EHA

European Helicopter Association

Newsletter

24 September 2026

In this week's news...

- **EHA priorities gain traction at EASA:** IIMC is now recognised within EASA's Top Safety Topics, while the SAB has asked EASA to respond formally on two further EHA priorities: obtaining reliable rotorcraft flying-hours data and using operational experience from exemptions and alternative means of compliance to support more proportionate rulemaking.

- **European helicopter supply raises a policy dilemma:** Pre-owned twin-engine sales in Europe increased 75% year-on-year as global inventory fell to a five-year low. Against this backdrop, Europe's reliance on imported and ex-military capacity raises questions about whether policy is doing enough to encourage sustainable investment in certificated European capability.

- **Wire strikes – the next safety priority:** Heli Austria has brought renewed attention to the persistent threat from wires and slack lines. With many strikes involving wires pilots never see, EHA believes that, following the progress made on IIMC, wire-strike prevention should become the next major sector-wide safety conversation.

- **EPAS 2027 increasingly reflects rotorcraft concerns:** Proportionality for smaller operators, GNSS resilience, helicopter AOC harmonisation and the threat posed by unauthorised UAS to low-level helicopter operations are gaining greater visibility in European safety planning.

- **Brussels agenda has important rotorcraft implications:** Disaster resilience, proposals for a future European firefighting fleet, stronger UAS security, SAF implementation, ATM modernisation and the latest aviation safety figures all underline the need to ensure rotorcraft requirements remain visible as wider European aviation policy develops.







EASA & Regulatory Matters

In other news

Association news

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EASA & Regulatory Matters

Read the latest regulatory tracker version here

EASA Stakeholder Advisory Body (SAB) - Updated Feedback

The circulation of the draft minutes has highlighted that the EHA successfully advanced several priorities of direct importance to the European rotorcraft sector. The discussions resulted in three concrete outcomes concerning safety, reliable flying-hours data and the use of operational experience to inform future rulemaking. This note summarises these developments and the next steps.

1. Recognition of IIMC. EHA's work on Inadvertent Entry into Instrument Meteorological Conditions (IIMC) has helped secure recognition of the issue within EASA's Top Safety Topics. IIMC is now positioned within the wider European safety framework, rather than being treated solely as a rotorcraft concern. EHA will continue coordinating the development and validation of practical mitigations across training, technology, human factors and operational decision-making.

2. Flying-hours data. EHA has formally challenged the current timeline for obtaining reliable rotorcraft flying-hours and exposure data. Without this information, safety performance cannot be properly measured, risks accurately assessed or the effectiveness of interventions evaluated.

3. Operational experience in rulemaking. EHA has asked EASA to examine whether experience gained through Alternative Means of Compliance and Article 71 exemptions could be used systematically to inform future rulemaking and proportionality assessments, rather than remaining confined to individual approvals.

The SAB has formally asked EASA to respond to the issues raised under points 2 and 3.
EASA is part way through an ambitious simplification programme. EHA supports this objective while maintaining that simplification must produce better and more proportionate rules, not merely faster rulemaking.

Your operational experience is essential to this work. We therefore encourage you to share relevant examples, particularly concerning data gaps and disproportionate regulatory burdens. This evidence will help EHA translate everyday operational challenges into safer, simpler and more proportionate regulation as we continue Shaping Europe's Vertical Flight – safely, sustainably, together. Infographic

In other news

EPAS 2027 – Rotorcraft Priorities Gain Ground

EASA has reviewed more than 800 comments from 37 organisations on the draft EPAS 2027, with simplification, GNSS interference, AI and unauthorised UAS among the most commented topics.
Several outcomes strongly reflect EHA priorities. Feedback calls for simpler, more proportionate Air Operations rules, particularly for small and non-complex operators, including dangerous goods, training and approval requirements. Harmonisation of helicopter AOC procedures also attracted significant attention.
Crucially, GNSS resilience now explicitly recognises rotorcraft-specific reliance, alternative navigation and contingency planning, while the unauthorised-UAS work would expand to low-level helicopter operations.
The emerging plan therefore provides welcome evidence that rotorcraft concerns are increasingly visible within European safety planning. EPAS 2027 is expected to be published around 16 **December.**







Association news

European Demand Exposes a Policy Dilemma

European pre-owned twin-engine helicopter sales rose 75% year-on-year in H1 2026, while global inventory fell 33% to a five-year low. Yet Europe continues to rely on imported capacity, including ex-military helicopters, to meet predictable requirements such as wildfire response. Such aircraft provide valuable surge capability, but policymakers must confront the harder question: why is Europe not creating the regulatory and commercial conditions for operators to invest in sufficient certificated capacity of their own? Emergency solutions cannot become permanent policy. Europe needs political commitment to long-term rotorcraft capability, not repeated reliance on whichever short-term option is easiest or cheapest.
AeroAsset - Heli Market Trends

Wire Strikes – The Next Rotorcraft Safety Challenge

Following the sector's growing focus on IIMC, wire and slack-line strikes should be our next major safety priority. The statistics are stark: 90% of wire accidents occur below 200 ft, 60% of pilots never see the wire they strike and, over a decade of reported accidents, every fatal wire strike involved an unmarked wire.
EHA therefore welcomes Heli Austria bringing this hazard firmly into focus through its recent **Mastering the Wire Environment seminar**. Covering hazard recognition, detection technology, low-level CRM and breaking the accident chain, it addressed an area for which there is currently no mandatory pilot training requirement.
The message is clear: wire strikes are predictable and largely preventable. **After IIMC, this needs to become our next sector-wide safety conversation.**

Brussels news

EHA Policy & Regulatory Update

This week's developments highlight the growing intersection between rotorcraft, resilience, security and European aviation policy. An EU study identifies future disaster-response capabilities, while Commission plans for a European firefighting fleet raise questions over sustainable civil capacity versus reliance on imported or ex-military aircraft. EASA is recruiting dedicated rotorcraft expertise and proposing stronger UAS identification requirements, alongside Ireland's emerging counter-UAS framework. ReFuelEU data show SAF exceeding initial targets, but at substantially higher cost than conventional fuel. SESAR's ATM priorities will shape future airspace access and integration with drones and innovative air mobility. Finally, Eurostat reports increased helicopter fatalities in 2025, reinforcing the need for safety policy based on exposure, operational context and longer-term trends rather than headline numbers alone.
EU Policy Update

Forthcoming events

IIMC Working Group Meeting Sept. 29, EASA HQ, Cologne	**ESAG-R & R.COMM** Nov. 2-4, EASA HQ, Cologne	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





