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Press Release

Air-One Commander Receives Highest Aviation Award

September 7, 2008 - Winthrop Harbor, IL. The Law Enforcement Aviation Coalition (LEAC) and the Winthrop Harbor Police Department are proud to announce that **Commander Daniel Bitton** received the *Robert L. Cormier Award* in Houston, TX on July 19, 2008. The award was presented cooperatively by the Airborne Law Enforcement Association (ALEA) and Bell Textron Helicopter, and is the highest award presented at the annual ALEA convention.

The Robert L. Cormier Award is presented in recognition of an individual's outstanding achievement in the advancement of aircraft in public use. Past recipients have included governors, senators, chiefs of police and sheriffs. Bitton, who is Unit Commander of the Law Enforcement Aviation Coalition, a not-for-profit organization founded in part by the Winthrop Harbor Police Department, was recognized for his 30-plus years of dedication to aviation in law enforcement, and specifically for his extraordinary efforts in New Orleans after hurricane Katrina devastated the area. Bitton, together with his crew of two other Winthrop Harbor officers and one civilian, all on volunteer time and using a donated helicopter, organized and participated in the rescue of over 1,500 patients and staff from Tulane hospital in downtown New Orleans under the most extreme and adverse flight conditions imaginable.

"LEAC is staffed with men and women who volunteer their time. I can't begin to express the pride I have in working with each and every one of these dedicated professional airborne officers, and it is they that make this a great and viable air support unit.", said Commander Bitton in his acceptance speech.

The **Law Enforcement Aviation Coalition** is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 charitable organization, providing no-cost air support for search & rescue, law enforcement, fire service and counter-terrorism missions throughout the region. Additional information about LEAC and the AIR-ONE helicopter program is available on-line at www.airsupport.org.

Additional information about the **Airborne Law Enforcement Association**, an international organization, is available at the organization's web site – www.alea.org.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE