

Police Aviation News

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IPAR

INSIDE:

Operation Frontex

Cormorant at 2,000

UK air ambulance

gains a new representative

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POLICE AVIATION

AUSTRALIA

QUEENSLAND: The police of Queensland, Australia are pushing forward for the introduction of a Helicopter Air Support Unit.

The Queensland Police Union of Employees, the industrial voice of some 9200 sworn police officers in the sunshine state of Australia, is behind a push to see police helicopters introduced into the state police service to provide the much needed support to its front line officers and the local community.

With a state population approaching 4 million, and a capital city urban area the second fastest growing in the world, it is seen as long overdue local police shared the added safety afforded to other police officers in Australia and worldwide through use of helicopter patrols. Queensland remains the only Australian mainland state without integral helicopter support for police patrol relying on outside agency support in emergency situations.

The police union have enjoyed a sound working relationship with the government appointed Police Minister in recent years which has resulted in some positive outcomes for the police service, this has included an increase in police numbers by some 2400 additional officers. The introduction of helicopter patrols is seen as an essential positive step towards increasing the effectiveness of police patrol capability and vastly improving the workplace safety of police officers and community alike

Queensland Police, one of the larger agencies worldwide, enjoys an annual budget exceeding AU\$1.3 billion for year 2006/2007.

The police force, always a fixed wing operator until they started using a leased helicopter for operations at the Rugby World Cup in 2003 has started looking at issues relating to the eventual purchase of helicopters.

The Queensland Police Union of Employees, representing some 9200 police officers, is keen to push for Government acceptance of the value and necessity of a well conceived, resourced and funded police air support unit in the State and the July issue of their Journal carries a lengthy feature article on air support. The article is available free as a download at www.gpu.asn.au

The article in the Queensland Police Journal lays out the hopes and aspirations of some in the Queensland Police Service. The article was put together by a serving officer and ALEA member who researched the material with a high level of reliance on the resources made available through ALEA membership, unit visits and attending the 2004 ALEA Conference. .

FRONT COVER: Even with all that technology industry can provide, just having a commanding position remains the core aim of emergency services surveillance. [The Royal Gunpowder Mills, Waltham from AS355F2 in July 2006 ©WAFW]

NORTHERN TERRITORIES; AUSTRALIA: The vast distances involved in the continent tend to promote fixed wing police aviation. Earlier this year Northern Territories took delivery of a second Pilatus PC-12 aircraft, VH-YDO. Unlike the original VH-YDN the new arrival, captured here at Jandakot, Western Australia on 27th August 2006 is second hand. It is understood that Western Australia are also to take delivery of a PC-12 shortly. [image from Stuart McCarthy—Perth]



CANADA

R.C.M.P : Dart Helicopter Services has received FAA certification for externally mounted rafts on their AS350/AS355 float systems.

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EUROPE

Operation Frontex, the EU sponsored air and sea surveillance patrols began operating around Canary Islands in mid-August.

Patrol craft from Spain, Italy, Finland, and Portugal, are being deployed for up to nine weeks as part of a plan to enhance the control of the waters off western Africa and divert ships heading for Europe. The thinking behind the patrols is to try to stem the flow of illegal migrants trying to get to Europe.

Frontex is spending €3.2M (\$4.12M) to finance the patrols, which will include Finnish and Italian aircraft and Portuguese and Italian boats, alongside Spanish vessels and helicopters. The operation will be co-financed by Spain. EU Justice and Interior ministers have also agreed on similar patrols for the Mediterranean island of Malta.

More than 240 illegal immigrants on board seven boats reached the shores of the Italian island of Lampedusa in just twelve hours. The Italian coast guard recovered 42 people from one boat and then a further 39 on a small boat found adrift 80km off the island's coast. Coast guard patrols intercepted another 84 illegal immigrants and pulled them to safety on the island followed within hours by an Italian war ship sailing off Sicily recovered another 79 illegal immigrants.



The Italian Interior Minister has said that as many 178 vessels carrying 10,414 illegal immigrants reached Lampedusa from January to July.

In response to the situation the Coast Guard have bolstered 2^o Aerial Unit, an existing operation that has flown Piaggio P166DL3SEM fixed wing aircraft for over 15 years, with three fully role equipped AB412CP helicopters and crew primarily in response to the Frontex mission. The unit 2^o is based at Fontanarossa airport, Catania, Sicily.

Towards the end of August in one incident nearly a dozen people were reported dead when a boat believed to have been carrying some 100 illegal immigrants sank off the coast of Sicily.

On the face of it the Spanish problem appears to be being treated as the most urgent although the numbers involved seem similar. So far there is little to be seen in the way of success in this effort. In the middle of August more than 800 immigrants reached the Canary Islands in 48 hours.

Earlier in the month, August 7, three boats arrived in the Canary Islands carrying 308 would-be immigrants – the first vessel to arrive, just after midnight saw 97 African migrants carrying virtually no possessions scramble up a beach where tourists were spending a warm night by the seaside. Beach-goers offered clothes and first aid to the group on the southern El Confital beach, near Los Cristianos and Playa Las Americas resorts.

A second boat, carrying 104 migrants, was then towed to port at Los Cristianos by a rescue vessel, while a third was escorted into port at La Gomera Island.

As the new surveillance measures commenced 512 Africans reached the islands of Tenerife and Gomera in six boats, followed the next day by two boats carrying 184 people arriving at Tenerife and another, with 126 migrants aboard, reaching Hierro Island.





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Three fishing boats carrying 310 Africans arrived at the Canary Islands to push the total over 800 according to Spanish Red Cross sources.

More than 17,000 Africans from some of the continent's poorest countries have made the perilous sea trip to the Canary Islands so far this year; more than triple the total for all of 2005. Over 1,000 are reported to have died attempting the voyage in the last 10 months. A typical journey from Senegal might take nine days across the Atlantic Ocean.

A vessel with 101 people on board, including eight children, reached Los Cristianos on Tenerife at 3.30 on the afternoon of August 16. It was the second vessel to arrive at Los Cristianos that day, 100 immigrants who arrived after their boat was spotted by a Spanish Navy patrol boat at 7am. All on board were men and were said to be in good health.

The repercussions of the new efforts to stop the landings are being felt across Spain. Just as the tourist season is getting under way in mainland Spain police officers are being drawn away on special assignment to the Atlantic islands.

In the Valencia region locals are expressing disquiet at a decision to re-deploy some policemen to the Canary Islands to deal with the influx of illegal immigrants. Reports of a current wave of robberies on industrial estates and in private homes do not help.

To further improve its chances of reducing the heavy flow of humanity from the African coast Spain has said it would provide a helicopter and two patrol boats to Senegal to help the country patrol its coastline to curb illegal migration to the Canary Islands.

Spain has already provided 20 pick-up trucks, 50 computers, 50 infrared goggles and 50 walkie-talkies to help the gendarmes, police and the marines conduct patrols as more and more Senegalese and other West Africans choose to make the 1,500 km sea journey from a virtually unguarded 700 km coastline.

While Senegal said it agreed with the essential mandate of Frontex, Dakar has not yet signed the accord that would allow European vessels to patrol Senegalese waters as they do along the coasts of Mauritania and Cape Verde.

Spain has no formal repatriation agreement with Senegal. As a result, Spanish authorities in the past were forced to release illegal Senegalese immigrants and others with no identity papers at all, on the Spanish mainland.




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PERU

Novosibirsk aircraft plant has signed a contract for the overhaul of Mil Mi-171B helicopters owned and operated by the police in Peru. Before the signing the plant was visited by Peruvian police aviation dept.

The overhaul of helicopter fuselages will be carried out by NAHP specialists temporarily based at a National police-owned maintenance base in Lima. Parts and assemblies will be dismantled and sent two Russia for repair. [RUSnews]

RUSSIA

A policeman from the Vladimir Region, to the east of Moscow, who was arrested after fighting and threatening to blow up an aircraft, has been convicted.

The court in the industrial district of Barnaul has passed a suspended sentence of just three years imprisonment upon police Lt. Col. Vadim who was deputy chief of Internal Affairs Dept. in the Kameshkovsky District, Vladimir Region.

The incident took place aboard an airliner owned by Sibir as it flew a route from Moscow to Barnaul on April 27. Vadim was drunk and started a mock fight with a colleague of his that got out of hand. He seized his tie and started strangling him. An air hostess asked him to let the man go. He hit her with his fist. He was overpowered by two Emergency Situations Ministry workers who were nearby and secured.

