

Police Aviation News

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Issue 262

February 2018

**DESPERATELY
SEEKING -
CREDIT?**



LATVIA UPGRADES

SINGAPORE - EVE OF SHOW

IRELAND AIR AMBULANCE

SWARMS IN CHINA

EDITORIAL

In the past month the editor has noted several additional instances of police ignoring and denigrating lessons from the past.

Winston S Churchill pointedly stated that only fools ignore the lessons of history and therefore succeed in repeating the errors of the past.



In the last issue a correspondent made that very point in his letter about the forthcoming NPAS fixed wing operation. Twenty years ago members of the Polizia de Stato spoke to me freely of their experience with their fixed wing fleet all firmly parked up in their hangars. Rather than fly them they preferred their ancient Agusta A109A fleet as mounts. There may well be a direct link between the two that is there for the asking. For too long have operators ignored the wise counsel of those that went before. All too often operators have claimed to know it all only to have it proven that they were wrong within a short space of time. On that basis this publication will continue to highlight apparent failures in the leadership. Churchill also said "If you have an important point to make, don't try to be subtle or clever. Use a pile driver. Hit the point once. Then come back and hit it again. Then hit it a third time - a tremendous whack."

Although some will be muted by their current employers, I suspect that there is a queue of people still waiting in the wings with their verbal pile drivers.

Bryn Elliott

LAW ENFORCEMENT

AUSTRALIA

WESTERN AUSTRALIA POLICE: WA Police are currently discussing the possibility of purchasing a new police helicopter. This comes after the State Coroner, Ros Fogliani, recommended the police get a new helicopter after overseeing the cases of six people who died during five police pursuit crashes in the period 2012-14. The Police currently have two ageing helicopters, a Kawasaki-Bolkow KB117 and a Eurocopter AS365N3 Dauphin.

State Coroner Ros Fogliani recommended in her findings the Police Airwing be "allocated greater resources for the acquisition and operation" of an additional helicopter. WA Police Union made similar statements to the Coroner as part of their submissions to the case. In June last year the police were poised to ask the McGowan Government for \$30M to buy two new helicopters but no purchase order has yet been made.

Ed: Whether two, new or old, helicopters are sufficient to cover the needs of the vast WA is a moot point. WA covers the entire western third of Australia - 2.646 million km² - although most of it is mostly arid Outback. The population of around 2.6 million is concentrated in its fertile southwest corner, where the capital Perth is and that is where helicopters will primarily serve.

BELGIUM

FEDERAL POLICE: In mid-January the Belgian Federal Police took delivery of a fifth MD Explorer after buying a pre-owned aircraft from a local operator. It will be G-17 in the fleet.

The former Gendarmerie commenced operations with MD Helicopters in 1997 when they put three MD900 Explorers to work, supplementing these two years later with a pair of two single engine MD520s. They added a fourth MD Explorer in 2010 after buying a low-hour example upgraded MD902 from Denmark. The original fleet was upgraded to 902 standard over the next few years.

The latest acquisition arrived from Belgian based operator NHV, who previously operated it in France on an air ambulance contract. It is a 2009 build 902 with serial 900-00137, and will need to be role equipped to its new law enforcement tasking. NHV still have three other MD Explorers in their fleet.

The Belgian Police also operate two Cessna 182 fixed wing. [HeliHub.com]

FRONT COVER: Last month an Austrian manufacturer claimed a very dubious 'first' for their unmanned craft. The company press release claimed that the Camcopter® S-100 'proved' its suitability for search and rescue missions by undertaking a search for a killer, assisting local law enforcers. The subject of the search was not found and remains at large. It is difficult to see what has been proved but the company, seeking credit, claims that the S-100 offers a cost-effective solution for such tasks. [Schiebel]

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CANADA

WINNIPEG: Early in January it was learned that the EC120 operated by the Winnipeg Police Service was helping out in the making of a 'Hollywood movie shoot.'

The helicopter, "Air One," was deployed for 72 minutes on December 20 to participate in the film making for an outside agency. The take-off, travel, shooting and the return flight to the police helicopter pad was to enable it to be filmed in flight.

At a police news conference Inspector John Lutz stated the facts and a media furore broke on tv and in the newspapers.

The film producers covered the cost of the helicopter's operation, and that the aircraft could easily and quickly have been rerouted if it was needed for police operations. The helicopter was not seen to be taking the place of a private helicopter but not all accepted or appreciated that claim.

ESTONIA

POLICE: The Estonian Police and Border Guard Board have put their Enstrom 480B ES-PEG up for auction. A first attempt to stir up interest failed to raise any bids. They hope to sell the helicopter and with the money made, purchase a new fixed wing observation plane. The Enstrom was bought in 2006 but is said to have had reliability issues. [Helihub]

LATVIA

BORDER GUARD: Leonardo announced that the State Border Guard of Latvia has signed a contract for two AW119Kx single engine helicopters plus option for an additional unit, customised configuration and aircrew/maintenance technician training services. The aircraft will be delivered from the Company's facility in Philadelphia in 2019 and will perform a wide range of missions including search and rescue (SAR), transport, firefighting and disaster relief; replacing two ageing AB206B JetRanger's acquired from Finland five years ago. They were manufactured in 1974 and 1980.

This order marks a further expansion of the State Border Guard's fleet of Leonardo helicopters, adding to two AW109 Power light twins which were delivered ten years ago to supplement Russian equipment.

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NETHERLANDS

POLITIE: In January it was announced that Leonardo had received the contract to purchase a third AW139 helicopter for service with the police air operation based in Amsterdam. The contract had been awarded in mid-December.

Two AW139s [PH-PXY c/n 31267 and PH-PXZ c/n 31250] were ordered and delivered in 2009 and are now due for a mid-life upgrade. It is possible that work on the earlier airframes will await delivery of the new airframe later this year.

Meanwhile the details of the mid-life upgrade of the six 2009 Eurocopter EC135P2+ operated by the police fleet, is progressing towards the first airframe being worked on. [PAR]

POLAND

In addition to the tender for a new single engine helicopters type for the police mentioned late last year there are two small contracts out relating to existing police aircraft.

The first contact is for an assessment of the technical condition of the remaining operational Bell 206B3 helicopter [assumed to be SN-16XP c/n 4154] to provide the police with information on the economics of keeping it operating. In September a tender was issued for the purchase of an air surveillance system for the Bell-412 helicopter (SN-18XP) and the Bell-206 helicopter (SN-16XP).

In late December a tender award document was posted for the purchase and installation of the Air Observation System on the Bell 412 helicopter at a cost of 4,873,675 zloty [£1M]. It appears the tender has gone to a Czech company with work sub-contracted to a German company Helitec.

The Bell 412HP was taken over by the police from the military in December 2011. The twin-engined helicopter was previously used by the 36th Special Regiment of Transport Aviation and was not immediately police role equipped. Six years later it would appear that the police role fit is only now being undertaken in 2018. [TED]



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SINGAPORE



Outside the Marina Bay Hotel ©SingPol/AETOS

POLICE: There is no history of prior aircraft use in the country but on New Year’s Eve the Singapore Police were operating two contractor supplied drones as an addition to their other resources.

One upgraded drone, equipped with red and blue blinkers, a search light, and an audio broadcast system that enabled the police to communicate with crowds in the event of an emergency, supplemented a standard machine. Over the last few months the upgraded drone was under test with plans to deploy it at major events such as the National Day Parade, SAR operations, hostage situations and other public order incidents to complement the efforts of its officers on the ground. The 12kg unmanned aerial vehicle can be flown up to 60 metres high, but can stay airborne only up to 20 minutes due to its limited battery capability. The police hope to take the more capable machine into operation by the final quarter of 2018.

The supplier is AETOS Holdings Pte Ltd, a leading safety and security solution provider in the region. It was established in 2004 following the strategic merger of three very experienced and matured key Auxiliary Police Forces – PSA Corporation (PSA) (1947), Singapore Technologies Kinetics (ST Kinetics) (1967) and Changi International Airport Services (CIAS) (1981). Together, these three entities brought to AETOS more than 50 years of experience in providing security solutions to Singapore’s key maritime, aviation and infrastructure installations.

In recent years, AETOS has become a key security service provider for signature events such as the Marina Bay Singapore Countdown, Singapore F1 night race, Singapore Air Show and the 2015 South East Asian Games.



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UNITED KINGDOM

A police helicopter and drone have been airborne together for the first time, as part of the ongoing search for missing man Daniel Dawes. A large scale search operation was launched on Dartmoor to look for Daniel, who lives in Ivybridge, and was last seen on December 29.

The Police Drone Alliance said: "Great communication between us & @npasexeter (the police helicopter) today showing we can share the air to have a drone and a helicopter deployed at the same incident."

