

# Police Aviation News

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T H E N E T W O R K I N G C O N T I N U E S



# EDITORIAL

Oh Dear!

There should be red faces in Whitehall just about now. Not for the first time.

All this long-winded trouble about the Home Office getting their act together with BT and EE to erect cellular telephone masts especially built for the Emergency Services Network (ESN) to be up and running by 2017 and yet still being only a promised development as the build programme is way behind schedule. The finished product is supposed not to be afflicted by no signal Blackspots (now of course called Not spots) and along comes a highly predictable leap in technology. Technology does not wait while Civil Servant finish their afternoon tea at home.

Even as ESN struggles with lots of remote 'Not spots' and tries to overcome weak reception in the signal shielding canyons of big city streets a rival mobile telephone company turns up with ideas that appear to kick most of the many problems into touch.

The newcomer is Vodafone, certainly no new kid on the block, who decided that there was another answer and that seeks to employ satellites to fill in those awkwardly named gaps (be they black or not spots). It has demonstrated the technology. The question is now whether Vodafone can get its system up and running before ESN gets its act together. I would bet on a yes to that. See page 20.

This has happened before. About 20 years ago, or was it more, the recording of information from the mission management system in police aircraft (also known as EO/IR) was onto tape. The tape was somewhat flimsy, liable to stretch or break, so a more robust alternative was sought. Finally, the wire recorder was introduced to the market and actually started to be fitted to UK police aircraft. At almost the same time the security industry was seeking to answer their own recording problem for CCTV, something other than a bulky hard drive, and they developed a system without moving parts – and through that we have the ubiquitous SD card..... The wire recorder was stopped in its tracks.

It would appear that history might be about to repeat itself.

*Bryn Elliott*

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

### CAYMAN ISLANDS

**POLICE:** Last month the police helicopter and pilot team were assisting border security and The Royal Turks & Caicos Islands Police tactical operations, providing critical aerial support to enhance surveillance and response efforts.

This collaboration strengthens the units ability to protect borders and ensure public safety. A huge thank you to our sister territory for their support in keeping our Islands secure! [Lee Burling/ RCIPS]

*Editor: Remarkably, it has now been fifteen years since the RCIPS took on the former East Midlands EC135T1 and formed a unit that now has two H145 helicopters serving the Cayman's for police, SAR and air ambulance duties. Doesn't time fly!*



Airbus H145 [RCIPS]

**Cover mage.** In October 2023 the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services issued a tender for four helicopters capable of carrying Bambi Bucket provision with foam injection to renew its fire-fighting fleet. Other features are a wire strike protection system and AFS engine inlet barrier filter.

The result was the delivery of the first Bell 212 Eagle airframe "Forestry 21" in 2024 N621FC c/n 35034 originally a 1991 airframe. The second Bell 212 Eagle in the buy [N622FC] has flown but remains in the factory in Canada being prepared for service. [Brad Weller FDACS]

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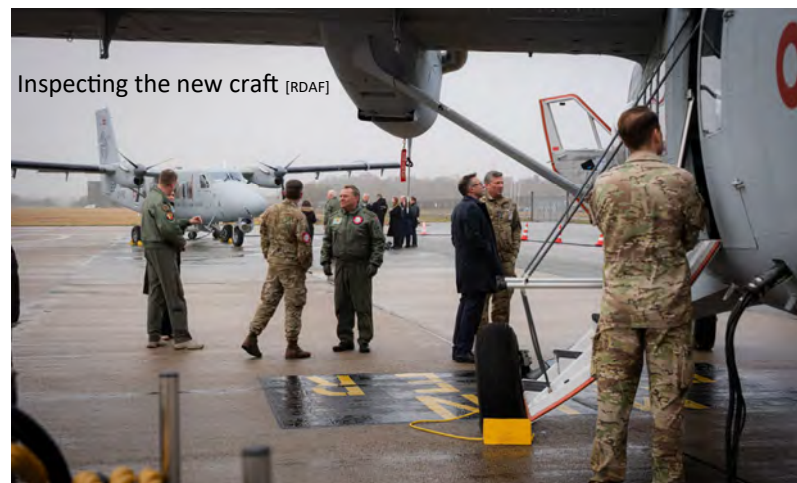
## DENMARK

**HOME GUARD:** As the last issue went to press Airborne Technologies in Weiner Neustadt, Austria, announced the successful official handover of two fully customised de Havilland DHC-6-300 Twin Otter surveillance aircraft to the Danish Home Guard. At a ceremonial event, the aircraft were formally delivered to the end user. They are now fully operational in their designated zone.

This achievement marks the culmination of a remarkable collaboration with the prime contractor Zimex Aviation Ltd., the Danish Airforce Home Guard, and the Danish Ministry of Defence. The state-of-the-art patrol platforms, equipped with the Airborne LINX Surveillance System, are designed to undertake a wide range of missions, including Surveillance, Search and Rescue (SAR), and Maritime Patrol operations.

The project's highlights include a cutting-edge operator workstation, an observer station, and a comprehensive ISR surveillance suite. The modifications were finalized through a collaborative cross-European effort between Altenrhein, Switzerland, and Wiener Neustadt, Austria, showcasing the expertise and dedication of all teams involved.

Wolfgang Grumeth, CEO of Airborne Technologies, remarks, "Seeing these aircraft take to the skies is a proud moment for our team. Together with Zimex, we have created two exceptional platforms that align perfectly with the demanding mission profiles of the Danish Home Guard. Having already modified more than a dozen Twin Otters for various clients worldwide, this project represents another significant achievement for our team. We wish the Danish crews' safe operations."



Inside the cabin of the DHC-6 [ABT]

This state-of-the-art operator workstation is designed for maximum efficiency, providing full control over mission systems, communication, and real-time data analysis. Ergonomic and intuitive, it integrates live data, seamless command and control, and tactical decision-making in one place—ensuring optimal situational awareness and performance. The Observer/Mission Commander operates from a fully equipped workstation, controlling communication and maintaining full oversight of the mission. The table can be stowed for take-off and landing.

Integrated into the aircraft's nose, the ViDAR system takes SAR missions to a whole new level. Previously reliant on the crew's concentration, the water surface is now continuously scanned, detecting and highlighting any changes. [ABT]

## EUROPE

FRANCE AND PAVCON 2025:

THE PROGRAMME (so far)

**Monday 26 May:** Training day: Tactical Air Crew Course For : Manned & UAV crews Sponsor : Tactical Flying & Teledyne FLIR Hosts. : Harald Brink & Luc Stremersch

**Tuesday 27 May:** From 9am there will be a conference and exhibition. The opening ceremony will include a presentation by Jean-François Deltour the Airport Director outlining what is going on at the airfield and co-located motor racing circuit. He will be followed by Cédric Serrano, the event host and owner of Air Attack Technologies, an aerial work company, based in Perpignan Rivesaltes and undertaking 2,000 flight hours annually undertaking specialist missions.



Mid-morning there is a presentation on Missing Persons & Air Support by Alain Remue, Head of the Missing Persons Unit, Belgium. This is followed by Harald Brink (Netherlands Air Support) presenting “How to survive a plane crash in the North Sea” by Mr. Ijsselink.

The afternoon programme includes a presentation centring on Five Years of wildfire fighting in the German State of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) by Manual Deussen, followed by another focussing on the fires in Los Angeles and how the Fire Department worked to control them by Michael Sagely, Senior Pilot of LAFD . A presentation on Air Support in Spain, comes from Nacho Osori of the Police Nacional and that is followed by a presentation on Managing distractions in Aviation by one of the enduring figures in police aviation presentations, Glenn Daley, a former Lieutenant and pilot with the NYPD.

The evening will be rounded off with a few beers and much one-to-one Networking between the operators and their industry suppliers.

**Wednesday 28 May:** After the usual welcome, Glenn Daley will be again presenting on an always fresh Flight Safety subject IIMC Survival. Later in the morning there will be a presentation on the new Irish Police Helicopter and Airplane, this followed by Droneschool, how to teach to keep separation between helicopter and drone by Ewout Westdijk , Head of training, instructor RPAS Police Netherlands. Keeping up the flight safety and drones theme the afternoon brings Safety between Police Helicopters & Drones by Oliver Dismore. Also in the afternoon, and throughout the day, there will be space and time for several presentations from industry – primarily those exhibiting at the event – before the PAVCon Europe ‘Special Weapon’ from the Basque Country in northern Spain police rescue pilot Joseba Mendizabal – introduces us to his latest take on police aviation and management.

