



St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office
Steven A. Hall, Sheriff
23150 Leonard Hall Drive, Leonardtown, MD 20650



NEWS RELEASE

St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office K-9 Teams Complete Aviation Familiarization Training with MSP Trooper 7

LEONARDTOWN, MD (December 18, 2025) - Recently, members of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office K-9 team participated in specialized aviation familiarization training at the Maryland State Police Trooper 7 hangar at the St. Mary's County Regional Airport to enhance coordination and operational readiness for search-and-rescue and law-enforcement incidents.

On December 13, 2025, Deputy Joseph Senatore and Corporal Lacey Smith, along with their K-9 partners Karma and Kyra, received training focused on Trooper 7's medical and search capabilities, aviation technology used to support law enforcement operations, and guidance on when to request aviation assistance. The training also included safety procedures for operating around and inside the aircraft, as well as familiarization with the aircraft's interior and onboard medical equipment.

Both K-9 teams conducted progressive acclimation exercises with the aircraft, first with the engines off and later with the rotors spinning. The canines were walked around the exterior and inside the aircraft to become comfortable with confined spaces, noise, and wind generated during flight operations.

Following the familiarization exercises, Corporal Smith and K-9 Kyra completed a 30-minute flight aboard Trooper 7. During the flight, the team reviewed aviation search equipment and procedures while flying over the Great Mills Road area. The aircraft later landed at St. Mary's Hospital, where K-9 Kyra safely exited the aircraft while it remained running. Positive reinforcement exercises were conducted to further acclimate the K-9 to noise and wind.

The training provided a safe, controlled environment for K-9 teams to build confidence in aviation operations and strengthen collaboration with the Maryland State Police Aviation Command. This enhanced familiarity will improve readiness for joint responses and support more efficient use of Trooper 7 during future searches and critical incidents, ultimately increasing the Sheriff's Office's ability to serve and protect the residents of St. Mary's County.

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