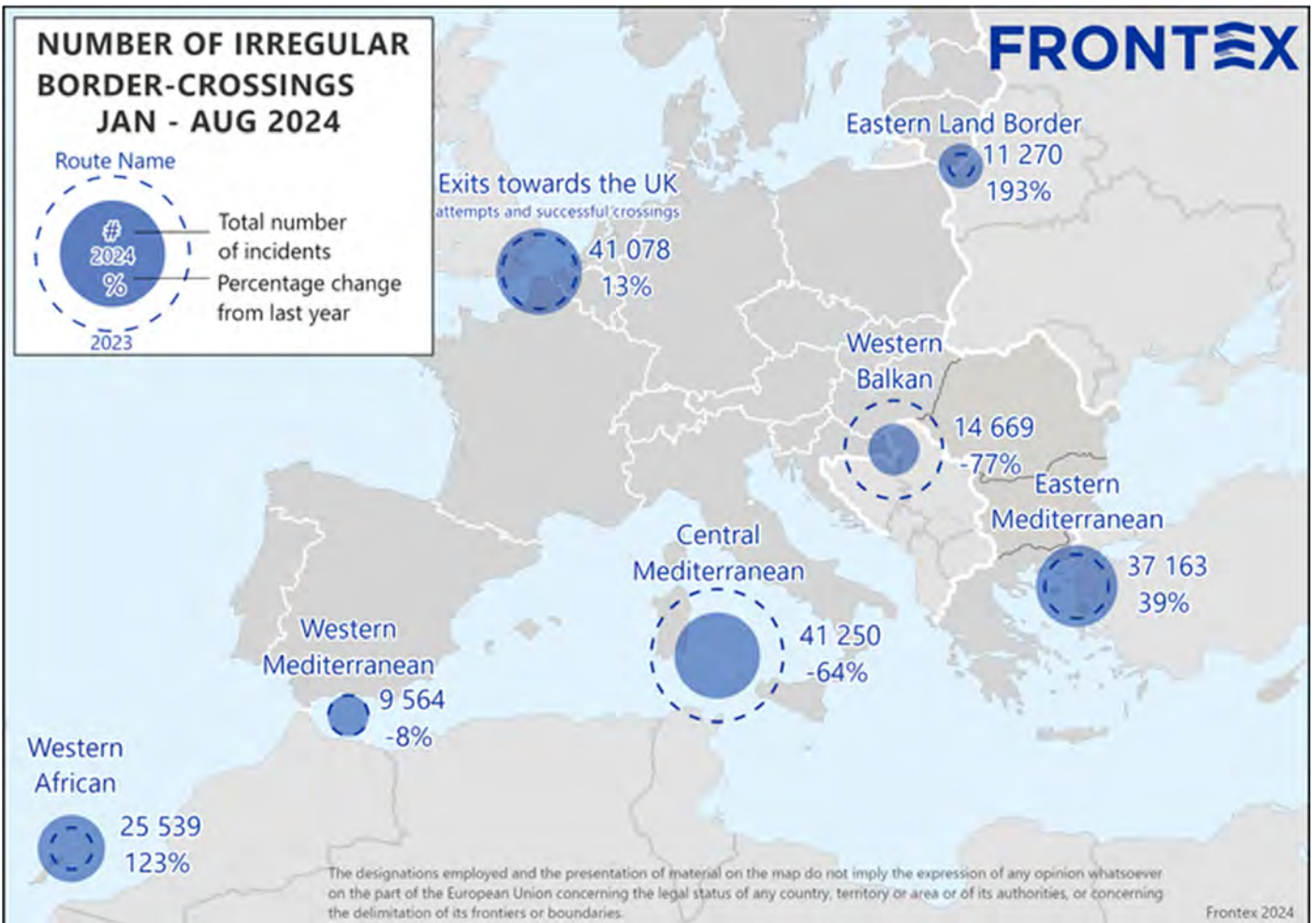
Den Helder Airport, Netherlands. The latest Dornier Do328-100 multi-role special mission aircraft (MPA) are available to FRONTEX. from EASP Air

EUROPE

FRONTEX: According to figures issued by Frontex in late September, the number of irregular border crossings into the European Union fell by 39% in the first eight months of the year. The preliminary figures showed that the numbers detected crossing amounted to 139,847. No estimate of those crossing undetected has been disclosed.

The Central Mediterranean saw a 64% drop (year on year) in irregular border crossings. The Western Balkans also continued to show a strong decrease of -77%.

Eastern Land Border and Western African route showed the highest rises of 193% and 123%, respectively. Top three nationalities this year: Syria, Mali, Afghanistan.



CROSS-CHANNEL MIGRATION - NUMBERS INCREASING

Despite the rhetoric from successive politicians, 'stop the boats', 'smash the gangs', together with the formation of the new UK 'Border Security Command', led by former senior Metropolitan police officer, Martin Hewitt, migrants continue to stream across the English Channel in increasing numbers. Even before the month had ended, October became the busiest month in 2024 with 5,187 migrants setting out from a beach in France in 94 boats, before being 'rescued', by the UK Border Force, and transported to England.

Nevertheless, the French police have had some success in stopping migrants from risking their lives in a flimsy inflatable boat in an unforgiving sea. In the first 3 weeks of October, 2,445 migrants were 'prevented' from leaving France. In the same period, 2,960 illegal migrants were landed at Dover from 51 boats, an average of 58 migrants per boat. The French police are doing their best, stopping around 50% of migrants from endangering their lives in the English Channel. However, with persistent air support, with 'spotter planes' above the beaches of northern France, together with more boots on the ground, they could do better. To date, the number of migrants who have perished in the English Channel in 2024 is reported to be 61; there were 12 deaths in 2023. Both the British and the French must up their game if this crisis is to be resolved and if further migrant deaths are to be prevented.

Although the French police are preventing some 50% of migrants from crossing the English Channel in small boats they could do better, with more 'boots on the ground' and with persistent air patrols above the beaches of northern France.



The 'Uber' Cross Channel App

A new twist, which doesn't help, is that one of the migrant charities based in France, Utopia56, is encouraging migrants to use their mobile phones, to make a distress call once they've reached the half-way mark, between France and England. In the early hours of Thursday, 24 October, Utopia56 reported that more than 500 migrants were in danger in '10 overloaded dinghies'. The message read, "At least ten overloaded boats are currently in danger in the English Channel. Since 2am, the Calais team has received ten distress calls at sea, involving over 500 people." Utopia56 also shared screenshots of messages showing the location of some of the distress calls. According to Home Office, 509 illegal migrants were subsequently landed at Dover from 11 boats by the UK Border Force. This was after the migrants had successfully called for help, using the 'Utopia56 cross-Channel taxi app'. It could be argued that Border Force should have 'rescued' the migrants sooner, in French waters, and then landed them in Calais!

On the 24 October, after being alerted by the French charity, Utopia56, based in Calais, 509 illegal migrants were landed at Dover by the UK Border Force.



