

RHC's Pat Cox Receives Award for Excellence



Pat Cox.

RHC's Pat Cox received the Rolls-Royce Excellence in Helicopter Maintenance Award which recognizes an individual for long-standing excellence in the performance of helicopter maintenance instruction or supervision. The award was presented March 4, 2015 at the Helicopter Association International (HAI) Salute to Excellence Awards ceremony in Orlando, Florida.

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Kurt Robinson Updates Press at Heli-Expo

Speaking at Robinson Helicopter's press conference during Heli-Expo, President Kurt Robinson updated the helicopter industry on the company's accomplishments, production numbers and current projects.

The company produced 329 helicopters in 2014, down from 523 produced in 2013.

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Robinson Unveils New Options at Heli-Expo



Heli-Expo attendee checks out Robinson's avionics options on the R66.

ORLANDO, FLORIDA - Robinson's booth at this year's Heli-Expo was crowded with spectators anxious to check out the company's latest options. On January 15th, Robinson added Garmin's G500H and Genesys Aerosystems' HeliSAS autopilot to the R66's optional equipment list. Both systems were on display in a gray and sand metallic R66.

The G500H is a combination Primary Flight Display and Multi-function Flight Display (PFD/MFD) that provides flight instrumentation, moving map navigation, and situational awareness on dual screens. Garmin's Helicopter Synthetic Vision Technology (HSVT) is optional and offers a more realistic display of terrain, obstacles, runways and traffic.

The G500H system is installed in a newly designed instrument panel, which also houses all required traditional instruments.

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R66 instrument panel shown with Garmin G500H.

Russians Put the R66 to Test Again



Photo credit: Laurie K. Gilbert

The Russians have left little doubt that the R66 Turbine is a tough helicopter. First, in the spring of 2013, Russian pilots flew an R66 from Moscow to the North Pole; five months later Russian pilots flew an R66 around the perimeter of Russia and then one month after that, four Russian pilots, in two R66s, completed a remarkable six week *Around-the-World Expedition*.

Their latest endeavor dubbed *From Moscow to New Zealand and Back* began on September 16, 2014. Two R66s piloted by Evgeny Kabanov, Igor Rudoy, Alexander Kurylev (Kurylev also flew in the 2013 *Around-the-World Expedition*) and Alexey Murashov took off from Heliport Moscow marking the first day of a seventy-seven day journey. Originally, the plan was to reach New Zealand and return to Moscow in fifty-nine days, but bad weather, a volcanic eruption, and bureaucracy set the expedition back more than two weeks.

In the end, the crews flew 30,000 nautical miles and logged more than 280 hours (not counting local flights). The helicopters were outfitted with floats and long-range fuel tanks.

Pilot Charts New Course

Each year RHC awards a Robinson Pilot Safety Course scholarship to a member of the Whirly Girls Association. After attending the course, Jessica Ward-Wallace, the 2012 scholarship



Jessica Ward-Wallace

recipient, changed her own career course. Ward-Wallace only flew helicopters for pleasure but after 3-1/2 days with Robinson instructors, she had a better understanding of safety and a brand new direction. She went on to earn her CFI rating and in January 2014 opened her own flight school, High Tide Helicopters, in North Carolina.

Pilot/Ranch Hand Relies on R22



Photo credit: Sheila Harvie

Julian Olivas with one of three R22s used at the Bering Pacific Ranch.

Since 2007, Julian Olivas, 68 (but looks decades younger) has been working as a pilot/ranch hand for Bering Pacific Ranches. The company grazes 5,000 head of cattle on a million acres on Umnak Island in the Aleutian archipelago. With only a few roads on the island, the helicopter is king.

The ranch operates one R44 and three R22 helicopters. In the fall when mustering season begins, the days are long and the work is hard. Ideally three helicopters are employed; one helicopter pushes from behind while the other two keep the herd intact. Olivas, who refers to the R22 as "a tough little guy," says it's the perfect helicopter for herding because it's nimble, accelerates quickly, turns tightly and will fly in conditions that ground others.