Smirnov compensated the air hostess and plead guilty to three charges relating to the fracas. The court let him off lightly thanks to his previous good character, three bravery medals and family. [RUSnews]

SERBIA

Serbs seeking a bit of extra protection or perhaps a helicopter for the weekend can now turn to the police, which now rents out its personnel, transport and even animals for private use. According to a detailed price list published in the official gazette, the cost of hiring a policeman to guard money transports or sports events would be a highly economic 300 dinars (or £2.40/\$4.50) an hour.

A police horse goes for 2,400 dinars a day, a trained dog for 1,800 dinars a day, and a helicopter for between 45,000 and 140,000 dinars per hour depending on the type.

A statement published on the official government Web site states that individuals and companies would be entitled to use those services, but the process would be under the strict control of the Interior Ministry to prevent abuses.

SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL PARKS: The South African National Parks (Sanparks) received the first of its two new AS350 B3 helicopters, ZS-OPX s/n 4091, at Lanseria airport near Johannesburg last month.

The green and yellow helicopter was the first of two bought from Eurocopter Southern Africa in July to replace two EC120's bought in 1999. Sanparks decided to sell off the EC120s at a



time when they were at their optimum resale value and to upgrade capability by selecting the AS350B3. Delivery of the second helicopter is expected to take place in December.

UGANDA

MPs on the defence and internal affairs committee are reported to have demanded that the Government purchase a new Police helicopter in preparation for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) scheduled for November 2007.

The Ministry of Finance has earmarked 756M Ugandan Shillings to repair the old Police helicopter but the committee resolved that parliament would rather support allocation of funds to procure a new helicopter than repairing an old one.

Ed: The identity of the 'old aircraft' is unclear. Uganda has operated a significant fleet of Bell helicopters but the attrition rate has been high and the reference to just a single airframe is sadly not surprising.

UNITED KINGDOM

HAMPSHIRE: The problem with residual wartime ordnance deployed in defensive positions – believed to be pipe mines – continue.

The mines were laid at all South Coast Airfields within 10 nms of the coast as a wartime defence measure. Canadian Quarry engineers laid them at Lee-on-Solent in a criss-cross pattern in 60 ft, sections under the runways. Many were deactivated after the war but it is believed that not all were flushed of their explosives. They were designed to be command detonated by external stimulus, so are safe if left.

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency [MCA] now own the former Navy airfield and it is their plans to rebuild their helicopter base that has brought these ordnance deposits to the forefront. The MCA wish to start construction of their new complex has resulted in 4 or 5 sections being listed for removal.

There are 20 ground radar survey contacts, only one is known to have explosives still in it, the other 19 are probably clear having been flushed out at the end of the war. It is the one that might be active that is causing the problem but no one is really sure that the other 19

are in fact inert. A result is the proposed 5 week daytime closure of the airfield, and from time to time 750 metre exclusion zones around the centre of each pipe. These are scheduled to start later this month but the chances of a delay in the start date are high.

The police Defender will relocate to work out of Bembridge by day and return to work out of Lee on Solent [Daedalus] by night when work stops. The MCA SAR helicopter will work out of Fleetlands Heliport by day. [Media/HP]

LONDON: The BBC is producing a documentary on the introduction of three Eurocopter EC145's into Police service with the Metropolitan Police. PAN understands that the Metropolitan Police are cooperating in this 'cradle to operational readiness' television programme and some footage has already been shot at Oxford of the three airframes – two already painted and the third [G-MPSA] still in a green state.

It is not currently clear whether this is a local or national programme production and whether it will be widely available. [pprune/mca]

UNITED STATES

FEDERAL – USCG: A Coast Guard homeland security boat from Station St. Petersburg in Florida established a security zone around the cruise ship StarShip while a Coast Guard helicopter from Air Station Clearwater hovers over head with a joint FBI and Coast Guard boarding team aboard. The cruise ship was playing a motor vessel carrying hazardous cargo attempting to enter the port with a suspected terrorist aboard during Bay Sentinel 2006. The boarding team is preparing to lower from the helicopter and search for the suspected terrorist. Bay Sentinel is a multi-agency exercise aimed at testing the areas maritime security plan. USCG Photo by PA1 Donnie Brzuska.



ARKANSAS: The Faulkner County Sheriff's Dept. has announced the securing of a DoD surplus 1968 Bell OH-58 Kiowa helicopter. They have waited in line for it for 10 years. In a matter of months the Bell will be in service operating over Faulkner County's 700 square miles used for drug eradication, surveillance and SAR. Costs of the operation will be

trimmed as both the pilots and mechanics are already on staff or are volunteers, this should trim operating costs to about \$250 an hour. It is expected to be used on a very limited basis to further keep costs down.

FEDERAL - CUSTOMS & BORDER PATROL: The Department of Homeland Security has ordered five more EC120s from American Eurocopter, increasing to 15 the total number of these single-engine helicopters being acquired for front-line operations by the US Customs and Border Protection agency. The EC120s will support Customs and Border Protection missions in low-altitude surveillance and security patrol of America's borders. As the quietest helicopter in its class, the EC120 is well suited for duty with the agency, and its environmentally-friendly operation enables missions to be flown in wildlife zones contained within the Customs and Border Protection's area of responsibility. The first EC120 [N146CB] from the original order of 10 aircraft was delivered to Customs and Border Protection during a July 21 ceremony at American Eurocopter's Columbus, Mississippi production facility. The remaining 14 helicopters are scheduled to be delivered one per month until all 15 are deployed. [AEC]



ILLINOIS: In August 2006 Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin law enforcement and fire service agencies acquired an additional helicopter to assist them in homeland security missions, search and rescue operations and counter-drug activities. Among the potential terror targets is a shuttered nuclear plant operated by Exelon. The Winthrop Harbor Police Department, coordinating agency for the Law Enforcement Aviation Coalition [LEAC], operator of a private Eurocopter EC125T1, has received a DoD surplus Bell OH-58A helicopter at no cost. The addition will enable LEAC to enhance its operation in support of Northern Illinois. The Bell will be upgraded with role equipment using funding from private and government resources, including donations from member agencies. Last year, the Countryside Police Department in Will County received a similar helicopter. It has flown 100 hours on Homeland Security missions since October 2005. LEAC is a not-for-profit corporation composed of cooperating law enforcement and fire service agencies in the area formed with a common purpose of providing no-charge air support to all agencies.

KANSAS: The Topeka Police Department have heard that the city council have approved the purchase of one of two new \$650,000 helicopters they were seeking. In an 8 to 1 vote, council members authorised more than \$675,000 for the machine. More than half of the cash will come from insurance money the city received after a police helicopter crash near Manhattan last year. Another \$220,000 was already set aside for the new FLIR unit that comes with the helicopter. In a normal year the city spends \$590,000 on the Schweizer S300 equipped helicopter unit

Evolving Homeland Security...

The advertisement features a grid of equipment: 12DS200, MX-15, MX-POD, WISARD™ HandHeld, and AzTrack. To the right is a large image of a helicopter with 'Policia de Puerto Rico' and 'WESCAM' markings. The L3 communications logo is also present.

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so the request for additional funding is a significant increase in the request for funding. [Bee/WIBW]

MINNESOTA: The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has placed a purchase order for an Enstrom 480B helicopter. The helicopter will be outfitted with a loud hailer PA/Siren system and mount systems for a surveillance camera and a SX-5 searchlight. The DNR Enforcement Division will operate the helicopter throughout the state, providing all non-fire resource assessment, census and law enforcement functions. In addition, the helicopter will assist in ensuring public safety, law compliance with state game, fish, recreational vehicle, and natural resource commercial operations. The helicopter will be based in Brainerd, Minnesota and is scheduled to be delivered to the DNR in September, 2006.

NEBRASKA: Omaha Mayor Mike Fahey has presented his budget to the City Council and included a request for three new police helicopters over the next four years at a price tag of \$2.8M.

Fahey said the helicopters provided 14,500 assists in 2005 - responding to radio calls, assisting in SAR, pursuits and calls from outside agencies. The helicopters currently in use are Bell OH58As from the Vietnam era, and the city is running out of parts and can't find replacement parts.

The mayor's plan is to purchase two new helicopters in 2008 and a third in 2010. No new staff would be required and the newer helicopters will require less maintenance. [KETV]

Ed: Omaha Police Air Support Unit serves a population of 350,000 in an area approx 103 Square miles from North Omaha Airport. The unit took delivery of a number of OH58A helicopters in 1996 but the first operation was undertaken on July 28, 1997. Since then there have been occasional threats to its existence but it has survived through public popularity. Six Bell OH58A's have been associated with the unit in the last decade but only 2 have been identified as flight worthy.

