

Police Aviation News

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PAR



Bond rebrands to Babcock

Pulling the skids in Norway

NPAS tightens its belt

UAS on ice



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LAW ENFORCEMENT EUROPE

FRONTEX: The Frontex Agency is reported to have selected the Tecnam P2006T MRI as modified by Spanish based company Indra as the base aircraft for its Mediterranean patrol functions under Operation Triton. The aircraft is expected to be equipped with the FLIR Systems Ultra Force 275 and the Selex Galileo Seaspray 5000E radar.



JAPAN

NPA: Kawasaki Heavy Industries has announced the delivery of two EC145/BK117D2 helicopters to the National Police Agency [NPA] in Japan. These will be the first EC145s to be used by the NPA, and are replacements of existing earlier model BK117 helicopters deployed by the Police in the prefectures of Kanagawa and Chiba. The EC145 is a development of the BK117 which Kawasaki started to develop with MBB before the creation of Eurocopter/Airbus Helicopters. The EC145 with a standard tail rotor is certified as the BK117C2, and the Fenestron H145 (ex EC145T2) is the BK117D2. The cabin frame on every helicopter in the 117/145 family is made in Japan by Kawasaki, with the vast majority then shipped to Germany for the main production line. German production to date has seen 253 117 A and B models, 55 C-1, 750 C-2 (EC145) and 80 D-2 (H145/EC145T2) helicopters. The Kawasaki factory in Japan has built 135 A, B and C-1 airframes and 39 of the newer C-2 (EC145) model to date. [Helihub]

NORWAY

POLICE AIR UNIT: Earlier this year the police air unit delivered its EC135T2 to Bond Air Services Limited at Staverton, Glos for an upgrade. The Norwegian's operate two similar airframes one they own and the other is leased from UK's NPAS, it was their own machine that was worked on.

FRONT COVER: At the end of March Schiebel's Camcopter S-100 Unmanned Air System (UAS) successfully demonstrated its capabilities to the Canadian Coast Guard, the Royal Canadian Navy, Transport Canada, the Canadian National Research Council and the University of Alaska from the CCGS George R. Pearkes, During trials the Camcopter® S-100, equipped with the Wescam MX-10S payload camera demonstrated its effectiveness in open waters under icy winter conditions in spotting vessels, animals and objects at long ranges at sea. Image via Schiebel See page 12



©Norwegian Police

This was not a full upgrade in the manner undertaken on the NPAS aircraft but it has seen the removal of the ventral MacPod and replacement of the high skids with medium height skids. The equipment from the pod is displaced to the interior of the cabin. Much of the original equipment was reused but remounted. The work has provided a small performance improvement. Meanwhile, the unit continues its research into the future nature of air support in the country.

UNITED KINGDOM

NPAS: Early in April South Gloucestershire Council reversed its approval for a new helicopter base in Almondsbury following a legal challenge. The heliport was planned to serve both the Great Western Air Ambulance and the National Police Air Service, whose helicopters have been based at Filton Airfield since the mid-1990s.

The airfield is to be redeveloped by a Malaysian company and has outline planning permission for 2,675 residential dwellings and has up to 24 hectares assigned for commercial use. At one time it was intended to retain the heliport at Filton but that stance altered in the face of financial pressures as it would mean the loss of 400 dwellings from the plans and it was always likely that the new neighbours would eventually complain about aircraft noise faced with a 24/7 heliport on their doorstep.

The council planning committee approved the heliport on a green field site next to a noisy motorway at Almondsbury in July last year, but a local resident has threatened to issue proceedings to put the decision into a "judicial review" on the grounds that the Council had not properly assessed the environmental impact of the development and not imposed a noise monitoring condition. The major flaw was that there was no immediate need to give up the current Filton site.

South Gloucestershire Council has reportedly taken legal advice that suggests both of the first two points have a realistic prospect of succeeding. The plans will thus need to be re-submitted to the Council, who will obviously be taking heed of the threat they have responded to in making a decision in the future. [Helihub/PAR]

As a major element of security during an official visit by US President Barak Obama unmanned craft/drones were banned from flying in large parts of London between 0900 on 21 to 2230 24 April.



©NPAS London Twitter

Part of the reason for the visit was to mark the 90th birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and to that end the ban also extended to the area to the west of the Capital London and Windsor, where Mr Obama lunched with the Queen the 22nd. Authorities said it was a routine ban, similar to those used at sports events

The importance of the Obama visit led to NPAS ensuring the all three of its London based EC145 helicopters being on-line at the same time. Part of the planning for the event led to a pair of NPAS EC145 (G-MPSA and G-MPSB) being despatched to RAF Mildenhall to undertake a trial run into London on the 19th with VH-3D Sea King 'Marine One' and the MV-22 tilt-rotor elements of the air security. Obama swept in two days later, took tea with the Queen, upset the British voters with his comments on whether they should leave or stay in the EU and flew off to Germany three days later.



©NPAS London Twitter

Concern has been raised nationally that resources available to search for a rising number of missing persons are falling.

As police officers are primarily crime fighters the perceived fall in crime [or at least crime reporting] is leading to lower expectations in the number of officers needed. In some areas that is leading to the overall number of officers being cut back.

The smaller numbers may suit day to day operations but they do seriously limit the available resources for the unexpected and for such as detailed ground searches. This disparity in numbers places a greater pressure on the need for air support searches at a time when they too are downsizing.

LANCASHIRE: It has been announced by campaign group 'Save the Lancashire Police Helicopter Base' that the NPAS base within the BAE facility at Warton will close at the end of August.

All the staff that have already moved have been notified they are to be redeployed, and the EC135T2 G-LASU is to go to Manchester, before an upgrade and being relocated to the base in West Yorkshire.

In future cover will mainly be from the nearest NPAS bases at Manchester [Barton] or Harwarden in North Wales.

Warton will remain available for fuel until January, because there is nowhere else north of Manchester at 2am in the morning to get fuel. It will then be handed back to BAE.

In its Facebook post the pressure group also stated that all its arguments have not stopped this, a decision made by six Police and Crime Commissioners who sit on the NPAS Strategic Board. No comments about the fixed wing cover the north was promised from NPAS. In fact no comments about anything. The group had expected the base would not close until April 2017 and feels misled. [via Southport Visiter]

Ed: The minutes for the NPAS Board are eventually made available on-line by NPAS <http://www.npas.police.uk/> but these do not include those of the latest meeting. The situation is not set in stone and depends on the availability of staff. With the future clouded staff are departing in their own timescale leaving NPAS to make it work. As a result, the original schedule is being cut and the unit closing earlier than originally intended. The EC135 will be moving to join the Explorer at Barton when it has to [so August may well not be the date] but potentially replacing the venerable Explorer G-YPOL after it has been upgraded by Babcock. These are loose plans pretty much being driven by the day-to-day logistics and events and I doubt that any of this will be strictly according to even this plan. All that really matters is the arrival of air support on-scene when it is needed, everything else is just logistical detail.

Even the statement put out by NPAS on April 18 seems to contradict other information streams.

Chief Superintendent Tyron Joyce, late Programme Director but now Chief Operating Officer for the National Police Air Service said:

"The closure of NPAS Warton in April 2017 is part of a national programme of planned activity to ensure that essential air support remains in place to support the police forces of England and Wales at a significantly reduced cost to the public.

"The decision to close NPAS Warton was made based on an impact assessment of the ability of the National Police Air Service to provide air support to police forces in line with areas of the greatest threat, harm and risk to the public.

"Whilst NPAS Warton will remain open until April 2017, it is possible that some of the services they currently provide will be delivered by other local NPAS bases sooner than that in order to most effectively manage the closure process.

"Alongside this closure, more NPAS bases are operating 24 hours. NPAS Barton and NPAS Hawarden along with others across the rest of England and Wales already provide a service 24/7."

