

Onondaga County Sheriff's Office News

Kevin E. Walsh

Sheriff



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Lawsuit Against Air-1 Helicopter Dismissed in Federal Court



Syracuse, New York – Onondaga County Sheriff Kevin E. Walsh reports that a two year lawsuit against the Onondaga County Sheriff's Air-1 helicopter has been dismissed in Federal Court.

On February 26, 2010, the United States Northern District Court issued its decision dismissing a lawsuit that was filed by Mercy Flight Central, Inc. against the Onondaga County Sheriff's Office, New York State Police, Central New York Regional Emergency Medical Services Council and TLC Emergency Medical Services, Inc. The lawsuit, which was initiated in 2007, alleged that both the Sheriff's Office and the New York State Police helicopters were in violation of federal law by providing competing services without proper certification.

The Sheriff's Office is pleased with the Court's decision which agreed that the practice of dispatching the closest medivac transport was proper. "We felt we were right at the beginning. I think we've been proven by at least the federal court that we were right, that the closest available air medical service should get that patient to the hospital in as quick a manner as possible so that we can be within the golden hour to save that patient," said Undersheriff Warren Darby.

Air-1 is Onondaga County's multi-mission helicopter capable of fulfilling numerous police, fire and rescue missions. In 2009, Air-1 flew a total of 611.5 hours and responded to a total of 1,643 calls for service, which included 22 medivac missions.

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