EHA

European Helicopter Association

Newsletter

1 October 2026

In this week's news...

- **AI and human factors:** The Flight Safety Foundation will examine how AI affects judgement, skills, workload and trust — directly relevant to EHA's work on IIMC mitigation and future training;
- **Emerging aviation noise:** UK CAA CAP 3304 highlights the challenges drones and eVTOLs may pose for existing noise metrics and calls for proportionate, evidence-based policy;
- **Pilot experience gap:** EHA engagement with the insurance community suggests there is no universal minimum-hours threshold; structured development, transparency and a strong safety case can influence underwriter confidence;
- **Sustainability:** The inaugural EHA Helicopter Sustainability Working Group met this week, focusing on practical Year-1 outputs, rotorcraft's societal value and proportionate sector-specific policy;
- **IIMC – from recognition to delivery:** The R.COMM Working Group is progressing four practical outputs across human factors, visual-reference flying, AI decision support and recovery training, following IIMC's elevation to an EPAS 2027 Top Safety Topic. Final material is targeted for submission to EASA before Christmas.
- **EASA rotorcraft expertise:** EASA is recruiting a Rotorcraft Air Operations Expert, an important role in ensuring future regulation reflects operational reality, and;
- **Brussels round-up:** Resilience, U-space economics and environmental performance featured strongly, with Connecting Europe Days, new SESAR research and the EASA/EUROCONTROL AVENIR catalogue all carrying implications for rotorcraft.







EASA & Regulatory Matters

In other news

Association news

Forthcoming events

EASA & Regulatory Matters

[Read the latest regulatory tracker version here]

AI & Safety – Keeping People at the Centre

Topical to our work on mitigating IIMC, the Flight Safety Foundation will host a free webinar on 28 October 2026 exploring the human impact of AI in aviation. Rather than asking simply what AI can do, the session will examine how it affects professional judgement, skills, workload, trust and operational roles.

Drawing on early aviation deployments and experience from other safety-critical industries, the panel will consider how organisations can introduce AI without eroding expertise or creating hidden risks. Speakers from ETH Zurich, NASA and EUROCONTROL will also discuss how these human effects can be monitored over time. The webinar runs from 14:00–15:30 CET. Register for free here.

UK CAA Sets Out Emerging Aviation Noise Priorities

The UK CAA has published CAP 3304 – Managing Noise from Emerging Aviation Technology, examining how drones and eVTOL aircraft could reshape aviation noise policy. The report highlights that lower-altitude operations, hovering, higher movement rates and activity close to communities may create impacts not captured by conventional noise metrics.

Existing aviation frameworks provide a useful starting point, but the CAA identifies gaps in certification standards, assessment methods and governance. It calls for proportionate interim measures, common data requirements and transparent community engagement while operational evidence develops. A first national drone noise policy is proposed as a transitional framework.

IIMC Working Group: From Recognition to Delivery

The R.COMM IIMC Working Group met to review progress following IIMC's inclusion as a Top Safety Topic in the draft EPAS 2027. The focus is now shifting from recognition to practical delivery, with the Group's five-pillar approach covering human factors, prevention, recovery training, technology and regulation.

Four draft outputs are now being refined: a Human Factors bridging package, Visual Reference Flying briefing note, AI decision-support paper and Training & Examination Checklist. A planned training video will demonstrate deteriorating visual reference and the importance of protecting options early. The Group also supported greater use of scenario- and competency-based training. Finalised material is intended for submission to EASA before Christmas.

In other news

EASA Recruiting Rotorcraft Air Operations Expert

EASA is recruiting an Air Operations Expert – Rotorcraft to support rulemaking, safety promotion and research under the European Plan for Aviation Safety (EPAS). The Cologne-based role will lead or support rotorcraft air operations rulemaking, develop regulatory and guidance material, coordinate stakeholder discussions and act as a focal point for rotorcraft expertise within the Agency.

For EHA, this is a particularly relevant appointment: strong operational rotorcraft expertise within EASA is important to ensuring that future rules remain practical, proportionate and informed by real-world experience. The successful candidate will also engage directly with external stakeholders, expert groups and consultations — areas where EHA is increasingly active.

Applications close on 18 October 2026. More details







Association news

Insurance, Experience and Trust: Rethinking the "Minimum Hours" Barrier

The EHA has opened a useful dialogue with the aviation insurance community on an issue raised by operators: whether insurance requirements genuinely prevent the recruitment and progression of lower-hour pilots. Early feedback suggests there is no single insurance-market minimum-hours threshold. Underwriters consider a much broader picture, including an operator's loss history, aircraft and operational risk, market conditions and, importantly, the quality of the safety case supporting pilot development.

A structured pathway, incorporating supervised operations, progressive operating privileges, additional check flights, simulator training, FDM and clear management oversight, can demonstrate that experience is being built deliberately rather than simply accumulated through flying hours.

This reinforces a wider message: aviation insurance should not necessarily be treated as a purely transactional purchase. HeliOffshore's guidance encourages operators to engage early with brokers and underwriters, share meaningful safety-performance information and explain the context behind their risk profile. The market is interested not only in loss data, but also in safety culture, investment, operational learning and forward planning. The EHA will continue exploring how closer engagement with insurers could help tackle the pilot experience gap — replacing assumption with evidence, transparency and trust.

Renewals Recommendations

EHA Helicopter Sustainability Working Group

The inaugural meeting of this new group took place this week, bringing together EHA, Airbus Helicopters, RIVE and industry stakeholders. Initial discussions focused on priorities, practical Year-1 outputs and how to quantify rotorcraft's societal value while shaping proportionate, sector-specific sustainability policy. With obvious links to other topics in this week's newsletter, we shall continue to report on progress.

Brussels news

Brussels Round Up

Brussels developments this week point to a stronger focus on aviation resilience, U-space economics and environmental performance. Connecting Europe Days, attended by our Chairman, highlighted competitiveness, civil-military coordination and strategic autonomy, all relevant to helicopter public-service and specialist operations.

Reflecting operator concerns, SESAR research questioned assumptions about willingness to pay for U-space services, supporting calls for proportionate implementation. EASA and EUROCONTROL also launched the AVENIR Environmental Catalogue, reinforcing the need for rotorcraft-specific operational evidence as environmental assessment becomes more embedded in policy.

Forthcoming events

Part-IS Implementation Workshop 2026
Oct.7-8, EASA HQ,Cologne

SAFE 360 Safety in Aviation
Oct. 21, Cologne

BHA Safety Day
Oct. 8, Cranfield, UK

ESAG-R & R.COMM
Nov. 2-4, EASA HQ, Cologne

Innovative Air Mobility Implementation Forum
Oct. 27-28, EASA HQ, Cologne

EUROPEAN ROTORS
Nov. 30 – Dec. 3, 2026, Lyon, France





