Police Aviation News

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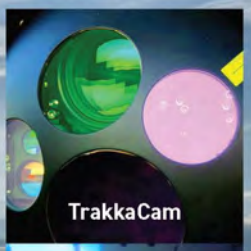
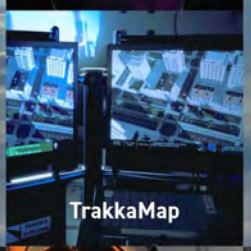
Neue H145-Flotte der Bayerischen Polizei

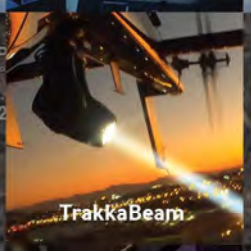
The final delivery

Image by Michael Mau

STRONGER. TOGETHER.







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30

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LAW ENFORCEMENT

BELGIUM

MILITARY: Airbus Helicopters has delivered the first H145M helicopter to the Kingdom of Belgium, marking a major milestone in the modernisation of the nation's defence and security capabilities. The aircraft is part of a wider procurement contract signed in 2024 via the NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA) to equip both the Belgian armed forces and the Federal Police. With the Federal Police the type will start to replace the fleet of MD900 Explorer aircraft.

Highlighting the growing momentum of the programme, Belgium has also recently exercised its option for three additional H145M helicopters, bringing the fleet ordered to 20 aircraft.

The H145M is the military version of the tried-and-tested, light twin-engine H145 helicopter. The global fleet of the H145 family has accumulated more than 8.5 million flight hours. It is used by armed forces and law enforcement agencies around the world for the most demanding missions. The US Army employs almost 500 helicopters from the H145 family built in the USA under the name UH-72 Lakota. Germany has ordered up to 82 H145M helicopters, with deliveries currently ongoing from the production line in Donauworth near Munich.

BRAZIL

BRASILIA: As a reader you will no doubt be somewhat swamped by the English language police aviation events that PAN regularly reports on organised in Europe and the USA. There are other police aviation conferences and exhibitions across the world although not all of them see regular repeats. You can find one in China, another in Indonesia and there was a short-lived version in Malaysia many years ago. This month the coverage is of one that is alive and well in South America.

As this edition closes for publication the airborne law enforcers of South America are converging on a meeting place in Brasilia – the Espaço Dois Ipês Brasília - Asa Norte Trecho 2 Conjunto 5 to attend the ninth edition of ENAVSEG 2026, the National Public Safety and Civil Defence Aviation Meeting. The event brings the leading names in public safety aviation and consolidates itself as the largest meeting point between managers, operators, authorities and industry in the sector in the country.

With a similar focus to PAvCon Europe and various APSCON events ENAVSEG is a main meeting point for the mainly Portuguese speaking ALE sector in Brazil, bringing together those who operate, those who decide, and those who provide the solutions that drive public safety aviation in the country.

Over three days, June 29 to July 3, (the dates and venues tend to vary from year to year) this year's event offers lectures with national and international experts, technical content applied to operational reality and demonstrations of technology facilitating direct networking with operators, decision-makers, and institutional leaders. Subject matter includes helicopters, drones and related equipment. Among the hardware, the Leonardo 09 mock-up is expected, Heliflite, Onboard Systems, and Trakka are expected to exhibit and Airbus will be represented by Helibras the main supplier of police helicopters in the region. Past exhibitors have included various divisions of Safran and Robinson.

According to the promotional material, the event also celebrates 40 years of public safety aviation in the Federal District, but no details were given. [ENAVSEG]

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APSCON 2026
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JULY 13-17

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FRANCE

GENDARMERIE: Mid-June was taken up with serving in support of the latest G7 Conference hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron. The 2026 G7 Leaders' Summit was held on the south side of Lake Leman in Évian-les-Bains, France, from June 15 to 17. In the midst of a major war in Ukraine and a shaky peace in the Middle East, the three-day gathering of global leaders from the US, UK, Canada, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the EU focused on international peace, global economic stability, and emerging technologies.

Preparation for the event included lengthy pre-planning and several days of operational briefings, crew coordination, aerial reconnaissance and preparation. The security operation for the summit was carried out on land, on the waters of Lake Geneva, and in the skies over Haute-Savoie, where numerous aerial assets—helicopters and drones—as well as anti-drone systems operated by the French National Gendarmerie were deployed.

For this G7 nearly 80 soldiers and seven helicopters were assigned, one of the larger deployments undertaken by the FAGN (*Forces Aériennes de la Gendarmerie Nationale or* National Gendarmerie Air Force). In previous years only 2-3 helicopters were assigned to similar events. Additionally, on this occasion, some 70 drones were available for deployment.

Throughout the summit, the crews of FAGN based in the east of France oversaw the event and provided support to the forces deployed on the ground. The Officer in Charge of the deployment was Emmanuel Chavanne, commander of the South-East Air Force, responsible for implementing the air detachment and the 3D operational plan for the G7 on behalf of the Commander of Gendarmerie Forces (COMFORGEND), Army Corps General Frédéric Boudier. [Prefect of Haute-Savoie, Auvergne-Rhone-Alpes Gendarmerie Region]

Next year was scheduled for France to host PAvCon Europe but circumstances relating to staff and venue availability have again reportedly changed and another venue looks likely for May/June 2027. There may be more on the replacement venue imminently but a number of parties will need consulting before an announcement can be made. Suffice to say that many of those actually attending the 2026 event already know the proposed new location for 2027! We just need to get the confirmation before broadcasting too much potentially incorrect information.