Ed: The Twitter accounts of the individual air units tell a story that to date the NPAS management have not centralised. Most of the items tweeted are relatively mundane but include the occasional spectacular image and media interesting storyline.

The second return of NPAS London to the Twitter fold took place in January after another six-month gap in publication. The first NPAS instance related to taking of a aerial image of a well known comedian on his doorstep. The cause of the latest 'issue' which saw the account moribund from June until January remains unknown.

VENEZUELA

POLICE: Police officer Oscar Perez on the run since last summer has been killed in an operation by the National Government. He made headlines last year after stealing a helicopter and attacking government buildings with gunfire and grenades.

On June 28, 2017, a group of security force officers headed by Perez hijacked the helicopter and attacked the Venezuelan Supreme Court in Caracas, opening fire and dropping several hand grenades, before moving against the nearby Justice Ministry. After declaring the start of their fight against the government, the attackers disappeared. All went quiet.

Six months on and the media reported that Venezuelan security forces were engaging with terror groups that were believed to include the rogue police pilot and his supporters at the poor hillside neighbourhood of El Junquito on the edge of the capital. During the firefight with former colleagues Perez, forever the actor and model that were his other callings, managed to post graphic videos of the attack on social media. The text, background noise and images portrayed apparent wounds and gunfire.

Further reports became very confused and reports of the number of dead and who they were varied by the hour. Finally the Interior Ministry released a statement claiming that members of a "terrorist cell" were killed and five others captured. Perez was killed and unexpectedly the family were able to collect and bury his body a few days later. [media]

If publicity was the aim he certainly achieved that in large doses. If it was the overthrow of the regime he failed completely and lost his life in the process. Images from the short public life of Oscar Perez



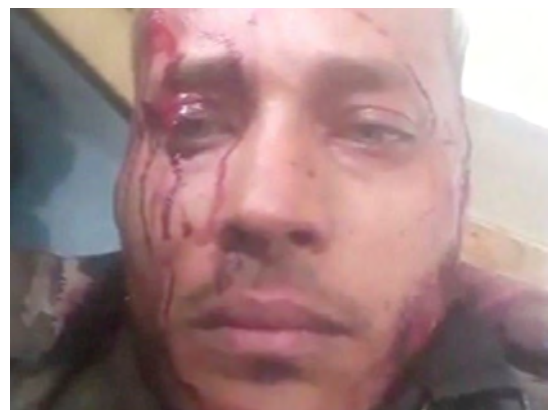
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@PoliceDrones

The first time we have been airborne together at the same incident - all done safely and effectively through good communication. 🇬🇧

NPAS Exeter @NpasExeter
Engaged on missing person search near Harford with @DC_Police @DSRTPlymouth @Devondogz @PoliceDrones & members of the public. For first time operationally the drone and helicopter were airborne & working together. Safety through good communication #teamwork



Web news Images





©James Lloyds

The fleet of MD902 helicopters for the police in Hungary continued in test at the Specialist Air Services facility in Staverton, Gloucestershire into the New Year. [James Lloyds]

A close-up view of a pilot in a cockpit. The pilot is wearing a dark flight helmet with a police emblem and white gloves. They are operating a complex avionics system with multiple touchscreens displaying maps and data. The cockpit is filled with various instruments and controls. The Babcock logo and tagline are overlaid on the image.

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AIR AMBULANCE

CANADA

ORNGE: An Ontario air ambulance company has had all charges against it dismissed in the wake of a fatal night-time helicopter crash and a controversy over night-vision goggles for its pilots. The operator flies modern AW139 helicopters fully equipped with modern night flying aids but it retains some old Sikorsky S-76 that have not been upgraded.

Moosonee, Ontario has been the home of helicopter emergency medical services for the surrounding region since at least the 1980s. Most of the flying involves short flights between the base and a hospital in Moose Factory on a nearby island. New hires were often placed there, though some experienced pilots also worked there as there were challenges with night flying because there were no light sources on the ground to provide reference for pilots. As a result, night flying was generally done completely by instruments, which required different rules than visual flying in daylight hours.

Some claimed that the air ambulance service provider should have looked into night-vision technology for new helicopters, but crash involved the older type that was only equipped with a searchlight as a night flying aid.

Under Canadian Employment Law employers have a legal obligation to take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of their employees and the case was built around that premise. The outcome – the dismissal of the case – decided that this doesn't necessarily mean doing everything that is technically possible, as some measures may not be feasible even though they're available. Ornge decided night-vision systems were too costly and difficult to install on its existing helicopter fleet and the court finally accepted that.

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GERMANY

ADAC HEMS ACADEMY: With the H145 Level D FFS at the ADAC HEMS Academy, a mission experienced flight training source is getting available for international H145 operators.

The new H145 Level D simulator, developed and produced in close cooperation by Reiser Simulation & Training GmbH in Germany completes the portfolio of EC135 and EC45 FFS at the Academy and sets a new standard in the world of helicopter simulation.

The simulator comprises a 6 DOF-electric motion and vibration system, a directly projected moving imagery using 15 two channel HD LED video projectors on a 240 by 80 degrees screen and an intuitive on-board instructor operating station (IOS) guarantee the highest level of realistic flight experience.

“Besides Level D standards, the H145 FFS offers pilots the opportunity to gain experience in night vision goggles (NVG) flight, making use of the NVGs the operators use during their missions” says Thomas Hütsch, CEO of the ADAC HEMS Academy.

The mission experience of ADAC Air Rescue, the sister organization of the HEMS Academy, operating 14 H45 helicopters, has translated into the safety-oriented training and in the development of the H145 FFS at the ADAC HEMS Academy. ADAC Air Rescue is one of the major helicopter emergency medical services (HEMS) operators in Europe with established considerable expertise and a respected record for safe flying of successful HEMS mission during more than 45 years of operation.

Operators from various mission profiles worldwide, like HEMS, law enforcement, VIP services, or offshore operators, value the professional service and personal touch of the HEMS Academy, which is easy to reach via 3 international airports in the close proximity.

“We are dedicated to ensure the best training possible for ADAC crews” states Thomas Hütsch, “partners worldwide can benefit from the same top level training facilities used by Germany’s largest air ambulance service”. [ADAC]

Ed: ADAC HEMS Academy will be at next month’s HAI Heli-Expo in Las Vegas promoting their wide range of training options to the international market.

IRELAND

AIR CORPS: A few years ago it was difficult to foresee where the European market for the Spectre variant of the Pilatus PC-12 might be. It had but a single engine and everyone knew that twins were required. As a result the sales were elsewhere and the advertising – mainly in the USA – reflected that. There has been a change in direction with singles now accepted and certified in airline service by EASA.

Two years ago there were moves to put capital in place for a fixed wing purchase but it was unclear whether the aircraft being replaced was the five 44 year old single engine Cessna 172’s or the twin-engine 1997 Garda Defender 254. At the time it was mused that a single type would eventually replace both and that both leading contenders were single engine.

The Cessna 208 Grand Caravan and the Pilatus PC-12 Spectre were both a major step up from the diminutive Cessna’s, but might yet be controversial as a replacement for a police twin. The cost to acquire, operate, and maintain a single PC-12NG Spectre is half that of its twin-engine competition, and at an hourly operating cost of \$727.

The final decision was announced in December. Three PC-12NG Spectre, the special mission version of the aircraft, are to be operated by the Irish Air Corps in the Intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, transport and medical evacuation (medevac). The contract announcement did not disclose what additional equipment might be procured to support these missions.

The contract, valued at €32M (US\$38M), will see all three aircraft delivered to the Irish Republic in 2019 and 2020. The cost to acquire, operate, and maintain a single PC-12NG Spectre is half that of its twin-engine competition, and at an hourly operating cost of \$727.

At the moment there is no suggestion that the Defender is to be replaced with the PC-12. The 20-year old airframe was recently upgraded with undisclosed equipment, a factor that will no doubt put off the decision for a while. The new fixed wings will allow the IAC to operate a lower cost type to undertake civil medical work to other countries [effectively the UK] and take the pressure off such as the IAC AW139 and Coast Guard S-92 helicopters.

MALAYSIA

LANGKAWI: The Langkawi Hospital launched their new air ambulance service last month. Together with Aerial Power Lines (APL) they will provide EMS service to the four million tourists that visit the island annually, as well as the 120,000 Langkawi residents. The contract is for two years, using their Airbus H135 helicopter 9M-DRA.

An air ambulance service at Langkawi Hospital will boost the status of Langkawi as an international tourist island, will facilitate and speed up numerous cases that need to move away from Langkawi in need of expert emergency treatment in such skills as neurosurgery, cardiology and cardiothoracic and neonatology services.



