

California Aviation Services is owned and operated by Leo and Raquel Bell.



Leo began flight training in 1979, while he was in high school. He trained in a Cessna 150 on the weekends to earn his private pilot airplane license. He continued on to college as he continued to build flight experience in airplanes.

In 1983 he began helicopter training in Missouri. He became CFI and began to teach. A year later he received his college degree in aeronautics. He returned to California and began flight school with Floyd Hiser. (Hiser Aviation Inc. became the largest flight training school on the United States west coast with a fleet of over 30 training aircraft.)



Throughout his early helicopter career, Leo was a chief pilot, chief flight instructor, and primary long-line (external load) pilot. Along with his work for Hiser, he began government contract work in the aerial firefighting industry and began to bid for law enforcement training and patrol work. He enrolled in the Sheriff's academy and became a deputy sheriff for the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department.

Leo continued to work days and vacation periods with Hiser and nights with the Sheriff's. His flight duties were: patrol, surveillance, search and rescue, mountain, desert, and metro. In 1991 he transferred to the Riverside County Sheriff where he worked street level patrol, narcotics, then due to his experience at Hiser and S.B.S.O., he was assigned to assist in the implementation of the Riverside Sheriff's aviation unit. After funding was approved and helicopters were ordered, he was assigned as Chief Pilot and

Unit Flight Instructor.



During the same year, he was appointed by the FAA as Designated Pilot Examiner. When Hiser Aviation Inc. relocated out of state, he continued with law enforcement agencies to provide pilot and ground training for their personnel.

In 1994, Leo returned to street patrol, where he found more fulfillment working directly with people instead of above them. He was nominated for Officer of the Year while assigned to streets. That October he was asked by several law enforcement agencies to open a flight school. He bought one Robinson R22 helicopter through a past customer who agreed to finance the aircraft.

In November 1994 he began negotiations with an overseas company for pilot training. Raquel took care of finance, accounting, and office management part-time. In December 1994, he opened the first U.S. FAA Approved Written Test Center in Japan.

In 1995 the company expanded to four helicopters. Raquel came onboard fulltime. In 1998 he accepted an offer from S.B.S.O. to return to the department aviation unit. (S.B.S.O. aviation is one of the top aviation units in the country, very well known for the number of aircraft, variety of missions, and the quality of the pilots.)

In 2000 Leo decided to leave fulltime law enforcement and accept a job flying jets at American Eagle Airlines. He is still a reserve deputy at S.B.S.O.