Meanwhile the Gendarmerie are still promoting themselves in a slightly smaller way. Early last month members of a business club based in the Gironde, BOSS & PILOT, gathered together 80 members at the hangar of the Air Section of the Gendarmerie of Bordeaux Merignac to join staff at the unit to listen to a presentation on the facilities and missions by its commander Lieutenant Colonel Alban Robin. The base is located at the HM 100 hangar within the Bordeaux-Mérignac Airport

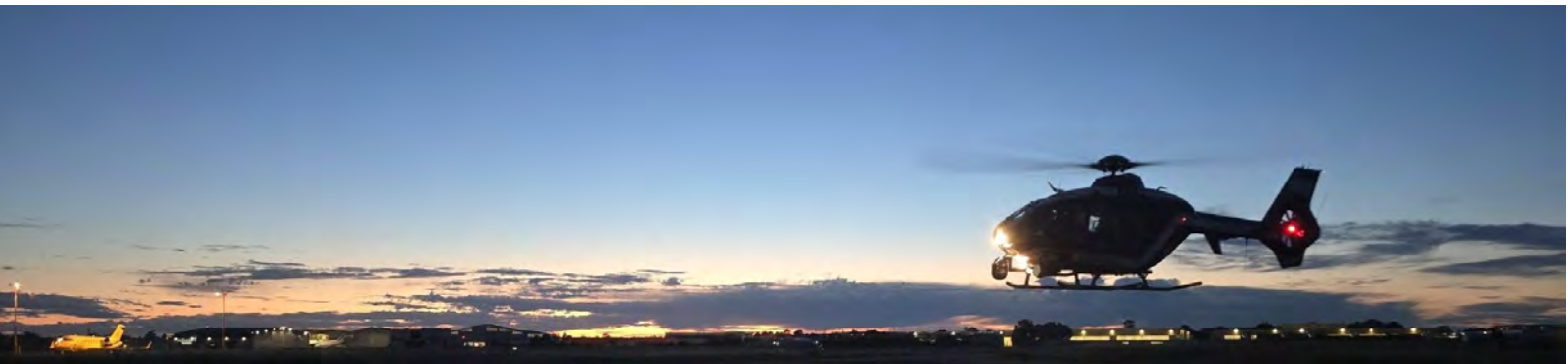
Although not as extensive as a PAvCon conference spread over 2 days, the public relations exercise clearly matched the effort put into the typical APSA Safety Symposium or a Netherlands Police training day in terms of numbers involved.

After an introduction by Professor Jean Charles Le Huec MD PhD led on the collaboration between the hospital rescue services and the air resources of the gendarmerie that allows the transport of medical staff teams as near as possible to the scene of medical incidents. Lt Col Robin followed his words with a further presentation, Professor LeHuec is Chief of the Spine Unit and chairman of Department of Orthopaedic and Traumatology at the Bordeaux University Hospital.

Although the promotional event was not greatly dressed up the unit set up seating and light refreshments, displayed two aircraft and erected some explanatory panels on their work for the visitors information.

The aircraft displayed were a 1988 AS350B Ecureuil JCQ and an 2009 EC135T2+ JDC

The group attending from Bordeaux Boss & Pilot Aéro Business Club is a French non-profit Association registered in 1901. They are based in Pessac, Gironde, and bring together business leaders, entrepreneurs, and aviation enthusiasts at a variety of events.



GERMANY

BAVARIA: *The final delivery* of the new fleet of Airbus H145 police helicopters has been made and last month a ceremony took place to mark the occasion. With the handover of the now role equipped eighth helicopter “Edelweiss 1” in Donauworth the fleet renewal of the Bavarian fleet is complete.

The ceremony marking the completion was attended by the Prime Minister Dr. Markus Soder and the Minister of the Interior Joachim Herrmann

The ceremony was undertaken against a backdrop of H145 D-HPBA (21184) which was first delivered to Bavarian police officials in a ceremony in 2023. The airframe was retained by Airbus for development work on a range of new features for the Bavarian fleet including such as the main rotor tip lights. It thus became also the last to be delivered to the operator with the full set of features.

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NORTHEAST: Meanwhile, and to far less fanfare, the Police of Sachsen to the south of Berlin received their own 'fleet completion' Airbus H145 for operation from their base in Dresden.

The former East German operation has long since given up its Mil and PZL-Sokol W3 helicopters and, like all of Germany, progressed to operating the Airbus EC135. They ordered the Airbus Helicopters H145 in 2023 and last month the third was declared ready for service, all are now reported to have been upgraded to a similar five blade standard.

Elsewhere in Berlin, the Brandenburg helicopter squadron based at the Schonefeld Airport alongside a Federal Police squadron is looking to move on from its 25-years old Eurocopter EC135P2 fleet of two. The pair was last updated by Airborne Technologies in Austria in 2017.

Ever hopeful of getting its products into a wider, Airbus Helicopters dominated, European market, Bell helicopter has proposed its Bell 429 to Brandenburg. The only public sign of this activity is an artwork that recently emerged bearing a spurious registration and debatable role fit.

The two Brandenburg helicopters are only hosted by the Federal Police Blumberg, there is no formal cooperation, neither with the Federal police or with Berlin Police who cooperate directly with the Federal Police. The two EC135P2s are separate airframes and have a different colour scheme and unique equipment standard.

Meanwhile, returning to the seemingly never ending thread of 'who has bought an H145 this month….'

GARDA: Caught on flight testing was this Airbus Helicopters H145 destined for operations with the police in Ireland. The airframe (21529) currently marked as D-HBKW in the test fleet will become 289 in the Irish Air Corps fleet system. Entry in the service will be delayed for some time yet. The H145 will be delivered to Oxford in due course for a comprehensive role fit which will take months. Whether there will be an acceptance ceremony at Oxford or the Donauworth factory in Germany, similar to that for the NPAS aircraft, in the meantime remains to be seen. [Parapex/MM]

MALAWI

POLICE AIR WING: The Malawi Police Service has confirmed it is considering the purchase of modern aircraft as it attempts to rebuild an Air Wing that has not functioned for several years. One of the primary tasks will be to work out whether its long-grounded Bell 206L LongRanger 7Q-PSH can be returned to flight economically. According to an illustration carried by the news media it is complete and sits atop the back of a lorry.

The helicopter, once central to surveillance, search and rescue and national security duties, has been sitting idle at Mtakataka Air Wing in Dedza after suffering mechanical failure. Its prolonged grounding has left the service without any aerial capability, a gap that has persisted through multiple security incidents.

