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Heli-Expo 2016: Obstacle database expands into Europe

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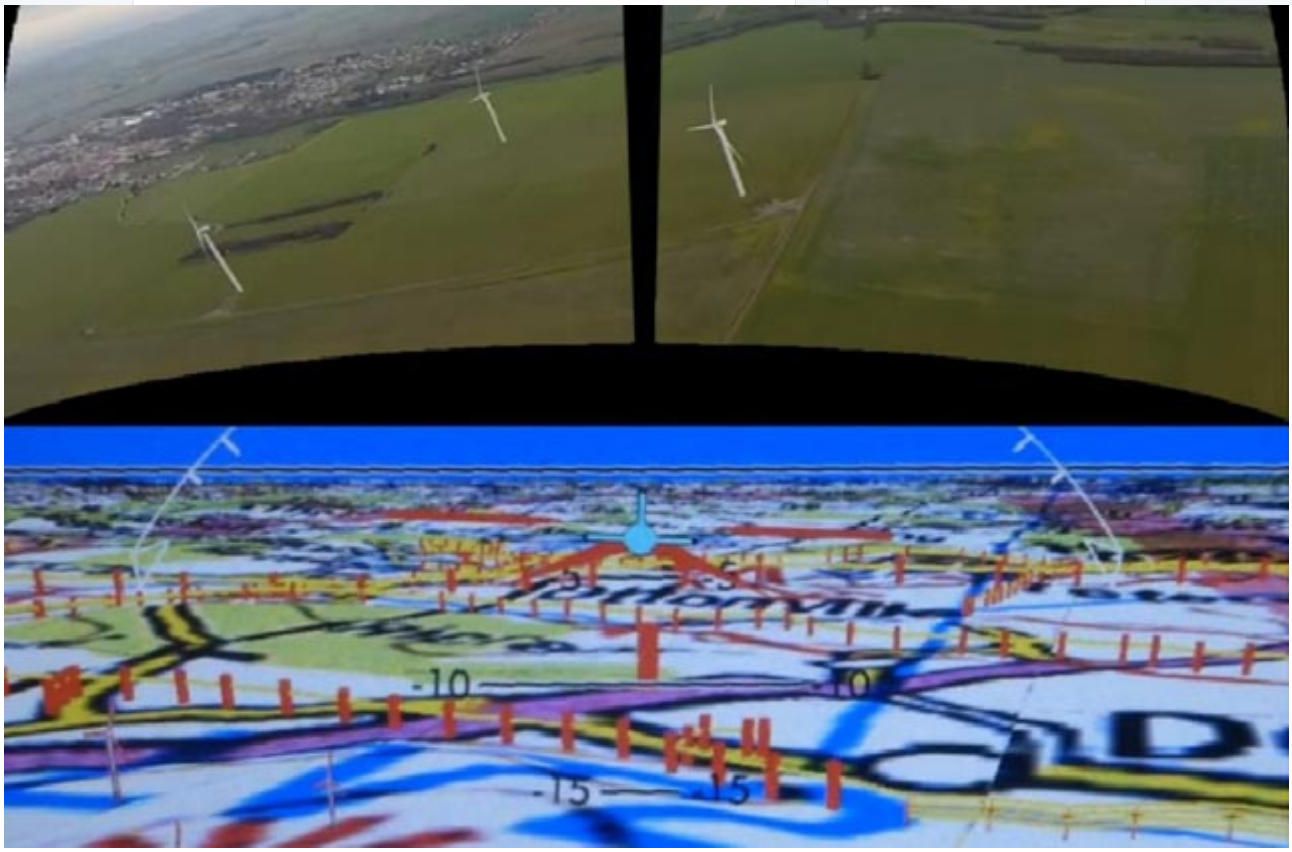

German based company, Moving Terrain, has introduced a new obstacle detection database for the rotorcraft market which covers the entirety of Europe.

The company offer precise mapping of all obstacles a helicopter pilot may encounter at 25 meters or above as well as offering 2D and 3D view of obstacles on the mapping instruments.

The creation of the detailed map over-lay has been on-going for over two years to ensure all relevant information is included. The company uses a variety of sources, including official government sources which are super imposed onto its maps.

Moving Terrain has already begun using the system in Switzerland.

'The country had a lot of accidents with military and civilians, they built a complete database to cover the obstacles in the last 1990s.' Stefan Unzicker CEO at Moving Terrain explained to Shephard, 'For a long time they were pretty unique. From then the drive was in other countries to map cables and now increasingly wind turbines.'

'We have dedicated a lot of attention to what sources we can bundle up and get full coverage, not just in one country but in the whole of Europe,' he added.

Looking forward the company is looking at the work to keep the map updated through a quarterly update schedule. Unzicker points out while obstacles do not change as frequently as airspaces some of the maps are being discontinued as well as other maps being set up.

'If we are successful enough there it is worth expanding to areas we are happy to do that.'

'One of the areas which we market our other systems to and where we see a demand is Brazil.

There is a lot of helicopter traffic in South America and we have been approached as to whether we want to do something in Brazil. But one step at a time,' Unzicker said.

'This is a visualised database with its respective symbols of cable cars and wind turbines. In the 3D version these are moving features,' Unzicker said.

Pilots are able to split the screen and run the 2D and 3D version parallel to enhance the awareness of the pilot.

'There are no speed constraints to the mapping system however if you fly very fast the update rate of the picture may slow down somewhat. That would be very extreme though,' Unzicker said.

The company currently has customers in Switzerland and is confident the extended database will be successful elsewhere.

The product is aimed at governmental missions, medical transport and oil and gas transportation operations.

The company has been making multifunction displays since 1993. The company originated the moving map in aviation at that time.

The company has been adding complimentary features like satellite communicated radar picture, or terrain boarding systems or traffic implementation into the flight management systems.