

Police Aviation News

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Issue 349

May 2025



PAvCon Europe Preview
France for the first time

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EDITORIAL

Here we are, well into 2025, and I guess all of us are distracted by many different items of interest in what are certainly 'troubled times.' As *Police Aviation News* trundles into its 30th year of publication the industry it surveys is at least 'interesting.' Trying to pay attention to a narrow section of aviation (airborne emergency services) is difficult when you have a whole gamut of distractions elsewhere on the world scene.

If it is not for the bloody war raging between Ukraine and Russia, there are plenty of others across the world that also need a decent ceasefire in place—even if it is only so that the victims of a severe earthquake can draw breath for a day or two. Disaster SAR is difficult enough without the good guys dropping bombs on you. Still, even the governments of Myanmar and Israel desist for a while it looks as if India and Pakistan might revisit their regular blood letting for a period.

Further north things are not much better as politicians of all hues seem hell bent on disturbing day to day life with trade embargoes, threats to invade (sorry, "incorporate") their near neighbours and worries about whether we are properly dressed for a public domain argument. The only positive move seems to have been a timely death in the Vatican, The Pope at least brought together two important people who appear to have forgotten about suit protocols for a while.

Lower down the scale you could almost say that things are more settled—but they are not! No sooner does it seem that all is well than someone or something upsets the applecart. I can only speak on the British scene on this but it seems that the leaders of everything seem to have lost the plot. Disregarding politics, the chiefs of each of the emergency services seem to be showing themselves to have little or no self control. Time and again they get found to be either in the wrong bed, being rude or over affectionate to their staff or making a less than effective attempt to cover up other peoples crimes in the name of keeping up the supposed good name of the organisation. And all that without awarding yourself someone else's medals to wear inappropriately in public.

The result is 'out' or 'suspended,' neither of which is good for leadership. And invariably these are the very people set in judgement of the youngsters that make up the real 'sharp end' of undertaking the work of the emergency services. And it just goes on and on. The leaders are not learning the very lessons they expect others to abide by.

The numbers seeking to leave each of the services through disillusion over where the higher ups are apparently leading everyone, the turnover in staffing, the loss of skills, and therefore a need for new training is negatively affecting the efficiency of each of the component parts and there appears to be no slowdown in the rot.

Rant over!



Bryn Elliott

APOLOGIES to a number of readers who may have had problems accessing the April edition last month. This appears to have mainly affected users of Apple devices and in particular iPhones. The problem was resolved by mid-month but the posting on-line first went to www.policeaviationnews.info rather than www.policeaviationnews.com. Two different sites and two different Webmasters (for a reason) – it is always worthwhile checking out both if you encounter problems.



COVER IMAGE: With the 2025 edition of the PAvCon Europe returning this month, an image from last year at Airborne Technologies, Wiener Neustadt Lower Austria. Nothing to do with the event itself, this is an Airbus Helicopters EC135 of the locally based air ambulance operation of ÖAMTC Wiener Neustadt. As such it was regularly flying through and over the static park of the event. [Adrian Harrison]

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LAW ENFORCEMENT

PAvCon Europe CONFERENCE

At last count there were 34 exhibitors confirmed for the event, the list below shows a couple of changes from that published earlier this year. In addition there are expectations of several static park airframes arriving on the day. So far the Training Day Monday has the largest audience yet including some expected to join from Brazil using a broadcast.

The main conference programme is posted on the website www.pavconeurope.eu

In terms of the operational air police in Europe, the map shows that most countries are represented. Individual numbers vary but six officers are expected from Sweden.

Exhibitors are currently little changed but those currently signed up include: Axnes AS; Adams Aviation Supply Co Ltd & Canyon; AeroConnect; Air Attack Technologies; AIR TEAM Intel s.r.o.; Airborne Technologies GmbH, Airbus Helicopters; Anodyne Electronics Manufacturing Corp. (AEM); Babcock International; BECKER AVIONICS GmbH; CarteNav; CENTUM; Enterprise Control Systems Ltd; Flightcell International Ltd; FLYSIGHT; Gentex Corporation, Global Aviation Systems GmbH; HEN-SOLDT AG; L3 Harris/Wescam, Leonardo; LICO Stahl -und Kunststofftechnik GmbH; Macro-Blue Inc; Nova Systems; PAvCon Europe; PVL/Mirage, Safran Electronics & Defense; SHOTOVER; Skyops NL; Smith-Myers; SPAES GmbH & Co. KG, Suneris; team2applications GmbH; Teledyne FLIR, THALES; Trakka Systems AB;



BRAZIL

Brazil has 26 states and one federal district, most of them have air support.

VERTICON FEATURES BRAZIL: In March the Air Tactical Group of Brazil's Public Security Department of Pernambuco State earned the 2025 VERTICON Salute to Excellence Law Enforcement Award. The aviation unit earned the award for contributions to the promotion and advancement of rotorcraft in support of law enforcement activities. Although it is this year's award it actually relates to an earlier period.

For several days in late May 2022, multiple months' worth of regional rainfall fell in Brazil's northeast state of Pernambuco. In the state's capital, Recife, and surrounding areas on the Atlantic Ocean coast. The floods and landslides created catastrophic damage that claimed more than 130 lives and left more than 6,100 people homeless.

On May 28, one of the heaviest rainfall days, the Air Tactical Group of the Public Security Department of Pernambuco State (Grupamento Tático Aéreo de Pernambuco, or GTA) in Recife was grounded due to low visibility, having VFR-only Airbus AS350s and a single H125. That morning, a flight nurse ran over to the base from an air ambulance airplane requesting help because the ambulance couldn't make it to the airport through the flooding. After determining they could assist safely, the crew airlifted the critical patient to a hospital.

The crew had to wait about two hours at the hospital for the rain and low ceiling to pass before they were able to return to base.

