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# Police air operations

## Policy statement and principles

### What

Police employees may have the need to use <sup>Out of scope</sup> [redacted] helicopters for irregular or one off operations outside of regular aircraft users, such as the Auckland Air Support Unit <sup>Out of scope</sup> [redacted]

### Why

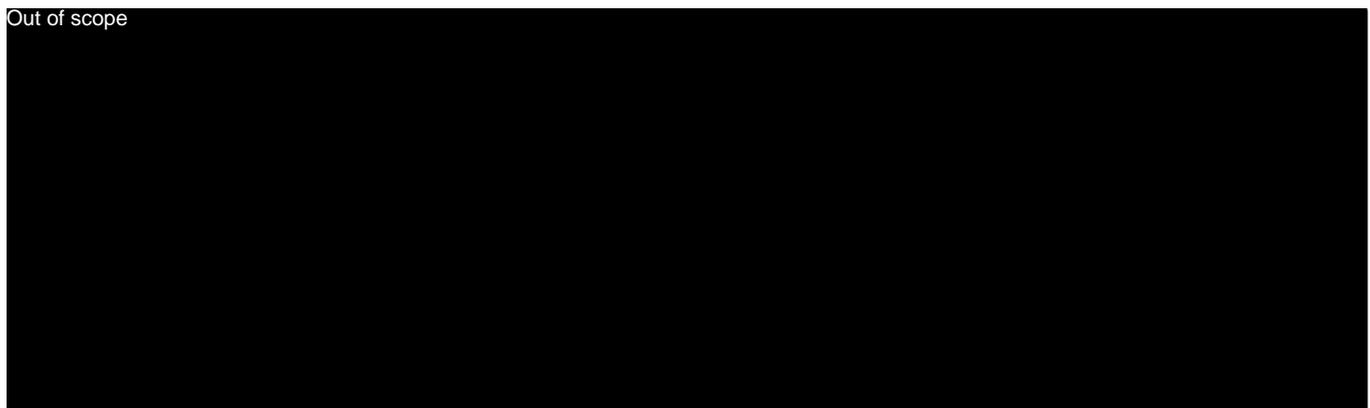
In the interest of public safety, victim focus and offender apprehension, Police have a responsibility to investigate, reduce and resolve crime(s).