National Police Spokesperson Lael Chimtembo said officers began local training in aircraft operation and maintenance in January this year in an attempt to rebuild technical capacity that had been halted in the period since the Air Wing was grounded.

The police are attempting to revive an aviation unit without a functioning aircraft, without confirmed procurement timelines, and while still training personnel to operate equipment they do not yet have. [Nyasa Times]

Editor: Malawi has a fairly long history of police aviation, thirty years ago the then bible on the subject, the 1997 Shephard's Police Aviation Handbook claimed the Malawi Police had a fleet of one AS350 helicopter and three Britten Norman BN-2T Defender's and a couple of Cessna trainers. The remains of some of them are no doubt still sitting, somewhat forlorn and scorched by the sun, in the corner of an airfield and yet, like the disabled Bell helicopter, just awaiting a qualified engineer and some spare parts.

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ROMANIA

INTERNAL AFFAIRS: Airbus Helicopters has signed a contract with the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Romania for the acquisition of twelve multirole helicopters, comprising seven H160 and five H145 aircraft. This significant investment is part of the European initiative Security Action for Europe (SAFE), which aims to strengthen European civil protection, emergency response, and public safety frameworks.

Romania is significantly enhancing its operational readiness, reducing emergency reaction times, and positioning itself as a robust contributor to European integrated rescue and security mechanisms. The fleet will be operated by the Ministry's General Inspectorate of Aviation, under the coordination of the Department for Emergency Situations (DSU). The aircraft are destined to modernise Romania's national capabilities in integrated emergency management, civil protection, and public order enforcement.

The H160 fleet will provide a high-performance multirole capability, with four aircraft dedicated to civil protection and disaster relief missions, whilst three will support public order, aerial surveillance, and tactical security operations. The H145 fleet will be fully allocated to the country's emergency rescue service (SMURD) and mountain rescue operations, serving as the primary resource for rapid emergency medical interventions, specialised medical evacuations, and complex search-and-rescue (SAR) missions.

UNITED STATES

HAPPY BIRTHDAY USA

TEXAS: At a recent Public Safety Commission meeting members of the Texas Department of Public Safety's Aircraft Operations Division were lauded for their operations in rescuing countless lives during last years flooding in the Texas Hill Country. Among them was Trooper Melissa Flanigan who descended into a canyon to give emergency medical care to a person who had fallen.

Other members of the Division will go forward to compete in national competitions.

Last month a further Airbus Helicopters H125 N556TX joined the TDOPS fleet from Metro Aviation. The highly customised, mission-ready H125 was completed in a collaboration with Austin-based engineering firm Tejas Advanced Solutions.

This aircraft marks a historic first in the public safety aviation sector as the H125 features a permanently mounted and hardwired Starlink antenna. Operating in conjunction with an onboard Teradek system, this integration creates a powerhouse triple-bonded, bidirectional data connection utilising both cellular networks and satellite communication. Designed to maintain continuous data resiliency in even the most remote, austere environments, the network proved near-flawless during rigorous flight testing, registering less than 0.5% obstruction and maintaining an average signal quality of 98%.

In addition to the new technology, Metro Aviation outfitted the H125 cabin and airframe with a custom suite of tactical and safety gear, including the state-of-the-art Shotover ARS-750 airborne mapping system, a 4th Generation Wescam MX-10 sensor and a high-output TL360 Trakka searchlight, custom hoist control panel and a specialised "grab handle" at the LH sliding door to ensure maximum operator safety and stability during complex hoist profiles.

Other features include Metro's first installation of a forward-facing camera integrated into the tail boom tip cap, paired with an aft-facing camera mounted to the bottom of the boom. ·There is a state-of-the-art digital audio system from AEM, an Axnes Wireless Intercom System (ICS) for untethered crew communications, internal cabin camera, LifePort tail rotor illumination lights, and Whelen 600 Series position lights.

AIR AMBULANCE

AUSTRALIA

RFDS: In a ceremony marking the introduction of the first in a new fleet of Pilatus PC-12 air ambulances the RFDS SA/NT Chair Peter de Cure welcomed Federal Healh Minister Mark Burler MP to mark the occasion.

The RFDS has around 100 aircraft in the Pilatus fleet and twelve new examples of the latest PC-12 PRO are set to join them in the next two years. These latest examples feature a greatly enhanced medical configuration that has been described as akin to a flying intensive care unit.

Other features include advanced safety systems including an Autoland system, synthetic vision, and an ability to operate from short remote airstrips. The flying doctor service was set up nearly 100 years ago and provides medical services and transportation to the population living in remote areas of Australia.

GERMANY

ADAC: Special-mission work continues at Bombardier, and a new German medevac order announced at the ILA Berlin air show last month confirms that Nuremberg-based operator Aero-Dienst GmbH has signed for a second medevac-configured Challenger 650 to support ADAC's patient repatriation and air ambulance services.

It is the second Challenger 650 for ADAC, following an initial order in 2024, and it adds enhanced long-range capability onto a fleet that still runs two Learjet 60XRs and two Dornier 328Jets. There is speculation that ADAC will start disposing of the smaller airframes in the future.

In the Challenger 650 ADAC are seeing reliability figures nearing 100% in a type that offers a cabin and passenger door large enough to load up to four stretchers while keeping a stable environment for patients and medical crew.

Learjets have long been a mainstay of the medevac fleet, but production of the 60XR version ended in 2013, and they are now approaching midlife, leading operators to consider their reequipment options. The Challenger is a larger, longer, aircraft offering significantly more space in a different plane in a very different cabin class.

UNITED KINGDOM

BEDFORDSHIRE: In a rare instance of a serious railway accident on June 19 last month, two commuter trains collided in Bedfordshire killing one train driver and severely injuring many passengers.

Nine people were left in a critical condition after the Bedford train crash. The total number of people listed as seriously injured was 32, with 57 reporting minor injuries, some 100 overall. Two similar East Midlands Railway (EMR) service trains were on the same line heading south towards London when one stopped and was hit from the rear. It was a scenario that had been deemed "impossible" before it happened. Fortunately is was a relatively slow speed impact and that appears to have greatly reduced the consequences for the occupants.

