

N.M. State Police Acquire Surveillance Plane

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The **New Mexico State Police** will deploy a specialty surveillance aircraft acquired from a private aviation company at no cost.

The agency will begin using CSI Aviation's Seeker fixed-wing aircraft as a regional asset to assist local, state, and federal law enforcement missions, said Chief Robert Shilling.

"The Seeker is a great addition to our fleet," Chief Shilling said in a statement. "Because of the aircraft's unique surveillance capabilities, our aircrews will now be able to monitor sensitive, undercover law enforcement operations using its extraordinary ability to fly slowly."

The state police was one of several agencies who applied for the aircraft via an RFP process, even though CSI Aviation provided it as a donation, according to the company. The Seeker was awarded to the state police earlier this year.

"I can assure you that the Seeker will provide our state police with an exponential increase in surveillance capabilities," said Allen Weh, CSI Aviation's CEO. "The department will be able to fly this aircraft at a vastly reduced cost compared to a helicopter or comparable fixed-wing aircraft."

The Seeker, which is valued at \$250,000, is designed as an affordable option to helicopters, according to the company. It provides its crew greater visibility with a rear-mounted "pusher" engine and forward crew seating that allow for 270-degree visibility.

The airplane has docile handling characteristics that provide for a safe, low speed stall, responsive harmonized control, minimal pitch change with power and flap changes, and stability that reduces pilot workload and increases situational awareness. It can accommodate a variety of surveillance and sensor equipment, according to the company.