



CASE STUDY:
PUBLIC SAFETY BELL 505
AGING FLEET. INCREASED DEMAND.
TIME FOR AN UPGRADE.

CHALLENGE:

650 sworn officers, 500,000 citizens – when you're tasked with keeping a sprawling metropolitan city safe 24 hours a day, seven days a week, you need eyes in the skies.

Operating as an air response team since 1997, California's Sacramento Police Department previously depended on their seven U.S. Army Bell OH-58 Kiowa helicopters (two of which were refurbished and equipped for law enforcement; the others kept for spare parts). However, after accumulating more than 30,000 flight hours over the past 22 years, the SPD made the decision to upgrade the platform entirely rather than repair and replace aging OH-58 equipment due to rising operating costs.



SOLUTION:

The SPD Air Operations team put their trust in the enhanced visibility, maneuverability, versatility and advanced avionics of the Bell 505.

Although it was a brand-new platform in the parapublic industry, the Sacramento Police Department chose the Bell 505 due to its customer-driven design, high performance, low operating cost, ease of maintenance, and supportive customer service. It's a force multiplier that can conduct the work of 20 or more ground officers, and its command presence encourages suspects to surrender rather than fight or flee.



125 knots

speed



1500 lbs

useful load



1.5 min

average response time

When lives are on the line, every minute getting to the scene is crucial. With a speed of 125 knots and useful load of 1,500 pounds, the Bell 505 is safe, easy to fly and boasts an average response time of 1.5 minutes for the Air Operations team. Ergonomic seats allow flight officers to fly comfortably for hours while large windows allow for greater visibility in searching for suspects and missing persons. "The Bell 505 will be invaluable in critical calls for service when minutes matter and will allow us to best protect the citizens of Sacramento," said Sergeant Randy Van Dusen, SPD Air Operations.

For more on this story, read "New to the Beat" by Skip Robinson on page 75 in Vertical 911 magazine or follow this link: <https://bell.co/yrp>



SUCCESS:

The value of the Bell 505 proved to be true shortly after it went into service.

Not long after purchase, Air Operations was called in to support the Sacramento Police Department's SWAT team during a yard-to-yard search. Three suspects were involved in a lengthy vehicle chase after officers observed them shooting numerous rounds into a residential area. One subject was quickly apprehended by patrol, but two suspects were not able to be located on foot. Using the Bell 505's infrared capabilities, the second suspect was quickly found hiding in a garbage can. Almost seven hours later, using the Bell 505's thermal imaging, the third suspect was spotted hiding outside of the police perimeter.

When asked if there have been any challenges since receiving the Bell 505, Sergeant Van Dusen stated that "there have been no challenges other than deciding how to force ourselves to continue to fly time on the OH-58 remaining in our fleet."

"Without the advanced equipment and the comfort of the 505, there is no way our crew would have been able to fly that long and the third suspect would have not been apprehended."

Sgt. Randy Van Dusen, SPD Air Operations



HOW THE BELL 505 HELPED THE SACRAMENTO POLICE DEPARTMENT:

CHALLENGE

Aging OH-58 Fleet

Rising operating costs

Outdated mission equipment

SOLUTION

The Bell 505

Advanced avionics – Bell 505's thermal imaging and infrared helped SPD capture two suspects shortly after delivery

Ergonomic seats – Air Operations Team flies comfortably during long missions

Performance – Speeds of 125 knots and useful load of 1,500 pounds - provides high performance to meet the SPD's mission

Maintenance and operation – Easy and low cost

Enhanced safety – Certified to latest safety standards

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