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PACE CONFERENCE 2007

Sweden October 10-11.

The Annual PACE (Police Air Support Units Networking Centre Europe) conference took place in Stockholm, Sweden on October 10-11. This year the conference was hosted by the Swedish National Police Air Support Unit at the National Police Headquarters, Stockholm. Delegates from 12 European Countries attended the conference entitled Protecting Air Crews from Ground Hostilities.

The conference was opened by Commissioner Therese Mattsson of The Swedish National Investigating Police and Edo van den Brink President PACE Netherlands Air Support Unit.

Workshops were arranged to discuss the danger posed to aircrews from ground fire (long and small firearms), lasers and high intensity lights. The workshops focused on the responsibilities of, Management, Pilots, and Observers in managing threats from the ground and on protective measures that can be taken to safeguard air crews.

A number of very interesting presentations were made to attending delegates by Thomas Jarlinge, Patria Helicopters, Swedish Air Support Unit's maintenance provider, Luc Stremerch and Bert Troonbeeckx, Belgian Air Support Unit, Edo van den Brink Netherlands Air Support Unit and Hakan Gerharsen Norwegian Air Support Unit in Conjunction with Jon Andre Garberg, Jag Defence Group AS, Internet Distributed Downlink. This involved a demonstration of the Norwegian Air Supports helicopter operating over Oslo and transmitting live downlink pictures, over the internet to the conference room in Stockholm.

Elections for the post of President and Secretary which are held every two years saw the re-election of Edo van den Brink Netherlands Air Support Unit as President and Miha Avbelj Slovenian Air Support Units as secretary. The re-election of both committed PACE members, brings stability to the organisation and the knowledge that their hard work in support of the organisation will continue for another two years.

Of course no conference would be complete without a visit to the hosting countries Air Support Units base. In true style our hosts treated everyone to a wonderful sight seeing boat trip around the many islands that made up the City of Stockholm, before giving a conducted tour of their facilities located on one of the outer islands. This was followed by the conference dinner at the Unit's base sponsored by Patria Helicopters.

Once again the conference was considered a great success and delegates are already looking forward to next year's conference, the 10th, at a venue to be decided.

Donal Doyle Vice President PACE



POLICE AVIATION CONFERENCE

The Hague, Netherlands November 7-8.

The 2007 Shephard Conferences organised Police Aviation Conference in The Hague proved to be an excellent forum for the world's air operations practitioners.

The event was nominally hosted by the Dutch KLPD air unit but with members of the unit still locked in the final negotiations for a new air fleet to finally replace the ageing BO105s their time was clearly at a premium. An announcement about a new fleet has been made subsequently.

Squeezing two days of fairly intensive conversation into the pages of PAN is clearly out of the question. Suffice to say that, wholly as intended, this was not a cosy meeting of staid presentations - this was a coming together of practitioners with their own occasionally conflicting views.

In the wake of a few words by the Chairman Gareth Davies and Gunter Carloff of the German Federal Police the first scheduled speaker was intended to be Giovanni Liguori of the Italian State Police. Unfortunately Giovanni died in a double fatal accident in Rome when a AB206 PS*91 crashed in October [see reports in PAN November and December]. Fortunately his colleagues were able to send an excellent alternative speaker, Dr Coriolano Conte, who spoke later in the day. More at <http://www.uppolizia.it/>

Much of the success of any conference is generated from the interaction between speakers and delegates outside the hall as well as within. As has been found in the past simply bringing together Australian, American and a wide mix of European police does not guarantee success and perhaps it is the bringing together the constants of a familiar Chairman and a small cadre of regular speakers that helps.

There is little doubt that the most warmly welcomed group at the well appointed Congress Centre venue were those that travelled furthest to attend. Three members of the Australian Federal Police were in town making their numbers on par with almost every other national group. Some speakers do not need groups and this year circumstances left but one American representing his nation. Attempts to mute the booming tones of one of New York's finest, Chief Pilot Ken Solosky, were only partially successful—certainly no-one missed a word of either of his presentations on police aviation in the USA!