Profits for all

In another report, the BBC confirmed, after a lengthy investigation, that the large, badly constructed inflatable boats, made in China and imported into Europe through Turkey are destined for warehouses in Essen in western Germany. The current price for a flimsy inflatable boat, described as a 'death trap', complete with a small outboard engine, a Mercury, or a Yamaha, an inflation pump and 60 lifejackets, is €15,000 (£12,500). With the journey to the UK costing each migrant around £2,000, the profits, for the people traffickers, are enormous.

Supply route from Turkey to French coast



Enormous, legitimate profits, are also being taken from the public purse in the UK. At one point, hotel accommodation was costing the government, the British taxpayer, around £8million per day, almost £3billion per year, to house over 58,000 migrants in more than 400 hotels. This was reduced by the previous immigration minister, Robert Jenrick to just over 250 hotels costing £4.2million per day, £1.5billion per annum. Also, according to David Bolt, the interim independent chief inspector of borders and immigration, the Home Office has squandered £400million in a year on unused bed space. One contractor is reported to have been paid for 32,656 bed spaces by Home Office, of which, 11,043 beds were unoccupied!

B B C

Then there are the costs incurred in patrolling the English Channel with aircraft, some provided by contractors from Canada and Portugal, together with the 5 crew transfer vessels (CTVs) designed to support the burgeoning offshore wind turbine industry, but now adapted to become rescue vessels with a portable toilet, a 'porta-loo' on the stern deck. These 5 CTVs, based at Ramsgate in Kent, are a key component of 'Uber cross-Channel taxi app' which speeds illegal migrants from mid-Channel to England, to the migrant reception centre at Dover, yet another component of this multi-billion pound industry which sees thousands of migrants crossing the Channel in small boats every year. Now in opposition, the Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP has accused the current UK government of complicity in an 'institutional cover-up' over the full cost of mass migration in terms of the economy and social cohesion. The lack of border security, a fundamental for any government cannot go on. The British government knows it, the French government knows it and the public in both countries know it too.

BF Ranger, one of 5 crew transfer vessels, designed to support the offshore wind turbine industry and adapted to 'rescue' large numbers of illegal migrants from the middle of the English Channel, from inflatable boats, before landing them at Dover. Modifications include the provision of a portable toilet on the aft deck.



Sadly, any hope that the Labour Government would, in the words of the new Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, 'smash the gangs', the same gangs of people traffickers who are 'running circles' around the government's of the UK and France have been dashed within just 4 months of the new government taking office.. In one month, in October, more illegal migrants, over 5,000, had arrived in the UK, in small boats from France, more than in any other month in 2024. Moreover, with 2 months to go, the annual total for 2024, at the time of writing, is currently, 30,431. Significantly greater, almost 1,000 more than the total of 29,437 for the whole of the previous year, for 2023

James A Cowan MBE



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IRELAND

COAST GUARD: Bristow Ireland Limited's (BIL) training, engineering and familiarisation programme for the new Irish Coast Guard Search and Rescue Aviation Contract, switched to Shannon Airport, ahead of the service going live at the end of October. The company has acknowledged that they have "resolved some minor issues" as preparations continued.

The Bristow Group Inc subsidiary will provide the next Irish Coast Guard Search and Rescue (SAR) Aviation Contract after being confirmed in May last year the preferred bidder for the new deal. The contract, which has not been without controversy, will see Bristow Ireland Limited take over responsibility for operations currently being undertaken by CHC Ireland.

Bristow will operate a fleet of six specialist Leonardo AW189 helicopters the first of which arrived in Ireland from Gosport in Southeast England in August. The contract sees operations from the current bases at Shannon, Sligo, Waterford and Weston Airport in West Dublin.

There had been speculation that the new aircraft had encountered technical problems however Bristow Ireland have said there have been some 'minor issues' on which they have been working with the aircraft manufacturer to resolve. [Clare FM]

UNITED STATES

NATIONAL: I doubt the average reader has missed the never-ending focus of this publication on the boat people in the English Channel. There may have been mention of the effect this human traffic has had on Europe as a whole but the concentration on the aeronautical elements of that 21 miles strip of water has been, perhaps, overstated for the taste of some. The editorial team accept the criticism but point out that no-one else is likely to cover the story so it will continue!

Meanwhile we are fully aware that the numbers being attracted to the borders of Europe, both land and sea, are far greater than those assailing England and that both are pale imitations for those problems facing the United States. It is clear that Illegal Immigration into the US is a major element in this month's Presidential Election process.

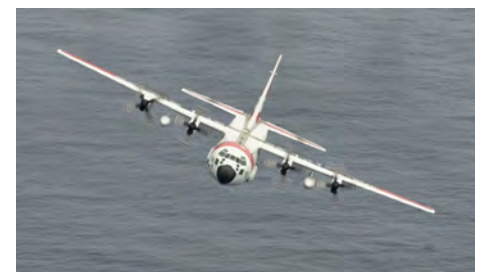
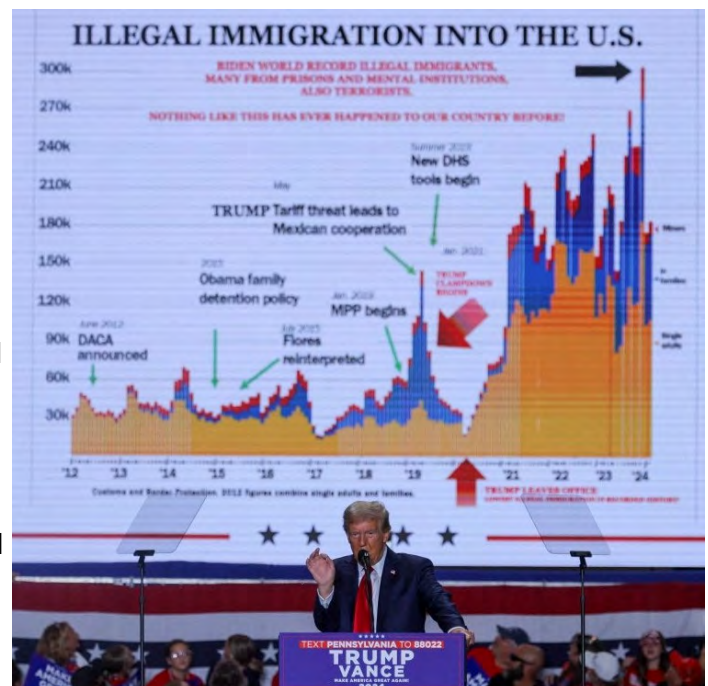
No one knows exactly how many undocumented immigrants are living in the US, it can be difficult to establish an accurate number due to the nature of the situation. Currently, it is estimated that the number of unauthorized immigrants in the U.S stands at just over 10 million.

Ten times as many migrants died in New Mexico near the U.S.-Mexico border in each of the last two years compared with just five years ago as smuggling gangs steer them — exhausted, dehydrated and malnourished — mostly into the hot desert, canyons or mountains west of El Paso, Texas.

During the first eight months of 2024, the bodies of 108 presumed migrants mostly from Mexico and Central America were found near the border in New Mexico and often less than 10 miles (6km) from El Paso, according to the most recent data. The remains of 113 presumed migrants were found in New Mexico in 2023, compared with nine in 2020 and 10 in 2019.

