

2011 Production Doubles 2010's



Kurt Robinson, RHC president, fields questions at the annual Heli-Expo press conference.

Robinson Helicopter Company's President Kurt Robinson began this year's Heli-Expo press conference with a summary of the company's current state of affairs. To date, Robinson has received over 380 R66 orders and has approved fifty-eight R66 dealers worldwide. While the introduction of the R66 boosted the company's sales, the R44 remains Robinson's number one selling helicopter.

As in previous years, foreign markets dominated the company's 2011 sales, accounting for more than seventy percent of the year's total. Production for 2011 was 356 helicopters (212 R44s, 88 R66s and 56 R22s) more than double 2010's production of 162.

With a growing backlog of orders, the company is focusing on production by expanding manufacturing and working closely with outside vendors to reduce lead times.

Moving on to foreign certification of the R66, Kurt noted that nine countries have certificated the R66 including Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Malaysia,

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R66 Police Helicopter Debuts



Robinson R66 Turbine Police Helicopter in Heli-Expo's static display area.

Robinson exhibited the first R66 Police helicopter at this year's Heli-Expo held in Dallas, Texas. The base price has been set at \$1,096,000 and the required deposit is \$90,000.

The ship was flown to the show on an Experimental Certificate as FAA certification is pending. The technology available on the R66 Police version is essentially the same as the R44 Police version, but the R66's more powerful engine offers greater payload and increased altitude performance, a must for many police departments.

A second R66, S/N 0115, was displayed alongside an R44 Raven II in the convention center's main hall. At the conclusion of the show, S/N 0115 was delivered to SKY Helicopters, Robinson's longtime dealer in Dallas, and the R44 went to Seacoast Helicopters, one of three Robinson dealers in Florida.



R66 Turbine on display in the convention's main hall.

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Mexico, New Zealand and South Africa. Certification in some countries is taking longer than expected, but is progressing. Robinson continues to work with various foreign agencies and the FAA, providing technical support as necessary.

Finally, Kurt answered questions regarding new technologies and avionics. The company is working with Garmin and the FAA to obtain O.E.M (Original Equipment Manufacturer) installation approval for the new GTN (touch screen) series. The GTN series will replace the Garmin 400/500 series and should be available by next year. Robinson engineers are also evaluating other new systems including the Garmin 500H Flight Display and the Aspen Evolution Flight Display. No decisions have been made as to what options might be offered or when they will be available.

Robinson Receives Honor from Los Angeles County

On 10 January 2012, Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe presented Frank Robinson with a certificate honoring Robinson Helicopter Company for its commitment to service and for becoming the world's leading manufacturer of civil helicopters.

One of the last aircraft manufacturers in Los Angeles County, Robinson Helicopter currently employs more than 1200 people.



Frank Robinson receives certificate from Don Knabe of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

R44 Pilot Finds Lost Family (Again)

Pilot John Rachor (Medford, Oregon) possesses a knack for finding people who get lost in Oregon's vast wilderness.

Rachor, whom we reported on twice before, used his R44 Raven II to help with local search and rescue missions at his own expense. In November 2006, Rachor's efforts gained fame when he found the Kim family who had been stranded for more than a week on a snow-covered logging road in Oregon's southwest timberlands. Three years later in 2009, Rachor spotted injured hiker Coreen Clark who had spent the night lost in Oregon's Applegate wilderness.

More recently in February of this year, Rachor found the Conne family who went missing for six days in Oregon's densely wooded forest, 300 miles south-southwest of Portland. On a Sunday afternoon Daniel and Belinda Conne, along with their 25-year-old son Michael, set out on a day trip to gather mushrooms. As dusk fell, the family became disoriented. Cold and unable to find their Jeep, they took refuge in the hollow trunk of a massive fallen tree.

A search party was dispatched when, after four days, it was discovered the family had not returned to the campsite where they had been living. On the sixth day, as the search and rescue effort turned into body-recovery mode, John Rachor volunteered his R44. Accompanied by Lt. John Ward, Rachor ventured outside the official search area. Flying slowly over heavily wooded terrain, he spotted a flash of movement that turned out to be the Connes. Unable to land, Rachor radioed the U.S. Coast Guard who sent a chopper equipped with a basket.

Since being elected Jackson County Commissioner in 2010, Rachor has had less time to fly. Fearing he wouldn't maintain his sharp pilot skills, he sold his R44 in March 2012. Rachor, who has never been affiliated with local law enforcement, has participated in thirty-eight search missions and is credited with twenty-two finds. Law enforcement officials praised Rachor, saying his efforts have been a tremendous asset to the community.



John Rachor with his R44 Raven II.

Photo credit: Associated Press / Jeff Barnard

First Grader Gets a Lift to School

Cape Town Helicopters (South Africa) teamed with local radio station Heart 104.9 FM to give six-year-old Khyler Johnson an R44 helicopter ride to her first day of school.

