



# Huntington Beach Police Department

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Eric Parra, Chief of Police

## Press Release

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## Huntington Beach Police Department Unveils New Police Helicopter

Today, Wednesday, February 8, 2023, the Huntington Beach Police Department (HBPD) unveiled the first of three new police helicopters at the HBPD helipad. The second and third helicopters will arrive within the next few months. The three new MD 530F helicopters will replace the department's existing fleet and feature a higher 3,350-pound gross weight, increased cruise speed, improved flight characteristics in confined areas, and lower direct operating costs compared to the older aircraft.

"The safety of our Huntington Beach residents, businesses, and visitors is of the utmost importance," said Mayor Tony Strickland. "It is critical that we invest in public safety and provide our police officers with the tools and equipment necessary that allows them to keep our community safe."

The [Huntington Beach Police Air Support Unit](#) was formed in 1968 with the primary mission to fly in support of the police, fire, and marine safety operations. Those operations include, but are not limited to, patrol ground operations, surveillance, aerial photo/intelligence gathering missions, observation support for police, fire, and marine safety operations, as well as SWAT operations and Emergency/Disaster surveying. The unit not only provides air support for the City of Huntington Beach but is also contracted to serve Costa Mesa, Irvine, and Newport Beach.

In the Unit's 54-year history, MD helicopters have been flown for 40 years, equating to 150,000 hours of flight time.

In 2021, the HBPD signed a \$10 million purchase agreement for three MD 530F helicopters equipped with the latest law enforcement technology. The City recouped approximately \$3 million by selling the previously used HBPD helicopters.

"The Huntington Beach Police Department is happy to continue with the ongoing operation of MD helicopters in our Air Support Unit," said Chief of Police Eric Parra. "These new helicopters will allow the HBPD to continue to provide the highest level of service to our community and improve the quality of life in Huntington Beach for many years to come."



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