

# HELICOPTER PRISON ESCAPES



[Mountjoy Prison](#) where on October 31, 1973 three IRA members escaped in a hijacked helicopter.<sup>[1]</sup>



[Prison de la Santé](#) where on May 26, 1986 Michel Vaujour was flown out of the prison by his wife.<sup>[2]</sup>

A helicopter [prison escape](#) is made when an inmate is taken from a [prison](#) by means of a [helicopter](#). The helicopter's vertical lift is ideal for prison escapes because of the limited space to land and take off in prisons. This list includes prisoner escapes where a helicopter was used in an attempt to free prisoners from a place of internment, a prison or correctional facility.





One of the earliest instances of using a helicopter to escape a prison was the escape of Joel David Kaplan, nicknamed "Man Fan", on August 19, 1971 from the Santa Martha Acatitla in Mexico.<sup>[3]</sup> Kaplan was a New York businessman who not only successfully escaped the prison but eventually escaped Mexico and went on to write a book about his experience, *The 10-second jailbreak*.<sup>[4]</sup>





France has had more recorded helicopter escape attempts than any other country, with at least 11.<sup>[5]</sup> One of the most notable French jail breaks occurred in 1986, when the wife of bank robber Michel Vaujour studied for months to learn how to fly a helicopter. Using her new-found skills, she rented a white helicopter and flew low over Paris to pluck her husband off the roof of his fortress prison. Michel was later seriously wounded in a shoot out with police, and his pilot wife was arrested.<sup>[2]</sup>



The record for most chopper escapes goes to convicted murderer [Pascal Payet](#), who has used helicopters to escape from prisons in 2001, 2003, and most recently 2007.<sup>[6]</sup>





Another multiple chopper escapee is [Vasilis Paleokostas](#) who on February 22, 2009 escaped for the second time from the [same prison](#).<sup>[7]</sup> Because of this, many prisons have taken applicable precautions, such as nets or cables strung over open prison courtyards.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>







## Actual attempts







Date	Prison name	Country	Success or failure <sup>[key]</sup>	Escapee(s)	Details
August 19, 1971	Santa Martha Acatitla	 <a href="#">Mexico</a>		Joel David Kaplan	Joel David Kaplan was a New York businessman and nephew of molasses tycoon Jacob M. Kaplan. <sup>[3]</sup> His trust fund, J.M. Kaplan Fund, was named in a 1964 Congressional investigation as a conduit for CIA money to Latin America. In 1962 he was convicted of killing his New York business partner, Louis Melchior Vidal, Jr., in Mexico City. Kaplan always maintained his innocence and on August 19, 1971, a helicopter landed in the Santa Martha Acatitla prison yard where he made his escape accompanied by Carlos Antonio Contreras Castro, a Venezuelan counterfeiter. Both men were flown to America and then different planes flew Kaplan to California and Castro to Guatemala. <sup>[3]</sup> The escape is told in a book, <i>The 10-Second Jailbreak: The Helicopter Escape of Joel David Kaplan</i> . <sup>[4]</sup> It also inspired the 1975 movie, <a href="#">Breakout</a> , which starred <a href="#">Charles Bronson</a> and <a href="#">Robert Duvall</a> .
October 31, 1973	<a href="#">Mountjoy Jail</a>	 <a href="#">Ireland</a>		JB O'Hagan <a href="#">Seamus</a>	On October 31, 1973 an <a href="#">IRA</a> member hijacked a helicopter and forced the pilot to land in the













Date	Prison name	Country	Success or failure <sup>[key]</sup>	Escapee(s)	Details
May 24, 1978	<a href="#">United States Penitentiary, Marion</a>	 <a href="#">USA</a>		<a href="#">Garrett Brock Trapnell</a> Martin Joseph McNally James Kenneth Johnson	<p>exercise yard of Dublin's <a href="#">Mountjoy Jail</a>'s D Wing at 3.40pm, October 31, 1973. Three members of the IRA were <a href="#">able to escape</a>, JB O'Hagan, <a href="#">Seamus Twomey</a> and Kevin Mallon. Another prisoner who also was in the prison was quoted as saying, <i>"One shamefaced screw apologised to the governor and said he thought it was the new Minister for Defence (<a href="#">Paddy Donegan</a>) arriving. I told him it was our Minister of Defence leaving."</i></p> <p>The Mountjoy helicopter escape became <a href="#">Republican lore</a> and was immortalized by "<a href="#">The Helicopter Song</a>", which contains the lines <i>"It's up like a bird and over the prison. There's three men a'missing I heard the warder say"</i>.<sup>[11]</sup></p> <p>43-year-old Barbara Ann Oswald hijacked a <a href="#">Saint Louis</a> based charter helicopter and forced the pilot to land in the yard at USP Marion. While landing the aircraft the pilot, Allen Barklage who was a Vietnam veteran, struggled with Oswald and managed to wrestle the gun away from her. Barklage then shot and killed Oswald thwarting the escape.<sup>[8]</sup> A few months later her daughter <a href="#">hijacked TWA Flight 541</a> in an effort to free Trapnell.</p>
January, 1983	<a href="#">Pentridge (HM Prison)</a>	 <a href="#">Australia</a>		<a href="#">David McMillan</a>	<p>Arrests were made for the 1983 attempted helicopter escape from Melbourne's Pentridge Prison in Australia.<sup>[9]</sup> The three, all held on drug-importation charges, had hired a former <a href="#">SAS</a> soldier, then</p>

Date	Prison name	Country	Success or failure <small>[key]</small>	Escapee(s)	Details
December 19, 1985	Perry Correctional Institution, <a href="#">Pelzer, South Carolina</a>	 <a href="#">USA</a>		James Rodney Leonard William Douglas Ballew Jesse Glenn Smith	<p>living in the <a href="#">Philippines</a>, to lift the prisoners from the jail's tennis court to a nearby van fitted with panels to hide them for the 600 kilometre road trip to Sydney, where a yacht was to take them to <a href="#">Manila</a>.</p> <p>The plan was thwarted when <a href="#">Lord Tony Moynihan</a>, himself an exile in the Philippines, informed the <a href="#">Australian Federal Police</a>, who then ran it as a sting operation. Tony Moynihan would later become an informer against <a href="#">Howard Marks</a> in a Florida trial.</p> <p>Of the accused, only <a href="#">David McMillan</a> and his accountant friend who had visited the prison, stood trial. During the hearings, few prosecution witnesses used their real names as they were mostly from Moynihan's former West African <a href="#">MI6</a> unit. Those on trial were convicted and sentenced.<sup>[10]</sup></p> <p>One murderer, James Rodney Leonard, and two armed robbers, William Douglas Ballew and Jesse Glenn Smith, fled in a helicopter with a pilot and a woman hijacker with a pistol to a getaway car 4 to 5 miles away.<sup>[11]</sup> The 3-passenger helicopter was so overloaded with 5 occupants that it barely cleared the fence, while flying away in a hail of gunfire that injured one guard. Two other men attempted to escape as well, but either jumped or were pushed off when the pilot told the escapees that the helicopter could not take off.<sup>[12]</sup></p>