NEW YORK: Police Officers Devin Buonanno and Dennis DeRienzo were patrolling New York on July 5 in an Agusta A119 when they got a call of a body floating in the Harlem River.

From 1,400 feet above the World Trade Center site, they zoomed up to the Bronx and lowered the aircraft to search the water.

Amid floating debris in the middle of the rain-swollen river, the face of a woman - alive, but seemingly fading fast - appeared. There was no time to call out the Bell 412 rescue helicopter.

Using a combination of DeRienzo's piloting skills and Buonanno's strong grip as he perched on the helicopter's skid the woman was and they brought her safely to shore.

For the rescue, DeRienzo and Buonanno were awarded the NY Daily News Heroes of the Month. [New York Daily News]



TEXAS: In the wake of a major rethink of their vehicle pursuit policy Houston's chief of police has requested an additional helicopter to help when high speed chases do occur.

The new policy states that officers will not be allowed to initiate a chase for minor offences such as speeding or running a red light. It is expected that this alteration will help reduce the number of chases, but it won't stop them entirely.

If an officer witnesses this type of minor traffic offence action will be reduced to noting vehicle identity rather than giving chase. The availability of an additional helicopter would help in tracing and tracking those individuals to provide information to the officers on the ground.

Chief Harold Hurtt says the department uses one helicopter now for overnight and early morning assignments, and two more for evening activities. But he says there is a need for at

least one more. An application is being placed with Homeland Security. [Media]

Ed: I ended up scratching my head with this report—especially the bit that HPD was applying to HOME LAND SECURITY for an additional helicopter to help in red light traffic offence pursuits. So jumping lights is now de-facto a homeland security [terrorism] issue!

Well it's a good job I asked because most everyone in Houston is at a loss too! Reporters got the wires crossed. HPD has just taken delivery of its latest Homeland Security aircraft [the units 9th] and the business case had nothing to do with traffic at all! To add to the confusion that 'new chase policy' was almost immediately scrapped as unworkable!

AIR AMBULANCE

DUBAI

Three conferences for emergency medicine professionals will take place in Dubai in September. Under the umbrella of the Middle East Emergency Congress 2006, three dedicated conferences -- the fourth International Emergency Medical Services Conference, Accident and Emergency Conference and the second Middle East Trauma Conference, will address current topics to share best practice and improve standards of care.

The congresses, being organised by IIR Middle East from September 12-14, aim to improve the skills of all healthcare professionals but in particular EMS practitioners, ER physicians, accident and emergency specialists, internists, and general practitioners currently facing unique challenges given the rapid expansions in many populations across the Middle East, said the organiser.

One of the key topics to be discussed at the International Emergency Medical Services Conference includes the future of HEMS (helicopter emergency medical service) in the region with specific emphasis on the Abu Dhabi Police Air Wing. [TradeArabia News Service]

GERMANY

In July 2006 the DRF (Deutsche Rettungsflugwacht e.V./German Air Rescue) flew more than 2,822 missions – more than ever before in a single month since the organisation began work in 1973.

During the last month the DRF's 20 helicopters based all over Germany were needed more often than ever before in a single month. DRF has flown over 330,000 rescue missions. Together with its partners in Germany, Austria, and Italy, the DRF established the air rescue alliance TEAM DRF. The TEAM DRF partners operate 44 HEMS (Helicopter Emergency Medical Service) bases with more than 50 helicopters for emergency rescue and intensive care transport between hospitals.

In addition, DRF owns four ambulance aircraft for worldwide patient transports. These repatriation flights are coordinated by the DRF Alert Centre in Filderstadt, Germany.

UNITED KINGDOM

AAAC - The Association of Air Ambulance Charities: Associations representing the sixteen charities supporting the 22 helicopters currently in service across England and Wales have had a poor track record. The Automobile Association funded National Association of Air Ambulance Services [NAAAS] was set up in April 1999 but lasted only until late 2002. It was then replaced by the Air Ambulance Foundation [AAF] in 2003, an organisation that folded in April 2004. The AAF had a *remit to raise money at a national level to support the UK's then 15 regional air ambulance charities. It set itself a target to raise £10M in three years to sustain existing services, expand and upgrade old helicopters. The money never flowed. Part of its remit devolved to the Confederation of Helicopter Ambulance Services [CHAS] but it was not a fundraising organisation it deals with operational matters.*

A new body – AAAC – was formed in November with aims broadly in line with the earlier AAF in increasing the profile of air ambulances. With an Ambulance Service reconfiguration

taking place in recent months it maintained a low profile but that is set to change in the coming weeks when AAAC propose to engage with the national and specialist media. Air Ambulance charities are good at driving local news stories; but the Association want to tell some stories of national significance and interest.

Unlike NAAAS or the AAF there are no membership fees but the organisation will need funding and to that end it has announced that a line of funding has been agreed through a motorcycle claims management company Sorrymate.com. Sorrymate has nominated AAAC to be the beneficiary of their innovative philanthropy. They will be making a generous contribution to the Association for every non-fault accident claim they take on. The money will then be used to help all sixteen independent Air Ambulance Charities which the AAAC represents.

These non profit organisations rely entirely on donations and corporate partnerships. Currently the charities need to raise £25M per year collectively to keep the fleet flying.

The AAAC Chairman is David Philpott, the CEO of Kent Air Ambulance Trust and on the CHAS Executive, and further information on the AAAC can be found at www.airambulancecharities.co.uk or call +44 1622 833833.

Meanwhile CHAS have announced the dates and venue for Air Ambulance 2006 on 13-14 November 2006 at Chateau Impney Hotel, Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire. This makes mid-November a particularly busy time for UK airborne emergency services industry conferences. Air ambulance precedes Police Aviation in London by one day and that itself precedes the PACE Conference in Eire by one day. All the events overlap so it's choice time.

The air ambulance conference will provide an opportunity to discuss the latest issues facing Air Ambulance Services. To start this unique event, the Confederation of Helicopter Ambulance Services [CHAS] invites delegates to its Annual General Meeting.

A pre-conference gala dinner and guest speaker follows the AGM on 13th November. Television personality Jenny Bond will be the guest speaker at the Dinner – also at the Chateau Impney Hotel.

The Conference and Showcase Exhibition takes place on 14th November and provides a forum to discuss the latest issues facing EMS and will be of particular interest to healthcare professionals, pilots, fundraisers and HEMS crewmembers. The Exhibition Showcase arena will provide delegates the

opportunity to sample leading initiatives available to Air Ambulances. Over 25 top companies have been invited to showcase at the event.

NORTH WEST: HBOS Foundation, the independent charitable arm of HBOS plc, the UK's largest mortgage and savings provider, has granted £2,500 to the North West Air Ambulance (NWAA) to part fund a reporting and mission planning system which will allow the service to respond even faster to incidents throughout the region.

The generous donation will be put towards the purchase of the Easytask Observer Report-

"Flying into the Future"

Air Ambulance 2006

CHAS Welcomes You To The
**2nd National
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Conference Dinner
13th November 2006

Conference & Exhibition
14th November 2006

Chateau Impney Hotel
Droitwich Spa Worcestershire

Confederation of
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The poster features a red and yellow color scheme. It includes a photograph of a red helicopter, a map of the United Kingdom, and a circular inset showing a helicopter in flight. The text is arranged in a vertical layout on the left side, with the title and event details in a white box at the top.

ing Pro Reporting System. Recommended by the Confederation of Helicopter Ambulance Services as best practice, the system will allow the NWAAs to record details of its mission in a clear and accurate way. A mission planning module will also reduce response time by plotting direction and distance automatically.

The NWAAs cost £1.3M a year to maintain and receive no mainstream funding but are in the region's sky seven days a week, 365 days a year, across 5,500 square miles.

SURREY: An Epsom car dealership is helping to get Surrey Air Ambulance Service off the ground.

Dagenham Motors, in East Street, has given £125,000 towards a helicopter air ambulance to get seriously sick and injured patients to hospital without the risk of traffic jams.

