

Forward Looking Infrared Real-time Video (FLIR)

Seattle Police Department (SPD)

What is the technology?

Two King County Sheriff's Office helicopters with Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) send a real-time video feed of ongoing events to commanders on the ground.

This technology provides a platform for aerial photography and digital video of large outdoor locations (e.g., crime scenes and disaster damage, etc.)



The open comment period for this technology is currently underway. You can provide comments to [Seattle.gov/Surveillance](https://seattle.gov/surveillance).

All comments will be included in the Surveillance Impact Report on this technology and submitted to Council.

If you would like to provide feedback outside of the open comment period, please submit them directly to City Council.

Why do we use the technology?

The Guardian One and Guardian Two helicopters provide critical assistance to SPD units on the ground during incidents. The benefits include rapid response to crime or disaster scenes and give law enforcement personnel an enhanced bird's eye view of the situation.

Collection

The forward looking infrared (FLIR) camera technology housed within the helicopters provide an enhanced picture of incident scenes by displaying heat signatures of individuals and objects on top of the aerial video. The FLIR technology allows for subjects to be detected even when hidden by clouds, haze, or darkness.

Use

The KCSO Helicopters and onboard FLIR technology respond only to SPD emergency events in which air support is beneficial and requested, including assault, burglary, and robbery.

Protections

SPD only receives and accesses information from the video feed that is relevant to the incidents to which Guardian One or Guardian Two have responded. The data transmitted to these devices is not accessible outside of these units.