



Ventura County Sheriff's Office  
Military Equipment Annual Report - 2023  
May 16, 2024

On May 24, 2022, the Ventura County Board of Supervisors adopted Ventura County Ordinance 4603 pursuant to California Assembly Bill No. 481 (AB 481) which codified Chapter 12.8 to Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code, commencing with section 7070. The legislative intent behind AB 481 was to increase the public transparency by which California law enforcement agencies fund, acquire, and/or use "military equipment."

Ordinance 4603 requires the Sheriff's Office to obtain Board of Supervisors approval prior to taking certain actions relating to the funding, acquisition, and/or use of equipment defined by the ordinance as "military equipment." The term "military equipment" as used in Ordinance 4603 does not necessarily indicate equipment used by the military. The majority of the equipment defined by this ordinance and possessed by the Sheriff's Office is employed by most law enforcement agencies across the country to enhance citizen and officer safety. In addition, Ordinance 4603 requires the Sheriff's Office to submit an annual military equipment report to the Board of Supervisors by July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year for as long as the military equipment is available for use.

The Sheriff's Office shall make each annual military equipment report publicly available on the department website for as long as the military equipment is available for use and hold a community engagement meeting within 30 days of posting the report to the department website. The report shall include the following information for the immediately preceding calendar year:

1. A summary of how the Military Equipment was used and the purpose for its use.
2. A summary of any complaints or concerns received concerning the Military Equipment.
3. The results of any internal audits, any information about violations of the Military Equipment Use Policy, and any actions taken in response.
4. The total annual cost for each type of Military Equipment and the source of funds to cover such expenses.
5. The quantity possessed for each type of Military Equipment.
6. Whether there is intent to acquire additional Military Equipment in the next year, and if so, the quantity sought for each type of equipment.

This report shall cover the period from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023.

**Unmanned, remotely piloted, powered aerial vehicles**

- The Sheriff's Office has 25 unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), but 12 are near end of life and 6 are completely obsolete or damaged to the point they are no longer used. UAV may be deployed when an aerial view would assist with investigations, including missing persons' searches, vehicle collisions, natural disaster management, crime scene evidence collection, public safety, high-risk apprehension of armed violent suspects, and other life-saving missions. Sheriff's Emergency Services also utilizes UAV to for disaster prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery.
- Total Usage: 447 times
  - 164 times to assist patrol with suspect searches, exterior building searches, etc.
  - 96 times for tactical operations, including barricaded subjects
  - 66 times for crime scene or traffic collision documentation
  - 47 times for internal documentation of Sheriff facilities, equipment, and staff events
  - 38 times to assist Sheriff's Emergency Services with mapping, assessments, and storm notifications
  - 30 times to search for missing persons/search and rescue operations
  - 6 times to assist other law enforcement agencies
- Equipment Costs
  - On April 23, 2024, the Board of Supervisors approved the use \$1,592 from the Sheriff's existing FY 23/24 budget for the purchase of one DJI Avata UAV that was received in 2023. This UAV will be utilized by the Office of Emergency Services.
  - On April 23, 2024, the Board of Supervisors approved the acceptance of 2 Fotokite E389K UAV that were recently received. These devices were included in the purchase of the two Frontline Communications Mobile Incident Command Posts approved by the Board of Supervisors in March of 2020 and March of 2022. Though the command posts had already been received, these tethered UAV were not received until early 2024. These devices will be used for intelligence and situational awareness during critical incidents.
  - On May 16, 2023, \$21,280 from the General Services Agency Parks Off-Highway Vehicle Trust was approved by the Board of Supervisors for the purchase of one DJI Matrice 30T UAV that was received in 2023. This UAV is used at the Sheriff's Lockwood Valley Station to assess trail conditions and locate missing persons and persons involved in off-highway traffic collisions.
  - Approximately \$3,155 was spent on FAA licensing, batteries, and supplies for existing equipment. Funding was derived from the Sheriff's existing FY 23/24 budget.
  - Approximately \$37,843 was spent on UAV training. Funding was derived from the Sheriff's existing budget.
- There were no complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.

- Intent to obtain additional equipment
  - The majority of the existing fleet of the UAV possessed by the Sheriff's Office are more than five years old and near end of life. In addition, new FAA regulations require all small UAV to have remote identification capabilities that allow them to broadcast their identities and telemetry to other aircraft nearby while the UAV is in flight. On April 23, 2024, the Board of Supervisors approved to use \$114,745 from the El Dorado County Caldor Fire and Mono County Winter Storm Event Mutual Aid Reimbursement for the purchase of 2 DJI Matrice 30T, 10 DJI Mavic 3 Enterprise, and 4 DJI Mini 4 Pro UAV in order to replace aging equipment and comply with FAA regulations. This purchase is still in the procurement process.

### **Unmanned, remotely piloted, powered ground vehicles**

- The Sheriff's Office has 13 unmanned ground vehicles (robots), but 11 are obsolete or damaged to the point they are no longer used. This equipment is utilized by the Sheriff's Bomb Unit and SWAT team to remotely gain visual/audio data, carry equipment, open doors, facilitate disposal of hazardous devices and clear buildings without exposing deputies to hazardous situations. They may be deployed during high risk situations such as searches for wanted subjects, barricaded subjects and hostage rescues. They may also be used to inspect hazardous materials, possible explosive devices, and other hazardous situations.
- Usage
  - 41 times for community events/demonstrations
  - 6 times for calls for service related to possible explosives
  - 4 times for building sweeps prior to dignitary visits
- Equipment Costs
  - There were no new purchases related to this equipment.
  - Approximately \$55 was spent on batteries and other supplies related to existing equipment. Funding was derived from the Sheriff's existing FY22/23 budget.
  - There were no training costs as the training for this equipment is incorporated into existing Bomb Unit and SWAT team training.
- There were no complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.
- Intent to obtain additional equipment
  - On April 23, 2024, the Board of Supervisors approved the use approximately \$63,633 from the Homeland Security Grant to purchase one ICOR Mini-CALIBER tactical robot. Though the Sheriff's Office applied for this grant in 2021, funding was not made available until 2023. This equipment will be utilized by the Sheriff's SWAT team to remotely gain visual/audio data, carry equipment, open doors, and clear buildings without exposing deputies to unnecessary hazardous situations. This tactical robot may be deployed during high-risk situations such as

searches for wanted subjects, barricaded subjects and hostage rescues. This purchase is still in the procurement process.

- The Sheriff's Office intends to request Board of Supervisors approval to continue to participate in the Law Enforcement Support Office's military equipment surplus program and specifically seek out additional military surplus robots to improve the existing inventory utilized by the Sheriff's Bomb Unit. Military surplus items, such as the ones requested, are provided to law enforcement at no cost. In addition, the existing inoperable military surplus equipment will be returned to the federal government over the next year.

**Mine-resistant ambush-protected (MRAP) vehicles or armored personnel carriers. However, police versions of standard consumer vehicles are specifically excluded from this subdivision.**

- The Sheriff's Office has two armored personnel carriers, a Lenco Bearcat and a Lenco Medcat. These vehicles are to be used during critical incidents to support tactical operations and provide safe transport, security, and rescue of department personnel and members of the public. They may also be used during disaster-related emergencies, search and rescue operations, and terrorism preparedness, protection, and response.
- Usage
  - 52 times for community events/demonstrations
  - 9 times for a patrol assist related to a barricaded subjects and search warrant service.
  - 6 times for mutual aid requests from other local law enforcement agencies to assist with search warrants and/or barricaded subjects.
- Equipment Costs
  - Approximately \$18,946 was spent from the Sheriff's existing budget on service, repairs, and fuel for these vehicles.
  - Approximately \$25,690 was spent on training costs associated with these vehicles.
- There were no complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.
- There is no current intent to seek additional equipment in this category.

**High mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles (HMMWV), commonly referred to as Humvees, two and one-half-ton trucks, five-ton trucks, or wheeled vehicles that have a breaching or entry apparatus attached. However, unarmored all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and motorized dirt bikes are specifically excluded from this subdivision.**

- The Sheriff's Office has two usable Light-Medium Tactical Vehicles (M1078 troop transports) and one AM General HMMWV (Humvee). These are high mobility multipurpose four-wheel drive vehicles with the capacity to travel over difficult terrain. Both vehicles are assigned to Search and Rescue as their primary

purpose is to perform rescue missions in areas that are not accessible to traditional first responder vehicles. They may also be used during other emergencies, such as active shooter or hostage scenarios, and antiterrorism preparedness, protection, and response.

