POLICE AVIATION NEWS

Police Aviation Research Number 367 November 2026



CANADA:THE ONTARIO FLEET LATEST

FRANCE: GENDARMES WILL RE-EQUIP

ELIANCE FACE THE CREDITORS

AIRBUS H140 IN US TRIALS


STRONGER.
TOGETHER.
TrakkaCam
TrakkaMap
TrakkaBeam
TrakkaStream
TOTAL MISSION SOLUTIONS
Trakka Systems is a global leader in Critical Vision Technology, empowering law enforcement and public safety for over two decades. As your single supplier, we streamline the supply chain, simplifying procurement for integrators, OEMs, and end users. Experience the strength of Trakka's unified ecosystem—where advanced imaging, mapping, and lighting technologies work in concert to simplify the mission and improve operational outcomes.
Trakka Total Mission Solutions. Stronger together, for every mission.
TRAKKA SYSTEMS
trakkasystems.com/total-mission-solutions | +46 16 708 60

Police Aviation News published monthly by **POLICE AVIATION RESEARCH**.
7 Windmill Close, Honey Lane, Waltham Abbey, Essex EN9 3BQ UK
Contacts Cell: +44 7778 296650. Main web site: www.policeaviationnews.com
E-mail: policeaviation@hotmail.com or editor@policeaviationnews.com

Police Aviation Research an Airborne Public Safety Association Member since 1994
Police Aviation News has been published since April 1996 and is wholly supported by advertising.

RECENT SPONSORS

Bell Textron	www.bellflight.com
Enterprise Control Systems	www.enterprisecontrol.co.uk
FlySight	www.flysight.it
Teledyne FLIR	www.flir.com
Macro-Blue	www.macro-blue.com
Smith-Myers	www.artemis.smithmyers.com
Trakka Systems	www.trakkasystems.com
Airborne Public Safety Association	www.publicsafetyaviation.org
PAvCon Europe	www.pavconeurope.eu

EDITORIAL

In last month's Editorial I ventured that a lot of coffee will be spilt in Parliament if it turned out that one or more of the boat people turned out to be terrorists in plain clothes. Unfortunately, I was way behind the times and boat people had already been linked to terror acts by the time my words appeared. The bogey man politician of British politics, Nigel Farage, predicted just such a scenario over one year ago and the members of the current government dismissed his words. Where now are they with their mealy words? Meanwhile the USA has withdrawn its precious bombers in a silent statement of disbelief in British security, and trials of the terror suspects are pending and expected in coming years. And years it is – in the modern UK you may have to wait years for a trial hearing.

The most worrying aspect of that is that the politicians and civil servants had already taken it on the chin and not a drop of coffee was being spilt. Are we all doomed?

Having recently celebrated my 80th birthday I am fully aware that I am in illustrious company as the most recent Western world leaders are in the same age bracket (Biden was 81 when last in power, Trump is 80) and it is abundantly clear to me that running the world is not a place for octogenarians! A decade ago, was fine but running a police aviation conference and trying to keep my sanity evident within the pages of PAN is a challenge. PAvCon has therefore passed to younger hands and heads with an announcement on the 2027 UK venue imminent, and hopefully I will get the message when it's time to let go PAN. I am aware that some people said it was time to go in 2000, after they had read a few issues! Other opinions are available.

Bryn Elliott

LAW ENFORCEMENT

AUSTRALIA

SOUTH AUSTRALIA: Every unit wants new aircraft to fight the criminal fraternity but as we see time and again, sometimes the money and the political will are not there and those in the aircraft have to put up with the equipment they have. Sometimes that leads to nonsensical situations where a 'free' aircraft is carrying a million dollars' worth of sensor and other role equipment.

Meanwhile the police in South Australia Police air support (SAPOL) are celebrating their 20-years old Pilatus PC-12 VH-HIG and still consider it one of their most valuable aviation assets. In its service it has supported everything from search and rescue operations and disaster response through to frontline policing and community safety missions across the vast, 984,314 square kilometres, state of just 1.9 million

people. In the 20-years it has accumulated 11,000 flight hours and travelled an estimated 5.5 million km – that is around 137 times round the world.

SAPOL air support operations (PolAir) use a mixed fleet of helicopters and fixed wing with the most recent deliveries being a pair of Bell 429s last year. Since 2021 they have also operated a camera equipped Cessna 208 in support of the fixed-wing operations.

CANADA

DURHAM: As part of the ongoing re-equipment of the police air units in Ontario, Durham Police took delivery of their Airbus H125 C-FDBK to be operated as Air 4 at the end of September.



Ontario first announced the $191M initiative in 2024 to bring together air support resources of Durham, Peel, Halton, and Toronto police services with similar helicopter types to replace those already in service. The scheme delivered its first H125 helicopter to Peel police in August.

PEEL: As borne out by several images shared on social media after the event, the Airborne Public Safety Association (APSA) 'Safety Stand to' held recently at the Peel Regional Police headquarters facility in Mississauga, Ontario reported a record turnout of attendees ably supported by industry displays. In recent years there has been a worry that 'attend in person' events were losing favour compared with Zoom calls. Has that now passed us by?

In the background of the APSA event, Peel Regional Police recently took delivery of their new H125 helicopter C-FCPP and selected Heli-Lynx Helicopters of Simcoe, Ontario, to conduct the official acceptance and delivery inspection on their behalf. Heli-Lynx Helicopters specialise in aircraft maintenance and completions and claim over 20 years of experience in the sector.









EUROPE

PAvCon EUROPE: PAvCon European Aviation Community – Have Your Say

The team at PAvCon Europe is exploring the development of an online forum for the European airborne community — a dedicated space for professionals and units to connect, share knowledge and discuss the issues that matter most to our industry.

Their aim is to establish quarterly online sessions providing opportunities for open discussion, collaborative learning and professional development, with a focus on operational safety, tactics, training and other topics of shared interest and concern.

By bringing the community together, they hope to encourage the exchange of experience, strengthen professional relationships and support the continued development of safe and effective airborne operations across Europe.

PAvCon Europe want to hear from you! If you or your unit would be interested in taking part, please register your interest using the link below. Your feedback will help to shape a programme that delivers real value to the European airborne community.

“Together, we can share knowledge, strengthen our community and improve operational effectiveness.”

Please share the link between your colleagues within your units and the wider aviation community.
https://forms.gle/8fBT8gDhP7FDETmj6 [edited PAvCon Europe script PAvCon 2027 is set for June 2027]

FRANCE

GENDARMERIE: In the wake of last month’s report on the poor state of the Gendarmerie air assets a social media post from Souverains a prominent French non-profit ‘Think Tank’ organisation, apparently reporting official texts, has appeared.

The Gendarmerie may now be preparing to renew its helicopter fleet with 23 new Airbus Helicopters H145D3. The 2027 finance bill has reportedly found credits that will allow purchases in addition to the six aircraft of the same type already ordered, of which two have been delivered into service. There are also the ten H160s on order.

What appears new is that the replacement schedule will now seek to replace the 39 oldest helicopters as a means of avoiding a capacity gap that might lead to air base closures. The original plan was to replace worn modern helicopter like the early EC145 fleet. [Souverains]
Editor: The comments appear based on the French Government Finance Bill draft that was issued on October 1. The French government has budgeted funds to allow the Gendarmerie Nationale to order 23 new Airbus H145 D3 helicopters at a total eventual cost of €355M. The immediate cost would be substantially and based on deposits. This document is unlikely to be ratified before December, and it is known that France has its own financial issues which may be affected by the Presidential Elections there in April next year.
Army General Hubert Bonneau was reportedly heard to say at the Defence and Armed Forces Committee last month that 23 H145s will be ordered by the end of the year.
So far there is no confirmation that orders have been made over and above the 16 mentioned above, nor is there any suggestion that Airbus may have already set aside some delivery slots that might overcome the known congestion in the factory into the next decade. The oldest airframes in the Gendarmerie fleet are the AS350, and it is therefore assumed that the new deliveries will seek to replace those first and upgrade the pilot training accordingly to meet an all twin-engined fleet.

The Sandhurst Treaty – money from London
On October 12 one of the new Airbus H145D3 helicopters, AB, was officially inducted into service at the Lille base under the auspices of the Commander of the Northern Region and the Commander of the Air Forces of the National Gendarmerie. The helicopter first arrived at Lille in February this year. The type has also been delivered to Amiens in June, and the next delivery is for Chamonix.

The local press release and social media made a significant point that the two H145 deliveries to service this year went to Hauts-de-France (Lille and Amiens) because they were part funded by the British. The €18M cost was part funded by money from London.

The Anglo-French Sandhurst Treaty, together with UK funding, was signed in 2018, presumably at the Army College at Sandhurst. The more recent agreement, in April 2026, with an additional £662M funding package, is an extension of the Sandhurst Agreement. The total amount paid to France in 2018, 2023 and 2026 is close to £1.6 billion. It seems that escorting large inflatable boats, those carrying hundreds of illegal migrants, to the middle of the English Channel, is an expensive business and not just the cost of new boats for the Border Security Command and others. [Parapex Media/Tony Cowan/SM]

Editor: Meanwhile it might be said that the British air police are somewhat behind in the race to re-equip its current air fleet, let alone get it back up to the same size and capability as it originally had.

There are times when I question the need for PAN to religiously follow the ebb and flow of illegal migrant traffic across the English Channel (thanks to the research and reports from Tony Cowan) it's mainly about the day-to-day waterborne operations of a border force rather than news about air fleets. But now it is increasingly clear that there is a firm connection between the illegal migrant traffic; the politics and massive cost of the Sandhurst Agreement and the consequent lack of money available for UK air support both manned and unmanned for Britain's emergency services.



The official H145 handover ceremony at Lille last month included a flying demonstration by the new H145





By heaven, to serve.
Artist Romain Hugault recently completed a painting, unveiled last month of the Airbus H145-D3, H160 a DT46 drone and Gendarmerie crew in front of the landmark Le Bourget airport (Paris).





LUXEMBOURG: A major meet up of air support was held on October 9 in the facilities of the police in the Duchy of Luxemburg. The attendees were drawn from across Europe and included Belgium, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Luxemburg (of course!), Netherlands, Spain, Sweden,

The Luxembourg Police Air Support International Exchange Day kicked off the previous evening with a warm welcome for all delegations at the Légère Hotel in Munsbach, Luxembourg. An enjoyable dinner and a great opportunity to network and exchange experiences.

Friday morning was dedicated to five interesting and informative presentations. Speakers from Ireland, the Netherlands and FLIR shared their knowledge and expertise on a variety of topics, including infrared technology, training and search tactics. Around 45 participants attended the sessions, making it a valuable morning of learning and professional exchange. Following a standing lunch, participants enjoyed guided tours of the facilities of the Luxembourg Police, Luxembourg Air Rescue and the Fire Brigade.

It was fascinating to get a behind-the-scenes look at how our colleagues operate and to discover their equipment, procedures and working environment. The day concluded with a wonderful dinner at an Italian restaurant in the centre of Luxembourg. Everyone joined for a relaxed evening filled with more great food, good conversations and even more networking opportunities.

A special word of appreciation goes to the local Tactical Flight Officers (TFOs), who took care of the entire organisation and made this event such a success. The Luxembourg Police generously covered the accommodation and lunch, while FLIR also contributed to making the event possible. A huge thank you to the Luxembourg Police Air Support Unit for this excellent initiative, the warm hospitality and the outstanding organisation! Events like these demonstrate the importance of international cooperation, sharing operational knowledge and building strong relationships within the police aviation community. And what a great way to build momentum towards PAvCon 2027, taking place on 2–4 June somewhere in Europe!

We are looking forward to seeing everyone. [Luc Stremerch, Chairman, PAvCon Europe]





WWW.POLICEAVIATIONNEWS.COM
Keeping up with Emergency Services News



UNITED KINGDOM

NPAS: During September, NPAS received 1,961 calls for service from police forces across England and Wales. Aircraft were available for deployment 58.5% of the time.
As with any aviation operation, aircraft availability is influenced by planned maintenance, engineering requirements and fleet resilience activity.

NPAS crews continued to respond to incidents where air support can provide critical assistance to officers on the ground with an average response time of 20 minutes and 39 seconds for Priority 1 missions, with Priority 2 missions trailing somewhat at 28 minutes and 37 seconds.
These figures represent the average time from receiving a call to arriving on scene.

Since the start of the financial year (April 2026) NPAS aircraft have flown 5,576 hours in support of police, with rotary aircraft have flown 5,225 hours attending calls for service and the four fixed-wing aircraft flying 474 hours.

NPAS crews have completed 741 training flying hours during the first six months of the financial year. [NPAS Press Release and image]

NATIONAL CRIME AGENCY: A team of NCA and Border Force officers have seized 25 inflatable boats that were destined to be shipped to cross-Channel people smugglers.

The boats, which could have carried around 1,700 illegal immigrants to the UK, were identified by the NCA and Home Office Intelligence Team in pallets on an air freight shipment being moved from Turkey to the Netherlands.

It transited through a freight hub at East Midlands Airport on the way, allowing the NCA and Border Force to move in and intercept the packages on October 2.