### How

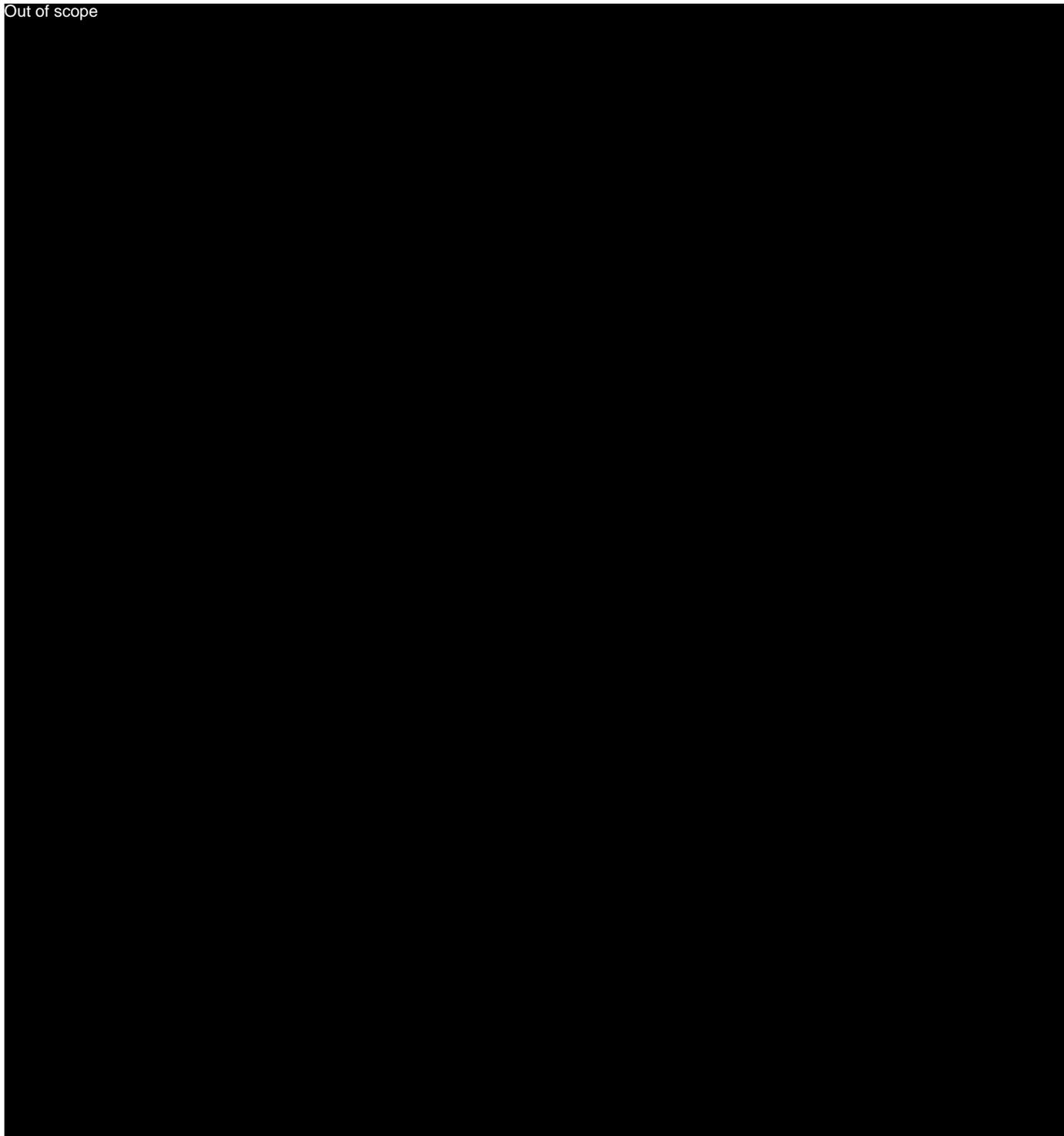
Police will ensure that:

- Response and Operations Group at PNHQ, will work with active users of air support and Wellness and Safety, PNHQ to further ensure that operating instructions are suitable
- they continue to work pro-actively with prevention first and victim focused strategies
- all relevant staff are suitably trained and aware of their responsibilities when exercising any powers
- appropriate resources will be allocated for attendance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, Police safety policies and that the TENR – Operational Threat assessment tool is utilised
- if any offences are identified, actions such as enforcement, detention and/or prosecution as deemed appropriate will be taken.

Out of scope



Out of scope



## **Auckland Air Support Unit**

Police helicopter 'Eagle'

The Air Support Unit is an effective resource for crime and crash reduction in the Auckland Metropolitan Region. It utilises the Police helicopter 'Eagle' for aerial observation, aerial search, surveillance, rescue, tactical response, transport and command & control platform and as a communications platform, providing an

often-vital resource to incident controllers during emerging events and critical incidents. Its ability to operate close to the scene as a forward operating platform has proved to be invaluable.

This section relates to the deployment of the Air Support Unit, its tactical deployment, and its function in a command and control situation:

- Air Support Unit deployment rationale
- 'Fleeing driver policy', which makes it clear that where possible aerial surveillance must be utilised and that the aircraft must take over the primary responsibility for providing commentary during a pursuit.

## **Air Support Unit deployment rationale**

The following considerations address day to day requests for deployment of the unit. If a request falls outside these criteria, it should not be excluded until either the O/C Air Support Unit or the Inspector: Metro Operations Support, Auckland has considered all relevant information.

