



MEMORANDUM
OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE
COUNTY OF PLACER

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Thomas Miller, County Executive Officer
By: Rich Colwell, Chief Assistant County Executive Officer *Rich Colwell*

DATE: January 23, 2007

SUBJECT: Helicopter Acquisition, Placer County Sheriff's Office Aviation Program

REQUESTED ACTION

That your Board accept the attached Helicopter Acquisition Feasibility Study Report and approve the following recommendations regarding the acquisition of a new helicopter for the Placer County Sheriff's Office Aviation Program.

- 1) Initiate the following purchase and authorize the Purchasing Manager to execute all documents associated with sole-source purchase of an Aerostar AS350 B3 from American Eurocopter located in Plano, Texas at an estimated cost of \$2.5 million;
- 2) Approve the attached Budget Revision in the amount of \$1 million from the Contribution to Infrastructure account to augment the \$1.5 million previously set aside to purchase the items identified in 1 above and add this item to the Master Fixed Asset List. This Budget Revision consists of a loan from the County's General Fund in the amount of \$1 million to be repaid with FY 2007-08 Public Safety Sales Tax Revenues;
- 3) Direct County Executive and Sheriff's Offices to pursue funding partnerships with local jurisdictions and other potential funding partners on one-time contributions, potential grant partnerships, and expanded on-going funding and staffing contributions;
- 4) Develop Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreements for reimbursement of fire support services with the California Department of Forestry (CDF) and the United States Forest Service (USFS);
- 5) Formalize mutual aid agreements with Sacramento Sheriff's Office, Sacramento Police Department and the California Highway Patrol for helicopter support services;
- 6) Direct County Executive and Sheriff's Offices to develop a full-funding approach for the estimated one-time acquisition costs of \$3.6 million (\$2.5 million for aircraft, \$938,400 for related mission equipment, and \$173,200 for a 5% contingency) and on-going operational costs of \$1.1 million (an annual increase of \$398,000) associated with operation of the new helicopter as part of the FY 2007-08 budget process.

BACKGROUND

The Sheriff's Office is requesting the acquisition of a new helicopter to replace the Air Support Unit's existing 35 year-old Bell OH-58 helicopter based on the age, remaining service life and operational limitations of this aircraft. The Sheriff's Office is also requesting to retain the Bell helicopter in its aviation fleet, but transition it to a more limited role of support or backup to a newer, more capable aircraft.

At the FY2006-07 Budget Briefings, the Board of Supervisors directed the County Executive to convene a study group to assess the overall costs and benefits of the Sheriff's request to acquire a new helicopter. At those Budget Hearings, \$500,000 in reserve funding from the Sheriff's budget was identified to help finance the acquisition of a helicopter. Additionally, your Board directed staff to set aside \$1 million of General Fund in the FY 2006-07 Final Budget for the proposed purchase.

Subsequently, the County Executive convened the Helicopter Feasibility Study Committee (the "Committee") comprised of staff from the County Executive Office, the Sheriff's Office, and Administrative Services Procurement Division. Additional technical support was provided to the Committee from the Office of Emergency Services and from Risk Management.

Over the following months, the Committee reviewed the current mission and operations of the Aviation Program. The evaluation process included assessments of aircraft, equipment, staffing, maintenance and training requirements, the changing law enforcement needs of the County, the limitations of the existing aircraft, and the mission enhancements a newer, more capable aircraft would provide. The attached 56-page report contains a comprehensive review and analysis of these issues, along with a detailed review of procurement and funding alternatives. The key findings from this report are presented below

Mission Enhancement Recommendations

The existing Bell OH-58 helicopter was originally acquired by the department in 1995 through the Department of Defense Reutilization Program for the purpose of flying drug eradication missions in the foothills of Placer County. Since that time, the department has expanded the utilization of the Air Support Unit helicopter to include a number of law enforcement support activities, such as:

- o Crime Detection and Prevention
- o Drug Suppression
- o Search and Rescue
- o Searches for Vehicles, Suspects and Missing Persons
- o Pursuits
- o Incident Command and Control, and
- o Aerial Photography