The boats are around nine metres in length and, had they made it into the hands of people smugglers, each could have been used to transport around 70 people across the Channel.

It is the second time a large consignment of small boat equipment has been seized in the UK this year, but the first time such a detection has been made in air freight. In July 25 boats and 25 engines were seized in a maritime consignment at Felixstowe. The boat carrying them had stopped there on the way to Germany. So far in excess of 1,600 boats and engines have been intercepted, denying their use to criminal networks.



NCA

This summer has seen the lowest number of small boat arrivals since 2020 and arrests for immigration crime up 74% on the previous year thanks, it is claimed, to the targeting, disrupting and dismantling the gangs involved in organised immigration crime. [NCA]
Editor: The East Midlands Airport freight hub carried 413,664 tonnes during the 2025/6 financial year (April 2025 to March this year) – the first time since the global Covid pandemic that freight volumes have topped 400,000 tonnes. Seven dedicated cargo carriers regularly use the rapidly expanding facilities.

While talking of the East Midlands, the NPAS unit at Husbands Bosworth (or Sulby) and an entirely different location some 30 miles away from the East Midlands Airport has recently had a minor spring clean with a long overdue floor paint undertaken by the officers on site Back in the day the unit was called East Midlands Air Support and was mainly tasked with responding to Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire but now it often responds to calls on both the east and west coasts. They have retained the old coat of arms on the wall as a reminder of where they came from. [LI]



NPAS

Editor: To many, history is boring, and I accept that – with the caution that not too many mistakes are repeated due to not taking note of the past.
Although I was nominally based and working in London, 80 miles away, I nonetheless saw this base built from drains to completion. It therefore has a special place in my DNA. After it 'fell' to NPAS there were strenuous moves in Wakefield to get those historical artworks removed because they spoke of the past and were not corporate NPAS. Fortunately, it never happened. Time has moved on and now Wakefield are looking for West Yorkshire Police to escape NPAS and enter a National Police Service. If it happens, and who knows, NPAS may just be another waypoint in UK police aviation just as the East Midlands ASU was.

UNITED STATES



FEDERAL: US Customs and Border Protection has retired its final Lockheed P-3 AEW & C aircraft, based on the Orion sub-hunter aircraft. It took its final flight from Jacksonville, Florida on September 30th.

The aircraft type is thought to have been the world's only AEW & C aircraft used for border- security and counter-narcotics missions. It served in the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico. [Patrick Lalande]

FEDERAL: The United States Departments of Transportation (DOT), War (DoW), and Homeland Security (DHS) imposed new restrictions on drone flights along the U.S.-Mexico border. The new temporary flight restriction (TFR), commencing from October 16, bars unauthorised drone activity up to 400 feet above ground level within one nautical mile north of the border.
The release does not state how operators can gain authorisation to fly inside the restricted area or whether existing authorisations apply. The US government states that the ban will assist in countering cartel drones and strengthen security in the airspace above the border. [CUAVN]

CALIFORNIA: Merced County Sheriff, Merced California has disposed of its 2005 Robinson R44 N7527G c/n 10805. They acquired it in 2008. It went to a civil buyer in West Virginia.

Also in California, at the end of October San Jose Police Department held a ribbon cutting for their brand-new hangar [see below] at Coleman Avenue, San Jose Mineta International Airport. The new facility replaced one that was about 65 years old and includes two hangar bays, electric vehicle charging stations, dedicated office space and accommodations for SJPD's forthcoming new fixed-wing aircraft.





This new $19.1M Police Hangar is the latest Measure T-funded project completed by the City of San Jose, following the completion of the new Fire Station 8 in August. Approved by San José voters in 2018, Measure T, the Disaster Preparedness, Public Safety and Infrastructure Bond, funds critical public safety and infrastructure improvements across San José.

The unit's primary purpose is to provide aerial services for SJPD and other agencies across Santa Clara County, with a main objective of supporting ground officers on matters of public and officer safety.

The unit currently flies a 2018 Airbus AStar N408PD c/n 8459, staffed by one sergeant, two officer pilots and two officer tactical observers, and the helicopter known as AIR-3 normally flies seven days a week when it isn't down for maintenance. The fixed wind, still being prepared for service is a Kodiak 100 N408DC c/n 0364. The marks were previously carried by an SJPD EC120B from 2000, they memorialise a pilot killed in a 1999 crash with 408 referring to the telephone area code for San Jose and DC being the initials of the officer, Desmond Casey. There is another mark N148PD reserved to San Jose but no type is yet assigned to that.

FLORIDA: The 2003 Florida Highway Patrol Pilatus PC-12/45 c/n 514 N504HP has recently come out of a role equipment fit and refurbishment process with Southeast Aerospace, based at Melbourne Orlando International Airport, Florida.

The 23-year-old aircraft now has a new Garmin equipped cockpit and mission console, bringing together modern avionics and mission-specific capability in the versatile platform.

Also in Florida, Broward County Sheriff based in Fort Lauderdale, Florida has sold its 2012 Eurocopter EC135T2+ N257BC c/n 1043 to Metro Aviation Aviaton Inc in October.

At the end of September Airbus delivered the latest H125 N717CC c/n 9900 to Hillsborough County Sheriff, Tampa Florida. Completions for Hillsborough are usually undertaken by Metro Aviation.

NEW YORK: The Suffolk County Police Department (SCPD) Aviation fleet has added the latest example of the Airbus Helicopters BK117 to its fleet. The H145 N454PD c/n 21429 follows a long line of Eurocopter/Airbus helicopters in the fleet.

The Suffolk County Police Department Aviation Section provides aviation services with four helicopters to SCPD commands, associated law enforcement agencies, government agencies, the emergency medical service community and the residents and visitors of Suffolk County. These services include law enforcement support, search and rescue, aerial photography and surveillance.

The current fleet of two H145 and two H125 has enabled both aviation bases in Ronkonkoma and Westhampton to have 100% operational readiness capability.

Also in New York State, Erie County Sheriff in Buffalo has re-registered its 2025 Airbus H125 N235AH c/n 9745 to the marks long associated with AStar's operating for the unit, N338SD.

UTAH: Salt Lake City Police Department have issued numbers on their drone-as-a-first responder (DFR) operations.



Over a period of three weeks in August, they undertook 391 launches of the drones and were first on scene 70% of the time. On 88 of those flights, a pilot and headquarters decided a patrol car did not need to attend. In 24 instances the drone helped locate or watch suspects who were subsequently arrested.

There are five dock clusters around the city, and each is capable of launching in five seconds. The drones are interlinked with video. Live video from the drone is fed into a crime centre that is already taking in other feeds from such as body worn cameras. Officers can get eyes on the call when they are still en-route. This allows them the option not to attend.

Salt Lake PD is flying mostly Skydio drones from docks, with feeds pulled together into the crime centre (operations room). The Skydio drone is designed, assembled and supported in the USA. It is a model of the autonomous quad rotor drone designed for DFR, critical infrastructure inspection, tactical ISR, site security, surveying and mapping operations. The base Skydio X10 enterprise drone typically starts around $11,000 to $15,000 depending on the configuration.



Skydio DFR systems

In Nevada Las Vegas PD also uses the Skydio system. Building on the success of its mobile DFR deployment, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) transformed its drone programme into a 24/7, county-wide aerial response system supporting police, fire, and emergency medical services.

At the core of this expansion is a fully operational Drone Operations Centre embedded within LVMPD's Fusion Watch (their term for their 24/7 multi-agency control room). Fusion Watch coordinates closed-circuit security cameras, automatic licence plate readers, gunshot detection, facial recognition, and crime pattern analysis software into one monitoring location to help make strategic crime reduction decisions. The camera system was designed to help with proactive crime control in high traffic areas and real-time monitoring of public safety issues. From this hub, trained pilots remotely operate docked drones launched from more than a dozen secure locations at police and fire facilities across the valley.

Even before the full network was in place, LVMPD flew more than 10,000 drone missions in 2025—claimed to be the highest annual mission volume of any public safety agency in the USA. The projections for this year (2026) are that up to 20,000 missions will have been flown in 2026, all tied to calls for service.

In Colorado the Lakewood Police Department also use the Skydio drone and report that over 22 weeks they handled 1,200 calls for service of which 41% it was judged that officers need not attend. The drones are now getting on scene in 80% of events attended and arrests being made.
Editor: Each of these operators of DFR technology also use manned helicopter assets on law enforcement and other missions.
DFR is effectively a symptom of having withdrawn individual police officers from the street for a whole host of reasons. Historically it was these officers that undertook and dealt with the First Response actions. Despite the numbers being far lower than are typical today in most organisations officers have vacated street for offices and response vehicles rather than have (in some instances) a police officer at every major junction. Fifty years ago, the Avenue des Champs-Elysees a 1.9-kilometer (1.2-mile) long boulevard in

Paris, France had a police officer stationed every 100 metres, seemingly 24/7 they are not there now. How did that happen?

ILLINOIS: The City of Chicago has been operating a Bell 429 and two Bell 407GXi's on patrol for a couple of years now and they have recently sold off the Bell 206B3 they acquired 20 years ago (N911UU B206B3 c/n 4614) to a buyer in Nebraska.

WASHINGTON: Two Cessna T206H aircraft were acquired for the Washington State Patrol Aviation division in a contract last year. The State Patrol has used small airplanes since the late 1950s to patrol the freeways and roads. The current fleet is the two Cessna 206 aircraft, three Cessna 182s, and two King Air B200s for transportation. The singles mainly have around 10,000 hours in 2025.

The two new aircraft were purchased from Textron, and the first was delivered for its role fit in June this year. That aircraft is N823EG c/n T20609807 is now on the flightline undergoing a shake down of its role fit prior to entering service. Past aircraft were numbered after chiefs, but the latest ones will be named after fallen troopers. N823EG is after detective Eric Gunderson badge 823. So far, it has 30 flight hours accrued. The second Cessna is due for delivery soon. [AnsonS/FAA/PAR]





AIR AMBULANCE

AUSTRALIA

NORTHERN TERRITORIES: Toll Aviation will support the delivery of critical aeromedical retrieval services across Northern Australia as part of a new long-term partnership with the Royal Flying Doctor Service SA/NT (RFDS SA/NT).

RFDS SA/NT has been awarded the new Top End Medical Retrieval Service (TEMRS) contract by the Northern Territory Government, securing the provision of aeromedical retrieval and inter-hospital transfer services across the Top End, Big Rivers and East Arnhem regions for the next 10 years.

The Toll Aviation service is expected to support more than 4,500 patients annually across some of Australia's most remote and geographically challenging operating environments. It builds on Toll Aviation's long history of delivering specialised aviation services in complex and remote operating environments across Australia, including emergency response, search and rescue, offshore operations and government aviation services.

The new contract is scheduled to commence on 1 July 2027, following a transition period led by RFDS SA/NT and its partners.

Toll employs 14,000 as part its logistics, transport and supply chain to support more than 20,000 customers worldwide from around 300 sites in over 30 markets, and a forwarding network spanning 140 countries. They are part of Japan Post — www.tollgroup.com.

CANADA

ONTARIO: Chorus Aviation Inc. has entered into an agreement to acquire SkyCare Air Ambulance ("SkyCare"), the largest private fixed-wing air ambulance operator in Northern Ontario. The acquisition is expected to close by the end of this year.

Founded in 2006 by President and Chief Executive Officer Frank Behrendt, SkyCare is a privately held aviation and medical services company headquartered in Sioux Lookout, Ontario.

In 2025, SkyCare generated approximately $48M in revenue. The company employs approximately 220 people across bases in Sioux Lookout; Thunder Bay and Kitchener, Ontario; and St. Andrews, Manitoba; including aviation operations personnel and acute and primary care medical professionals. SkyCare operates a fleet of 22 aircraft, including turboprops and business jets configured to support air ambulance and other specialised missions.

SkyCare provides 24/7 medevac, repatriation, organ transport and charter services across Canada and the United States. Through its longstanding relationship with Ornge, SkyCare plays an important role in supporting regional medical transportation across Ontario. Its diverse fleet and specialised capabilities enable the company to support a range of complex medical missions.

The purchase price will be funded by Can$32M in cash with the remainder of the purchase price payable on or before March 31, 2029, subject to meeting certain performance targets. From 2026-2029, Chorus expects to generate approximately $500M to $550M of Free Cash Flow and aircraft sale net proceeds.



GERMANY

DRF: After 50 years' experience in helicopter maintenance directly mainly at supporting and operating the DRF brand of HEMS operations in Europe, DRF Luftrettung has joined forces with DRF Maintenance to pool their technical expertise in a business branded DRF Aviation Services GmbH.

The new company is now positioning itself to be available to all customers.

INDONESIA

SARAWAK: The preliminary investigation report into the September 8 Flying Doctor Service (FDS) helicopter crash at Long Lellang, Ulu Baram, which claimed five lives, was made to the Cabinet on October 16.

Transport Minister Anthony Loke said the Air Accident Investigation Bureau had prepared the preliminary report following investigations into the crash involving a Bölkow BO-105DBS-5 9M-LLF, operated by Layang-Layang Aerospace Sdn Bhd under a Health Ministry contract.

