2011 Law Enforcement Committee Survey Results on:

Forward Looking Infrared "FLIR"

Since FLIRs use detection of heat to create the "picture" assembled for the video output, they can be used to help aircraft pilots and vessel operators steer their vehicles at night, and in fog or detect warm objects against a cold background when it is completely dark (such as a cloudy, moonless night). The wavelength of infrared that FLIRs detects differs significantly from that of night vision equipment which operates in the visible or existing light.

A survey was designed and distributed by this LE committee to NASBLA's 56 members. Thirty three (33) responses were received and revealed there is significant interest by the membership to understand the full scope and application of this technology.

Some interesting numbers:

1. 67 % of the respondents say the technology is being utilized in their state. However - ONLY 3 states are using the technology on vessels – aircraft was the number one application, followed by utilization of handheld units.
2. 67 % of the respondents say that cost and lack of understanding of the technology has kept them from using FLIR on their vessels.
3. The number one style utilized was a fixed mounted "pan and tilt" version.
4. The principle uses of the technology in order of prevailing use were; Surveillance, Search and Rescue and Navigation in poor visibility.
5. Over 70% of the respondents did not have a policy or a training requirement for utilization of FLIR.

Based on the findings of the survey, the subcommittee on Techniques and Technology has decided to:

1. Clarify and provide information on understanding of the technology.
2. Create a whitepaper on the applications and benefits to marine law enforcement
3. Create a training outline to help fully utilize this technology in the marine environment.