It's not clear exactly why more migrants are being found dead in that area, but many experts say smugglers are treating migrants more harshly and bringing them on paths that could be more dangerous in extreme summer temperatures. [NPR]

FEDERAL: The US Coast Guard has recently disposed of its last Lockheed HC-130H Hercules aircraft after commencing a replacement programme with examples of the HC-130J in June 2021.



A close-up photograph of a flight simulator cockpit, showing the instrument panel, yoke, and throttle levers. A graphic of a winding road is overlaid on the right side of the image.

APSA On-The-Road

**TACTICAL FLIGHT OFFICER /
AIRBORNE THERMOGRAPHER
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ORLANDO, FL | DECEMBER 9-11, 2024

NORTH CAROLINA: A month ago, September 28, the emergency on everyone's mind in the USA was Hurricane Helene. The devastating storm had tracked in from the Gulf, nudging the west coast of Florida to slam into the southern states and devastate multiple states, including the Carolinas, Georgia, and Virginia. The catastrophic storm displaced families, destroyed homes, flattened businesses, and crippled essential services. Over 200 people died.

You might be forgiven for expecting that it would be "all hands to the pumps" as it were when setting up rescues of people in mortal danger, but not so it seems. A South Carolina pilot who flew stranded Hurricane Helene victims to safety in the flood-ravaged areas of North Carolina claims he was told he would be arrested if he continued to offer free rescue missions.

Jordan and Landon Seidhom, a teenager, flew to the flood-ravaged Lake Lure region of North Carolina to help victims of Hurricane Helene. They were flying victims out of the devastation when local leaders declared there was a flight restriction on the area and that they would arrest him if he continued making flights.

Hundreds of people stranded as entire roadways washed away, and Seidhom learned of a family that was stranded without water on a mountain in Banner Elk, a ski town heavily battered by the storm.

Seidhom, flew out bottled water and food to the family and then set out to find other people in need of help. He flew four victims to safety, including two women stranded at the top of a mountain and two vacationers trapped inside their Airbnb. Low on supplies, they didn't have any food, water or power. They took them to a local airport, and they were able to fly home from there.

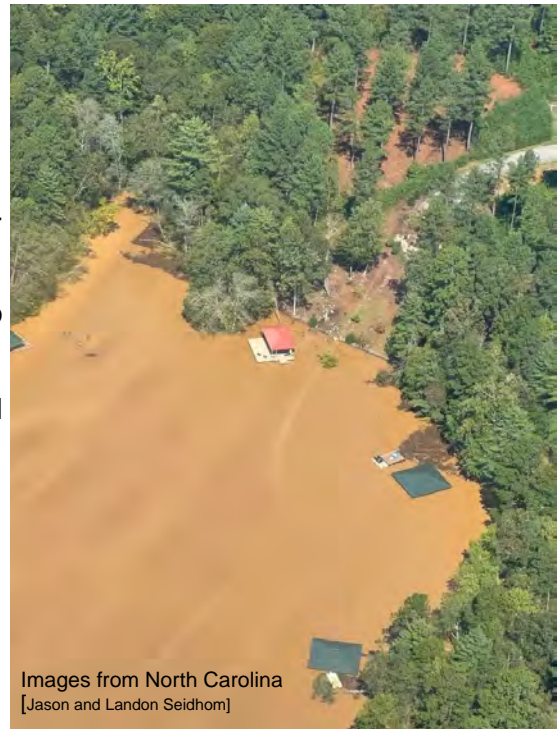
The next day, the father and son went back out and found a husband and wife who waved them down from their partially washed-away home. The pair were Susan and Mike Coffey who had spent the previous two-and-a-half days in their car after watching their house crash down the steep embankment along with those of their neighbours. The stranded couple had waved to various helicopters passing nearby but, none stopped.

Only equipped with his small R44 Raven helicopter, a type with marginal stability and weight characteristics Seidhom had his son exit the aircraft to make room for the wife, whom he flew to a group of first responders about three minutes away.

He was just going to take one person down at the time, but his plans to return for the other victim and his son were squashed by a senior Lake Lure fire official, who allegedly threatened to have him arrested if he continued picking up stranded victims.

Seidhom was not exactly unfamiliar with the emergency services and their ways, he had once been in the Chesterfield County Sheriff's Office narcotics unit and both he and his son were volunteer firefighters, but that experience was not enough it seems. Even though he explained that his son and Mike Coffey were still out there officialdom would not budge on his edict.

Faced with an impasse Seidhom returned to retrieve his son and explained what happened to Mike Coffey, whom he was forced to leave stranded in his crumbling driveway. In the event the husband and wife were kept apart and out of contact with each other for three days. Rather than being reunited by helicopter in minutes they only finally met up again after the husband was pulled across raging flood waters using a rope thrown to him by people on the ground.



Images from North Carolina
[Jason and Landon Seidhom]



The R44 they operated
[Jason and Landon Seidhom]



Flood waters North Carolina
[Jason and Landon Seidhom]

The firefighter, later identified as Lake Lure Assistant Chief Chris Melton, became scarce after the media started asking questions.

Less than 24 hours after their ordeal, incident commanders in the area requested civilian pilots to help with the rescue. The debris-ridden terrain prevented many large helicopters from landing. True to his earlier activity Jordan returned to be part of the mission.

Editor: Not a good day for the emergency services although it was driven by the imposition temporary flight restriction covering the area, reports of flight conflicts and poor communications around Lake Lure. It has not been explained what Melton was thinking when he suggested that a man would abandon his teenage son on a hill side with a total stranger. Let alone why he would deny Mike Coffey a short flight to safety in difficult circumstances. [New York Post/Firehouse/Facebook]

INDUSTRY

Police Aviation Research (incorporating Police Aviation News, PAVCon Europe, The Hurricane, and other projects) donates to the **Wikimedia Foundation** from time to time. [donation, number CNTCT-65162129, on October 1, 2024]

Avincis is expanding its maintenance offering in Portugal and has sent an AW139 from its Italian fleet there - a positioning flight of over 1,300 miles flown on 1-2 September. The aircraft will receive a complete overhaul from the Portuguese technical team and is part of an investment strategy in the country to strengthen its helicopter Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) base in Loures near Lisbon. Avincis established the Portuguese capital as its global corporate headquarters in 2023.

Until now, the base in Lisbon has only worked on helicopters from its Portuguese and Spanish fleets. For example, the Spanish firefighting fleet of 10 aircraft is maintained here over the winter months.

The AW139 aircraft, which provides Emergency Medical as well as Search and Rescue services from the operator's Colico base at Lake Como in Italy, will remain in Lisbon for around 10 weeks while the two-yearly inspection is carried out. This operation will be conducted by around 10 engineers, technicians and support staff who will work on this aircraft exclusively until the inspection is complete. It must also raise the question as to why the Colico base is not best placed to do this project, given its close proximity to Leonardo's manufacturing plant and thus appropriately skilled and knowledgeable engineers.

For John Boag, Avincis Group CEO, "the project strengthens the investment made in developing Lisbon into a centre of excellence for maintenance and training. Portugal is the right location for us, geographically and in terms of available talent in the labour market." The company has already created 10 new technical jobs in the last year, "highly specialised labour, which we want to maintain and increase," he stresses. The company expects to create more work and give more long-term job security to its Portuguese workforce with this initiative.