Date	Prison name	Country	Success or failure <small>[key]</small>	Escapee(s)	Details
May 26, 1986	<a href="#">Prison de la Santé</a>	 <a href="#">France</a>		Michel Vaujour	<p>Vaujour had 28 years to serve for attempted murder and armed robbery; this was his fourth escape attempt. He made his way to the roof by threatening guards with a fake pistol and nectarines painted as grenades. On top of the jail he was picked up by his wife Nadine, who had taken helicopter pilot lessons especially for the escape.<sup>[5]</sup> They landed at a nearby football pitch and fled in a waiting car.<sup>[2]</sup> <a href="#">Paris-Match</a> published amateur photos of the escape, which was made into a film starring <a href="#">Béatrice Dalle</a> in 1991.<sup>[13]</sup></p>
November 5, 1986	<a href="#">Federal Correctional Institution, Dublin</a>	 <a href="#">USA</a>		Samantha Lopez	<p>Ronald J. McIntosh walked away from a minimum security prison on October 28 and then rented a helicopter on November 5.<sup>[14]</sup> He used the helicopter to free Samantha Lopez from the <a href="#">Federal Correctional Institution at Dublin</a>, east of San Francisco. Both were later caught on November 15 when they arrived to pick up wedding rings from a <a href="#">California</a> shopping mall. The authorities were monitoring the account McIntosh used to write the check and the police were waiting for them.</p> <p>Ron McIntosh for his role in the escape was sentenced to 25 years in prison. Samantha Lopez was given five years added to her 50 year sentence for a 1981 bank robbery in Georgia.<sup>[15]</sup> As they were driven away to their separate prisons McIntosh was able to lean out of a car window and yell, <i>I love you!</i> to Lopez.<sup>[16]</sup> Samantha Lopez was released from prison on 20</p>







Date	Prison name	Country	Success or failure <small>[key]</small>	Escapee(s)	Details
November 23, 1986	<a href="#">Prigione di Rebibbia, Roma</a>	 <a href="#">Italy</a>		François Besse Jean-Claude Myszka André Bellaïche	<p>April 2010. <sup>[17]</sup></p> <p>A red cross helicopter was hijacked and forced to land in the maximum-security <a href="#">Rebibbia Prison</a> courtyard. About 50 inmates were exercising when the helicopter hovered about three feet off the ground. While the hijackers laid covering fire three inmates tried to board the helicopter Andre Bellaïche, 36, a Tunisian-born Frenchman, who was in jail for murder and bank robbery. The other escapee, Gianluigi Esposito, 30, was an arms smuggler accused of providing weapons to Italian terrorists. The third man, Luciano Cipollari, 24, an Italian extradited from France in 1985 for murder, slipped and fell preventing him from escaping. The helicopter flew to a nearby soccer field scattering an ongoing game. The men ran out of the helicopter and hijacked a car to escape. <sup>[18]</sup></p>
December 10, 1987	<a href="#">Gartree (HM Prison)</a>	 <a href="#">United Kingdom</a>		Sydney Draper John Kendall	<p>At 3.16pm on December 10, 1987, John Kendall and Sydney Draper were sprung from <a href="#">Gartree's</a> exercise yard with the aid of a hijacked <a href="#">Bell 206L helicopter</a>. Kendall was a gangland boss serving eight years while Draper was jailed for murder and serving a life sentence. <sup>[19]</sup> The escape caused great controversy at the time and led to a tightening of security at the jail. Kendall was recaptured 10 days later but Draper remained at large for 13 months.</p>
April 17, 1989	Federal Holding Facility,	 <a href="#">USA</a>		Ben Kramer	<p>Famous Apache Boat Builder and racer Ben Kramer tried to escape by helicopter from a Federal</p>







Date	Prison name	Country	Success or failure <small>[key]</small>	Escapee(s)	Details
	Miami, FL				<p>Holding Facility in Miami on April 17, 1989. The escape failed when too many other inmates jumped on the helicopter and the helicopter crashed from being overloaded. Ben Kramer was serving life without parole for <a href="#">Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act</a> (RICO) charges resulting from drug trafficking, and also pled guilty to the murder of fellow boat builder and racer <a href="#">Don Aronow</a> owner of <i>Cigarette Off Shore Boats</i>.<sup>[20]</sup></p>
August 19, 1989	Arkansas Valley Correctional Facility	 <a href="#">USA</a>		Ralph Brown Freddie Gonzales	<p>Colorado prison inmates Ralph Brown and Freddie Gonzales were able to escape via helicopter. Two women, Rebecca Brown and Patricia Gonzales chartered a helicopter out of Denver Colorado. Once air born the women held semi-automatic pistols to pilot Tim Graves head and ordered him to land in the prison yard to pick up the two men. They were recaptured in <a href="#">Holdrege, Nebraska</a> that night after firing shots at law enforcement officers.<sup>[21]</sup></p>
June 19 1990	Kent Penitentiary, British Columbia	 <a href="#">Canada</a>		Robert Ford David Thomas	<p>Two prisoners, Robert Ford and David Thomas, escape when a hijacked helicopter lands in the courtyard. Captured 2 days later. Correctional Officer R. KIRBY was shot during the incident and survived.</p>
1991	Rio Piedras State Penitentiary, Puerto Rico	 <a href="#">USA</a>		William Lane	<p>Inmates were able to escape when a helicopter plucked them from the prison. The escape prompted the Puerto Rico House Government Committee to pass a regulation that allowed penal officials to fire on any helicopter aiding an escape</p>



Date	Prison name	Country	Success or failure <sup>[key]</sup>	Escapee(s)	Details
1992	Lyon Prison	 <a href="#">France</a>		—	attempt. <sup>[22]</sup> After a successful helicopter escape from this prison, cables were strung across the central yard at five-metre intervals. <sup>[5]</sup>
December 1992	<a href="#">Touraine</a> Central Prison, <a href="#">Tours</a>	 <a href="#">France</a>		—	The would-be escapee was shot dead by prison guards; three others were wounded. <sup>[13]</sup>
June 17, 1993	<a href="#">Touraine</a> Central Prison, <a href="#">Tours</a>	 <a href="#">France</a>		Michel Vaujour	Vaujour and his wife were imprisoned in 1991. A man and woman hijacked a helicopter and held the pilot's family hostage. The wife alerted police and the prison was locked down before the helicopter arrived. It returned to its base, from where the hijackers escaped in a car. <sup>[13]</sup>
December 30, 1996	—	 <a href="#">Chile</a>		Four members of the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front	Two women suspected of involvement were Irish citizens, raising suspicions of a <a href="#">Provisional IRA</a> link to the left-wing rebel escapees. <sup>[23]</sup>
September 18, 1997	De Geerhorst jail	 <a href="#">Netherlands</a>		—	A September 18, 1997 escape attempt ended in failure when the helicopter crashed into the prison ground of the Dutch prison, De Geerhorst. The helicopter had been stolen earlier in <a href="#">Belgium</a> . The pilot was killed and the Colombian prison escapee, who was serving a long-term sentence for drug trafficking, walked away with slight injuries. <sup>[24]</sup>
March 25, 1999	<a href="#">Metropolitan Remand and Reception Centre</a>	 <a href="#">Australia</a>		John Killick	On March 25, 1999, librarian Lucy Dudko hired a helicopter under the pretence of checking out the upcoming <a href="#">Olympic site in Sydney</a> . <sup>[25]</sup> Using a gun she forced pilot, Tim Joyce, to land on the <a href="#">Metropolitan Remand and</a>











