

Robinson Tops Product Support Survey



Parts being moved through the Robinson factory.

Once again Robinson ranks number one for product support in *Professional Pilot's* 2017 Product Support Survey. This is the 14th year in a row Robinson is the leader for piston product support.

Robinson's overall score of 8.17, which is an improvement over its 8.06 score in 2016, is also the highest score of any helicopter manufacturer, piston or turbine, surveyed.

The most notable improvement was in the technical representative category. Robinson scored 8.58, an increase of .39 compared to last year's 8.19 score. The survey is divided into two sections: piston and turbine. Because Robinson's R66 is relatively new, the number of responses was not enough to be included in the survey.

Claude Vuichard Visits RHC

On January 4th, RHC welcomed Claude Vuichard to its Torrance, California factory. Vuichard developed what is now known as the *Vuichard Recovery*,

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Robinson Provides Update



Robinson's booth at Heli Expo 2017.

KURT ROBINSON opened his 2017 Helicopter Association International press conference with the company's 2016 production numbers. Robinson Helicopter produced 234 aircraft in 2016, (19) R22s, (140) R44s, (12) Cadets and (63) R66s, approximately sixty percent were delivered to foreign countries. Kurt acknowledged the numbers are low compared to the 347 helicopters produced in 2015 but stated it is not surprising considering the overall downturn in the market. He went on to say while delivery numbers were down, sales of options were up. Recently introduced technologies including Garmin's G500H, Aspen's EFD 1000H and Genesys' HeliSAS autopilot were clearly in demand particularly for the R66.



Kurt Robinson updates the media.

Moving on, Robinson provided a brief synopsis of recent events. New spindles for the R22 were introduced last spring eliminating repetitive inspections and allowing operators to switch to a collective-activated hour meter. EASA certified the R66 Marine for both private and commercial applications after the R66 officially passed Sea-State testing in July. The R66 Inlet Barrier Filter was FAA certified last month (see page 2).

Robinson also announced the Cadet was recently certified in Europe and added he believes sales will strengthen as more countries complete certification. "We think the Cadet is going to do well given its price and available options. Air conditioning, Garmin's G500H and Genesys' HeliSAS autopilot are all options on the Cadet," said Robinson, noting the University of North Dakota's flight training school took delivery of its first Cadet in January.

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R22 Takes Veteran Back in Time



Photo Credit: Sam Jackson

David Monks with Rusty Waughman

On July 15th, as part of Pooley's Dawn to Dusk 2016 Challenge, British Helicopter Club chairman David Monks used an R22 to take 93-year-old Royal Air Force veteran Rusty Waughman to revisit camps where Waughman was stationed during WWII.

The challenge's goal is to encourage interesting use of an aircraft within the limits of competent airmanship that demonstrates the capabilities of pilot and machine in a day's flying.

To locate the historical camps, Monks studied wartime maps, Google Earth, and Ordnance Survey maps. He declined GPS technology and instead used a mechanical flight computer, paper charts, and a magnetic compass.

With Monks piloting and Waughman navigating, the duo took second place, flying a total of eight hours, 643 miles, over 21 airfields.

Flying is a Family Affair



A Barossa R44 over vineyards

R44 pilots and sisters Bridgette Hastings and Billie-Jo McInerney spend their days flying visitors over the family's vineyards located in the Barossa Valley of Australia.

Parents Peter, a 30-year helicopter pilot, and Sandra Kies formed Barossa Helicopters in 1989 with a Bell 47. Two Jet Rangers were added a few years later. In 2004, looking for a more economical solution, Barossa Helicopters purchased a Robinson R44 Raven II. The R44 proved itself and today Barossa operates four bright yellow R44 Clipper IIs providing tours, filming and aerial surveying.

R44 Chosen for UK Pipeline Surveillance



Helicentre Aviation's Clipper II heads out for National Grid pipeline surveillance.

Utility and survey specialist Helicentre Aviation (UK) replaces its aging fleet of Bell 206 helicopters with Robinson R44s.

The company's fleet replacement program is part of an eight-year contract awarded to Helicentre by National Grid, an international energy transport company. The National Grid contract is the largest onshore pipeline surveillance contract in the UK. Numerous aerial platforms were considered and after a year of discussions, both companies agreed the Robinson R44 is the most technology advanced and practical replacement.

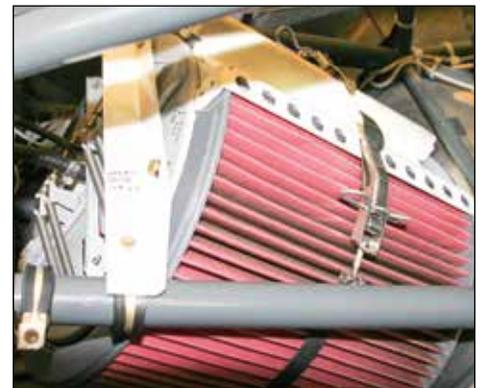
Helicentre logs over 2000 hours per year from two midland bases, Leicester and Wolverhampton. The company provides pipeline surveillance for multiple customers (National Grid being the largest) and believes a significant advantage of the R44 is that the airframes will be re-built every 2200 hours. Helicentre has already put three R44s in service with plans to add two more.