"Mobilising aircraft between the countries in which Avincis has operations is not only a rational decision to make efficiency gains where they exist, but also a demonstration of the size, capacity and resources of the company as a group, factors that distinguish us from other operators in the different markets," concludes John Boag.

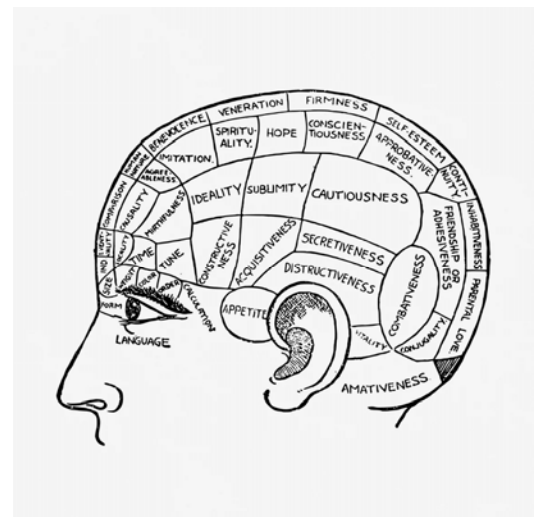
Avincis employs around 100 people in Portugal, providing helicopter emergency medical service for the National Institute for Medical Emergencies with four aircraft, and aerial firefighting with both fixed and rotary wing aircraft at the service of the National Civil Protection Authority, including two Canadair aeroplanes. The company operates a fleet of 180 helicopters in Europe. [HeliHub]

Last month the **Police Superintendents' Association (PSA)** of the United Kingdom shared the results of its latest member survey, which reveal extremely poor levels of motivation and morale, to coincide with World Mental Health Day.

Carried out annually, the PSA's consultation process, conducted in partnership with the Superintendents' Association of Northern Ireland (SANI), seeks feedback and insight from its members on pay, morale and motivation. Members are management level police officers.

The 2023 survey results show extremely low levels of morale and motivation – many the lowest they have ever been. The results also show significant drops in the level of pride felt with being in the police service, and in the number of members who would recommend joining policing.

Just 52% of those surveyed said their personal motivation was high – the lowest ever recorded. Meanwhile, 66% said morale was low in their force and only 38% said they feel valued. Just 32% said they would recommend policing to others.



Airbus Helicopters and its partners have conducted a full-scale demonstration of a manned-unmanned teaming (MUM-T) system developed as part of a project funded by the European Union and code-named MUSER. The demonstration took place in France and Italy from 30 September to 9 October and involved multiple manned helicopters and unmanned systems connected to a single MUM-T network.

The experiment was led by Airbus, which deployed the H130 FlightLab [right] as a manned platform and the VSR700 unmanned aerial system (UAS) on a DGA test range. Meanwhile, Leonardo performed the demonstration with a helicopter and an optionally piloted vehicle. Thales, coordinator of the MUSER project, provided a supervision station and a mission debriefing station. Space Applications Services was in charge of the mission preparation station. Indra led simulation activities in preparation for the demonstration, while ONERA provided studies on crew workload.

The MUSER demonstration consisted of various scenarios involving the different aircraft flying simultaneously in France and in Italy. The missions were based on concepts of operations defined by the ministries of defence of France, Italy and Spain. One scenario, for example, showcased UAS and manned helicopters for an anti-piracy mission. The UAS was initially conducting a surveillance mission. Once it spotted suspicious activity on a boat, the manned helicopter joined the scene and took full control of the UAS in preparation for an intervention.

The in-flight testing aimed at demonstrating levels of interoperability (LOI) 2 to 4, from direct receipt of UAS data by the manned helicopters and the ground station, to the control and monitoring of the UAS from the helicopters. The demonstration also served to prove that manned helicopters and UAS from different companies and different countries, operating in distant areas, could be integrated within a single MUM-T system.

MUSER is a project launched in the frame of the European Defence Industrial Development Programme (EDIDP) launched by the European Commission in December 2021. The project aims at developing a generic European MUM-T system that can operate robustly in multiple environments (civil, military or mixed), whilst reducing the crew's workload and delivering maximum capacity in operation.

On September 26, **Safran Helicopter Engines** received the validated type certificate (VTC) for the Arrano 1A engine from the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC). This is the second VTC obtained in China by Safran Helicopter Engines this year, after the Aneto-1K engine in May.

The Arrano 1A is the exclusive engine for the state-of-the-art, medium-segment Airbus Helicopters' H160. It has been certified in Europe, the United States, Brazil, India and 11 other countries around the world. Arrano 1A's certification in China will significantly support the H160's entry into service in the Chinese market.

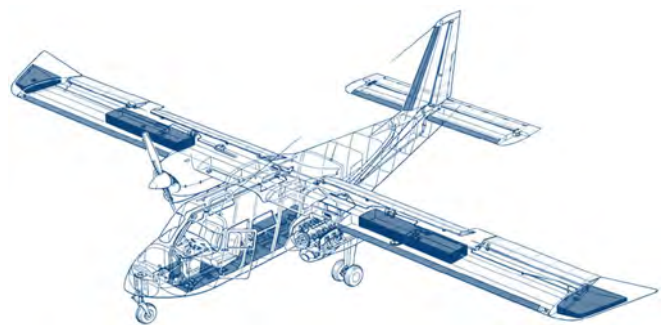
Arrano 1A is a new generation 1,300 shp engine incorporating the latest technology. It is also the most efficient and competitive engine in its power range.

Arrano offers 15 % reduction in fuel consumption over other in-service engines. Its innovative design features a new-generation digital control system that offers greater in-flight responsiveness, enhancing both safety and pilot handling. The gyratory combustion chamber features fuel injectors made using additive manufacturing (3D-printing) techniques. These enhance engine start performance in all weathers and altitudes and contribute to reducing emissions.

Britten-Norman has successfully completed its second funding round, securing significant capital from Northern Ireland based Beechlands Enterprises. The investment will accelerate production of the iconic Islander aircraft and transform aftermarket business.

Britten-Norman will scale manufacturing operations in the UK up to eight aircraft a year in phase one. Manufacturing will be focussed primarily on the unleaded piston version of the Islander, with around 20% of aircraft being delivered as turboprops.

As part of the company's focus on manufacturing, it will invest in more advanced manufacturing tools and machinery, enhancing component production capabilities. These upgrades will help reduce lead times, increase output, and improve overall cost and efficiency.



The EU has once again delayed the rollout its new **electronic border control system** after Germany, France and the Netherlands warned the bloc's central IT infrastructure is not ready. The long-delayed Entry-Exit System (EES) had been due for launch on November 10 but that is no longer an option. The new timeline for the start of EES is not set and a phased approach is being considered. EES is a biometric system which will use digital photographs and fingerprints for registering travellers from non-EU countries, including the UK, when they cross the EU's external border. It will apply to both short-stay visa holders and visa-exempt travellers.

An interesting potential sign of potential despair in India.