The vehicle firm has helped to raise a total of £250,000 for a fundraising campaign which needs more donations if the county is to get its own chopper. [Surrey OL]

YORKSHIRE: Yorkshire Air Ambulance has bought its first helicopter – just three years after Yorkshire Evening Post readers helped to raise £400,000 to save the charity. The newspaper's Golden Wings Appeal had closed and that the 'McDonnell Douglas' MD902 Explorer, which had previously been rented by the organisation, would be bought during August. *Differing news reports quoted the price as a hefty £1.7M and a ridiculous £12M.*

The news organisation is now to launch a new Golden Wings Appeal, to raise funds for a second helicopter. The air ambulance says they have had preliminary discussions with the manufacturers 'McDonnell Douglas' about one of the helicopters that they've got available in Arizona, which is equipped with a winch.

Since it was launched in 2000, Yorkshire Air Ambulance has carried out more than 4,000 successful missions, crewed by a pilot and two paramedics. The service currently operates from its base at Leeds Bradford International Airport and costs £3,500 a day to run.

The charity plans to expand its services over the next two years and is aiming to establish a new air base in the York area and a satellite base in South Yorkshire. [Post]

Ed: Why is there this constant thread of purchasing 'McDonnell-Douglas' helicopters in the UK? That company is a division of Boeing and only builds military attack helicopters and they would never talk to Yorkshire air ambulance about Explorer helicopters. MDHI firmly stated last month it would not perpetuate a distortion of their trading name – as a result my guess is that has a source much nearer to home.

PAS have a German registered Explorer c/n 52, another long-term build project, in their hangar and bearing in mind that the purchased Yorkshire aircraft is a discarded Dutch Schreiner EMS aircraft this might also be for a UK air ambulance. Both Great North and Yorkshire have been talking up an aircraft acquisition with Explorer in mind.

With operators still moving away from the MD brand the resale market remains depressed though. Current thoughts are that these machines are still only worth little more than £0.5M in the current market as customers wait to see whether the MDHI miracle will stay on track.

Clarification requests to PAS and YAA have not so far elicited a reply.

UNITED STATES

PENNSYLVANIA: EmeryCare/LifeStar, an ambulance and air medical transport company based in Erie, Pennsylvania recently took delivery of their first EC145 [N586LS] at a ceremony held at American Eurocopter headquarters in Grand Prairie, Texas. EmeryCare, Inc., which operates Life Star as one of its divisions, purchased the aircraft after careful consideration of the market and an extensive evaluation process by their selection



committee.

EmergencyCare covers several hundred square miles, although primarily rural, includes Erie County as well as several other counties in North-western Pennsylvania, parts of Ohio and New York, and a population estimated to be more than one million persons.

The helicopter will first go Metro Aviation in Shreveport, Louisiana to be equipped for EMS service. After completion, Life Star's new EC145 is expected to enter service in the fourth quarter of this year.

FIRE FIRE FIRE FIRE FIRE

SPAIN

Fires that raged for 12 days in the north-western Spanish region of Galicia destroyed 77,000 hectares (190,000 acres) of forest. The last of the fires, which claimed four lives, was finally extinguished with the help of rainfall.

The area destroyed became a political hot potato after an estimate from the state environment ministry had put the expanse of forest destroyed at 65,000 hectares, while the opposition party estimated 175,500 hectares, based on satellite photographs. Just to add to the argument the European Union put the figure at 88,500 hectares, also based on satellite images.

Twenty-eight people have been arrested on suspicion of arson in connection with the fires, most of which were suspected to have been started deliberately. Four were committed to mental hospitals; the others were accused of having criminal motives.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

CANADA

A 19 Wing Comox CH-149 Cormorant helicopter [EH101] has become the first in the world to reach 2,000 flying hours, according to personnel from 442 Search and Rescue (SAR) Squadron.

442 Squadron has been able to reach 2,000 hours on Aircraft 904 so quickly because of the high SAR tempo on the West Coast, and the fact it is the training squadron for all pilots and flight engineers across the country on the CH-149.

The Cormorant was selected as Canada's new SAR helicopter and the first of these aircraft entered service in 2002 at 19 Wing Comox. By the spring of 2004, the entire fleet of 15 Cormorants became fully operational. [BCNG]

Ed: Comox is a valley on Vancouver Island BC.

In 2002 AgustaWestland Industries, manufacturers of the Canadian Forces' Cormorant search and rescue helicopters, commissioned a trophy to be presented annually to a civilian, government or military Canadian helicopter crew that had performed the most demanding helicopter rescue of the year. Every year the Canadian Forces issues a call for nominations to all recognised helicopter operators in Canada for the award now known as the Cormorant Trophy.

Nominations having closed on August 20 a selection committee at 1 Canadian Air Division Headquarters are currently choosing this year's award crew.

The criteria are that the winning submission occurred within Canada's SAR area of responsibility; was conducted by a Canadian civilian, government or military helicopter crew and involved a rescue or attempted rescue where lives were saved or the potential for saving lives was high between July 1 2005 and June 30, 2006.

From the nominations received last year, the selection committee chose a CH-149 crew from 413 Squadron, Greenwood Nova Scotia as the recipients of the 2005 Cormorant Tro-

phy. The CH-149 crew of "Rescue 910" rescued the 5-member crew of the Fishing Vessel Sandy Beach, a ship in danger of sinking in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, during a storm in March 2005. The trophy was presented to the winning crew last year at the Canadian Forces National "SAREX" search and rescue exercise in Summerside, PEI.

UNITED KINGDOM

BURNHAM: A brand new second rescue hovercraft entered service in Burnham-On-Sea last month. A crowd of around 3,000 people flocked to Burnham seafront, when more than 14 emergency services from across Somerset gathered for a joint safety awareness day. Other groups participating were Somerset Air Ambulance, Skywatch, Freewheelers Blood Bikes, Somerset 4x4 response, Highways Agency Traffic Patrols and Burnham lifeguards. BARB, the charity that runs the main Spirit Of Lelaina hovercraft, says the new three-seat machine has been made custom-made for the group by BBV, the same manufacturer as the main craft.

The brand new £15,000 'Light of Elizabeth' hovercraft is smaller than its sister craft, the Spirit of Lelaina, and is set to be used primarily for training and river rescues.

Burnham's Spirit Of Lelaina hovercraft has helped and rescued more than 95 people during its two years of operation. The Western Daily Press launched a huge fundraising campaign soon after the tragedy during which its readers donated £115,000 to buy the fully-equipped craft. [Burnham-On-Sea.com]



SKY WATCH: Just like its American forebear CAP when it started up, it looks as if the ongoing official recognition and acceptance difficulties the UK's private SAR organisation has faced have started to ease.

The improved relations with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency [MCA] have been fol-

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lowed by involvement with Civil Defence on seal counts and loss notification agreements with the farm and landowners association and Sky Mark. The latter is a system whereby large identification lettering is applied to trailers, mobile and motor homes. In each case losses are notified to Sky Watch centrally and sent out to pilots.

Sky Watch is currently corresponding with the UK's largest existing independent SAR organisation the Royal National Lifeboat's Institute [RNLI] in Poole. There is some interest in the Sky Watch air observation capability within the RNLI and they will be bringing up the possibility of cooperation at the next meeting of the UK SAR Operators Committee.

All has not necessarily been rosy in all areas of Sky Watch. It has been found that the biggest problem has been the involvement of existing flying groups and clubs within the Sky Watch 'club'. Each of these groups has tripped up over internal politics. One member in a group membership has usually risen to take the club out of the system. As a result Sky Watch has now decided to base the core membership on individual pilots and all new approaches by clubs are being rejected.

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UNITED STATES

It is predicted that the next time the US Air Force responds to a major disaster in the home territory, remote-controlled MQ-1 Predators could relay live video feeds to rescue teams to help them find survivors. There are four aircraft packed up and ready to go.

The plan to deploy Predators came in the wake of a decision by the FAA in May to approve the use of Predators for disaster relief missions.

Under the new agreement, the Air Force and FAA will cooperate to set aside blocks of airspace in which the Predators can fly. For example, the FAA and Air Force could agree that a Predator would be limited to flying in restricted airspace at an altitude of 19,000 feet. Other aircraft would be expected to stay out of the Predator's way.

Predators are slow even by civilian aircraft standards; with a cruising speed around 80 mph. Their wingspan of a little less than 49 feet makes them slightly wider than a single-engine Cessna. The Air Force would have to designate the airport the Predators would fly out of and explain how the planes could reach the restricted airspace.

On the ground in a disaster zone, Air Force tactical air control parties and others could use laptop computers hooked up to small antennas to view live Predator images and talk with the crews flying the aircraft.