9M-DRA at the hospital

Langkawi, officially known as Langkawi the Jewel of Kedah, is a district and an archipelago of 104 islands in the Andaman Sea, some 30 km off the mainland coast of northwestern Malaysia. The islands are a part of the state of Kedah, adjacent to the Thai border. [wiki]

NORWAY

The Babcock operated air ambulance service has commenced. Babcock Scandinavian Air Ambulance (BSAA) has launched the very first state-of-the-art AW169 helicopter in active Emergency Medical Service (EMS) duty in the Nordics. The helicopter is operated on behalf of Region Jämtland Härjedalen and it replaces the AS365N2 Dauphin.


On Saturday, January 13, the new AW169 helicopter took off on its first mission assignment ever – a long-distance patient transport southwards. Later that afternoon, the crew returned to Östersund after more than four hours in the air.

The base in Östersund is the first of four Swedish EMS helicopter bases that will replace its existing helicopters with the Leonardo AW169s in 2018. Next in line are, Gällivare, Lycksele and the newly awarded base in Gothenburg. Simultaneously, work is also underway to replace the current helicopters at the company's base in Stockholm with two new Airbus H145 this spring.

Meanwhile the operation is still seeking additional staff. Applicants who do not have Norwegian as their first language must document Norwegian language proficiency by passing "Bergenstesten" a written test

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designed for foreigners who intend to apply for admission at a Norwegian university or college, as well as for Norwegian citizens who have graduated from secondary schools abroad and for job-applicants in Norway (e.g. medical practitioners, native language teachers, and those who are required to document their Norwegian language skills). The oral test, has been designed mainly for healthcare workers and other foreigners who are required to document their Norwegian speaking skills at advanced level, when applying for studies or a job in Norway.

UNITED KINGDOM

YORKSHIRE: Yorkshire Air Ambulance are currently recruiting for Chief Pilot, Line Pilot and Relief Pilot. The Job Descriptions, Application Form and instructions are on-line at [Yorkshire AA](#).

Yorkshire Air Ambulance made a major national category win at the prestigious Health Business Awards, scooping up the 2017 Air Ambulance Service Award at an event at the Grange Hotel, London.

The Health Business Awards recognise and celebrate the significant contributions made each year by organisations and individuals that work inside and alongside the NHS. They were presented by broadcaster, journalist and physician Dr Phil Hammond.

Yorkshire Air Ambulance serves five million people across Yorkshire and carries out over 1,250 missions every year and raises £12,000 every day to maintain the service on its two state-of-the-art Airbus H145 helicopters.

UNITED STATES

NEW YORK: The Watertown International Airport, in the north of New York State, is getting \$1.5M from the state to design and build a new hanger for air ambulance services. The new hanger will give the air ambulance service, Air Methods, its own facility to replace the shared facility that the LifeNet helicopter is housed in.

The new hanger facility will put the crew in the same building, a stand-alone dedicated facility just for their operations and eliminate the customary delayed response to get to their hanger facility and onto an accident scene. The new hanger should be completed by the spring of 2019.

PENNSYLVANIA: Penn State Health Life Lion Critical Care Transport has welcomed a new helicopter to its life-saving fleet. The newest aircraft is the largest aeromedical helicopter in Pennsylvania.

The Airbus model H155 N916LL is one of three owned by Penn State Health. The twin-engine helicopter has an especially large interior cabin, allowing for more crew members and medical specialists to accompany patients and administer care.



Image: Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center

NORTH DAKOTA: In a widely welcomed item of local legislation, Senate Bill 2231 regulates how insurance companies will pay for air ambulance services in the State of North Dakota.

Since January unscheduled rides in air ambulances will not be the horror stories that many patients and families have faced. Sometimes fully insured patients found that their insurance company refused to pay for the ambulance used because it was not one they approved of.

Now as long as the insurance plan has been issued in North Dakota there will be strict controls on the amount patients will be charged. The patient's health insurance company is required to pay the ambulance company the average of the insurance company's in-network rates for air ambulances in the state.

The move follows 34 complaints filed between 2013 and 2017, totalling nearly \$2M in uncovered charges. On average each air ambulance ride had cost the consumer an average of \$54,705 in circumstances where those involved were in difficult or life-threatening situations; emergencies where they had little or no control over which ambulance provider provided the service – and the last thing they might do is assure that the provider was compatible with their health plans.

Under this law, as long as a consumer has health insurance issued in the state of North Dakota, they will be covered and should not receive a balance bill. For those with Medicare, it's federal law that air ambulance companies must accept the Medicare payment as full and final.

SOUTH DAKOTA: Early in January Jim Peitz convinced the Pierre City Commission to approve a new airport lease for a big new hangar he and his wife, Cathy, plan to build this year at the airport.

It will house a new base for air ambulance service for Avera St. Mary's Hospital in Pierre, South Dakota in north central USA. The new build is fronted by JCP Leasing and associated with Mustang Aviation set up nearly 30 years ago at the Pierre Regional Airport by Peitz and currently run by his son as an FBO.

The new facility will house up to three Beechcraft King Air 300 turboprop airplanes set up to fly patients to larger hospitals.

Avera St. Mary's, part of the Avera Health System based in Sioux Falls that has a Catholic heritage, now has air ambulance service that flies out of Sioux Falls to pick up patients in Pierre to fly them to Sioux Falls or elsewhere for specialized care.

Avera Health currently operates its Careflight air ambulance operation with two Beechcraft King Air 200 and a fleet of Bell 407 and Airbus H145 helicopters from base locations in Aberdeen and Sioux Falls to Avera facilities in Pierre, Mitchell, Yankton and Marshall, Minnesota, as well as many other destinations including Omaha and Bismarck, Rapid City, Rochester, Minnesota and Minneapolis.

Peitz said he plans to build a facility at the airport for planes as well as pilots and flight nurses and their equipment to be on duty when an emergency case calls. They will have flight crews on duty 24 hours a day, at the airport, ready to go.

Peitz plans to build a 13,000-square-foot building, including about 10,000 square feet for hangar space and 3,000 square feet set aside as offices and day rooms, for flight crews and flight nurses on duty. It will take up nearly all of an empty parcel of land about 140 feet by 120 feet designated for development of hangars in 2009 when the airport terminal was built. The new air ambulance service could be in operation in late 2018.

The city commission approved, 5-0, a 25-year lease agreement between the city and JCP Leasing will pay about \$2,156 per year to lease the space at the airport. [Pierre Capital Journal]

Ed: As often happens with these stories some parties were temporarily discomforted by the story they had not intended to release just yet. Avera subsequently stated "We weren't planning on announcing this yet,"

TEXAS: Airbus has challenged Travis County's decision to go with three of AgustaWestland's AW169 helicopters to replace their EMS fleet. Airbus argues that the winning bid for the \$34M contract was a poor decision as it was more expensive than their offer. They also argue that the filtration systems for the engines and the cabin setup for EMS use are not yet certified with the FAA. Travis County is standing by its decision. [My States Man].

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FIRE

CHILE

CURANILAHUE: Three firefighting helicopters were damaged in what appears to have been an arson attack in the early hours of January 17. The three helicopters operating for Forestal Arauco were parked in a line on La Colcha aerodrome. The attacker seems to have been a local terror organisation as leaflets of the ORT (Órganos de Resistencia Territorial) were reportedly left behind.

The three AgustaWestland AW119 Koala CC-ACT, EC-KZX suffered severe cockpit and cabin fires and will be written off. The third, EC-LQB, was substantially damaged in the forward cockpit and may be less damaged. [ASN]



SEARCH & RESCUE

INTERNATIONAL : The 2018 APSA Rescue Summit will be held in conjunction with the HAI Heli-Expo 2018 on Monday, February 26, at the Las Vegas Convention Center - Las Vegas

APSA has confirmed that effective January 1, 2018, the Helicopter Rescue & Response Association (HRRRA) has been merged into APSA. This merger is a direct result of the rebranding of the Airborne Law Enforcement Association (ALEA) as the Airborne Public Safety Association (APSA). HRRRA's premier event has been their annual Helicopter Rescue Summit, which will now be produced and hosted by APSA. As in the past, this event will continue to be conducted in conjunction with HELI-EXPO.

The Rescue Summit will include various presentations pertaining to helicopter rescue operations including topics such as hoisting, safety and critical incident & accident reviews. Lunch will be provided and numerous networking opportunities are scheduled throughout the day.



This year's Rescue Summit will take place between 0830 and 1700 on Monday, February 26, in Las Vegas, NV. To find out more about Rescue Summit 2018 and view the agenda, [click here](#). The Rescue Summit is complimentary for APSA Individual members (non-member registration is available for \$50/person). Those who are not members of APSA, but are interested in joining can find information on the website www.alea.org

BRAZIL

AIR FORCE: Brazil has exercised an option for an additional Airbus Defence and Space (DS) C295 search and rescue (SAR)-configured aircraft, to add to two that were ordered in 2014. The additional SAR-configured aircraft, which was announced on 22 January, will bring the total number of SAR and transport-configured C295s fielded by the Brazilian Air Force (Força Aérea Brasileira: FAB) to 15 by the time the deliveries are complete in 2020. The FAB currently operates 10 transport-variant C295s (designated C-105 Amazonas in national service) that it began receiving in 2006, and three SAR-variant C295s (SC-105 Amazonas) that arrived from 2009 (including the first of the additional batch of three that was received in August 2017). The second of the additional batch will be delivered in 2019, with the third now announced arriving in 2020 to complete the process.