SOUTH YORKSHIRE: It is a case that has been rumbling in the background for many months and now it appears that in the wake of the final closure of the former South Yorkshire Police [SYP] helicopter operation based at Sheffield a court case is looming.

Five former SYP helicopter crew are to appear in court after they allegedly misused EO/IR camera system to record X-Rated videos while hovering over naked sunbathers and courting couples during police operations.

One of the victims is a former model who was allegedly filmed sunbathing naked in her back garden.

The five include two serving officers who have since been suspended from duty by South Yorkshire Police, all are charged with misconduct in public office after a probe was launched into one officer PC Adrian Pogmore, 50, who has already been sacked over similar allegations.

Pogmore was dismissed in an enquiry that found a number of explicit DVDs at his home. He was turned in by his ex-wife who contacted the professional standards department.

A criminal investigation was launched and Pogmore and four others, two pilots and two police officers, have now been charged in relation to four incidents that took place between 2007 and 2012 – before the unit became part of NPAS.

Much was made in the news reporting of the now dated claims on the South Yorkshire Police website that the Wescam MX-15 camera system was among the best in the world and that the NOTAR of the helicopter made it particularly quiet and 'can track suspects without them even knowing.'

The South Yorkshire Police statement on the charges stated "Five men, including two serving South Yorkshire Police officers and a National Police Air Service pilot, have been summoned to court following an investigation relating to unauthorised use of force visual recording equipment.

"The alleged offences relate to four incidents between 2007 and 2012. One incident on August 23, 2007, two incidents on July 28, 2008, and one incident on July 22, 2012.

"The investigation relates to unauthorised filming while using the force helicopter." [The Sun/PAR]

Ed: As if that were not enough the same South Yorkshire Police service is being castigated over its prominent part in a number of recent cases perhaps the most important being the large loss of life at a football match at Hillsborough decades ago. The conclusion of a recent coroner's court case into the 96 deaths in 1989 has resulted the incumbent Chief Constable being suspended even though he could hardly be personally culpable. He had planned to retire from his post, taken up in 2012, in November after 31 years.



SURREY: The police in Surrey and Sussex have acquired four new state-of-the-art Aeryon SkyRanger' unmanned craft to add to the existing one which has been used to support policing operations at Gatwick since March 2014. The craft are being used primarily to safeguard people and to assist with the investigation of crime. They are capable of operating during daylight and after dark, in high wind and heavy rain, and can reach speeds of about 30mph.

Surrey and Sussex Police have been awarded almost £250,000 to fund the devices and creates what is currently the largest of any force in the UK.

Assistant Chief Constable Steve Barry, head of Surrey and Sussex Police Operations, said: "We have invested significantly in training 38 operators to CAA (Civil Aviation Authority) accredited standard to give us every opportunity to use drones when appropriate to do so critically assess the benefits."

Trained officers have used the existing drone for multiple operations over the past two years, including missing person searches, protestor responses, airport security and crash scene investigations. The money has been granted from the Home Office through the Police Innovation Fund, which rewards creative, collaborative and cost-saving projects.

A three-month operational trial will now commence and the five drones will be deployed to Eastbourne Neighbourhood Response Team, Guildford Targeted Patrol Team, Gatwick Armed Response Vehicles, Shoreham Forensic Collision Investigation and Reconstruction Unit, and Lewes Operations Command Search and Operations Planning. The objective of the trial is to critically assess the benefits of employing drone technology: both within a wide range of policing functions with a view to enable efficiency savings, and also to increase public and officer safety. [Police Oracle]

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UNITED STATES

FEDERAL: A Department of Justice report has highlighted bad management of an aircraft programme being administered by the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Department of Defense. They reportedly spent more than \$86M on equipping an aircraft for counter narcotics efforts in Afghanistan even though the aircraft never actually flew in Afghanistan.

The aircraft, an ATR 42-500 airliner, was purchased for a programme called "Global Discovery" seven years ago, was outfitted with surveillance equipment and modified to conduct operations in a combat zone. The cost to the Pentagon was four times the estimated \$22M. In March this year the aircraft remained inoperable and resting on jacks.

The DEA contract to purchase the aircraft started off badly in that it cost \$3M more than the estimate but most of the cost overruns were used in the retrofit. By October 2014 in excess of \$65M was spent on the modifications but then an additional \$6M had to be spent to repair damage caused during the modification process.

It was not just the aircraft that soaked up the money. Almost \$2M was spent on alterations to a hangar for the ATR. The aircraft was never housed there, nor will it, as the DEA ceased aviation operations from Afghanistan in July 2015.

Perhaps more damning was the information that there was no real need for the aircraft in the first place. It seems that only 14% of the missions flown by the DEA in Afghanistan between October 2011 and February 2015 were for reconnaissance, surveillance or intelligence. The vast majority of missions were for transporting personnel and equipment – a role that the converted ATR would no longer be suitable for.

The DEA was short of transport and this led to the State Department flying more than 1,200 missions to support DEA aviation operations.

Despite the problems the aircraft is expected to be ready for service in June this year. [Edition/ CNN]

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CALIFORNIA: On the evening of April 23, the Riverside Police Department's Air Support Unit (AIR-1) was working a call in the area of Panorama Road, central California. At the same time, a radio call was dispatched regarding a vehicle which had lost control, rolled over and come to rest directly on the railroad tracks in the area of Dewey Street.

On arrival the flight crew noticed a BNSF railroad train travelling West on the tracks directly below them and realised the train was on the same set of tracks, about 2 miles from the location of the stuck car.

They immediately flew ahead of the train and descended into the conductor's field of view. Using their spotlight, they signalled to the conductor to stop the train. Next, they located the stuck car in the residential area of Dewey Street while continuing to signal for the train to stop. The train eventually came to a stop about 40 feet East of the car on the tracks. The driver of the car had been able to exit and was arrested by ground units for drunk driving.

This train was approximately 2 miles long. As a result of their incredible weight, they normally require a long distance to come to a complete stop. After being contacted by ground units, the conductor said had it not been for the flight crew intervening to signal him, he would not have had enough time to stop the train before striking the vehicle. (Photo taken by AIR-1's Tactical Flight Officer)



MINNESOTA: The Department of Natural Resources Division of Enforcement has taken delivery of an MD500E it ordered in November 2015.

DNR needed to raise a Budget Supplement of \$670,000 from the Game and Fish fund to acquire the aircraft. There was funding to purchase a used helicopter but the DNR found that used helicopters did not meet its needs. They concluded it was in the state's best interest to purchase a new helicopter. DNR received \$2.1M in the 2015 session. The new helicopter cost \$2.77M and the supplement funded the difference.

The custom-built MD 500E was welcomed by Chief Pilot Tom Buker and Pilot Brad Maas on March 29 at MD Helicopters' Mesa, Arizona headquarters. The new 500E joins Minnesota DNR's 8- aircraft fleet (6 fixed wing, 2 additional rotorcraft) to perform a variety of missions in support of the DNR's responsibility to manage natural lands, maintain healthy wildlife populations, and support law enforcement, firefighting and general forestry operations across the state's more than 5.5 million acres of managed land. This is the first MD helicopter to join the DNR since the Aviation Unit was born in 1947.

As well as the fixed wing aircraft, including two float equipped Cessna 185, DNR operates a ten years old Enstrom and a DoD surplus OH-58 based at Brainerd. Additional contractor aircraft are used for peak demand fire fighting and spray work.

The unit has been clearing an old hangar filled with military surplus parts in preparation for retirement of the 48-year old OH-58 helicopter. The DNR's Enforcement aviation section is comprised of four law enforcement pilots and three non-sworn natural resources pilots.

They fly an average of 2,600 hours per year, with almost 60% of the hours being game and fish related. The section has bases in Bemidji, Brainerd, Grand Rapids and New Ulm.