Inlet Barrier Filter Available for R66

Robinson announced FAA approval of a new Inlet Barrier Filter (IBF) for use in R66 Turbine helicopters. Developed by Donaldson Aerospace & Defense, the optional IBF provides added protection for engines operating in dusty environments.

A standard air filter uses a foam filter element while the recently-approved IBF employs a high-efficiency, flexible pleated element. The IBF mounts to the same inlet screen as a standard filter, uses the same filter bypass systems and cockpit indications as a standard filter and imposes no performance penalties making its installation transparent to the pilot.

Service intervals for the IBF are 300 hours or annually. The installation includes a pre-flight gauge that indicates when the filter is becoming dirty.



Inlet Barrier Filter installed in R66

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University of North Dakota Adds Cadet



UND's Don Dubuque receives the keys from RHC's Monica Campos

"We feel this will be a perfect platform to help us provide our students with the most technologically advanced training helicopter on the market. Our plans are for this to be the first of many R44 Cadets which will keep us on the leading edge of flight training."

— Don Dubuque,
Director, UND Extension Programs

On January 13th, RHC delivered an R44 Cadet to the University of North Dakota (UND). This is the first Cadet to be used in UND's prestigious flight training program.

UND Aerospace owns the largest civilian flight training operation in the world with three campuses and over 150 aircraft and flight training devices. The helicopter training division is located at the Grand Forks, ND campus and logs over 5000 hours in helicopters annually.

According to Ron DePue, the university's chief helicopter pilot, the flight department plans to replace its existing fleet of helicopters with more mission specific and technologically advanced helicopters. UND's Cadet is configured for VFR and IFR training with Garmin's G500H Flight Display, a GTN 750 navigator, a GTX 345 transponder, and a GMA 350Hc audio panel. Accessory bars were also added to the cockpit to accommodate personal navigation devices.

Robinson Provides Update

The company is also wrapping up certification of its R66 ENG (Electronic News Gathering) model. "We've got quite a demand for an R66 Newscop-ter and certification is really close," said Robinson.

Projects currently in development include a wire strike prevention kit and a lithium battery for the R66, a data recorder similar to an EMU for the R22 and R44, and a cockpit video recorder for all models. The data recorder fulfills EASA requirements for commercial operators and will be very useful to mechanics or in the event of an accident.

Lastly, Robinson conveyed optimism that the economy is improving and 2017's production numbers will surpass 2016's. While the company is still not where it was pre-recession, a surge of orders at the beginning of the year prompted Robinson to increase production rates. The current production rate is set at seven aircraft per week with increases to go in effect later in the year.

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Claude Vuichard Visits RHC

which is a method for helicopter pilots to recover from the dangers of the vortex ring state.

Vuichard developed the technique during his career as a long-line operator in the Swiss Alps where the traditional recovery method was ineffective due to the terrain.

Robinson's Chief Safety Instructor Tim Tucker met Vuichard in 2011 while conducting a safety course in Neuchâtel, Switzerland. During the flight portion of the course, Vuichard demonstrated his technique to Tucker. Impressed by the technique, Tucker added the *Vuichard Recovery* to the Robinson Safety Course curriculum and Robinson's *Flight Training Guide*. Tucker has advocated for the technique in published articles, FAA safety seminars, and his international safety courses. In August 2015, the U.S. Helicopter Safety Team endorsed the *Vuichard Recovery* and issued an Airmanship Bulletin detailing the technique (available at www.usgst.org).

Vuichard has been a helicopter pilot for more than 35 years and has logged over 16,000 hours. Now retired, Vuichard was a senior flight inspector/examiner for the Swiss Federal Office of Civil Aviation. He formed the Vuichard Recovery Aviation Safety Foundation which advocates the *Vuichard Recovery* and other procedures that promote safety in civil aviation.



Claude Vuichard with Tim Tucker

RHC Refreshes Website



The home page of Robinson's new website.

In January, Robinson launched a new, responsive website. The new design is accessible on both desktop and mobile devices. Information on options has been expanded to include more descriptions and photos. Replacement parts are easier to find and purchase. Sortable and searchable tables provide fast access to technical and safety publications.

Robinson Delivers 12,000th Helicopter

On December 23rd R66 S/N 0763 became the 12,000th helicopter to roll off Robinson Helicopter's production line.

R66 S/N 0763 was delivered to Hover Dynamics, one of three long-time Robinson dealers in South Africa. The helicopter was purchased by a new charter and tour operator, Fly Karoo Air Services, operating in the area of Graaff-Reinet. According to Dean Feldman of Hover Dynamics, Fly Karoo chose the R66 because of its powerful turbine engine, quieter cabin, spacious baggage compartment, and low operating costs.



Robinson Helicopter Company celebrates its 12,000th helicopter



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