Date	Prison name	Country	Success or failure <sup>[key]</sup>	Escapee(s)	Details
June 5, 2000	Martin Treatment Center for Sexually Violent Predators, Martin County Florida	 <a href="#">USA</a>		Steven Whitsett	<p><a href="#">Reception Centre</a> grounds. Waiting was John Killick, who was serving 28 years for armed robberies. He jumped in the helicopter making an escape while being fired on by guards and cheered on by inmates. They landed in a park where Killick hijacked a taxi at gunpoint. The two were able to elude authorities for six weeks before being arrested at the Bass Hill Tourist Park.</p> <p>Lucy Dudko, dubbed <i>Red Lucy</i> by the media, was sentenced to the maximum of 10 years and was sent to <a href="#">Mulawa Correctional Centre</a> women's prison. On May 9, 2006 she was released on parole after serving 7 years of her sentence. John Killick is eligible for parole in 2013 when he will be 71. <sup>[26]</sup></p> <p>Steven Whitsett was serving a civil commitment as a Sexually Violent Predator at the Martin Treatment Center. On June 5, 2000, at approximately 1:00 pm, correctional officers patrolling the perimeter of the treatment center reported a helicopter approaching from south of the facility. Piloted by Clifford Burkhart, a former lover of Whitsett, the helicopter landed inside the fenced compound. <sup>[27]</sup> While Whitsett was climbing aboard, the helicopter struck an object. As a result of the damage the helicopter crashed about 100 yards south of the perimeter fence. Twenty-six hours from the time of the escape, a Martin County Sheriff's deputy spotted Whitsett &amp; Burkhart from</p>





Date	Prison name	Country	Success or failure <small>[key]</small>	Escapee(s)	Details
2000	Lyon prison	 <a href="#">France</a>		—	<p>a search helicopter. The two men were in a canal, in shoulder-deep water, four miles east of the treatment facility. For the escape and weapons charges stemming from the escape Whitsett received a criminal sentence of 25 years. Whitsett was awaiting a retrial when his conviction was overturned in 2007. Burkhart, for his part in the escape was sentenced to 7 years, followed by 10 years of probation. Burkhart was released from prison in 2007. <sup>[28]</sup></p> <p>Three men were able to escape a prison near Lyon by having an accomplice fly a hijacked helicopter over the prison. A net was lowered and the three inmates were able to grab hold and lifted to freedom. Guards were able to fatally shoot one of the convicts. The remaining two were recaptured after a gun battle with police. <sup>[5]</sup></p>
2001	Luynnes prison	 <a href="#">France</a>		<a href="#">Pascal Payet</a>	<p><a href="#">Pascal Payet</a> escaped from <a href="#">Luynnes</a> prison using a hijacked helicopter. <sup>[6]</sup></p> <p>On March 24, 2001, an armed man hijacked a helicopter from a nearby airfield. The pilot was forced to</p>
March 24, 2001	Draguignan prison	 <a href="#">France</a>		Abdelhamid Carnous Emile Forma-Sari Jean-Philippe Lecase	<p>land in the courtyard of the prison. Three convicts managed to get aboard before flying 60 kilometres (37 mi) away. Landing in the village of <a href="#">Auribeau-sur-Siagne</a>, the pilot was released and the men got into a waiting getaway car. The escapees were later identified as convicted armed robbers Emile Forma-Sari, Jean-Philippe Lecase</p>





Date	Prison name	Country	Success or failure <small>[key]</small>	Escapee(s)	Details
May 28, 2001	Fresnes prison	 <a href="#">France</a>		—	<p>and Abdelhamid Carnous. <a href="#">[29]</a></p> <p>(Although not a helicopter escape in the truest sense, it is listed here because of the large role a helicopter played in the incident). In May 2001 a hijacked helicopter flew over Fresnes prison, south of Paris and dropped weapons in the exercise yard. Two prisoners armed with a bulletproof vest, an automatic pistol and a Kalashnikov dropped by the copter were able to take three guards hostage in an attempt to escape from prison. The hostage drama lasted about 24 hours before the prisoners surrendered. <a href="#">[30]</a></p> <p>One of the most daring prison escapes in Brazil happened when a helicopter was flown into Parada Neto Penitentiary, freeing two inmates serving time for murder and bank robbery.</p>
January 17, 2002	Parada Neto Penitentiary	 <a href="#">Brazil</a>		—	<p>Earlier in the day two men rented a helicopter pretending to be tourists wanting a panoramic ride over the city. While in the air they drew guns and forced the pilot to land in the central yard of the prison. The inmates jumped aboard, and when the pilot took off again guards opened fire. The helicopter was found abandoned on a football pitch 50 kilometres (31 mi) away full of bullet holes. <a href="#">[31]</a></p>
December 30, 2002	Las Cucharas prison, Puerto Rico	 <a href="#">USA</a>		<p>Orlando Cartagena</p> <p>Jose Rodriguez</p> <p>Victor Diaz</p>	<p>In Puerto Rico five prisoners escaped from Las Cucharas prison in <a href="#">Ponce</a>. Two men had earlier rented the helicopter saying they wanted to inspect construction sites. They forced the pilot at</p>

Date	Prison name	Country	Success or failure <sup>[key]</sup>	Escapee(s)	Details
2003	Luynnes prison	 <a href="#">France</a>		Eric Alboreo Franck Perletto Michel Valero	<p>Hector Diaz gunpoint to land on the roof of the jail where they picked up the five convicts. To reach the roof the inmates cut a hole in the chain link fence. One was forced to hang on to the skids outside the helicopter as there was no room inside.</p> <p>The escapees were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orlando Valdes Cartagena, who was serving a 254-year sentence for murder</li> <li>• Jose A. Perez Rodriguez, who was serving a 319-year sentence for murder</li> <li>• Victor Gonzalez Diaz, who was serving a 113-year sentence</li> <li>• Hector Marrero Diaz, who was serving 109-year sentence</li> <li>• Jose M. Rojas Tapia, who was serving a 100-year sentence.</li> </ul> <p>Of the five, only Victor Gonzalez Diaz wasn't recaptured immediately. The inmates claimed to have killed him soon after the break-out. He later surrendered himself to authorities in January 2003. <sup>[32]</sup></p> <p><a href="#">Pascal Payet</a> organized the helicopter escape of three men, Franck Perletto, Eric Alboreo, and Michel Valero from Luynnes prison using a hijacked helicopter. <sup>[33]</sup> Payet himself escaped from the same Luynnes prison in 2001. <sup>[6]</sup> He and the three men were later captured but in July 2007 again escaped by helicopter</p>