The unit called in all the pilots and crews—amounting to 15 people in all - to help with rescues to keep the three aircraft flying. As the rain cleared, a landscape of water and mud left thousands of people stranded on roofs, in trees, and on isolated high ground.

The GTA started rescuing people, in one case returning time and again to one house with 19 people on the roof. With rescue baskets attached to the aircraft, GTA crews were able to lift 63 people from their roofs in the first few hours. They also assisted firefighters in rescuing thousands more by guiding and transporting fire department personnel and equipment.

The pilots, mechanics and crews worked around the clock, taking short breaks, first rescuing and transporting people to safety and the hospital, then delivering critical food, water, medicine and other supplies to communities in the hardest-hit areas that had become completely cut off. The GTA also partnered with the not-for-profit organisation Vizinhos Solidários, delivering additional food, water, clothes and bedding to isolated communities. The critical humanitarian work continued for a month as the group's aircraft made up for lost roads and bridges. [State of Recife Military Police]

JAPAN

NATIONAL POLICE AGENCY: Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Ltd. announced that they have delivered two H145/BK117 D-3 helicopters to the National Police Agency. These are the third and fourth D-3s to National Police Agency. With its excellent maneuverability, high speed, and high visibility, the D-3 is not only to be used for patrol and information gathering, but also for SAR.



Kawasaki has delivered 202 of the various BK117 units to date, with more than 2,000 worldwide with deliveries by Airbus Helicopters combined. Production, as opposed to preparation for customer delivery, is mainly taking place in the USA and Germany drawn from parts manufactured across the globe. Kawasaki will continue to improve the BK117 helicopter, including the development of new optional equipment for various applications.

SPAIN

ERTZAINTA/BASQUE: The Bilbao based unit is still settling down to operating its new Airbus Helicopters H135 aircraft. Although the two new helicopters have been in use since last year for training, only one has been delivered to their operational base. The second is expected to arrive next month. Meanwhile the unit is undoubtedly the only one that flies both the EC135T1 and T3 but trains in a EC135T2 simulator at the Colmenar Viejo Army Aviation Training Centre.



A decade ago the unit had possession of three helicopter types but later this year they should have just the H135 on hand. Long gone are the three Sud/Eurocopter SA365C3 EC-EBA c/n 5036, EC-EBB c/n

5013 and EC-EGV c/n 5032 and recently the last of two AS350B1 EC-ERZ c/n 2261 and EC-ESA c/n 2260 departed. EC-ERZ has not been used for a while now and it went to Airbus Spain as a ground training machine. As for those venerable early model Eurocopter EC135T1s EC-GNA c/n 017 has been retired after the arrival of the new EC-OGK and EC-GMZ c/n 016 will be retired after the arrival of the new EC135T3 in June. [Ertzaintza]

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

ABU DHABI: The police now appear to have taken delivery of a fifth and sixth example of the Bell 429. First deliveries of the type, P-401 (c/n 57391) and P-402 (c/n 57393) took place in early 2021 against a stated order for six examples. On delivery those airframes were equipped with EO/IR sensor, Trakka searchlight, hoist, rappelling gear and skid mounted floatation gear.

In 2018 APSA reported that Abu Dhabi Police sent a delegation to Europe in early July to be briefed on international best practices and development expertise related to helicopters and their use in police operations. The group visited Airbus factories in Germany and France to evaluate the H145 helicopter but no order appears to have resulted and the main operational type in service remains the Leonardo AW139. [Scramble/PAR]

UNITED KINGDOM

NATIONAL: In a recent interview with Police Oracle, Sir Andy Marsh the current CEO of the College of Policing was quoted as saying that UK policing regards training as an abstraction where other professions regard it as an investment. He was formerly the Chief Constable at Avon and Somerset Constabulary.

Ed: This is not a new development, most training interaction between the three major services (police fire and ambulance) end up being between fire and ambulance and that has not altered greatly in decades. It is probably an attitude thing.



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On social media NPAS has announced that their Newcastle Airport based EC135 will return to 24 hour status. To that end they are recruiting additional Tactical Flight Officers.

The TFO role is open to substantive Police Constables from the North East regional forces: Northumbria, Durham, Cleveland, North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire & Humberside. The closing date is May 8, 2025.

Meanwhile NPAS are again advertising for new control room staff at their Wakefield HQ. They are recruiting Flight Dispatchers full or part time at a full time salary range of £34,839 to £38,237.

Despite warnings from the security services (DI5) two years ago about worries that using Chinese drones may be a security risk British police continue to use such as craft from DJI Technology as their main drone. In 2023 it was reported that two-thirds of the drones in use across Britain came from DJI. Elsewhere the military have been directing that their staff should stop using electric vehicles from China when working and in particular to avoid charging their mobile phones in such vehicles.



DJI drone...

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: The Riverside County Board of Supervisors approved Sheriff Chad Bianco's plans to turn an aircraft hangar at March Air Reserve Base [MARB] into a permanent place of operation for the sheriff's department.

Bianco's request will allocate \$655,255, all drawn from the Riverside County Sheriff's Department's fiscal year budget, to architectural, design and engineering services provided by C&S Engineers Inc., a San Diego-based firm.

The facility will be enough to house three aircraft and will sit on the southeast end of the airfield close to the Million Air Hanger on Hancock Street. The department currently operates from Jacquelin Cochran Airport in Thermal and Hemet-Ryan Airport.

The MARB Joint Powers Authority property has been identified as the most strategic location, as it is the closest airport to central Riverside, the sheriff's office headquarters, and it is vital for quick responses to critical calls.

Current designs call for 20 workstations, 10 offices, a gym, a break room, outdoor fuel tanks, restrooms, locker rooms, a parking lot and security fencing surrounding the property.