Khyler was this year's winner of the station's fourth annual *First Day Fly-in Contest*. Her mother entered Khyler in the contest after the unexpected death of the little girl's father. The first grader was flown in an R44 Clipper II over Cape Town's harbor before touching down at Westcott Primary School just before 8:00 am.

Cape Town Helicopters' Base Manager Braam Botha said the company sponsored the flight to thank the local community for its support during the recent recession. Established in 2011, Cape Town Helicopters' fleet includes three R44s.



Khyler Johnson stands before Pilot Janno van Niekerk, mom Carlynn, and radio personality Julian Naidoo.

Robinson's Safety Course Turns 30



Safety course instructors Tim Tucker (far left) and Bob Muse (far right) join safety course students for a group photo.

January 2012 marked the 30th anniversary of the Robinson Safety Course. The first of its kind, the course is the longest operating FAA-approved Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic.

With the introduction of the R22 in 1979, helicopter flight training suddenly became more affordable. As the number of student pilots increased in the early 1980s, so did the number of student pilot-related accidents. Believing the trend was the result of insufficient training and lax standards, Frank Robinson started the Flight Instructor Safety Program in 1982. An essential part of that program was the R22 Flight Instructor Safety Course, which was FAA approved in January 1983.

Initially taught by Frank Robinson, Tim Tucker, Terry Strange and Rod Anderson, the course focused on the causes and prevention of R22 accidents. The idea was to raise awareness and educate Certified Flight Instructors (CFIs) transitioning from larger helicopters into the new, smaller R22. The impact of the course was undeniable. The rate of fatal R22 accidents per 100,000 flight hours fell from 6.0 in 1982 to 0.7 in 1997.

In the beginning, the once-a-month class included twelve students and was restricted to CFIs. In the late 1980s, as more and more R22s were acquired for business and personal use, the course enrollment was expanded to include private and commercial rated pilots. With the introduction of the R44 in the early 1990s, the course became the R22/R44 Pilot Safety Course. Today, the Robinson Safety Course, as it is best known, includes subjects relating to the R22, R44 and R66.

To date, over 16,000 pilots have attended the 3½-day course, which focuses on accident prevention, aerodynamics, mechanics and pilot awareness. One full day is devoted to accident trends and statistics as well as a brief history of the company. The safety course also includes an hour of dual-flight time under the supervision of a Robinson Safety Course pilot. All Robinson Safety Course pilots are highly qualified CFIs carefully selected by Tim Tucker, Robinson's Chief Safety Course Instructor.

Robinson continues to push for more rigorous standards in training, believing it is the most effective tool in accident prevention.



Robinson's Chief Safety Instructor Tim Tucker teaches a Robinson Safety Course

FAA Awards SKY Helicopters R44 Training Contract

SKY Helicopters, a Robinson dealer since 1998, announced it has been awarded a contract from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). SKY Helicopters will provide initial and recurrent R44 transition/awareness ground school and flight training for helicopter-rated FAA pilots.

The helicopter pilot training is for Flight Standards Operations Inspectors and Aircraft Certification Pilots employed by the FAA. All training will be conducted at SKY Helicopters' facilities at the Garland/Dallas Fort Worth Heliport in north Texas.

Robinson congratulates SKY Helicopters for having been awarded this contract as it is an endorsement of the company's flight training standards and commitment to safety.

Embry-Riddle Presents Safety Award to UHI



ERAU president Dr. Johnson presents UHI's Gordon Jiroux with the President's Award for Safety.

On 23 February 2012, Universal Helicopters Inc.'s (UHI's) president and founder Gordon Jiroux accepted the Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU) President's Award for Outstanding Achievement in Safety. The award recognized UHI for having provided ERAU's Prescott Arizona campus with high quality, accident free flight instruction for two years.

Embry-Riddle University was established in the late 1960s and is the only accredited aviation-oriented university in the world.

UHI has multiple locations including a Robinson dealership in Provo, Utah as well as service centers in Scottsdale, Arizona and Salina, Kansas. The company operates twenty-seven Robinson helicopters.

Robinson Delivers 100th R66 Turbine

On 23 December 2011, R66 S/N 0100 rolled off Robinson's production line, one year and two months after the R66 Turbine received FAA certification.

The five-place R66 is Robinson Helicopter's largest and most powerful helicopter. The idea, conceived more than a decade ago, was to produce a low-maintenance,

high-performance light turbine helicopter to fill the emerging void created in the market as older model turbines timed out.

Because the response to the R66 has been so positive, Robinson is working to expand and enhance the line. The company is currently teaming with the FAA to certificate an R66 Police version (intro-

duced at this year's Heli-Expo), a float-equipped version, and a cargo hook.

Serial number 0100 was delivered to National Airways Corporation (South Africa), a Robinson dealer since 1990. The R66 is presently operating in twenty countries.



Robinson's R66 Final Assembly Line and Flight Test Department gather around the 100th R66 Turbine.

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