THE EXHIBITORS (so far)

Axnes AS; Adams Aviation Supply Co Ltd & Canyon; AeroConnect; Air Attack Technologies; AIR TEAM Intel s.r.o.; Airborne Technologies GmbH, Airbus Helicopters; Anodyne Electronics Manufacturing Corp. (AEM; Babcock International; BECKER AVIONICS GmbH; CarteNav; CENTUM; Enterprise Control Systems Ltd; Flightcell International Ltd; FLYSIGHT; Global Aviation Systems GmbH; HENSOLDT AG; LICO Stahl -und Kunststofftechnik GmbH; Macro-Blue Inc; Nova Systems; PAVCon Europe; Safran Electronics & Defense; SHOTOVER; Skyops NL; Smith-Myers; Southeast Aerospace; Suneris; team2applications GmbH; Teledyne FLIR, THALES; Trakka Systems AB;

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## NETHERLANDS

**MILITARY POLICE:** On January 25, 2025, the 'Staatscourant', the official publication of the Government of the Netherlands, the Koninklijke Marechaussee (KMar, Royal Netherlands Military Police) will receive two Diamond DA 62MPP aircraft.

The Kmar, who interact with the civil police in the Netherlands and who have taken part in the PAvCon Europe event, will operate two civil registered aircraft leased from QinetiQ GmbH. The lease meets a 3-year experimental project for the Kmar, and they will be flown by former Air Force pilots from military airfields in the Netherlands.

The pair, D-IAMT DA62MPP c/n 62.201 call sign Charlie 01 and D-IBMT DA62MPP c/n 62.206 call sign Charlie 02, are fully equipped for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) missions. The Diamond can fly sorties of more than nine hours. QinetiQ GmbH ordered two DA 62MPP in Autumn 2021 and both aircraft were delivered in September 2022. The first of the aircraft, D-IAMT, arrived at Gilze-Rijen airbase on February 21.

Flying the two Diamonds is acclaimed to be an experimental project for the KMar for a period of three years. The planes will be used for surveillance tasks and flown by former Air Force pilots. They will be operated from military airfields in the Netherlands. The first of the new DA 62MPPs, D-IAMT, arrived at Gilze-Rijen airbase today, 21 February 2025, around noon. [Scramble]



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## MALAYSIA

**POLICE:** The Royal Malaysian Police are to get new aircraft and helicopters in the coming years. Tenders have been issued and some contracts signed under a project led by the Ministry of Defence and implemented by the Public-Private Partnership Unit (UKAS) and the Prime Minister's Department, represents a strategic advancement in modernizing the operational capabilities of national security agencies. In January papers were signed to order 28 helicopters from Weststar Aviation Sdn Bhd on lease for use by ministries and other government agencies.

Under a leasing agreement, 12 helicopters will be assigned to the Royal Malaysian Air Force (TUDM), 7 to the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM), 2 to the Royal Malaysian Navy (TLDM), 2 to the Fire and Rescue Department (JPBM), and 4 to the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (Maritim Malaysia). This distribution reflects the government's commitment to adopting a comprehensive approach to national security needs. The helicopters will be used for various missions, ranging from military operations and maritime surveillance to emergency interventions and public safety.

The choice of leasing marks a turning point in Malaysia's acquisition policy, traditionally based on outright equipment purchases, often associated with high upfront costs and a somewhat long-winded series of negotiations, the new approach will hopefully allow for reduced initial expenses while ensuring continuous access to modern and efficient equipment.



File image [PAR]

The primary type being leased for the military is the Leonardo AW149, a modern multi-role military helicopter designed for diverse missions such as troop transport, search and rescue operations, and assault missions. It offers increased payload capacity, advanced avionics, and overall better performance compared to currently deployed models. The aircraft can carry up to 18 troops or be configured for various mission-specific roles, including search and rescue, medical evacuation, and combat support.

The allocation of helicopters to the police and maritime agencies highlights the growing importance of inter-agency cooperation to address issues such as border security, combating illicit trafficking, and illegal fishing.

The police operate the remaining airframes from eight Eurocopter AS355N ordered in the late 1990s and the five survivors of six AW139s ordered in the period 2016-20.

There is another police specific tender out for twin-engine transport aircraft to replace the currently in service, single engine Cessna Caravan 208 and the circa 1986 Pilatus Turbo Porter PC-6. The Caravans has been in service for some 30 to 35 years now. Most if not all of the Turbo Porters have been retired from service but local sources suggest that the 208s are expected to continue in service as long as the manufacturer will support them.

Based on the specifications for the twin engine fixed wing aircraft f, the police may be looking for aircraft like the Canadian DHC-6 300 or 400 Twin Otter, Cessna SkyCourier and the PTDI N219. The new helicopters look likely to be selected from the Bell 429, AW169, H135/145 or similar.

## SWITZERLAND

**ZURICH:** The Kantonspolizei Zürich have been operating a 2010 AS350B3+ Ecureuil HB-ZKZ for some years. When introduced, almost ten years ago, the Zurich Cantonal Police presented its then newly equipped police helicopter, the Ecureuil it was the only police force in Switzerland that has its own helicopter. The arrangement is in concert with Heli Linth from Mollis who own and operate the police helicopter on the behalf of Zurich. The Swiss Air Force supports the other areas using their EC135s simply by exchanging the cabin doors for examples marked 'Polizei.'

Now Zurich is looking for a new helicopter – and a tender for a larger light twin has been issued. For a machine that will be police owned and continuing to operate from Dübendorf airfield.

According to the new tender, the Zurich Cantonal Police intends to conclude a contract for the operational leasing of a new police helicopter. What is needed is a helicopter registered in Switzerland, operated by the Kapo. The machine is to be modified with typical police mission systems, with special systems coming from the customer, i.e. the Kapo. Kapo's contractual partner must ensure the airworthiness and maintenance of the helicopter, whereby the provision of a maintenance spare aircraft is available.


The new helicopter will be twin-engine and with a maximum take-off weight of 3,175 kg or more. Options appear to include the Bell 429, H135/H145 and AW169.

## UNITED STATES

**EVENTS COMING UP:** The annual APSA Rescue Summit 2025 will be held in conjunction with the newly branded Heli-Expo or VERTICON 2025 on March 10, from 0800-1700 CST at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center in Dallas, Texas. Rescue Summit 2025 is for all who use VTOL aircraft in rescue operations. Registration for the event is complimentary as a benefit of membership; a nominal \$65 fee for non-members applies.

This year's Rescue Summit will include various presentations pertaining to helicopter rescue operations including topics such as hoist fatality review, SAR accidents and incidents, an overview of ESPN-R and hoist operator/pilot training guidelines, dynamic hoist approaches and high-altitude flying and hoist vs. hook. Networking opportunities are scheduled throughout the day. There is no cost to members for this event, but registration is required.

APSA's first Safety Seminar of 2025 will take place in St. Augustine, Florida, March 25-27, 2025. The



**2025 APSA Rescue Summit**  
**Monday, March 10, 2025**  
**Dallas, TX**  
**Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center**



Safety Seminars are offered free of charge as a benefit of membership to all active association members (a fee applies for non-members) and cover a wide range of topics through informative training classes as well as roundtable discussions.

The event's host hotel, World Golf Village Renaissance St. Augustine Resort, is offering attendees a discount rate of \$159 per night, including complimentary fitness centre and high-speed Wi-Fi access, until March 10.

APSA's first **Safety Stand-To** of the year will take place in Austin, Texas, April 23-24, 2025. Co-hosted by the Texas Department of Public Safety Aircraft Operations Division and the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department Aviation Unit, this 1.5-day event will be conducted at the Texas Department of Transportation Flight Services hangar located at the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. Topics slated to be discussed include hoist operations, air interdiction, aircraft ground handling, Operation Lone Star, TPWD air ops, and UAS operations.

APSA Safety Stand-Tos are offered to members free of charge, registration is required. With each of these events you need to go to the APSA website and register.

**FIRST RESPONDERS:** The number of drones as first responder operations [DFR] coming to notice in the USA continues to rise, partly no doubt due to the high number of law enforcement agencies in the country. With some 17,000, often small, agencies across the 'States it can be all too easy to find one or two start-ups each month without really having a major effect on operations. Each of the operations coming to notice so far can cover their entire area of operation – just a few miles – with a handful of drones and launch apparatus without proving the universal case for the technology.

## AIR AMBULANCE

### GERMANY

**DRF LUFTRETTUNG:** A significant increase in missions in the dark, another milestone in fleet renewal and innovative medical procedures – in 2024, DRF Luftrettung continued to focus on the consistent further development of emergency rescue by air. A total of 35,850 missions by the non-profit air rescue organisation speak for themselves: rapid assistance from the air in a changing German healthcare system continues to play a central role in ensuring reliable and comprehensive emergency care for the population.

