HELO COCKPIT RESEARCH STUDY USES EYE-TRACKING TECH

News / Business aviation



Global offshore helicopter association HeliOffshore has commissioned industry expert Jarvis Bagshaw Ltd. to conduct a research study in Aberdeen that uses eye-tracking technology to understand how pilots monitor flight instruments. Twenty-six pilots participated in the first phase of observational study, which seeks to improve pilot performance in the cockpit.

Optimizing the training and tools provided to offshore crews is a safety priority across the industry, according to HeliOffshore CEO Gretchen Haskins. “This is the focus of HeliOffshore’s collaborative eye-tracking research, which started this month,” she said.

The research involves pilots wearing eye-tracking glasses while flying a helicopter sim under IMC. This replicates a “realistic workload that immerses both crewmembers in duties and has a number of different task components to be monitored,” Haskins said. “Airbus Helicopters UK donated time in its Aberdeen-based H225 simulator and pilots from Bond Offshore, Bristow and CHC Helicopter are participating in the study.”

The results will be used to improve training and standard operating procedures, as well as give feedback to the manufacturers about the design of automation and cockpits, according to HeliOffshore operations director François Lassale. Results will be shared with HeliOffshore members at the association’s annual conference in Prague in mid-May. Then a working group will determine the best way possible to further improve safety via pilot training, procedures, policy and system design.

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