When considering requesting specialist aerial support to attend critical incidents, consider these factors:

### **Routine support operations**

- The seriousness of offending/incident. Greater emphasis must be placed on potentially life threatening incidents, (e.g. pursuits, armed offenders).
- High volume crime, as outlined in the Statement of Intent.
- Potential threat to Police employees considering the environment they are working in, e.g. disorder, dog handler tracking at night, or staff in isolated locations.
- Utilisation of unit specialist equipment adding value to a deployment (i.e. FLIR, night sun, NVG). This can be used instead of deploying ground staff, thereby reducing the demand on other resources.
- Enhanced command and control requirements at critical incidents (i.e. support to North Comms or the field Incident Controller).
- Time delay since incident occurred.
- Probability of subjects / offenders being located.
- Actual location of incident.
- Traffic management support.
- Seriousness of the offending/incident. Greater emphasis must be placed on potentially life threatening incidents, potential threat to public or Police employees.

- Effectiveness or likely effectiveness of units' involvement. Probability of subjects/offenders being located, utilisation of specialist equipment adding value to the operation (i.e. FLIR, night sun, NVG, crew's skill set).
- Actual tasking and expectation of the unit from the requesting officer / organisation.
- Time and location of incident, transit time to the locations, environment and weather conditions.
- Deployments outside normal hours, must receive prior approval from the Inspector: Metro Operations Support, Auckland.

### Specialist aerial support operations

- To support other specialist squads (e.g. AOS, STG, Surveillance or SAR).

### National specialist aerial support operations

- To support squads involved in national security operations; specialist aerial support to national emergency management including CDEM; specialist support to districts where use of local commercial helicopter services would compromise operational security or subject those operators to unnecessary risk.
- Any deployment outside of the Auckland Region requires prior approval from the Inspector: Metro Operations Support, Auckland.

### Air Support Unit deployment process

To ensure the avoidance of any doubt, this table details the deployment process.

Stage	Description
1	Prior to the commencement of flying operations the Air Support Unit must log onto the Communications Centre via the CARD Resource Allocation (CRA).
2	ASU staff must assess every job and ensure they will add value to the incident before deploying and it fits within ASU's allocated flying house. The decision to deploy is also subject to a collaborative risk assessment between the pilot and crew.

3	<p>Once ASU deploy (as per Air Support Unit Deployment Rationale - <u>Routine Support Operations</u>), the Air Support Unit must operate and take directions from the Northern Communications Centre and must provide commentary and updates to the Centre in the same manner as any other field unit.</p>
4	<p>During a critical incident the Air Support Unit must direct their commentary and updates to the Incident Controller, whether that is the Communications Centre or a field appointed Incident Controller.</p>
5	<p>When appointing the field Incident Controller the Shift Commander, Northern Communications Centre must also take into account the ability of the designate to effectively communicate with the Air Support Unit via radio communication in real-time.</p>
6	<p>There will be occasions when, because of their unique observation position, it is appropriate for the Air Support Unit to direct field staff (i.e.; setting of cordons). However, this should only occur when authorised by the Incident Controller and should be preceded by an announcement to field units, unless immediate action is required to protect the safety of Police employees or the public and it is impractical for such announcement to be given.</p>
7	<p>All requests for the services of the Air Support Unit to be deployed outside of the Auckland Metropolitan Area must be referred to the Inspector: Metro Operations Support, Auckland who will contact the ASU. Subject to consultation with the Officer in Charge Air Support Unit or the Inspector: Metro Operations Support, Auckland the Shift Commander, Police Northern Communications, does not have authority to deploy the Air Support Unit outside of the Auckland Metropolitan Area.</p>

8	At all times it is the joint decision between the operational crew and pilot to determine whether it is safe to operationally deploy in existing weather conditions or a situation which compromises safety and whether the proposed deployment is within the capabilities of the aircraft and crew.
9	Where another district requests deployment of the Air Support Unit outside of the Auckland Metropolitan Area and that request can be accommodated, the district may be required to agree to meet the costs of that deployment.

Out of Scope