Last year, DRF Luftrettung was in higher demand in the dark compared to the previous year. The 14 helicopter bases, which were on duty 24 hours a day and with extended off-peak hours, carried out 17,907 missions in 2024, 4,058 of which were in the dark – just under a quarter (23 per cent) of all missions carried out by these bases. Compared to 2023, there was an increase of 13 per cent in the number of missions carried out by these crews after sunset. The conversion of the DRF Luftrettung base in Niebüll to 24-hour operation in May 2024 and the start of operations with extended off-peak hours at the HEMS bases in Berlin-Buch and Bremen are therefore seen as logical.

The crews were most frequently called out to patients with cardiovascular diseases such as heart attacks or strokes, as well as accidents and fall injuries. In 2024, the crews flew 160 rescue hoist missions to provide rapid emergency medical care and evacuate patients even in terrain that is difficult to access: an increase of 22 per cent compared to the previous year.

Worldwide patient repatriations were carried out 385 times by the ambulance flight team based at Karlsruhe/Baden-Baden Airport.

Last year, DRF Luftrettung retired the last EC135 from its fleet. Since then, only H135 and H145 helicopters have been used; DRF Luftrettung thus operates the most modern fleet in civil air rescue throughout Europe. The continued expansion of the H145 fleet to 32 aircraft sets a further course for the future.





## FRANCE

**CLERMONT-FERRAND:** The Clermont-Ferrand University Hospital takes to the skies with its new all yellow AgustaWestland AW109 Trekker helicopter F-HTKI assigned to SAMU 63 air ambulance operations operated by S.A.F. Hélicoptères.

The Trekker was first selected as the HEMS operated from Rouen Hospital, Normandy, France back in 2020. S.A.F. Hélicoptères were the launch customer for the type as an air ambulance in France. [AP-V]

## INDIA

**AIR AMBULANCE:** India has reached a \$1 billion deal with IIT-Madras-based electric aircraft startup, ePlane Company. Under the deal, ePlane Company will deliver 788 eVTOL (Electric Vertical Take-Off and Landing) air ambulances to ICATT, India's leading air ambulance service provider.

The 788 eVTOLs will be deployed across every district in India, revolutionizing emergency medical services, particularly in urban and rural areas plagued by congested road traffic. The aircraft, which are electric-powered, will not only enhance access to critical care but also minimize environmental impact compared to conventional air or ground ambulances.

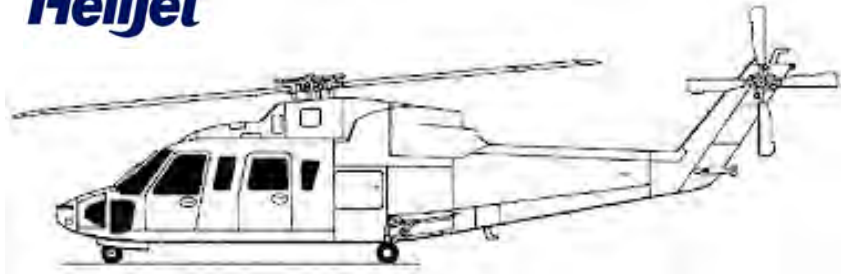
The deal is a significant leap forward for India's electric aviation market, which has been gaining momentum in recent years. The government is also looking to ease airspace regulations to facilitate the use of eVTOLs for transportation and delivery services.

ePlane Company, founded by Satya Chakravarthy, a professor at IIT-Madras, is targeting the last quarter of 2026 to begin operations for its air ambulance services. With a production capacity of 100 units per year, ePlane Company is now focused on raising an additional \$100M to continue the development and certification of eVTOL aircraft. So far, the firm has raised \$20 million from investors.

*Editor: A very positive story in the e-aircraft sector but the negative stories emanating from Germany on the cash problems faced by their entries into the same market may prove salutary. Finding \$20M is one thing but getting a further \$100 may be a fund-raise too far. Perhaps we are to assume that India, a country with few existing air ambulance resources, and significant flight restrictions is going to undergo a gargantuan change of direction.*

# UKRAINE

A medically equipped helicopter will be on its way to Ukraine after it was donated by Helijet to three organizations that work in the country. Helijet says it has been working with Maple Hope Foundation, the Ukrainian World Congress, and Initiative E+ over an eight-month period to donate the Sikorsky S-76A air ambulance helicopter C-GHJV under the understanding that the helicopter is exclusively used for non-commercial, humanitarian and medical evacuation purposes.



The donated helicopter was previously under contract with British Columbia's Ministry of Health for patient transport within the province and was recently pulled from service but still has years of flight capability remaining. Two pilots and two engineers from Ukraine travelled to Richmond in November to receive training on flight, maintenance and deployment.

*Editor: Earlier, on January 24, 2024, it was reported that the Defence Intelligence of Ukraine received a Mi-2 AM1 air ambulance helicopter from Polish sources.*

*The helicopter is equipped with modern medical equipment that allows for provision of assistance to evacuees from the frontline areas right in the air. It can accommodate 2-3 wounded on board.*



Mil Mi-2 has been around a very long time but can still fill a need.



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## UNITED KINGDOM

**CORNWALL:** A new arrival at Staverton Airport, Cheltenham, Gloucester, on the evening of February 21, 2025, was Leonardo AW169 helicopter, G-CNLL (I-RAIE), destined for delivery to the Cornwall Air Ambulance based at Newquay.

The helicopter arrived from Lydd Airport Kent with the pilot using the radio callsign "Helimed 20" during the flight. After landing, the helicopter taxied to the Gama Aviation hangar where she will be undergoing work prior to entry into service. [MJ]

*Editor: The Charity has since announced that the aircraft has entered its period of role fit, with entry into service slated for 'this summer.'* This final stage of the process coincides with the Heli2 Appeal now having well surpassed the £2M milestone of the £2.85M target, leaving just £197,000 to raise.

**COUNTY/MIDLAND:** The official handover ceremony of the new Airbus Helicopter H145 (MBB-BK117 D-3) G-HMAA c/n 21304 took place on Valentines Day February 14 at the smart new HQ base of the charity in Airbase Avenue, Neachley, Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 8UR.

This latest addition to the fleet is owned by the air ambulance charity but continues to be fully supported by Babcock. From the early days the aircraft have been sourced from Staverton, initially under the Bond name and now Babcock. Previously the airframes were leased but the move is now to ownership.

The fleet has been three helicopters and supporting cars operating from three bases at Strensham in Worcestershire, Tatenhill, Staffordshire and the new HQ near RAF Cosford, Shropshire. Recently the favoured type was the leased EC135/H135 but now the move is to the five blade H145. Over the last year, from January 2024, the pre-hospital lifesaving service has been trialling a new clinical operating model, which responds on a 24/7 basis. The helicopters are night capable for which they carry a forward mounted Trakka searchlight, but the fleet of BMW critical care cars operates between 7pm and 8am. The primary role is transporting medical practitioners to the scene to provide life-saving and stabilising treatment, the method of transporting patients from the scene to the nearest hospital is a decision made after they are stabilised.

The new H145, which entered service on January 1, is seen as the standard going forward with an interior supplied by Bucher in place of the Aerolite



Image [MAA]



Ahead of the launch day Midlands AA issued this image. [CAA]

previously favoured. The main identifiable difference is that the Bucher offered a more flexible choice of lay-out going forward.

The interior is laid out for a single patient on the right side of the cabin utilising a wheeled stretcher that feeds straight into the rear via the rear clamshell doors.



Image [PAR]

The once favoured oxygen system supported by Open House Products in the Northwest has now been given up. Some elements of the equipment became unavailable and in the end it was not adopted across the industry.

The latest aircraft for Yorkshire Air Ambulance have also given up the system they spearheaded just a few years ago.

The resulting replacement is of smaller capacity but it utilizes readily available cylinders that are standard and found across the NHS. .



Image [PAR]

As previously reported in PAN the base in Worcestershire, on the edge of the M5 Motorway services, has been undergoing an extensive refurbishment. This is now nearing the end of the works, and it is expected to become fully operational again shortly with the return of the aircraft from its temporary home with Babcock at Staverton. The base is scheduled to have an open day in August.



This H145 G-RMAA c/n 20166 was delivered into service in August 2021. [NorPress]

**DORSET/SOMERSET:** They are discussing a move to Yeovil in 2027-28 timeframe and have meanwhile put the proposed Henstridge hangar extension on hold - other move ideas are also being considered.

The operation was previously based on the AgustaWestland airfield at Yeovil but were obliged to move after the CEO of the manufacturer took exception to them operating an Eurocopter EC135 (from 2007 to 2017) rather than an Agusta. They moved to the GA field at Henstridge which presented no such issues.