Because the environment is harsh and the aircraft are pushed to their limit, Olivas is adamant about maintenance and preflight inspections. He appreciates the aircraft's simple design and likes that the engine is exposed and that there are no hydraulics.

Olivas has 3,300 pilot hours (2,300 in the R22, 800 in the R44, 150 in the Schweizer 300C and a smattering of hours in other helicopters). He has attended the RHC Pilot Safety Course fourteen times over the last twenty-eight years. The litany of Robinson safety instructors he has flown with is long. Olivas attends the course to stay current, to learn new things and, most importantly, to be reminded "to be careful up there."

Take Me Out to the Ballgame

R44 pilot Bruce Haffner helped comedian Will Ferrell make a dramatic entrance during a spring training baseball game between the San Francisco Giants and the Chicago White Sox at Camelback Ranch, Arizona. Haffner landed an R44 Newscopter in center field where Ferrell jumped out, in full White Sox gear, ready to play.

It was the fourth of five games that Ferrell participated in for charity. By the end of the fifteen-hour day, Ferrell had played all nine positions, took a turn as a designated hitter and coached third base. The charity *Cancer for College* gives scholarships to people who are battling cancer.



Photo credit: Joe Camporeale, USA Today Sports Images

Will Ferrell exits R44.

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Robinson Unveils New Options at Heli-Expo

A Garmin GTN 650 or 750 navigator is required with the G500H and is installed in the panel just below the PFD/MFD.

When R66s are equipped with the G500H system, the HeliSAS autopilot may be added as an option. The autopilot was developed specifically for light helicopters. In its primary mode, the autopilot functions as a stability augmentation system applying corrective inputs to the cyclic to maintain fixed pitch and roll attitude. Only light force on the cyclic is required to override or “fly through” the system, allowing the pilot to maneuver with the system engaged. Additional autopilot modes include heading hold, altitude hold, navigation signal tracking (VOR or GPS) and approach navigation (including vertical guidance). The autopilot does not provide any collective or pedal inputs.

The R66 G500H installation may be interfaced with Garmin’s GTX 33 remote transponder (controlled via the GTN 650/750 navigator) and with FreeFlight’s RA-4500 radar altimeter that displays AGL information on the PFD. The GTX 33 installation includes ADS-B Out, which complies with ADS-B mandates.

Customer response has been very positive. To date, the company has received more than a dozen R66 orders with the G500H and the HeliSAS autopilot.

Tim Tucker Gives Safety Briefing Down Under



Tim Tucker conducts safety briefing.

In early November 2014, Tim Tucker, Chief Instructor of the RHC Pilot Safety Course, traveled to New Zealand at the invitation of the New Zealand Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to give a presentation on issues affecting the operation and safety of both the R44 and R66.

There were two presentations in New Zealand. The first was sponsored by Heliflite Pacific, a longtime Robinson dealer, and was held at the Ardmore Airport outside of Auckland on November 3rd. The second presentation was sponsored by Skysales Aviation, also a longtime Robinson dealer, and was held in Queenstown on November 6th.

Andrew McKay, a CAA examiner, opened each session with a statistical summary of Robinson accidents since the R22 first entered the country in the early '80s. Tim Tucker followed with a review of the R66’s certification history, its worldwide distribution and current production numbers. He included an in-depth discussion regarding the three major causes of accidents: inadvertent flight into instrument meteorological conditions, low “G” mast bumping, and low RPM rotor stall. Both sessions were well attended by owners, operators, instructors and CAA officials. The day after each presentation, Tim offered individual flight training and numerous attendees took advantage of the opportunity.

Before returning home, Tucker traveled to Sydney, Australia where Heliflite Pty Ltd, one of Robinson’s Australian dealers, sponsored another one-day safety seminar.