- Usage
  - These vehicles were not deployed during the specified period.
- Equipment Costs
  - Approximately \$14,171 was spent on service, repairs, and fuel for these existing vehicles. Funding was derived from the Sheriff's existing budget.
  - There were no training costs as the training related to this equipment is incorporated into existing Search and Rescue team training.
- There were no complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.
- There is no current intent to seek additional equipment in this category.

**Tracked armored vehicles that provide ballistic protection to their occupants and utilize a tracked system instead of wheels for forward motion.**

- The Sheriff's Office has one armored Caterpillar tractor (ROOK). It operates on tracks to provide greater ground contact than tires and it has mission specific attachments including a floor-to-roof front shield, hydraulic breaching ram, a grapple claw, and a vehicle extraction tool. The Rook may be utilized during SWAT and/or Bomb Unit deployments when there is a need for its defensive ballistic protection, rescue platform, and the ability to navigate rough terrain environments where other equipment would be limited. It may also be used during disaster-related emergencies and search and rescue operations.
- Usage
  - 5 times to assist Sheriff's Office personnel with search warrant service.
  - 5 times for mutual aid requests from other local law enforcement agencies to assist with search warrants and/or barricaded subjects.
  - 3 times for community events/demonstrations
- Equipment Costs
  - There were no new equipment costs.
  - Approximately \$2,448 was spent on service, repairs, and fuel for existing equipment. Funding was derived from the Sheriff's existing FY 23/24 budget.
  - Approximately \$7,704 was spent on training costs associated with this vehicle.
- There were no complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.
- There is no current intent to seek additional equipment in this category.

**Command and control vehicles that are either built or modified to facilitate the operational control and direction of public safety units.**

- The Sheriff's Office has two 45' Frontline Communications command centers, two 20' Search and Rescue trailers, and one 29' Freightliner SWAT command

vehicle. They are all used as mobile incident command posts during critical incidents, search and rescue operations, and pre-staged events.

- Usage
  - 18 times for community events/demonstrations
  - 17 times for search and rescue operations
  - 9 times for critical incidents/criminal investigations/fires
- Equipment Costs
  - There were no new equipment costs.
  - Approximately \$29,931 was spent on equipment, service, repairs, and fuel for these existing vehicles. Funding was derived from the Sheriff's existing budget.
  - Approximately \$214 was spent in 2023 from the Sheriff's existing budget on training drivers who operate the command posts.
- There were no complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.
- There is no current intent to seek additional equipment in this category.

**Weaponized aircraft, vessels, or vehicles of any kind.**

- The Sheriff's Office does not possess any equipment in this category, nor is there any intent to seek any.

**Battering rams, slugs, and breaching apparatuses that are explosive in nature. However, items designed to remove a lock, such as bolt cutters, or a handheld ram designed to be operated by one person, are specifically excluded from this subdivision.**

- The Sheriff's Office has two breaching shotguns and nine Kinetic Breaching Tools (KBT). This equipment is used by the SWAT team and members of specialized investigative units to quickly and effectively breach doors.
- Usage
  - The KBT was used 33 times during the service of search warrants.
  - The breaching shotgun was not used during this specified period, other than during training.
- Expenses related to this equipment
  - On December 13, 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved the use of FY 23/24 state asset forfeiture funds for the purchase of five kinetic breaching tools. The total costs of this equipment was \$52,940 and they were received in 2023.
  - There were no costs related to existing equipment.
  - There were no training costs as the training for this equipment is incorporated into existing team trainings.
- There were no complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.
- There is no current intent to seek additional equipment in this category.

**Firearms and ammunition of .50 caliber or greater. However, standard issue shotguns are specifically excluded from this subdivision.**

- The Sheriff's SWAT team has two .50 caliber rifles and about 900 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition. It is a precision weapon to address a threat with more accuracy from a greater distance than other rifles utilized by the Sheriff's Office. This rifle also provides greater penetration in situations where smaller caliber ammunition is ineffective due to armor protection.
- Usage
  - This rifle was not used during the specified period, other than during training.
- Expenses related to this equipment
  - The Sheriff's Office obtained one additional .50 caliber rifle from the Oxnard Police Department at no cost.
  - There were no new equipment costs.
  - There were no costs related to existing equipment.
  - There were no training costs as the training for this equipment is incorporated into existing SWAT team training.
- There were no complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.
- There is no current intent to seek additional equipment in this category.