Now Dorset and Somerset operate an AgustaWestland AW169 which might be considered more acceptable! A second aircraft is due in the UK in December for completion and it is expected to be in service from May 2026. [Parapex/PAR]

**HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT:** Hampshire & IOW Air Ambulance have released their financial statements for the year to September-2024

Annual Income is up 7.3% to £10.924M, with expenditure up 10.5% to £11.233M which results in an operating loss of £309,000 for the year was more than offset by investment gains of £812K. The balance sheet funds showed £17.670M.

The charity is also planning is a new airbase to be located at Southampton Airport , and much closer to their headquarters, some £9.4M has been set aside for the project. Currently the aircraft is based at Thruxton Airfield and racing circuit on the A303 and 20miles from the HQ at Nursling. [Parapex]

**LINCS & NOTTS:** The Waddington based Leonardo AW169 air ambulance G-LNCC was grounded after an administrative error early last month.

Lincs and Notts Air Ambulance (LNAA) was not operated from February 1 after it failed to meet a deadline to renew its licence for carrying controlled drugs. The error resulted in controlled drugs being withdrawn from the aircraft and base site.

Chief Executive Karen Jobling said she believed the air ambulance should still be allowed to operate, carrying only non-controlled drugs, until the licence is renewed. She added that "the majority of patients who use the air ambulance do not need controlled drugs, and therefore the aircraft should still be able to operate." The East Midlands Ambulance Service

(EMAS), which deploys the aircraft, said, based on clinical advice, it had "identified a higher risk to patient safety is present without LNAA's supply of appropriate controlled drugs".



The licence was renewed ten days later and the aircraft and base restocked with drugs.



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**ARTEMIS**

MAGPAS: The Cambridgeshire based charity has released their financial statements for the year to June 30, 2024.

Faced with a fall of income down 12.3% to £6.334M MAGPAS were operating without an aircraft for some months. Expenditure down 15.2% to £5.214M which led to an operating surplus up 4.3% to £1.120M and allowed a year-end balance sheet funds of £5.076M

Expenditure was down as MAGPAS chose not to take up a contract with Gama Aviation when the latter bought certain assets from the charity's previous operator Specialist Aviation Services. MAGPAS did not have a regular helicopter to operate after their AW169 was returned on February 9, 2024, until their AW109SP arrived on October 7, 2024 under a new contract with Castle Air <sup>[Parapex]</sup>



Previously flying as one of the main helicopters for Northwest Air Ambulance, EC135T2 G-NWAE was recently replaced and the helicopter, stripped of its full marking of the charity, was used by Babcock to fly in staff to the recent Midland AA H145 launch. <sup>[Norpress]</sup>

NORTHWEST: North West Air Ambulance released their financial statements for the year to March 31, 2024.

Income has been up by 10.1% to £15.683M, where expenditure up 12.2% to £14.268M leaving them an operating surplus (including investment gains) up 17.3% to £1.667M. This gave them balance sheet funds on March 31, 2024, of £20.766M <sup>[Parapex]</sup>

WALES: The decision on whether to overturn plans to close Wales Air Ambulance bases at Welshpool and Caernarfon has been delayed for a second time after a court hearing on February 7.

The NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee (JCC), a group made up from the seven health boards in Wales, approved the reorganisation of its bases in April 2024, but campaigners from the 'Save Welshpool Air Ambulance Base' and 'Save Caernarfon Air Ambulance' groups have fought hard against the decision.



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They say closing the bases at Caernarfon and Welshpool and merging them into one new site will leave places like Gwynedd and the surrounding areas without adequate cover. Rapid response vehicles left in their place will not reach casualties as fast as the air ambulance, campaigners say, and this will result in a rise in fatalities in north and mid Wales.

Last July, the campaign groups confirmed that an application for a judicial review had been issued to the High Court. Last October, they received the news that they had won the right to a full hearing in the High Court.

Campaigners were delighted when it was announced that hearing would take place on Wednesday 22 and Thursday 23 January at Cardiff Crown Court, and a decision was expected at the end of the two days. However, at the end of the second day, Justice Turner consulted with legal teams and announced that the decision would be delayed from that day to another hearing on February.7. Now a delay, thought to be two weeks is in place as the judge reserved judgement subject to "proper analysis".



## ZAMBIA

**FLYING DOCTOR:** In an exciting milestone for the Zambia Flying Doctor Service (ZFDS) late in January was the official unveiling of its newly acquired Bell helicopter 9J-KDK. The helicopter carries the initials of the first patron and Republican President Dr. Kenneth David Kaunda.

The celebrations relating to the arrival took place in both Lusaka and Ndola Districts and mark a significant advancement mission capability to enhance lifesaving healthcare services across Zambia.

Service Chiefs present for both events from the Zambia Army, Zambia Airforce, Zambia National Service, Zambia Police, Government Heads, Senior Government officials, Senior Medical Superintendents for the University Teaching Hospital, Ndola and medical officials.

The Zambia Flying Doctor Service (ZFDS) is a grant-aided service delivery statutory board under the Ministry of Health (MoH) that was created under an Act of Parliament No 37 of 1967 with amendment No 18 of 1972 and repealed by act No 25 of 1975 Chapter 298 of the Laws of Zambia. It was founded by Dr. James Lawless in 1965. The FDS Act provides for the establishment, management and development of the Zambia Flying Doctor Service. Aircraft include examples of the Britten-Norman BN-2 and the Cessna 208 Caravan.





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# FIRE

## BRAZIL

IBAMA: The Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources, a federal agency under the Ministry of Environment, which undertakes an environmental police role; looks after the issue and compliance with environmental permits, fights wildfires have taken on new helicopters.

In August 2024, Omni Taxi Aéreo signed a contract with IBAMA to use an Airbus H225 helicopter to fight forest fires. The contract is part of a six-month operation to help with the growing problem of forest fires in the Pantanal region. In September IBAMA acquired five additional foreign helicopters for wildfire suppression, taking the fleet up to ten aircraft.



After a repaint and with permanent marks. [SECOM PR]

The other chartered helicopters were single engine. Two aircraft were already operating in the Pantanal (Mato Grosso do Sul); one is in the Xingu Indigenous Park region (Mato Grosso); and another is in the Araguaia region (Tocantins). The single-engine aircraft charter contract has a duration of four months, while the twins remained in IBAMA's possession for six months.

The aircraft were acquired to carry up to 18 firefighters and equipment and combat the flames with an underslung bucket. Brazil has 22 companies authorized to provide firefighting services. Previously, these services were carried out using small aircraft.

On January 16, IBAMA received seven new AW119 Koala helicopters to bolster operations to combat illegal mining and forest fires. The new fleet was made possible through a lease agreement, with an annual investment of £17.9M/\$22.7M (Brazilian Real BRL 130 million), ensuring approximately five thousand flight hours per year: a 40% increase compared to the previous fleet. Each helicopter can carry six passengers and features constant tracking, rappelling equipment, direct communication with the base, and a Bambi bucket system.

The new aircraft will also be essential for responding to environmental and climate emergencies, coastal monitoring, inspections of projects under environmental licensing, and various other essential activities to safeguard the population and the country's natural resources.

IBAMA has also invested in remote monitoring technology, with a fleet of 163 drones (remotely piloted aircraft) equipped with high-precision sensors and operated by a specialized team of 192 professionals, ensuring greater efficiency in environmental monitoring and protection actions throughout the national territory.

*Editor: It is believed by Parapex Media that there will be nine Koala's in total. They are all 11-15 years old and previously operated as air ambulances in the USA with LifeFlight. There are images on-line of some of the helicopter wearing the dark blue colour scheme of LifeFlight stopping over on the US east coast wearing temporary Brazilian marks last July. The fleet will use Brazilian marks in the range PS-IBA to PS-IBI.*

## TURKEY

**FIRE:** The Turkish Aeronautical Association (THK) has put its fleet of eight Canadair CL-215 water bombers up for sale. The fleet dates back to the 1970s when Canadian operators, including Ontario, flew them. Turkey bought its first one in 2009. It is believed that only five of them are currently airworthy, last June one of the eight (TC-TKV) suffered an accident in which it sank in shallow lake water (see PAN July 2024).

## UNITED STATES

**CALIFORNIA:** A Culver City man agreed to plead guilty to recklessly operating a drone that crashed into a Canadair CL415 operating over the Los Angeles fires in January.

Peter Tripp Akemann, 56, the former president of Skydance Interactive, has agreed to plead guilty to one count of unsafe operation of an unmanned aircraft. He faced a potential one year in prison Akemann and plead guilty to the offence and admitted to his reckless and illegal conduct in flying the drone that posed an imminent safety hazard to the aircraft.

Akemann agreed to pay full restitution to the Government of Quebec, which supplied the plane, and an aircraft repair company that repaired the plane. As a result of the collision, the Government of Quebec and an aircraft repair company incurred costs of at least \$65,169 to repair the plane. Akemann also agreed to complete 150 hours of community service in support of the 2025 Southern California wildfire relief effort.