In addition to sending pictures from its thermal and video cameras, the Predator can also determine location coordinates for rescuers. For example, the Predator can provide an approximate Global Positioning System map coordinate for anything it sees. At night, the aircraft's laser spotter can mark areas for rescuers, such as helicopter crews, wearing night-vision goggles. [Air Force Times]

NEW YORK: The Rockland County Fire & Rescue HELP programme based with a Bell 206 in Pomona want to retire the county's 32-year-old emergency helicopter [N316RC] and purchase a new \$3.25M model. Dan Greeley, assistant director of fire and emergency services, said the helicopter has been used in a variety of missions including search and rescue and police work. Among its recent were a suicide and a 2005 murder in New City. Built in 1974 although it carries a searchlight the yellow painted machine is lacking in technology and capability.

Now in the early planning stages, a request for the new helicopter was recently presented to the county Legislature's Public Safety Committee. The current helicopter was purchased in Canada in the mid-1980s and is flown by six volunteer pilots.

Although not identified it is said that the projected new helicopter would be slightly larger than the current Bell and able to hold four to five people. Informal conversations had been held with Bergen County, N.J. about joint use of a new machine to help defray the operating costs. Bergen

does not have its own helicopter but used air support way in the past.

It is hoped that Rockland would receive a new helicopter within two years if the Legislature approves the money, bids will then be sought from manufacturers.

Meanwhile over in Westchester County they are looking forward to receiving their own new Bell 407 helicopter. The current aircraft a DoD surplus Hughes OH-6A N81751 has seen a lot more action in recent years thereby increasing pressures to buy new and reduce DOC's. The craft has a bit of a history in that it was reportedly shot down twice in Vietnam.

In addition to assisting emergency workers at accidents, crime scenes and police pursuits the after effects of 9-11 mean that the 1967 vintage Hughes flies daily to survey the county's sensitive areas, including the Indian Point nuclear power plant, the Hudson River and the Tappan Zee Bridge.



Next month, Westchester will get the new \$3.5M Bell 407 and send it for a £1M role equipping. Westchester County's current helicopter is a 1967 model, obtained for free as military surplus. The craft has a bit of a history in that it was reportedly shot down twice in Vietnam. [Media]

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Falcon Aviation Services of Abu Dhabi, a small company with limited resources, signed a two year Search and Rescue (SAR) contract with the UAE Armed Forces. Falcon has selected Evergreen Helicopters, Inc. (EHI), an experienced operator, as their subcontractor to support the SAR requirements. Evergreen brings ACMI (aircraft, crew, maintenance and insurance) and an impeccable safety record to the programme.

The operation is scheduled to begin on August 31 as PAN went to press operating two Bell 412EPs and two Agusta Westland AW139s. The four role-equipped Evergreen helicopters will be based in three strategic locations, each maintaining 24 hour standby alert. Under the contract, Falcon and Evergreen will be providing both military and civilian SAR services. Crews were said to be specially trained for the SAR mission.

At the same time as the contact was announced far from knowing they had the specially trained crews in place Evergreen Aviation were still seeking helicopter pilots to fulfil it. Pilots with over 3,000 hours, previous SAR and B-212/412 or AW-139 experience were being offered excellent pay, benefits and housing. Other sources suggest that the pilot's rates of pay were actually low for the region - in the order of \$380 per day for the 412 drivers and \$400 for AB139. With the shortage in manpower still being evident it was being speculated that it was unlikely that the usual tours of eight weeks on and four weeks off could be operated at the moment. [EG/Pprune]

FISHERIES

PACIFIC REGION

The Royal Australian Air Force has completed a series of aerial surveillance patrols, assisting Pacific Island countries to protect their Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) from illegal fishing operations.

Over 10 days, an RAAF Edinburgh based RAAF AP-3C Orion aircraft conducted aerial patrols to support authorities in Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands. These aerial patrols worked in conjunction with the participating nations' maritime authorities, most of whom deployed Australian-donated Pacific Class Patrol Boats during the activity. The patrols covered areas known to be popular with foreign fishing vessels.

The patrols are one element of Australia's programme of cooperation with maritime police and military elements in the region. Coordinated surveillance contributes to Pacific Island countries' economic development by protecting fish stocks in their EEZ's from illegal fishing operations.

Australia has provided aerial surveillance assistance in the Pacific since 1983 to complement maritime surveillance activities in the region.



INDUSTRY

The **Swedish Space Corporation [SSC]** www.ssc.se and Polish aircraft company PZL finalised the installation of the first MSS 6000 surveillance system in an M-28 aircraft of the Polish Border Guard. The twin-engine aircraft is used to monitor the land and sea borders of Poland and the European Union.



Meanwhile SSC has been awarded two other surveillance contracts for its MSS 6000 system, including one for upgrading the 1990's vintage surveillance systems that were delivered aboard CASA 212 aircraft used by the Portuguese Fishery Inspectorate is signed.

The Portuguese Air Force's systems will be upgraded to the new MSS 6000 system standard, which includes a radical modernization of the signal and data processing as well as the presentation system for SLAR (Side Looking Airborne Radar), IR/UV (InfraRed/ UltraViolet) Line Scanner, Search Radar, FLIR (Forward Looking

Infrared), Micro Wave Radiometer and Pyrometer. The upgrade further involves modernisation of the SLAR and IR/UV sensors, as well as adding new camera and video camera systems with fully digital processing and recording.

Transport Canada ordered two integrated suites of marine pollution surveillance equipment to help protect Canada's ocean resources starting in December 2004. These surveillance systems serve to detect, classify and track all targets of potential interest and marine oil spills.

The first system, which is currently being installed on a Transport Canada Dash 8 pollution surveillance aircraft, is expected to be operational with a trained crew by September 2006. This aircraft will be used to conduct pollution surveillance in the Atlantic, Quebec and Ontario regions. The second system will be used for surveillance over



Canada's West Coast and Western Arctic waters. This will result in Transport Canada having a very capable identical surveillance system on both coasts, which will significantly enhance the effectiveness of the National Aerial Surveillance Program by allowing for more effective enforcement of Canada's domestic pollution legislation.

The MSS 6000 will enable Transport Canada to track and identify polluters and obtain prosecution information in all weather conditions on a 24-hour basis; this is a capability that is currently not available in Canada. Transport Canada is anticipating that, in the future, on an annual basis, 25 to 30 per cent of the pollution patrols will be conducted during hours of darkness. Aerial surveillance can be an effective tool in combating ship-source marine pollution by detecting oil spills and gathering evidence to prosecute polluters. The ongoing presence of pollution patrols can also deter potential polluters as the visible presence of police cruisers can reduce speeding on highways.

During fiscal year 2005-2006, Transport Canada conducted over 1,548 dedicated pollution patrol hours; a new record for the programme. Seventy eight pollution incidents were detected and 9,724 vessels were over flown during dedicated pollution surveillance patrols. [SSC/TC]

Max-Viz, Inc. has announced FAA STC approval for installation of Max-Viz Enhanced Vision System; model EVS-1000, on Bell 206/407 helicopters.

The STC, developed under contract with Max-Viz by Paravion Technology, Inc. of Ft. Collins, CO, covers the Bell 206A, 206B, 206L, 206L1, 206L3, 206L4 and 407 models.

The Max-Viz EVS system was already certified on the Bell 206/407 airframe, this STC raises the total number of STC's for installation of Max-Viz EVS systems to over 50 fixed and rotor wing airframes.

Air-Evac Lifeteam, West Plains, MO recently announced their purchase of 10 EVS-1000 Infrared Enhanced Vision Systems with options for 30 more for installation on the firm's fleet of Bell 206 EMS helicopters.

The EVS-1000 is the world's smallest and lightest Enhanced Vision System. It enables pilots to "see through" conditions of poor visibility such as haze, smoke, snow, rain, and the darkness of night, all of which reduce a pilot's ability to see the outside environment. The systems use real-time infrared sensors, signal processing, and a cockpit display to provide flight crews with actual images of terrain, runways, taxiways, aircraft and other potential obstacles during poor visibility conditions such as light fog, haze, smoke, precipitation and darkness. Max-Viz EVS turns night into day.