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AIR AMBULANCE

UNITED KINGDOM

ESSEX: As reported in the last edition, last month the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance held their latest 'open invitation' Clinical Governance Day in the hangar at their North Weald airfield base.

The following day they announced the 7th Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Trust Aeromedical Conference, is to be held at the Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1SQ on June 8. This again is an 'Open Invitation' event hoping to attract medical practitioners from across the region. Entitled The Trauma Epidemic: Adapting to the latest strain the conference is chaired by Dr Ronan Fenton, Medical Director of Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Trust and has a nationally acclaimed speaker line-up. [see back page for more detail]



It will be another year before they receive their new AW169 aircraft but early planning is in place and contracts being honed. At the end of this year the Earls Colne based MD902 G-EHAA will be replaced by the newer, night capable, G-LNCT displaced from Lincs & Notts who are having a new AW169. The other MD902 G-HAAT will remain at North Weald until the AW169 arrives in service in about June 2017.

The hangar at North Weald is large enough to house the AW169 [but not much else] but that at Earls Colne will be too small if, or when, the same type is operating from there.

GREAT NORTHERN: Although The Childrens Air Ambulance [TCAA] based at Coventry in middle England is now an accepted part of the 'Establishment' and the AAA its national fundraising activities still rankle in some parts.

The Great North Air Ambulance Service has seen fit to again warn its supporters to think carefully about where to send charitable donations. Founder of the GNAAS, Grahame Pickering, spoke out following a local increase in fundraising by TCAA.

The CAA offers hospital transfers for seriously ill children but is not based in the North-East and does not respond to emergencies in the region – unlike the GNAAS. It is believed that TCAA has only flown in the region a handful of times where the GNAAS treated and airlifted

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59 children in the region just last year.

Concerns have been raised by those who believe the CAA's intensive fundraising in the North-East is confusing its residents and impacting on the amount raised by the GNAAS. The matter was being publicised simply to allow people to make an informed decision before they make their donation to the charity.

LONDON: Four-year-old Ethan from Hornchurch in London, England, is one of the lucky winners to name one of London's Air Ambulance helicopters. The winning name is "Rowan" after his two-year-old sister.

On a visit to its helipad at The Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel last month, Ethan and his sister got to see the chosen name. The name has been placed on the MD902 Explorer registered G-EHMS. The other winner, Megan, was announced in February and her chosen name 'Walter' was placed on the more recently acquired G-LNDN.

MIDLAND: As part of their commitment to advanced clinical training and development, on April 26 the Midlands Air Ambulance Charity officially opened a new Education and Training Centre at their newest base at Tatenhill Aviation Airport, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire.

The new building forms part of the service's ongoing clinical and operational plan and is the charity's second education facility, the first of which opened in 2013 and is based at the Strensham airbase in Worcestershire.

The Tatenhill Centre includes a well-equipped meeting room, and more importantly a specially designed scenario simulation room, complete with medical equipment and props which will enable the flight paramedics and doctors to act out various scenarios as part of their advanced medical training. The room will allow the simulation of both indoor and outdoor environments, and is one of a kind in the air ambulance sector.



The centre is also being offered to schools and colleges who want to find out more about the charity and the lifesaving service. The new centre will give a greater number of children in the region the chance to visit one of the air ambulance airbases, as part of their experiential learning in an outdoor environment, and learn about the service directly from the aircrew.

www.midlandsairambulance.com

UNITED STATES

HAWAII: A life-flight helicopter which had been allowed to permanently park on Hilo Medical Center's helipad for the past three years will soon be leaving.

The helicopter, operated by the statewide Hawaii Life Flight, is cleared to park in the spot under an agreement with Hawaii Health Systems Corp that expired last month. It seems there have been several safety issues and HHSC does not plan to renew.

The main problem appears to be that the operator has not been moving the EC135 N555YE out of the way of other landing helicopters and as a result they have been asked to move to Hilo International Airport. It will not affect transportation of the patients as the helicopter will be welcome when operating. [Hawaii Tribune-Herald]

MONTANA: An attempt to regulate air ambulance services supported by Democratic Senator Jon Tester struck out in the U.S. Senate yesterday.

Over the past year, Montana's Insurance Commissioner's office has been receiving an increasing number of complaints from patients, who were surprised when they were handed large bills from air ambulance companies when they thought the service was covered by insurance.

Tester's amendment to the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act didn't even get a vote. He was pushing for it with Republican Senator John Hoeven from North Dakota. The amendment would have granted states more power to regulate air ambulances. Current federal law prevents states from regulating air ambulances rates, routes or services. It is hoped that an amendment changing states' abilities to regulate air ambulances could be attached to other appropriations bills passing through the Senate this year. If that doesn't work the issue may need a bill of its own.

A working group of Montana legislators and industry representatives are meeting at the state capitol to discuss this issue May 25th.

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SEARCH AND RESCUE CANADA

COAST GUARD: At the end of March 2016 at Fogo Island in Canada, Schiebel's Camcopter S-100 Unmanned Air System (UAS) successfully demonstrated its capabilities to a host of dignitaries from the Canadian Coast Guard, the Royal Canadian Navy, Transport Canada, the Canadian National Research Council and the University of Alaska in partnership with the Memorial University of Newfoundland.

During trials the Camcopter® S-100, equipped with the Wescam MX-10S payload camera, once again demonstrated its operational value and mission effectiveness in open waters under icy winter conditions. The combination of the VTOL air vehicle and the Wescam camera demonstrated its potential to easily identify vessels, animals and objects at long ranges at sea.

The S-100 was deployed aboard the CCGS George R. Pearkes, a light icebreaker of the Canadian Coast Guard. About 60 nautical miles north from Fogo Island, the vessel broke through the ice at speeds of up to 14 knots, guided by imagery from the Camcopter® S-100, which offered to the ship's captain not only a wide view image of the ice structure, but also identified boundaries between flat and rough ice.

Due to the S-100's operational maturity in the maritime environment and ability to operate in a broad range of weather conditions, it is perfectly suited to support the demands of the Coast Guard. The flight tests included multiple take-offs and landings in winter conditions.

The VTOL S-100 UAS needs no prepared area or supporting launch or recovery equipment. It operates during daytime and at night, under adverse weather conditions, with a beyond line-of-sight capability out to 200 km, both on land and at sea. The S-100 navigates via pre-programmed GPS waypoints or is operated with a pilot control unit. Missions are planned



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TURKEY

COAST GUARD: The Turkish government's procurement agency has released a request for information (RFI) for options on purchasing a coast guard aircraft. The Undersecretariat for Defence Industries (SSM) said that planned missions of the aircraft will be controlling naval sovereign zones in the Mediterranean.

Tasks will include performing reconnaissance flights to help control illegal immigration on the Aegean Sea, search and rescue operations, curtailing illegal activity along the Turkish coastline and performing coastal reconnaissance. The process has been opened to local and foreign contenders.

Bidders that have already shown an interest include Austrian aircraft manufacturer Airborne Technologies, Italian company Finmeccanica (soon to be rebadged as Leonardo) and Turkish firm Savronik. Those interested in bidding had been asked to return the RFI document by 8 April.

UNITED KINGDOM

ROYAL NAVY: A helicopter involved in numerous rescues since it arrived in Helston in 1970 is being prepared for its final callout.

The Sea King search and rescue helicopter from RNAS Culdrose is being given a makeover, ready to be placed on a plinth just inside the naval base's fence opposite Helston Community Hospital.



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It was due to be transported to its final resting place at the end of March, when 771 Naval Air Squadron was officially decommissioned.

Royal Navy engineers having been making sure the helicopter, which had the call sign 827, will be looking its best thanks to a new coat of paint courtesy of Culdrose's 'Spray Bay'. The seven man team has sanded it down, re-primed it and then painted it back to its original state.