CANADA

COAST GUARD: The rollout of the new fleet began on the West Coast, but the east didn't have to wait too long to get the new aircraft, with the first 429 arriving in Shearwater in February 2015, and the 412 in June 2017.

The 429s are much quicker, they cover a lot more ground in the same period of time than the old 105s did. Even the new 412s have an increased speed over the 212s. The service covers a large geographic region — for instance, from St. John's to southern Labrador was always a two-day trip. Now we can do that and return in a day because of the increased speed of the machine.

In Canada, the 429 has a maximum gross weight of 7,500 pounds (3,400 kilograms), offering a payload of roughly 2,300 lb. (1,040 kg), said Mosher. Shortly before *Vertical's* visit to Shearwater, the Coast Guard had secured an extension on the 429 for a maximum gross takeoff weight (external) of 8,000 lb. (3,630 kg). than capable of — they have lots of power," Despite this, the 412 is still considered the workhorse of the new fleet.



IRELAND

COAST GUARD: Throughout the last year [2017] the Coast Guard Helicopters, provided by CHC Ireland, conducted 750 missions, assisted 316 and were able to save 175 people. [Flying in]

NETHERLANDS

COAST GUARD: RUAG Aviation has renewed an aircraft sustainment contract with the Netherlands Coastguard. The agreement comprises full maintenance services for two Dornier 228-212 special mission aircraft. Signed at the Netherlands Coastguard station, Schiphol-Oost, in December 2017, the contract takes effect in May 2018.

The sustainment contract covering these two Dornier's has been in place since 2007 and now extends over three additional years. RUAG Aviation is supported by partner Jet Support B.V., at Schiphol-Oost. Their proximity to the Netherlands Coastguard station ensures the group's aircraft availability requirements are promptly met. Aircraft maintenance as well as Continuing Airworthiness Management (CAM) are included in the subcontract also signed by RUAG and Jet Support in December. Together both companies are responsible for the overall maintenance of the two aircraft and have jointly provided these required services since 2007.

Each of the special mission aircraft are equipped with state-of-the-art communications technology, radar for the detection of environmental pollution and an infrared camera system enabling mission-readiness under all conditions. They cover SAR, disaster and incident control, environmental supervision and border surveillance. Throughout the year, one aircraft and its crew are on standby for deployment above the North Sea, or elsewhere in Europe, twenty-four hours a day.

Ed: The two Dornier's are 2007 replacements for a single machine previously operated by the coast guard. These two, although on the civil register, are operated by the air force.

NIGERIA

NAVY: There are indications that the Nigerian Navy may have suspended the repair of a SAR helicopter belonging to the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) on funding issues. The aircraft was one of four helicopters ordered in 2006 for military and civil applications.

It is said that the \$9M civil AW139 is currently out of service at the Nigerian Navy Air Station, Ojo. It has not been worked on for three years.

Some ship owners claim that the absence of the helicopter has played no small part in a rise in piracy and kidnappings on Nigerian waters. The helicopter was acquired in 2008 to boost Nigeria's capacity to secure her maritime domain. After it developed an undisclosed major fault four years ago, the management of NIMASA was unable to deploy any helicopter for aerial surveillance. As a result shipping of all types in the region has been sup-



pressed by the fear of crime and civil SAR has not been available. [This Day]

The Nigerian Air Force (NAF) has commissioned into service the second and final Bell 412 helicopter previously impounded by customs, and reactivated a machine tools workshop. The helicopter was commissioned in a ceremony on 19 January. As with the first helicopter, which was inducted into service in November 2017, the aircraft's major systems and its surveillance cameras had to be sent to the United States and Canada for overhaul and repair to be restored to airworthiness, having been in containers for about two years as at the time of the handover.

The two helicopters were handed over to the NAF in January 2017 after they were seized in late 2016 when the importer could not produce end user certificates.

UNITED STATES

2017 was a year of natural disasters, and each time, helicopter crews responded. Fire, flood, hurricane, earthquake — unfortunately our industry had many opportunities to demonstrate the unique abilities of helicopters to conduct rescue, relief, and recovery missions.

Helicopter Association International has called for the men, women, companies, agencies, units, and squadrons who answered the calls for assistance throughout 2017 to be honoured and intends to present certificates to the people and organisations.

HAI has invited those that might be honoured to self-nominate their efforts, provide photo or videos of personal or corporate participation in these efforts, so that they may display them and the event and on social media channels.

Ed: So I can foresee that the material will arrive from the self motivated and not from the quieter self-effacing heroes.

CALIFORNIA: As previously reported there is friction between the emergency services in a Southern California county where the sheriff's department and fire authority are still battling over which agency should conduct air rescues.

Orange County supervisors have now voted to refer the problem to the state after Fire Authority Chief Patrick McIntosh told the board his pilots would continue responding to rescue calls in remote regions. McIntosh said he would ignore Sheriff Sandra Hutchens' recent decision to unilaterally take over helicopter operations in those areas.



Pilots from the sheriff's department and the fire authority have regularly clashed — with helicopter teams from both agencies racing to rescue scenes, at times arguing over radio and face-to-face after flying in the same airspace. The California Office of Emergency Services will take up the dispute. [OCR]

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INDUSTRY

The children are playing again and the lawyers are, as usual, the sole winners. One company wins an order so their rival takes the decision of the customer to court and then presumably expects the now agitated customer to remain cool, calm and willing to change their mind. The latest round is Airbus Helicopters taking a decision by the Polish Army to court when they lost a contract. [see also their similar stance on the recent AW169 order in Texas]

A slightly older version of this tit-for-tat messing about was when Leonardo challenged the wish by the US Army to order more UH-72A/EC-145 helicopters to add to their existing Airbus Helicopters fleet. Now the U.S. Army wish to add new EC-145s has led to them announcing an open tender. One wonders how many vendors out there could actually provide such new production line machines in the face of an antagonistic manufacturer?

The **US Army** has an interest in procuring up to 35 “new FAA certified EC-145 aircraft to supplement the Army’s existing fleet of aircraft.” Clearly Airbus is the source but Leonardo want to make the sale. If the customer states that the Lakota helicopter features the same level of technology as the operational fleet aircraft, therefore eliminates costly transitional training steps, offers lowest cost to buy, own and operate of any helicopter in the [U.S. Defense Department] inventory, there may be a clue there to the likely progress of the plan.



Originally, the Army had planned to use a portion of the some 400 Lakota’s it already had under contract and purchase additional units, to fulfil training needs. That process was slowed due to the lawsuit. In August 2016, a U.S. court where Leonardo challenged the purchase of 16 more Airbus UH-72As.

In addition to the difficulties being caused there is the matter of the US Airbus workforce whose jobs are under threat. Yes Leonardo also has a US factory that also has an interest in continued production – but they do not build the Lakota and that is what the customer wants. [R&W/PAR]

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Ed: Into this mix of the ridiculous can be thrown the tears. According to one tear jerker argument “the jobs of 40% of ex-warfighters are at risk.” In a country with conscription I am surprised the percentage is not higher. And no doubt the level of ex-military is about the same in each factory affected so please - no more crocodile tears.

In the United Kingdom it is estimated that the network of surveillance cameras capable of undertaking **Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR)** is misreading as many as 1.2 million plates each day. Just 3% each day.

The number of failed reads is tiny compared to the number images taken each day – 40 million – but is causing concern because many of those involved in error reads are being prosecuted as if the system was infallible.

The problem is less an issue where the registered marks involved are clearly wrong – a lorry or a car for instance – but the design differences between modern cars are often not that obvious from a photograph and I have seen quite a few notices of intended prosecution accompanied by clearly wrong images. It is an issue that is large and growing. In the aviation world there is at least the likelihood of error reading, disinformation and a potential to make bad calls.

There is now a demand for tighter rules to be applied to the standard of cameras to both reduce the errors and to protect them from cyber-attack. The standard of number plates has also slipped with many instances of owners illegally choosing their own typeface that defeats the ANPR.



Bell 505 law enforcement experience ©CNC Technologies

Last month the staff of **CNC Technologies** attended flight demonstrations of the Bell 505 Jet Ranger X at LAPD’s Air Support Division Hooper Heliport on the roof of the Piper Technical Center.