The incident in daylight attracted a massive emergency services response in which 'seven' local charity air ambulances, (East Anglia, Essex & Herts, London, Magpas, Midlands and The Air Ambulance service mentioned specifically) were reported to have supplemented efforts from police, fire and ambulance services road vehicles. The HEMS units also despatched several response cars with medical staff to the fields close to the rail lines. The closest air ambulance, Magpas based at Alconbury Weald, was also first on scene and they contributed a total of nine clinicians triaging and treating the most seriously injured patients.

Editor: at this time no-one has assessed how many medical staff there were at the scene within minutes but it would appear that it is likely that overall they will have quickly out-numbered the casualties which will further enhance the charitable standing of all the UK air ambulance in the eyes of the public that fund them.

EAST ANGLIA: On June 10 the EAAA welcomed former East Anglian Air Ambulance pilot, His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, back to its base on the edge of Norwich Airport.

The visit, however, saw him take on a slightly different role - delivering lifesaving blood for tonight's shift. Following a generous personal donation to Norfolk Blood Bikes, which enabled the charity to purchase a new vehicle, The Prince of Wales formally presented the car at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital before collecting units of blood and personally delivering them to Helimed House.

HELIPAD REPORT: A new report from the All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPG) for Air Ambulances formally released in early June has highlighted significant variation in hospital helipad provision across the UK and is calling for safeguarded 24/7 on-site access at all Major Trauma Centres and specialist hospitals.

The report, *Critical Moments, Life-Saving Infrastructure: The Case for Safeguarded 24/7 On-Site Hospital Helipads*, assesses 43 hospitals and identifies a clear national infrastructure gap, with over half of sites unable to consistently support full 24/7 on-site helipad access.

Overall, over half of the assessed sites (53%) are either unable, or not consistently able, to support full operational capability for 24/7 on-site helipad access. Separately, more than a third (37%) of hospital sites either lack 24/7 on-site access altogether or do not have an operational helipad. In addition, there are seven hospitals which currently do, or within this current year will, require a new helipad.

Where on-site access is unavailable, air ambulances are often required to land at secondary off-site locations, introducing delays into the transfer of critically ill or injured patients into specialist care.

The UK's air ambulance charities rely on NHS infrastructure to complete the patient journey into hospital and receive no routine Government funding, instead depending on public donations to deliver pre-hospital emergency care.

Click here to read the full report

UNITED STATES

LOUISIANA: An EMS operator in the state has purchased a former Manx registered EC135T2+ from a Polish broadcasting billionaire. Until recently the helicopter was in use based on the rear deck of a £74M superyacht vessel owned by the millionaire. He has now disposed of both the vessel and the helicopter.

MONTANA: A brand new Airbus Helicopters H145 N145TB was put into service with Two Bear Air in Montana on June 6. It replaced a Bell 429 which was sold on to Air Methods.

The Black Bell 429 has moved on to Mercy Flights Inc., for service in the Buffalo, New York area. via an inspection and technical preparation in Latrobe, Pennsylvania arranged through global marketing teams at Rotortrade.

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SEARCH AND RESCUE

NETHERLANDS

COAST GUARD/FRONTEX: Appearing at the recent ILA Berlin Air Show was the Amsterdam based Dornier 328 assigned to a range of ISR missions including Frontex whose colours it no wears. EASPair market the aircraft as the Deutsche Aircraft D328 MR Multi Role on behalf of Frontex - EU Border & Coast Guard Agency. No stranger to recent issues of PAN, these new images show the aircraft and its role equipment at ILA. The company has announced that it will be display the aircraft at the forthcoming Farnborough International Air Show (20-24 July 2026).

At the ILA show the correspondent was told by the EASPair marketing team that the capabilities of the aircraft been enhanced so they can now also look under the waterline as well as surface. They can deploy a mini Unmanned Surface Vehicle (USV) by dropping it out of the back and can integrate with Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, acting as a primary mission platform. [Ian Fraine]

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SOUTH AFRICA: Before we get to the regular report on the latest state of migrant traffic across the English Channel from mainland Europe it is worth noting that it is a world problem that very few countries have succeeded in turning around.

It is so widespread that the media elements of some countries simply never seek to publicise the problem as anything but local. The United Kingdom rarely, if ever, reports on the vastly larger numbers crossing borders elsewhere in Europe or the USA. For them (and PAN) the storyline is the boat people.

It is worth noting that for the very disgruntled people of the Republic of South Africa the last day of June 2026 represented a line in the sand for the removal of illegal migrants. This is no case of reporting on the numbers of boat people making their way across a 21 mile funnel of sea near Dover. Entering South Africa entails a long walk but with a land border that extends over 3,000km and involving six other countries including Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Eswatini there are few who might see a need for funding a rubber boat from China. A few pairs of flip flops will suffice and there is no wall to clamber over like in the USA..

Beyond July 1 the situation may not change but equally there are fears that the lives of the illegals might be put at serious risk. How big a problem is this? Well there are estimates but they vary between 2 and 5 million and that simply means that no-one has a clue. The population is put at around 62 million.

What could possibly go wrong?

UNITED KINGDOM

CHANNEL REPORT

At the end of the first half of the year, at the end of June, it's a good time to look at the numbers, to compare the number of illegal migrants entering the UK by small boat, after crossing the English Channel in the first 6 months of 2026, with the number in the same 6 months in the previous year, in 2025. Have more, or have fewer illegal migrants, been landed in the UK at the Port of Dover, by the UK Border Force in 2026? Those illegal migrants who have set sail in a large inflatable boat from a beach in Belgium, or from northern France. An operation organised by criminal groups, many of which are based in the UK.

Numbers

The good news is that, at the time of writing, up to and including the 27 June 2026, the numbers have gone down! The total number of illegal migrant landed in the UK in the first half of 2026 is 11,743. In the same period in 2025, January to 27 June, the total was 18,518. At face value, a reduction of 36.6% is good news. Nevertheless, 11,743 illegal migrants entering the UK without permission in just 6 months is still a big number!