**Specialized firearms and ammunition of less than .50 caliber, including assault weapons as defined in sections 30510 and 30515 of the California Penal Code, with the exception of standard issue service weapons and ammunition of less than .50 caliber that are issued to officers, agents, or employees of a law enforcement agency or a state agency.**

- The Sheriff's Office has 551 .223 caliber rifles and 12 .308 rifles, along with approximately 244,000 rounds of .223 caliber/5.56mm ammunition and approximately 25,000 rounds of .308 caliber ammunition. These are precision weapons intended to address a threat with more accuracy from a greater distance than a handgun, such as an encounter with an armed or barricaded subject. They also provide greater penetration of soft body armor than a handgun.
  - Seven of these .308 rifles are not deployed for enforcement purposes. They are only used by the Sheriff's Honor Guard for ceremonies, such as funerals.
  - The Sheriff's Office transferred ownership of 35 Colt M16A2 CQB rifles to Sionics during 2023 for credit toward the purchase of new rifles. The rifles had already been removed from deployment due to their age.
  - The Sheriff's Office no longer has any of the 71 aging military surplus M16A1 rifles in deployment and plans to return them to the federal government in 2024.
- Usage
  - 29 times a rifle was pointed at a potential suspect
  - 18 times utilized for ceremonies



- There were no instances of a rifle being fired at a suspect during this specified period.
- Expenses related to this equipment
  - On December 12, 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved the use of \$145,000 from the FY 23/24 state asset forfeiture funds to purchase of 60 Sionics SAR-15 rifles. The rifles were purchased and received during 2023.
  - On April 26, 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved Sheriff's Office Policy 709 on Military Equipment which allows for the Sheriff's Office to munitions to maintain a sufficient inventory to meet department needs. With that in mind, the Sheriff's Office used approximately \$47,300 was spent on .223 ammunition.
  - Approximately \$1,968 was spent from the Sheriff's existing budget on replacement magazines, batteries for rifle optics, and other supplies for existing equipment.
  - Approximately \$48,760 from the Sheriff's existing FY 23/24 budget was spent on rifle training during the specified period. There were no additional costs associated as additional training for this equipment was incorporated into other existing training, range qualifications, etc.
- There were no complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.
- Intent to obtain additional equipment
  - On June 27, 2023, the Board of Board of Supervisors approved the use of approximately \$98,695 from the Sheriff's FY 23/24 asset forfeiture accounts to purchase of 40 Sionics SAR-15 rifles. This purchase is still in the procurement process.
  - On April 23, 2024, the Board of Supervisors approved the use \$184,194 from the Sheriff's existing FY 23/24 budget and another \$61,398 from the Sheriff's Trial Court Security Trust to purchase of 100 Sionics Patrol Three SBR Rifles and related accessories. The addition of 100 new rifles will provide a sufficient supply to issue new rifles to those deputies beginning their patrol training in 2024 and 2025. It will also provide an adequate number to issue them to deputies assigned to Court Services and for positioning additional rifles in secure areas of the courthouse so they are accessible in case of an active shooter incident at the Government Center. This purchase is still in the procurement process.

**Any firearm or firearm accessory that is designed to launch explosive projectiles.**

- The Sheriff's Office does not possess any equipment in this category, nor is there any intent to seek any.

**Noise-flash diversionary devices and explosive breaching tools**

- The Sheriff's SWAT team maintains several types of noise-flash diversionary devices (flash bangs) which produce a loud "bang" and white light to cause short-term physiological/psychological sensory deprivation in order to allow law enforcement members a tactical advantage during critical incidents such as high

risk search warrants, arrests of armed and violent subjects, and hostage rescue. The SWAT team currently has 66 noise-flash diversionary devices in their inventory, of which 48 are expired.