**FLORIDA:** On the final page of last month's edition Police Aviation News carried an image of a Daher Kodiak 100 N600FC operated since 2023. This was erroneously attributed to the manufacturer where the true owner of the copyright was Brad Weller, Senior Forest Ranger and Tactical Flight Officer, with the Florida Forest Service in Brooksville. They operate the Kodiak, Agusta A119s and Bell Huey. The front cover of this month's edition also comes from Brad,



# SEARCH & RESCUE

## IRELAND

**COAST GUARD:** The Irish Coast Guard contract is experiencing some delays in getting each base live under the new contract with Bristow Helicopters. Sligo was originally slated for handover from CHC to Bristow on February 14, but this has now been put back to April 1.

Bristow have issued the following statement:

Establishing a new service with new bases is a complex process which requires close cooperation between multiple key stakeholders, including the incumbent operator, the regulator, future employees, partners, suppliers and many more over a carefully managed phased transition period. The phased transition period will see CHCI continue to operate SAR operations at the Sligo base until 30 April 2025 at which point the service will transition to Bristow. Collaborative engagement to manage the broader transition plan is ongoing, with safety and service delivery at the heart of all discussions. More details about the process at the Waterford and Weston bases will be available soon.

Bristow are operating Leonardo AW189s on this contract, whereas previous contractor CHC flew Sikorsky S92s. The first of the five CHC Sikorsky S92s has been shipped to Canada via Liverpool,

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## UNITED KINGDOM

**SCOTLAND:** A planning application for a Coastguard hangar has been filed and withdrawn at Oban Airport on the west coast of Scotland. Following a flood risk assessment and questions over multiple occupancy and sleeping accommodation it was recommended that a decision on the application should be deferred.

The activity suggests that there may be plans by operator Bristow for a move away from Prestwick Airport. A query has been raised with them but has not yet been answered.

## CHANNEL UPDATE

At face value the numbers of illegal migrants crossing the English Channel in January and February 2025 have fallen when compared to the same period in 2024. In the first 2 months of 2024 the total was 2,255. This year, up to and including the 25 February, the total is 1,956. Twenty three days of adverse weather, with strong winds, prevented crossings in January. In February, up to and including the 25 February, the weather also guarded the UK's southern border with France for a further 16 days.

Sadly, the French police, those paid for by the United Kingdom government to patrol the beaches of northern France, continue to disappoint. In the first 2 weeks of February, when the UK Border Force landed 555 illegal migrants at Dover, from 12 boats, the French police, according to UK government figures, failed to prevent any departures from the French beaches bordering the English Channel.

Nevertheless, on the evening of Friday, 14 February the French rescued 69 migrants from an inflatable boat which foundered in French waters, near Calais. Sadly, one migrant perished during this rescue operation.

James A Cowan MBE

## INDUSTRY

**Vodafone** has demonstrated the world's first space video call from an area of no coverage using a standard mobile phone and commercial satellites built to offer a full mobile broadband experience.

Rowan Chesmer, a Vodafone engineer, made an historic video call from a remote area of Wales to Margherita Della Valle, Vodafone Group Chief Executive, using satellites built to offer a full mobile broadband experience.

Astronaut Tim Peake joined Margherita in Newbury, UK, for unveiling of first space to land gateway in Europe which seamlessly connects the satellites with Vodafone's terrestrial network.

Currently the only satellite service in the world today that offers mobile broadband directly to multiple normal 4G or 5G smartphones, Vodafone aims to offer the first commercial direct-to-smartphone broadband satellite service in Europe from later this year and into 2026.

Unlike today's satellite-based services, users do not need a special dish, terminal or expensive satellite phone to benefit from full mobile broadband connectivity. The service they will receive mirrors the experience of existing 4G and 5G mobile networks, enabling them to use everyday smartphones to switch between space and ground-based networks automatically.

This historic milestone marks another significant step forward in the partnership of Vodafone and AST SpaceMobile. The provider has been a long-time investor in AST SpaceMobile, and they have now achieved several world firsts in space-based broadband connectivity, including the first-ever space-based voice call, the first-ever 4G download speed above 10 Mbps, and the first-ever 5G voice call. This latest achievement using low earth orbit AST BlueBird satellites, takes them one step closer to a mission to eliminate connectivity gaps and make cellular broadband accessible to all.

Following further tests this Spring, Vodafone aims to progressively introduce the direct-to-smartphone broadband satellite service commercially in markets across Europe later this year and during 2026 to close the last remaining coverage gaps.

*Ed: Currently holding back, the technology is the number of satellites being fielded by AST SpaceMobile. Arguably they are still offering to prove the region with 100% coverage next year which is still two years ahead of the often-missed UK ESN targets.*

*Despite the sterling work undertaken by the ESN team (including the BT and EE networks ) there remain far too many historic/legacy reception gaps in the cellular telephone system in the UK and it may be that the only true answer to those gaps is a system that feeds into a satellite system.*



The good news continues to roll out of the former Doncaster Sheffield Airport – now to be renamed **South Yorkshire Airport City**.

The Vulcan to the sky charity that was told to leave the site in 2022, has now been told it can stay by two very accommodating and welcoming potential landlords. They had found a different venue but are now pleased that the Avro Vulcan bomber XH558 and the English Electric Canberra, do not need to be dismantled and moved by road and rebuilt elsewhere!



The City of Doncaster Council (CDC) have setup **FlyDoncaster Ltd**, which is a wholly owned company within the council, which has been established to manage the airport and partner with an international airport operator. Its key initial role is to mobilise the re-opening of the airport for passenger flights in Spring 2026.

The limited aircraft movements from 2Excel who are based at the airport have continued and this is clearly just the beginning. Even the National Government Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rachel Reeves, has been noted supporting the re-opening of the airport. Although her involvement may yet prove to be a debatable honour.

One of Europe's most successful airport operator's subsidiaries, which has operations and projects around the world, has been unveiled to strategically partner the reopening of the former Doncaster Sheffield Airport (DSA).

Germany-based **Munich Airport International GmbH (MAI)** will provide operational and management services to FlyDoncaster, the airport's operator – a wholly owned City of Doncaster Council (CDC) company - along with FP Airports Ltd, aviation sector specialists in the UK, to progress the airport's reopening. CDC has established FlyDoncaster and has started the mobilisation of the airport.

Just a few miles south of the yet to be resurrected Doncaster airport lies another smaller flying field at Gamston near Retford, Nottinghamshire. This too has an international flavour to its surveillance operations in that is home to a company that provides air security to parts of Europe that other countries can only aspire to!

During a working visit to the UK, Ambassador Her Excellency Ms Fleur Thomas visited **DEA Specialised Airborne Operations** in Retford—an innovative British SME providing Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) services to the Luxembourg Directorate of Defence.

As a trusted partner, DEA Aviation plays a key role in supporting Luxembourg's defence capabilities, demonstrating the strength of UK-Luxembourg collaboration in security and innovation.

DEA say they are proud to support such strategic partnerships that enhance European defence and security. Fleur Thomas was accredited as Her Majesty's Ambassador to Luxembourg for Great Britain and Northern Ireland in April 2021.





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Dr Richard Salisbury accepts the award from the Princess Royal.. [Thermoteknix]

On February 4 last Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal opened a new electro-optics facility at **Thermoteknix** in Cambridge, and presented the company with the King's Award for Enterprise trophy for Innovation, in recognition of the company's groundbreaking development in thermal imaging.

Employing 75 people, Thermoteknix was established in 1982 by Managing Director Dr Richard Salisbury. The company manufactures a wide range of industrial and surveillance infrared based systems. With more than 40 years of milestones and groundbreaking innovation, the company made history in 2009 when its thermal imaging cameras were used by NASA on its successful LCROSS moon landing mission which identified the presence of lunar sub-surface water.

Thermoteknix has been the recipient of five such prestigious Queen's and King's Awards in recognition of its innovation and sales success in overseas trade.

The Princess Royal toured Thermoteknix' headquarters in Cambridge, during which Her Royal Highness was given demonstrations of the company's thermal imaging products, including cameras and systems which reduce industrial Carbon emissions, and fused night vision goggles which deliver UK forces with superior situational awareness and Augmented Reality capabilities.

The Princess Royal formally opened the new electro-optics facility and presented The King's Award for Enterprise before going on to unveil a commemorative plaque to mark her visit.

For more information on Thermoteknix Systems Ltd., visit [www.thermoteknix.com](http://www.thermoteknix.com).

In the wake of last year's take-over of **ESG Elektroniksystem** und Logistik GmbH by Hensoldt the contact details for ESG staff are now migrating to Hensoldt addresses. In most instances the change is simple deleting the @esg with the @hensoldt.net domain..



