

On Patrol

The Robinson R44 Raven II Police Helicopter

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For public safety agencies seeking to balance community safety and fiscal solvency, Robinson's R44 Raven II Police Helicopter provides law enforcement operators with an affordable, fast and well-equipped solution.

While accountants may view a police helicopter as an expensive luxury, law enforcement agencies see it as essential to meet the threats posed by gangs, drug cartels and terrorists. Police helicopters are a proven force multiplier, equal to at least five ground units, allowing law enforcement departments to deploy manpower more effectively. With a bird's-eye view, a police helicopter serves as an effective command platform, providing ground units with situational awareness and directing pursuits in car chases.

A fuel-injected, high-performance Lycoming IO-540 engine quickly gets the R44 Police Helicopter where it's needed. Once on patrol, the R44 can remain on station for up to three hours when fully fueled. This powerful engine, coupled with an aerodynamic fuselage, enables the R44 Police Helicopter to cruise at up to 130 mph. Optimized installation of exterior-mounted equipment minimizes drag and maximizes speed.

With a base price of \$658,000, the R44 Police Helicopter arrives with its specialized law enforcement equipment already installed and FAA-approved. Equipment is positioned for easy access and viewing, day or night. A FLIR Ultra 8000 thermal imaging system enables law enforcement to expand their dusk-to-dawn operations and observe situations otherwise not visible at night. An ergonomic hand control features backlight and large knobs so the camera operator can easily operate the Ultra 8000 even in the dark. The camera's continuous zoom can be adjusted on the fly or through three programmable settings. An 18x optical and digital zoom, along with advanced low-light capture technology, improves image quality.

A 500-watt xenon lamp emits a 15-20 million candlepower high-intensity, focusable beam. The light can be directed by either the hand controller or, as an option, by slaving it to the nose-mounted gimbal. The searchlight is positioned below the right rear seat to allow left banked turns without the light beam being obstructed by the skid. A 10-inch, sunlight-visible color LCD screen easily switches between the FLIR camera and the optional moving map and can be lowered when the system is not used. The monitor mount accommodates various single- and multi-band FM police radios. Optional equipment includes four-point shoulder harness system (front seats), P/A speaker and siren (100 watt), micro-wave downlink capability, LoJack, moving map, and a selection of UHF, VHF and 800 MHz police radios.

Easy maintenance requirements and low operating costs allow law enforcement agencies to fly the R44 Police Helicopter for patrol missions on a regular basis. The R44 requires only 50-hour oil changes and 100-hour inspections. Properly maintained, the R44 has an approved engine and airframe TBO of 2,200 hours or 12 years, and all of its life-limited components also have approved service lives of at least 2,200 hours or 12 years.

Introduced in 1998, R44 Police Helicopters are flown by police agencies in California, Ohio, Florida and North Carolina, as well as Brazil, El Salvador, Estonia, Argentina and Mexico, to name a few. South Africa, host of the 2010 football/soccer World Cup, added six R44 Police Helicopters to its fleet of helicopters to safeguard the thousands of fans who will attend the world's most popular sporting event. Region One Air Support in Southern California operates four R44 Police Helicopters seven days a week and covers a 50-square-mile area in the San Gabriel Valley.

Increases in crime and budget cuts seem, unfortunately, to go hand-in-hand with tough economic times. All too often the first victim of budget cuts is the police helicopter. However, the Robinson R44 Police Helicopter provides law enforcement agencies with a helicopter not only purpose built for today's missions, but priced affordably for today's budgets.