KENT: Lydd Airport will be the permanent base for the UK Coastguard's search and rescue helicopter services in the south-east, the Department for Transport has announced. After original plans to operate out of Manston were thwarted the UK Search and Rescue Helicopter Service operated out of Lydd Airport in Shepway on a temporary basis since August 2015.

But the decision to make the arrangement permanent will now enable the operators, Bristow Helicopters Ltd, to push ahead with plans to build a new £7m search and rescue helicopter hangar at the airport.

FALKLAND ISLANDS: AAR Airlift division has commenced operations for Search and Rescue (SAR) and Support Helicopter (SH) services for the UK Ministry of Defence in the Falkland Islands.

AAR Airlift Group, together with British International Helicopters (BIH) and Air Rescue Systems (ARS), is delivering turnkey SAR and Support Helicopter services to the British Forces South Atlantic Islands (BFSAI) operations.

Team AAR is providing Finmeccanica AW-189 SAR helicopters, Sikorsky S-61N support helicopters, flight operations, maintenance, logistics, facilities support, and personnel management at the Mount Pleasant Complex in the Falkland Islands and the surrounding maritime region. The mission includes 24/7/365 all-weather SAR, helicopter emergency services, rescue hoist operations and passenger and cargo transfers.

Award

Following award of the 10-year, \$275 million (£180 million) contract in January 2015, AAR sourced two new AW189 aircraft customized by Finmeccanica to meet the programme requirements. The aircraft were accepted in November 2015. These are the first Civil Aviation Authority approved AW189s operating in a SAR role.

British International Helicopters (BIH) is the largest British-owned helicopter operator with a fleet of 25 principally owned helicopters employing over 150 personnel. The company has particular expertise in offshore operations and in the defence sector, operating the Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) helicopter support programme for the Royal Navy and providing the Ministry of Defence with helicopter services in support of British forces in the Falklands. BIH also provides Police and Air Ambulance capability and utility/commercial helicopter charter services. Rigby Group plc, the ultimate holding company for BIH, was formed in 1975 and is the parent company for a portfolio of privately owned and highly successful businesses operating across Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.



INDUSTRY

As fully expected for some six months now the former Bond helicopter operations are now being re-branded as Babcock.

From a company name point of view, the changes (which all went through on Friday 22nd) are as follows

Bond Aviation Group Ltd. to Babcock Mission Critical Services UK Ltd.

Bond Air Services Ltd. to Babcock Mission Critical Services Onshore Ltd.

Bond Offshore Helicopters Ltd to Babcock Mission Critical Services Offshore Ltd.

Bond Helicopters Europe Ltd. to Babcock Mission Critical Services Design and Completions Ltd.

International Aviation Leasing Ltd. to Babcock Mission Critical Services Leasing Ltd.



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The brand change is the final step in the process of the company's acquisition by Babcock International Group (Babcock) in 2014. Going forward, the Bond companies will be referred to simply as Babcock. It is not all gone however, the "Bond" call-sign and "BND" flight prefix are being retained due to the high cost of changing it with ICAO.

The Bond Name

The Bond family started their exit from day-to-day onshore and offshore helicopter operations around four years ago when it became part of Avincis, a group that embraced a number of international companies, each element retained its former identity and indeed for a while the Bond family retained shareholdings. The Bond operation changed subtly and became more proactive in how it served its customers, evolving from being a straight operator and maintainer of airframes completed by others to one providing a broad design, advice and completion service. Two years ago Babcock International PLC bought Avincis and it is now working through each of the elements rebranding to a common name.

The New Ideals

Today the Babcock Design & Completions Centres combine vast experience and operational expertise and offer parapublic agencies and fleet managers the best in aircraft mission system design, certification, flight test, integration, training and through-life support.

Babcock Mission Critical Services (MCS) Design & Completions is based and managed as part of Babcock MCS Onshore at Gloucestershire Airport, Cheltenham and is one of the world's top three providers of this sector with around 385 aircraft flying more than 135,000 hours per year.

Babcock is the UK's leading engineering support services organisation with revenues of £4.5bn and an order book of £20 bn across defence, energy, telecommunications, transport and education. They have approximately 34,000 staff working in positions that are vital to the delivery of many key public services, both in the UK and overseas.

In its new work ethic Bond, now Babcock, brought to the aviation support and completions market a new style that has won over many customers. In the past completions were invariably led by the company undertaking them at their chosen speed; the new Babcock led work-ethic places the customer more to the fore. The reason the first NPAS EC135T2 upgrade took slightly longer to arrive into service was the attention to detail the Design & Completions office thrust upon the new customer. Previously most industry-wide completions had been off drawings board,



The first NPAS conversion ©PAR



Even the inside of the hangar has been rebranded at Staverton
©Babcock

the new concept was that every detail of the first edition [G-POLB] was tested, discussed and altered to ensure that the first edition of the end product was truly what the customer wanted. Even those with an extensive knowledge of the industry were pleasantly surprised and this attention to detail worked in Babcock's favour. Add to that a growing good name in on-time, on-quality delivery of aircraft and the company reaps the benefit.

Babcock has certificated the H135 & H145 T2 for flight on Night Vision Goggles (NVG) to ground level and to unlit sites. EASA STC approval demands that the most thorough light laboratory, dark-hangar and flight testing be successfully completed as well as robust System Safety Assessments and the development of comprehensive Flight Manual Supplements and Instructions for Continued Airworthiness. NVIS is a specialist field and Babcock has recently undertaken ten completions and has the capacity for further work in this field.

Elsewhere other more modern variants of the EC135T2 and T2+ await their turn in the upgrade process and such as G-ESEX lie dormant at the Airbus Helicopters facility at Oxford being taken apart and used as spares to support other aircraft. Whether this is simply acting as a temporary Christmas Tree in support of the rest of the fleet while it awaits an upgrade at Babcock Staverton or a final parting out remains to be seen. NPAS owns eight EC135T2 or T2+ helicopters, two POLB and POLC are converted and five more will be converted - LASU, NEAU, NMID, WCAO. Whether ESEX will remain as part of the programme or be replaced by the last of the fleet XMII [now in Norway] is unclear.

All the other eight EC135s owned are examples with P&W engines. These are CPAO, CPAS, EMID, HEOI, NWOI, POLA, SUFK, TVHB

Diamond Aircraft Austria has partnered with Gilat Satellite Networks Ltd., a world-wide leader in satellite networking technology, solutions and services, to deliver airborne broadband connectivity via satellite.

Gilat's BlackRay 71 (BR71) terminal was integrated by Diamond in its DA42 MPP GUARDIAN aircraft to enable satellite-based homeland security Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) operations. Diamond designed a special enclosure for Gilat's BR71 terminal behind the cockpit of its remote sensing platform. The long-range, twin-engine aircraft was designed for homeland security ISR missions.

First orders for the Gilat-Diamond Satcom-On-The-Move (SOTM) airborne solution have already been received by government agencies in Latin America and central Asia for homeland security ISR applications.

Drone sales are soaring in Germany, but so is the number of potentially dangerous near-miss incidents around airports. The authorities have now decided that it's time to reel in the flying robots.

Germans have developed a taste for **drones**. Sales are climbing and prices are dropping. Some are now being sold that can even be controlled via smartphone. And so, predictably enough, dangerous incidents near airports are becoming more and more frequent.

The Federal Transport Ministry is working on new rules to regulate both private and commercial drones. From now on, private Unmanned Aerial Systems are not allowed to fly above an altitude of 100 meters (330 feet), or within 1.5 km (0.9 miles) of an airport or airfield.

They will also be forbidden to fly over government buildings, prisons, hospitals, power stations, crowds, accident or disaster scenes, or out of the direct sight of their pilots.