Much of the good humoured banter generated in and outside the hall related to the inexorable approach of the UAV. Everyone was agreed that, industry aside, this spectre is still sufficiently distant to be largely discounted but here as everywhere it intruded into most conversations and finally became the object of humour. As is becoming increasingly clear in the





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day to day information gathering for PAN the subject simply will not just go away. There was evident hostility from the pilots to the newcomer – although most were agreed that the chances of such craft actually replacing air support as we know it were very slender. As has been proven recently the biggest danger appears to lie in potential air unit operators ‘making do’ with unmanned vehicles in the mistaken belief that a UAV can replace manned craft. They are aircraft but in reality those seeking to operate them are not of the current aviation fraternity.

Many apparently disassociated presentations were coloured by the UAV’s. With the humour regularly breaking into proceedings the Belgian Federal Police introduced their existing Cessna 172 fleet as their valid ‘manned UAV’ resource. They are written down in very old money they are a very low cost observation platform that only needs one pilot - and the unit has pilots. it seems likely that the proposed new technology UAV’s will be acquired at a significant ‘new money’ cost and may yet require two systems operators - pilots - that might be expected to incur whole tranche of new money training and recurrency costs. There were certainly few real UAV fans in the Congress Centre.

As already widely reported elsewhere in the media there are protocols in place that centre around seeing the realisation of some operational go ahead circa 2012 - nothing to do with the London UK Olympics, just a coincidence in dating. The surprise announcement in the hall related to an organisation calling itself the South Coast Partnership of regular police forces teamed up with other enforcement agencies to partner BAE Systems in operating the [High Endurance Rapid Technology Insertion [HERTI] UAV over the busy English Channel. The project will not go away and was again being presented to the emergency services industry at Stoneleigh Park a matter of





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weeks later – more of that later.

Although HERTI appears to be pretty much long term stuff it both marks a move by the police in Kent to obtain air support on the cheap and places a modest warning to the industry that UAV's will be among us sooner rather than later.

I again refer the reader to the Belgian opinion on what you can do with a single engine Cessna and add that if this 2012+ single engine UAV project is so worthy on security grounds why are Kent [the front door to the UK] still without their own air support in 2007. Even if it is a cheap and battered Cessna?

The fact that this project was officially launched to the world at the Police Aviation Conference in The Hague was acknowledged in a short article on the HERTI project in the Sunday Times early in December.

The star turn, most agreed, was Martin Inglott.

In many ways it was a hard won gamble to invite what was nominally an army unit to speak at a police event on a subject - Frontex - that was effectively an unknown area of law enforcement. In the event doing so brought to the forefront a hitherto unknown area of police operations.

Lt. Col Martin Cauchi Inglott, Armed Forces of Malta, to give him his official title is nominally a sailor. He is the Commanding Officer of the Maritime Squadron - Malta's hard pressed tiny naval presence in the vast Mediterranean Sea. He was able to tell the

audience first hand about recent operations in securing the southern borders of Europe against mass migration from Africa. The human cost - clearly illustrated by corpses in the sea - is one aspect; the very real terror threat is another. The stream of humanity is a perfect cover for entry into Europe's soft underbelly. To add to the problems of the tiny Maltese Islands, those that are rescued have to stay in the islands, severely straining the resources of a population of just 800,000.

The relatively small craft operated by the AFM and the unsuitable aircraft options they currently have make effective patrol of their assigned area – a large area of sea 100 miles south of the islands – difficult. Air patrol is the task of their highly effective BN-2 fleet but they have no twin-engine helicopters. Italy undertakes SAR patrols on the islands on their behalf using Agusta-Bell machines.

Only now are the USA and the EC recognising this shortfall in capability by fiscal support for



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the delivery of advanced new EC145/UH-72A Lakota helicopters to operate in a SAR role. In a deal yet to be finalised the new helicopters will be replacing the ageing single engine Sud Alouette III's obtained more than a decade ago from the Netherland's. www.afm.gov.mt/

The Editor of Police Aviation News acts as an advisor to Shephard Conferences in selecting the range of speakers for this event.

Next year the Police Aviation Conference will be held in Olympia, London from November 5-6, 2008 www.shephard.co.uk/police

More images of this years Police Aviation Conference can be found at: -



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