Date	Prison name	Country	Success or failure <small>[key]</small>	Escapee(s)	Details
July 2005	France	 <a href="#">France</a>		—	<p>from <a href="#">Grasse</a> prison in south-east <a href="#">France</a>.</p> <p>A helicopter escape attempt was foiled when alarms were set off as the helicopter tried to land on the roof. <sup>[5]</sup></p>
December 10, 2005	Aiton Prison	 <a href="#">France</a>		—	<p>On December 10, 2005, two men rented a helicopter under the pretense of using it to do some back-country cross-country skiing. Brandishing guns, the men forced the pilot to land in the yard of the Aiton prison where three inmates boarded the helicopter. One inmate was serving time for a drugs-related conviction, one for armed robbery and the third for leading a robbery. The helicopter landed in open country near <a href="#">Grenoble</a> where they left the pilot after relieving him of his phone and radio. <sup>[5]</sup></p>
June 6, 2006	<a href="#">Korydallos Prison</a>	 <a href="#">Greece</a>		<a href="#">Vassilis Paleokostas</a>	<p>On June 6, 2006, Nikos Paleokostas and another man hijacked a helicopter, forcing it to land on the roof of the <a href="#">Korydallos Prison</a>. Two convicts scrambled on, Nikos's brother, <a href="#">Vassilis Paleokostas</a> who was sentenced to a 25-year sentence for kidnapping and bank robbery and Alket Rizai, who was serving a life sentence for manslaughter. The helicopter flew to a nearby graveyard from where they fled on motorcycles. <sup>[7]</sup></p>
April 15, 2007	<a href="#">Lantin Prison, Liege</a>	 <a href="#">Belgium</a>		Eric Ferdinand	<p>Two men hijacked a small helicopter and forced Pilot Eric Mathieu to land in the courtyard to pick up inmate Eric Ferdinand. Earlier the hijackers paid for the flight at an airfield near the city of Sint-Truiden saying they were tourists from Marseilles but</p>



Date	Prison name	Country	Success or failure <small>[key]</small>	Escapee(s)	Details
July 15, 2007	Grasse prison	 <a href="#">France</a>		<a href="#">Pascal Payet</a>	<p>eventually pulled out a pistol &amp; grenade. Eric said he landed around 200 inmates. One climbed on board while the hijackers threw tear gas canisters into the crowd. The helicopter then landed less than a half-mile from the prison, where Ferdinand and the two hijackers got in a waiting car and drove off. Eric Ferdinand was waiting to be extradited when he escaped Lantin Jail was arrested before in Belgium after escaping from a Spanish jail where he had been serving a sentence for theft, forgery and embezzlement. <a href="#">[34]</a><a href="#">[35]</a><a href="#">[36]</a><a href="#">[37]</a></p> <p>Ferdinand was later arrested and was extradited from Italy to Belgium. <a href="#">[38]</a> In February 2008, he was sentenced to six years in prison for the escape. Three of his accomplices also received prison terms. <a href="#">[39]</a></p> <p><a href="#">Pascal Payet</a>, 43, escaped for the third time from Grasse prison using a helicopter that was hijacked by four masked men from <a href="#">Cannes-Mandelieu airport (CEQ)</a>. <a href="#">[6]</a> The helicopter landed some time later at <a href="#">Brignoles</a>, 38 kilometres (24 mi) north-east of <a href="#">Toulon, France</a> on the <a href="#">Mediterranean</a> coast.</p> <p>Payet &amp; his accomplices then fled the scene and the pilot was released unharmed. Payet gained notoriety for using a helicopter in 2001 to escape from <a href="#">Luynes</a> prison in southern France and then while still on the run in 2003 organized</p>

Date	Prison name	Country	Success or failure <small>[key]</small>	Escapee(s)	Details
October 28, 2007	<a href="#">Ittre prison</a>	 <a href="#">Belgium</a>		<a href="#">Nordin Benallal</a>	<p>another escape for fellow inmates from the same Luynes prison. Payet had been serving a 30-year sentence for a murder committed during a robbery on a security van. <sup>[40]</sup></p> <p>On Oct 28, 2007, <a href="#">Nordin Benallal</a>, self-styled "escape king", arranged accomplices to hijack a helicopter near a prison in <a href="#">Ittre</a>, 30 kilometres (19 mi) south of <a href="#">Brussels, Belgium</a>.<sup>[37]</sup> However, the helicopter was swarmed by other prisoners, floundered and crashed. Benallal and his cohorts then seized two prison guards as hostages and fled in a car parked nearby. He was arrested again two days later by <a href="#">Dutch</a> police in <a href="#">The Hague</a>.<sup>[41]</sup></p> <p>Nordin Benallal faces over 50 years of jail time has several convictions for armed robbery, carjacking, and previous escape attempts. He has previously run from a prison van, walked out of jail wearing a wig and sunglasses and scaled a prison wall with a rope ladder.<sup>[42]</sup></p>
February 22, 2009	Korydallos Prison	 <a href="#">Greece</a>		<a href="#">Vasilis Paleokostas</a> <a href="#">Alket Rizai</a>	<p>On February 22, 2009 <a href="#">Vasilis Paleokostas</a> and another man (<a href="#">Alket Rizai</a>) escaped from <a href="#">Korydallos Prison</a> by helicopter. They had escaped in a similar manner during 2006 but they were eventually arrested. Their new prison break took place while their trial for the 2006 helicopter-assisted escape was ongoing. They were transferred to <a href="#">Korydallos Prison</a> just one day before their new escape, in order to attend their</p>