They have been looking for a rotary wing replacement for their 50 years old Alouette fleet for ages. The selection process has been long and drawn out and has driven several manufacturers to despair over a period of years. More recently they turned down the AS350 and then selected the **Russian Kamov 226** design just before the Ukraine war broke out.

That war introduced trading restrictions which appear to have stalled the plans to start production in India and as a result the government have increased orders for the locally developed HAI light utility helicopter [LUT] but it's a type that is significantly larger than the Alouette and the Kamov. The question now is what they will do to resolve the problem.

A few months ago, Airbus, the loser in the cancellation of the AS350 cancellation has already announced it had decided to open a limited AS350/H125 production line in India. If the impasse over the local Kamov production continues it may yet be an instance where the management at Airbus are seen to have been accurately reading their corporate tea leaves to good effect.



With this in the background, the **Indian Army** has been contracting with private firms to lease helicopters for logistics support to remote military posts. This initiative is set to operate for 150 days starting next year. This development follows a tender issued by the army a year ago for leasing 20 helicopters for reconnaissance and surveillance missions over a five-year period.

The helicopters needed for both categories are expected to be light helicopters.

One of the key reasons the army cites for contracting civilian helicopters is to preserve the operational lifespan of its current fleet. The first Chetak helicopter was inducted into the Air Force, while the first order for the Cheetah was placed by the forces in 1971. This indicates that these helicopters are nearing the end of their service lives and require timely replacement. The majority of these helicopters are over thirty years old, and it will be some time before replacements enter service.

ITC-AeroLeasing has announced the signing of 11 aircraft leases with Global Medical Response through its operating companies Air Evac EMS, Guardian Flight, Med-Tran Corporation, and Reach Air Medical Services.

The leases include four B407s, four H125s, and three Pilatus PC-12s. The variety of models involved in these transactions reflects the various performance requirements needed to deliver a diverse range of patient care and transportation services across the United States.

The Bell 407 is a popular model in EMS, in operation since 1996. Built to land quickly in challenging conditions, the bi-fold doors make loading patients faster and easier. Bell also offers HEMS kit platforms via various vendors.

The Airbus Helicopters H125 is one of the market-leading aircraft in the single-engine EMS market. The H125 offers a cabin with multiple medical kit options adaptable to an operator's specific needs, along with outstanding performance.

Over 2,000 Pilatus PC-12s have been delivered to date, making it the most iconic pressurized single-engine turboprop in the world since entering operation in 1994. The PC-12 is one of the best ambulance aircraft, not only for its low operating costs but also for its unique ability to operate in and out of unpaved runways. The pressurized cabin offers enough space for up to three patients and medical equipment, and the large cargo door allows for easy loading and unloading. The cabin can easily be reconfigured to fit a wide variety of mission profiles, for maximum operator flexibility.

EDMO Distributors, Inc. has added the KGB Data Acquisition Ruggedized Tool (DART) to their expanding line card. KGB Aviation Solutions, LLC, based in East Aurora, NY, is a leader in design, development, and manufacture of aircraft Flight Data Recorder (FDR) and Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR) data downloading devices. They also provide exceptional FDR/CVR Data Analysis services to global aviation customers. This service has formed the foundation for the development of



products, such as DART, that when integrated with KGB's data analysis services, offers users a reduction in operational costs and process time while enhancing safety and maintenance operations.

Flight Data is complicated. KGB's Data Acquisition Ruggedized Tool (DART) simplifies and automates it with regards to collection and detailed analysis. DART is the only tool of its kind that is Wi-Fi capable so you can download FDR or CVR data while at the aircraft side and immediately transmit to a secure cloud environment. DART also gives users the ability to monitor the data from the recorder for aircraft side troubleshooting.

DART supports most recorders in the industry and as additional recorders are added, that capability is remotely pushed to the DARTs in the field and a simple interface cable is shipped to the customer. This allows maintenance teams to continue to use DART without down time. A common user interface for all the supported recorders also allows for minimal training.

With DART, live data monitoring, remote assistance and technical support from KGB Aviation's engineers is available in real time on a secure, safe platform while troubleshooting the aircraft. KGB's data analysts have years of experience providing accurate reports that are easily understood by quality, maintenance, and safety teams. Any failed parameter will have detailed comments calling out the reason for failure and may contain suggested maintenance steps to confirm or rectify the issue.

In mid-October, Bell reported on their 2024 "Law Enforcement Symposium" which was held in Gaborone, Botswana, to bring together law enforcement operators from across southern Africa. Noting that there are more than 65 active public safety helicopters in Africa, Bell flooded the event with key personnel in what appears to have been a bid to pick up business from their competitors. Data from Parapex Media suggests a fleet close to double their number with 120 helicopters in the law enforcement role across the continent. Bell currently has examples of their own helicopters flying in Kenya, Niger, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda, while there are two licence-built 412s operating in Niger.

Bell listed the following people attending - Both Regional Sales Manager, Lynette Loosen, along with Bell's independent representative from National Airways Corporation, Gary Phillips, delivered key presentations on operational insights and the latest innovations in helicopter technology for public safety.

Terry Miyauchi, Bell's Public Safety Manager, [pictured] highlighted the importance of "Safety Through Teamwork". Bell's invited Keynote Speaker, Dan Millon, from San Diego, California shared his experience and insight on "The Aviation Mindset". Delegates were also addressed by representatives from Safran Helicopter Engines and Pratt & Whitney Canada. Finally, Bell's Customer Service Engineers, Lukas von Benecke based in South Africa and Hans Arnold based in Namibia, were also available during the Law Enforcement Symposium for any technical and aftermarket support discussions specific to operators in the region.

We await to see whether this OEM's efforts have paid off and they get rewarded with new orders. [Parapex - adapted from a Bell report, technically not a press release]

<https://news.bellflight.com/en-US/242562-bell-highlights-africa-s-strategic-importance-at-2024-law-enforcement-symposium>



Bell's Public Safety Manager, Terry Miyauchi was among the speakers at the marketing event in Africa last month. You can expect to see him in Amsterdam this month.



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ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

27 September 2024 Pilatus PC-12/47 N895CR Operated by Air Methods. After arriving from Marianna Municipal Airport, Florida, was manoeuvring at Gainesville-J R Alison Municipal Airport, FL. The propeller of the Pilatus PC-12/47 collided with a golf cart while being marshalled to parking injuring a lineman. The four occupants were not injured. Uncertain what role the aircraft was performing. [ASN]

30 September 2024 MD Helicopters MD500E N8372F Houston Police Department. The helicopter was conducting emergency procedure training, at Wolf Air Park, Manvel, Texas, flared too low during autorotation resulting in the tail contacting the ground during landing. Substantial damage was suffered by the 1991 airframe, no reports of injuries to the two crew aboard. [ASN]

4 October 2024 Air Tractor AT-802A Fire Boss VH-RFM "364" fire attack aircraft operated by Field Air in Greece. firefighting plane force landed at the shore of Lake Marathon, Athens, Greece. According to the pilot, he was unable to release the integral landing gear and therefore landed on the surface of the lake using the floats. The pilot was not injured, and airframe damage was minor. [ASN]

7 October 2024 Bell 206L-3 LongRanger III N230AE. Air Ambulance of Air Evac Lifeteam. From Base 133 Owenton, Kentucky, crashed near Omigos restaurant, in Owenton, a small city in Owen County, about 50 miles northeast of Louisville after striking a tower. The three crew on board died in the impact and following fire. They were on way to a scene to pick up a patient when the accident occurred. [Tristate/Brio]

11 October 2024 Aerospatiale AS350B Ecureuil F-MJEF? Law enforcement, French Gendarmerie Noumea (Nouvelle Calédonie). While operating over the French Colony, suffered engine failure and auto-rotated on to the sea off the capital Noumea. Buoyancy aids deployed. No damage to the airframe or injuries to the three personnel aboard. Airframe believed c/n 2225 F-MJEF (JBZ, CSF) [Linked In]
Editor: Additional script from the National Gendarmerie Ministry of the Interior and Republic High Commission in New Caledonia.