CALIFORNIA: CNC Technologies, an aviation technology and wireless communications company serving the law enforcement, government and military markets, will deliver three further fully mission-ready Cessna Caravan 208 aircraft to the California Highway Patrol (CHP). Under the recently signed agreement, CNC Technologies will procure the aircraft, design the comprehensive mission suite package, and manage the complete integration process. The aircraft will be equipped with advanced surveillance and mapping technology, including the Wescam MX15 and SHOTOVER Mapping Systems.

This sophisticated mission equipment and training will enhance CHP's aerial law enforcement capabilities across California. The recent procurement brings the total to four Cessna Caravans purchased by CHP from CNC Technologies, further expanding the agency's aerial surveillance coverage and operational capabilities. The first aircraft was delivered last year, with these three new aircraft continuing the partnership.



COLORADO: The Colorado State Patrol (CSP) also selected CNC Technologies to provide an Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) upgrade for the agency's Pilatus PC-12 aircraft. This ongoing collaboration with CSP follows the successful completion of a previous Pilatus PC-12 mission enhancement. The upcoming aircraft upgrade will be completed at Century Helicopters in Fort Collins, Colorado.

CNC Technologies selected Century Helicopters as the partner completion facility for this project, recognizing the value of working with a Colorado-based company. [CNC Technologies]

FLORIDA: After 50 something years, the Miami-Dade County Police reverted back to being a Sheriff's Department. in January 2025. When they sent one of their four AS350 AStars in for a 12,000 hour inspection they had it repainted and marked to reflect the new Department title. They have four new H125s arriving later this year. They will be keeping N804MP as well.

It hasn't been Metro Dade since the late 90's! The County decided to tie in closer to Miami, so they officially renamed the County Miami-Dade. Spending millions to reflect the new name on everything from letterhead to police vehicles. For reasons I'm not sure of, they went back to a Sheriff's Office and yes, the Sheriff is elected. Nothing other than one helicopter has been remarked, "Sheriff". [Jon Goldin]



The look that is going

KANSAS: Last month CNC Technologies delivered the second Airbus Helicopters H125 to Kansas Highway Patrol to complete a full fleet upgrade. The fleet is now based around two H125 helicopters and a Cessna 208 Caravan. CNC also integrated a ground downlink support into the upgrade.

AIR AMBULANCE

BULGARIA: Bulgaria has established a national air ambulance service, initially with funding from the European Union, and is currently operating with a fleet of Leonardo AW109 Trekker helicopters, with plans for a network of six bases across the country.

The Bulgarian Centre for Emergency Medical Assistance by Air organisation have announced the arrival of their third emergency medical air helicopter. The Leonardo A109S Trekker landed at Jambol Bezmer Air Base and will in due course operate from the regional HEMS base in the city of Sliven.

GERMANY

ADAC: The German Aerospace Center (Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt; DLR) has partnered with the non-profit organisation ADAC Luftrettung – the German air rescue service – to conduct a pioneering research campaign examining the use of sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) in rescue helicopters. For the trial, two ADAC Luftrettung helicopters completed over 1800 flight hours using a blend of conventional kerosene and SAF. The blend contained up to 38% SAF produced from recycled vegetable or animal fats, such as used cooking oil. Researchers from the DLR Institute of Combustion Technology supported the long-term trial with a total of six ground-based measurement campaigns. They examined the combustion behaviour and performance of the SAF blend, with a particular focus on analysing the emissions of ultrafine particles and gases such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x).



DLR measurements showed that engines running on the SAF blend emitted significantly fewer ultrafine particles (UFPs) – commonly known as soot – compared to pure kerosene. During idle operation shortly before take-off, when rotor speeds are already high, researchers recorded a 44% reduction in UFPs. At engine power levels typical for cruising flight, particle emissions were 33% lower. The DLR team also found no notable changes in exhaust gases, demonstrating that the engines run smoothly and reliably with the SAF blend. [DLR]

Since April 7, the non-profit ADAC Air Rescue will be training challenging flight and rescue manoeuvres using the rescue hoist in the Ohlstadt-Eschenlohe area and in the upper Höllental Valley. The crews of the ADAC Air Rescue stations "Christoph 1" at the Munich Harlaching Clinic and "Christoph Murnau" at the BG Murnau Clinic, operated by ADAC Air Rescue, will be working with the Bavarian Mountain Rescue Service to train for complex operations under the unique conditions of an alpine environment.

In addition, during the week of May 5-9, an ADAC rescue helicopter will be flying regularly over the Karwendel and Wetterstein Mountains, as well as the Ammergau Alps, to simulate rescue flights in high mountains. The ADAC rescue helicopter will be operating daily from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to approximately 5 p.m. during the training weeks. Both stations will remain fully operational during the training sessions. During the training sessions, which are closely coordinated with (nature conservation) authorities and landowners.

During the second week of May, an ADAC rescue helicopter will once again take off several times in the region for training purposes. During flights over the Karwendel and Wetterstein Mountains, as well as the Ammergau Alps, the crew members will gain an experience of the unique characteristics of the high alpine environment and gain important expertise for rescuing people in life-threatening situations in the mountains. Improvement of winch operational competence and growing demand.

IRELAND

ATHLONE: On April 11 the Tánaiste and Minister for Defence, Simon Harris, officially opened the new €1.4M helicopter hangar for the Athlone-based Emergency Aeromedical Service (EAS), which is operated by the Air Corps. The service, which has been in operation since 2012, is based at Custume Barracks, Athlone and has completed more than 4,300 missions throughout the country.

The investment is seen as the government's commitment to improving emergency care throughout Ireland. The new upgraded hangar supports the highest aviation safety and reliability standards and reflects the government's commitment both to enhance and modernise Defence Forces infrastructure right across the country and ensure the safe transport and in-flight care of vulnerable patients during potentially traumatic moments.

The EAS has undertaken 161 missions to date in 2025. In 2024, the service undertook missions in 25 counties, of which a third came from Counties Galway, Mayo, Roscommon and Westmeath.

