

## Multi-person rescue net plucks people from depths and heights

A new type of rescue apparatus which could save lives in air or sea disasters has been developed by a British Columbia engineering firm. The device, called Emergency Multiple Person Rescue Apparatus (EMPRA for short) is the creation of four men who have experience in air and sea rescue operations.

One of the four, Jim Bradley, says the idea grew out of the crash of an Air Florida jet in January 1982, in which 78 people lost their lives. He was struck by the fact that most of the people who died had been stranded in the icy waters of the Potomac River for a long period of time. Mr. Bradley noted that the rescue helicopters could pick up only one person at a time, and he felt if a dozen or more could have been retrieved at once, most of them could have been saved.

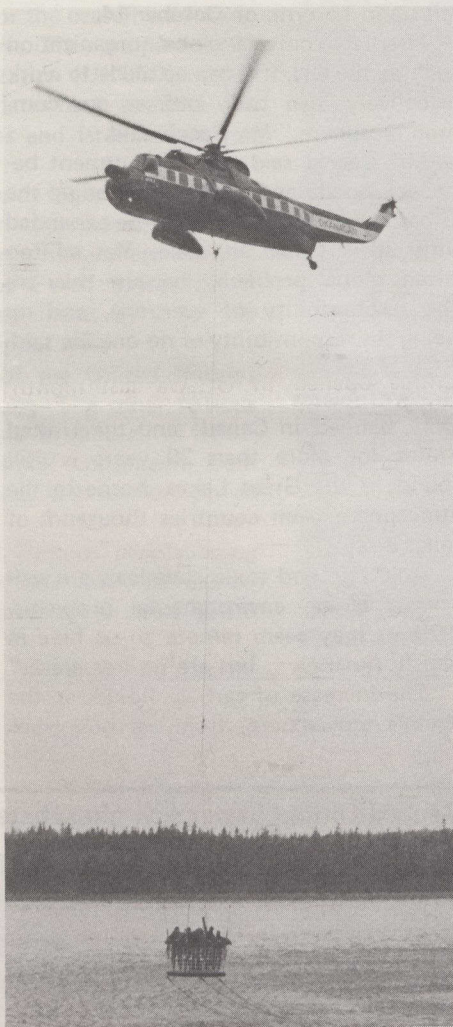
### Collapsible net

EMPRA is a collapsible, open-top ring net that can be slung under a helicopter or hitched to a ship's crane which can pick up as many as 20 people in one load. It is a circular device, and when it is lowered into water, or to the top of a burning high-rise building, the sides collapse to allow easy access and exit. On water, a flotation ring on top floats on the water surface so survivors can roll into the net no matter how tired or injured they may be.

Mr. Bradley says that this device could have saved the lives of many



*A collapsible, open-top ring net can pick up as many as 20 people in one load when lowered into water. The sides drop to allow easy access and exit.*



*Newly-developed rescue device could become standard equipment for off-shore industries. Sales have already been made to Esso, Petro-Canada and Dome Petroleum.*

people who drowned on the Ocean Ranger, the oil rig which sank off the coast of Newfoundland in 1982, carrying 84 people to their deaths.

### Sales and enquiries

Dart Aero Systems of Richmond, British Columbia has already sold the rescue apparatus to Esso, Petro-Canada and Dome Petroleum, and has had enquiries from Shell, British Petroleum and Mobil. Enquiries have also come from companies operating in the North Sea and off the coasts of Chile and New Zealand.

It is expected that EMPRA will eventually become standard equipment for people working or travelling under hazardous conditions.

*(From Canadian Scene.)*

## Bush plane breathes again

The durable old Noorduyn *Norseman* aircraft will be kept flying thanks to a federal grant. About 100 of the craft, the first Canadian-designed bush plane and a legend in helping to open Canada's North, are still flying world-wide, a half-century after the aircraft's initial flight.

Norco Associate of Petawawa, Ontario has received a grant of \$77 550 from the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Regional Economic Expansion toward the \$553 000 estimated cost of establishing a plant in Petawawa to rebuild damaged *Norseman* and other light aircraft and to manufacture parts.

## Auto supermarket: browse and buy

Nine car dealers in Richmond, British Columbia have committed themselves to spending at least \$15 million on a multi-dealer auto supermarket on a nine-hectare site.

Customers will be able to browse around Volkswagens, Chevrolets, Fords, Chryslers and others, catch a meal at a restaurant and take out a loan at a financial institution to pay for their purchase.

Gary Cowell of Cowell Motors Ltd. says the dealers were inspired by Carlsbad Car Country, a 21-hectare, ten-year-old car lot in California.

Ron Dixon, a Ford-Isuzu dealer at Carlsbad, said: "It's been beyond our best expectations. We were hoping to increase business 10 to 15 per cent in our first year. In fact we increased our business 50 per cent."

Included so far in the British Columbia venture are nine dealerships representing all the big carmakers, domestic and foreign. Two more manufacturers are negotiating to join.

Mr. Cowell said each dealership will have an individual lot and buildings. Also planned are a restaurant, a park, a financial institution, an insurance office and, perhaps, an auto-rental office.

Buyers should be able to make better deals because dealerships will save on expenses for advertising and security.

"Probably the most difficult part was to get the dealers together initially," said Mr. Cowell. "This park is a little different than others. It was dealer-instigated. It's all local businessmen in Richmond getting together, optioning the property, getting the re-zoning and starting development."