Date	Prison name	Country	Success or failure <sup>[key]</sup>	Escapee(s)	Details
April 27, 2009	Domenjod Prison, Réunion	 <a href="#">France</a>		<a href="#">Juliano Verbard</a> Alexin Jismy Fabrice Michel	<p>trial. <sup>[43]</sup> Alket Rizai was recaptured in November 2009. Vasilis Paleokostas remains a fugitive.</p> <p>Juliano Verbard was a guru of the <i>Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary</i> launched in 2002 on the island of <a href="#">Réunion</a>, a French territory in the <a href="#">Indian Ocean</a>. He was arrested and jailed 15 years <sup>[44]</sup> in February 2008 for attacks on children aged nine and 13. <sup>[45]</sup></p> <p>On April 27, 2009, Juliano Verbard escaped from the Domenjod Prison near <a href="#">Saint-Denis</a> on the island of Réunion. Three armed accomplices, posing as tourists, hijacked a helicopter and landed in the exercise yard of the prison. <sup>[46]</sup> He escaped with two followers, father and son duo, Alexin Jismy and Fabrice Michel. Once the three were aboard they took off and landed in a nearby clearing where a van was waiting. <sup>[46]</sup> He was recaptured on May 6, 2009. <sup>[47]</sup></p>
July 23, 2009	Bruges	 <a href="#">Belgium</a>		Ashraf Sekkaki plus three other criminals	<p>A man hijacked a helicopter and forced its pilot to land in a prison outside the city of <a href="#">Bruges</a>. The helicopter picked up four men including Ashraf Sekkaki, a 26-year-old convicted bank robber who has been described as one of the most dangerous criminals in Belgium. Sekkaki escaped from another prison in 2003. The escapees then flew to the town of <a href="#">Aalter</a>, then seized a black Mercedes from its female driver and robbed a service station before heading for the Belgian coast. <sup>[48]</sup> He was captured in Morocco two</p>




Date	Prison name	Country	Success or failure <sup>[key]</sup>	Escapee(s)	Details
June 25, 2010	Isle of Wight	 <a href="#">United Kingdom</a>		Brian Lawrence	<p>weeks later. <sup>[49]</sup></p> <p>While never actually reaching the execution phase of the plan, Lawrence communicated with his collaborators via a code written in "invisible ink" hidden in sudoku puzzles. Officers grew suspicious and eventually discovered the code after a message "more heat less light" was found. The escape attempt was planned during the Isle of Wight Festival where it was thought it would arouse less suspicion. <sup>[50]</sup></p>
March 22, 2012	<a href="#">Sheksna</a> , Penal colony N17	 <a href="#">Russia</a>		Alexey Shestakov	<p>Shestakov was whisked away from a penal colony on a <a href="#">Mi-2</a> helicopter hijacked by his accomplices, and re-captured shortly after his escape. <sup>[51]</sup></p>
February 24, 2013	<a href="#">Trikala</a> , Trikala Prison	 <a href="#">Greece</a>		Panagiotis Vlastos	<p>The chartered helicopter - carrying two armed passengers, a pilot and a technician - first tried to rip off the chicken-wire fence surrounding Trikala prison with a hook dangling from a rope. But that didn't work, so a rope was lowered down to whisk away Panagiotis Vlastos. Another prisoner, an unnamed Albanian national also in the courtyard at the time, may also have been part of the escape plan.</p> <p>At the same time, the armed passengers used AK-47 assault rifles and Uzi submachine gun to fire on the prison guards. One guard, who was inside a post, was slightly injured by shards of flying glass. He and others returned fire, injuring Vlastos, who had managed to climb into the helicopter, as well as the helicopter's technician.</p>

Date	Prison name	Country	Success or failure <small>[key]</small>	Escapee(s)	Details
March 17, 2013	Saint-Jérôme Detention Facility, Quebec	 <a href="#">Canada</a>		Benjamin Hudon-Barbeau Danny Provençal	<p>Vlastos fell from a height of about 3 meters (10 feet) into the courtyard, and the helicopter was eventually grounded in the parking lot.</p> <p>Prison officials told TV stations Mega and NET that they recovered well over 500 bullets fired from the helicopter. The Ministry of Justice, in statements describing the escape attempt, added that the helicopter passengers also carried, but did not use, "improvised explosive devices."</p> <p>Two inmates successfully escaped from the Saint-Jérôme Detention Facility by clambering up a rope from an awaiting helicopter. The helicopter had been hijacked at gunpoint by two accomplices and took them to a waiting vehicle, in which they drove to a chalet in the Chertsey area and forced their way in. Local residents reported the incident, and only a few hours later the suspects again drove off but were soon surrounded by police vehicles, at which point they exited their vehicle and opened fire, with the police returning fire. Fleeing on foot, they were soon captured and the last of the suspects was apprehended overnight. There were no serious injuries reported. <sup>[52]</sup></p>