Editor: It must be inflation or some hideously expensive hidden feature but it would appear that the €1.4M just for that hangar is excessive.



NORWAY

BASING: The Scandinavian Journal of Trauma, Resuscitation and Emergency Medicine published several papers last month including a paper on the impact of concurrency conflicts on optimal location of air ambulance bases in Norway.

The nine page document researches whether Norwegian air ambulances are placed in the optimum location for the best service to the customers in the country.

The HEMS service currently operates 14 HEMS units operating from 13 bases strung out along the 1790km length of the country. The research data was based upon 2015 data covering a population of 5.2 million of whom one third were concentrated around the capital Oslo in the south. At the time there were 11 bases. The helicopters based on a national model and therefore a single directing body were not located to meet the widely variable population density rather than to spread them across the country to provide a similar response time in all areas. Some helicopters were therefore significantly busier than others.

<https://sitrem.biomedcentral.com/counter/pdf/10.1186/s13049-025-01324-3.pdf>

UNITED KINGDOM

GREAT NORTH: Eurocopter AS365N2 Dauphin G-NHAC c/n 6497 has been retired and shipped by road to Weston Aerodrome near Dublin into retirement. Its future is not yet known.

Manufactured in 1996 and UK registered to Multiflight for operations with the Great North Air Ambulance in 2011 the Dauphin had accrued a modest 3,559 hours by last September. Multiflight maintains three Dauphin' for air ambulance services by GNAA across the north of England.



GNAA AS365N by David Thompson



SCOTLAND: The former Welsh Air Ambulance EC135 helicopter G-WASC which was a Babcock spare machine at Staverton (Gloucester Airport), has been repainted into the Scottish Charity Air Ambulance scheme and re registered to G-PSCA.

Throughout early April 2025 the aircraft was noted performing engine ground runs at Staverton outside the Babcock hangars. On April 19, G-PSCA departed Staverton to Blackpool Airport and is believed to have subsequently flown onto Perth where the SCAA is based. [MJ]

UNITED STATES

ARIZONA: Native Air celebrated the opening of its new base at the Abrazo West Campus in Goodyear, a suburb of Phoenix early last month with crew members, Air Methods leaders, Abrazo Health leaders, and nearly 75 guests attending.

Partnered with Air Methods, Native Air 23, which began service on February 5, enhances the geographical coverage for air medical services across western and central Arizona, improving response times for emergency and trauma situations.

Twenty years ago, helicopters were flying to Goodyear to pick up patients to transport downtown to access specialised care. Now, the campus serves as a hub to be able to reach out further to the West Valley and other rural communities to serve as their care hub.

The ribbon-cutting event gave guests the opportunity to learn about the advanced capabilities of Native Air 23, see the Airbus AS350 air ambulance helicopter N117LN up close, meet the CAMTS certified clinicians and pilots who staff the base, and learn how the aircraft's clinical and safety features enhance emergency care. [Helihub]



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ARTEMIS



First responders carry a victim to a Flight for Life helicopter that landed on the football field during an active-shooter training at the Summit High School on August 7, 2024. The training was hosted by the Summit County Sheriff's Office. [Ryan Spencer]

COLORADO: Common Spirit Health is proposing a new colour scheme for its Flight for Life helicopters and other emergency transport vehicles. But some Colorado residents who like the helicopters' current orange design are less enthusiastic.

CommonSpirit announced in a news release that over the next couple years it will be phasing in a new pink-purple gradient design to Flight for Life's six helicopters, seven ambulances and three airplanes that operate out of the Denver metro area, Summit County, Colorado Springs, Pueblo, Fort Morgan and Durango. The new colours reflect those of their current logo [right].

Flight for Life transports patients across several states in the Rocky Mountain region and assists in search and rescue missions, including providing aerial search support and avalanche deployment.

There is an online petition calling for the original orange colour to be kept. Early last month it had reached 6,000 signatures.

In continuous service since 1972, St. Anthony Flight For Life was the first civilian, hospital-based emergency medical helicopter in the United States. Over 300 flight programmes around the country and around the world have since been modelled on this concept.



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SEARCH & RESCUE

CARIBBEAN

CURACAO: Last month a Guyana Defence Force (GDF) delegation visited the island of Curaçao at the invitation of Rear Admiral Walter Hansen, Commander of the Netherlands Forces in the Caribbean (NLFORCARIB) and director of the Dutch Caribbean Coast Guard (DCCG).

The GDF delegation was headed by the GDF Colonel General Staff, Captain (Coast Guard) Vernon Burnett, complemented with three staff officers from the GDF Coast Guard, Air Corps and Planning branch.

The objective of the three-day visit was to get to know each other's operational organisations and find common objectives from where options for future cooperation could be developed.

Stability in the region is an overlapping security interest, particularly in relation to challenges from territorial integrity, transnational organized crime and humanitarian aid/disaster relief for Guyana and the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the Caribbean.

NETHERLANDS

SCHIPHOL: Back across the Atlantic within the older part of Amsterdam Airport the Dornier 328 ISR fleet is being fitted with new EO/IR sensors from Teledyne FLIR. The installation of the FLIR UltraFORCE 380-HDc on the EASPair MPA 3 is in the final stages prior to test runs. EASPair is a Schiphol-based service provider of airborne operations and integrated surveillance missions across Europe mainly for governments, civil and military authorities and NGOs.



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The number of illegal migrants crossing the English Channel in the first 4 months of 2025, assisted by the French police and the UK Border Force, has reached a new record. Over 10,000 migrants have been landed at Dover. An increase of some 40%, year on year. [AFP]

UNITED KINGDOM CHANNEL UPDATE

Despite all the rhetoric from British politicians of both mainstream political parties, Conservative and Labour, “stop the boats” and “smash the gangs”, the number of illegal migrants crossing the English Channel, from the northern beaches of France to the south coast of England, have reached a record high. Up to and including the 28 April the total was 10,358. It may well exceed 11,000 by the first of May; - the first 4 months of 2025. In the first 4 months of 2024 the total was 7,567, an increase, year on year, of some 40% at the time of writing.

