

Air ambulance gets feline support

A cat has been adopted as North Wales Air Ambulance's mascot after years of seeing the crew in and out of their base when they go on jobs.

TC, a black and white female, lives at Helimed 61, the air base in Caernarfon, but leaves the building when the alarm is sounded for the air ambulance.

She then returns to welcome the crew back after their potentially life-saving flight.

Paramedic Irfon Davies said: "TC has become something of a mascot really."

Crews at Helimed 61 respond to around 60 calls each month, providing vital life-saving support to the Welsh Ambulance Service's road crews.

"As we're coming back in sometimes we see her coming across the field ready to meet us"
Irfon Davies, paramedic

Although the paramedics shift between air and road duties, the one constant team member since 2003 has been TC, who has come to recognise the emergency call that signals a crew is about to get airborne.

"It's uncanny how she knows when to leave the building when a call comes in and she's always here waiting when we get back," said Mr Davies.

"As we're coming back in sometimes we see her coming across the field ready to meet us."

The Bolkow 105 aircraft, stationed at Helimed 61, has been in service in north Wales since July 2003.

But in order to improve performance, the service needs to upgrade to a new generation of helicopters under Civil Aviation legislation by 2009.

Wales Air Ambulance relies on charity donations and launched its pound appeal in March, which urges everybody in Wales to pledge £1 towards the new helicopters.

Story from BBC NEWS:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/wales/north_west/7456537.stm

Published: 2008/06/16 11:17:01 GMT

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