<sup>a</sup> <sup>b</sup> Key

 Indicates successful prison escape by helicopter

 Indicates failure to escape prison by helicopter

## References

1. <sup>^ a b</sup> ["Chopper escape from Mountjoy". \*Republican News\*. 2001. Retrieved May 14, 2009.](#)
2. <sup>^ a b c</sup> ["The Helicopter Caper". \*TIME\*. June 9, 1986. Retrieved May 28, 2009.](#)
3. <sup>^ a b c</sup> ["Whirlaway". \*TIME\*. August 30, 1971. Retrieved May 2, 2009.](#)
4. <sup>^ a b</sup> Eliot Asinof. *The 10-second jailbreak;: The helicopter escape of Joel David Kaplan* (1973 ed.). Holt, Rinehart and Winston; 1st edition. p. 268. [ISBN 0-03-001011-X](#).
5. <sup>^ a b c d e f</sup> Campbell, Matthew (December 11, 2005). ["French jailbirds stage yet another helicopter escape"](#). London: [Times Online](#). Retrieved 11 December 2005.
6. <sup>^ a b c d</sup> ["French inmate in second breakout"](#). BBC News. 14 July 2007. Retrieved May 28, 2009.
7. <sup>^ a b</sup> ["Two flee Greek jail in helicopter"](#). BBC News. June 4, 2006. Retrieved 4 June 2006.
8. [St. Joseph News-Press](#) (December 21, 1978). ["Plane Hijacked"](#). *St. Joseph News-Press (News-Press & Gazette Company)*. p. Front Page. Retrieved January 10, 2011.
9. <sup>^</sup> ["David Peter McMillan"](#). melbourne crime. 2007. Archived from [the original](#) on May 5, 2008. Retrieved May 15, 2009.
10. <sup>^</sup> [The Sydney Morning Herald](#); Date: Jan 21, 1983
11. <sup>^</sup> ["Woman plucks 3 from jail"](#). *The Irish Times*. 21 December 1985. p. 5.
12. <sup>^</sup> ["Pilot Forced to Land at S. Carolina Institution : Inmates Flee Prison Aboard Helicopter"](#). Los Angeles Times. 20 December 1985. Retrieved March 18, 2013.
13. <sup>^ a b c</sup> Hone, Kathryn (17 June 1993). "Prison foils helicopter escape bid". *The Irish Times*. p. 11.
14. <sup>^</sup> [United Press International](#) (November 6, 1986). ["Around the nation; Woman Escapes Prison In a Hijacked Helicopter"](#). New York Times. Retrieved May 14, 2009.
15. <sup>^</sup> ["Lovers Sentenced in Escape From Prison in a Helicopter"](#). New York Times. July 19, 1987. Retrieved May 14, 2009.
16. <sup>^</sup> ["Headliners; Back in the Arms of the Law"](#). New York Times. November 23, 1986. Retrieved May 14, 2009.
17. <sup>^</sup> ["Inmate Locator - Locate Federal inmates from 1982 to present"](#). [Federal Bureau of Prisons](#). 2009. Retrieved May 14, 2009.
18. <sup>^ a b</sup> Associated Press (November 24, 1986). ["Copter Hijacked, 2 Freed From Prison in Rome"](#). [Los Angeles Times](#). Retrieved June 25, 2011.
19. <sup>^</sup> ["Helicopter escape still remembered 19 years on"](#). [Johnston Press Digital Publishing](#). October 3, 2006. Retrieved May 14, 2009.
20. <sup>^</sup> ["United States Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit. - 943 F.2d 1543"](#). [United States courts of appeals](#). October 11, 1991. Retrieved May 15, 2009.
21. <sup>^</sup> [Associated Press](#) (August 19, 1989). [ught.html "2 Women in a Helicopter Free 2 Convicts, but All Are Caught"](#). New York Times. Retrieved May 14, 2009.
22. <sup>^</sup> ["Dramatic prison escape in Puerto Rico"](#). BBC News. December 31, 2002. Retrieved May 15, 2009.
23. <sup>^</sup> ["Chile seeks help over jail break"](#). *The Irish Times*. 5 June 1997. p. 2.
24. <sup>^</sup> ["Helicopter pilot dies in Dutch prison escape bid"](#). Media Awareness Project. September 18, 1997. Retrieved May 28, 2009.
25. <sup>^</sup> Ellen Connolly (July 21, 2001). ["Lucy in the sky with convict lands seven years in jail"](#). [Irish Examiner](#). Retrieved May 14, 2009.
26. <sup>^</sup> ["Mastermind of helicopter jailbreak freed early"](#). [The Sydney Morning Herald](#). May 9, 2006. Retrieved May 28, 2009.
27. <sup>^</sup> Andrew Goldstein (June 11, 2000). ["The Boy Who Loved Me"](#). [TIME](#). Retrieved May 18, 2009.
28. <sup>^</sup> ["Report No. 99-58 - Special Review Escape from Martin Treatment Center for Sexually Violent Predators"](#) (PDF). Florida Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability. Retrieved May 18, 2009.
29. <sup>^</sup> ["Helicopter escape from French prison"](#). BBC News. March 24, 2001. Retrieved 28 May 2009.
30. <sup>^</sup> [Associated Press](#) (28 May 2001). ["Guards freed in prison hostage drama"](#). London: [The Independent](#). Retrieved May 4, 2009.
31. <sup>^</sup> ["Helicopter escape from Brazil prison"](#). BBC News. January 17, 2002. Retrieved 17 January 2002.
32. <sup>^</sup> Associated Press (December 30, 2002). ["Helicopter swoops down to Puerto Rican prison, flies away with five escaping prisoners"](#). The Seattle Times. Retrieved May 14, 2009.
33. <sup>^</sup> ["Les évadés de la prison de Luynes arrêtés dans la Drôme"](#). [investigateur.info](#). May 10, 2003. Archived from [the original](#) on September 27, 2007. Retrieved May 27, 2009.
34. <sup>^</sup> ["Audacious Belgian jail escape"](#). *ITN (Independent Television News Limited)*. April 16, 2007. Retrieved July 24, 2009.

35. <sup>^</sup> ["Hijacked helicopter reportedly used in Belgian jail break"](#). *USA Today*. 2007-04-15. Retrieved July 24, 2009.
36. <sup>^</sup> ["Helicopter used in prison break. Pilot says two men hijacked craft at gunpoint"](#). *MSNBC*. April 15, 2007. Retrieved July 24, 2009.
37. <sup>^</sup> <sup>a</sup> <sup>b</sup> ["Jailbreak sparks Belgium outcry"](#). BBC News. 30 October 2007. Retrieved May 28, 2009.
38. <sup>^</sup> [French - "Erik Ferdinand, l'évadé de Lantin, de retour en Belgique"](#). *Le Vif*. September 22, 2007. Retrieved July 24, 2009.
39. <sup>^</sup> [French - "6 ans de prison pour s'être évadé de Lantin en hélicoptère"](#). *Le Vif*. February 28, 2008. Retrieved July 24, 2009.
40. <sup>^</sup> ["Killer stages second helicopter prison break"](#). *The Daily Telegraph (Australia)*. July 15, 2007. Retrieved July 15, 2007. <sup>[dead link]</sup>
41. <sup>^</sup> [Agence France-Presse](#) (October 31, 2007). ["Escape artist nabbed after spectacular prison break"](#). *The Sydney Morning Herald*. Retrieved May 28, 2009. "A notorious criminal, who escaped from a Belgian prison after a hijacked helicopter crash-landed inside the prison grounds, has been recaptured in The Hague after a hold-up."
42. <sup>^</sup> Richard Holt and Matthew Moore (November 2, 2007). ["Belgian Ronnie Biggs' captured robbing shop"](#). London: *Sunday Telegraph*. Retrieved May 28, 2009.
43. <sup>^</sup> ["Prison break repeat shocks Greece"](#). BBC news. February 22, 2009. Retrieved May 28, 2009.
44. <sup>^</sup> ["Cult leader escapes jail in helicopter"](#). BBC News. April 27, 2009. Retrieved May 23, 2009.
45. <sup>^</sup> correspondents in Saint Denis (April 27, 2009). ["Pedophile cult leader Juliano Verbard escapes from Reunion prison"](#). *The Sunday Times*. Retrieved May 23, 2009.
46. <sup>^</sup> <sup>a</sup> <sup>b</sup> Idris Issa (April 27, 2009). ["Cult leader escapes from French jail in helicopter"](#). *FRANCE 24*. Retrieved May 28, 2009. <sup>[dead link]</sup>
47. <sup>^</sup> ["Escaped cult leader re-captured"](#). BBC News. 6 May 2009. Retrieved 23 May 2009.
48. <sup>^</sup> ["Three escape Belgian jail in hijacked helicopter"](#). Reuters. July 24, 2009. Retrieved July 23, 2009.
49. <sup>^</sup> ["Moroccan police capture Ashraf Sekkaki"](#). *Flandersnews*. August 9, 2009. Retrieved January 21, 2010.
50. <sup>^</sup> ["Prison break foiled by sharp officers"](#). *Iwcp*. June 25, 2010.
51. <sup>^</sup> Parfitt, Tom (March 22, 2012). ["Murderer escapes from prison by helicopter"](#). *The Daily Telegraph* (London).
52. <sup>^</sup> News, CBC (March 17, 2013). ["Quebec manhunt on for fugitives who fled prison in helicopter"](#). *CBC News* (Saint-Jérôme).
53. <sup>^</sup> ["Breakout"](#). *Yahoo.com*. May 14, 2009. Retrieved May 14, 2009.
54. <sup>^</sup> ["Prisoner: Cell Block H"](#). maggiemillar.net. 2009. Retrieved May 14, 2009.
55. <sup>^</sup> ["Spy Game - Brad Pitt as Tom Bishop"](#). bradpittnow.com. 2009. Retrieved May 14, 2009.
56. <sup>^</sup> ["Splinter Cell: Double Agent"](#). IMDb. October 20, 2006. Retrieved December 20, 2010.
57. <sup>^</sup> ["Bang and Burn"](#). prisonbreakmanhunt. November 19, 2007. Retrieved May 15, 2009.