ESG remains its own legal entity, but operationally they are now part of the Multi Domain Solution division of Hensoldt.

A Trans-Atlantic 'Narco-Sub' was found abandoned along the Galician coast in northern Spain last month. It sunk while being towed to shore, it was estimated to have carried 3 tons of cocaine.

This is the 3rd time a narco-submarine has been discovered near Galicia's rugged coastline, often referred to as a smuggler's paradise, despite continued efforts to increase surveillance in the area.

The submarine was 20 meters long and featured a twin-diesel engine configuration, which is a change from the single-engine setups seen in the past. The craft usually operate just above the waterline, making them difficult to spot via radar or aerial surveillance. True submersibles with full underwater capability are rare, but there is a noticeable trend towards more sophisticated, robust designs in response to increasing surveillance.

The French Defence Procurement Agency (Direction Générale de l'Armement) has signed a contract with **Airbus Defence and Space** as prime contractor, in partnership with Thales, for a risk-assessment study

of the future maritime patrol aircraft programme. This 24-month contract follows on from the architecture and feasibility study launched at the end of 2022.

The aim of this new definition study and risk-assessment contract is to prepare for the development and production launch of the maritime patrol aircraft programme at the end of 2026.

The type that is expected to go forward is the Airbus A321 MPA, a militarised version of the Airbus A321XLR. The aim is to have a new aircraft to replace the fleet of Atlantique 2 operated by the French Navy from the Lann-Bihoué (France) naval air base by the 2030-2040 timeframe.

**Airborne Technologies** continue to promote their facility as a premier venue for short term events that promote aviation and their facilities to a wider market.



On January 23 UniCredit Bank Austria AG chose the ABT facilities as the venue for their Business Breakfast with their corporate clients. The highlight of the morning was a fascinating keynote by their Chief Economist, Stefan Bruckbauer.

Following the presentation, participants had the opportunity to tour parts of the company and gain insights into the aviation sector work. One of the Danish Home Guard aircraft was included in the walk around.

The **Police Foundation** has published a report in partnership with Forensic Analytics that looks at how UK policing is using AI now and whether it has the skills to fully realise the potential of the technology in the future...





Faced with the seemingly intractable problem of not being able to sell their **Kamov** KA226 to India because it was scheduled to be powered with an embargoed French engine the Russian's have now offered a variant powered by a VK-650 engine the first Russian engine in the 650-750hp class. The engine has just received its type certificate and it is hoped that it will overcome the massive problem faced by the Russian helicopter industry in having two nominally successful types (the KA226 and the Ansat) but no engine for them that overcomes local market needs and the foreign sales issues even where the potential customer chooses to ignore the international embargoes.

Meanwhile there have been reports that an Indian Army general has been visiting the Airbus facility in France talking about the plan to build a H125 production facility in India.

Canadian avionics manufacturer, **Anodyne Electronics Manufacturing Corp. (AEM)**, of *Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada* has announced a new efficient loudspeaker is now available to the market.

The Loud Hailer System (LHS41) is AEM's newest in loudspeaker system technology. Building upon the successes and high performance of AEM's existing family of loudspeaker systems, the LHS41 delivers unmatched audio quality and Sound Pressure Level (SPL) output from an impressively efficient and relatively compact mechanical package.

Made up of the LS800-34DT (Loudspeaker), LSA800-002 (Amplifier) and LSC22-10xN (Controller), the LHS41 produces 142 dB with extremely low distortion levels and a full system weight at a lean 36.6 lb/16.69 kg (MAX). As a result of efficient Direct Drive loudspeaker drivers, the LHS41 requires only 800W peak output power to produce AEM's loudest and clearest system to date.

The system features a front-mount auxiliary input allows message transmission from an MP3 player or smartphone, onboard digital storage for fast recording and playback, field-adjustable mic input sensitivity function to boost low level mic signals and reduce feedback, power-saving Direct Drive loudspeaker drivers, unibody loudspeaker chassis construction, standard MIL-STD Speaker Connectors and standard NVIS-compliant lighting

Also, from AEM is an announcement that its MTP136D Panel-Mount Forest Service Radio has received full approval by the United States Forestry Service (USFS) and Department of Interior (DOI) for use in all federally regulated aerial firefighting agency and contractor aircraft.

Meeting all USFS communications requirements for aerial firefighting use across all U.S. jurisdictions, the MTP136D is a Project 25 Phase 1 compliant VHF FM solution for digital and analogue communication on all channels across the 136MHz to 174MHz frequency band.

Originally released in late 2023 with Canadian launch customer Yellowhead Helicopters, AEM subsequently achieved a Transport Canada STC for the installation of the MTP136D on all Airbus H125 aircraft, which sparked the radio's initial push into the Canadian market with a high introduction rate.

The USFS approval opens up an addressable market of more than 3,000 applicable aircraft fit to be upgraded to the MTP136D from existing legacy technology.

The MTP136D features a large NVIS-compatible screen displaying all channel and operational information and was developed in consultation with tactical aerial firefighting agencies to be intuitive for users and able to withstand demanding mission environments.

Call the AEM sales team at [1-888-763-1088](tel:1-888-763-1088) or email [sales@aem-corp.com](mailto:sales@aem-corp.com) to enquire or meet up with them at Verticon March 11-13.

**Frequentis** marks the debut of its LifeX3020 solution in Southeast Asia, improving emergency call handling and response coordination across three major centres and nationwide blue light agencies. This effort supports Malaysia's Next Generation Emergency Services 999 (NG999) project, an upgrade designed to replace the current Malaysian Emergency Response System (MERS999). The initiative underscores Malaysia's strong commitment to enhancing public safety across the nation.

Frequentis will install innovative systems in three emergency response centres, the first deployment of its kind in Southeast Asia. These implementations will streamline emergency call handling, enabling quicker and more effective responses from key agencies such as police, fire, maritime, and civil defence services. The project involves the setup of 350 workstations across key emergency centres, backed by a robust infrastructure designed to enable rapid response across Malaysia. With the new platform, call takers will have enhanced tools to assess emergencies quickly and direct resources to the appropriate agencies without delay.

Frequentis partners with local stakeholders to implement this large-scale project, which aligns with Malaysia's broader efforts to strengthen national emergency services.



The **Diamond Aircraft** DA62 MPP (Multi-Purpose Platform) has once again proven its capability as a versatile and efficient aerial platform. In a recent mission, the aircraft completed a 9-hour, 20-minute surveillance flight, demonstrating its long-endurance performance, advanced technology, and operational flexibility.

The route, spanning over 900 nautical miles, covered Wiener Neustadt, Austria, the Adriatic coastline of Croatia, the east coast of Italy, and concluded with a return leg through Venice and Carinthia. The mission route provided a challenging mix of operational environments, including maritime, mountain, and coastal surveillance.

The unrefuelled 9 hours 20 minutes flight offered high fuel efficiency - an average consumption of 8.6 gallons per hour of Jet-A1 fuel carrying advanced surveillance equipment, including the ARTEMIS T-U IMSI Catcher from Smith Myers and a state-of-the-art EO/IR camera EUROFLIR 410 by Safran.

The Smith Myers Artemis T-U SAR system provides real-time signal location and analysis, enabling operators to monitor communications over telecommunications frequencies. This capability is critical for search and rescue, law enforcement and maritime surveillance missions.

The Safran Euroflir™ 410 operates in four spectral wavebands - TV, NIR, SWIR, MWIR – with a wide field-of-view and ultra-long-range observation, allowing it to function at standoff distance any time day or night. With a service ceiling of 20,000 feet, the DA62 MPP is ideally suited for mountainous terrain, whether locating missing persons in avalanches or wildfires, the aircraft is a valuable asset for SAR operators.

**Adams Aviation Repair Centre** has cemented its reputation as the premier aviation headset repair specialist in the UK by becoming the officially authorised warranty repair station for **Bose**, **David Clark**, and now **Lightspeed Aviation**. This milestone underscores the company's commitment to providing top-tier service, ensuring pilots, airlines, and aviation professionals receive fast, reliable, and manufacturer-approved repairs for their essential communication equipment.

For years, Adams Aviation has been synonymous with excellence in aviation parts and support. Expanding into repair services, the company has steadily built a trusted name, offering unparalleled expertise in diagnosing and fixing headset issues with manufacturer-approved techniques and genuine parts. With its authorised warranty repair station status for Bose and David Clark, Adams Aviation has already been supporting general aviation pilots, commercial flight crews, and ground mechanics with high-quality repairs and servicing. The addition of Lightspeed Aviation further enhances its ability to cater to a growing market, providing comprehensive support for a wider range of aviation professionals.