The Max-Viz EVS-1000 system uses uncooled, long-wave infrared sensors to gather data about runways, terrain and any potential obstacles on the ground or in flight. These images are enhanced, relayed and displayed on any video-capable display system in the cockpit. www.max-viz.com

The first of four **AgustaWestland AW139** helicopters for the Irish Air Corps was handed over to the Irish Air Corps last month. This handover also marks the first delivery of an AW139 to a military customer. Flying training of Air Corps pilots has started and will continue until late October, when the second helicopter will be handed over. The AW139 helicopters for the Irish Air Corps are equipped with a range of role equipment including AM/FM tactical radios, a Forward Looking Infra-Red (FLIR) camera with a fifth cockpit LCD mission display. In the cabin the aircraft can be quickly re-configured from the troop transport role with ten crashworthy troop seats to the medical evacuation role with air ambulance equipment plus seats for attendants. Additional role equipment includes abseiling and fast rope systems as well as a dual machine gun installation. [AW]

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CAE has been awarded a contract valued at more than C\$15 million by AgustaWestland to design and manufacture an AW139 helicopter flight simulator for the AgustaWestland training centre in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

This will be the second AW139 flight simulator developed by CAE and it will be delivered in early 2008. The world's first AW139 simulator will be delivered later this year to the Rotor-sim Training Centre in Sesto Calende, Italy. Rotorsim is the consortium owned equally by CAE and AgustaWestland.

The AW139 simulator will feature some of CAE's latest simulation technologies, including an architecture based on the CAE STRIVE™ simulation framework and a CAE Medallion™ visual system. The visual system will feature advanced weather and lighting

Broadcast Microwave Systems [BMS], the California based manufacturer of analogue and digital portable and fixed microwave transmitters, receivers, and accessories, has announced that the Alachua County Sheriff's Office is one among 12 local counties that has ordered a microwave silhouette receive system to unify their existing BMS microwave downlinks allowing aerial video to be transmitted live to ground receivers across district lines.

BMS President Graham Bunney said, 'On the front line of Homeland Security is our Country's First Responders, and they need products that help them communicate, quickly, accurately, and seamlessly across, City, County, and Regional borders. Microwave Downlinks can do just that. It has been said, A Picture is worth a Thousand Words, and BMS' Video Downlinks provide live pictures from the aircraft to those on the ground. So any First Responder in the Air can aid any First Responder on the ground by showing them the aerial advantage. Mutual aid and teamwork has never been easier.'

Tying into existing analogue Microwave Downlink systems, Colonel Gainey of the Alachua County Sheriff's Office, (A member of the Regional Domestic Security Task Force for Florida's Region Three), spearheaded the purchase of multiple complete 6 GHz downlink systems that are being distributed to participating agencies within North Central Florida.

These Downlink Systems will operate seamlessly throughout North Central Florida, so that all 12 neighbouring counties can provide mutual aid throughout the four of Florida's seven participating Domestic Security Task Force Regions. This area spans from the Panhandle of North Florida to Osceola County in Central Florida and is one of the largest mutual aid

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downlink systems in the country. Any and all participating agencies within the region can share downlinked video from their aircraft to the ground.

The Microwave Downlink system will allow the participating county's airborne helicopters to send and share with their live video from a pilot's aerial observation platform to both personnel at headquarters and to personnel at the scene of the incident. The live video provides an accurate and complete description of an incident in progress and is more efficient than a verbal description from the pilot.

Receive systems include a Silhouette ground tracking antenna receive site for fixed building installations, and a portable briefcase receiver for real-time on site video monitoring at the scene. Downlinked video of the incident can be received simultaneously at the scene and at the Emergency Management Command Centers. Visit www.bms-inc.com for more information or e-mail sales@bms-inc.com.

AirCell, Inc., an Iridium service provider, and MedAire, Inc. are launching a unique new service that offers in-flight, on-demand medical assistance from ground-based health experts through the Iridium satellite network.

Using one-touch dialling from the aircraft's AirCell Iridium satellite phone, the new service, marketed as *MedLink Powered by AirCell*, will allow flight crew and passengers to talk directly to emergency room physicians at MedAire's 24/7 MedLink Global Response Center. With special training in remote airborne diagnosis and treatment, the physicians provide real-time medical advice to help people manage any medical issues that occur during the flight.

MD Helicopters, Inc. and its customer service team will be offering regional operator's conferences later this year. Each conference has been scheduled to create a forum for information exchange; technical review of FAA service bulletins and to generate feedback and fleet data exchange for MD operators, MD Helicopters authorized repair stations and the MD Helicopters Customer Service Team.

The schedule includes conferences in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada on October 5, 2006, where the local MD authorized repair station sponsor is EM Helilogistics. The second will be held in Columbus, Ohio on October 26, 2006, sponsored by Helicopter Minit-Men.

Please contact Brian Reid at 480-522-5038 or email Brian.Reid@mdhelicopters.com or Norman Pepin at 480-346-6507 or email Norman.Pepin@mdhelicopters.com for additional information.

QinetiQ's Zephyr High Altitude Long Endurance (HALE) solar powered Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) has achieved its longest flight to date during a set of flight trials at the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico at the end of July. One of the three aircraft flown in the trials flew for 18 hours, including 7 hours of flying in the dark, the first time Zephyr has flown at night. The aircraft flew using solar power for the ascent, reverting to battery power as dusk fell.

Zephyr is an ultra-lightweight electrically powered aircraft, with a wingspan of up to 16 metres but weighing less than 30 kg. The aircraft uses a combination of solar array and rechargeable batteries and, when fully developed, is expected to operate for months at a time at an altitude above 50,000 feet providing a sustained and persistent earth observation platform.

Zephyr has been developed by QinetiQ under a jointly funded programme with the UK Ministry of Defence (MOD). Lord Drayson, Minister for Defence Procurement, praised the Zephyr programme during his key note address at the recent Farnborough International Air Show, describing it as "a truly unique capability".

Hand baggage is all the talk at the present time and so far the luggage manufacturers have been very slow off the mark in promoting their products that meet the new specifications. Partly perhaps because the problem may yet go away.

For the record the cabin bag must be no bigger than 45cm wide x 35cm long x 16cm deep/high (17.7" wide x 13.7" long x 6.2" deep/high), including wheels, handles, side pockets – equivalent to a small laptop bag or rucksack. Bottle holders may well never make a return!

Late this month US federal officials should announce the preferred contractor to meet a programme known as the **Strategic Border Initiative** network, or SBInet. Four rival submissions from Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, Northrop Grumman and Ericsson of Sweden are designed to meet a Department of Homeland Security requirement for defending the US with a variety of ways to combine technology existing or to be developed with the government's border patrol and infrastructure.

Boeing's St. Louis-based defence division has developed a plan combining radar and laser technology, sensors and cameras, unmanned aerial vehicles, other surveillance equipment and rapid communications tools to keep illegal immigrants, drug smugglers, potential terrorists and gun runners from entering the United States.

The **Evergreen Aviation Museum** is famous for the biggest flying boat, the Howard Hughes' Spruce Goose, and the fastest aircraft ever built, the SR-71 Blackbird, but now visitors can also see one of the smallest – the Hiller Rotorcycle.

This Korean War-era helicopter was designed by Stanley Hiller to help downed pilots evade enemy capture. Small enough to fit into a pod slung under an aircraft, the collapsible Rotorcycle was designed to be dropped by parachute and assembled in minutes with no special tools. Pilots could conceivably strap themselves into the craft for a quick and safe getaway. The aircraft measures in at less than 19 feet long and less than 8 feet high with a weight of only 130kg/290 pounds [compared to the Bell 47's 27 feet long, 10 feet high and weight of 736kg/1,730 pounds].



The first Rotorcycle flew in 1957. English aircraft manufacturer Saunders Roe was contracted to build 10 more between 1959 and 1961; Evergreen Aviation Museum's Rotorcycle is the third built of those 10. Only a handful of these helicopters are in existence as the military cancelled testing before the Rotorcycle entered service and halted production at number 12.

In hopes of raising interest in sales Saunders Roe demonstrated the type to the police in the UK during May 1958. As part of its European sales tour, in mid-May 1958 five different demonstrations of the Hiller were arranged. On one occasion a guest list of around 100 naval, military, private viewers and police attended a site at Elstree to observe the American product. Elements of the police audience, which including representatives from Cheshire, Lincolnshire, The City of London and the Metropolitan forces, were sceptical from the start. Few could see how a potential police officer pilot could act as observer as well as fly the craft safely.

It was not all of the police audience that were against the project, some praised the potential economies it appeared to offer. In comparison with two other light helicopters then on offer

to the police - the British Skeeter and the French Djinn - the XROE-1 appeared to offer vertical lift at a bargain price. If it had met its claimed potential, for under £6,000 the police could have a single seat helicopter that, financially at least, compared well against the £15,000 two seat Skeeter and Djinn. Ultimately, the concept behind the Hiller was not found to be successful.