It is already known that the pilot's credentials and the aircraft maintenance paperwork are valid. The investigation is still ongoing, and a final report on this air accident must be prepared within one year from the date of the air accident.

The crash at the Long Lellang Short Take-Off and Landing port (STOLport) claimed the lives of the pilot Capt Zainol Afiq Bee Sham, medical officer Dr Ainul Baraah Kamaruddin, assistant medical officer Alexson Adit Henry, as well as staff nurses Debra Moset and Jessie Paya Jok.

The next-of-kin of the four Health Ministry personnel killed in the crash are each eligible to receive at least RM130,000 (Malaysian Ringgit) approximately £24,000 in British Pounds (GBP) in lump-sum payments. The crash claimed the lives of five people, including a pilot and four Health Ministry personnel who were on Flying Doctor Service (FDS) duty when an engine fire was followed by a fatal crash.

The Health Ministry said on October 15 that the payments comprise compensation in place of leave (CGR), derivative gratuity, funeral assistance and death ex-gratia payment. The ministry added that pension payments would be made to dependants.

The pension will be divided among eligible next-of-kin according to their respective shares. This arrangement ensures that each eligible dependant receives their entitled share in accordance with existing legal provisions. The families also receive dependants' pensions and benefits under the Work-Related Disaster Ex-Gratia Scheme, which are being processed by the Sarawak Pension Division.



SWITZERLAND

Early last month the 17th of 21 new Airbus Helicopters H145 D3 rescue helicopters was delivered to REGA. Although primarily a rescue helicopter its equipment includes an under-cabin mount for external loads including water buckets for firefighting. It has an additional third external camera for monitoring hoist rescues and the external load.



REGA hopes to convert all of its operation over to the H145 by the end of this year.

UNITED KINGDOM

DEVON: Devon's life-saving air ambulance is said to be facing a £4.9M funding shortfall for a new headquarters, and local MPs are taking the 'fight' for additional funding directly to the Treasury.

As part of its case the charity claims that crew members currently operate out of cramped facilities with inadequate storage, no formal clinical training space, and nowhere to support families after serious incidents.

Exmouth MP David Reed, backed by six fellow Devon MPs, is calling on the Chancellor to allocate capital funding in the upcoming Budget for a fit-for-the-future base at Exeter Airport. The charity faces rising costs, including aircraft fuel. that have helped creat the £1.1M deficit.
Editor: A surprising development. Traditionally the UK air ambulances have been steadfast in their independence, and most are charities who fundraise the cost of aircraft, crew and facilities and only spend what they fundraise. Asking the government for money is an anathema to most of them, although government handouts have been accepted in the past. This includes payments to all operators out of such as the Libor banking funds.
Each charity tends to reflect the generosity of the area they operate in and the success of their fundraisers. If they have low income the unit retains older aircraft and remains in modest accommodation, but where fundraising is burgeoning, they purchase newer aircraft and upgrade their facilities to ensure that the money they have in reserve does not become an embarrassment with the Charity Commission.
Currently Devon Air Ambulance Trust (DAAT) operate and own modern helicopters out of two bases (north at Eaglescott and south at Exeter Airport). It is the south base that is being described as having "… cramped facilities with inadequate storage, no formal clinical training space, and nowhere to support families after serious incidents." In recent months DAAT put forward plans to extend the existing facility – a substantial hangar it shares with NPAS – and add the type of additional facility that other air ambulances like Yorkshire have already funded and built off the back of good fundraising in less difficult times (see below). It would seem that for unspecified reasons the fundraising in Devon has fallen short of expectations at a critical point in the process. These things happen, and Devon has won several awards over the years for its application to operations and fundraising.



The Devon Air Ambulance Trust accounts for year to 31 December 2025 show that fundraising and legacies are down by £2.3M in the past year and the retail operations that also bolster the funding lost £207,000.
Put the 2025 numbers alongside previous years (2025 £7.6M, 2024 £9.9M, 2023 £5.4M, 2022 £7.1M, 2021 £7.8M, 2020 £5.4M, 2019 £4.4M) and it is pretty obvious that to keep in with the long-held disinclination of all air ambulance charities to ask the government for cash is in danger of being strained here. Most, if not all charities, are facing harder times but there is still plenty running through the accounts to keep the aircraft and crews flying the lifesaving missions – even if they might have to use the local church hall for training once in a while. (see also the **Stop Press** announcement at the end of this edition)

EAST ANGLIA: Three adjoining charitable air ambulances (Essex & Herts, East Anglia and Magpas) won the Excellence in Collaboration award at the BQF UK Excellence Awards 2026 last month.



The award recognises their Sharing for Success events which provide the opportunity to build and strengthen partnerships, knowledge sharing and learning from each other. All this leads to better care for customers across the East of England.

MAGPAS: The Cambridgeshire based charity air ambulance based on the former USAF air base at Alconbury welcomed HRH The Princess Royal to the base in October. It was an important opportunity for her to hear about the major incidents the teams have been involved in, in what has been an unusual year - The Huntingdon Train stabbings and the Bedfordshire Train Crash being the most prominent - both showed the necessity of partnership working in saving lives. MAGPAS were joined by The Ambulance Service, neighbouring air ambulances, police and fire services all explained what faced them and what they did.



It was an opportunity to express a thank you to the emergency services MAGPAS works with on a day-to-day basis. HRH also met those special to the charity the volunteers and the fundraisers without whom their life saving services would be impossible. The Royal visitor was hosted by Daryl Brown MBE DL the Chief Executive of the charity and HM Lord Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, Julie Spence OBE

YORKSHIRE: A major fundraising drive is underway to secure the final £400,000 needed to equip the purpose-built, £9M permanent home for the Yorkshire Air Ambulance's northern operations. They are currently operating from the control tower at RAF Topcliffe where the British Army has units based, they have been there since 2012.

The purpose-built aviation facility is located on a green field site at Skipton Bridge, near Thirsk a former wartime RAF facility of 70 years ago. Construction on the new Northern Airbase, being built by Yorkshire-based contractor HACS, is nearing completion with the opening scheduled for late 2026.

Yorkshire Air Ambulance committed £5M of its own reserve funds to the build, while £3.6M of a £4M fundraising target has been successfully raised. Charity officials say this financial backing has come from a wide range of individuals, businesses, trusts, major donors, grant funders, and local communities.

The remaining £400,000 will pay for essential interior equipment, fittings, and infrastructure to get the spaces ready for immediate use. This includes workstations, screens, communications equipment, and IT networks for mission planning areas.

The money will also fund clinical storage and preparation facilities, furniture and furnishings for crew accommodation, and specialist training and simulation equipment without further digging into reserves.



Once fully operational, the new base will feature a hangar and helipad tailored to the needs of operational teams. It will also house a gym, meeting rooms, offices, wellbeing spaces, and areas to host future supporter events, complementing the charity's existing southern airbase at Nostell, near Wakefield.

One of Yorkshire Air Ambulance's longest-standing Principal Partners, I'Anson Bros Ltd, has renewed its commitment to the Charity for a further three years, taking the partnership into its ninth year.

The renewal builds on a relationship that began in 2017, when the independent, fifth-generation family business pledged to donate the savings generated after replacing traditional lighting across its Masham mill with energy-efficient LED technology. Since then, I'Anson Bros Ltd has donated more than £150,000 to help keep Yorkshire Air Ambulance flying and responding to emergencies across the region. The renewal was marked at I'Anson Bros Ltd's recent Farmers' Open Day, held at the company's new Dalton feed mill near Thirsk.

The latest contribution from NFU Mutual's Northallerton agency follows an identical donation made in June 2025, shortly after planning permission was approved for the air ambulances new base. Together, the two donations total £15,798, helping to fund a purpose-built facility that will support the Charity's lifesaving operations for decades to come.

UNITED STATES

ARKANSAS: Air Methods, the USA's major air medical service provider, announced a new partnership with Pafford Medical Services to launch a rotor wing air medical program across Southern Arkansas. This operation was expected to be in place before the end of October operating air medical bases in Texarkana and Arkadelphia, each operating a Bell 407 helicopter. The first base, which will open in Texarkana, will operate in a brand-new Bell 407GXi. The light, single-engine turbine helicopter features advanced Garmin G1000H NXi avionics and a Rolls-Royce 250-C47E/4 engine.
The aircraft also has Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) capability, allowing for safe operation in low-visibility conditions. The base in Arkadelphia will operate in a Bell 407 which is already part of the Air Methods fleet.

PAFFORD MEDICAL SERVICES

This partnership brings together Air Methods' expertise with Pafford Medical Services' high-quality, pre-hospital emergency medical care. The programme will significantly enhance rapid access to advanced medical transport for patients in both urban and rural communities, supporting hospitals, first responders, and healthcare providers throughout the region.

Each base will be staffed around the clock with Air Methods' highly trained pilots and mechanics, alongside Pafford's experienced clinicians, delivering a seamless, integrated approach to emergency and critical care transport. The aircraft will have the capability to carry specialised medical equipment, including Impella, intra-aortic balloon pump, and ZOLL AutoPulse NXT devices to support complex cardiac patient transport. Crews will also carry whole blood for in-flight administration to patients experiencing severe blood loss and at risk of haemorrhagic shock.

Both aircraft will feature custom medical interiors, which include an Articulating Litter Loading System (ALLS), which allows for the primary caregiver to be seated at the patient's head.

MARYLAND: In mid-September MedStar Transport welcomed the newest member of its Air Methods supplied helicopter fleet, and their first H145 D3 N783MH. After induction and training of the new type, the new helicopter was put into service in October across the Washington, D.C., and Maryland region.



Compared with the existing EC135, the upsized aircraft is designed to better serve patients with complex medical needs during transport, the aircraft offers meaningful clinical and operational enhancements for those requiring multiple medical devices, neonatal intensive care, ECMO—a temporary heart-lung support system—or bariatric transport.

The new Airbus H145 D3 offers a larger cabin able to accommodate two stretchers, additional equipment and additional clinicians when a larger bedside team is needed in flight. MedStar Health's critical care transport programme has been serving the Baltimore and greater Washington, D.C., region for over 40 years.

Founded in 1983, as the first hospital-based air medical service in the Washington area and has grown into a regional transport system with air ambulances, ground ambulances, a dedicated communications centre, with a highly trained medical and support staff. MedSTAR Transport moves approximately 5,000 patients each year and specializes in interfacility critical care transport as well as selected scene response operations, including transport to Level I trauma centres.

MASSACHUSETTS: Boston Medflight, the non-profit critical care transportation organisation has placed an order for the purchase of three Airbus H145 helicopters to further the modernisation of its medical transport fleet serving New England. This brings the total number of H145 purchased by the organisation to 12.

Boston MedFlight was established in 1985 through the collaboration of several leading Boston academic medical centres—uniting to create a nonprofit critical care transport service that prioritised patient needs over competition.

Over time, that original partnership has grown to include some of the region's most respected academic medical centres including: Beth Israel Deaconess Medical, Boston Children's Hospital, Boston Medical, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Lahey Hospital & Medical, Massachusetts General and the Tufts Medical Center.

Since the first flight in June 1985, the operation has flown variants of the BK117 and has grown the mission from helicopter patient transfer to include flying Dauphin helicopters and long range fixed wing jets. Their rotary fleet is now all H145 and these undertake 55% of the missions flown. Last year they completed 40 years of service.

FIRE

AUSTRALIA

VICTORIA: Last month it was announced that the State of Victoria is to expand its fleet of aircraft. The 2026-27 aerial firefighting fleet and the State Governments investment in strengthening its firefighting capability.

Victoria is preparing for a potentially challenging fire season and has committed $53M to expand the aerial fleet from 53 aircraft to a record 60. They operate a mixed fleet of Airbus AS350, EC130 and EC135, Bell Huey models and PC-12 fixed wing. Two Large Air Tankers will be based at Avalon Airport, and two high-volume Aircranes with the capacity to carry 10,000 litres of water will be positioned at Essendon and Moorabbin.

A dedicated Super Puma helicopter has returned to the skies to fight fires at night through firebombing, supported by an Air Attack Supervision aircraft that provides critical fire detection and observation at night. If the locally based fleet find themselves overstretched Victoria can call upon a fleet of more than 100 aircraft, including Black Hawk Helicopters, from the National Fleet.

Additional bases are to be opened this year. While some aircraft are already on standby in Hamilton, two new operating bases will be established at Leongatha in South Gippsland and Lethbridge in the state's west.

Authorities have identified Victoria's south-west, western plains, Central Highlands and far east Gippsland as areas facing elevated risk this summer. [7 News]

GREECE

The first of the Greek Canadair CL415 super scooper aircraft has entered a modernisation process to replace the aircraft's legacy cockpit equipment with a glass cockpit from Universal Avionics. This work is covered by a newly developed de Havilland STC and is being undertaken by Hellenic Aerospace.

Following the completion of this initial project the remaining CL415s will also be upgraded to ensure that the old fleet has a similar standard cockpit to the seven new DHC-515s on order for the operator.