**Aerox® Aerospace Group** has acquired Omnigas Systems, Inc, a Florida based of aftermarket services for aerospace oxygen and fire suppression systems catering to commercial aviation, business aviation, and military customers.

Aerox specialises in oxygen systems engineering and manufacturing for leading airframe manufacturers, Air Medical interiors manufacturers, and other oxygen system integrators. The addition of Omnigas enhances Aerox 's capabilities to support a broader in-service fleet and a wider range of oxygen system brands beyond Aerox® systems.

Omnigas Systems will continue to operate independently within the Aerox® Aerospace Group portfolio alongside Aerox® Aviation Oxygen Systems and Aerox® Fluid Power. Omnigas will be re-branded as "Aerox® Omnigas MRO." <https://www.aerox.com>



**Pilatus** delivered 153 aircraft last year and achieved record sales despite ongoing challenges in its supply chain. The Swiss aircraft manufacturer reported total sales of 1.633 billion Swiss francs (\$1.81 billion), an EBIT of 243 million Swiss francs (\$269 million), and a substantial order book valued at 2.193 billion Swiss francs (\$2.43 billion).

This represents a more than 10% increase in sales compared to the already successful 2023 fiscal year. The company's delivery figures include 96 PC-12 NGXs, 51 PC-24s, and 6 PC-21s, demonstrating strong demand across its product lines.

**HENSOLDT** announced the launch of the DL-6000, its sixth-generation data link solution, at IDEX 2025, the military show held in Abu Dhabi last month. The DL-6000 offers long-range, line-of-sight HD video and telemetry data exchange across multiple platforms.

The DL-6000 is an IP-based, high-data communications link that sets a new standard in video and telemetry transmission. Being internet protocol (IP) based, it provides the transmission of secure, high-definition video and telemetry data from unmanned and rotary-wing airborne platforms to ground-based command and control centres. Several radios may be networked together, enabling distributed payload and platform control, as well as display capabilities.

Helicopter industry data experts Parapex Media identified for HeliHub.com that the two Leonardo AW09 prototypes had not been flying for many weeks – the last AW09 noted flight was on October 5, 2024. As a new model pursues certification, this is a long break in the programme. **Leonardo** exclusively briefed HeliHub.com on the situation – they identified “a manufacturing non-conformity” with a supplier part in the transmission system. After addressing the issue with the unnamed supplier, Leonardo have confirmed that they are still implementing the solution. This has necessitated the pause in flight test activities, and Leonardo expect to resume flights in the coming weeks, without being any more specific on timing. [see HeliHub for additional detailing on this story]

## ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

**28 January 2025 Bombardier LearJet 35 XA-UCI.** Air ambulance of Jet Rescue Air Ambulance or Med Jets departing near North Philadelphia Airport (PNE/KPNE), Philadelphia, PA for an airport at Springfield-Branson National Airport in Missouri with six people on board (one young patient, relatives and crew) crashed into dwellings and struck a car killing one. Seven died. [Media/NTSB]

**29 January 2025 Cessna S550 Citation S/II YV3561** Venezuela Ministry of Interior, Justice and Peace the Cessna crashed shortly after take-off from Caracas/La Carlota-Gen. Francisco de Miranda Air Base, Venezuela.

It departed from runway 11, made a climbing right-hand turn until it began to descend, impacting a wooded area in the El Volcán sector of the Baruta municipality, about 7 km south of the airport. All three persons on board died.

**17 February 2025 Eurocopter EC135T2 N405TJ** Air ambulance of Air Methods LLC left Abington Memorial Hospital bound for the helipad of Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Philadelphia, PA. Whilst on the approach to the destination helipad, seven minutes after departure, was struck by two unidentified items which caused damage to the main rotor blades cowling and fuselage. [ASN]

**17 February 2025 Leonardo AW119 Koala PS-IBD.** Firefighting helicopter of the Brazilian IBAMA (Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources) flying a police surveillance mission with eight persons on board between Uruará, PA and Altamira, PA when the starboard door's window ejection system was inadvertently activated. The aircraft landed safely at the destination with no one on board injured. [ASN]

**20 February 2025 Kazan Ansat-GMSU RA-20050.** National Air Ambulance Service of Russia. The Ansat with four persons aboard undertook a hard landing at the Stavropol airport after partially losing control. There were two pilots and two medical workers on board. During a medical mission flight to the Ipatovo area, the pilots reported a problem with rotor pitch. In attempting a pitch-up run on landing onto snow the tail boom struck first and the machine swung to its right but landed almost upright. [ASN/Telegram]

**20 February 2025 Leonardo AW119Kx Koala PR-JPC** Polícia Civil do Rio de Janeiro exchanged fire with persons on the ground in Duque de Caxias, Rio de Janeiro. When attempting to evade the ground fire they collided with power lines and made an emergency landing at Jardim Balneário Ana Clara, Duque de Caxias, Rio de Janeiro. The three occupants were not injured and the helicopter received minor damage. [ASN]

**24 February 2025 EC135P2 N930NH** Air Ambulance of Novant Health AirLink crashed in a wooded area near Wilmington at night. The helicopter departed New Hanover Regional Medical Center-Ed North Heliport, North Carolina. The incident was near the New Hanover/Pender County line. The three were employees not patients. Two of the three people involved in the accident were "severely injured" [ASN]

# SAFETY

A new podcast aimed at pilots, flight crew, ATC and operational staff is highlighting the continued risk of laser attacks on aircraft and the importance of reporting them.

The UK Civil Aviation Authority (UK CAA) receives approximately 1400 reports of laser interference each year with police and air ambulance services experiencing higher rates of strikes per flight due to lower and slower flights that operate in or around residential areas.

A laser incident is a serious distraction for any flight crew, but for air ambulances it can also delay vital medical treatment reaching patients on the ground.

The episode features crew members from Yorkshire Air Ambulance Service (YAA) who have seen an increase in lasers being shone at their aircraft. Technical Crew Member Alex Clark describes one incident where a laser beam hit his eye, resulting in a burnt cornea.

Listeners will also hear from YAA Chief Pilot Owen McTeggart who shares his experience of laser attacks, the risks for pilots and crew, and the procedures they have in place following an incident.

James Cunningham, Head of Aviation Safety for the National Police Air Service (NPAS) is also featured in the episode and explains that it is vital for UK airspace users to report incidents to their local police force, in addition to making a Mandatory Occurrence Report to the UK CAA.

The episode is the latest in the CAA's Safety Files series which looks at occurrence, incident or accident reports that have been published throughout the different areas of the UK aviation industry.

Each episode focuses on a different report with aviation experts discussing the relevant safety guidance and what can be learnt from the incident.

You can listen now at: <https://podfollow.com/caa-safety-files>

# UNMANNED

## AMAZON PRIME

By a happy coincidence, on the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the formation of the world's first public railway company to use steam locomotives, the Stockton and Darlington Railway, 1825 to 1863, Amazon has selected its distribution centre at Darlington for its 'innovative and groundbreaking' new service - Amazon Prime Air.

Following successful trials in the USA, in Arizona and Texas, and after consultation with the Civil Aviation Authority, the National Air Traffic Services, Teesside Airport, aircraft operators, including the air ambulances service and the public, Amazon will now submit a planning application to Darlington Borough Council. A decision is anticipated later this year with flying commencing in 2026, if the application is successful.

The drone is the Prime Air Mk30, maximum take-off weight 80 lbs, payload 5 lbs, cruising at up to 50 mph at 400 feet. The plan is to deliver a boxed package to an agreed address within a 7.5-mile radius of the distribution centre, within 2 hours of the order being placed, in daylight, during 'office hours' and under visual flight rules (VFR). The Mk30 drone can be flown in light drizzle, but not in known icing conditions.



The Amazon Prime Air Mk30 drone, maximum take-off weight 80 lbs, payload 5 lbs.



In order to operate 'beyond visual line of sight' (BVLOS) the Mk30 drone has a sophisticated detect and avoid, 'perception system' using a combination of an optical camera, a thermal camera and radar to provide all-round detection, biased towards the direction of flight. The drone, powered by a battery with six electric motors and six 'quiet' propellers, has a range of 15 miles.

The full cost of this innovative aerial delivery system has not been revealed, although, setting aside any flight safety concerns, it's unlikely to be able to compete financially with a man, or a woman, in a van, delivering dozens, if not hundreds of packages in the same day, in all weathers, day or night!

[James A Cowan MBE]

Delivering a 5 lb package, by air, at an agreed address within 7.5 miles of the Amazon distribution centre at Darlington. [Amazon]

# SECURITY & POLICING 2025

UK UAS manufacturer Evolve Dynamics will be at Security and Policing, 11 - 13 March 2025 in Farnborough, Hampshire [www.securityandpolicing.co.uk](http://www.securityandpolicing.co.uk)

Evolve Dynamics are the designer, developer and manufacturer of mission-specific UAV, RPAS, drone and payload systems for ISTAR (Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance) systems.