At the conclusion of its review, the Committee determined that a more powerful and versatile helicopter would enhance the Sheriff's capabilities in each of these law enforcement support activities, and would add two new air support capabilities. The

addition of an external rescue hoist would facilitate vertical rescue and extraction of individuals in rugged terrain, over water or in other situations where landing is impractical. The addition of an externally carried water bucket would equip the Air Support Unit to provide first-on-scene firefighting capability and the potential to contain or slow the advance of small fires until U. S. Forest Service or California Department of Forestry firefighters arrive.

Helicopter and Mission Equipment Recommendations

Based on the research, analysis, technical reviews and flight evaluation results, the Committee recommends the acquisition of the American Eurocopter Aerostar AS350 B3 (hereafter B3) as the aircraft best suited to meet the operational requirements of the Sheriff's aviation program. The Committee also recommends the purchase and installation of options and mission equipment specified in the report from American Eurocopter and a completion contractor at a total estimated cost of \$3.5 million (\$2.5 million for aircraft and \$938,400 for related mission equipment). A contingency of 5% of the one-time purchase cost, or \$173,200 is also recommended to be established.

The recommended list of installation options and specific mission equipment is based on the basic missions performed by the current Bell OH-58 helicopter that would be continued with the new aircraft. Current state-of-the-art mission equipment options were selected that will provide the same functionality with increased capability, reliability and maintainability. Equipment selections for new missions, such as hoist rescue, firefighting and expanded command and control, were based on Department research and interviews with agencies that perform these missions in an effort to take advantage of their expertise gained through procurement processes and use.

The Committee also recommends retention of the existing Bell OH-58 helicopter to provide backup capability in instances where the new helicopter may be out of service for maintenance or repairs. While it's primary function will remain as a backup for the new helicopter, this aircraft remains suitable for routine patrols and could augment response capability in a major event, natural disaster or terrorist attack. The Sheriff's Office may also use the OH-58 for specific missions, such as enhancing drug surveillance flights.

Procurement Recommendations

The Committee assessed procurement options including lease, lease-purchase and purchase and recommends sole source purchase of the B3 from American Eurocopter located in Plano, Texas at a total estimated cost of \$2.5 million. This approach is the least costly to the County.

There is consensus among Committee members that this aircraft best meets the County's law enforcement needs and meets the definition of sole source procurement in accordance with Section 1.3(f) of the Purchasing Policy Manual due to its technological, specialized and unique character. This recommendation is supported by the Administrative Services Department which is responsible for County-wide procurement policy.

The mission equipment, to include completion shop build-up, will be purchased separately as it is more cost-effective than purchasing from Eurocopter. The Committee has reviewed a quote from a certified completion shop contractor (Jet Source); however, Procurement Services is investigating whether a pre-qualification process will result in the ability to solicit competitive bids for this aspect of the purchase. Therefore, the mission equipment price quote from Jet Source should be considered the maximum amount required and is currently identified at \$938,400.

Given the lead time required to have the helicopter built, and the various approaches identified in the feasibility study report potentially available to assist in funding both one time and on-going costs, it is recommended that your Board approve the purchase and ordering of the helicopter now. Further, the County Executive Office will continue to work with the Sheriff's Office and other potential funding partners to develop a full-funding approach as part of the 2007-2008 budget process and funding for the related mission equipment and recommended contingency will be brought back to your Board approximately six months prior to receipt of the helicopter for consideration.

Fiscal Impact

Consistent with prior discussions, staff is recommending outright purchase of the helicopter. The estimated total cost for the recommended base helicopter is \$2.5 million. We will return to your Board to address the related mission equipment estimated at \$938,400, a purchasing contingency of \$173,200 and on-going operating costs for the enhanced aviation program estimated at \$1.1 million, an increase of \$398,000 over the current program operating costs of \$745,000. These items will be brought back to your Board during FY 2007-08 budget process.