- Usage
  - 1 Noise-flash diversionary devices was used during 2023 during the apprehension of a wanted subject in conjunction with the service of a search warrant.
- Expenses related to this equipment
  - There were no new equipment costs.
  - There were no costs related to existing equipment.
  - There were no training costs as the training for this equipment is incorporated into existing SWAT team training.
- There were no complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.
- On April 26, 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved Sheriff's Office Policy 709 on Military Equipment which allows for the Sheriff's Office to purchase noise-flash diversionary devices to have a sufficient inventory to meet department needs. With that in mind, the Sheriff's Office intends to spend approximately \$3,000 from the Sheriff's existing FY 24/25 budget to purchase replacement equipment from this category that is at or near expiration.

#### **Chemical agents containing tear gas or OC, excluding standard, service-issued handheld pepper spray.**

- The Sheriff's Office maintains several types of chemical agents which are less-lethal tools used to compel violent/armed and barricaded suspects to comply when circumstances are too hazardous for deputies to approach them. Chemical agents may also be used against members of riotous crowds to defend against a threat to life or serious bodily injury, or to bring an objectively dangerous and unlawful situation safely and effectively under control. The Sheriff's Office currently has 69 canisters containing chemical agents, of which 23 are expired. We also have 12 pepperball launchers and approximately 4,800 rounds of pepperball munitions.
- Usage
  - Chemical agents were used one time during the specified period, other than training. The incident involved the use of a pepperball launcher against a confrontational/non-compliant individual.
- Expenses related to this equipment
  - On April 26, 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved Sheriff's Office Policy 709 on Military Equipment which allows for the Sheriff's Office to purchase chemical agents as needed to meet department needs. \$2,180 was subsequently allocated from the Sheriff's FY 23/24 asset forfeiture funds to purchase of chemical agents that were received in 2023.
  - \$2,488 of FY 23/24 asset forfeiture funds were used for chemical agent instructor training during 2023. There were no additional training costs as the training for this equipment is incorporated into existing SWAT team, Tactical Response Team, and Emergency Response Team training.

- There were no complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.
- There is no intent to seek additional equipment in this category.

**Taser Shockwave, microwave weapons, water cannons, and the Long-Range Acoustic Device (LRAD).**

- The Sheriff's Office does not possess any equipment in this category, nor is there any intent to seek any.

**The following projectile launch platforms and their associated munitions: 40mm projectile launchers, "bean bag," rubber bullet, and specialty impact munition (SIM) weapons.**

- The Sheriff's Office currently has 40 40mm launchers, approximately 280 40mm impact sponge rounds, approximately 160 sponge rounds containing chemical agents, of which 39 are expired, and approximately 206 40mm projectiles containing 60 caliber rubber balls. The Sheriff's Office also has 113 less-lethal shotguns and approximately 2,000 super-sock bean bag rounds. These are less lethal tools designed to be used from a distance in order to compel potentially violent suspects to cease dangerous actions and/or comply with arrest.
- The Sheriff's Office also has 30 simunition handguns, 55 simunition rifle conversion bolts, and approximately 11,000 rounds of simunition marking rounds. This equipment is not used for law enforcement purposes as it is designed for training purposes.
- Usage:
  - 10 times a 40mm launcher was pointed at a suspect
  - 2 times a 40mm launcher was fired at a suspect
  - 10 times a less-lethal bean bag shotgun was pointed at a suspect.
  - A less-lethal bean bag shotgun was not fired at a suspect.
- Expenses related to this equipment
  - On April 26, 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved Sheriff's Office Policy 709 on Military Equipment which allows for the Sheriff's Office to purchase munitions as needed to meet department needs.
    - \$3,759 of FY 23/24 asset forfeiture funds were subsequently used to purchase 40mm impact sponge rounds. The munitions were received during 2023.
    - \$16,400 was allocated from the Sheriff's existing FY 23/24 budget to purchase 12 gauge bean bag rounds. This order was received in 2023.
  - On December 13, 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved the use of \$21,854 from FY 23/24 state asset forfeiture funds for the purchase of 8 Defense Technology 40mm launchers. The new launchers were received in 2023 and issued to the SWAT team and specialized teams who support patrol and investigative operations.
  - There were no costs associated with existing equipment.

- There were no costs associated with training as the training for this equipment was incorporated into other existing training, range qualifications, etc.
- There were no complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.
- There is no intent to seek additional equipment in this category.

**Any other equipment as determined by a governing body or a state agency to require additional oversight.**

- The Board of Supervisors has not identified any additional items requiring oversight.