The Sky Mantis all weather long endurance UAV is now widely deployed with UK and international Police Forces, Fire Services, Energy inspection, Search & Rescue organisations and UK MoD (Ministry of Defence) customers.

Evolve Dynamics is continuously developing new payloads and platforms - eVTOL, nano, micro, EW to name a few and will be demonstrating and explaining them and customer requirements on stand 22. Evolve Dynamics are based at the Surrey Technology Centre, 40 Occam Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 7YG [sales@evolvedynamics.com](mailto:sales@evolvedynamics.com) +44 1483 575575

## PEOPLE

An official of the Philippine National Police was among the 67 people killed in the collision between a passenger jet and a helicopter in the approaches to Reagan National Airport, Washington DC., USA Both aircraft plunged into the Potomac River with no survivors.

In a statement, the PNP identified the officer as Police Colonel. Pergentino Malabed Jr, chief of the Supply Management Division and member of the Philippine National Police Academy Class of 1998. The 51 years old officer was on official travel for the PNP at the time of the tragedy.

Sixty-seven people died after a passenger plane on approach to Reagan National Airport near Washington, DC, collided with a US Army helicopter midair at night. The airliner was a Bombardier CRJ-701ER N709PS operated by American Eagle/PSA Airlines and the helicopter was a Sikorsky UH-60 Blackhawk of the US Army.



## MOVE ALONG THERE

When, as a young constable back in the Swinging 60s, I was instructed in the use of what was then still more often than not called the "wireless."

They (who knew better) drummed into us the need for conciseness in the use of the technology. Things have not changed that much in transmitting over wires or the airwaves and there are still plenty of opportunities to be loose with diction, to get excited and to lose "Clarity and Brevity" Why then, in the name of political correctness has there been this move by the confused people who insist on adding pronouns to their name to say that a suitably descriptive "Blackspot" should be substituted with a word like "Not spot"? Surely in their confusion over their own correct gender they might realise that "Not spot" is easily confused over transmission systems with "Hotspot" which has the exact opposite meaning.

What could go wrong?

In the United Kingdom the Police Foundation has published a report in partnership with Forensic Analytics that looks at how UK policing is using AI now and whether it has the skills to fully realise the potential of the technology in the future... The basic conclusion is that it will get a lot more done and more quickly if it embraces AI. I have little doubt that some time soon there will be an AI version of *Police Aviation News* appearing in your mailbox. Perhaps these words are destined to be repeated time and time again through the coming centuries?



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# THE EYES HAVE IT

The British police and public are having trouble with its judiciary and strange decisions (who isn't?), leading to some mind-boggling decisions.

In one recent instance (which may in its idiocy have already strayed from these shores) a convicted terrorist lady, Farishta Jami, complained to the court that the police had issued the 'wrong' mug shot to the media. She objected that it showed her face in full rather than hidden behind a covering. The judge was nonplussed by the complaint but decided to leave it to the police to resolve. A few hours later the police issued the second image showing just her eyes peering out of a niqab and instructions that the media could choose which one to publish!



BEFORE

Who says humour is dead?

AFTER

Meanwhile the British Government continues to stockpile massive numbers of small boats and outboard motors to supply the indigenous British people when they decide to evacuate the United Kingdom through overcrowding.

The world is coming to terms with "The Donald" ... there have been a large number of edicts and opinions coming out of the White House and at least some of it has been well received food for thought. There have been some divergences of opinion though on why the US President should get so annoyed about why Europe is not buying US cars, food, and to some degree, aircraft.



The last time I looked even the average US citizen chooses (just like me) to drive cars not designed in the home country i.e. foreign cars. Like many Americans I drive a Japanese car simply because they are good value, cheaper to operate and fit on smaller roads. The same applies to those Americans that choose to buy such as Audi, BMW, Volvo etc. They place their Dollars where they see the best overall value and probably make a point of not mentioning the 1940s war and all that went with it.

And the current bestselling marque of civil helicopter and civil airliner across the world? Airbus. The reasons why would of course fill a book, no time for that here AI might be watching.....

Tellingly Trump recently toured a Boeing plant to check out new features and highlight the aircraft maker's delay in delivering new versions of the Air Force One aircraft. They cannot really claim that they are having difficulties with the technology – 56 years after the type was first flown— and yes, there are problems that even a 20% import tariff cannot solve immediately.

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[www.publicsafetyaviation.org](http://www.publicsafetyaviation.org)



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**MEANWHILE....**

It seems that one US museum is making great news out of an African American female helicopter pilot, Lindsey Jones, making the grade. I am not so sure that the many African female helicopter pilots, those not having an American background, born and residing in Africa (and therefore Africans) will be quite so awestruck but even then it turns out that the Jones version of a first relates only to her being the first African American to fly for the US National Guard. Seems that some PR person in the US is having trouble with exactly how you corollate history and news! Make it up as you go along it seems.

**EVENTS**

**UPCOMING**

**5-6 March 2025 BAPCO 2025.** Coventry Building Society Arena., Coventry CV6 6AQ

This years Annual BAPCO Event, is bringing together an international line-up of leading expert speakers. They will be sharing their expertise via in-depth analysis, real-life case studies and interactive debate - addressing all the latest you need to know in UK public safety communications.

The programme consists of three streams centred around people & strategy, technology & hands-on showcases and interactive discussions in "The Huddle", plus the new AI Zone and wearables Zones. The agenda is packed with:

*Following the recent announcements of the signings of the Mobile Services and User Services contracts earlier this year, there will be speaker sessions that will outline the next steps that will be undertaken to deliver the Emergency Services Network. More details will be posted online so make sure to stay tuned for more updates over the coming weeks."*

BAPCO expects 95 expert speakers, over 2000 visitors and 86 exhibitors. In 2024 some 58 countries were represented.

There is a CPD-accredited conference programme and exhibitor listings on the website

**11-13 March 2025 Verticon 2025** Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center Dallas, TX

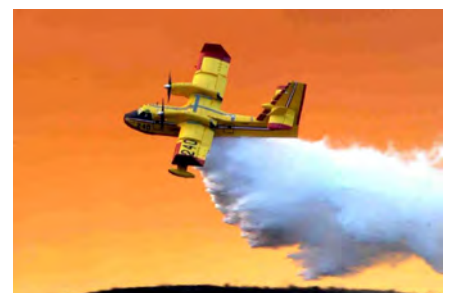


**25-27 March World Security Congress**, Madrid Spain.

**26-27 March 2025 Aerial Fire Fighting Europe** is taking place this month organized by Tangent Link, in partnership with the French Ministry of the Interior (and France's aerial firefighting agency, Sécurité Civile), Aerospace Valley, the Fédération Française des Métiers de l'Incendie (FFMI), Bordeaux Technowest, Bordeaux Métropole and Région Nouvelle-Aquitaine are inviting everyone to Bordeaux, France for the 27<sup>th</sup> edition of the global Aerial Fire Fighting Series.

The two-day event will include conference sessions and a trade show offering industry and practitioners an opportunity to come together to shape the tactics and technologies of the AFF community, and to directly engage with government stakeholders, aerial operators, and technology providers from all over the world. Industry sponsors include Airbus, Air Tractor, Conair, De Havilland Canada and Leonardo.

The event will be teaming up with AirMed&Rescue magazine as a media partner and sponsor. Aerial Fire Fighting Series: Europe is all about pushing the global aerial firefighting community forward, highlighting the latest strategies, technologies, and innovations. It's the go-to event



where industry professionals, government leaders, and aerial operators come together for networking and learning. For details check out Tangent Link Limited, based at Chilterns House Business Centre, Eton Place, 64 High Street, Burnham, SL1 7JT UK. [info@tangentlink.com](mailto:info@tangentlink.com)

**13-15 May 2025 DUBAI**

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

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

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


The exhibition will showcase pioneering solutions from leading international companies, including Samsung as the event’s strategic partner, alongside ESRI, Presight, and Thermo Fisher. More than 200 exhibitors specialising in security technologies, armoured vehicles, marine

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safety systems, and surveillance solutions—such as Hikvision, Inkas Armored, AksumMarine, and Dahua Technology—will contribute to making this the largest and most impactful policing event on the global calendar.

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

Spanning 5,000 square metres, the exhibition will provide a platform for companies to showcase their innovations to law enforcement leaders, government officials, and global experts.

[www.worldpolicesummit.com](http://www.worldpolicesummit.com)



# Police Aviation News

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[www.nwamuseum.co.uk](http://www.nwamuseum.co.uk) OPEN APRIL TO NOVEMBER



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Both of the Danish Home Guard Twin Otter aircraft before delivery [ABT]



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