Jump to: [navigation](#), [search](#)



An [Aérospatiale Alouette II](#), the type of helicopter used in the escape

The **Mountjoy Prison helicopter escape** occurred on 31 October 1973 when three [Provisional Irish Republican Army](#) (IRA) [volunteers](#) escaped from [Mountjoy Prison](#) in Dublin, Ireland,

aboard a hijacked [Alouette II](#) helicopter, which briefly landed in the prison's exercise yard. The escape made headlines around the world and was an embarrassment to the Irish [coalition government](#) of the time, led by [Fine Gael](#)'s [Liam Cosgrave](#), which was criticised by opposition party [Fianna Fáil](#). A [manhunt](#) involving twenty thousand members of the [Irish Defence Forces](#) and [Garda Síochána](#) was launched for the escapees, one of whom, [Seamus Twomey](#), was not recaptured until December 1977. The [Wolfe Tones](#) wrote a song celebrating the escape called "[The Helicopter Song](#)", which topped the [Irish popular music charts](#) despite being banned by the government.

## Background

Following the outbreak of [the Troubles](#) in 1969, the [Provisional IRA](#) had conducted an [armed campaign](#) that sought to create a [united Ireland](#) by ending [Northern Ireland's](#) status as part of the United Kingdom. As a result of increasing levels of violence in Northern Ireland, [internment](#) without trial was introduced there in August 1971, and in the Republic of Ireland the coalition government led by [Fine Gael](#)'s [Liam Cosgrave](#) was attempting to curb IRA activity.<sup>[1]</sup> Fine Gael had come to power on a [law and order](#) ticket, with a policy of "getting tough on crime".<sup>[1]</sup> Suspected IRA members were arrested and accused of IRA membership by a [superintendent](#) in the [Garda Síochána](#), a crime under the [Offences against the State Act](#).<sup>[1]</sup> They were tried at the juryless [Special Criminal Court](#) in Dublin, where the traditional IRA policy of not recognising the court resulted in a *fait accompli* as no defence was offered and IRA membership carried a minimum mandatory one-year sentence, resulting in internment in all but name.<sup>[1]</sup> In September 1973 IRA [Chief of Staff Seamus Twomey](#) appeared at the Special Criminal Court charged with IRA membership, and stated "I refuse to recognise this British-orientated quisling court".<sup>[2]</sup> He was found guilty and received a five-year sentence.<sup>[2]</sup> By October 1973 the IRA's command structure was seriously curbed, with Twomey and other senior republicans [JB O'Hagan](#) and [Kevin Mallon](#) all being held in [Mountjoy Prison](#).<sup>[1]</sup>

## Planning of the escape

The IRA immediately began making plans to break Twomey, O'Hagan and Mallon out of the prison.<sup>[3]</sup> The first attempt involved explosives that had been smuggled into the prison, which were to be used to blow a hole in a door which would give the prisoners access to the exercise yard.<sup>[3]</sup> From there, they would scale a [rope ladder](#) thrown over the exterior wall by members of the IRA's Dublin Brigade who would have a [getaway car](#) waiting to complete the escape.<sup>[3]</sup> The plan failed when the prisoners could not gain access to the exercise yard and the rope ladder was spotted, so the IRA began making new escape plans.<sup>[3]</sup> The idea of using a helicopter in an escape had been discussed before, an idea to break [Gerry Adams](#) out of [Long Kesh internment camp](#) had been ruled out because of faster and more sophisticated [British Army](#) helicopters being stationed at a nearby base.<sup>[4]</sup> The IRA's GHQ staff approved the plan to break out Twomey, O'Hagan and Mallon, and arrangements were made to obtain a helicopter.<sup>[4]</sup> A man with an American accent calling himself Mr. Leonard approached the manager of Irish Helicopters at

[Dublin Airport](#), with a view to hiring a helicopter for an aerial photographic shoot in [County Laois](#).<sup>[4]</sup> After being shown the company's fleet of helicopters, Leonard arranged to hire a five-seater [Alouette II](#) for 31 October.<sup>[4]</sup>

## The escape

Leonard arrived at Irish Helicopters on 31 October and was introduced to the pilot of the helicopter, Captain Thompson Boyes.<sup>[5]</sup> Boyes was instructed to fly to a field in [Stradbally](#), in order to pick up Leonard's photographic equipment.<sup>[5]</sup> After landing Boyes saw two armed, masked men approaching the helicopter from nearby trees.<sup>[6]</sup> Boyes was held at gunpoint and told he would not be harmed if he followed instructions.<sup>[7]</sup> Leonard left with one gunman, while the other gunman climbed aboard the helicopter armed with a pistol and an [Armalite](#) rifle.<sup>[7][8]</sup> Boyes was instructed to fly towards Dublin following the path of railway lines and the [Royal Canal](#), and was ordered not to register his flight path with [Air Traffic Control](#).<sup>[7][8]</sup> As the helicopter approached Dublin, Boyes was informed of the escape plan and instructed to land in the exercise yard at Mountjoy Prison.<sup>[7]</sup>

In the prison's exercise yard, the prisoners were watching a football match.<sup>[7]</sup> Shortly after 3:35 pm the helicopter swung in to land in the prison yard, with Kevin Mallon directing the pilot using [semaphore](#).<sup>[9]</sup> A [prison officer](#) on duty initially took no action as he believed the helicopter contained the [Minister for Defence Paddy Donegan](#).<sup>[8]</sup> After prisoners surrounded the eight prison officers in the yard, fights broke out as the officers realised an escape attempt was in progress.<sup>[9]</sup> As other prisoners restrained the officers, Twomey, Mallon and O'Hagan boarded the helicopter.<sup>[9]</sup> As the helicopter took off, in the confusion one officer shouted "Close the gates, close the fucking gates".<sup>[9]</sup> The helicopter flew north and landed at a disused [racecourse](#) in the [Baldoye](#) area of Dublin, where the escapees were met by members of the IRA's Dublin Brigade.<sup>[8][10]</sup> The escapees were transferred to a taxi that had been hijacked earlier, and transported to [safe houses](#).<sup>[10]</sup>

## Reaction

The escape made headlines around the world and was an embarrassment for Cosgrave's government, which was criticised for "incompetence in security matters" by opposition party Fianna Fáil.<sup>[6][11][12]</sup> An emergency debate on security was held in [Dáil Éireann](#) on 1 November, where leader of the opposition [Jack Lynch](#) stated:

