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### SCSO Aviation Section achieves national accreditation

Seminole Co. Fla., (Aug. 28, 2017)-The Seminole County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) Aviation Section was recently presented with national accreditation from the Airborne Law Enforcement Association's (ALEA) Public Safety Aviation Accreditation Commission (PSAAC). Sergeant Steve Farris, Chief Pilot, was presented with the accreditation at the ALEA Annual Exposition held in Reno, Nevada on July 28, 2017. The SCSO Aviation Section is the only helicopter operation in the State of Florida, and only one of 12 in the country, to hold this distinction.

"This achievement reflects our commitment to the overall safety and efficiency of our aviation operations," said Sheriff Dennis Lemma. "I'm extremely proud of our pilots and flight officers for their hard work and dedication to protecting our community. These deputies adhere to rigid safety standards and they have brought state-of-the-art technology and tactics to our flight operations."

SCSO's Aviation Section is comprised of 10 full time and 18 part time members who maintain and operate two Airbus helicopters (Alert1 and Alert2), that provide around the clock airborne assistance to SCSO and the County's seven city police departments. The Section utilizes advanced technology to patrol Seminole County's waterways, neighborhoods, and roadways, as well as provides investigative support, conducts fire suppression, and performs land and water rescues. In 2016, the Section aided patrol units on 1165 calls for service and was instrumental in the arrest of 173 subjects. The Section also assisted in the recovery of 18 stolen vehicles and located 17 lost or missing persons. Videos of our Alert helicopter in action can be viewed on our [You Tube](#) channel.

SCSO completed five rigorous phases in order to gain accredited status. The process involved a written application, self-assessment, on-site assessment, commission review, and demonstration of compliance maintenance. Accreditation is a voluntary process that promotes safe, efficient and accident-free aviation operations in support of law enforcement missions. The accreditation program is designed to objectively evaluate and certify a unit's overall compliance with the standards developed and adopted by PSAAC and ALEA.

PSAAC is a non-profit corporation which consists of a team of dedicated law enforcement aviation professionals, both active and retired, whose core values are focused on the development of a common standard of safety for all law enforcement aviation units in the United States and Canada.

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Sergeant Steve Farris, Chief Pilot, (center) was presented with the accreditation at the ALEA Annual Exposition held in Reno, Nevada on July 28, 2017.



Sheriff Dennis Lemma presented a Unit Citation to our Aviation Section who recently obtained Accreditation from the Public Safety Aviation Accreditation Commission, an honor no other helicopter operation in the State of Florida possesses.