At the same time, the rules are being relaxed for drones used by businesses because they offer wide opportunities in such as agriculture or traffic surveillance. To that end, the rule that drones can't fly out of sight of the pilot will not apply to commercial drones – though their safety has to be demonstrated and pilots will be issued a license.

At the moment drones that weigh over five kilos need a special permit issued by state authorities – anything below five kilos is considered a toy and not likely to pose a danger but no kind of registration system is proposed even though it might appear during ongoing discussions. [Deutsche Welle]

Air Charter Scotland has contracted with MedAire to provide aviation travel risk management services for its crew and passengers – in-flight and on-the-ground.

MedAire will provide Air Charter Scotland with in-flight and on-the-ground medical support and advice, as well as the most up-to-date aviation security assistance solution supported by a 24/7 aviation security team with a global network of regional experts. MedAire's aviation expertise will allow Air Charter Scotland to monitor and mitigate the potential risks for any flight, and will include access to travel risk management tools such as MedAire's Trip Ready App and online portal.

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“Air Charter Scotland passengers and crew will receive peace of mind that health, security and logistics expertise is available 24/7 and that they may call as often as they wish, wherever they travel,” commented Steven Bates, MD Europe, MedAire. “We look forward to providing outstanding service to the Air Charter Scotland operation and to our long and successful partnership.”

The first **Tecnam P2012 Traveller** has been rolled out from the Experimental Assembly Line (XAL) in Capua (Italy).

The Traveller is an eleven seat next generation piston engine twin, designed to comply with both FAR part 23 and EASA CS-23 and involves input from Lycoming for the engines and Garmin for the avionic systems.



The P2012 is on track to meet the future needs of Cape Air, one of the largest regional airlines in the USA. Cape Air flies over 686,000 passengers to destinations around the world including: New England, New York, the Caribbean, the Midwest, Florida, the Bahamas and Micronesia with a fleet of eighty-four Cessna 402s, two ATR-42s, four Britten-Norman Islanders, and two Cessna Caravan Amphibians.

Dallas Avionics is now a distributor of **Avion Power's Voyager** Power Source. The Voyager is designed to start aircraft engines and provide auxiliary power. On a single charge, a Voyager provides 10 or more turbine engine starts, powers on-board electronics for an hour, or provides a combination of auxiliary power and starting power. Voyager is available in 10Ah and 20Ah capacities that weigh 9 or 15 pounds, respectively; they can be stowed on-board and recharged in-flight. Voyager's useful life is approximately ten years or 2000 charge cycles, self-discharge is less than 3% per month, it has no memory, and it is maintenance free.

“The portability and design of the Voyager battery offers both rotorcraft and fixed wing aircraft operators a convenient way to power aircraft,” said Dallas Avionics Vice President of Sales Scott Davis. “The products we offer to our customers need to be economical, practical and add value to operators. The Avion Power Voyager meets all our criteria.”

The Voyager Power Source incorporates Avion Power's Modular Battery System, developed for the U.S. Army's 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment. The Modular Battery System received an Air Worthiness Release and has been the main battery in the 160th SOAR's MH-47 Chinook helicopters since 2010. Avion Power launched the Voyager in 2014 to address demand in the commercial aviation market for powerful, lightweight, portable auxiliary and emergency power.

Voyager's capacity options offer power solutions for multiple starts and/or auxiliary power on nearly all helicopters including the Agusta 139 and Airbus H225 Super Puma, which are heavily used by the offshore oil industry. Voyager batteries are also appropriate for many fixed-wing aircraft including Pilatus, Quest, Cessna, Cirrus, King Air, and De Havilland.



FLIR Systems, Inc. has launched the FLIR TraqiOne traffic sensor developed specifically for accurate traffic detection utilizing the world's most advanced low-cost thermal imaging technology. The FLIR TraqiOne uses thermal imaging and Wi-Fi tracking technology to provide traffic engineers with a differentiated, highly reliable solution to detect vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians in urban environments. Enabled by FLIR's revolutionary Lepton thermal imaging technology, the FLIR TraqiOne has the ability to see in total darkness, remain unaffected by shadows, colours and sun glare, operate in inclement weather conditions, and detect heat signatures of pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles, resulting in lower false alarm rates. It provides reliable 24/7 traffic detection of intersection activity by sensing when a person, car, or bicycle approaches a crosswalk, waits at a stoplight, or intersects a median or crosswalk. The TraqiOne connects to a city's traffic signal controller to allow for a more dynamic control of traffic signals based on traffic and pedestrian patterns and intensity. It uses Wi-Fi tracking technology to capture detailed traffic flow data, including travel and route times along road segments. Using traffic flow information, the equipment can also measure traffic delay times at intersections. Traffic engineers can access information collected through the cloud to obtain useful traffic insights to aid in their decision making.

"The FLIR TraqiOne will help cities improve traffic flows by utilizing highly accurate thermal imaging technology," said Andy Teich, President and CEO of FLIR Systems. "Through the use of Lepton-based thermal sensors connected to a city's traffic network, the FLIR TraqiOne will help traffic engineers accurately adapt traffic signal timing, reduce vehicle idling time, monitor traffic congestion, and enhance driver safety in a broader range of environmental and lighting conditions." The FLIR TraqiOne will be available in the second half of 2016. FLIR will showcase the FLIR TraqiOne sensor at the Intertraffic Amsterdam 2016 trade show from April 5 - 8, 2016, at booth #10.403. For more information about the FLIR TraqiOne, visit www.flir.com/traffic.



FLIR Systems, Inc. has announced a range of thermal imaging solutions for firefighters, including the **FLIR K33** and FLIR K53 handheld cameras, the FLIR KF6 camera for fire engines, and two FLIR Aerial First Responder Kits featuring the DJI Zenmuse XT powered by FLIR. The new products were exhibited last months Fire Department Instructors Conference (FDIC) International trade show in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Packaging the DJI Zenmuse XT stabilized thermal camera powered by FLIR with the DJI Inspire 1 drone, the FLIR Aerial First Responder Kits provide first responders added support from the air. Available in both Advanced and Basic packages, these kits allow firefighters to gain a thermal perspective from high above the ground to pinpoint temperature variances signifying potential problems in buildings, to detect the presence of people or animals, and to monitor fire personnel in large fire scenes. Information on the individual products is at www.flir.com/TICS.




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Bell Helicopter is planning to ask the Federal Aviation Administration to let pilots at its training academy fly at a higher altitude, after noise complaints from residents and cities in Tarrant County.

The helicopter manufacturer also hired an engineering firm, deployed noise monitors and changed routes in an effort to reduce noise.

Concerns over the flights started to increase last year after Bell consolidated its training academy at its headquarters in east Fort Worth.

Pilots, who include a significant number involved in the airborne emergency services, had to fly north to train in airspace near the Texas Motor Speedway. The flight path along US 377 took helicopters over heavily developed commercial and residential areas and, some complain, were at heights low enough to shake houses at times.

Directing pilots to fly at a higher altitude is complicated by the airspace requirements for DFW International, Meacham and Alliance airports. [CBS]

Cardiff Heliport has new operators, with Roy Steptoe and Hugh Evans having signed a 50-year lease. Mr Steptoe is the owner of Caernarfon Airport at the opposite end of Wales, and also owns fixed wing operator Air Caernarfon and North Wales Air Academy. Mr Evans owns an Agusta-Bell JetRanger III.

The heliport is two miles from the centre of Cardiff, and has seen significant use when sporting events are held at the nearby Millennium Stadium.

In March 2014 the previous heliport managers British International Helicopters moved all helicopters out of Cardiff Heliport. [Helihub]

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The **Airbus Helicopters Foundation** was behind the appearance of what is clearly a former UK police helicopter in the training role in France. The helicopter, identified as the EC135T1 G-NESV formerly operated by the police in Northumbria, is now stripped of its tail boom and mounted on wheels to ease its use as a procedure trainer for medical teams. A number of the early model UK fleet EC135s have been sold on but perhaps there were simply too many around for the market to absorb and they are therefore finding alternative non-flight uses.

