



THE LIFEFLIGHT FOUNDATION

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FIXED WING AIRCRAFT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

*The fixed wing aircraft is another tool in LifeFlight's toolbox and because it has different capabilities than the helicopters, it makes LifeFlight more reliable. **It means LifeFlight can answer more calls for help.***

Why does Maine need another airplane?

A critical care transport system that serves the entire state requires multiple strategies—helicopters, fixed wing aircraft and ground ambulances. Each vehicle has different capabilities and limitations, and together they provide a comprehensive transport system. The common element is LifeFlight's critical care team and advanced medical equipment, which brings tertiary-level care directly to the patient.

Why a fixed wing instead of another helicopter?

While LifeFlight is also working to add a third helicopter, the specific capabilities of the fixed wing make it an important resource for the people of Maine include:

- Faster over long distances
- Improve all weather capability – airplanes can operate in some weather conditions that the helicopter cannot.
- Improve coverage – reducing the number of long flights currently experienced by the helicopters means those aircraft will be available to respond to more calls
- Regional transport capacity – Provides a way for critically ill or injured patients in Maine to receive specialized care outside of Maine, with the ability to access facilities in a ring that includes Richmond, VA/Washington DC, the Cleveland Clinic and Toronto, Ontario.

What kind of airplane did LifeFlight purchase?

A King Air B200 twin-engine turboprop, the most common fixed wing air ambulance in the world.

Who is the medical crew on the airplane?

The same crew that flies on the helicopter also flies on the plane; they will have the same skills and experience, and all of the same specialized medical equipment as the helicopter.

How does this aircraft fit with the existing fixed wing programs in the state?

LifeFlight's fixed wing doesn't replace anything currently in Maine's EMS transport network. It is supportive and complementary to the helicopters, the airplanes in Aroostook County and Penobscot Bay, and the hundreds of ground ambulances across the state, by increasing the entire system's capacity.

Where is the fixed wing based?

The fixed wing airplane is based at the Bangor International Airport. From here, it will most efficiently provide service to the entire state of Maine, and transport patients to trauma and specialty centers within the state, as well as across New England and as far away as Toronto, Ontario; Cleveland, OH and Richmond, VA.

Where will the fixed wing aircraft land?

The King Air B200 turboprop has been modified to land on most of the runways in Maine. The general criteria are a runway length of at least 3,000 feet and an appropriate instrument approach. However, some airports or airstrips that don't meet this criteria may still be usable on a case by case basis.

How much did the new fixed wing cost?

The total project cost was about \$3.5 million, which included purchasing and retrofitting the airplane, purchasing the advanced medical equipment necessary for each transport, and renovating hangar space at the Bangor International Airport.

How many more calls will LifeFlight be able to respond to?

The two most common reasons LifeFlight turns down requests are weather in which the helicopters are unable to fly and both helicopters are already busy transporting other patients. Because it has different aviation capabilities, the fixed wing aircraft can answer some of the calls LifeFlight currently has to turn down for weather reasons. The fixed wing can also be used for some the long flights the helicopters currently complete, which will free up the helicopters to answer additional calls. We expect these two factors to allow LifeFlight to transport more than 300 additional patients every year.

Does it service the entire state or just one region?

LifeFlight's new fixed wing aircraft services the entire state, transporting patients from most Maine communities to specialty medical centers in Maine, New England and from Richmond, VA and Washington, DC to the Cleveland Clinic and Toronto, Ontario.

Where did the funding come from?

LifeFlight's capital needs are funded by private donations. Much like a hospital, LifeFlight transports are paid for by insurance companies, however those fees don't quite cover the cost of operations. All of our capital projects, including aircraft, specialized equipment, aviation infrastructure and training programs must be supported by philanthropy. **LifeFlight** is really **OF Maine**-- if we need LifeFlight for ourselves or our loved ones, we need to support LifeFlight to make sure it is there for us.

Is the care provided on the fixed wing different than the care on the helicopter?

The care provided by the LifeFlight crew is the same. Whether the crew is on a helicopter, an airplane or a ground ambulance, they bring the same knowledge, experience and equipment with them wherever they go.

How many patients can the plane carry?

The King Air B200 turboprop is configured to carry one patient at a time.

How does LifeFlight decide whether to send the helicopter, the airplane or a ground ambulance?

LifeFlight looks at weather, distance of transport and several other factors to determine the most efficient and appropriate vehicle to accomplish any given mission.

Does this change how medical providers interact with LifeFlight?

The addition of the fixed wing aircraft does not change how our customers request and interact with LifeFlight. The bottom line is the addition of a third aircraft will make LifeFlight more reliable; it means LifeFlight will be able to answer more calls for help and improve the care and outcomes for hundreds more patients every year.