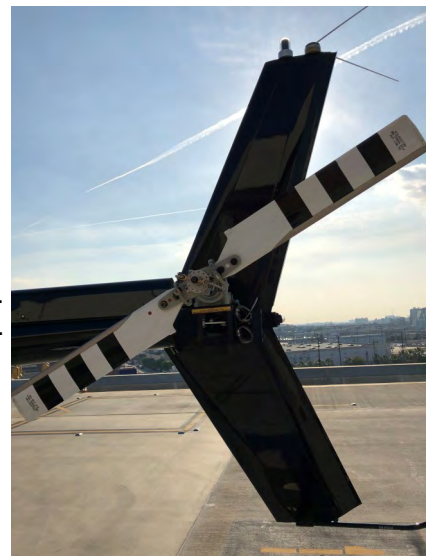
They joined numerous law enforcement and fire organisations in classroom and flight demonstrations related to the new to market type. Hooper was a scheduled event and the demo team received great feedback on the aircraft, mainly around power, ergonomics, and visibility. The Bell 505 continues to attract a lot of interest with Law Enforcement agencies.

Bell Regional Sales Manager Bobby Frey provided an overview of the aircraft, and Regional Sales Manager and demo pilot Greg Maitlen performed demo flights for most of the day.

One CNC attendee reported that he found the 505 to be very powerful. Maximum performance take-offs with 4 people on-board achieved a 1,000 feet per minute rate of climb. The noise and vibration levels were very low, and the

visibility for the flight crew and passengers was excellent.

CNC staff were also on-site to promote mission equipment suites and on-going support for potential 505 customers.



Bell 505 N505TL law enforcement experience ©Bell Helicopter



The Team

Airborne Technologies based in Weiner Neustadt, Austria are now a fully EASA approved Part 21, Section A, Subpart J, Design Organisation. The company has received their EASA DOA certification in December 2017.

This important and internationally recognised approval authorises Airborne Technologies to develop STC's for normal, utility, aerobatic and commuter fixed-wing aeroplanes (CS 23) as well as for small and large helicopters (CS27 and CS29). It covers a wide range of permissions, beginning with modifications of airframe structures, avionics and cabin configurations, up to the integration of mission equipment as well as flight testing.

According to Wolfgang Grumeth, CEO of Airborne Technologies: "What sets us apart from the competition is the fact that we are not only a Design Organisation but with the operation of our own flight testing department we are really broadly positioned. We are keen to serve our customers with the full spectrum of DOA capabilities and aviation know-how. According to the motto "Certified Creativity" our mission is to provide innovative and state-of-the-art solutions which fit within the EASA framework. Too small production area and missing certification where often the arguments of the competition against us. With the construction of our new facility with 43000 sqft operating area and our EASA DOA certification we have taken the wind out of the competitors' sails once and for all. Furthermore the Production Organisation Approval (POA) will follow within the first quarter of 2018.

Therefore, we can proudly and safely state that Airborne Technologies is built with quality and transparency in mind. We integrate the attitude of quality in our daily work and continuously challenge ourselves to improve the quality of our products and services while always complying with the specifications and regulations", emphasises Wolfgang Grumeth.

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**BOLD IDEAS,
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Sealite (t/a Avlite Systems) has announced they have acquired a majority interest in Washington based Laser Guidance Inc.

Laser Guidance is a leading designer and manufacturer of LED precision lighting systems for the aviation industry. The range includes Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI), Helipad Approach Path Indicator (HAPI), Medium Intensity Approach Lighting with Sequenced Alignment (MALSR), expeditionary airfield lighting systems and other products. Avlite Systems design and manufacture solar powered airfield lighting systems, helipad lighting systems, and obstruction lighting. The acquisition of Laser Guidance will give Avlite clients access to the widest range of portable airfield lighting products on the market for expeditionary or sustained uses.

Laser Guidance will continue to operate its facility in Redmond, WA, and Avlite estimates full integration of the Laser Guidance product offering into the Avlite range by March 2018.

We have the **HAI Heli-Expo** in Las Vegas coming up in less than a month and no doubt there will be several goodies being launched as attractions that may never see the light of day in exactly the form launched.



Last year it was a concept airframe this year this 'Future' exhibit? ©Bell Helicopter

I guess we can expect to see the new Bell Helicopter urban air taxi cabin design on the floor. It was launched at CES 2018 [the Consumer Electronics Show] in Las Vegas on 9 January but I do not suppose they were allowed to leave it in the Convention Center for a few weeks while HAI came around.

Designed around Bell's vision of the 'future of urban air mobility', the future air taxi concept can accommodate four passengers and offers a full smart user experience with control centre, wifi, artificial and wireless charging, and video conferencing capabilities.

It did not pass unnoticed that the design concept had a few parts missing. Nonetheless it seems most attendees at the CES Show were unquestioning.

Bell didn't bring the entire aircraft, just brought the cabin, to highlight the passenger experience. It plans to unveil the entire vehicle, complete with rotors and powertrain, at a later date. Maybe that is Las Vegas II and HAI?

Where it will fit in terms of a helicopter show remains to be seen.

Once upon a time the opening gambits to HAI's Heli-Expo were the 'Day 1' breakfasts. Somehow the long suffering journalists had to suffer three substantial breakfasts in a row between 0700 and 1000 to get their story. No longer, and it has little to do with the welfare of the journalist's stomachs. Cut backs are everywhere and the breakfast junkets were very expensive.

Now we get the story before the event and Airbus released theirs in late January. **Airbus Helicopters** delivered 409 rotorcraft and logged gross orders for 350 helicopters (net: 335) in 2017, with a strong commercial performance on the heavy and super-medium segments. The company booked 54 orders for helicopters of the Super Puma family and 19 orders for the super-medium H175, confirming those types as

best-sellers on their respective market segments. Bookings also included 168 orders for light-single engine helicopters and 105 orders for the H135/H145 light-twins. At the end of 2017, the overall backlog stood at 692 helicopters.

“We are now closing the first chapter of the company-wide transformation launched in 2014, which has allowed us to become stronger and leaner in a challenging market environment. Our 2017 results are a testimony to the great work done by our teams to transform our industrial operations, improve our products & services, while delivering an ambitious innovation roadmap to prepare the future of vertical flight”, said Guillaume Faury, Airbus Helicopters Chief Executive Officer. “As we launch a second wave of company transformation this year, our main focus will be to speed up these efforts through increased digitalisation of our products, services and operations – for the benefit of our customers and the safety of our fleet”.

Last year saw major progress being made on new products, including the H160 – first of the “H Generation” – with three prototypes now in flight-testing ahead of certification in 2019. A full-scale firing campaign of the HForce weapon system was also carried out successfully on the H145M, which will benefit from improved and modular military capabilities by the end of 2018. The year was also marked by the launch of ACH (Airbus Corporate Helicopters) through which the company is able to offer high quality design and specifications across its range of helicopters to private and business customers.

In 2017, Airbus Helicopters completed the implementation of its revamped industrial model with the inauguration of its blade production facility in Paris-Le Bourget, which will be fully part of the new site specialisation strategy integrating the Marignane, Donauwörth and Albacete plants. On the international stage, the company delivered the 400th UH-72 Lakota to the US Army and broke ground on its first helicopter final assembly line in China, with initial deliveries expected in 2019.

Ed: Airbus deliveries were slightly down on last year but up on 2015 and the company claims 50% of the market – ahead of Bell [18%], Leonardo [17%], Russian Helicopters [11%], Sikorsky [1%] and others [3%] but studiously ignores the market share of Robinson – a company who produced the R66 model that effectively dismissed the Airbus EC120 from the market-place. In 2016 the company produced 234 aircraft of which no less than 63 were R66s.

Late last month **Sikorsky**, a manufacturer that barely figured in the world market in market share percentage terms, has finally sold off its all-but-moribund S-300 line.

Sikorsky has sold its light product line — which includes the S-300 and S-333 to Schweizer RSG, a new company affiliated with Rotorcraft Services Group in Fort Worth, Texas. This will allow the company to concentrate upon its larger airframes.

Sikorsky are saying that the sale will not affect its commercial workforce or the facility in Coatesville, Pennsylvania, where the S-300 production line is currently based.

In terms of spares support the new ownership should bring hope to nearly 3,000 using the type around the world but where it places new production remains to be clarified. The length of the transition period is uncertain but may be explained in more detail at Las Vegas.

Sikorsky purchased Schweizer Aircraft Corporation in 2004, primarily to acquire the original Schweizer manufacturing plant in Elmira, New York, for other work.

Licence production in China has yet to start under a partnership with Aviation Industry Corporation of China (AVIC) and Schweizer RSG will work toward setting up an S-300 production line in Fort Worth.