It is poetic justice that a helicopter is now at the heart of the Government's embarrassment and in the centre of their dilemma. Indeed, it was hard to blame the prison officer who observed that he thought it was the Minister for Defence paying an informal visit to Mountjoy Prison yesterday because, of course, we all know the Minister for Defence is wont to use helicopters, as somebody observed already, as other Ministers are wont to use State cars.<sup>[13][14]</sup>

The IRA released a statement on the escape, which read, "Three republican prisoners were rescued by a special unit from Mountjoy Prison on Wednesday. The operation was a complete success and the men are now safe, despite a massive hunt by Free State forces".<sup>[15]</sup> Shortly after

the escape Twomey gave an exclusive interview to German magazine *Der Spiegel*, where the reporter said people throughout Europe were joking about the incident as "the escape of the century".<sup>[16]</sup> [Irish rebel](#) band the [Wolfe Tones](#) wrote a song celebrating the escape called "[The Helicopter Song](#)", which was immediately banned by the government yet still topped the [Irish popular music charts](#) after selling twelve thousand copies in a single week.<sup>[11]</sup>

## Aftermath

The escape resulted in all IRA prisoners being held at Mountjoy Prison and [Curragh Camp](#) being transferred to the maximum security [Portlaoise Prison](#).<sup>[11]</sup> In order to prevent any further escapes the perimeter of the prison was guarded by members of the [Irish Army](#), and wires were erected over the prison yard to prevent any future helicopter escape.<sup>[11]</sup> Cosgrave stated there would be "no hiding place" for the escapees, and a manhunt involving twenty thousand members of the Irish Defence Forces and Garda Síochána ensued.<sup>[6][11]</sup> Mallon was recaptured at a [Gaelic Athletic Association](#) dance in a hotel near [Portlaoise](#) on 10 December 1973, and imprisoned in Portlaoise Prison.<sup>[17]</sup> He escaped from there in a mass break-out on 18 August 1974, when nineteen prisoners escaped after overpowering guards and using [gelignite](#) to blast through the gates.<sup>[18][19]</sup> He was recaptured in [Foxrock](#) in January 1975 and returned to Portlaoise Prison.<sup>[20]</sup> O'Hagan was recaptured in Dublin in early 1975, and also imprisoned in Portlaoise Prison.<sup>[17]</sup> After the end of his original twelve-month sentence, he was immediately arrested and sentenced to a further two years imprisonment for escaping.<sup>[17]</sup> Twomey evaded recapture until 2 December 1977, when he was spotted sitting in a car in [Sandycove](#) by members of the Garda's [Special Branch](#) who were investigating an arms shipment after a tip-off from police in Belgium.<sup>[17]</sup> Twomey drove away after spotting the officers, before being recaptured in the centre of Dublin after a high-speed car chase.<sup>[17]</sup> He was also imprisoned in Portlaoise Prison until his release in 1982.<sup>[17]</sup>

## References

- <sup>^</sup> <sup>[a](#)</sup> <sup>[b](#)</sup> <sup>[c](#)</sup> <sup>[d](#)</sup> <sup>[e](#)</sup> Hayes, Paddy (2004). *Break-out! Famous Prison Escapes*. [O'Brien Press](#). pp. 118–119. [ISBN 0-86278-875-7](#).
- <sup>^</sup> <sup>[a](#)</sup> <sup>[b](#)</sup> *Break-out! Famous Prison Escapes*, p. 114.
- <sup>^</sup> <sup>[a](#)</sup> <sup>[b](#)</sup> <sup>[c](#)</sup> <sup>[d](#)</sup> *Break-out! Famous Prison Escapes*, pp. 120–121.
- <sup>^</sup> <sup>[a](#)</sup> <sup>[b](#)</sup> <sup>[c](#)</sup> <sup>[d](#)</sup> *Break-out! Famous Prison Escapes*, pp. 122–123.
- <sup>^</sup> <sup>[a](#)</sup> <sup>[b](#)</sup> *Break-out! Famous Prison Escapes*, p. 124–125.
- <sup>^</sup> <sup>[a](#)</sup> <sup>[b](#)</sup> <sup>[c](#)</sup> Louisa Wright (12 November 1973). "[The Canny Copter Caper](#)". *TIME*. Retrieved 19 March 2008.
- <sup>^</sup> <sup>[a](#)</sup> <sup>[b](#)</sup> <sup>[c](#)</sup> <sup>[d](#)</sup> <sup>[e](#)</sup> *Break-out! Famous Prison Escapes*, pp. 126–127.
- <sup>^</sup> <sup>[a](#)</sup> <sup>[b](#)</sup> <sup>[c](#)</sup> <sup>[d](#)</sup> MacUileagóid, Mícheál (1996). *From Fetters to Freedom*. Sásta. p. 61. [ISBN 978-1-901005-05-9](#).
- <sup>^</sup> <sup>[a](#)</sup> <sup>[b](#)</sup> <sup>[c](#)</sup> <sup>[d](#)</sup> *Break-out! Famous Prison Escapes*, pp. 128–129.
- <sup>^</sup> <sup>[a](#)</sup> <sup>[b](#)</sup> *Break-out! Famous Prison Escapes*, pp. 130–131.
- <sup>^</sup> <sup>[a](#)</sup> <sup>[b](#)</sup> <sup>[c](#)</sup> <sup>[d](#)</sup> <sup>[e](#)</sup> *Break-out! Famous Prison Escapes*, p. 132.
- <sup>^</sup> [Moloney, Ed](#) (2002). *A Secret History of the IRA*. [Penguin Books](#). p. 172. [ISBN 0-14-101041-X](#).
- <sup>^</sup> "[Committee on Finance. – Mountjoy Jail Escape: Statement by Taoiseach](#)". [Oireachtas](#). 1 November 1973. Retrieved 19 March 2008.
- <sup>^</sup> *From Fetters to Freedom*, pp. 61–62.
- <sup>^</sup> Art Mac Eoin (1 November 2001). "[Chopper escape from Mountjoy](#)". *An Phoblacht*. Retrieved 19 March 2008.
- <sup>^</sup> [Die Autobombe genügt nicht mehr](#) (Interview with Seamus Twomey) *Der Spiegel* 47/1973, 19 November 1973

17. <sup>a b c d e f</sup> *Break-out! Famous Prison Escapes*, pp. 134–135.
18. <sup>^</sup> ["Portlaoise escape re-union"](#). *An Phoblacht*. 19 August 2004. Retrieved 19 March 2008.
19. <sup>^</sup> *Break-out! Famous Prison Escapes*, pp. 136–137.
20. <sup>^</sup> [Eamonn McCann](#) (23 October 2005). ["Herrema's kidnapper explains motive"](#). *Sunday Journal*. Retrieved 19 March 2008.