The Evergreen Aviation Museum is located near McMinnville Airport in Oregon. www.sprucegoose.org.

The Rotorcycle dream has not gone away. A potentially more practical and comfortable alternative, the GEN H-4 from **Gene Corporation** - Japan is another personal helicopter. It comes with a seat and landing gear so all you have to do is strap on and you are ready to go. Unlike its 1950s predecessor it has the type of coaxial contra-rotating rotors still used by some manufacturers to eliminate the need of a tail rotor for balancing. The GEN H-4 is powered by 4 light-weight 125 cc 2 cylinder engines, can fly to a maximum altitude of 1,000 meters at a top speed of 90 km/hr (59 mph) for up to 30 minutes. You don't require a licence to fly the GEN H-4 in Japan and the inventors claim it is easy as riding a bicycle and with just 2 hours of practice you can master it. The controls also resemble a bicycle handle.



In today's crowded airspace being seen is critical to flight safety, particularly for those consistently operating with high workloads at very low heights, especially Police, Emergency Medical Service and Fire-fighting aircraft.

To reduce the chances of airborne collision and bird strikes, conclusive tests have proven that the pulsing of external lights creates an illusion of exaggerated motion and makes an aircraft visible for miles, even in fog or smog.

With over 20000 units fitted since its introduction in North America, the successful Pulselite® avoidance system is now available in Europe from **Ross Aviation**. Simple to fit, the system pulses landing / hover lights, activated manually or automatically using its TCAS feature.



Dan Schwartzbach, police officer and an experienced pilot with Houston Police Department, who's entire fleet of rotary and fixed wing aircraft are fitted with Pulselite, says: 'We purchased Pulselite for the extra safety margin it afforded us by making us more visible, especially during daylight, to other aircraft operating in proximity to us. In many police aircraft operations, multiple media aircraft converge on our scenes, and using Pulselite gives additional peace of mind that we will be seen and avoided.' For further details contact Mark Biggs at Ross Aviation on +44 1954 542341 or mark@ross-aviation.co.uk

ACCIDENTS and incidents

4 June 2006. MD900 Explorer G-EHMS. Air ambulance, London Virgin HEMS. Landed in garage forecourt throwing sign and other debris up and causing damage to MRB and stabiliser. [CAA]

Ed: Not initially listed when noted at time as it was thought to be an repeat of the almost identical 29 October 2005 incident.

6 July 2006 Beriev Be-200. Portuguese Fire fighting Agency. The aircraft appears to have hit trees during a water scoop operation from the lake of the Agueira Dam near

Santa Colomba Dao in northern Portugal. The damage resulted in one of the Progress D-436TP engines being shut down. The aircraft was then obliged to dump fuel in the vicinity of existing fires and these extended burns were doused by helicopters. The aircraft returned safely to Monte Real airbase, being grounded awaiting parts. [Flight Int.]

27 July 2006 Eurocopter BK117 N912TG. Air ambulance for Tampa General – Aeromed based at Tampa, Florida. [CJ Systems]. The helicopter suffered a strike with a large bird on the pilot's side windscreen and initiated a precautionary landing just south of the City of Brooksville, FL. The damage to the windscreen was major. [Concern]

2 August 2006. MD520N N520AP. Louisville Metro Police, Kentucky. The helicopter crashed near Billtown Road and the Gene Snyder Freeway in southeast Jefferson County, KY while performing practice manoeuvres. Brian Smith, 38, a CPL rated mechanic with the police air unit, was flying the craft under supervision of Officer Paul Zehnder, the unit's chief pilot. The helicopter was hovering about five to 10 feet off the ground and preparing to land when it unexpectedly dropped and flipped onto its right side. Smith was transported to hospital with a back injury not considered life-threatening.

Smith, a civilian employee of the air unit for four months, was learning to fly the helicopter to familiarize him with the craft he maintains. The same unit damaged a MD500 in the same field whilst training in 2002. [Media]

4 August 2006 Sikorsky CH-54A Skycrane N6156U Bureau of Land Management and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection contracted to Heavy Lift Helicopters Inc. of Apple Valley Two experienced helicopter pilots, Terry "Jake" Jacobs, 48, of Kern County and Andrei Pantchenko, 38, of Oregon died. The Skycrane crashed in the Klamath River whilst working a fire in a rugged wilderness area of Happy Camp, Siskiyou County that had been burning for two weeks.

5 August 2006 Agusta A109E Power N901EM Air ambulance of Life Flight of Maine, Bangor - vendor Keystone Helicopters. Shortly before midnight the helicopter set off on a flight to a dirt logging road in a remote forested area operating night VFR in conditions of little or no ambient light. The pilot was unable to initialise either GPS and this was compounded by ground units providing incorrect GPS information. On arrival heavy radio traffic providing conflicting Landing information hampered the aircraft. As a result the pilot selected a secondary landing site away from the majority of personnel and ground vehicles. During descent and landing, severe brown-out conditions were encountered. As the aircraft neared the ground the pilot heard a scraping noise and realised that the landing gear was not lowered. The aircraft was immediately lifted to a high hover and gear lowered. The aircraft sustained minimal damage to two antennas and slightly damaged a search light. [Concern]

9 August 2006 Bell OH-58 Kiowa. National Guard helicopter with an AK State Police Trooper board was being used to help police combat illegal drugs crashed four miles northeast of Green Forrest, Carroll County north-western Arkansas. Maj. Timothy Dickinson, the pilot, was taken to hospital in Fayetteville and the Trooper Andy Wiley, was taken to Springdale where both were in described as being in a stable condition. [Media]

10 August 2006 Bell 206L-3 N206UH Air ambulance, Air Methods operated for AirMed in Utah. While preparing for departure from the airport and in a hover hold for landing traffic, aircraft drifted rearward striking tail rotor on hangar door. Pilot immediately performed a hovering autorotation without further incident. [Concern]

14 August 2006 Eurocopter AS350B3 N355EV US Forest Service leased in from Ventures Acquisition Company LLC of McMinnville, Oregon and flying in Yellow Pine, Idaho crashed under unknown circumstances. At the time of the crash the helicopter was transporting Forestry service employees to the Krassel Guard Station when it went down on the South Fork Salmon River Road, which is 18 miles West of Yellow Pine. Four were killed. [FAA]

14 August 2006 Helicopter [probably Sikorsky S-76]. New Jersey State Police. A helicopter carrying Governor Jon S. Corzine made a precautionary landing after a transmission warning light went on. The helicopter landed safely at Solberg Airport in Readington.

Corzine left in another state police helicopter to attend a ceremonial bill signing in Hacketts-town. The helicopter left shortly after Corzine departed, following a check by mechanics. [Media]

16 August 2006 Helicopter Columbus PD, Ohio. The helicopter undertook an emergency landing after it was fired on whilst responding to a bank robbery at Huntington National Bank on East Dublin Granville Road, Columbus. While the police helicopter was searching for the man, gunshots were fired at the chopper and officers returned fire. No injuries were reported but the helicopter made an emergency landing. The man was apprehended. No injuries. [Media]

18 August 2006 Eurocopter BO105 Guardia Civile. The two man crew of a Guardia Civil helicopter that ditched into the sea around six miles from Las Galletas, to the south of Tenerife escaped without injury.

The pilot contacted the control tower at Tenerife Sur airport reporting engine problems and requesting air sea rescue. When the rescue team arrived, they found the helicopter still afloat and the two occupants nearby with their life jackets on. The helicopter was towed to Los Cristianos port. [Media]

18 August 2006 AgustaWestland Super Lynx. Oman Air Force rescue helicopter crashed into the Arabian Sea. The helicopter took off from Salala air base on a mission recover local sailors on a sinking boat in Dhakout sea area when it crashed about 1,000km south of the capital, Muscat off Dhafar Governorate coasts [Omani News Agency/media]

19 August 2006 Helicopter [MD500E?] Wichita Police Department. Helicopter made an emergency landing in a school car park after it developed engine trouble while on routine patrol. The helicopter was towed back to the department's heliport. [Eagle]

23 August 2006 Fixed Wing*. Air ambulance. New Brunswick Air Ambulance Services. Aircraft with five people aboard, including a patient, made an emergency landing at Moncton airport, New Brunswick, Canada. The aircraft touched down safely and there were no injuries.