The Malta based **Migrant Offshore Aid Station (MOAS)** has shortened its intended sea mission in South East Asia due to delays by the Thai authorities in releasing a pair of unmanned aircraft. The MOAS ASIA mission will continue to use its ground network. The MOAS search and rescue vessel, MY Phoenix journeyed to the Andaman Sea last year to begin a fact-finding mission focused on the plight of ethnic Rohingya forced to flee Myanmar and Bangladesh by sea.

The plight of the Rohingya, labelled “the world’s most persecuted people,” has festered since Myanmar authorities stripped them of citizenship by law in 1982. Since then, hundreds of thousands of Rohingya have been forced to flee to neighbouring countries, often via long journeys by sea.

During the past six months, MOAS representatives met with the Thai military and government authorities, as well as with well-placed counterparts in Malaysia to discuss the full scope of their fact-finding mission. MOAS has reported that ultimately neither helped their operations.

Despite the unfortunate foreshortening of the sea mission, MOAS did manage to create an early warning network to not only measure movement at sea but also to document human rights abuses in Bangladesh, Myanmar and Thailand. Additionally there have been substantive discussions on the search and rescue protocols and clear understanding of disembarkation, including official offers of assistance in the Thai Search and Rescue (SAR) region. MOAS was a visible presence in the Andaman Sea, bringing attention and direct SAR action in support of the all in distress.

MOAS complain that its own ideals were thwarted in recent weeks by delays by Thai authorities in the release of two Schiebel S-100 Camcopter's intended for use in SAR operations in the region. Customs officials held the drones for over a month despite various assurances from representatives at various levels of government and now the monsoon season is upon the operation. As a result the operation has been scaled back to a two-week operation off Ranong in southern Thailand—a well-known centre of human trafficking. [MOAS]



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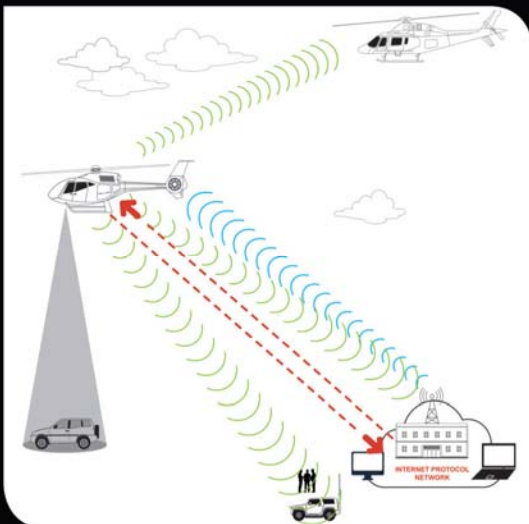


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Project Pegasus is a multi-agency campaign encouraging the public and law enforcement to join the fight against serious and organised crime and terrorism by reporting unusual activity around small aviation sites. The campaign by the National Crime Agency [NCA], UK police forces and UK Border Force, is aimed at enhancing surveillance on over 3,000 aerodromes, small airfields, farmers' field strips, and helipads; around 47,000 Civil Aviation Authority-licensed pilots; and around 20,000 light aircraft generating around 90,000 general aviation flights every year.

Thanks in part to such as Pegasus criminals can fall foul of the law in their brazen criminality. Last month three people were arrested over an alleged plot to smuggle millions of pounds of cocaine and heroin into the UK under the noses of NPAS and as a result the NPAS base hangar at Redhill in Surrey became the repository for a blue Robinson R44 seized by the NCA. The helicopter flown by two Dutch Nationals from Belgium landed at Redhill and was impounded shortly afterwards, the Dutchmen were arrested on suspicion of importing a Class A drug.



The R44 in the NPAS hangar at Redhill. The image issued had its registration removed. ©NCA

Earlier, Metropolitan Police officers had seized around 40kg of suspected cocaine and 60kg of suspected heroin from a car on the M26 motorway in Kent, while an older man from the North Kensington area of London was also arrested on suspicion of conspiracy to import Class A drugs.

The suspects were said to be Niels Wartenbergh, aged 27, and Ricardo Vorstenbosch, aged 26 - and Joe Peel, aged 38, from London. They were charged with conspiracy to import class A drugs, appeared at Guildford Magistrates Court and were remanded in custody until 15 May. [NCA]

Thommen Aircraft Equipment Ltd has launched its brand new Emergency/Cabin Flashlights series. The compact design is available in four mission related profile colors. NATO green color with white or NVIS light, Matte Grey with white light, SAR Yellow with white or red light and Matte Black with white or red light or white or NVIS light. A high resistance to environmental conditions including shock, vibration and mechanical impact is assured by compliance with the DO-160G qualification test. It is water resistant to a depth of 3 metres (9.9 feet), and can withstand operational temperatures from -40°C (-104°F) up to +85°C (+185°F) and has max. 140 lumens of light.

On April 11 an adversarial online magazine called ***The Intercept*** published a lengthy article revealing details of the ownership and activities of Austrian company Airborne Technologies. The revealed specifics were far from common knowledge but it seems mainly aimed at causing discomfort to the company.

Over the last 18 months Airborne Technologies has done well and secured some important aircraft conversion contracts with police in Germany and Britain's NPAS. These activities appear to be wholly above reproach but it is another project that involves what has been identified as a potentially para-military conversion of a US crop-spraying aircraft that has set the alarm bells ringing.

At the centre of the supposed shock revelations is the news that an alleged part owner of Airborne Technologies is one Erik Prince. To those up to speed with modern warfare the name means a great deal but it is clear from recent queries that many do not immediately know the name or the connectivity. It meant little to most policemen in Europe.

A quick search on the Internet tells us he is Erik Dean Prince (born 1969) an American businessman, philanthropist, and former U.S. Navy SEAL officer. Prince was best known for founding the government services and security company Blackwater USA, a mercenary organisation involved in questionable activities in US war zones. *The Intercept* claims that he is the customer for the Airborne Technologies conversion of a Thrush 510G crop duster into a special mission aircraft.

As blithely reported here in PAN from the Singapore Air Show the Thrush was simply an economical surveillance aircraft. Unfortunately, the widely repeated *Intercept* article makes much of a theoretical ability to carry more sinister weapons of war. As well as surveillance it mentions laser-targeting equipment, bulletproof cockpit windows, an armoured engine block, and protects fuel tank, and wiring that could drop and control rockets, bombs and machine guns but there is no evidence that these are fitted. Weapons on civil aircraft is not new and could apply to any aircraft but for its own reasons the article weaves a sinister tale associated with Prince.



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Airborne Technologies may well have simply been putting together a useful ISR machine but unfortunately the SCART surveillance pod is mounted on a standard NATO mount [there being no civil equivalent] which has given undue credence to the weapons allegation.

The Intercept recounts its allegations at length, and PAN cannot vouch for its ultimate authenticity. The fact remains though that ripples have been caused and there are suggestions that the activity may result in questions being asked and there may be unease among those with existing or future contracts with the Austrian company. In a competitive commercial market that may well be the sole intention of the originators.

For a while Airborne Technologies were unaware of the minefield created by their work on the Thrush aircraft. Adding weapons capable mounting points to civil aircraft is not new anywhere, dating back almost a hundred years, and someone has to undertake the engineering.

As to the stressed business and share links between the Prince and the management of Airborne Technologies they appear very tenuous. Where the article claims a large 25% share for Prince another publication reckons that his shareholding in a company with a shareholding in Airborne Technology might give him an indirect *non-voting* 16% share. Not quite the same thing.

