

## **Man arrested for pointing laser at SCSO helicopter - 10/19/2012**

SEMINOLE CO. (Oct. 19, 2012) – Deputies with the Seminole County Sheriff’s Office (SCSO) yesterday arrested Usman Tufail, 24, of Winter Park for shining a laser light eight times at Alert 1, one of SCSO’s two helicopters. He was charged with pointing a laser light at a pilot, culpable negligence, and resisting an officer without violence.

Shortly before 10 p.m., Alert 1 was in the area of Hall Road and SR 426 searching for a vehicle burglary suspect when the flight crew reported a green laser light flashed through the cockpit. The helicopter responded to the area where the light was originating and used Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) to direct deputies on the ground to a residence on Grove Avenue, where Tufail was sitting outside. Tufail was transported to the John E. Polk Correctional Facility.

Shining a light into an aircraft creates a temporary glare on the windscreen and generates a temporary flash of blindness, similar to a camera flash. It is highly dangerous for pilots and flight crew who can experience blurred vision or become disoriented. At the time of last night’s laser strikes, Alert 1 was flying at approximately 800 feet.

The FBI and FAA were also notified of the incident. The FAA has the ability to impose civil penalties for pointing a laser into the cockpit of an aircraft.