11 October 2024 Eurocopter EC145 PR-UEA Corpo de Bombeiros de Minas Gerais. (Minas Gerais Fire Department) Departed Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais en-route for Belo Horizonte on a search and rescue mission for the wreck of a small plane reported crashed but crashed on a steep mountain slope killing all six occupants, two pilots, two military personnel, a nurse and a SAMU doctor. The helicopter, which had been missing for a day was found near the town of Ouro Preto. [Xinhua News Agency]

22 October 2024 Airbus Helicopters H125 N741SM Law enforcement helicopter operated by Las Vegas PD made an unscheduled landing in the parking of the CSN college campus College Drive north of I-11 in Henderson, Nevada without damage or injury. [5]

26 October 2024 Mil Mi-2 RA-15758 Air ambulance of local airline Vyatkaavia, Russia. The medical evacuation helicopter made a crash landing in a forest near Beleenki, Darovskoy Raion, Kirov Oblast with all four persons aboard being killed. On board were Valentin Komlev, CEO of Vyatkaavia, pilot; Alexander Gyska, doctor; Tatyana Glyzina and Sergey Shirokih, paramedics. The Mil had been in service for nearly 38 years according to Russia's civil aircraft registry, The Interstate Aviation Committee has formed a commission to investigate this aviation incident. The commission has begun its work.

Editor: One of the last examples of the Mil Mi-2 to be produced and yet still in service with its country of origin in the important role of HEMS. Grounds for comment? As we are all aware, there is a 'Special Operation' going on between Russia and the Ukraine and this has seriously affected both countries. The replacement for the Mil and its like has been the Kazan Ansat and many were produced and put into service across Russia. Unfortunately the Ansat was mostly powered by a Western PWC engine and were fitted with numerous Western systems designed to make them more attractive to export markets. They fell foul of import/export restrictions, as did the numerous Westernised airframes in Russian service. A host of Ansat airframes in Russian HEMS colours were donated to Zimbabwe for police and HEMS operations. At the time it was thought that they would never fly, although more recent information suggests that a handful are indeed operating despite the technical support issues with the engine and other systems. See next month.



OLD SCHOOL

Commented on in the previous page, the Mil Mi-2 was one of the primary air ambulances in Russia prior to President Putin's Special Operations in Ukraine. It was being replaced by more modern Ansat's helicopters until Western nations put in place sanctions. This example was at Harwarden, North Wales in August 1997. [PAR]

SAFETY

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has directed American helicopter operators to remove and replace a tension torsion strap for several Bell aircraft. TT straps anchor each rotor blade to the mast while accommodating the multi-directional forces inherent in rotorcraft flight.

The FAA was prompted after a Bell 212 helicopter experienced a separation of a main rotor blade from the main rotor head and subsequent impact into terrain shortly after take-off. Sources suggest that the description of the incident is similar to the scenario in Fort Good Hope, North West Territories earlier this year, killing pilot Tom Frith. The FAA does not confirm the speculation.

The directive calls for operators to replace four types of tension torsion straps manufactured by Airwolf Aerospace, affecting about 120 helicopters on the American registry.

Failure of an affected (tension torsion) strap could occur at any time without any previous indications and result in a sudden and catastrophic condition.

Preliminary results from an investigation by the Transportation Safety Board showed a broken tension torsion strap, manufactured by Airwolf, was the cause of the crash in Fort Good Hope.

On July 18, Transport Canada issued a [safety alert](#) calling on Canadian operators with Bell 204, 205, 206, 210 and 212 model helicopters to inspect their Airwolf straps. That alert references the Fort Good Hope crash. [CBC]

At last year's Air Medical Transport Conference (AMTC) in Columbus, Ohio, there was a discussion regarding episodes of patients suddenly developing violent behavior during transport that caused injuries to crew members and/or threatened catastrophic outcomes. The Air Medical Physicians Association (AMPA) has had further discussions on this issue with the goal of developing guidelines to safely manage violent patient behavior in transport.

To that end, CONCERN has been asked to solicit reports of such events. While not every operation may have considered these situations worthy of reporting via CONCERN, we are asking for details of these situations for the sake of determining the rate of occurrence and severity.

To encourage participation in this effort, reports may be submitted without operation identifying information. Please provide some information on vehicle or aircraft type to provide a fuller picture of the event. Simply use the Report an Incident button on the CONCERN homepage (www.concern-network.org) and select Ground or Air. A report on these submissions will be provided once collected.



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UNMANNED

NORTHUMBRIA: The local NHS delivery of drugs project may have been temporarily suspended, but another use of drones has (excuse the pun) sprung up in its place. In fact, it has been around for some time having been set up at the start of 2024.

Now we have a trial which uses drones to monitor water quality in remote places.

Skyports Drone Services in collaboration with Makutu completed maiden test flights for a new drone inspection service to help water companies monitor and improve the quality of river and coastal water in the early part of this year.

The test flights demonstrated how beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) electric drone operations can be used to automate water quality surveys to improve access to hard-to-reach areas, reduce carbon footprint, gather more data over a larger area, and obtain results much faster.

The service aims to provide an alternative to current labour-intensive data collection processes which require personnel to manually collect water and return it to a central lab for testing. In rural locations, over large expanses, or during poor weather, this process can be difficult, dangerous and time consuming.

Northumbrian Water has been using drones to test coastal waters and estuaries across north-east England, following the earlier test flights in Bishop Auckland.

The equipment makes it cheaper and easier to gather data in hard-to-reach areas, as the water company currently relied on manual collection. That said the manual checks to understand the reliability of the technology and cross check the cost effectiveness of 'a man in a van' versus 'a team with a drone in a van, or two'

The potential spoiler in the plan is that the data collected by drone would be reviewed and any issues with water quality would be investigated (by a scientist in a van?) as standard procedure.

Nonetheless, Northumbrian Water claim that the trial - Project Kingfisher - was a "world first" for the water industry. Manually collecting water samples could be "challenging or simply not possible" in some locations, and the travel could sometimes take several hours, making the process time-consuming and inefficient.

Ed: So, the question is, what else does it do? The current system requires a member of the water team to visit remote, inaccessible, sites to collect water. While they are there, they have the opportunity to take in other elements like infrastructure damage, water leaks etc. It would appear that the testing drone will be focussed entirely on water dipping and that suggests the need for another team to check on the structure..