UNITED KINGDOM

WILDFIRES: There has been limited political activity in addressing the wildfires that struck the UK in the last summer but there was a meeting of minds at a gathering in Westminster Hall on October 13. At the meeting, mainly focussing on the fires in Wales, it was identified that ground based fire resources were put in undue danger by a lack of the correct equipment.

In August South Wales fire and rescue service said that selected appliances recorded 296 mobilisations and well over 10,000 cumulative incident hours, and officers recorded 99 mobilisations and over 500 incident hours. At its height, the South Wales fire and rescue service was responding to 14 concurrent wildfires. Between August 11 and September 1, it reported 961 grass fires, including 115 wildfires and 26 category 3 wildfires, which indicates the level of pressure on a fire service that has hitherto not been regularly presented with wildfires. In South Wales the fire and rescue service was assisted by 22 other fire services drawn from around the country who came to their aid in the summer to work alongside the county borough council, Natural Resources Wales, Gwent police and 110 military personnel. Military assistance to the civil authorities was not available for the wildfires in every area.

The new Prime Minister, Andy Burnham, has announced that he will soon host a wildfire summit, focused on how the authorities can increase their resilience to wildfire but this is not directly related to the already scheduled biannual UK Wildfire Conference to be held on November 10-11, 2026, at the Headingley Stadium, Leeds. It is understood that in the wake of the fires this year the level of UK Government interest, both financial and physical in this event has been recently boosted. It is clear from the discussions in Westminster Hall that the government have yet to decide what sort of people to invite to the Burnham event, let alone put names on the invite list and decide on a date.

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: Consolidated Fire Protection District of Los Angeles County based in Pacoima, California, has acquired a Bell 412 N133LA c/n 39136. It is expected that this registration will be changed to N17LA in due course when the helicopter will take up the callsign “Copter 17.”

They are based at Barton Heliport (adjacent to Whiteman Airport) and serve as the primary base for the Los Angeles County Fire Department's Air Operations Section and fleet. The fleet includes Firehawk’s and several other Bell 412s operating as like Copter 11, Copter 12, Copter 16, Copter 21, and Copter 22. [Parapex/PAR]

Ed: Almost the same name is a commercial company based in Irvine who specialise in National Fire and Life Safety services for customers throughout North America. CFP services all types of Fire and Life Systems needed to maintain facility safety.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

AFRICA

DIJIBOUTI: Illegal migration by sea continues to take its tragic toll. The latest report of mass deaths is from probably the worst choice of crossing across the Bab al-Mandab Strait, already in world news as a strategic chokepoint between Yemen on the Arabian Peninsula and Djibouti and Eritrea in the Horn of Africa It connects the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. As readers will be aware the same stretch of sea has seen renewed armed activity between Houti rebels and Saudi Arabia.

A migrant boat carrying hundreds of people capsized, with children among those killed and unaccounted for.

The boat was travelling along the dangerous route to Yemen when it sank. The latest estimate of those killed is given as 139.

EUROPE

Over the past 15 years foreign born Immigration in the European Union has reached historically high levels and this is partly being reflected in disturbances on the streets of some member countries.

The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs estimates that resident migrant population grew by over 48 million, or 67%, in the four years from 2000 to 2024. The United Kingdom added the most in absolute terms (7.1 million) followed by Spain and Germany. Trends have changed since then thanks to tighter visa rules, but the perception of the original population has not yet accepted that as a fact.

UNITED KINGDOM

CHANNEL REPORT

INTRODUCTION

When looking at the number of illegal migrants, those landed in the United Kingdom, after crossing the English Channel in a small boat, October has been a relatively quiet month. A total of 1,739 migrants were landed from 23 boats in one week, 1-7 October, an average of 76 migrants per boat. Then, after 21 days of bad weather, 8-28 October, without any landings in the UK, the weather became more settled. On the 29 October 263 illegal migrants were landed from 3 boats.

The following day, 30 October, a further 671 were landed from 9 boats, an average, in 2 days, of 78 migrants per boat. Nevertheless, adverse weather, strong winds, together with a rough sea, remains best deterrent, the best way to ‘stop the boats’. At the time of writing the total number of illegal migrants landed in the UK in 2026, up to and including the 30 October, was 21,869.

The weather for most of October has been too difficult for the larger, less seaworthy, inflatable boats to cross the English Channel.



French SNSM lifeboat service.

“ONE IN, ONE OUT”

Events that are worth mentioning include the Anglo-French “one in, one out” scheme, a pilot scheme which allowed the UK to return some small boat arrivals while agreeing to take the same number from France; those migrants who were believed to have a legitimate claim to come to Britain. When introduced, a year ago, the scheme was much vaunted by the previous British prime minister, Sir Keir Starmer. In one year it saw 1,631 illegal migrants returned to France in exchange for 1,496 migrants who were permitted to enter the UK to claim asylum following vetting in France. This scheme has now been scrapped, by the French.

The Anglo-French “one in, one out” agreement, agreed between former British prime minister, Sir Keir Starmer and French President Macron has been scrapped after one year



Home Office

BORDER SECURITY AND IMMIGRATION

The British parliamentary system includes cross-party scrutiny committees which, in the case of the Home Office (Department of the Interior) is the Home Affairs Committee chaired by The Rt Hon Dame Karen Bradley DBE MP. On the 21 October the Committee, in a special session titled, 'Border Security and Immigration' quizzed Duncan Capps CBE, the leader of the Home Office Border Security Command (BSC) and Rob Jones, the Director General for Operations at the National Crime Agency. This meeting, lasting 90 minutes, was recorded and may be viewed on line at: *'21 October 2026 - Border security and irregular migration: The work of the Border Security Command - Oral evidence'*

According to those being quizzed by the Committee, the number of illegal migrants landed in the UK are now at their lowest since 2020. The current total, for 2026 is 21,869. However, with up to 4,000 migrants waiting in camps at Calais and Dunkirk, the total for 2026 is expected to exceed 25,000 by year end which, according to Capps, will be 25,000 too many!

In its first 2 years the BSC has, with national and international partners, targeted the UK 'pull factors'; increased 'upstream' operations and improved near border operations in Belgium and France. France is now reported to have a 60% success rate when. 'stopping the boats'. Targets in France, for the security services, described as 'go kits', include, cars, boats, outboard engines, lifejackets and, of course, the migrants themselves. There is work in hand to reduce the numbers, illegal migrants crossing the English Channel in small boats, even further in 2027.

This 'overt' criminal operation, fuelled by social media, has seen a decrease in numbers in 2026. Year on year, a 43% reduction in the number of illegal migrants landed in the UK and 50% fewer boats. Nevertheless, the focus for the security services in the UK is still directed at the inflatable boats, those full of migrants, which is still regarded to be the most serious breach of the UK's borders. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that larger boats, those carrying hundreds of passengers, will, naturally, result in a smaller number of boats. These boats are inherently less seaworthy and, at the same time, much more dangerous in adverse weather.

Despite the hard work and the successes of the UK's Border Security Command, together with other agencies, including the National Crime Agency (NCA), one of the organised criminal groups, the Iraqi Kurds, have now been described by the NCA as being, "over represented". At the same time, French prosecutors have described the Iraqi Kurdish people traffickers as, "merchants of death". The Iraqi Kurds have become so successful, so cash rich, that in October they commissioned one large inflatable boat in the colours of the Kurdish national flag, red, white and green with a yellow sunburst. This 'flag ship' was then launched from a beach in Belgium with the criminals, figuratively, sticking two fingers up at the governments on both sides of the English Channel!



One organised criminal group of Iraqi Kurds commissioned a large inflatable boat in the colours of the Kurdish flag, red, white and green with a yellow starburst. Sticking up two fingers at the governments on both sides or the English Channel
Facebook

As the boats become bigger, the weather becomes a more critical factor. Capps, the head of Border Security Command expressed a concern that with an increase in the size of the inflatable boats, boats that are often grossly overloaded, coupled with the new, 'long route', some 70 miles from the Cherbourg Peninsula towards Portsmouth, it's only a matter of time before there are mass casualties in the English Channel. All the more reason to create an English Channel search and rescue region and for the French, with the assistance of the British and the Belgians, to rescue migrants travelling in inflatable boats at the earliest opportunity. Instead of escorting them from France into the middle of the world's busiest shipping lane, the Dover Strait.

The new ‘long route’, some 70 miles between the Cherbourg Peninsula and Portsmouth, increases the risk of mass casualties in the English Channel.



BBC

In the interim the size of the Border Security Command fleet of rescue vessels will be increased with new boats. An increase to the current fleet of 7 vessels, which are used to cover what Capps refers to as the ‘Short Strait’, between Calais and Dover. The additional rescue vessels will be deployed further west to cover the much more dangerous ‘long route’. This in turn will reduce the number of calls for assistance to the UK’s voluntary lifeboat service, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. Although, according to Capps, of the total number of ‘rescues’ of migrants in the English Channel, 98% are by the vessels belonging to the Border Security Command, with just 2% by the volunteers of the RNLI.



The number of Border Security Command rescue vessels, currently 7 converted crew transfer vessels (all based at Ramsgate, near Dover), is to be increased to cover the new, much more dangerous, ‘long route’ between the Cherbourg Peninsula and Portsmouth.

Home Office

RAF FAIRFORD

Readers will recall that the October edition of *Police Aviation News* reported an incident close to the military air base, RAF Fairford in Gloucestershire, an air base which hosts aircraft belonging to the US Air Force. This incident involved three vans, loaded with barrels of petrol, together with 5 young men who were arrested and then released on bail. Towards the end of October it was reported that two British citizens of Iranian descent, with contacts in Iran, Mohmed Ahmad Abdulkarim, 24 years, and Nouman Essghir, also 24 years, both from London, had been arrested and charged. Abdulkarim has been charged with assisting a foreign intelligence service, believed to be Iran. Essghir has been charged with entering a prohibited place for a purpose prejudicial to the UK, including filming the facility during a video call with a third person. Six other men, one a 25-year old UK-Iranian national, remain on police bail. Of those illegal

migrants who cross the English Channel in small boats, 90% are young men, many without any identification. Historically, the numbers of illegal migrants, those coming from Iran, Afghanistan and Iraq, have been comparatively high.

MORE POWERS FOR FRONTEX

At the end of October, it was reported that Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, will be given new powers to deport migrants from outside Europe. A full report will feature in a future edition.

CONCLUSION

Although the numbers of illegal migrants, those landed in the UK, after starting their journey from a beach in northern France, or from Belgium, are coming down, there are currently an estimated 4,000 migrants, mostly young men, waiting in camps outside Calais and Dunkirk. Waiting to begin their journey across the English Channel, lured by the UK 'pull factor' which includes a 'grey' cash based economy, where work is rewarded with cash in hand. Those who fail one day will try again the next day, the next week, or the next month. When interviewed at a reception centre in the UK it's not unusual to find that those who succeed in reaching the UK in a small boat have made up to 8 previous attempts. The numbers may have come down in 2026, but this relatively new phenomena of illegal migrants using an irregular route, crossing the English Channel in a small boat to enter the UK without permission, is far from being resolved.

James A Cowan MBE

Note:
The author is a former police officer, member of the Royal Air Force, a former police pilot and a former air ambulance pilot.



UNITED STATES

FEDERAL: Late last month Textron announced the sale of several of its Cessna light aircraft to the USAF sponsored Civil Air Patrol (CAP).
The order from CAP for 21 additional Cessna piston aircraft that will support CAP's emergency response, training and community missions across the US. Deliveries are expected to be completed in 2027.
The order includes seven Cessna 172 Skyhawk aircraft, 11 182 aircraft, two T182T Turbo Skylane and one HD206 Turbo Stationair aircraft. CAP is the world's largest operator of Cessna aircraft, and they help ensure that members are ready when communities have a need, whether searching for someone who is missing, responding after a disaster, or introducing young people to aviation.

As a nonprofit and the U.S. Air Force Auxiliary, CAP serves as a cost-effective force multiplier for military and government partners through emergency services, joint training and youth programmes. Its 72,000 members, including 35,000 adults and 37,000 youth, operate from 1,424 locations across the USA, supported by thousands of emergency services professionals and a fleet of 543 single-engine aircraft.

In early 2026, Civil Air Patrol reported a estimated $334M in operational value on a $73.5M federal investment, representing more than $4.50 in value for every federal dollar invested, for the prior year. Since October of 2024, the organization has flown nearly 200,000 hours, completed 860 search and rescue missions and saved 104 lives.

Civil Air Patrol is a volunteer organization and the official civilian auxiliary of the Department of the Air Force. CAP is one of America’s most trusted youth development organizations, with tens of thousands of members serving communities around the world. Through emergency services, aerospace-focused leadership development, aviation, and STEM education, CAP develops leaders of character while supporting communities and the nation. Members come from every background and experience level, from cadets who join at age 12 to adult volunteers with decades of professional expertise. whatiscap.org.

GULF OF MEXICO: Fences have been lengthened and secured but the US border still has its issues as illegal immigrants slip over the border on land or out at sea.