Ed: Subject to further explanation in Las Vegas next month it appears that current production in Coatesville is negligible. When Sikorsky took over the company it was clear that they did not have the first idea what to do with the products. Even the 434 project for the Saudi Border Guard was abandoned. Hopefully the situation will slowly get better

The upcoming Swiss manufactured **Marengo SH-09** will appear in Las Vegas with the second prototype (P2) and a mock-up in EMS guise on the booth at Heli-Expo. MSH say that P2 has demonstrated excellent flying characteristics and performance that underpins the SH09 multi-role capability. Prototype 3 (P3), is currently undergoing preparations before continuation of the flight test programme. This helicopter and pre-series aircraft PS04 will jointly serve to obtain European (EASA) certification and soon after US (FAA) validation, allowing first deliveries in 2019.

The mock-up of the SH09 equipped with a state-of-the-art air medical interior developed in cooperation with



Metro Aviation based in Shreveport, Louisiana. This medical interior will highlight the flexibility, space and capacity of the SH09 which are typically seen on light twin-engine helicopters, thus providing a very cost effective solution.

Frasca International has launched a new, lower priced Helicopter Training Device (HTD). The HTD™ is designed for helicopter air ambulance providers, airborne law enforcement, introductory turbine transition training, and ab-initio flight schools. Frasca will display the HTD™ at their booth (N3909) at Heli-Expo. The Frasca HTD™ comes standard with one aircraft configuration kit (B206, B407, R44, AS350), Garmin G500H or analogue instrument panel, Garmin GTN 650, a collective grip based on aircraft configuration kit (governed or ungoverned piston, modulated, or FADEC), annunciator Panel and Circuit Breakers required in RFM procedures, Frasca's Helicopter Mission Training Database, Single Channel Visual System, Frasca's Simplicity™ Touch-Screen Instructor Station (IOS) and will be AATD qualified. Additional aircraft kits can be purchased to add training value, and optional features include: Garmin GTN750, Simulated HeliSAS, 3 channel visual display system, a trailer for mobility or self-contained facility and Custom Databases.

MS Heli Design, LLC has received of a FAA Supplementary Type Certificate (STC) for a new lightweight, quickly removable emergency medical services Advanced Life Support System (ALSS) interior for Leonardo AW119 and AW109 helicopters.

The ALSS interior has been developed with doctors', nurses', and paramedics' feedback and with the new technology by extensive use of composites and advanced materials and can be removed in less than ten minutes for cleaning and quick change purposes. The ability to remove and re-install the interior components so quickly, allows deep blood cleaning as often as needed and this is a great advantage for corrosion prevention and clean daily operations and maintenance personnel love this capability.

The ALSS interior is customisable and includes electrical outlets, a high-capacity oxygen system, medical air and suction provisions and a litter support turret topped with an articulating stretcher that allows patients to be loaded feet-first into the helicopter and then turned roughly 90 degrees so the stretcher is parallel to the helicopter doors.

The interior has been selected by the South African Red Cross to be installed on its three new AW119Kx helicopters and on another five helicopters that will join the fleet in 2018 and 2019, said Girolin. An AMS interior has also been selected by a Guinea operator for its EMS-Utility/VIP quick change operations on one AW109E Power helicopter.



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The image is a promotional poster for the PAvCon 2018 conference. It features a large, detailed photograph of a silver and blue police helicopter in flight, viewed from a side-on perspective. The helicopter has "POLICJA" written on its side, along with the registration "SN-32XP" and "A-013". The background is a light blue sky. At the top, there is a logo for "PAvCon POLICE AVIATION CONFERENCE" with a small helicopter icon. Below the logo, the text "PAvCon 2018" is written in large, bold, white letters with a blue outline. At the bottom, the location and dates "Warsaw, Poland May 21 - 23, 2018" are displayed in white text. Below that, the slogan "The Networking continues" is written in a smaller, italicized white font. At the very bottom, the website address "www.pavconeurope.eu" is shown in yellow text on a dark blue background.

AIR ACCIDENTS

8 November 2017 Bell 207L LongRanger N275AE Air ambulance of Air Evac EMS, Inc., O'Fallon, Missouri, USA. The helicopter sustained substantial damage after landing on an undetected 10-15 degree slope at an LZ during a training event at the 911 center in Union City, Tennessee. All crewmembers were evaluated at the local medical facility and the pilot was determined to have sustained a minor injury. [Concern]

14 December 2017 Bell 407GX N119MX Air ambulance of Mercy Flights, Inc., Medford, Oregon, USA. Shortly after take-off, the Flight RN seated on the left hand side of the aircraft noticed a tapping noise on the exterior of the aircraft. After investigating the noise, the Flight RN noticed that the strap (with metal D clip) used to secure the patient loading door was hanging outside the aircraft. The Flight RN notified the PIC of the situation, the aircraft was slowed to approx. 35kts, the door was opened and the strap was retrieved. Upon landing, the PIC and maintenance personnel performed an inspection of the aircraft and no damage was found. [Concern]

29 December 2017 Saab 340B JA8952 Japan Coast Guard. Kagoshima Airport. A male mechanic of Japan Air Commuter received fatal injuries when a Saab 340B of Japan Coast Guard, tilted left during a tow back to a hangar for maintenance. The left main landing gear was retracted, and the head of the mechanic was caught between the left wing and the ground. Japan Air Commuter undertakes periodic inspections of Saab 340B's of Japan Coast Guard at Kagoshima Airport. [ASN]



Donald Milne's biplane lies crumpled and upside down

30 December 2017 Bell 412SP EC-MMC. Fire fighting helicopter operated by Inaer [Babcock International] operating from Alicante-Mutxamiel Airfield, Valenciana, Spain collided with light aircraft as both inbound to an airport without ATC. The pilot of the biplane, Donald Milne, was killed. The helicopter sustained significant damage to the main rotor, tail rotor, horizontal stabiliser and skids but remained stable and upright, the two crew and 7-8 passengers were not injured. The biplane crashed inverted. It appears that the light aircraft landed on top of the helicopter at very low level, 20 feet agl. [ASN/Twitter]

1 January 2018 Eurocopter AS350B3+ ZS-RDL South African Police. The helicopter crashed near Cathedral Peak in the Drakensberg during a search for missing person. The crash onto grass resulted in the helicopter rolling on to its right side damaging the airframe, MRB and right horizontal stabiliser. There was no fire. The pilot and crew, who included a search and rescue unit operator and his search dog, survived the crash. [Times Live/ASN]

17 January 2018 AgustaWestland A119Kx CC-ACT Fire helicopter of Forestal Arauco

17 January 2018 AgustaWestland A119Kx EC-KZX Fire helicopter of Forestal Arauco

17 January 2018 AgustaWestland A119 EC-LQB Fire helicopter of Forestal Arauco. The three helicopters were damaged in what appears to have been an arson attack on La Colcha aerodrome. The attacker seems to have been a local terror organisation. All three suffered fire damage to cockpit and cabin. [ASN]

22 January 2018 Airbus Helicopters EC135P2+ D-HDRV Air ambulance of DRF Luftrettung and **Piper PA-28RT-201T Turbo Arrow IV HB-PGF** from Flugschule Basel. A mid-air collision between a light fixed wing aircraft and an air ambulance helicopter near a gravel workings at Philippsburg, Baden-Wuerttemberg a small city near Karlsruhe in southern Germany took place at about 800 feet. The helicopter was on a training flight with two pilots from the DRF-Training centre at EDSB, the FW with 2 POB was apparently arriving from Basel on a similar training flight into the nearby Speyer airfield. Speyer is uncontrolled and has no instrument approaches. Fixed wing emerged from cloud cover. It may have landed on top of the helicopter. Personal details of the four fatalities are not yet known. [Media/ASN]

FLIGHT SAFETY

EASA issued an Emergency Airworthiness Directive relating to the Electrical Magnetic Plug fitted to the Safran Helicopter Engines (formerly Turboméca) ARRIUS 2F engine. These engines are known to be installed on, but not limited to, Airbus Helicopters EC120 B helicopters. Flaking of the cadmium coating of electrical magnetic plugs head was detected. This is the result was the result of manufacturing deficiency.

This part is installed on electrical magnetic plugs (front and rear position) of the engine, providing warning signals for early detection of internal part(s) structural degradation, propagating in form of presence of metal particles in the lubrication system. A batch of affected magnetic plugs has been identified.

Severe vibration caused the crash of a Bell helicopter 525 Relentless that killed two pilots during testing in 2016, according to a final [NTSB report](#) published last month.

Officials at the Fort Worth-based Bell Helicopter Textron say the company has made changes in the configuration of the aircraft's pilot controls in response to the crash, which occurred near the Ellis County community of Italy.

"Bell and the NTSB have carefully studied the cause of the vibration, which had never been encountered before," company officials said Wednesday in a statement. "The vibration was the result of an unanticipated combination of very high airspeed with a sustained low rotor RPM condition. The in-depth analysis of the flight data resulted in a thorough understanding of the corrective actions necessary, and appropriate changes to the aircraft have been implemented."