A new proposal, by the British and the French governments, is that France will accept the return, to France, of failed asylum seekers, in return, on a one to one basis, of migrants in France wishing to join their families who are settled in the UK. Whether this new initiative will deter the organised criminal groups, those making enormous profits, from people smuggling is very doubtful. Moreover, the term ‘people smuggling’ is open to question when the evidence indicates that the UK Border Force is ‘rescuing’ illegal migrants in French waters before taking them to England, to land them at Dover. Under international maritime law those rescued at sea should be taken to a place of safety. The nearest place of safety would be Calais, Dunkirk, or Boulogne-sur-Mer, when the rescue takes place in French waters.

The other dilemma, for the British government, is that to accommodate an illegal migrant, an asylum seeker who enters the UK by an irregular route, by crossing the English Channel in a small boat, costs the British taxpayer, on average, £145 per night, £53,000 per year, in a hotel. The alternative would be £14 per night in shared house, a flat, or a bed-sit. A very good idea, until you factor in the shortage of housing in the UK, with the prospect of civil unrest if asylum seekers are provided with housing ahead of those British citizens wishing to purchase a house. Some landlords have described this Labour government drive, to house asylum seekers in their properties, as ‘immoral’.

The irony of the flagship of the Royal Navy, HMS Prince of Wales embarking on an 8 month world cruise whilst the UK’s southern border, the English Channel, remains wide open has not gone unnoticed.

For those with an interest in national security, including border control, the irony of the flag ship of the Royal Navy, HMS Prince of Wales, carrying two squadrons of F-35B ‘stealth fighters together with helicopters, escorted by other warships, embarking on an 8 month cruise to the Far East, ‘Operation Highmast’ (CTG25), whilst the UK’s southern border, the English Channel, remains wide open has not gone unnoticed! It beggars belief that the Royal Navy can project sea and air power around the world, but it cannot prevent an inflatable boat from crossing the Channel, from France to England!



James A Cowan MBE

The author, a former member of the Royal Air Force, a maritime reconnaissance pilot, also a former police and an air ambulance pilot, has recommended to successive Home Secretaries (Minister for the Interior) that the cross-Channel route will only be closed when the beaches of northern France are patrolled with light aircraft, with ‘spotter planes’ and when illegal migrants, those rescued in French waters, are landed in France.

INDUSTRY

In Italy, **Tecnam** has introduced the latest additions to its P2012 aircraft series: the P2012 Special Mission features a Continental engine option and a Short Take-Off and Landing (STOL) variant. These new models reinforce Tecnam's commitment to providing a varied yet versatile offer to the Special Mission customers worldwide.

The Special Mission variant builds on the success of the P2012 platform, offering flexibility for a variety of reconnaissance applications. Operators now have the choice between two engine options: the existing Lycoming TEO-540-C1A and more recently introduced Continental GT-SIO-520S.

The variant offers:

Dual sensor hatches (735x567 mm / 28.9x22.3 in) capable of holding any sensors with plenty of weight allowance.

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Multi-role versatility, enabling quick conversion to cargo, medevac, skydiving, and combi configurations.

P2012 Traveller Continental minimum suggested mission speed 85 kts

P2012 STOL Continental SMP minimum suggested mission speed 70 kts

Maximum endurance is in excess of 8h.

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To provide more training options for its global customers, especially for operators in the EMEA regions, the **Bell Training Academy** recently expanded its technical training courses in Valencia, Spain. The BTA Valencia team launched courses previously offered at its Fort Worth, Texas, USA facility to provide two new comprehensive programmes for maintenance technicians, designed to give a full overview of the aircraft including in-depth maintenance training.

All 429 Field Maintenance Course Offering Approved for Certification by (DGCA, EASA, GCAA, UK CAA), the Bell 429 field maintenance course provides comprehensive coverage of the description, function, and maintenance procedures required for field maintenance. Leveraging a recently installed Bell 429 airframe, students receive classroom and hands-on experience on the airframe, ground handling and servicing, main rotor, and main rotor controls. They also cover the main rotor drive system, powerplant (installation and rigging as related to the airframe), fuel system, tail rotor drive system, tail rotor, hydraulic systems, flight controls, and electrical systems. Instructors will provide theoretical and practical aircraft type training to qualify engineers on the Bell 429 aircraft. Bell requires that all regulatory technicians must take the written exams in English only without the assistance of an interpreter or digital translator.

This is a four-week course with the following dates: July 7, 2025 – August 1, 2025; October 6, 2025 – October 31, 2025. Bell 429 Integrated Avionics Course Offering Approved for Certification by (DGCA, EASA, GCAA, UK CAA). The integrated avionics course dives into the Bell 429s electrical system, avionics system, and AFCS system, to expand on technician's expertise of the aircraft and its technology. Dates Bell requires that all regulatory technicians must take the written exams in English only, closed book, without the assistance of an interpreter or digital translator. This is a four-week course with the following dates August 6, 2025 – August 29, 2025. The BTA is one of the most advanced facilities in Europe for pilot training, welcoming over 300 Bell pilots a year. The centrepiece is a certified Bell 429 Level D simulator, which has accumulated well over 1600 flying hours.



Police Aviation News

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Last month included the annual gathering of emergency services helicopters at the **Pasadena Rose Bowl Fly In**, in California. Cal Meeker noted that of the 23 helicopters present, 18 of them were equipped with Meeker gear. As he said in the post... "Puts a smile on my face" Quite right too!

Ed: Tellingly the image he posted of the line up of those helicopters showed half of them present. All but one of those (an MD) was an AS350 derivative.