As a result of the questions being asked the company felt obliged to release this statement.

Dear Mr. Bryn Elliott,

A recent report in 'The Intercept', accused Airborne Technologies of 'arming civilian aircraft and violating government export licenses'. The Management of Airborne Technologies states herewith that this is a fabricated story and an absolutely false allegation. We have never produced, modified or sold armed aircraft and our company obtains and abides all government export regulations necessary.

We pride ourselves to act in strict accordance with all relevant export laws and deliver turnkey solutions for airborne surveillance worldwide with approved export licenses. This is a logical precondition, not even necessary to mention, for the success of Airborne Technologies over the last 7 years and essential for our continuing strong growth on the international market. Our joint programs have been, are and will be conducted with the utmost respect and professionalism that your project deserves: we take no short-cuts in technology, financial responsibility and export rules.

Airborne Technologies is the leading provider of state of the art airborne ISR turnkey solutions. Our client base includes governments, engineering and logistics providers in Europe, Middle East, Africa and Asia. We are proud to be considered the leaders in our field and a successful Austrian company employing at the moment 50 people at our facility in Wiener Neustadt, Austria.

A clear and transparent statement of facts is of great importance to us. Our good reputation and a trustful relationship with our business partners is an essential foundation of our success.

*Yours sincerely,
Wolfgang*

And there are other things that simply will not go away. In 2010, **AgustaWestland** signed a high value contract to supply 12 AW101 helicopters to the Indian Air Force. In early 2012 an investigation started by the Italian attorney general's office into alleged unethical dealings by the state-backed Finmeccanica had widened to include corruption in the helicopter deal. In February 2013, the Italian police arrested the Chief Executive and Chairman of Finmeccanica SpA, Giuseppe Orsi. The arrest warrant charged him with paying bribes to intermediaries to secure the sale of the helicopters to India when he was head of the group's Agusta-Westland unit. He initially managed to stave off imprisonment but last month the Italian courts confirmed his prison sentence.



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ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

2 February 2016 Piper Cheyenne II N28CA. Air ambulance of Cal-Ore Life Flight of Brookings, Oregon. When returning to Crescent City, California from a meeting, the nose wheel failed to extend fully to the locked position. On board were a Captain (PIC), a pilot in training, and an administrative employee. The initial approach was terminated and the PIC moved to the left seat. Another company aircraft was dispatched and flew alongside the aircraft, providing direct input to the PIC. It was determined that the nose gear was partially lowered but not locked. The main gear was down and locked, but the main gear doors remained open, which is normal if the down lock on the nose is not satisfied. Pumping the gear down did not produce any results. The crew made three approaches, one low approach with no touchdown, two others with firm landings on the mains attempting to get the nose gear to move into the locked position. These actions did not help. The aircraft was then taken to altitude with several low G manoeuvres performed with the idea to allow the gear to free fall into the locked position. This action did not work either. The aircraft was landed on the main gear while holding the nose of the aircraft off as long as possible. The cause of the issue was the bolt securing the gear actuator to the landing gear brace was missing and assumed to have sheared off. A fleet wide check suggests this was an isolated incident. [Concern]

3 March 2016 Airbus Helicopters AS350 N855MB. Air ambulance of Eagle Air Med, Blanding, Utah. Operated by AMRG. The aircraft departed after completing a patient transport. About 10 minutes into flight, the aircraft encountered some light turbulence and the PIC noticed that when cyclic was moved left and forward to level aircraft, the cyclic bound. The PIC re-centred and tried again with same result. The PIC tried a third time without binding. The pilot checked the friction lock and it was appropriate. With no suitable landing area, PIC and crew opted to immediately return to Flagstaff and make an uneventful precautionary landing. [Concern]

22 March 2016 Airbus Helicopters EC145 N. Air ambulance of Sanford AirMed, Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The helicopter was starting up on the Sioux Falls helipad with one engine running when the team heard a "clunk" followed by a couple more noises. After it was determined that no equipment had shifted, the medic observed a rock lying on the helipad next to the aircraft. The entire team had completed a walk around prior to start-up with no debris being found. The aircraft was shut down and it was discovered that multiple rocks had been thrown from street level and struck the helicopter. After an investigation by Sioux Falls Police Department two young individuals were found and arrested. The damage to the aircraft was minimal.

15 April 2016 Airbus Helicopters AS350B2 N. Air ambulance of Air Methods was on final approach to Piedmont Mountainside, Jasper, Georgia to pick up a patient when it suffered a hard landing just south of the hospital in an open field. There were four crew members on board at the time of the crash and all walked away with no injuries. [Media]

18 April 2016 Bell 206L-4 N119SP Minnesota Department of Public Safety. Aircraft apparently operating a training mission at a military facility at Arden Hills, Ramsey County, Minnesota. Crashed in unknown circumstances causing substantial damage and injuries to person on-board. [Media/Kathryn]

25 April 2016 Bell 206L-4 LongRanger N435AE Air ambulance of Evac Lifeteam (operated for Methodist Air Care). After dropping off a patient, had refuelled and returned for two crew members. Suffered loss-of-control on take-off from the Memorial Hermann Hospital Helipad (1TE6), in Memorial City, Texas. Reports suggest loss of yaw control. Impact resulted in substantial damage to skids and tail. Aircraft came to rest off the helipad on grass with collapsed skids and tail boom broken off at rear. No injuries reported.

27 April 2016 Eurocopter EC135P2 N135AN. Air ambulance of Orlando Health Air Care, Kissimmee, Florida, USA. A suspected drunken driver crashed into the helicopter on U.S. 192 near State Road 429 in Orange County, California. The helicopter landed on the roadway, and driver went through a roadblock and hit the tail Fenestron area. The helicopter was damaged and had to be towed from the scene. [Media]

FLIGHT SAFETY

A U.N. aviation task force is updating global standards to ensure commercial helicopter pilots get enough sleep, at a time of broader industry efforts to manage crew fatigue, a technical specialist for the group said Wednesday.

The Montreal-based International Civil Aviation Organization is working to bring sleep standards for helicopter pilots in line with existing recommended practices for commercial airline crew, said Michelle Millar, ICAO's technical specialist, human performance. Unlike the existing standards for helicopter pilots, guidelines for commercial airline pilots take into account basic human physiology such as circadian rhythms and the importance of sleeping at night.

Fatigue management has become a growing priority for the aviation industry amid concerns that commercial airline and helicopter pilots are being asked to work longer hours because of an anticipated shortage of pilots around the world. Concerns over pilot fatigue gained global attention recently following the March crash of a FlyDubai jet in Russia, which killed all 62 people aboard.

The guidelines for international helicopter pilots would apply to the oil and mining industries, for example. They should be complete by 2018. ICAO data shows the aviation sector is expected to need more than 350,000 pilots by 2026 to fly an additional 25,000 new aircraft, even as more crew become eligible for retirement.

PEOPLE

The Yorkshire Air Ambulance Chairman, **Peter Sunderland DL**, has been awarded an MBE by Her Majesty The Queen at a ceremony at Windsor Castle which took place April 13. He was named in her New Year Honours list for '*Voluntary service to the Yorkshire Air Ambulance and the community in West Yorkshire*'

Mr Sunderland, 73, has been a Trustee of the life-saving Charity for over 12 years, with just over 9 of those as its Chairman, and has been responsible for some momentous changes at the YAA in recent years.

As well as his work with the YAA, Mr Sunderland has also been a member of the Wakefield Cathedral Council, and is a past President and Subscribers Secretary of Huddersfield Choral Society.

In 2007 he was appointed a Deputy Lieutenant of West Yorkshire by the Lord-Lieutenant, Dr Ingrid Roscoe.

Mr Sunderland was joined at his investiture by his wife Margaret and his two eldest grandchildren Lillie and Jacob. He is also supported by sons Richard, Matthew and Nicholas.