An investigation by the Australian Transport Safety Bureau has shed light on the moment a helicopter crew experienced an unusual near-miss off the coast of Broome late last year.

The Careflight Australia crew were undertaking a winching exercise in a Sikorsky S-92A on August 26 when it was found there was a potentially deadly break in a piece of the winching equipment.

The crew completed one mock-rescue when the winch operator signalled the pilot it was okay to move. As the helicopter moved left the winch operator was slowly winching in and monitoring the line, which was paying out from the hi-line bag.

When there was about 9 metre of winch cable still extended, a restriction of the line inside the hi-line bag occurred. This placed the weak-link under increased tension due to the relative motion of the helicopter and winch cable.

The weak-link snapped and the winch cable bounced within metres of the helicopter's MRBs.

The weak-link and the hi-line have since been replaced with new equipment. It was stated that the items of equipment, which comprised the hi-line - line, bag and weak-link - were individually fit-for-purpose, but when the hi-line was assembled it became susceptible to a restriction. [WANews]



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UNMANNED

Australian Lifeguards testing out new drone technology in Australia have been credited with saving two people stranded off the coast of the state of New South Wales. Widely reported footage from the commercial rescue drone shows a birds-eye view of the ocean before the drone ejects the yellow floatation device, which inflates when it hits the water. Two teenage boys about 700 meters (0.4 miles) offshore at Lennox Head in a swell of around three meters (9.8 feet). They were able to grab onto the floatation device and swim to shore.

The Lifeguard operating the device was able to launch it, fly it to the location, and drop the pod all in under two minutes. A similar swim-to rescue by a swimmer might average six minutes. The drones were reportedly only officially unveiled that morning, part of the government's \$344,000 investment in drone technology.

The drone belonged to locally based integrator Little Ripper Life Saver which is developing and integrating lifesaving devices into lightweight pods that can be easily deployed from drones. The optional payloads include automatic external defibrillators (AEDs), floatation devices, electromagnetic shark repellent devices, and personal survival kits.

Ed: <http://littleripper.com/the-future-of-lifesaving-has-arrived/> A well timed PR exercise I suspect. Hardly passing trade on a nice sunny day with little or no wind.

According to the company press release, Schiebel's Camcopter® S-100 UAS proved its suitability for SAR missions as part of an ongoing homicide investigation in Stiwoll, Austria, in late 2017. In the 'first operation' of its kind, Schiebel provided Austrian law enforcement with a S-100 and operating personnel to assist in the search for a double homicide suspect assumed to be hiding in a forest region.

The company claims that compared to manned helicopters, the S-100 offers a more cost- and mission-effective solution for conducting such exploration tasks. Its endurance of up to six hours within a 200-km radius provides the S-100 with enhanced operational capability that enables substantially extended search flight missions.

Ed: The editor enquired about the success of this mission and it appears that, despite the claims of success, that the unnamed suspect was not found and remains on Europe's most wanted list.

It is reported that in December the Chinese military successfully tested a swarm of "several tens of fixed-wing drones." The test appears to have been an evaluation of the ability of the swarm to conduct a reconnaissance mission above a certain area.

The same team had conducted a smaller swarm trial but in that instance the number of drones was limited to "a few."

At least three entities in China are currently working on drone swarm projects. The Chinese electronic giant CETC is reported to have performed a demonstration with 120 fixed wing drones. The swarm gathered autonomously in flight and conducted several tests including autonomous mission squadron clustering, distributed-mode surveillance, and target encirclement. [East Pendulum]

Ed: Meanwhile authorities in the UK continue to disregard the knowledge imparted by others and will not yet have considered how to deal with the easy bits let alone that level of a problem. The current defences are drones that fire nets that might ensnare a single drone at a pass and electronic interference that is currently illegal in the civil arena. Now we are considering swarms in their tens if not hundreds. Worrying? Well not to the uninformed I guess, they will never worry!

Last months UK police training sessions went down well. The organisers Tweeted "We really enjoyed our first ever day of workshops and a big thank you to all 68 of you that came. We're finalising more dates & locations across #Devon #Cornwall & #Dorset for the coming months so keep an eye out.

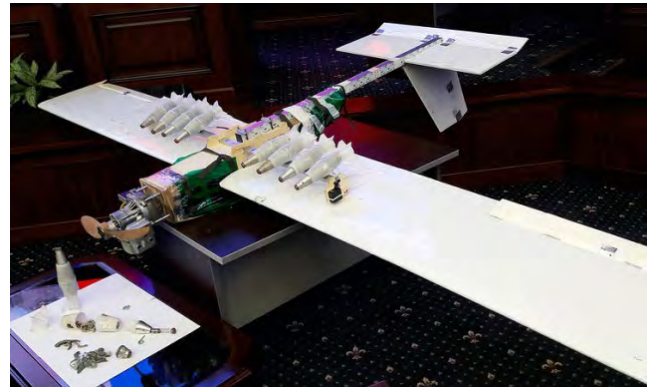


In the wake of those resource draining police drone courses in the south-west comes news that in the north-east of the UK one of the successful commercial enterprises, 'Heliguy' who started with model helicopters and then moved into drones is offering one better. He promotes drones made by DJI and offers sales, training and maintenance. They offer a **FREE**, one day introduction to drones. The joint DJI and Heliguy offering provides 'New Pilot Training' sessions for both newcomers and more experienced drone users looking for a greater understanding of DJI's models. Geared towards varied ability and knowledge levels, this specialised training ensures that all attendees leave with an in-depth understanding of how to get the most from DJI's product range. These sessions also outline potential routes into the more advanced aspects of the UAV industry and what important criteria you should consider when doing this. It is open to trainees and businesses who require equipment and guidance and can be booked via their website <https://www.heliguy.com/free-dji-new-pilot-training-day-p3866>

If the swarm trials in China are not enough to make people sit up and pay attention perhaps these Russian web images might attract a few seconds of brain time.

They are of a cheap simple craft sent against the Russians forces by ISIS and they carry some interesting little sporting extras.

I suspect the additional payload items might make a bit of a mess of your local boulevard on a sunny day.



ESG Elektroniksystem- und Logistik-GmbH was commissioned by Volkswagen AG to deliver a mobile drone detection system based on a VW Crafter for use within the group. This first major civil contract in Germany was won against competition and includes the delivery of a comprehensive, vehicle-based drone detection system against the unauthorised use of drones.

GUARDION, the Counter-UAS solution of ESG and its partners is based on the mission-proven system used to secure major political events such as the G7 summit in Elmau in 2015, the state visit of President Obama in June 2016 and the G20 summit in Hamburg in 2017. The ESG portfolio includes the selection and integration of high-performance sensors, the optimized operational picture and situation awareness via ESG's Command & Control system TARANIS® and the connection to existing IT networks and infrastructure. As a result, GUARDION offers scalable solutions adapted to the individual requirements of customers and scenarios for detecting and countering drones in stationary, mobile or deployable configuration.

The focus of the Guardian brand is on the national and international premium segment, and it offers tailor-made solutions for the protection against the threats of unauthorised drone flight in the areas of industry and military, for law enforcement and major events, as well as airports, infrastructure and state-owned properties. The next extensive assignments are nearing completion.

The ESG Counter-UAS vehicle and demonstrator, will be on show at GPEC from February 20-22, 2018 in Frankfurt am Main, the U.T.Sec from March 7 to 8, 2018 in Nuremberg and the ILA from April 25 to 29, 2018 in Berlin. www.GUARDION.eu



PEOPLE

Giuseppe Orsi, former chief executive of the state-controlled defence group, formerly known as Finmeccanica, and Bruno Spagnolini, once at the head of AgustaWestland, were cleared of charges as "there isn't sufficient proof", according to the sentence read out in court.

Last month an Italian appeals court acquitted two former Leonardo executives over a bribery case related to a large 2010 helicopter contract to the Indian government.

In December 2016, Italy's highest court had ordered a re-trial of the case, after the former executives of the Rome-based group were found guilty on corruption charges related to a 560 M euros (\$672M) contract to supply a dozen helicopters to New Delhi.

A judge earlier that year had sentenced Orsi to four and a half years in prison for corruption and falsifying invoices and Spagnolini to four years in jail.

A former Indonesian Air Force chief has been interviewed by the country's anti-graft agency concerning irregularities in the purchase of a Leonardo AW101 helicopter.

On January 17 a Bell Huey helicopter N658H crashed in mountainous territory at Raton, New Mexico. It is said to have been en-route from Raton to a ranch in Folsom, New Mexico. The crash and fire killed five of the six aboard. The crash was only remarkable for the range of relatively important people that died in it and that probably led to the immediate creation of a Wikipedia entry.