The tactical use of airborne thermal imaging can be one of the most powerful tools available to public safety. The **Teledyne FLIR Vision Awards**, presented annually during APSCON, strive to recognize state and local law enforcement agencies for their contributions to public safety through the use of tactical, airborne thermal imagery.

This year marks the 30th annual event. Each year, Teledyne FLIR ask law enforcement to submit their video footage shot during rescues, pursuits, apprehensions, and surveillance operations. Entries should highlight the tactical use of EO/IR technology and the importance of the airborne imaging system in the successful completion of the mission. The deadline to submit videos is May 15, 2025, and footage should be edited to no longer than eight minutes.

[Details and submit your videos here.](#)

Footage from each winning video will be shown as part of the Teledyne FLIR Vision Awards ceremony on Thursday, July 17, during APSCON 2025 in Phoenix, AZ.

(Source: Teledyne FLIR)

In 2015, following a three-month trial, the **Auckland Rescue Helicopter Trust** (ARHT), in partnership with New Zealand Blood Service (NZBS), made history as the first emergency ambulance service in New Zealand to carry units of O negative blood for pre-hospital transfusions on every flight.

A decade on, the partnership has made it possible for over 200 patients to receive around 315 units of blood in time critical pre-hospital transfusions.

Northern Rescue Medical Director Chris Denny credits this collaboration with New Zealand Blood Service for helping to ensure interprofessional clinical teams can provide care in motion in the setting of critical hemorrhage.










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2Excel Aviation Ltd may well be officially “not operating out of Doncaster Sheffield Airport” but recent images tend to belie that assertion. The airport closed in 2022 and day to day operations moved away to Humberside and Teesside Airports but 2 Excel retained the hangar space and offices at DSA in the hope that the airport would be revitalised in the future. Several events without aircraft, including hosting would be apprentices, took place there in the meantime.

As previously reported there are strong moves to reopen DSA and there have been several instances where the local and national politicians have demonstrated the political and financial will to see this happen.

On April 10 the 2Excel facility at Doncaster Airport hosted a visit by Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, Deputy PM Angela Rayner MP, Local MPs, Ed Miliband, Sally Jamieson and Lee Pitcher, Mayor of Doncaster Ros Jones, and Mayor of South Yorkshire, Oliver Coppard, and representation from the City of Doncaster Council and business people.

With more than 100 people in attendance from local employers, the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister spoke about the urgency to inject investment and regenerate the local area, following the earlier announcement of £30M of investment for Doncaster Airport. A January 2024 decision to block South Yorkshire Mayor Oliver Coppard spending regional funding to relaunch the site would be reversed.

The announcement was made as campaigning continued for elections for a new Doncaster Mayor and Doncaster Council was underway.

Opened in April 2005, Doncaster Sheffield Airport once served a host of destinations, including Berlin, Dubrovnik, Paris, Alicante and Mallorca. In November 2022 all flights were grounded when then-owners Peel Group said it was no longer financially viable and mothballed the site and thereby obliged 2Excel to remove its aircraft fleet that support the UK Coastguard and other airborne emergency services aircraft.

Africair is celebrating the delivery of the first new aircraft and the first **Beechcraft King Air 360ER** in Cabo Verde..

This delivery marks a major milestone for the Africair team, and for U.S.-Cabo Verde relations. Working

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closely with the U.S. Embassy in Praia, the Government of Cabo Verde, and the Cabo Verde Coast Guard, the sales team helped bring the versatile, multi-mission aircraft into action. The King Air 360ER will play a vital role in maritime security, disaster response, and regional stability, helping to strengthen shared goals of safety, peace, and prosperity in West Africa.

The Helimax team has officially joined the **Axnes** family. Recently, Josh Enloe provided comprehensive training and final system tuning for Helimax's first two (2) PNG Wireless Intercom System based on the BST35 Mobile Base Station for use on their CH-47 aircraft. Helimax is equipping a total of five (5) CH-47 aircraft with the Axnes PNG WICS. !

Frequentis Germany has been awarded the contract to plan and supply the operations and control centre system for the police of the Free State of Thuringia. As general contractor, Frequentis is responsible for the installation and commissioning of all system components. These include Frequentis' 3020 LifeX communication system, an operations control system from T-Systems Information Services GmbH, and the IT and network infrastructure provided by Siemens AG.

With the integrated operations and control centre system, the Thuringian police will be provided with a state-wide standardised and future-oriented solution for emergency call handling and managing police operations in daily service and special situations.

Gama Aviation has secured Airbus H145 maintenance approvals at its Staverton, Gloucestershire Airport facility (formerly Specialist Aviation Services/PAS/MAS) – a significant milestone in the continued expansion of UK rotary capabilities.

It is now just over a year since Gama took over the ailing SAS facility which primarily focused on the MD 900 and Leonardo AW169/139 types. Gama

was then offering a rival H145 based air ambulance service operating out of Farnborough, Hampshire. Next week they are holding a briefing for the aviation media so there may be more detail to report next month.

Gama Aviation



Airborne Technologies [ABT], the Austrian based completion experts have taken delivery of a Cessna 208 as their next prototyping project having already shown their skills with such as the Vulcanair P-68 and the DHC-6 Twin Otter.

Over the next few months, their team will equip the aircraft with a complete surveillance suite, featuring two sensor hatches, hardpoints for their SCAR-Pod(s) and an ergonomic operator workstation. It will also receive a brand-new paint scheme to reflect its role as a high-tech mission platform. With this demonstrator, ABT aim to attend key industry exhibitions, test the latest sensor technologies, and conduct live demonstrations both at their Wiener Neustadt facility and at customer locations.

As part of this process, ABT will generate multiple Supplemental Type Certificates (STCs) for the Caravan, making these enhancements available to their global customer base.