Although the numbers have gone down, 11,743 illegal migrants entering the UK in the first 6 months of 2026 is still a big number.

"The English Channel is routinely patrolled by the UK with two deHavilland Dash 8 maritime patrol aircraft, based in Kent, on contract to the UK Border Force. Also, by those aircraft, aeroplanes helicopters and drones, on contract to His Majesty's Coastguard. At the same time, the English Channel coasts of Belgium and France are patrolled by a Diamond DA62 multimission aircraft, a Vulcanair P68 Observer and a second Scheibel S-100 drone. A more detailed review of English Channel counter-immigration operations, at sea and in the air, will feature in a future edition of 'Police Aviation News'."

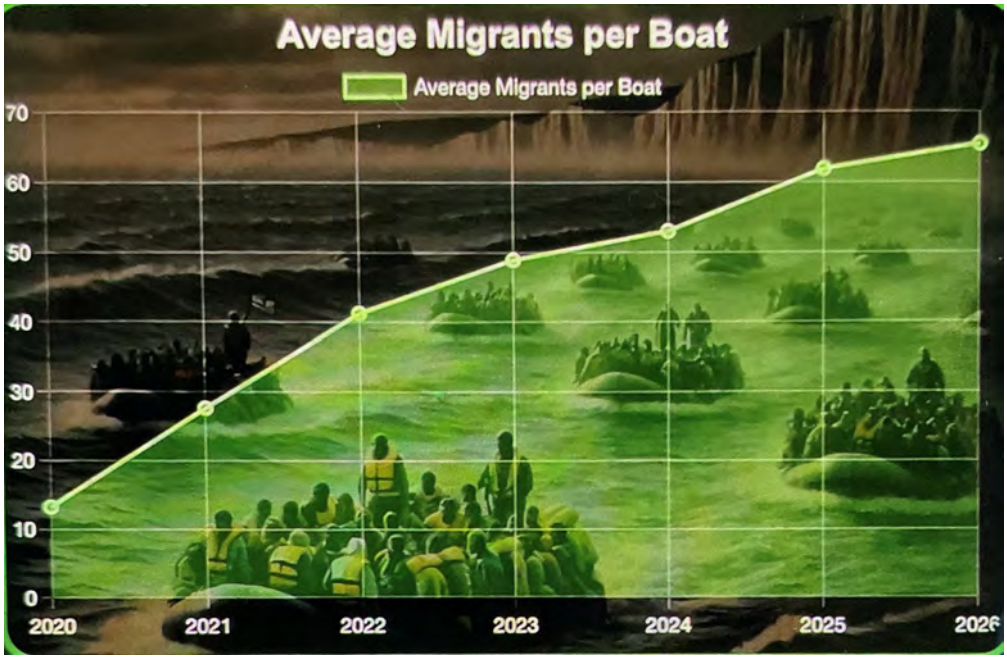
Migrant Tracker

In just 2 years, since the Labour government was formed on the 4 July 2024, with Sir Keir Starmer as the Prime Minister, 76,457 illegal migrants were landed in the UK from 1,273 boats, an average of 60 migrants per boat. The total estimated cost, to the British taxpayer, is £3,058,280,000 (over US$ 4 billion).

In 2 years, with a Labour government, 76,457 illegal migrants were landed in the UK from 1,273 boats, an average of 60 plus migrants per boat.

The British government, has now agreed to pay the French government a further £662M to 'stop the boats'. This is in addition to the £651M paid to France since 2018 when the first illegal migrants arrived in boats from the beaches of northern France. Also, the current Home Secretary (Minister for the Interior), The Rt Hon Shabana Mahmood MP, has announced yet more legislation, the 'Immigration and Asylum Bill', to increase the number of forced removals of failed asylum seekers from the UK. Seemingly, oblivious to the fact that criminals simply ignore, or circumnavigate the rules! The new legislation also includes proposed 'safe routes' for 'genuine migrants', those migrants sponsored to enter the UK by 'trusted' community groups and universities. The pessimist may be forgiven for believing that this will increase rather than decrease the number of migrants entering the UK, those who arrive by an irregular route, those who arrive by a 'safe route' and those who arrive legally, with a visa, and then claim asylum when the visa expires.

Since 2020 the number of illegal migrants carried in each inflatable boat has increased from around 12 to over 60, as more and more migrants exploit the UK's porous southern border between France and UK.



Migrant Tracker UK

Conclusion

Despite a fleet of aircraft, large and small maritime patrol aircraft, helicopters and drones, counting boats carrying illegal migrants across the English Channel. Despite the French being paid large sums of money to patrol the beaches, to stop the boats, and in addition to the UK Border Force transporting illegal migrants from mid-Channel to the Port of Dover, the organised criminal groups have, in response, expanded their cross-Channel operation to include more launch points; all the beaches between Belgium in the north to Dieppe in the south, a distance of over 100 miles. At the same time, packing more migrants into a smaller number of large, grossly overloaded, inflatable boats. The average is now 60+ migrants per boat, although more than 100 migrants in one boat is not uncommon. The British public have had enough, the British Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, has lost the confidence of both the public and his government and has resigned. If his successor fails to 'stop the boats', to secure the UK's southern border with France, then a general election, to choose a new government will be inevitable.

James A Cowan MBE

UNITED STATES

COAST GUARD: The USCG has taken delivery of its 19th HC-130J Super Hercules, designated CGNR 2019, making it the first aircraft in the fleet to feature the Block 8.1 upgrade installed during production rather than installed subsequently.

Since June 3 the aircraft has been in the mission/role equipment phase at L3Harris Integrated Mission Systems, in Waco, Texas. The specialised radars, sensors and comms equipment fit is expected to last another year and the aircraft to be ready for service a year from now.

Compared to the C-130H models it replaces in USCG service the new model offers 20% increase in speed and altitude and a 40% increase in range. The endurance of the type can exceed 20 hours.

There are 25 aircraft on order to date as part of a $1.142billion funding that seeks to replace the existing fixed wing fleet of C-130 and C-27 Spartan aircraft.