The dead included a representative of the Zimbabwean opposition (Movement for Democratic Change) Roy Bennett and his wife Heather. Also dead were the British born world record holder Charles Burnett III. He held the steam car world record from 2009 and was an investor and philanthropist with links to a wide range of businesses and a love of entertaining friends extravagantly.

Burnett was based in Houston and listed as an officer in dozens of companies registered with the Texas secretary of state's office. Nine years ago he drove a steam-powered car at an average speed of 139.8 miles per hour (225 kilometers per hour), setting a world record [top right].

Burnett's friends, pilot Jamie Coleman Dodd of Colorado and co-pilot Paul Cobb of Texas, were ferrying the group aboard a Huey UH-1 when it went down

The pilot in command was J. C. Dodd [right], was a police pilot with the California Highway Patrol from 1990 and Paul Cobb served as a police officer for three decades in the Houston suburb of Pasadena, Texas, rising to police chief until his retirement in 2004.

The survivor was Andra Cobb, Burnett's partner and the daughter of the co-pilot.



LETTERS



Good evening Gareth,

What a nice surprise and many thanks! Earlier today I received 2x £10 notes which, I'm guessing go back, to PAVCon 2008 when I had a bet with Andrew Mellors that the BAe HERTI unmanned aerial system (UAS) would not be flying over the London Olympics in 2012 and, as we know, it didn't! Ten years on it could be very handy over the English Channel post Brexit, we may all agree. Perhaps, in 2008 the HERTI and the former 'South Coast Partnership' were just ten years too early!

Just one problem, here in the UK we now have a new 'plastic' £10 note which replaces the earlier paper £10 note - ouch!!

Very best regards,

Tony

Ed: Well it took a mighty long time for the 'two tenners' to be unearthed. At least they are still just about legal tender! At least it shows we like to pay our debts occasionally. Thanks also to Andrew Mellor for the bet.

To be strictly accurate the event was the last of the late lamented Shephard Police Aviation Conferences held in Olympia, London. Those events led to the creation of PAVCon in 2009. Best wishes to Alexander Shephard who asked me along to run his venture. I found Gareth and the rest as they say is history.

MOVE ALONG THERE

The revelation that Cobham had been found to have bought 'unearned' university degrees for several of its staff in order to meet a foreign contract has been played down by Cobham. They say their staff, pilots and engineers, were qualified just that they did not have the paperwork to meet a customer expectation in Cuacao. The story revealed by the BBC, was that FB Heliservices (now Cobham Helicopter Services) purchased seven degrees for its employees from a company called Aexact who access a network of hundreds of fake online universities.

Where is the difference then if a potential employee turns up sporting a fake Degree or pilots licence at Cobhams door?

On too many occasions already fake qualifications have brought us close to disaster. Many of us have heard of proven instances where would be pilots qualified only on Microsoft Flight Simulator applies for and gets a job with a police air unit. The last I heard of was in the UK Midlands more than a decade ago but the Cobham instance of fake qualifications only took place 3-4 years ago. Nothing new under the sun it seems.



EVENTS NEXT MONTH

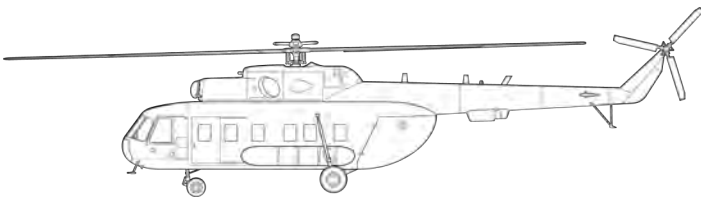
The Singapore Airshow will take place from 6 – 11 February 2018 amidst exciting but challenging times for the global aviation industry – rising demand for air travel is powering robust growth, with record 4 billion air passengers expected to fly this year. This will nearly double over the next 20 years to reach 7.8 billion passengers by 2036. Innovation and digitalisation continue to disrupt traditional business models, processes, and relationships, driving transformation across different parts of the aviation industry. The event will major of airline and military hardware but there will be emergency services elements to take on-board.

Boeing will showcase a wide range of products and services at this year's show. The scale of the company's presence at this year's show reflects the strong growth prospects and opportunities across its commercial, defense and services businesses in Asia-Pacific. Military Highlights include: F-15 Eagle, F/A-18 Super Hornet, P-8A Poseidon, CH-47 Chinook, AH-64 Apache, and unmanned systems including the Insitu Scan Eagle where the civil side will be fronted by such as the 737 MAX, 787 and 777X.

For the first time at the Singapore Airshow, there will be a Boeing Global Services (BGS) exhibit booth. Launched in 2017, Boeing Global Services is the company's newest business unit and is poised for growth through innovative services and support for regional commercial and defense systems throughout the entire lifecycle. Asia-Pacific is an important growth market for the services business with a strong emphasis on engineering, modifications, upgrades, maintenance, Boeing AnalytX, digital services and training. The Boeing Training and Professional Services campus in Changi, Singapore is Boeing's largest pilot, technician and crew training facility in Asia.

AND BEYOND

PAvCon 2018. There is a long way to go yet but current plans are that the next edition of this popular annual event will be held at Warsaw in Poland. A date for your diary is 21-24 May 2018.



I have run Police Aviation Conferences in Europe since 2006, since 2009 under the PAVCon banner. Until last year they were run from this office and integrated wholly financially with PAN. From this year the running is as a separate entity based in Austria. Same people same focus just detail changes. The event covers all type of manned craft and drones.

Details of the event can be found on the dedicated website. www.pavconeurope.eu



6-7 March 2018 AAMS Spring Conference. AAMC Learning Center, Washington DC. This conference is held each spring in the Washington, D.C. area. The focus is on legislative, regulatory and reimbursement issues. Members are encouraged to participate in grassroots efforts and visit their Congressional representatives. In addition to the opportunity to lobby, the event offers the highest quality educational content that consistently receives rave reviews! Attendees learn about what regulations are affecting them, how to speak out locally on issues affecting them, billing and reimbursement insights, leadership and management issues, and much more! AAMS offers a variety of educational opportunities throughout the year. www.aams.org



6-8 March 2018 Home Office Security and Policing Exhibition. Farnborough, Hampshire. This official Government event is an opportunity to meet, network and discuss the latest advances in delivering national security and resilience with UK suppliers, colleagues and government officials. The event brings together Government selected visitors, mainly from the UK, who have specific operational needs with any exhibitor able or willing to pay the entry price who have the relevant solutions, all within a secure environment. The unique three-day event also incorporates live demonstrations providing a setting for testing and collaborative showcasing. All in all, the sort of exhibitor that you might encounter at DSEi or many other open access security events meeting up with visitors that have been severely reduced by the organisers making arbitrary decisions on who is right to attend. www.securityandpolicing.co.uk

8 March 2018 The BBGA Annual Conference to be held at the Warren Weir, Luton Hoo Hotel, Golf & Spa, The Mansion House Luton, Bedfordshire LU1 3TQ. Less than a mile from M1 Junction 10 and nestled

One of the next UK air ambulances on the role fit line is this second machine for the Kent Surrey & Sussex Charity. The AW169 arrived in factory trim at SAS Staverton ©James Illoyds





Coming up as part of next month's HAI Heli-Expo will be a range of manufacturers recognising their customers. Look out for the story on East Bay Regional Park Police operating over the north side of San Francisco Bay being recognised by a manufacturer.

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within the stunning 1,065-acre grounds of Luton Hoo Hotel, Golf & Spa, Warren Weir is an events village offering a range of luxurious bedrooms & Suites, five meeting rooms, a hospitality lounge, private leisure and conference facilities, all of which finished to the highest standards. The following day [Friday March 9] there will be a Golf Day on the Luton Hoo Golf Club course. BBGA Annual Conference online booking system went live last month so book early to take advantage of the Early Bird Rate. BBGA are looking for conference sponsors, please contact Rachael Paskin to discuss sponsorship packages. All packages include delegate passes, a trade stand, half page colour advert in the conference programme and extensive exposure prior to and during the event. www.bbga.aero rachael.paskin@bbga.aero

12-14 March 2018 Aerial Firefighting North America 2018. On its 10th anniversary this event will address the core issues affecting aerial firefighting operations in North America, with further contributions from South America and worldwide. Staging over three days in Sacramento, California it will provide the only dedicated platform to discuss the national, state, regional, local and international aerial firefighting. Tangent Link event. www.tangentlink.com

20-22 March 2018 World Border Security Congress in Madrid, Spain. Covering a broad spectrum of border security subjects including the global migration crisis, illegal economic immigration from Africa and elsewhere and international terrorism. Contact: Neil Walker, Event Director. neilw@world-border-congress.com www.world-border-congress.com

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ADVANCING PUBLIC SAFETY AVIATION

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