(UK) CAA update

Offshore helicopter operations
At the initiation of the Civil Aviation Authority key organisations involved in the operation and regulation of offshore helicopter operations met on 18th June with representatives from the UK’s search and rescue services to discuss the operational needs of search and rescue organisations, and the role of Personal Locator Beacons (PLB) and Emergency Locator Transmitters (ELT). In search and rescue it is important that all emergency locator transmitting devices work successfully without compromising the safe operation of the helicopter in which they are carried. Following a Super Puma accident in February, it was suspected that PLBs issued to passengers interfered with the primary Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) fitted to the helicopter and liferafts.

As a result, the carriage of PLBs was restricted. It is understood that after the very constructive meeting, a way to progress the re-instatement of PLBs in offshore helicopters was agreed. Hosted by the CAA at the offices of its Safety Regulation Group in Gatwick, West Sussex the meeting was attended by representatives from:

Offshore helicopter operators: Bond, Bristow, CHC Scotia and BIH.


Offshore industry: Oil and Gas UK and BP

PLB and ELT manufacturers: SML Technologies and HR Smith

Regulatory bodies: Civil Aviation Authority, Health and Safety Executive.

Definitions: ELT An aviation authority approved Emergency Locator Transmitter carried to comply with aircraft operational requirements.

PLB A personal locator device used by the general public for a range of activities that may result in the need for rescue (e.g. mountaineering, sailing, and so forth).
CAA International certification
CAA International, the UK Civil Aviation Authority subsidiary, has been granted ISO Certification Body status by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS), it was reported from London on 23rd June.). It is understood that CAA International can now offer ISO 9001 certification to organisations in the aerospace industry. UKAS is the only accreditation body in the UK recognised by government. UKAS accreditation means that CAA International has demonstrated that its organisation, processes and audit personnel meet acceptable standards.

The CAA International Business Manager, Andrew Varley, commented, “We will offer a high quality, value for money service to certified clients using highly qualified and experienced personnel from the CAA, people who are acknowledged experts in the aviation and engineering fields.”

UKAS have accredited CAA International in accordance with the recognised international standard ISO/IEC 17021:2006 conformity assessment- requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems, for Quality Management Systems (ISO 9001:2008).

The CAA is the UK's specialist aviation regulator. Its activities include: making sure that the aviation industry meets the highest technical and operational safety standards; preventing holidaymakers from being stranded abroad or losing money because of tour operator insolvency; planning and regulating all UK airspace; and regulating airports, air traffic services and airlines and providing advice on aviation policy from an economic standpoint.

CAA International (CI) is a wholly owned subsidiary of the UK CAA. CI provides technical assistance, training and examination services covering all aspects of the application and implementation of aviation regulation. These activities are resourced from the UK CAA and delivered to other regulators, governments, operators and industry both in the UK and overseas. CI expertise includes: airworthiness, flight operations, air traffic, aerodromes, licensing, airspace, risk and safety management, organisation process and management.