INDUSTRY

Over 65 years go **Pratt & Whitney** took aa key step forward in aviation history. The first flight of the prototype PT6 engine took place on May 30 1961 and since 1963 the PT6 series of engines have become one of aviation's most successful engine options in the market.

It is one of the few engines certified for passenger use in a single engine configuration. Many airborne emergency services operators rely upon its rugged long distance reliability in service in types such as the Cessna 208 and Pilatus PC12.

To date more than 64,000 engines have been produced powering over 155 aviation applications worldwide. More than 500 million flight hours have been logged.

General Atomics Aeronautical Systems rolled out the newly upgraded Dornier Do228NXT in Oberpfaffenhofen at the start of May. They then flew the revamped Do228 for the first time in a green finish on May 2. It was a significant milestone for the company's efforts to bring the multi-role aircraft closer to mar-

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ket entry. The aircraft is based on the venerable Dornier 228, which was introduced 45 years ago and has gone through several versions and build locations.

The last programme owner was RUAG in Germany, they sold it on to AeroTec Systems, a subsidiary of US-based General Atomics. Meanwhile the type remains in production in India mainly to service the ISR needs of their Coast Guard air operations.

At ILA Berlin 2026 a fortnight ago, General Atomics Aerotec were celebrating the successful roll out, first flight and first customer – so far undisclosed. The aircraft at ILA was now painted and targeting the parapublic sector with their ISR and ambulance capable airframe.

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A major milestone has been highlighted for the latest five-bladed Airbus H145. The 500th five-bladed **H145** has officially been handed over to the French Sécurité Civile! It will soon be taking to the skies to support their vital rescue and EMS missions. From emergency medical services to law enforcement and corporate transport, the H145 family continues its global success story.

The latest iteration of the H145 is an unmanned version intended for the delivery of cargo in military and civil scenarios. Currently the manufacturers do not see any differences in specification between the civil and military models.

Airborne Technologies did not exhibit at the ILA Berlin show this year but they highlighted the inclusion of their SCAR-Pod as part of the special mission solutions presented by Textron Aviation at the show. Although ABT were not exhibiting this year Marcus Gurtner was on-site meeting with operators and potential customers.

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A **Pilatus PC-12** is nearing completion for an as yet unannounced surveillance customer of South East Aerospace (SEA) based in Florida. The aircraft modification project features a combination of mission-focused capabilities including an SEA designed and manufactured mission console, an external camera mount installation and the fitting and integration of special mission equipment. The full details of the fit remain undisclosed.

A **Dahar Kodiak 900equipped with the Trakka TC300 sensor** and the Rapid Imaging TFO console.

UK-based technology firm Smith Myers has announced a collaboration with Daher to integrate its Artemis T-A (Peli) system into the Kodiak 900 demonstrator aircraft, expanding the platform's capabilities for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) and critical mission operations.

The integration also includes a Trakka TC300 Gen 2 sensor and the Rapid Imaging Solutions mission system, providing a robust suite of tools designed for search and rescue (SAR), law enforcement, wildfire response, border security, and disaster management missions.

"Smith Myers greatly appreciates working with the consummate professionals from Daher, Trakka, Rapid Imaging Solutions, View Point, and Croix International to offer a superbly versatile aircraft suitable for ISR, LE, SAR, wildfire, disaster management, wildlife protection and border security missions to name but a few," said Peter Myers, co-founding director of Smith Myers.

The Kodiak will be on display at the annual APSCON event in Florida later this month.

Flight trials continue with the Shotover camera systems and Tom Churchill expects to have his trial Cessna 208 aircraft N208CN (the aircraft still marked up as Churchill) available to give demonstration flights at the upcoming APSCON I Florida later this month. Time now to book a flight slot if you are interested in this unusual camera system or the other mapping and data systems.

In the middle of June Avincis, Europe's largest emergency aerial services operator, and **Airbus Helicopters** signed a contract for up to 15 H145 helicopters. The new aircraft will be deployed across Avincis' extensive network, strengthening its operational presence in the Nordics, Italy, and Spain for Helicopter Emergency Medical Services and other mission segments like offshore transportation.

Avincis is one of the world's leading Aerial Emergency Services operators; they have a fleet of more than 220 aircraft and a staff of more than 2,400 highly experienced pilots, crews and technicians based in Spain, Portugal, Italy, Norway, Sweden and Finland, as well as operations in Mozambique and Chile.

France launches the development of new capabilities for the Airbus Defence and Space A400M transport aircraft. Airbus signed a contract with OCCAR (Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation), acting on behalf of the French Directorate General of Armaments (DGA), for the development of new capabilities for the A400M. These upgrades, known as the “Parallel Mission System” (PMS), aim to equip French A400M with multi-mission capabilities in the fields of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR).

The PMS developments focus on the integration of a new mission system on board, as well as tactical situational awareness consoles installed in the cargo hold to monitor various sensors and coordinate missions. They also aim to integrate an optronic sensor onto the aircraft.

This new mission system is designed to integrate additional sensors and communication systems, as well as to manage drones and missiles launched from the aircraft’s cargo hold. Following a development phase, the new equipment will be installed on board the first French A400M in 2027 and tested in flight in 2028. A number of aircraft in the Air and Space Force fleet will then be retrofitted to accommodate a PMS kit.

Editor: In the not too distant past the RAF was criticised for employing the vast A400M in what was seen as a giant oversized resource to search for tiny boats crossing the English Channel intent on ‘invading’ the British Isles. Now the ISR role is being put forward as some ‘true Swiss Army knife’ for the armed forces that use it. The difference is that the aircraft is to have an surveillance fit that will be much more practical than the previous sensors – eyes, binoculars and an airways radar. It remains a massive airframe in terms of patrolling the English Channel but the intended role is undoubtedly more akin to the use of Lockheed C-130 transports in such as the US Coast Guard.

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Safran' EO/IR solution, the Euroflir 410M is seen here installed on a Smart Copter Robinson R66 operated by the Sao Paulo Metropolitan Civil Guard (GCM), the system is integrated with the City of Sao Paulo Smart Sampa programme and delivers real time, high-definition daylight and infrared imagery to enhance public safety operations. [SM].

ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

7 June 2026 Airbus Helicopters EC-135T2+ F-**** Gendarmerie Nationale. Aircraft from the Villacoublay unit undertaking a missing persons search crashed in the Orléans Forest at the Lorris Massif, near Bray-Saint-Aignan, Loiret. The crash site is reportedly located on Route du Chat-Sauvage, in a forest criss-crossed by numerous trails. Of three persons aboard one, Adjutant Dorian Larigaudrie of the Châteauneuf -sur-Loire gendarmerie brigade, died in the accident and the two others were seriously injured. The mechanic/TFO was reported to be trapped in the wreckage and the pilot was ejected from the cabin and is in bad shape.

11 June 2026 PZL M-18 Dromader 117 Fire fighting aircraft of the Greek Air Force. nosed down on landing at Mytilene Airport. The pilot sustained minor injuries.

11 June 2026 Airbus Helicopters H125 (AS350B3e) N1603M Law enforcement helicopter of the San Antonio Police Department. Departed San Antonio-Stinson Municipal Airport, Texas, USA on aerial patrol. It struck a bird, damaging the bubble window under the right windscreen and landed back at the airport for inspection. The helicopter departed about 4 hours later.

13 June 2026 Cessna 182T Skylane N505CP. Civil Air Patrol. Departed from Fort Belvoir-Davison AAF, VA for Fredericksburg-Shannon Airport, VA. The airplane veered into the grass and into a ditch after landing on runway 6 at the latter. Detail of damage not reported, no injuries noted.

16 June 2026 Bell 205A-1 N3804C Colorado Department of Public Safety Operating out of Canon City on a wildfire at Hidden Creek, Rye, OK with water drops. Experienced a small electrical fire in the cockpit. The pilot, who was alone, smelled and saw smoke, followed SOP and successfully executed an emergency landing in a nearby field. There were no injuries.

20 June 2026 Saab 340B JA953A Japan Coast Guard. Departed Osaka-Kansai International Airport on an aerial patrol. Noted a warning light while en route over Kochi prefecture. The flight returned to the departure airport (Osaka-Kansai Int.) The post flight inspection revealed that a clamp (80 mm in diameter and 138 gram in weight) was missing. No reported ground damage.

24 June 2026 Airbus Helicopter H135 EC-OPI. Ertzaintza/Basque Police helicopter assisting at the scene of a wildfire in Zalduondo, Araba, northern Spain suffered serios Fenestron damage when a bag of construction materials flew into the system. The pilot managed to put the helicopter down safely in the town of Galarreta, Spain without further damage or injury. [FL360aero/M Mau/Ertzaintza]

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Intelligent network switching for uninterrupted airborne communications

Demand for reliable onboard communications across security, policing, intelligence, and emergency services is intensifying. In response, Enterprise Control Systems has launched an intelligent network-switching solution designed to keep rotary-wing operations connected without interruption. With mission requirements and environments becoming increasingly complex and unpredictable, seamless connectivity is now a critical factor.

Mission success now depends on a team's ability to collect, share, and act on information in real-time, even when operating in the most complex, unpredictable or remote locations. Whether coordinating a large-scale security operation, supporting intelligence gathering, or enabling rapid response for first responders, every second counts. As a result, organisations are seeking new technologies that can deliver reliable, uninterrupted communications.

ECS Connect, the new intelligent data link network manager from Enterprise Control Systems, is purpose-built to address these modern mission demands. Engineered for seamless, automated connectivity, it empowers teams to stay connected. By overcoming the limitations of legacy systems, often characterised by fragmented workflows, operational inefficiencies, and heightened risk of errors, ECS Connect sets a new benchmark for airborne communications. Its advanced management capabilities ensure that critical information is transmitted securely and efficiently, supporting better decision-making and faster response times.

As budget constraints continue to tighten, organisations are under increasing pressure to achieve more with fewer resources. This has heightened the demand for technologies that deliver exceptional value without compromising reliability or performance. ECS Connect is designed to meet these needs, providing an affordable yet highly effective solution for both established and emerging airborne platforms.

A surge in interest for advanced data link solutions is being driven by widespread efforts to modernise infrastructure, accelerate digital transformation, and counter evolving security threats. ECS Connect represents a major leap forward in data link technology, moving beyond single-purpose systems to introduce a smarter, more adaptive approach for both airborne and ground-based communications.

Dedicated COFDM links provide exceptional robustness and are often the primary transmission bearer, but are limited to the coverage available within the ground infrastructure. Alternatives such as satellite and cellular networks, while more cost-effective, often struggle to deliver the reliability needed in highly contested or remote locations.

ECS Connect addresses any gaps by intelligently managing and aggregating multiple networks simultaneously. The system continuously assesses geography and signal strength in real-time, dynamically switching to the optimal connection to meet evolving mission requirements, geographic constraints, and signal conditions.

Through automated switching between COFDM, SATCOM, LTE, Cellular, and MESH protocols, ECS Connect not only reduces pilot workload but also enhances reliability, cuts costs, and streamlines mission-critical operations. The result is uninterrupted, secure delivery of video, audio, and data across air, land, and sea domains – ensuring that vital information is always within reach.

Designed to be platform-agnostic, ECS Connect integrates seamlessly with any airborne transmission bearer. This makes it the ideal choice for agencies and organisations worldwide that demand reliable, high-performance airborne connectivity wherever their mission takes them.

With airborne platforms increasingly supporting a wide range of missions – from border surveillance to Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) – ECS Connect provides the flexibility, resilience, and confidence that teams need to maintain a continuous, uninterrupted flow of mission-critical intelligence.

Discover more about Enterprise Control Systems' data link network manager by visiting www.enterprisecontrol.co.uk

FLIGHT SAFETY

Airbus is urging pilots to stop using the use of non-certified equipment such as sunshades and suction cup -mounted tablet holders on cockpit windows to avoid compounding heating system failures.