In an effort to reduce those travelling on the sea the US Navy and Marine Corps have been placing orders for seaborne unmanned craft. Some $24M in orders have been let to the San Diego-based start-up Seasat for its small but efficient surface craft.

The Seasat Lightfish is a compact, solar-powered autonomous surface vessel (ASV) designed for long-duration maritime surveillance, research, and data collection, capable of operating up to 6 months at sea with modular payloads and rugged sea-state-6 performance.



The Lightfish is Seasats’ flagship persistent ASV, built for low-logistics deployment and long-range missions. It measures about 11.4 ft × 3.4 ft, weighs roughly 305–360 lb depending on configuration, and can be launched by one or two people. It uses solar power supplemented by a methanol generator for multi-month endurance and supports a wide range of sensors including EO/IR cameras, sonar, SIGINT/EW payloads, weather sensors, and more. It is used for maritime domain awareness, environmental monitoring, illegal fishing detection, coastal security, and oceanographic research.

The Pentagon is looking to expand its use of autonomous surveillance boats on the Rio Grande and in the Gulf of Mexico after the canoe-sized vessels helped authorities detect and deter illegal border crossings and narcotics trafficking during a pilot program that began in January. The current test fleet amounts to 10 vessels but it is expected that as many as 50 might relieve the strain on manned assets.

COAST GUARD: As reported in the September issue of PAN, the US Coast Guard has long operated the Lockheed Martin C-130 Hercules in transport and surveillance missions. Currently they are upgrading their fleet to the HC-130J Super Hercules, with further expansion plans in place. The plan is 28 Coast Guard aircraft and 12 more for Customs and Border Protection. In August the USCG were seeking to source missionisation of further examples.

The latest in this storyline is that on September 24, the USCG ordered six baseline C-130J long-range surveillance aircraft from Lockheed Martin Aeronautics in Marietta, Georgia with a first delivery on this contract in 2028.

This procurement also supports the Coast Guard's plans to expand its HC-130J operations to additional air stations, including Air Station Sacramento, California, which received its first HC-130J in July 2026. The Coast Guard currently operates the HC-130J out of three air stations: Elizabeth City, North Carolina; Kodiak, Alaska; and Barbers Point, Hawaii.

The Coast Guard funded this acquisition using up to $735 million of the $1.412 billion provided by the fiscal year 2025 One Big Beautiful Bill Act for fixed-wing aircraft that is expected to see other fixed wing aircraft, including the Leonardo C-27 Spartan, sidelined and taken out of service.

INDUSTRY

The **UK CAA** is seeking stakeholder feedback on a proposed interim approach to coordinating civil unmanned aircraft system (UAS) activity over the high seas within UK delegated Flight Information Regions (FIRs) to protect the safety of civil aircraft. This area covers high-seas areas within London, Scottish, and Shanwick Oceanic FIRs where the UK provides air traffic services. UK domestic drone rules only apply up to 12 nautical miles from the coast, creating a regulatory gap over international waters.
Under the proposal all UAS activity in high-seas portions of UK-delegated FIRs might be treated as potentially hazardous to civil aircraft. Operators intending to conduct activity would be asked to provide a defined set of information in advance, and the CAA, working with NATS and other relevant parties, would use that information to determine whether any specific airspace coordination measures are required. This consultation opened at the end of September and closes on November 8. [CAP312]

At the beginning of October **Hangar One Avionics**, Carlsbad, California, USA completed a new Dahar Kodiak 100 fitted with role equipment and avionics to an as yet unidentified customer. The aircraft has a custom-built workstation in the rear cabin which controls a Shotover Systems moving map, dual Macro-Blue Inc monitor. A Taradek 5G mobile encoder. Gamber-Johnson LLP laptop mount for their Getac laptop, True Blue Power converters and a Technisonic Communications tactical radio and Starlink antennas. Other modifications included the installation of the AEM P139 audio router. After first removing the under-fuselage cargo carrier, a Fargo Jet Centre retract mount was installed for the L3Harris Technologies MX15 camera.

In Brazil the **Mato Grosso do Sul State** Secretariat of Justice and Public Security (Sejusp-MS) signed a R$ 300,000 contract to conduct a practical Private Helicopter Pilot (PPH) course. The investment aims to strengthen public security air operations in the inland state which adjoins the Bolivia and Paraguay borders in the south of Brazil.
The contract was entered into with Plano de Voo Escola de Aviação Civil Ltda., responsible for conducting the training and providing the instructional materials necessary for the training.
According to the document, the course will be conducted in compliance with the requirements of the National Civil Aviation Agency (ANAC), including the practical activities required for the private helicopter pilot rating.
The funds used come from the State Public Security Fund, through a budget allocation intended to strengthen public security actions and the operational capacity of the state's air units.
The qualification of pilots is part of the actions aimed at expanding the capacity to deploy aircraft in policing missions, operational support, transportation and other activities carried out by the security forces.

Another social media storyline from the **Polícia Civil de Mato Grosso** Do Sul is about the maintenance of the units Electro-Optical/Infrared (EO/IR) cameras. Ensuring operational readiness in public safety aviation requires technical rigor, precision, and continuous compliance with manufacturer standards.
The 100-hour periodic inspection on the EO/IR system is a critical process to ensure that mission-essential technology for airborne surveillance, search, and rescue operates with maximum efficiency and reliability.

During this procedure, detailed routines are performed, including:
Visual and structural inspection Electro-Optical/Infrared: Checking the mounting assembly, wiring harnesses, connectors, and mechanical alignment of the optronic pod on the helicopter;
System purging and pressurization: Using dry nitrogen to purge the optronic gimbal, preventing internal moisture and ensuring optimal optical clarity for thermal and visual sensors across varying altitudes and temperatures.
Seal and O-ring verification: Inspecting environmental seals to protect internal components against dust and weather elements.
Functional checks: Verifying azimuth, elevation, image stabilization, and proper communication with the mission operator consoles.
Rigorous preventive maintenance on electro-optical systems not only extends the service life of high-precision electronic components but also guarantees mission readiness when every second counts.
[SEJUSP/Eduardo Hickman Helicopter Mechanic social media]

A recent issue of PAN carried an off the cuff comment about having to protect our homes in future against drones of all kinds, the benign (Amazon) and the aggressive (the Putin model) and by chance media reports emerged last month about the very type of material required in defence.
North Wales manufacturer **KnitMesh Technologies** is taking its specialist wire knitting technology into the rapidly developing counter-drone market with a stainless-steel mesh designed to provide a physical barrier against hostile, unmanned aircraft systems (UAS).
The company showcased its DroneStop Counter-UAS Shield at the Counter-UAS Homeland Security Europe conference in London on September 30 and October 1 as an alternative to the complex electronic countermeasures we are getting used to.
KnitMesh has spent almost 70 years developing knitted wire mesh for applications ranging from automotive components and filtration to hydrogen production, thermal management and industrial safety. Developed, manufactured and tested in the UK, DroneStop employs high-strength stainless steel knitted wire mesh to create a lightweight physical barrier above or around vulnerable assets. It requires no power supply.
Critically for the UK market it carries no hidden foreign taxes or tariffs because it is manufactured in Wales.
Potential installations range from overhead protection for vehicle parks, trenches and accommodation areas to barriers around radar and communications equipment, aircraft hangars and secure compounds including such as prisons which have a long history of difficulties in keeping drones away.
www.knitmeshtechnologies.com

Early in October it emerged that **Eliance**, one of Spain's leading EMS operators, has begun pre-bankruptcy proceedings amid a complex financial situation, according to local media outlet El Economista. The company board has told its employees (approx 230) that the move is intended to protect the company, preserve operations and ensure business continuity. The outcome will depend on talks with creditors and other stakeholders.
The move comes 18 months after Swiss Life Asset Managers acquired a majority stake in Eliance in April 2025 through its infrastructure fund. As part of the process, Buenavista Equity Partners exited, while RiverRock remained a minority shareholder. The move was presented as a way to fund future expansion.
Eliance had expanded internationally through its acquisition of Italian operator EliFriulia, and the launch of operations in Croatia in collaboration with EliAdriatik. The latter, a contract with the Croatian Ministry of Health, consists of two EC135s at Zabreb and Osijek and two H145s at Split and Rijeka
Despite this backing, Eliance's 2025 accounts showed mounting losses. The company lost €23.9M, compared with €12M in 2024, while revenue remained stable at about €54M.
The proceedings come as the Spanish National Commission on Markets and Competition (CNMC – Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y la Competencia) investigates Eliance and other companies over suspected coordination in public tenders for emergency services, firefighting, medical transport and rescue. That investigation remains ongoing. Eliance operates in Spain, Italy and Croatia. [Helihub/Media/Pprune]

The planned sale of the **Gloucester Airport (Staverton)** outside Cheltenham faltered earlier in the year after some eight months of negotiations. New moves are in place to attract new potential owners of an airport that has some important emergency services companies as tenants including Babcock and Gama.

WWW.POLICEAVIATIONNEWS.COM
Keeping up with Emergency Services News


At the 2026 edition of the Global Defence Aviation (GDA) held in Warsaw, Poland, last month **FlySight and HR Smith** presented a Personnel Locator System Simulation, demonstrating how FlySight' s OPENSIGHT software can support the integration and simulation of specialised avionics systems within a mission environment.
The demonstration combined HR Smith's expertise in airborne Personnel Locator Systems with FlySight' s software capabilities and its mission system ecosystem.
OPENSIGHT is designed to integrate heterogeneous sensors, systems and data sources into a common operational environment. Through its modular architecture, the software enables mission information to be visualised, managed and exchanged, supporting the integration of different capabilities within complex airborne mission scenarios.



FlySight is a leading provider of cutting-edge software solutions for enhanced real-time situational awareness, mission planning, and debriefing in the Defence & Security sector.



Alabama State Police Huey in 1999 [PAR]

The Bell 204, first flown on 20 October 1956, was warmly received, particularly for the performance of its single turboshaft engine over piston engine–powered helicopters. Initially as the Bell XH-40 it was fulfilling the United States Army requirement for a Medical Evacuation (Medevac) helicopter. Thereafter, the Bell was known as the HU-1 before being redesignated as the now familiar UH-1 entered production. Both the military UH-1 and civilian Bell, variously termed as the 204/205/212 and 412 entered service globally to meet the parapublic marketplace globally fulfilling various police air support, firefighting and emergency medical service roles.
The US military ordered 100 of them for service from 1960 and the rest as they say is history. They were of course the icon helicopter in the Vietnam War. After military service, survivors of the 16,000 built in the USA were retired used in law enforcement and many of them remain in service. Numerous law enforcement operators across the world bought variants of the Huey and remain in service. Equally, a countless number of the helicopters sit rotting and bleaching in the sun on the edges of many remote airfields across the third world.
Although it has changed in many ways, the latest version of the 70-years-old Huey design is the Bell 412 you can still buy one of those new!



Back in June**, Airbus Helicopters'** newest rotorcraft, the H140, arrived in the United States for 'hot and high' testing as part of its certification campaign. The first location was Lake Havasu City, sitting in the Mojave Desert south of Las Vegas. In June and July, temperatures reached 45C (113F) and above, so the test was extreme.


Airbus

Operations then transferred to Leadville, in Colorado's Rocky Mountains to undertake high altitude operations. The airport is already at 10,000 feet barometric altitude. On top of Mount Pennsylvania, with altitudes of 13,000 feet and above, the aircraft was being pushed to extremes in terms of controllability and engine performance required for hover, take-off and landing at high payloads. The third location was Albuquerque, which sits in the high desert along the Rio Grande. They tested intermediate altitudes, around 7,000-9000 feet density altitude: an altitude of critical importance for future H140 customers.

This was one of the most extensive and rigorous rotorcraft certification campaigns the Airbus team have ever executed. Supported by a 40-person flight test, prototype mechanics and quality assurance team, we logged over 130 flight hours and completed more than 800 safe test landings.

The environmental and physiological demands were extreme. Flight crews routinely operated in high ambient heat, managing the thermal hot soaking of the airframe prior to engine start and ground operations.

High-altitude testing in Albuquerque and Leadville required zero-wind conditions to accurately evaluate hover performance. Capturing these specific meteorological windows dictated a demanding operational tempo. Crews frequently departed before sunrise for early test flights, running dual-shift operations that extended until after sunset, when the aircraft was finally post-flight-inspected for the day.

Despite these severe environmental factors and extended duty days, the H140 demonstrated very good reliability. This sustained performance validates the platform's system maturity and provides us with absolute confidence as we approach entry into service and commence deliveries to operators.

The first prototype is currently being prepared for the "tie down test", an extensive ground endurance test intended to test transmissions, rotors, control system and drive shafts under rigorous test conditions while the aircraft is anchored securely to the ground. These tests are scheduled to commence in the middle of next year.

Airbus is operating two prototypes with a third prototype joining early next year for the certification flight test campaign. The prototype that was in the U.S. has now returned to Donauwörth in preparation for finishing certification activities in extreme cold conditions in Finland and Norway in the upcoming winter.

The targeted delivery of the first aircraft to a customer is set for 2028.