Wolfgang Grumeth, CEO of Airborne Technologies, expressed his excitement about this development: *"With this platform, we can showcase the full range of our surveillance and integration capabilities. Despite our full order books, our dedicated Design & Production Team will ensure that we are ready to perform customer demonstrations from Q2 2026."*

Editor: Too late for an appearance at this years PAvCon Europe but ABT are attending and the hosts will be bringing a number of fixed and rotary wing craft to the event in Southern France.

ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

30 March 2025 Bell 429 G-WLTS. Wiltshire & Bath Air Ambulance. An air ambulance had to abort its landing to a critically ill patient because five young children ran towards the helicopter, whilst their parents watched on.

The Wiltshire and Bath Air Ambulance Charity is reminding the public of its step-by-step guide in how to act around a helicopter, after a crew had to abandon the landing at Faringdon Park, Swindon on March 30.

They were able to land at the second attempt, however they say the delay could have been critical. The guide shares how making space is important, so the downwash from the helicopter landing doesn't knock anybody over. [ITV]

1 April 2025 Sikorsky S61N operated by/for the Haiti Government, Protection Civile, from Port-au-Prince airport was struck by gunfire at Saut-d'eau, Haiti. Passenger wounded.

6 April 2025 Bell 206L-1 HL9303. Firefighting in South Korea. The SKY. Crashed in Daegu killing the sole occupant, the pilot, and destroying the airframe. Initial reports suggest that the swinging fire bucket struck the tail boom. The helicopter went down around 3:41 p.m. in Seobyeon-dong, about 100 meters (328 ft) from the fire site, according to the Daegu Fire Department. The airframe ended up on its right side. The 74 years old pilot, identified as Jeong, died at the scene.

6 April 2025 Eurocopter EC135T2 JA555H Air Ambulance flown by SGC Saga Aviation for Fukuoka Wajiro Hospital, Japan. An air ambulance helicopter with six aboard departed Tsushima Airport for Fukuoka Wajiro Hospital and went missing east of Tsushima island. The helicopter was found floating inverted on the sea surface about 60km off Iki island, Nagasaki prefecture with inflated floats. Three of six occupants, a pilot, a mechanic and a nurse were found clinging to the floats and were rescued three hours later. The other three occupants, a patient, her family member and a doctor were found trapped in the cabin, confirmed dead on arrival at the Fukuoka Wajiro Hospital.

24 April 2025 Eurocopter MBB BK117B-2 N880SL Air ambulance of Air Methods LLC operating for ARCH Air Medical Transport performing a training exercise, clipped a tree during take-off in Hartford, Illinois, and crashed at the corner of North Delmar and Date Street. The three occupants suffered serious injuries and taken to a hospital and the helicopter caught fire and was written off.

Editor: This 1988 build airframe is one of the top 10 by flying hours of the entire 117 global fleet and was originally delivered as a BK117A4 c/n 7130 to Suffolk County Police, New York in 1989. It was subsequently replaced by MD902s.



Facebook image of the crash scene

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25 April 2025 Viking DHC-6-400 Twin Otter RTP964 Royal Thai Police Air Wing crashed into the sea shortly after take-off from Hua Hin Airport, Cha-am, Phetchaburi. All six occupants perished and the aircraft was destroyed. The aircraft had just left for a test flight in preparation for a parachute training drill in Hua Hin with three pilots, two mechanics and an aircraft engineer on board when reportedly the no.2 (right hand) engine failed and the aircraft spun nose down into sea and broke in two when impacting about 1km north of the airport. The wreck was in shallow water in the Gulf of Thailand about 100 metres offshore from the Baby Grand Hua Hin Hotel. The dead were pilots Pol Col Prathan Khiewkham and Pol Lt Col Panthep Maneewachirangkul, along with aircraft engineer Pol Lt Thanawat Mekprasert and mechanics Pol L/Cpl Jeerawat Maksakha and Pol Sgt Maj Prawat Pholhongs. Another seriously injured pilot, Pol Capt Chaturong Wattanapaisarn, was rushed to Hua Hin Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries. The plane, one of three Twin Otters acquired by the Royal Thai Police in 2020. [Bangkok Post/Media/FSN]

UNMANNED

An American reaction....

WOW, it's been several hours, but I am still in complete shock at how someone I thought was a friend, and impartial, and who works for the Association for Uncrewed Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI) totally betrayed public safety in Texas today by testifying in SUPPORT of HB41 in a public hearing in Austin. HB41 seeks to ban public safety agencies from purchasing any Chinese made drone in the future. I'm serious, I still can't believe it. I am so totally done with this traitorous organization, which up until today I supported and advocated for. Apparently AUVSI only supports uncrewed vehicle systems users and manufacturers who funnel vast amounts of dollars directly into their Association bank accounts. Good luck AUVSI, you just showed your true colors today and made a lot of fervent enemies going forward. Thank you to my friends who testified AGAINST the bill. If this disastrous bill, which will kill 90% of ALL public safety drone programs in Texas passes, it won't be because you didn't try. God bless the citizenry of Texas, because if this bill goes to the Governor, lives will be lost.

Taken from Social media post by Mark Colborn formerly Dallas PD helicopter pilot



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Some members of the civil emergency services see the use of high end military drones as the answer to their dreams but others in the military and civilian authorities are facing growing issues with that plan. MQ-9 Reapers are worth around \$30M apiece, certainly cheaper than many manned military aircraft but still far more expensive than the usual ISR types, and they are being lost at an unacceptable rate – nearly one a month - over the fifteen-month anti-shipping campaign in the Gulf Region. OK it's a bit of an undeclared war zone and there are no pilots being killed but in terms of the financial cost it is not sustainable. Three Reapers were claimed to have been downed in the last month, bringing the total losses since October 2023 to somewhere between 13 and 17 depending on which source you believe. The USA may well be able to take the financial jolt of losses at this level but it is certain that there are no NATO countries that could endure this level of attrition. The Houthis may well be firing at the craft and making it worse but no civil operation could accept the loss of even one of these craft. Any future fleet will need to add reliable and cost effective safety and recovery systems to ensure that the loss of the single engine does not lead to either a catastrophe or the write off of the airframe.