Photo attached: Peter Sunderland MBE, DL with his wife Margaret and grandchildren Jacob and Lillie at Windsor Castle.



The mention in an earlier NPAS item of Chief Superintendent Tyron Joyce, as Chief Operating Officer for the NPAS marks yet another unexpected bump in the progress of NPAS. I understand that **Chief superintendent Ian Whitehouse** the PAOC Accountable Manager, the man in place to ensure that all operations and maintenance activity can be financed and carried out to the standard required by the CAA – effectively the head of the organisation - has unexpectedly departed, retiring from the police. He was originally not expected to retire before mid-2017.

In the meantime, C/S Joyce will fill in some roles and Ollie Dismore will step into being the Accountable Manager. The post will require advertising via the usual channels and placing a trained person in post will take months.

Ed: As a result of this development an e-mail was sent to PAN cancelling the proposed PAvCon with NPAS in 2017.

The retirement of Ian Whitehouse has resulted in some changes in responsibilities at the top of the organisation and a review of current activity. A meeting on April 27 agreed that although the event was around 14 months away the hosting of "PAvCon by NPAS in 2017 is something that we are not yet in a position to proceed with."

As proposed the PAvCon was to be embedded within NPAS but no time has yet been spent on looking at alternatives which will retain NPAS as the host nation without the event taking place on their property.



Ch Supt Ian Whitehouse
©PAR

Rob Collingwood, 35, began as a full-time pilot with Wiltshire Air Ambulance (WAA) last month and has flown a number of missions in Wiltshire and surrounding counties responding to medical emergencies, including road traffic collisions and cardiac arrests.

This is his first helicopter emergency medical service (HEMS) role. He served in the United Kingdom Army Air Corps for 10 years as a helicopter pilot and before joining WAA was a helicopter pilot in the oil industry based in Aberdeen.

Collingwood is employed by Heli Charter, who WAA leases the Bell 429 helicopter from.

MOVE ALONG THERE

Oh what a big fuss about nothing – and a massive abuse of the English language!

From time to time high officials strain the parameters of use of air support to place it in the area of 'personal transport' and we are used to it. An unholy row has erupted in Alabama because a state police aircraft was used to transport a wallet for the State Governor back in 2014. He left it in his office and apparently could not pay his way at his beachside home in Fort Morgan. Serious stuff for such people.

The Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) confirmed the journey but its statement is full of that strange language called American English that so easily becomes a train wreck. The statement that sort of meant to say 'Yes we did it because we are tasked with looking after the security of the Governor' sort of went wrong!

The Code of Alabama Section 36-33-2 charges the Department of Public Safety, now ALEA, with the duty of protecting the person of the governor and outlines requirements. Furthermore, 36-33-2 (d) states: the director may use any personnel or equipment of the department for the protection or security, or both, of any protectee designated in this chapter, at any personal, political, official, campaign-related, or recreational event.

"The Dignitary Protection Unit of ALEA does what is necessary to protect and safeguard its protectees and provide assistance to ensure protectees are fully prepared to perform their duties as constitutional officers. Often, items are relayed to protectees – whether it be files, a briefcase, medicine, etc.," Secretary of Law Enforcement Stan Stabler said. "In December 2014, I received notification from Governor Bentley that he travelled to his home in Fort Morgan and inadvertently left his wallet in Tuscaloosa. I contacted my chain of command and ultimately received approval from former Secretary Spencer Collier, to utilize ALEA's aviation unit to pick-up and deliver the wallet to the Governor. Governor Bentley did not request a specific method be used to relay his wallet from Tuscaloosa to Fort Morgan – the decision to utilize department equipment to facilitate the request was made through ALEA's chain of command, using standard agency protocol."

Well, that is clear then! Wake up at the back there....



Now that's more like it!

From time to time PAN has featured various 'mamby pamby' anti-drone systems... you know the sort... aim a beam at the 'thing' and it coughs and splutters and drops to the ground – or even simply lands itself.

Now the Israelis have developed a REAL MAN's anti-drone system with the American's!

In already knocking down over 700 rockets and missiles the Israeli-America-developed Iron Dome ant-missile system has gained fame for its unprecedented ability to intercept short-range rockets of the type fired by Palestinian terrorists in Gaza, which other systems were incapable of protecting against.

Now, the US Army has successfully demonstrated how the system can also be used to down unmanned drones – *well blow them to smithereens anyway* - adding further value to the revolutionary system, which was largely funded by United States military aid.

No one is talking about cost per mission—thankfully.



LATER THIS YEAR

13 June 2016 PAvCon Classes and 14-15 June 2016 PAvCon Police Aviation Conference 2016. Basic details of the event, how to travel there and book your hotels are now on-line at www.pavcon.org

So far 35 exhibitors have confirmed that they want space and a number of other companies have shown interest in joining the regulars. With 42 exhibitors last year it looks quite likely that significantly in excess of that number will be showing their wares at Oberschleissheim near Munich. Details are on-line at www.pavcon.org

The 2016 PAvCon Police Aviation Conference is to be held on 14-15 June 2016 at Oberschleissheim near Munich, Germany.

This year there will be a EO/IR Tactical Training Day on Monday 13 June sponsored by the EO/IR industry. The training will be led by Officer Jack Schonely a highly regarded EO/IR trainer and ALEA member from California. This event is an extract from a multi-day training event operated by the ALEA in the USA.

This 8 hour Suspect Tactics and Perimeter Containment class is designed for both air crews and patrol officers. 90% of the usual USA based classes are to patrol officers, K-9 handlers, SWAT team operators, and field supervisors so this is not just an aviators class. He covers topics from several perspectives and adjusts every single class according to the audience. When a high percentage of ground personnel are attending the focus is shifted to include both perspectives. It is vital that air crews and ground officers understand how each other works and what is required for the common goal. Jack has a background in patrol, K-9, and air crew so I am able to share information to all involved.

Fees for this training day have been held at a local rate of 35 Euro per person where they are a member of a Police Aviation Unit. Group rates are available on request to the organisers.

Industry can book to attend at a higher rate of £75 [UKP] through the normal booking process subject to space being available on the day.

All places can be pre-booked through the PAvCon office and can be Invoiced or directly paid through such as Paypal.

11-13 May 2016 Smart Policing Summit 2016 Washington, D.C. The Only Event Focusing on Policy, Procedure and Application Surrounding the Latest Technologies in Law Enforcement The 2nd Annual Smart Policing Summit will bring together Chiefs of Police, Head Crime Analysts, and Senior Ranking law Enforcement Personnel from across the U.S. to identify tactics, practices and technology solutions that will bring resolutions to serious law enforcement issues in their jurisdictions while safeguarding not only officers lives', but the lives and property of our citizens. Already in attendance are Senior Law Enforcement professionals from Police Departments in Oakland Police Department, San Diego, CA, Pullman, WA, Virginia Beach, VA and more! Download the agenda at to find out more. Organised by IDGA/IQPC

19-20 May 2016 Helicopter Technology Eastern Europe Conference, A mainly military event. Novotel Budapest Centrum, Budapest, Hungary www.helitechconf.com

24-26 May 2016 The European Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition (EBACE2016) will return to Geneva's magnificent Palexpo from 24 to 26 May 2016 and is expected to attract 13,000 aviation professionals from around the world. Attendees will enjoy numerous opportunities to network with peers, meet with 500 vendors and suppliers and view 60 aircraft on static display at the adjacent Geneva International Airport.



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- The Modern MERT (military case study) – Lt Col Claire Park
- Outcomes After HEMS – Why we do, what we do: Professor Richard Lyon
- Introducing & Governing New Therapies: Dr Emily McWhirter
- CONFERENCE DEBATE** - Where Does Pre-Hospital Care End?

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£20 per person – book in advance