Schiebel participated in the large-scale NATO supported exercise REPMUS 2024 (Robotic Experimentation and Prototyping using Maritime Uncrewed Systems) hosted by the Portuguese Navy. For the third year in a row, the CAMCOPTER® S-100 demonstrated its multisession capabilities in the maritime domain. Sponsored by the UK Royal Navy and in partnership with Thales, the S-100 flew multiple missions over the three weeks of the exercise and impressed with its Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities as well as its Antisubmarine Warfare (ASW), Mine Counter Measures (MCM) and Rapid Environmental Assessment (REA) solutions:

A second S-100, configured with the Thales BlueTracker communications payload, then relayed the sonobuoy signals back to the ground station in real time providing critical range extension.

LETTERS

An open letter from the Chair of the Rotorcraft Specialist Group Royal Aeronautical Society provides a different, much more positive, take on the recent HeliTech/DroneX event in London.

24th Sept 2024

Dear Bryn,

Following from my report from HeliTech in Anaheim that I sent out in March, and in the vein of signposting the rotorcraft community towards "advancements in (rotorcraft) aeronautics", I thought that those of you who did not get the chance would be interested to know a bit more about HeliTech.

As many of you will be aware, some years ago HeliTech was the annual event of the helicopter industry in Europe, but since those heady days the show has seen a gradual decline (from a rotorcraft perspective) as European Rotors has grown, pulling the support of the EHA and the OEMs with it. Today, there were



only one or two helicopter related companies there including Dart Aerospace and an MRO company. However, HeliTech now shares space with its sister show, DroneX, which is doing relatively well, and the hall was filled with a variety of organisations selling their drone related products and services. (For the purposes of this article, I am using "drone" to include Advanced Air Mobility platforms).

Technologies that were on show were drone-related and often miniaturised; although many could be of use in the wider helicopter industry, for example:

Inertial navigation, GNSS positioning, radalts.

Video and communications transmissions and encoding.

Autonomy including automation of drone operations planning or inspection planning (etc).

Drone systems such as cameras, antennae, motors, control systems.

Precision IR landing systems and radalts

MicroLIDAR

In terms of the effect of the emerging drone market on the rotorcraft industry, it appears as if for the foreseeable future the "use cases" are complementary to (& not in competition with) the use of helicopters. Bristow Helicopters were notable in being the main show sponsors and outlined their vision of a staged adoption of these new platforms alongside their main business of rotorcraft operations. This could mean that use cases commence with cargo transport over unpopulated areas; then passenger movement in unpopulated areas; then regional passenger movement; and eventually passenger movement in complex urban environments.

The main thrust of Bristow's presentation was that drone operation will need experienced Air Operators. The certification of any air platform is an important milestone; but after that point, joint development of the products by OEMs and operators will be needed to integrate appropriate systems such as TCAS for daily use. Drones will need to be integrated into the existing air operations environment, including air traffic, airports, maintenance, cargo handling etc, all of which requires expertise and ultimately certification of the operator, the maintenance & other organisations – and who better than existing AOC holders?

It says a lot about the emergent drone industry that the largest exhibition stand at Helitech/DroneX was the UK Civil Aviation Authority. It's notable that the rapid pace of development of the industry has not yet been matched by its certification achievements! It appears that there will be more rapid development of drones and drone applications for smaller and less complex missions in rural areas (e.g. medical deliveries) under a lower certification requirement (the "basic category"). On the other hand, it is to be expected that it will take longer for the industry to surpass the higher regulatory standards that will be required for commercial operations in congested urban environments.

I hope you have found this of interest.

Best regards

Robin Taylor-Hunt

Chair of the Rotorcraft Specialist Group



MOVE ALONG THERE

WOKE HALL AWARDS

The Police Digital Awards are judged by representatives from the Police Digital Service, National Police Chiefs' Council Digital, Data and Technology Coordination Committee, and techUK (representing the supplier community). Recognises individuals or teams using innovative approaches to tackle police challenges.

Six judges agreed on the finalists for the NPCC Digital, Data and Technology Awards 2024, which and announced them on October 23.

A detailed list of the award categories and a brief description of it, and the forces that have made the shortlist, with details of their nomination duly appeared early in the month and the fanfares were prepared. In fairness none of nominations and selected finalists bore a great relationship to police aviation but it was worth a look. Or was it? In the wake of the due date, it was announced that...

After careful evaluation of all the nominations, the judge's decision was that as there was so little difference in the dedication, expertise and support given by these individuals that we would make them joint winners of the Unsung Digital hero award.

They went on to thank and commend all the 20 forces that submitted the 110 nominations, which showed passion, innovation and dedication.

The usual woke system of no winners and no losers, will anyone bother in future?

PEOPLE

Kgothatso Khunou, the Chief Pilot of the South African Police Service has received an award.



The National Commissioner of SAPS, General Fannie Masemola has congratulated Lieutenant Colonel Khunou for walking away as the overall winner in the aviation category at the Forty under 40 Awards. Khunou is the first female chief helicopter pilot attached to the SAPS Airwing in the Free State and one of 17 female pilots nationwide.

The awards which are held to honour and celebrate young achievers under the age of 40 from various industries took place on October 5 at the Raddison Blu Hotel in Kempton Park, a city in the East Rand region of Gauteng province. The Minister of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, Ms Sindisiwe Chikunga delivered the keynote address at this prestigious event.

Khunou was nominated together with Captain Zeldah Ntuli who is a fixed-wing pilot attached to the SAPS Airwing based at Wonderboom Airport. Khunou hails from the 'dusty streets of Rustenburg', as she fondly describes her humble upbringing as a 'village girl'. She says a career in aviation found her and not the other way around. As a teenager, Khunou kindled a dream of following a career in science.

Khunou has a commercial pilot licence and also holds a National Diploma in Biotechnology. Having a fear of flying, Khunou courageously jumped at the opportunity to overcome this fear when she was offered a scholarship to qualify as a commercial helicopter pilot. This ultimately led her to join the SAPS in 2014 as a junior pilot at the rank of warrant officer. Khunou is currently in her final year of obtaining a Diploma in Management (Aviation).



Cornwall Air Ambulance has announced motorsport legend **David Richards** [left] as its new Chair of the Board. David's impressive experience includes founding Prodrive, leading teams in Formula One, and previously chairing Aston Martin. After 50 years within the motor industry, David remains heavily involved as Chairman of both Prodrive and Motorsport UK. His career highlights include winning the World Rally Championships both individually and with his team. Despite his business base in Oxfordshire, he also has strong connections with Cornwall through ownership of two hotels in St Mawes, and he regularly visits the county with his own Leonardo AW109S helicopter.

Not only does David bring a wealth of knowledge in developing world-class teams but also a host of charity experience, including leadership and governance roles in charities within the healthcare and road safety sectors. Tim Bunting, Chief Executive at Cornwall Air Ambulance, added: "We are thrilled that David is joining the Board. With an impressive background to bring to the table coupled with immense experience in leading high-profile organisations, I look forward to working alongside him and seeing the charity flourish and grow with his leadership."