At last month's AMTC event **Life Flight Network** and Airbus announced that they had placed an order for five Airbus H135 helicopters to support critical emergency medical missions across the Pacific Northwest and Intermountain West. These new aircraft will build on their order for three new H135s placed in 2025, bringing their total number aircraft ordered to eight.
They will operate over Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana, expanding the operator's advanced air medical capabilities.
More than 1,500 H135 family helicopters are in service worldwide, logging more than 8 million cumulative flight hours across medical, law enforcement, and utility configurations.

Meanwhile **Life Flight Network** announced that it is seeking historical photos for their archives and in preparation for its 50th anniversary coming in 2028.
It is seeking to attract former employee, community members, healthcare partners or patients who have historical images of Life Flight Network in action. Contact socialmedia@lifeflight.org if you can help. Please be sure to include as much information about the image as you can. Location, date, names and titles of those in the images etc.

The **Florida Polytechnic University Police Department** claims to have become the first law enforcement agency in the USA to integrate an electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) vehicle into its operations. The manned aircraft, dubbed Astro in a double nod to science and the dog from the classic Jetsons cartoon, marks Florida Poly's entry into the rapidly developing field of advanced air mobility (AAM), creating new opportunities to explore how the emerging technology can support public safety.

Everyone likes to be able to claim a first but in this instance the Policia Nationale in Spain may have already gained the accolade for an electric 'man-drone' machine in policing.



Florida Poly is in the final stages of seeking approval from the Federal Aviation Administration to use the aerial patrol vehicle in its operations. Murray said Astro can enhance the department's ability to monitor campus and surrounding acres, reach areas difficult to access by traditional vehicles, assist with post-storm recovery efforts and deliver emergency supplies quickly when needed.
The University Police plans to collaborate with law enforcement agencies throughout the region to deploy Astro in support of emergency response and other public safety operations.
California based Jetson, fast-tracked Florida Poly's order of the Jetson ONE vehicle despite a three-year waiting list.

The introduction of the Astro flying police vehicle is the latest example of Florida Poly putting emerging technology into practice across campus. The University recently added a drone unit for its police department and a student-powered Security Operations Centre for cybersecurity. [Jetson]
Editor: There is an E-Hang electric flying machine in Spain of course but that has multiple seats even if many of us do not really believe it is actually on regular patrol mode rather than just testing. The Jetson is all painted up in police colours but that registration on the rear end (N911FP) does not currently exist with the FAA. An interesting promotional concept for the manufacturers but one person in any flying machine is very limited in the amount of police work they can perform. That cockpit looks a bit tight.

Bell announced the order for a Bell 407GXi to **HALO-Flight** at the AMTC show last month. This aircraft marks the seventh IFR-equipped Bell 407GXi to soon join the HALO fleet in south Texas.
HALO-Flight is a nonprofit air medical provider dedicated to providing life-saving air medical transport to the communities of South Texas, regardless of a patient's ability to pay. Serving 23 counties across approximately 24,000 square miles, HALO-Flight operates around the clock, responding to emergency scenes and interfacility transports to bring critical care to patients when and where it's needed most.
"Bell has been a trusted friend, mentor and business partner to HALO-Flight for decades," said Travis Patterson, CEO, HALO-Flight. "As we enter our 40th year of service and continue growing to meet the needs of South Texas, we're grateful to continue that relationship with a fellow Texas organization that has supported our mission and helped keep HALO-Flight flying for generations."

Bell also announced at AMTC the purchase order for additional Bell 407GXis by **Global Medical Response** (GMR). These new aircraft will support GMR's helicopter air ambulance (HAA) fleet, enhancing access to critical care for patients in rural and metropolitan communities alike.

GMR operates an extensive network of air and ground assets that provide critical and prehospital care to communities across the United States. GMR operates more than 170 Bell aircraft supporting emergency medical missions across the USA. The number of airframes involved in this new order has not been disclosed.

ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

30 September 2026 Eurocopter EC135P2+ N738AM. Air ambulance operating for Mercy Air by Air Methods. A night time departure from Pebbly Beach Helispot, Avalon, Catalina Island. Departure from the elevated high pad but the helicopter dropped towards the sea, hit it, recovered and carried on to the destination at UCLA hospital in Harvard where it was grounded. [CBS]

30 September 2026 Eurocopter EC135P2+ N313RX Air ambulance of REACH operated by Air Methods. The helicopter crashed into the sea about eight seconds after take-off in darkness from Pebbly Beach Helispot, off Avalon, Catalina Island, California. Three of the five occupants perished and two were injured and rescued. The L.A. County Medical Examiner identified 48-year-old Jessica Devries as the nurse who was killed in the helicopter crash off the Catalina, the pilot was Steve RobinsonRobinson a former U.S. Marine Corps helicopter pilot and flew Marine One, the presidential helicopter. The patient was patient Catalina Romero. A surviving crew member and the patient's son were rescued and hospitalised. [ASN/Media]

3 October 2026 IAI 1125 Astra SPX C-GRJP Air ambulance of Latitude Air Ambulance departed Bermuda-L.F. Wade International Airport for Boston Logan Airport Massachusetts USA with a patient, two medical personnel, two pilots, and a family member on board. It reported problems. The US Coast Guard reported locating the debris of the aircraft.

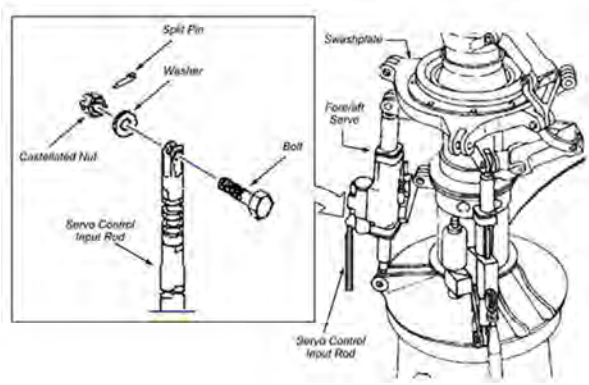
7October 2026 Airbus Helicopters H145 G-**** Air ambulance Wales Air Ambulance While the Carmarthen based helicopter was landing at Scar Farm Holiday Park in Saundersfoot, Wales collided with goal posts causing damage to airframe. Grounded four days awaiting a crane lift from location.

10 October 2026 Bell 206L-4 LongRanger IV N426AE Air ambulance of Air Evac Lifeteam. While en-route from Jacksonville Municipal Airport, Illinois to Riverton, Illinois struck a bird that went through the window. It subsequently landed at the Riverton Area Fire Protection District fire station. The pilot suffered minor injuries. [ASN]

18 October 2026 Beech King Air C90A VT-HYA Air ambulance operated by SKB Infracon Pvt Ltd., India. Aircraft flying from Agartala to Kolkata with seven aboard made an emergency landing in Bangladesh following a technical fault that caused the aircraft's door to partially open mid-flight while climbing through 12,000 feet.
The aircraft landed safely at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport with seven people on board, including two pilots, the patient, a doctor, a paramedic and two companions.
The patient, identified as 56-year-old Anjana Bhowmik, was taken to Kurmitola Multicare Specialised Hospital, where doctors declared her dead, The exact circumstances surrounding Bhowmik's death remain unclear. It is not known whether her death was linked to the aircraft's technical malfunction or other medical complications. [BSS/The Daily Star]

FLIGHT SAFETY

FAA Proposes Mandatory Rotor Servo Inspections on Nearly 1,000 AStar's and TwinStar's
The FAA is proposing an airworthiness directive that would require inspections of main rotor servocontrols on approximately 980 Airbus helicopters registered in the United States, covering multiple variants of the AS350, AS355, and EC130 families.
The unsafe condition centres on a lock washer that can lose its clamping ability when paint or protective coating is present on its surface. Loss of torque retention could allow the upper ball bearing end to separate from the main rotor servo-control — a failure the FAA says could result in loss of helicopter control.



In mid-October CBS news was reporting that the FAA was investigating an incident where a second Air Methods medevac helicopter operating for Mercy Air touched the ocean moments before the Catalina Island crash on September 30.
It is said that this incident occurred immediately prior to the fatal crash in darkness with the plot wearing night vision aids. Both helicopters departed about one minute apart and both appeared to dip to the ocean in an unexplained manner, one crashed but the other regained control despite hitting the ocean and flew away safely.
In a copy of a post incident internal report said to have originated from Air Methods shared with CBS LA, the unnamed pilot stated that the helicopter dropped from 150 feet to 75 feet. After realizing the sudden drop in altitude, the pilot "felt a thump and spray under chin bubble" as he regained control of the aircraft. It continued its flight to UCLA Harvard but was subsequently grounded.
According to the CBS investigation team, Flight Following data shows the second helicopter, the Reach Air Medical Services flight, crashed shortly after take-off, a minute after this incident in nearly the same spot where the Mercy Air helicopter touched the ocean.
Air Methods has not responded to several emails CBS LA has sent to the company, so the origins of the pilot's report have not been confirmed, but the FAA has confirmed that the two incidents are now being investigated. [CBS Los Angeles 13/10]
Editor: Both helicopters have been confirmed as the same type (Eurocopter EC135P2+) and broadly similar ages (15-18 years), but it has not been confirmed that the plots were both on NVGs in moonless conditions.

Copyright Notice: The content of this publication includes items that are the copyright of others. Where the information is available the source of words and images will usually be indicated together with the source of additional information that seeks to enhance the original information.

Police Aviation News includes materials produced for it by Ian J Commin of Insight Design of North Burnham, Slough SL1 6DS. This includes the banner titles and the PAvCon logo. In addition from time to times images specifically altered by Insight Design and others but originally produced for McAlpine Helicopters [now Airbus Helicopters UK], Oxford, will appear with permission of the original owner. In some cases it may not be possible to indicate the source of this material directly associated with the images used, or such information may have been lost. Such images may be marked 'File' or 'PAR Collection'.

Yorkshire Air Ambulance's chief pilot, Owen McTeggart, is warning of the dangers of pointing lasers at helicopters, with the attacks delaying patient care "on a number of occasions".
According to UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) figures, there have been eight laser attacks on emergency helicopters in Yorkshire so far this year.
Marking Air Ambulance Week, the CAA and Yorkshire Air Ambulance are calling for these attacks, which can distract the pilot and cause permanent eye damage, to stop.
In 2025 there were 94 cases of emergency helicopters being attacked with lasers across the UK, the CAA found.
Targeting an aircraft with a laser is a criminal offence and carries an unlimited fine and up to five years in prison.



Photographed beside H145 G-YORX Owen McTeggart says having lasers directed at helicopters in flight "can be really scary" [Sofia Luis-Hobbs/BBC]

UNMANNED

The much-maligned Chinese drone manufacturer DJI has produced a new, potentially market winning, DFR product that will take some time for others with a negative attitude to products from China will take a long time to develop. The DJI Dock 4, their first dock that offers battery swapping.



Most DFR operations are currently in some level of trials mode, but when DFR docks get to be second nature rather than just a mainly daylight only resource some are going to struggle in keeping their power source in a tip top condition. The automated battery swap should serve to overcome problems by ensuring that the drones have power packs that are able to keep the DFR pods in good condition.

Current recharge rates are very good but the added option of a 25 second battery change in the £20,000 Dock 4 should keep the need for humans to maintain the docks to a minimum.

DFR UNITED KINGDOM

On October 18, *The Mail on Sunday* newspaper carried a lengthy article on the growth of DFR, mainly focussing on London where a handful of schemes are now running within three boroughs The cost of the scheme so far is given as £400,000 and that covers the drones, the docks and the high-tech screens in control rooms. The cost of the human input is not included. The figures are compared with the cost of a National Police Air Service helicopter which is now judged to cost £5,700 per flying hour – but that presumably includes the crew costs.



Overall, the item was very positive towards the technology and how it might, in future, enhance first response in the Greater London area – or at least some parts of it. In most instances the drone can beat other resources to the scene and, thanks to its loud speaker system potentially interact with whatever is going on. Generally, though the system is being projected as an observe and report resource leading to

human resources either being sent there or called off as necessary. Regardless of the dreams, Superintendent Evans claims that drones have played their part in reducing mobile phone theft by 21% in the past year.



The MoS article includes comments from civil liberties groups about surveillance of the public, although that critique was long since lost when London was flooded with thousands of cheap CCTV systems on virtually every lamp post many years ago. [MoS Steve Boggan]

Editor: Comparing DFR with helicopters is wholly unfair. Helicopters are 'air support' and have never claimed to be the first responder – except perhaps in some vast desolate region where their long legs and speed might give them an advantage. In town the real first responders are police officers (preferably on foot) and fast cars located near to the area of need, they alone will make it to through wind, rain and fog that will ground every bit of air support invented. Even in the heyday of police air support in London the helicopters were based on the hill overlooking Epping Forest but still 30 miles away from many traditional crime hotspots.

UK police are facing a major problem at the moment, and it has been alluded to many times before in PAN. The lower ranks and the higher ranks in UK policing do not get on. The outcome is that the highly experienced 30-year police officer is getting rarer every day and the lower ranks are regularly walking into another profession because they do not like what they are expected to put up with in the way of directions from above.