This comes after serious safety risk was exposed on an A320 airliner. During the cruise a crews online purchase sunshade caused a window to overheat when the heating system malfunctioned.

The sunshade acted as a thermal barrier, preventing natural air cooling while malfunctioning heating elements drove temperatures dangerously high. The resulting damage required the window to be replaced.

Other dangers highlighted by add on accessories include suction mounted items detaching during flight and interfering with cockpit controls or simply just distracting the crew at a critical moment.

PEOPLE

Sir Stephen Watson QPM, the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police for the past five years has been one of all too few senior police officials to attract positive comment from the wider police community in recent weeks.

Watson joined the police in 1988 and served in Lancashire County before . In 2006, he was promoted to chief superintendent in Merseyside for three years. He later served as area commander for Liverpool North for three years. In 2011, he joined moved south and joined London's Metropolitan Police as Commander for the East Area; he had over 6,000 police officers under his command. He was involved in policing in the wake of the 2011 riots, the 2021 Olympics.

Not one for staying with any of the forces, from 2015 to 2016, he again heading north to be deputy chief constable of Durham Constabulary and then from 2016 to 2021 he was the chief constable of South Yorkshire Police.

His current post is with a force that is the second-largest police force in England and Wales with over 14,000 staff and many supporters thanks to the changes he has already made in performance. The BBC has reported that under his command arrest numbers have grown gratifyingly but in addition he has declared several, somewhat old fashioned, points on which he will not be moved.

Forty years ago a police chief stating that he would not 'take the knee' for some US criminal or paint his police cars in rainbow colours were fully expected and acceptable, but these days most of his fellow chief officers in the NPCC have some softer views on kneeling and multi-covered make up.

The now past mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham, has commended Watson on his performance. As a result last year Watson's contract at GMP was extended by a further two years.

Ex-mayor Burnham is now expected to be the leader of United Kingdom (no not the King and not a President), replacing Sir Kier Starmer, well known for his inappropriate kneeling and lack of focus. So it remains to be seen whether that meeting of minds in Manchester lingers on and whether Watson eventually goes back to London to inject some Manchester sense into that city too!

MOVE ALONG THERE

So, as stated above, the United Kingdom is in the throes of stabbing its latest Prime Minister in the back and is (therefore) yet again ungovernable! Fortunately there are at least another 50 million candidates so we will not run out soon. Regardless of that we have been assured that ex-Greater Manchester mayor Andy Burnham will be the new man.

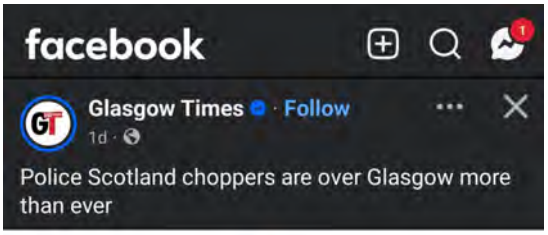
Todays selected image dates from November 2024 when the knives were out but not being publicly sharpened!

Some members of the Devon & Cornwall Police Drone Team were at the 92nd Interpol General Assembly in Glasgow (I erroneously missed mentioning the first 91 editions) when they encountered the now out-going PM Sir Keir Starmer and the short lived Home Secretary Yvette Cooper. The time at the Interpol show was a fantastic opportunity to meet many Interpol Nations and explain their drone technology and how it enables more efficient and effective policing operations. It might be said that their time with the politicians was wasted as both have moved on but the other meetings will have had a longer effect.

In recent weeks, the Devon & Cornwall team have been undertaking training courses for their own and other police forces including Gwent Police in South Wales and the Metropolitan Police, London. Eight more officers trained up to provide close air support at street level. For a period now they will not be undertaking training courses to ensure they can fully support the busier summer months. Two further course are planned for later in the year.

You may be impressed to know that that our former Home Secretary (now Foreign Secretary) recently opened a new warehouse for the storage of Pontefract Cakes in her local constituency. Ponterfract Cakes? Explanations for foreign readers and those of a sheltered upbringing, may be available if you search under Haribo!

I have already broached the question of whether they may be that little 'treat' product for next years PAvCon Europe. We know the black pudding goes down a treat with the Americans!



More worrying is the local news image posted by The Glasgow Times, and repeated on Facebook, last month when they reported that Police Scotland helicopters were more prevalent these days.

Over a year ago, so we have had a couple of PAvCon events in Europe and a APSA promoted APSCON and APSCON Unmanned in the USA since then, a unit in South America reached out for assistance with training for their back seat crews, TFOs. Oddly enough, although they appeared to have several offers from both Europe and the USA nothing connected and various suggestions were not carried through.

Last month they were back on the Internet (Linked In) seeking connections with the same aims in mind. Captain Fabio Bernardo with the Military Police of the State of Sao Paulo, Brazil was and is the primary contact. He is the technical manager responsible for the imaging system and they need training with the systems. Their idea is to send two of their TFOs on an exchange programme with agencies that have "training in this type of operation." It would appear that this might be more difficult than at first envisioned.

They operate 24 AS350 helicopters from 11 operational bases.

The next opportunity to get officers into the seats of learning is with APSCON in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida on July 13-17, 2026. Will it happen this time?

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ADVERTISING WITH POLICE AVIATION NEWS

Times they are a changing sang Bob Dylan way back in 1964 and the same happens here in *Police Aviation News* in its 30th year of publication. 'Stuff' is being outsourced and that includes the PAvCon Europe Conference and Exhibition and now advertising.

New advertising customers are now being directed to a long-stg associate in Parapex Media, better known as Jeremy Parkin. We have worked together for a very long time, but he has an age advantage on The Editor.

As part of a plan to future proof the publication I have now outsourced the advertising and the website content therefore has been altered to reflect the new position.

The new Media Pack is on the primary www.policeaviationnews.com site in PDF form

www.policeaviationnews.info site has it in text

Publication date for all issues is the first day of each month [National holidays excepted].

Advertising copy to be received by the 20th of the month prior to the scheduled publication date to guarantee appearance.

This will not change the arrangement for existing advertising currently dealt with directly

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