The connections go further - David Richards and the charity are both customers of Castle Air [Parapex]

Robin Wendling [right] serves as the Managing Director for Bell Europe, leading all Commercial Business sales efforts in region. Since joining Bell in 2015, Robin has successfully led regional sales in Western Europe, executing single helicopter and fleet acquisitions. During this time, he played a critical role in securing the first ever Bell 525 fleet deal with the Norwegian Energy company, Equinor, for 10 aircraft. This agreement marked the first sale for this new generation of aircraft, paving the way for future success on Energy, Search and Rescue, and Governmental missions.

Robin drove the growth of the Bell 429 footprint in the Western European region, positioning the platform as the aircraft of choice for the region's most demanding missions, including mountain rescue, HEMS, and Law Enforcement. He has also worked the first sales and deliveries of Bell's latest model, the Bell 505, supporting its successful entry into the European market as it carries on the Bell 206 Jet Ranger legacy.

Robin brings 15 years of rotorcraft sales experience, securing key deals in APAC, Latin America and European markets. He holds a master's degree from Kedge Business School in International Business and Trade.



Metro Aviation has appointed **Brady Carpenter** as Director of Safety, a promotion from the Assistant Director of Safety role he has held since 2018. He has been instrumental in mining data from the IRIS system and implementing changes to the operations manual and training manual to strengthen safety. In this role, Brady will continue to build on his extensive experience, utilizing safety data and operational insights to further strengthen Metro Aviation's commitment to safety. He will lead a team of more than ten aviation professionals, including pilots and technicians with nearly 300 years of combined aviation experience. [Parapex]



John Carrigan, Chris Whittington, Nam MacLeod and Michael Hennelly receive the 2024 Crew Commendation from Shipwrecked Mariners' Society President Admiral Sir George Zambellas (2nd from left) [Supplied]

October 1 was a day to remember for UK Search and Rescue (SAR) as a crew based in Stornoway, Scotland, scooped two highly prestigious awards at the same time - at different ends of the UK!

The coveted awards - a **Crew Commendation** from the **Shipwrecked Mariner's Society** and a **Brave@Heart** award from the Scottish Government - recognised the team's professionalism and fortitude in responding to a complex and difficult rescue, which saw them save the lives of two severely injured fishermen.

One of the team, Bristow Winch Paramedic Norman 'Nam' MacLeod, was also announced as the winner of the St Andrew's Award for his role in the rescue. The St Andrew's Award is reserved only for exceptional acts of bravery.

UK SAR Director Graham Hamilton who represented the crew at the Brave@Heart event said: "The awards were presented on 1 October at separate ceremonies in London and Edinburgh. While the Stornoway crew were receiving the award in London, I was honoured to represent them, and Bristow, at the Brave@Heart event in Edinburgh."

The incident happened on November 29, 2023 in the early hours of the morning, when a Spanish vessel found itself in need of medical assistance 100 miles offshore and during extremely rough sea conditions. Two fishermen were seriously injured, at risk of death, and no-one onboard spoke English. Bristow Winch Paramedic, Norman 'Nam' MacLeod, was lowered onto the vessel and stabilised both casualties, before assisting the team in winching them to the helicopter.

Over in the west of England **Chief Constable Rod Hansen** has been suspended by Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Chris Nelson, following the launch of an investigation by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC). Hansen was recently in charge of the group researching the future of UK police aviation.

It has been pointed out that the investigation concerns his handling of an allegation against a member of staff, and whether relevant policies and procedures were subsequently followed. It has no direct links to police aviation.



EVENTS

In early October the **Philippines Office for Transportation Security (OTS)** hosted the 149th Transportation Security Coordinating Committee (TSCC) conference in Pasay City and discussed the state of transportation security in the Philippines and develop plans to reduce threats.

OTS Administrator Undersecretary Crizaldo Nieves chaired the TSCC meeting, which focused on the state of peace and order in the National Capital Region (NCR), transportation security concerns, and national security.

Representatives from various government agencies attended the meeting, including the Anti-Terrorism Council-Program Management, Air Intelligence and Security Wing Philippine Air Force, Bureau of Customs, Bureau of Fire Protection, Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines, Civil Aeronautics Board, Department of Information and Communications Technology, Department of Migrant Workers and the Department of Trade and Industry-Strategic Management Office.

It also included representatives from the Intelligence Service Armed Forces of the Philippines, Light Rail Transit Authority, Land Transportation Office, Manila International Airport Authority, Metro Rail Transit-3, Naval Intelligence and Security Forces, Office of Transportation Cooperatives, Philippine Bomb Data Center, Philippine Coast Guard, Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange, Philippine Nuclear Research Institute, Philippine National Police Anti-Cybercrime Group, PNP Aviation Security Group, PNP Intelligence Group, PNP Maritime Group and the PNP National Capital Region Police Office. [Daily Tribune]

In the Houses of Commons on October 16, Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology, Peter Kyle, confirmed his attendance at the inaugural **Farnborough International Space Show**.

Taking place 19-20 March 2025 at Farnborough International Exhibition and Conference Centre in Hampshire, UK, the location of the world-famous Farnborough International Airshow, the event is designed to pioneer the commercial space age and advance space domain defence.

Utilising both Farnborough's recognised and trusted Business Connections Exchange and International Delegations programmes, visitors and exhibitors have an unrivalled opportunity to develop meaningful relationships and create business value all in one place. To register for your free pass or for more information, visit: <https://farnboroughspaceshow.com/>

UPCOMING

Rotorhub International has launched the **EUROPEAN ROTORS** Podcast—an exclusive, limited-series podcast created for both EUROPEAN ROTORS 2024 attendees and their global online audience. Running from 4 - 7 November, the series will feature three insightful episodes recorded live from the event in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

December 9-11 2024 Orlando, Florida. **APSA Tactical Flight Officer / Airborne Thermographer Certification Course**. This is a new 2.5-day course combining key elements of the Tactical Flight Officer (TFO) Course and the Airborne Thermographer Certification Course (ATCC) conducted annually during APSCON. The Tactical Flight Officer portion of this course will be instructed by Clay Lacey and is designed to provide aircrew members the tactical skills and information necessary to safely and successfully support ground units engaged in a variety of law enforcement missions. This 16-hours of instruction will cover helicopter patrol tactics, air support to K-9 operations, suspect behavior & perimeter containment, and vehicle pursuit management. The 4-hour Airborne Thermographer Certification portion of this course is an in-depth study of airborne thermal imaging technology and theory presented by Mr. Brian Spillane, Teledyne FLIR, who is a Certified Thermographer Instructor. All combined, this course offers certification as an Airborne Thermographer to qualified students who attend all 20 hours of training, pass the written exam. Although specifically designed for tactical flight officers, this course is applicable to pilots, crewmembers and unit supervisors alike. The information provided in this course is essential to the professional development of aviation law enforcement personnel and meets one of the requirements for TFO training related to accreditation.

In October 1994, 30 years ago the Editor joined the **Airborne Law Enforcement Association [ALEA]**, the only international meeting place for police aviators then—and now. I consider it one of the better moves I made in my professional life and recommended to all with a strong interest in what is now Public Safety Aviation.



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