

**Report of the Chief Constable to the Chair and Members  
of the Strategic Air Support Panel  
8<sup>th</sup> November 2011**

**Executive & Presenting Officer: Mr Sean White, Assistant Chief Constable  
(Crime & Operations)**

**Status: For information**

**Air Operations Unit Performance Update**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 This report is to provide Members with an update on the performance and finance of the Air Operations Unit.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Members note the contents of the report.

**3. Reasons**

- 3.1 During the period 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011, the aircraft has flown for 220 hours, attended 632 incidents and made 129 arrests. In the same period in 2010 the aircraft flew 185 hours, attended 478 incidents and made 84 arrests. The figures continue to show that we are getting improved results from the new aircraft. These figures show for 19% more flying time, we achieved 54% more arrests. The aircraft flew for less flying hours in the same period last year, due to a major service on the old aircraft, which lasted for nearly 4 weeks.
- 3.2 A selection of highlighted incidents, from this period are shown overleaf:

### Hartlepool District

- On 15<sup>th</sup> August, the aircraft was deployed to a stolen vehicle pursuit in Hartlepool. The aircraft provided downlink and commentary as the vehicle was driven into Seal Sands industrial estate. The aircraft captured video evidence including two stinger deployments, TPAC manoeuvres and the arrest of the four occupants.
- On 2<sup>nd</sup> September, the aircraft was tasked to search for a vulnerable female who had been reported suicidal and missing by her husband. The crew located the female lying hidden in the dunes at North Gare having consumed a quantity of tablets. The crew landed and gave first aid until officers and ambulance staff arrived.
- On 21<sup>st</sup> September, the aircraft deployed to a burglary in progress at Bruce Crescent. The crew were able to fly high enough to be inaudible on the ground. The crew captured the two burglars in the act of trying to jimmy the rear door of the house. Officers were directed. The two burglars made off and hid in a nearby out-house. Officers were directed and they were arrested.

### Middlesbrough District

- On 8<sup>th</sup> July, the aircraft deployed to search for a male responsible for a knife attack. The crew located a group of males in Pallister Park, one of whom fitted the description. Officers were talked onto the location and the male was safely arrested.
- On 2<sup>nd</sup> August, the aircraft deployed to an incident where a taxi was being attacked by a group of youths and the driver subjected to racial abuse. The crew directed officers to three suspects who were arrested for criminal damage and racially aggravated public order offences.

### Redcar and Cleveland District

- On 31<sup>st</sup> July, the aircraft was deployed to search for 2 males with rifles in Errington Woods. Both males were located and ARV officers were directed safely to them.
- On 3<sup>rd</sup> August, the aircraft deployed to assist ARV officers to find two males with firearms. The crew located two suspects hiding in trees. Officers were directed to them and one male was arrested for numerous offences including firearms, criminal damage and vehicle interference.
- On 1<sup>st</sup> September, the aircraft was deployed to search for a missing suicidal woman who had taken tablets. An extensive search of the Boosbeck area resulted in the location of the woman lying hidden in a hedge. The crew landed nearby and gave assistance. The woman was carried from the field to a place where the ambulance could gain access.

### Stockton District

- On 3<sup>rd</sup> July, the aircraft assisted with evacuating a serious casualty from a road traffic collision at Whinney Hill and transferred to James Cook.
- On 14<sup>th</sup> July, the aircraft took over from the Northumbria aircraft in the pursuit of a stolen BMW on the A19 at Leven Viaduct. The crew managed the pursuit into York where the three men decamped and were arrested for armed robbery of cash in transit in Durham that day.
- On 2<sup>nd</sup> September, the aircraft was deployed to a report of a burglary in progress at St. Bedes School in Stockton. The crew identified two suspects climbing down from the roof. Officers were directed and they were arrested for burglary.

3.3 The above incidents have been chosen to highlight the work of the helicopter. These types of incidents are happening every day around the Force and the helicopter is having a significant positive impact on many areas of Policing.

3.4 The revenue budget for 2011/12 is being monitored very closely and is forecast to come in on budget. There was a concern previously that we were not going to meet our target in respect of income generation, but this has picked up slightly over the summer, with assistance to North Yorkshire.

3.5 At the last meeting we reported that there may be a potential issue with the hanger facilities at the airport. This is still an ongoing problem as the hanger has not yet been repaired which could cause some problems if there is severe weather during the winter. The airport has given us assurances that this work will be carried out shortly and we are monitoring the issue closely.

3.6 Appendix A details the performance statistics and flying hours. The use of the aircraft has resulted in the equivalent of 170,315 officer hours being saved across the Force during July to September. This would equate to a cost saving of approximately £2,043,780 compared to officers on the ground being deployed to the same incidents.

3.7 During the period we have received 2 letters of appreciation and no complaints.

## **4. Implications**

### 4.1 Financial

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### 4.2 Diversity and Equal Opportunities

There are no issues arising from this report to bring to the members attention.

4.3 Human Rights Act

There are no human rights issues associated with this report.

4.4 Sustainability

There are no sustainability issues associated with this report.

4.5 Risk

There are no risks arising from this report.

**5. Conclusions**

- 5.1 The new helicopter has become business as usual and is being utilised in a great many areas of Policing across the force and is providing some very significant results on a daily basis.

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Temporary Chief Constable

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