Volatus Aerospace Inc. a leading provider of aerial solutions, has announced a new strategic partnership with RigiTech, a Swiss-based drone technology company. This collaboration aims to integrate RigiTech's Eiger long-range delivery drone into Volatus' expanding drone delivery network, significantly enhancing its medical delivery capabilities across Canada and beyond. The Eiger drone is known for its robust, tested design capable of carrying 3 kg payloads for up to 100 km. Equipped with advanced avionics and a safety recovery parachute, the Eiger is ideally suited for the longer-range delivery requirements of Volatus' medical delivery services.

It was not that long ago that PAN was reporting on research undertaken by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police that affirmed that drones were near impossible to destroy or disable using the tools at hand. Even automatic rifle fire had a negligible effect on a drone's ability to roam freely. Time moves on and wars bring forward ideas and capabilities that peacetime had not revealed. Now drones are being knocked out of the sky in their hundreds if not thousands. Ukraine has unveiled its domestically developed laser weapon system, named Tryzub, for the first time. The demonstration was led by Commander of the Unmanned Systems Forces. The Tryzub system is capable of destroying a wide range of airborne threats. Specifically, it can eliminate attack drones, aerial bombs, cruise missiles, and ballistic missiles at ranges of up to 3,000 metres. The system can also engage helicopters, manned aircraft, and reconnaissance drones at distances of up to 5,000 metres, can blind or disrupt sensors on drones, cruise missiles, helicopters, and planes at ranges of up to 10,000 metres and has been demonstrated as capable. The current prototype relies on manual targeting using a joystick, future versions are expected to include automated tracking and engagement. While still in development the war situation in Ukraine means that testing is in the operational environment. [Defence Industry Europe]

MOVE ALONG THERE

It has been 75 years since one of the greatest, quality, boys magazines hit the streets of the UK – though sadly it is long consigned to the dustbin of history. Good to know that the main hero of the weekly, Dan Dare - pilot of the future was both wot enough to ensure the his crew included women and that one story-line included the Metropolitan Police air support unit with an advanced new aircraft. Which raises the question - when will the new helicopters be delivered to Lippitts Hill camp?

The Eagle was launched in April 1950 and ran through until 1969. The Adventures of Dan Dare first aired on Radio Luxembourg between July 1951 and May 1956. The Radio Show was based on the first Dan Dare comic story from Eagle. The series ran for five years and covered 764 episodes in total but very few were preserved.

EVENTS

UPCOMING

5 April 2025 - 6 September 2025. Calm and Courageous The Second World War Home Front in Epping Forest District. Epping Forest District Museum, 39-41 Sun Street, Waltham Abbey, EN9 1EL, Essex UK. A free entry new temporary exhibition marking the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

There are links from the PAN websites to www.efdmuseum.org.uk

The main reason for this entry is that the museum has asked The Editor to provide Norwegian material for the exhibition and to give two talks on aviation subjects over the five months it is open.



14 May 2025 7-8 pm The Story of Aviation in West Essex an illustrated talk by Bryn Elliott at Epping Forest District Museum, 39-41 Sun Street, Waltham Abbey Essex EN9 1EL. In association with North Weald Airfield Museum. Part of the Calm and Courageous temporary exhibition marking the 80th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War. www.efdmuseum.org.uk enquiries@efdmuseum.org.uk

15 May 2025 DUBAI WORLD POLICE SUMMIT: Under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, the World Police Summit 2025 will return for its 4th edition from 13–15 May at the Dubai World Trade Centre.

Over 130 experts to explore the latest developments in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and innovations in training for the security sector. More than 200 global companies, including Samsung, ESRI, SAS, Presight, and Thermo Fisher, to showcase cutting-edge solutions at the accompanying exhibition

Organised by Dubai Police, the summit will bring together global thought leaders and experts in policing and security to address critical challenges and opportunities. It will also act as a vital forum for innovation, fostering collaboration between governments, private sector organisations, and global innovators to advance public safety and combat evolving threats.

Renowned for its focus on innovation, the summit's exhibition will showcase pioneering solutions from leading international companies, including Samsung as the event's strategic partner, alongside ESRI, Presight, and Thermo Fisher. More than 200 exhibitors specialising in security technologies, armoured vehicles, marine safety systems, and surveillance solutions—such as Hikvision, Inkas Armored, AksumMarine, and Dahua Technology—will contribute to making this the largest and most impactful policing event on the global calendar.

The three-day summit will deliver an extensive programme, with discussions covering 11 pivotal themes such as AI in policing, cybersecurity, organised crime, traffic safety, borderless policing, and anti-money laundering. Workshops, interactive sessions, and four specialised platforms will delve into emerging technologies, operational challenges, and strategies for enhancing global security.

www.worldpolicesummit.com

27-28 May 2025 PAvCon Europe Le Castellet International Airport, prefecture of the Pyrénées-Orientales department in Southern France. A few kilometres from the Mediterranean Sea and the scrublands of the Corbières massif the busy business airfield, marketed as the gateway to the French Riviera, is at 3100 Route des Hauts du Camp 83330 Le Castellet, France
www.aeroportducastellet.com www.pavconeurope.eu



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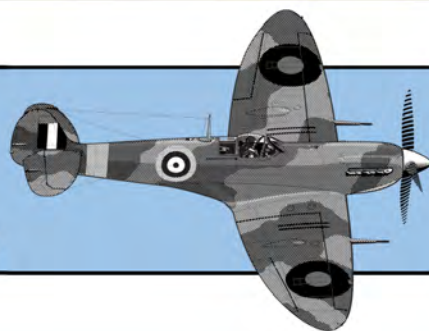
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