It took off from Moncton early Wednesday morning to pick up a patient from Bathurst. When a landing gear indicator light malfunctioned on the way back to the Saint John Regional Hospital, the pilot had to land in Moncton instead of Saint John. It was just a precautionary measure. [CBC]

*Ed: *Probably a Voyager Airways Beechcraft King Air*

27 August 2006 Eurocopter AS350 N973AE. Air ambulance. Departing the Regional Medical Center in Casa Grande, Arizona en-route to a traffic accident is suffered engine problems at a height of 10 feet [3m] and landed back on hard. [FAA]

27 August 2006 Eurocopter BK117 N10UM. Air ambulance. Aircraft landed in a field to pick up a patient at Ashland, Missouri. On lifting to depart the MRB struck a power-line. [FAA]

28 August 2006 Kamov Ka-32. Private fire-fighting contract machine operating in Turkey. All five passengers on board the crash in the province of Antalia. [Media]

SAFETY

The University of California Davis Extension has announced an *Emergency Response Aviation Safety Management Certificate Program*.

The need for safety in the field of emergency response aviation is critical. Increasing concerns about the structural health of US public-use fire fighting aircraft have led to the development of a program that delivers world-class aviation training. This program focuses on aircraft health monitoring as well as the decision-making processes and communication skills and technology required for coordination and cooperation during emergency response incidents.

At the helm of this is endeavour is a consortium of university, governmental and private industry experts from the US Forest Service, NASA's Ames Research Center, the American

Helicopter Services, Aerial Fire fighting Association, UC Davis's College of Engineering and UC Davis's Office of Research.

The six-course programme was created specifically for aviation safety officers, emergency services pilots, forest fire fighter aviators, border patrol aviators, medical-air transport personnel, law enforcement, homeland security officers and anyone involved in the field of aviation emergency response. The courses provide an experience that allows students to maintain safer aircraft and gain the skills to create an emergency aviation response environment that encourages crew member and management collaboration.

The *Emergency Response Aviation Safety Management Certificate Program* can be completed in just five weeks, during two consecutive quarter sessions. This fall's courses take place Oct. 31-Nov. 17.

- Aviation Health Management, Oct. 31-Nov. 3, 2006
- Human Factors and Operational Risk Management, Nov. 6-9, 2006
- Communications: Program Management, Nov. 13 & 14, 2006
- Communications: Operations Management, Nov. 15-17, 2006

To enrol or request more information, call (800) 752-0881 ext. 2403 or visit UC Davis Extension's Web site at www.extension.ucdavis.edu/aviation/. If you have any questions, comments or concerns please contact info@unexmail.ucdavis.edu or 1-800-752-0881

PEOPLE

Bristow Helicopters has announced that **John Cloggie** has been appointed as Acting Director of European Operations based in Aberdeen. John has been the Technical Director at Bristow since 2004 and has substantial experience of helicopter operations with 35 years in the industry, notably with Bond and Rotortech at Bourn. He is the technical Chairman of the European Helicopter Association and a member of the Technical Committee of the British Helicopter Advisory Board. John is married and has three children and lives near Banchory.

Afife N. Halabi, RN, BSN, MS, of Peoria, has been named manager of the Life Flight medical air transport program at OSF Saint Francis Medical Center. The appointment was effective on August 7.

Life Flight is the state's busiest medical air transport service, utilizing two Bell Model 230 aircraft to serve a 30-county region of central and north central Illinois, including Canton's Graham Hospital.

Halabi has been with OSF since 1991 and has served in a variety of capacities, including as staff nurse in the emergency department and on a surgical unit, as a flight nurse for Life Flight, as quality management specialist for OSF HealthPlans, and, recently, as assistant nursing care manager for the medical center's Family Birthing Center.

Flagler County Emergency Services, in Bunnell, Florida are seeking a new pilot to fly their four years old AS350B3 [N911US] in a range of fire, police and ambulance roles in Flagler County.

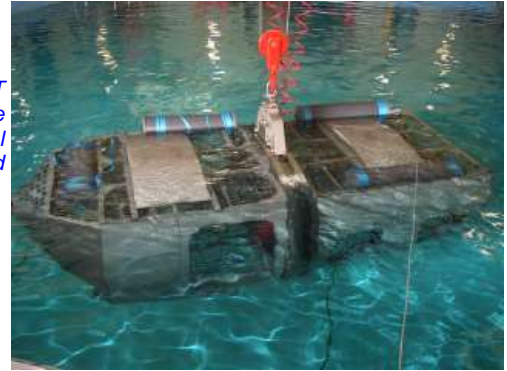
The successful candidate will have a FAA Commercial Certificate with Rotorcraft, Helicopter, and Instrument and current Class II flight physical. Minimum of 3000 hours flight time PIC helicopters and 500 hours civilian. 1,000 flight hours in turbine powered helicopters and 250 unaided night flight hours. Flight weight must be 225 pounds or less including helmet. Must be or have been USFS/OAS carded for fire suppression with a Bambi Bucket and have experience in wildland fire fighting. Part 135 and EMS experience is preferred. Salary \$47,944 - \$72,550.

EVENTS DIARY

The **Fleetwood Offshore Survival Centre** (FOSC) and EDM Limited will be holding an open day event on Friday 8th September 2006, showcasing their Helicopter Underwater Egress Trainer (HUET).



The EDM manufactured HUET at the pool facility of the Fleetwood Offshore Survival Centre in both the upright and inverted submerged positions.



The recently completed HUET is housed within FOSC's state of the art 18m x16m x4m tank at their Nautical Campus on the outskirts of Fleetwood and will be officially opened by local MP, Mrs Joan Humble. The training facility at FOSC offers the ideal environment for aircraft users to train for offshore survival situations and includes a wave machine capable of producing a metre swell wave of various patterns. Additionally, darkness and rainfall can be created to provide extreme abandonment conditions.

Invitations to the HUET open day are extended to all interested parties who are involved with the training of staff for possible ditching scenarios such as medical, fire and police helicopter personnel, military users and search and rescue teams as well as those involved within the specification and purchase of such equipment.

To receive an invitation to the HUET open day or for further information on the product, EDM or FOSC, please call Paul Kain on +44 161 947 3500 or email on pkain@edm.ltd.uk. More information can be found at www.blackpool.ac.uk/fosc.

- The date for the 2007 **AeroExpo** has now been set at 8-10 June, it will again be located at Wycombe Air Park, a venue offering easy access for International Exhibitors and visitors. Building on the successful footprint established in 2006 the organizers are adding more indoor and outdoor exhibition area and an all new special section For Light Sport Aircraft. The organisers are determined to make AeroExpo 2007, bigger, better and busier. Contact details: - Cowleaze House, 39 Cowleaze Road, Kingston, Surrey, KT2 6DZ, UK. Tel: +44 20 8255 4000, Fax: +44 20 8255 4300 Email: expo@avbuyer.com <http://www.expo.aero/>
- 27-28 September 2006 **Aero-Engine Expo**. Earls Court, London, United Kingdom. Organisers: Aviation Industry Exhibitions. The Aero-Engine Expo comprises of a conference and exhibition and brings together professionals from engine MRO shops, OEMs, leasing companies, specialist manufacturers / consultants / suppliers / repairers, airlines and airline engine shops. This year's Exhibition is over 60% bigger than 2005, with only limited exhibition space left. Tel: +44 20 7932 5589/5590 colinh@aviation-industry.com URL: www.ae06.com
- 12-14 October 2006 **NZAAA Conference**. Millennium Hotel, Rotorua, New Zealand. Contact: Keith Mockett, AIA Head Office, Ph 0-4-472-2707. Fax 0-4-471-1314 Email: keith.mockett@aia.org.nz
- 14-15 October 2006. **RotorFest 2006** Brandywine Municipal Airport, West Chester, PA. A new for 2006 event and a major new effort to promote the American helicopter industry, and highlight the capabilities and value of rotorcraft emergency response services in particular. www.helicoptermuseum.org www.irotor.org
- 14-18 October 2006 113th **International Association of Chief of Police**. Annual Conference: Law Enforcement Education and Technology Exposition Boston, MA The International Association of Chiefs of Police is the world's oldest and largest non profit membership organisation of police executives, with over 19,000 members in over 100 different countries. The IACP Conference is a closed show which is open only to IACP members and their guests.
- 23-25 October, 2006 IDGA's 2006 **Border Management Conference** to Address Critical Border Security Issues at Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington, DC. The 2nd annual event addresses a wide scope of border security issues. For more information contact Michael Gallo at michael.gallo@idga.org or visit www.idga.org/



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