During Board Budget Workshops in August, 2006, your Board approved a set-aside of \$1.5 million pending a due diligence report. Funding for this set-aside came from \$1 million General Fund Reserves and cancellation of Sheriff's Air Ops Reserves of \$500,000.

The Budget Revision attached for Board consideration includes a one-time loan from the General Fund in the amount of \$1 million that will be repaid with FY 2007-08 Public Safety Sales Tax Revenues.

As indicated in item 6 of the Requested Action, the final source of funding for both one-time and on-going operational costs associated with these purchases will be dependant upon the outcome of the Sheriff's and County Executive Offices efforts to generate contributions from grants, local jurisdictions and other interested parties. Adjustments will be accommodated as part of the FY 2007-08 budget process.

BUDGET REVISION

POST DATE:

DOC TYPE	Total \$ Amount	TOTAL LINES
10 BR	2,000,000.00	2

Cash Transfer Required
 Reserve Cancellation Required
 Establish Reserve Required

Auditor-Controller
 County Executive
 Board of Supervisors

ESTIMATED REVENUE ADJUSTMENT										APPROPRIATION ADJUSTMENT											
DEPT NO.	I/C	REV	FUND	SUB FUND	OCA	FCA	OBJ 3	PROJ.	PROJ. DTL	AMOUNT	DEPT NO.	I/C	REV	FUND	SUB FUND	OCA	FCA	OBJ 3	PROJ.	PROJ. DTL	AMOUNT
10	014		100		107800						10	014	100		107800			4451			1,000,000.00
10	015		100		107800						10	015	100		107800			3778			1,000,000.00
TOTAL										0.00	TOTAL										2,000,000.00

REASON FOR REVISION:

Prepared by Mark Giacomini Ext 4643

Department Head RE Colwell

Board of Supervisors

Date: 1/17/07

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Budget Revision # 1 FOR INDIVIDUAL DEPT USE



Placer County Deputy Sheriff's Association

Post Office Box 9157 • Auburn, California 95604

January 10, 2007

The Placer County Board of Supervisors
175 Fulweiler Avenue
Auburn, CA 95603

Subject: Endorsement of Sheriff's Department Helicopter Purchase

JAN 17, 2007
Clerk of the
Board of Supervisors

Dear Placer County Board of Supervisors,

The Placer County Deputy Sheriff's Association endorses and supports a 'yes' vote on the acquisition of a new Sheriff's Department helicopter. The DSA represents the men and women who patrol and safeguard Placer County and its citizenry. We, along with other first level emergency responders such as firefighters, paramedics, and emergency medical technicians, are the "end user" if you may.

The new helicopter will provide an increased level of airborne law enforcement to all citizens and visitors to Placer County. The acquisition of a newer and more efficient helicopter is also of great importance to the association members involved with the Sheriff's Department Air Unit. The new aircraft's capabilities are endless. The aircraft's unique airborne surveillance and search capabilities will increase ground deputy safety performance while saving time, and possibly lives during searches for suspects or missing individuals. It also has the potential to reduce the speed and duration of vehicle pursuits, which is also in the best interest of the County and deputies, but most of all the innocent citizens potentially in the path of a pursuit.

As first responders, we also support the potential for the new helicopter to have a secondary fire fighting "initial attack" mission capability that we understand is also endorsed by the CDF and U.S. Forest Service. We also feel an increased capability to support airborne "command and control" over major law enforcement events and natural disasters including earthquakes, wildfires, industrial accidents and possible terrorist attacks is in the best interest of the citizens of Placer County, which County leaders and DSA members vow to serve with the utmost highest level of service.

We encourage the Board to take this important step to meet the future law enforcement needs of a rapidly growing Placer County and provide this much needed resource to a much deserving community.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Tindal".

Deputy Sheriff Josh Tindal
President
Placer Deputy Sheriff's Association

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Van Bogardus".

Sergeant Van Bogardus
Chief Pilot
Placer Sheriff's Air Support Unit