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Surf Life Saving Queensland's Three Bell 429 Helicopters Surpass 5,000 Flight Hours Supporting Queensland Police Aerial Operations

The POLAIR fleet, operated by SLSQ for the Queensland Police Service, has supported arrests, missing-person searches and stolen-vehicle recoveries across southeast Queensland since entering service in 2024

Brisbane, Australia (18 November 2026) – Bell Textron Inc., a Textron Inc. (NYSE: TXT) company, today recognizes a major milestone for Queensland's police aviation capability. The three Bell 429 helicopters operated by Surf Life Saving Queensland (SLSQ) for the Queensland Police Service (QPS) POLAIR unit have surpassed 5,000 flight hours.

The helicopters entered service in southeast Queensland in mid-2024, expanding the region's POLAIR fleet from two aircraft to three and replacing the two older helicopters previously in operation. SLSQ operates the Bell 429s from facilities at Archerfield and the Gold Coast under a long-term service contract with QPS that runs through 2034.

Equipped with night-vision systems and high-resolution cameras, the Bell 429s help police officers track vehicles, locate missing people and apprehend offenders. The aircraft also provide real-time surveillance and situational awareness to officers on the ground.

"Reaching 5,000 flight hours is a testament to the professionalism of the SLSQ aviation crews and the reliability of the Bell 429. Every one of those hours supports officers on the ground and the communities they protect. We are proud to support QPS and SLSQ as they continue to deliver for Queenslanders," said Daniel McQuestin, business development director for Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Rim at Bell.

“Passing 5,000 hours in these aircraft reflects the commitment of our pilots, engineers and support teams, as well as our long-standing partnership with the Queensland Police Service. Surf Life Saving Queensland has been serving the community from the air since 1976, and it is a privilege to bring that experience to POLAIR,” said Jon Turley, General Manager Aviation, Surf Life Saving Queensland.

Impact across southeast Queensland

QPS has reported strong results from its southeast Queensland POLAIR operations. The most recently published figures, covering 1 July 2024 through June 2026 – the first months of the Bell 429s’ service – include:

• Aerial crews assisted with the arrest of 1908 offenders.

• Crews supported 237 missing-person operations, including searches for vulnerable children, older Queenslanders and people with medical conditions.

• Aerial crews helped recover more than 676 stolen vehicles across Brisbane and the Gold Coast.

• POLAIR responded to more than 2,100 priority incidents, including nearly 500 high-priority Code 1 and Code 2 jobs within 12 minutes of dispatch.

• POLAIR was the first police asset on scene for more than half of all callouts. QPS POLAIR crews operate with Tactical Flight Officers, who manage the aircraft’s surveillance systems and provide ground officers with real-time situational awareness.

Bell 429 in law enforcement

The Bell 429 is a light, twin-engine helicopter widely used for law enforcement, emergency medical services, utility and corporate missions. Queensland now operates six Bell 429s across the state, making the Queensland Police Service (QPS) the operator of Australia’s largest Bell law enforcement fleet. Bell 429 operators around the world include the New South Wales Police Force, New Zealand Police, the Indonesian National Police, the New York Police Department, the Royal Thai Police and the Swedish National Police. More than 500 Bell 429s are in service globally, supporting missions ranging from law enforcement, search and rescue, and aeromedical operations to utility and corporate transport.

About Bell

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Thinking above and beyond is what we do. For more than 90 years, we've been reimagining the experience of flight – and where it can take us.

We're an aerospace and defense company that engineers and manufactures aircraft for critical solutions in extreme scenarios. We're breaking barriers in lifting people to safety across transportation, medical, rescue and military services, and leading the industry in future solutions that are fast, reliable and efficient.

Headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas – as a wholly-owned subsidiary of Textron Inc., – we have strategic locations around the globe. And with generations of employees who have served, many in combat theatre of operation, helping our military achieve their missions is a passion of ours. Above all, our breakthrough innovations deliver exceptional experiences to our customers. Efficiently. Reliably. And always, with safety at the forefront.

About Textron Inc.

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