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Kurt Robinson Updates Press at Heli-Expo

Robinson attributed the decrease in production to an unstable economy as well as the company’s efforts to clear its backlog of R66 orders. He then added 2015 sales have started off strong and the company has increased production. Current production rates are one R22, four R44s and three R66s per week.

As in previous years, the majority of 2014 deliveries were outside the United States. Russia and China proved to be fertile markets last year. Robinson noted that while there is no doubt that recent economic downturns could affect 2015 sales, it is too early to make any hard predictions.

The company’s focus is on furthering the R66’s utility. The R66 float version, designated the R66 Turbine Marine, was FAA certified in the fall of 2014. Garmin’s G500H flight display system and Genesys Aerosystems’ HeliSAS autopilot were added to the R66’s options in January. Projects in development include a cargo hook and an R66 Turbine Police helicopter equipped with the G500H and the HeliSAS autopilot.

To better support its global fleet, the company added seventeen new service centers last year bringing the total to 478 centers worldwide.

RHC & Rolls Royce Sign Agreement



Kurt Robinson (foreground) signs agreement with Rolls Royce’s Jason Propes.

During Heli-Expo, Robinson Helicopter and Rolls Royce finalized an agreement for 1000 RR300 engines to be delivered over the next ten years. Kurt Robinson was pleased, stating that the relationship between the two companies has been very good and the RR300 is the right engine for the R66. To date, there are over 600 R66 helicopters in service.

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RHC's Pat Cox Receives Award for Excellence

Pat's enthusiasm for everything aviation started at the age of four when he flew with his uncle in a Beech Bonanza. At nineteen, he obtained his pilot certificate in a Cessna 172 and a few years later, added a rotorcraft-helicopter rating (flying R22 S/N 0004). During that same time period, he received his A&P (airframe and powerplant) license. In the late '80s, while contracting his services to corporate jet and helicopter operators in Arizona, his reputation as a skilled helicopter mechanic grew. Frank Robinson took notice and in 1990 persuaded Pat to move to Los Angeles and join Robinson Helicopter.

Pat wore many hats at Robinson before officially heading up its technical support department. He was instrumental in developing many of the procedures, techniques and special tools used on the R22, R44 and R66. He coauthored the R44 Maintenance Manual, which sets the standard for maintaining the nearly 6,000 R44s operating today. Early in his employment, Pat taught the Robinson R22 Maintenance Course, and later expanded the course curriculum to include the R44 and the R66. The 8-day course has been attended by over 4,000 mechanics from more than fifty countries and is a requirement for Robinson service centers. In addition to Robinson's Maintenance Course, Pat created and still teaches the maintenance portion of Robinson's Pilot Safety Course, which has been attended by over 17,000 pilots.

Pat has authored many Robinson Service Bulletins, Service Letters, and Kit Instructions and is often called upon by the FAA for technical clarification.

For twenty-five years Pat has availed himself to mechanics, pilots and service centers around the world lending support and advice whenever needed. As those in the industry will attest, Pat Cox is the go-to-guy when it comes to working on Robinson helicopters.

Congratulations Pat!



Pat Cox gives instruction on the RR300 engine.

Legendary Pilot Honored as Flight Instructor of the Year



Simon Spencer-Bower.

Thought to be the world's highest time pilot in Robinsons with more than 15,000 hours in the R22, R44, and R66, Simon Spencer-Bower of Wanaka Helicopters (New Zealand) received the 2015 W.A. "Dub" Blessing Certified Flight Instructor of the Year Award from the Helicopters Association International at Heli-Expo.

Spencer-Bower has been a pilot since 1967, a helicopter pilot since 1980, and a helicopter flight instructor since 1984 amassing nearly 21,000 total flight hours. As a CFI, he has logged 12,500 hours (mostly in R22s) providing instruction to nearly 600 pilots training for private, commercial, and instructor ratings.

Spencer-Bower also created the Advanced Helicopter Mountain Flying Course, the only mountain training course approved by New Zealand's CAA.

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