EHA

European Helicopter Association

Newsletter

10 September 2026



In this week's news...

This week's EHA Newsletter highlights the regulatory, safety and industry developments that could affect Europe's rotorcraft community – what is changing, why it matters, and where EHA is working to influence the outcome.

- **AI and rotorcraft safety:** EASA's AI Days showed how trusted, human-centred AI could deliver practical safety benefits well before autonomous flight. For operators and crews, IIMC provides a particularly relevant example, with AI potentially supporting earlier recognition of deteriorating situations.



- **R.COMM – from priorities to action:** EHA is pressing for clearer EASA action on IIMC, UAS conflict, GNSS interference and technical-personnel shortages. The aim is to ensure industry concerns translate into defined work, appropriate regulatory or innovation pathways, and resources.

- **Environmental regulation:** ICAO CAEP work on helicopter noise could ultimately affect certification requirements and future aircraft development. EHA is engaging early to help ensure any changes are evidence-based, operationally relevant and proportionate.

- **Industry developments:** Leadership changes at Leonardo Helicopters and NHV provide an update on two important EHA members and their evolving European rotorcraft businesses.

- **What's coming next:** IIMC, Part-IS, Innovative Air Mobility and EUROPEAN ROTORS feature prominently in the autumn programme.

For EHA members, the value is early awareness and context: understanding not simply what is happening, but what it could mean for the sector and how the EHA is representing your interests.



EASA & Regulatory Matters

In other news

Association news

Forthcoming events

EASA & Regulatory Matters

Read the latest regulatory tracker version here

EASA AI Days 2026 – Turning AI into Rotorcraft Safety Benefit

EASA's AI Days in Cologne brought regulators, researchers and industry together to explore how artificial intelligence could move from experimentation towards trusted aviation applications.

Discussions ranged from EASA's AI Roadmap and RMT.0742 rulemaking to AI assurance, ethics, human factors and human-centred design. International regulators also considered the importance of harmonisation, while research and advanced automation highlighted the growing potential for practical applications.

For the rotorcraft community, a particularly important message was that AI need not mean autonomy. More immediate safety benefits could come from intelligent decision-support tools that helped pilots recognise developing threats, manage workload and make better-informed decisions in complex operational environments.

This strongly supported EHA's stance in its work on Inadvertent Entry into Instrument Meteorological Conditions (IIMC). EHA's recent paper identified AI as one potential element of a wider package of IIMC mitigations. AI-enabled tools could potentially combine weather, terrain, aircraft trajectory and operational data to recognise a deteriorating situation and provide an earlier, contextual warning – ideally before an aircraft entered IMC.

Importantly, EHA saw AI as complementing, rather than replacing, human factors, training, procedural and technical mitigations.

The discussions in Cologne reinforced a principle central to EHA's approach: the objective should not be AI for its own sake, but the proportionate application of trusted technology to identifiable safety problems.
IIMC could provide an excellent rotorcraft use case through which to demonstrate exactly that. EHA IIMC AI Position Paper

In other news

R.COMM – Sharpening the Focus on Safety and Innovation

Last week's Rotorcraft Community Steering Group meeting considered how the R.COMM could evolve from a largely static Safety Roadmap towards a more focused, evidence-led approach to safety and innovation.

Discussions covered IIMC, UAS conflict, GNSS interference and emerging technical-personnel shortages, alongside priority innovation topics. The meeting agreed to take the priority topics to EASA for a clear commitment on which could be progressed, the appropriate regulatory or innovation route, and the Agency resources needed to turn industry priorities into deliverable action. Presentation.





Association news

Leonardo appoints new Helicopters Managing Director

Stefano Villanti has been appointed Managing Director of Leonardo Helicopters, a key EHA member and major contributor to Europe's rotorcraft industry. Villanti brings extensive experience across Leonardo's helicopter business, most recently leading Sales, Marketing and Contracts. He will focus on customer commitments, industrial strategy, innovation, quality and growth. Leonardo CEO Lorenzo Mariani emphasised rotorcraft's continuing strategic importance across civil, public-service and defence markets, alongside opportunities for stronger organisational synergies and global competitiveness.

New NHV Base Manager at Aberdeen

NHV has appointed Darren Weatherby-Boon as Base Manager at Aberdeen, the company's largest operational base. Already Ground Operations Manager for NHV's UK AOC, Weatherby-Boon will retain those responsibilities alongside his new role. NHV highlighted his extensive operational experience and detailed knowledge of its UK business and Aberdeen operation. The company also thanked Marc Burns, who served as Interim Base Manager and helped maintain operational continuity during the transition.

Brussels news

CAEP – Rotorcraft Noise Standards Back Under Review

ICAO's Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP) has put rotorcraft noise firmly back on the agenda. At CAEP/13, ICAO agreed the CAEP/14 work programme (2025–2028), including further consideration of helicopter noise certification. Unlike the new aeroplane CO_2 standards, no new helicopter limit was adopted; instead, further evidence is needed before determining whether the existing framework should change.

ICAO's helicopter noise limits – in Annex 16, Volume I, Chapters 8 and 11 – were last strengthened in 2002. CAEP/14 is now assessing whether the certification scheme remains representative of day-to-day helicopter operations and adequately addresses hover noise. For the EHA, any future change must deliver genuine environmental benefit while recognising rotorcraft's distinctive missions and avoiding disproportionate certification burdens. We are therefore monitoring CAEP/14 closely, coordinating with IATA and the Swedish Transport Agency to understand developments early and ensure the rotorcraft perspective is properly represented.

Brussels is back in business – and rotorcraft are firmly in the picture

From easier cross-border access for air ambulances and new firefighting helicopters to counter-drone security and evolving radio standards, Europe's latest policy moves signal a growing focus on resilience, interoperability and the vital role of rotorcraft operations. News from Brussels

Forthcoming events

IIMC Working Group Meeting Sept. 29, EASA HQ, Cologne	**AirMed World Congress** Sept. 16-18, Munich	Part-IS Implementation Workshop 2026 Oct.7-8, EASA HQ,Cologne
BHA Safety Day Oct. 8, Cranfield, UK	**Innovative Air Mobility Implementation Forum** Oct. 27-28, EASA HQ, Cologne	**EUROPEAN ROTORS** Nov. 30 – Dec. 3, 2026, Lyon, France