It does not matter why, that would probably take pages to analyse, but it does mean that the real first responders 'the Bobby on the beat' is getting rarer each day and the answer seems to be that handfuls of them, clearly a finite resource, are being extracted to work DFR and other computer systems remotely while the remainder tend to operate in groups rather than individually. So, who is going to be the hands-on responder? Who is going to be there for the victim BEFORE the incident took place. This is not the fire department, for nearly 200 years, policing is supposed to put officers front and centre deterring crime not putting out the fire and mopping up the blood. On its own, the threat of DFR is not Big Brother enough to do that job. Somehow the leaders at the top need to get the officers at the bottom to stay in the job and then they may take up their traditional role as first responders ably supported by drones in boxes and helicopters – only when the untrustworthy European weather permits.



Clearly offering every one of the thousands of police in the UK the opportunity to be one of 43 chief constables one day is not working! Who thought it would? On the evidence it seems that getting a Master's degree in policing is clearly not an answer, there was way more staying power in the lower ranks when they were barely literate. A master's degree and taking genteel tea with the criminal classes will not save you from a knife or a bullet. The retention of naked aggression as an option on the part of the officer might. Which brings us back to drones v CCTV. Drones, with their current level of endurance are way behind CCTV in acting as 'constant flying surveillance cameras' as cited in the article but as with everything, that presupposes that CCTV is even working. The numerous reports of fixed cameras that simply do not work through lack of maintenance skews the whole argument.

FAA RESEARCH

Early in October the FAA announced it has awarded $12M for 19 drone research and testing projects through its Unmanned Aircraft Systems Broad Agency Announcement Programme. The work covers technologies including detect-and-avoid systems, satellite communications, drone identification and integration between UAS traffic management and traditional air traffic systems.

Several projects address technology needed for longer-range operations beyond visual line of sight. General Atomics will develop ground-based systems intended to help drones avoid other aircraft, while

Skydweller will work on an onboard system for large UAS. OneRadio will test passive radar, Censys Technologies will evaluate satellite communications for long-range flights and Lighthouse Avionics will develop surveillance tools for long-range drone routes. ANRA Technologies is looking at a means whereby drone traffic-management systems can be linked to conventional ATC at airports.

The FAA continues work on frameworks for routine BVLOS operations. The proposal has raised questions for general aviation over electronic conspicuity, right-of-way and detect-and-avoid requirements. Matters that all the worlds ATC systems will have to address and overcome ion coming months – if not years. Sense and avoid has been an as yet unresolved problem for decades now. It is not just the technology it is the cost of adding it to the existing systems. Drones are supposed to be about economy of scale and that may not be met in this integration project.

Meanwhile the plans to expand Amazon drone deliveries into Connecticut have been stalled pending further discussions with sceptical neighbours who cite the effect of the drones on wildlife, The latter is always a port of call for stopping any enterprise. In the United Kingdom its usually disaffected newts, frogs or bats.

Amazon paused plans to begin Prime Air drone deliveries from its North Haven, Connecticut, warehouse while the company holds additional meetings with residents and government officials. The proposal had received local planning approval in May but was subject to state and federal review.

Amazon agreed to conduct meetings for the public, Connecticut lawmakers and the Regional Mayor's Council before moving forward with flying the MK30 delivery drone, which has a maximum take-off weight of 83.2 pounds and can carry packages within a 7.5-mile operating radius. Amazon targets operating as many as 1,000 flights per day from individual Prime Air delivery depots under its broader expansion plans.

The expansion is also facing broader regulatory challenges. A coalition of 15 states and Harris County, Texas, recently put in place an action claiming that the FAA did not adequately assess environmental and safety effects before clearing a nationwide framework for expanded commercial drone delivery operations.

AIRSPACE DECONFLICTION – UK

The newly arrived DFR trials are causing some difficulties for existing commercial operators wishing to use the same air space.
The newly designated airspace structure in London established to facilitate the DFR trials, EGD180, created a protective geographical envelope over the now expanding drone hubs as a Temporary Danger Area (TDA). Those entering the areas are expecting to face the additional stress of avoiding the assumed unpiloted police craft. They find themselves having to exercising extreme caution or complying with explicit routing restrictions inside the boundaries.
Temporary is the title attached to the document but there is little evidence that the units are ever facing the future by being subsequently dismantled!



London restrictions

Under the current document the restrictions affect the surface to 600 feet and the meaning of 'temporary' covers the period from October to April 2027 – a significant intrusion into the commercial contracts of those also wishing to make a living flying drones in the area.

AIRSPACE DECONFLICTION – USA1

A report from Mark Colborn, former pilot with the Dallas PD in Texas.
Last week, I listened to a presentation by a counter-drone company that, like the plethora of other counter-drone companies in America, promises to fix the low-altitude airspace deconfliction problem. "We need to understand that [below 400' AGL] airspace," the presenter said. "We must have a better understanding of airspace awareness."
Seriously, what is left to understand? The airspace below 500' AGL is becoming more and more congested. Delivery drones and electric Ubers will soon share airspace with recreational, commercial, and public safety drones; emergency medical evacuation helicopters landing at accident scenes or hospitals; and other low-altitude helicopter and airplane operators doing transmission line work, pipeline patrol, and many

other operations. The bottom line is that everyone flying in this low-altitude space, regardless of class of airspace, needs to be electronically conspicuous to prevent an inevitable collision. That means everything flying in low-altitude airspace, including military helicopters on training flights, requires either Remote ID, a 4096-code transponder, ADS-B Out, or another yet-to-be-approved form of electronic conspicuity.

The FAA knows what it needs to do: mandate the last two items listed above for flight in all classes of airspace. They did it already for drones; why do crewed aircraft get a pass? I was certain it would happen after the mid-air collision that claimed 67 lives at Reagan Airport - that it would spur them to act, but so far, crickets. Why is the FAA still reluctant? Pilot groups keep claiming equipage is too expensive. And operators don't like ADS-B because airports use it to bill landing fees, so the FAA keeps capitulating. Clearly, if you can afford to own and operate an aircraft, you can afford to install ADS-B Out, period. The FAA has been dragging its feet on this issue for over a decade.

In 2018, the FAA released UTM Concept of Operations Version 1.0 and, two years later, introduced Version 2, a more comprehensive plan. The concept was intended to be a community-based UAS traffic management system in which operators and entities providing operational support services would coordinate, execute, and manage operations under FAA-established rules of the road. When I was first appointed to the Department of Transportation's FAA Drone Advisory Committee as a local government representative, we worked on FAA-assigned projects to improve this plan.

The proposed UTM system they described was based on a Network and Broadcast Remote ID system. The plan's foundation involved the pilot posting their proposed flight route or flight area in the already fielded Low Altitude Authorization and Notification Capability (LAANC) system administered by a UAS Service Provider (USS). The second part of the plan required the remote ID-equipped drone to transmit, via an Internet connection, its position and the flight controller's position to a USS during the flight. That USS provider would share that flight information with what the FAA called a Flight Information Management System (FIMS), administered and maintained by the FAA. The FIMS would then push all that drone traffic information out (sans personal information) to other USS providers so everyone knows where everyone else is flying in real time.

The biggest problem with this plan, and why I originally opposed the Network requirement, is that it essentially didn't include acceptable procedures to integrate crewed aircraft (participation was voluntary) and imposed too many burdensome requirements on recreational and commercial drone pilots. The FAA ultimately stripped the Network requirement from the final Remote ID rule in favour of a Broadcast RID-from-the-drone feature (which, in its present form, is essentially useless for serious collision avoidance). RID is now the "license plate in the air," but it has also become an enforcement tool for the FAA and federal law enforcement.

LAANC was first made available to Part 107 pilots in April 2017, then later to recreational pilots, to request airspace authorizations in controlled airspace without needing a waiver. If the requesting pilot checks all the boxes correctly, the FAA approves the request instantly. There are currently 21 authorized LAANC USSs in the US. The FAA unfortunately neutered LAANC when they dropped the Network RID requirement. They turned LAANC into nothing more than a "check the block" legal formality for an airspace authorization. LAANC airspace requests are supposedly transmitted to ATC towers, but they never look at them, nor do they inform crewed aircraft that you are flying in their low-altitude airspace. Beyond that, these requests are not shared with other drone pilots either. Therefore, you can be flying in an area that other drone pilots have requested authorization to fly in and be totally unaware they are there. I realize now that the FAA should have enacted the Network requirement and let the crewed-aircraft collision-avoidance situation work itself out.

It is well past time for the FAA to mandate ADS-B Out or other electronic conspicuity equipment in all crewed aircraft flying in every class of airspace in the NAS. And after 9-years, it's time to create a federated UTM system that shares LAANC flight telemetry with all users of the airspace.

AIRSPACE DECONFLICTION USA2 – What Will Be the FAA's Solution?

On July 24, 2026, Congressman Troy Nehls of Texas, chair of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee's Subcommittee on Aviation, sent FAA Administrator Brian Bedford a letter. Nehls identified a foundational gap in the National Airspace System: the lack of functional awareness—not only detecting an aircraft in low-altitude airspace but also determining in real time whether it is authorized to be there. He raised this concern in the counter-UAS context as drones increasingly appear in restricted areas. Nehls called the problem solvable, stating, "Remote ID gave us a way to tell that an aircraft is up there and who it belongs to." He praised LAANC for quickly approving flights in controlled airspace but criticized its failure to share that information with other system users. In essence, he asked why low-altitude deconfliction and counter-drone challenges remain unresolved. He described the current traffic-management framework as a patchwork of systems that do not communicate with one another and called for a solution. He outlined five

items he believes the FAA should do. One is essential, he claims: “containment, in the form of dynamic geofencing driven by the authorization itself.” Apparently, Nehls wants the FAA to geofence critical infrastructure locations and incorporate those into the traffic management system. That’s a big ask and could prove to be a huge undertaking, especially since the FAA can’t even keep track of the actual number of heliports and airports in the U.S., let alone identify thousands of critical infrastructure sites!
Beford responded to Nehls letter on September 10, 2026, essentially saying that the FAA and NASA are working on the issue with a joint “pilot project,” holding workshops with government and industry. In a massive bureaucratic blowoff, he basically says to be patient; we're working on it.
Nehls knows when he’s being patronized, and on September 24th fired back another letter to Bedford stating that his response “will not meet the schedule set out in my July letter or the operational need behind that schedule.”
Detection is only half the problem that the United States has largely solved. He wants the determination issue solved, and states, “Detection without determination is not awareness, and better picture of an aircraft no one can clear or rule out does not change what the officer on the ground is able to do about it.”
He goes on to say that NASA research and development will take too much time. (The next target is) the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles. [Mark Colborn, edited from two of his social media posts]
Editor: The detail may vary considerably but each individual nation needs to solve the various problems relating to deconfliction at low level where so many aviation assets mix. In the UK that Olympic target seems familiar, In the run up to the 2012 London Olympics there was a wager over whether a drone would cover the event. It did not and time has certainly passed!
There is little evidence that a serious ‘sense and avoid’ system is operating and until it does a viable BVLOS drone system is toast. Few may have noticed the deaths in remote parts of Africa (mainly instigated by low technology military drones) over the years but when one of these craft starts accidentally killing people in the western world people will be obliged to sit up and take notice. Meanwhile, the uninformed still think that BVLOS is just around the next corner. The fact that the UK drone team at the recent Emergency Services Show in Birmingham acknowledged the impending problem is positive, however we all know that they have no directive or funding to deal with it.

EUROPE: More of a military move than domestic policing, news that on October 1 the Justice and Home Affairs Council of the European Commission announced that it is stepping up its support for Member States' counter-drone capabilities with an additional €130M under the Border Management and Visa







Instrument (BMVI). This is part of the EU's efforts to strengthen border surveillance and improve responses to emerging security threats.
The new funding comes on top of an initial allocation of €250M announced in December 2025 and a further €169M made available earlier this year to fund surveillance drones and related equipment for use by Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, and Member States. This brings the total funding available for surveillance and counter-drone technology to more than half a billion euro.

PEOPLE

Daniel B Schwarzbach, APSA's Executive Director and CEO since 2014, has notified the APSA board of directors of his intention to retire from the position in October 2027. This one-year notice is in line with his contractual obligations to the association. Schwarzbach's 38+ years with the Houston (TX) Police Department, 29+ of which were spent assigned to the Air Support Division, added to his time at APSA, will give him a combined 46 years in public safety related work with 43 of those years dedicated to public safety aviation. He has been with APSA when it was ALEA since his days with the Houston Air Unit, taking on the CEO role in early 2014 and overseeing its change into APSA as a way of broadening membership from police only.

He has picked up lots of honours and awards including the 2008 Helicopter Association International MD Helicopters Law Enforcement Award recipient, at that time he had already been with the Houston (TX) Police Department for 27 years, including 23 years assigned to the Helicopter Patrol Unit. His roles included pilot and tactical flight officer.

Schwarzbach joined the Airborne Law Enforcement Association (ALEA) in 1986, and in 1998, was elected South Central Region Director. During time on the Board of Directors, he has served as Secretary and President all mixed in with overseeing the production of the house magazine Air Beat and cajoling members to attend the annual conference and regular regional safety events. He has been a leading member of the association getting involved with all manner of committees and organisations.



