

## Obtaining Air Support

### 438.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The use of a police helicopter can be invaluable in certain situations. This policy specifies potential situations where the use of a helicopter may be requested and the responsibilities for making a request.

### 438.2 REQUEST FOR HELICOPTER ASSISTANCE

If a supervisor or officer in charge of an incident determines that the use of a helicopter would be beneficial, a request to obtain helicopter assistance may be made.

#### 438.2.1 REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE FROM ANOTHER AGENCY

After consideration and approval of the request for a helicopter, the Watch Commander, or his/her designee, will call the closest agency having helicopter support available. The Watch Commander on duty will apprise that agency of the specific details of the incident prompting the request.

#### 438.2.2 CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH AID MAY BE REQUESTED

Police helicopters may be requested under any of the following conditions:

- (a) When the helicopter is activated under existing mutual aid agreements
- (b) Whenever the safety of law enforcement personnel is in jeopardy and the presence of the helicopters may reduce such hazard
- (c) When the use of the helicopters will aid in the capture of a suspected fleeing felon whose continued freedom represents an ongoing threat to the community
- (d) When a helicopter is needed to locate a person who has strayed or is lost and whose continued absence constitutes a serious health or safety hazard
- (e) Vehicle pursuits
- (f) The helicopter may assist in scene security or investigations

While it is recognized that the availability of helicopter support will generally provide valuable assistance to ground personnel, the presence of a helicopter will rarely replace the need for officers on the ground.