So many images to choose from but this is one that has a strong message.
So, what is leadership? Perhaps some need to look and heed in these times when there is a massive gulf between the police workers and the leadership, Daniel B Schwarzbach leads from the front. He arrives and seeks out what is needed to lead by example. He identified the need and he found the tool. And I can assure you that at any PAvCon event he attended from 2009 onward he unfailingly supported the organisers in a range of practical tasks wholly unasked rather than simply swanning off to the hotel bar. For that alone he will be a loss to police aviation. So much more.

In 2009 Dan spoke at the first PAvCon Police Aviation Conference in London, UK and has been an enthusiastic and hands on supporter of the event and bringing about closer cooperation with non-US police aviation throughout his tenure.

In the near future, APSA will begin the search for Schwarzbach's successor, a process in which he will participate. Schwarzbach affirmed to the APSA board his commitment to succession planning and working in fulfilment of the association's mission over the next year with the same intensity, due diligence and enthusiasm as he has over the last 12.5 years. It will be a hard act to follow.

Meanwhile the **National Police Air Service** (NPAS) in Wakefield are looking for a talented Senior Project Manager to help shape the future of the NPAS.

As a police staff member, this is a unique and exciting opportunity to lead complex, high-profile programmes that support the delivery of national police air support across England and Wales. Working with a wide range of stakeholders, you'll play a key role in driving change, delivering strategic projects and helping NPAS continue to provide critical airborne support to policing.
Location: Homeworking and HQ Wakefield. Salary: £53,451 - £57,186. Closing date: Sunday 15 November 2026. https://orlo.uk/UXE1d

MOVE ALONG THERE

There are rumours of wholesale cancellations of European visitors to Vertiflite next year. The problem arose after US airlines stopped taking flights across the Atlantic Ocean in light of the latest edict by President Donald Trump to change the name to the American Ocean. Fortunately, the airlines of other nations are still able to book the route as it appears they know where it is. Apparently the route to the USA via the Pacific Ocean is not yet affected.

With London buses and other services, we are told that if you miss the bus all we have to do is wait five minutes wait five minutes and another three will turn up.
It seems that a similar trait is being found with ideas. Only recently, thanks to the report by Lord Hogan Howe we were expecting the 43 police forces in England and Wales to go away. Now only a few weeks have passed, and it seems that the Government may have changed tack on force mergers. Lord Blunkett the former Home Secretary (from yesteryear) told the Police Federation conference that the arrival of new Prime Minister Andy Burham is behind the delay in initiating the report on radical force mergers. I guess such matters are in the queue behind his thoughts on noisy buses and cheap gerkins.

Not exactly linked to police aviation but as former adversary of persons from the Bar (not the alcoholic kind) it's good to know that the likes of Sir Kier Starmer are not that rare in the upper strata of the legal profession as they would like you to think!
Through an accidental "computer error" a legal guide called Legal 500 accidentally revealed what customers and others thought of some bewigged lawyers in terms of their professional ability. These are of course the profession that spends years learning all about the law and then turns up at court with four of five vigorously thumbed and substantial volumes of Stones case law to wonder aloud why the officer of the law in front of them did not intimately recall and know the detail of the case of "Crown v Jones" during their 13 weeks** training twenty years ago.
Well, it seems that during its brief period in the public arena the leaked data informed the world that the lawyers have been described as 'sloppy, disorganised and indecisive', a better review simply noted that the advocate was 'nothing of note' praise indeed!
There are 18,000 barristers in England and Wales and, as we know to our cost, some simply give up the bar for politics – an area where they do not always excel!
*** I chose 13 weeks because that is what comprehensive training for policing was 60 years ago and then they let us loose into Krays Gangland, all on our ownsome. They never taught us the U-turn, apparently a favourite of baristas, but a strategic retreat was always an option.*

Under the new - or at least revised at the top - UK government there are mutterings of reversing Brexit and returning to the embrace of the European Union (EU).
Perhaps there is a need for the politicians promoting that plan to come out of their bunkers and open their eyes for a moment or two and see that there are numerous migrants who travel thousands of miles through the EU just to get to Brexit land. There is a reason for that even if a solution to their travel has not been found. Meanwhile there are (yet again) public disturbances across France - this time over rotten schools as well as rotten government, last time it was race, burkas and murders etc. All that before anyone looks at the books covering the finances of the EU! The last time we looked the Euro was in freefall against the US $ and swathed in gas cannisters, smoke and riot police.



Even more confusing is the fact that the UK government is drawn from the looney left where the Europe of their dreams seems headed inexorably towards the far right.
Other methods of government are available.

Depressed?



Well, there is always something positive out there if you look. When NASA sent off its first born to a life of potentially monotonous adventure in space it pretty much wrote it off from the first day. If it actually took off at all it was a minor miracle, if it completed its mission that was another thing. And if… well, it was a case of wait and see.
In September 1977 Voyager 1 set off for the big black yonder to probe to study the outer Solar System and the interstellar space. The probe made flybys with Jupiter, Saturn and Titan and its primary mission was over by 1980. But it is out there now still heading for who knows where! This month it will reach a distance of one light day from Earth – kept alive by people who were not born when it went off into space. None of us really understand the talk of 'light years' but bearing in mind we a nearing the completion of one light day, how many light years did they say it is to the nearest star? (4.25)



As PAN originates from the UK there is a tendency for content to reflect what happens around here but, from time to time, when Mr Trump allows a breather, we hear other voices. Recently Giorgia Meloni the right-wing Prime Minister of Italy announced her support for Ukraine and freedom…. Well chosen words even after translation.
"Surrender is not peace: it is conquest. If Ukraine were to stop defending itself tomorrow, as many hope or suggest, we would not achieve peace. We would be discussing the occupation of a European country and the return of Soviet-style imperialism that Europe knew for half a century".

The DroneX 2026 show held in ExCel London Docklands in September claims that it had 4,551 unique attendees from 65 countries attending this year's show. That was 30% upon 2025. Some 81% of exhibitors rated the lead quality as excellent or good. The visitors were said to include just 12% stating their interest was the emergency services. Next year the event is again being organised by Uncrewed Tech Ltd of Gloucestershire and will be held at ExCel from 28-29 September 2027.

It is often said that whatever the Yanks do will inevitably end up in the UK. Challenge coins were once the interest of the US military and that naturally transferred over to airborne law enforcement in the USA. They are now common across industry as keepsakes and promotional tools, a small, custom-designed metal coin or medallion—typically 1.5 to 2.5 inches in diameter—that bears the insignia, emblem, or motto of a specific organisation.





The associated thinking behind them was that having such a coin in your possession at the right time (when the challenge was made) meant that you were absolved from meeting the bar bill for everyone who had their challenge coin. Today they are as common as stickers used to be but if it's a bar challenge you have to have the right one at the right time which may be heavy on the pockets!

This one was created for the flying team at NPAS North Weald and recently appeared on social media. The coin was given to the social media poster by one of the National Police Air Service (NPAS) North Weald crew after they were involved in supporting Operation Galileo, a joint initiative tackling rural crime including hare coursing. They worked in partnership with Cambridgeshire Constabulary, Essex Police, and Hertfordshire Constabulary, in providing real-time aerial surveillance and intelligence to assist ground teams across county borders.

LATE NEWS

UK AIR AMBULANCE

MIDLANDS A: development missed in the clutter of the Internet was news first released at the start of the year that a midlands based air ambulance operation is to finance and build a new multi-million pound base for the Air Ambulance Service. The Air Ambulance service is an operation that includes HEMS Leonardo AW109 operating from Coventry Airport, Bagington, Warwickshire and East Midlands Airport, Castle Donington, Leicestershire and an associated inter-facility transfer operation flying Leonardo AW169s as The Children's Air Ambulance. They started operations more than 23 years ago.

Along with other operations, the Coventry Airport based air ambulance operation has been given notice to quit in preparation for a new multi-million-pound building producing batteries. Fixed wing operations ceased on June 11, leaving just the helicopters and airframes being trucked to other locations.





The plans announced in February see a new HEMS operation being set up in Harborough District, Leicestershire have taken a major step forward after a planning application was submitted. The base mainly covers Leicestershire and Northamptonshire and the planned facility is scheduled to be built off Swinford Road, north of the village of Catthorpe. The land is enclosed by the A5 in the west, and the M6 and the M! motorway junction to the north.

As plans were submitted in May a major fundraising campaign has been underway, with a public appeal aiming to raise £9M towards the cost of the new headquarters.

The purpose-built, two-storey, 2,107-square-metre facility on a 2.44-hectare site facility will include two helipads, a hangar, crew welfare facilities including bedrooms, rest areas, and a gym, training rooms, and incident simulation spaces. It will house two helicopters and two rapid-response cars, supporting both emergency medical services and the National Children's Air Ambulance, which has transported more than 1,200 critically ill babies and children to specialist hospitals across the UK. [106FM/BBC]

EVENTS

10th - 11th November 2026 • Headingley Stadium, Leeds ... The UK Wildfire Conference returns as a key biennial event for wildfire professionals. Wildfire2026's
In fact, Prime Minister Andy Burnham has announced that he will soon host a wildfire summit, focused on how we can increase resilience to wildfire. That is a separate event, yet to be announced .

10-12 November 2026 Safety & Security Asia, Sands Expo & Convention Centre, Marina Bay Sands, in Singapore. Last month's Emergency Tech Show and Emergency Services Show filled the NEC Birmingham, USA with unmatched energy as the UK blue light tech and operational community came together. Now the Emergency Services Show is going down close to the Equator to unite APAC's emergency services professionals under one roof. Expect: Live demos of new equipment and response solutions in action, Expert-led conference sessions and an Emergency Services Leaders' Summit, EMS Asia, co-located with ESS Asia, is the region's foremost conference for prehospital and emergency medical services, sharing best practice across emergency, disaster and trauma systems from across Asia., Emergency Tech Zone, bringing together cutting-edge technology and interactive live demonstrations
Four more co-located events covering security, fire safety, health and safety and integrated technology will be there so there's plenty of cross-sector insight to pick up too.
Expect over 475 world-leading suppliers and manufacturers and 13,000 visitors at the co-located events.

Sands Expo & Convention Centre in Marina Bay Sands is Asia's leading venue for world-class exhibitions, entertainment, and global conventions. Spanning over 1.3 million square feet, this state-of-the-art facility offers versatile event spaces in the heart of Singapore, providing an unparalleled experience for visitors.

19 November 2026 APSA Webinar #8 "September 11, 2001 – never forget: An aviation command perspective" presented by Ken Solosky, NYPD (Ret) Part of the APSA Live Webinar Training Series – these are available in recorded format from the APSA website after the date of the original broadcast. www.publicsafetyaviation.org

30 November – 3 December 2026 European Rotors 2026, EuroExpo Lyon Boulevard de l'Europe, 69680 Chassieu, Lyon. Europe's leading vertical aviation trade show and safety conference returns as France hosts the event for the first time and the show builds on five years of consecutive growth. The European Helicopter Association (EHA) organises the event, endorsed by European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and powered by Vertical Aviation International (VAI) and the European Rotors (ER) team. Organisers expect more than 200 exhibitors to display products and services across the vertical aviation industry, including helicopters, drones, maintenance solutions, avionics, training systems, and operational support technologies. ER2026 will offer a broad conference programme focused on safety, regulation, technology, sustainability, workforce development, and operational performance. Sessions will feature industry experts, policymakers, operators, and thought leaders addressing the issues shaping the future of vertical flight. www.europeanrotors.eu

Held annually since 2021, the show serves as Europe's central meeting point for the vertical-flight sector — bringing together operators, manufacturers, regulators, suppliers, training organisations, and urban air mobility innovators across a single professional platform.
Join us this year in Lyon, where the European rotorcraft community comes together to exchange ideas, share experience and shape the future of vertical flight. From safety and operations to innovation, sustainability and workforce development, EUROPEAN ROTORS provides a unique platform for open dialogue across the entire ecosystem.



What's Happening at the show this year?
Day 1 is the EASA Rotorcraft Symposium brings together regulators, manufacturers, operators, pilots, engineers, maintenance specialists, safety professionals and the next generation of aviation talent to discuss the latest developments in rotorcraft safety, certification and operations.
Day 2 Tuesday 1 December to Thursday 3 December — European Rotors
EUROPEAN ROTORS, co-organised by the European Helicopter Association (EHA) and the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), is Europe's leading rotorcraft and vertical aviation event, combining a major industry exhibition with a comprehensive conference programme.
The event offers:
Manufacturer and supplier, MRO, provider, operator, and regulator exhibition stands,
Networking opportunities
Industry conference sessions
Technical presentations, workshops and the practical Rotor Safety Zone
Career and workforce development activities
The latest developments in rotorcraft and vertical flight
Attendees can meet experts from across the industry and explore the technologies, services and innovations shaping the future of rotorcraft operations.







Parapex Media
Marketing, Social Media Management, Website Design, Press and PR dedicated to the Aviation Industry
www.ParapexMedia.com