



Kern County Sheriff's Office  
Military Equipment Annual Report 2024  
March 14, 2025

On December 13, 2022, the Kern County Board of Supervisors adopted Kern County Ordinance G-9185 under 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 use "military equipment."

Ordinance G-9185 requires the Sheriff's Office to obtain Board of Supervisors approval before taking specific 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 G-9185, 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 public and officer safety. The Board of Supervisors approved Sheriff's Office Military Equipment Use Policy J-4000, which allows the Sheriff's Office to purchase military equipment items outlined in this policy as needed to meet department needs.

The Sheriff's Office will make each annual military equipment report publicly available on its website as long as the equipment is in use. Additionally, a community engagement meeting will be held at least 30 days after the report is posted on the website. Additionally, there will be a notification on the Sheriff's Office website of when the community engagement meeting will be held. The report will include the following information for the previous calendar year:

1. A summary of how the military equipment was used and the purpose of 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, including acquisition, personnel, training, transportation, maintenance, storage, upgrade, and other ongoing costs, and from what source funds will be provided for the military equipment in the calendar year following submission of the annual military equipment report.
5. The quantity possessed for each type of military equipment.
6. If the KCSO intends to acquire additional military equipment in the next year, the quantity sought for each type of military equipment.
7. Within 30 days of submitting and publicly releasing an annual military equipment report, the KCSO shall hold at least one well-publicized and conveniently located community engagement meeting, at which the general public may discuss and ask questions, regarding the annual military equipment report and KCSO's funding, acquisition, or use of military equipment.

As this ordinance was adopted on December 13, 2022, this report shall cover the period from October 1, 2023, through December 31, 2024. Initially, this report was only to cover

until October 1, 2024; however, with permission from the County Council, this report will cover until December 31, 2024.

### **Robots (Unmanned, Remotely Piloted, Powered Ground Vehicles)**

- The Sheriff's Office currently has nine (9) unmanned ground vehicles (robots), but four (4) are obsolete or damaged to the point they are no longer used. This equipment is utilized by the Sheriff's Office Bomb Squad and Special Weapons and Tactics (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
  - 11 times for community events/demonstrations.
  - Five (5) time for calls for service related to SWAT operations.
  - One (1) time for calls for service related to explosives/ordnance.
- Equipment Costs
  - There were no new costs related to this equipment.
  - There were no training costs as the training for this equipment is incorporated into existing Bomb Squad and SWAT team training.
- There were no personnel complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no claims to the Civil Litigation Unit regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.
- The Sheriff's Office intends to continue participating in the Law Enforcement military equipment surplus "1033 Program" and specifically seek out additional military surplus robots to improve the existing inventory utilized by the Sheriff's Office Bomb Squad. Military surplus items, such as unmanned, remotely piloted, powered ground vehicles, are provided for law enforcement at no cost to our agency. In addition, the existing inoperable "1033 Program" military surplus robots will be returned to the federal government over the next year.

### **Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS)**

- The Sheriff's Office currently has 19 unmanned aircraft systems (UAS). This equipment is utilized by the Sheriff's Bomb Squad 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 for search and rescue operations to assist personnel in rescuing individuals in dangerous conditions and locating missing people. 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
  - 13 times for crime scene documentation.
  - Two (2) times for calls for service related to SWAT Operations.
  - 26 times for calls for service in a patrol setting.
  - Six (6) times for search and rescue operations.
  - Four (4) times for assisting allied agencies.
- Equipment Costs
  - Approximately \$19,775 was used to purchase six (6) drones (UAS) for 2023-2024 fiscal year (FY).
  - \$294 was spent to replace a drone that was shot by a suspect during a SWAT operation.
  - Approximately \$2,376 was used from 2023-2024 FY budget to purchase accessories such as anti-collision strobe lights, memory cards, propellers, and batteries.
  - One (1) Deputy attended a UAS Pilot Indoor Operations Training Course, total cost, \$1,133.80
  - One (1) Deputy attended an UAS Basic Crime and Accident Scene Mapping training course, total cost, \$1,852.16.
  - One (1) Deputy attended the UAS Manager course, a total cost of \$175.00.
- There were no personnel complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no claims to the Civil Litigation Unit regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.
- The Sheriff's Office intends to purchase additional unmanned aerial systems from the existing 2024-2025 FY. The additional equipment will be purchased specifically for the Lerdo Jail Facilities to increase operational capabilities. The additional equipment purchased will be provided in the 2025 Military Equipment Annual Report.

### **Armored Vehicles**

- The Sheriff's Office has two (2) Lenco armored vehicles. These vehicles are 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
  - 16 times for community events/demonstrations.
  - Six (6) times for mutual aid requests from other local law enforcement agencies to assist with search warrants or barricaded subjects.

- Seven (7) times for barricaded subjects, high-risk search warrants/operations.
  - Three (3) times as a standby react team for large, populated events.
- Equipment Costs
  - Approximately \$2684 was spent on service, repairs, and fuel for both Lenco Bearcats.
  - There were no training costs as the training for this equipment is incorporated into the existing SWAT team training.
- There were no personnel complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no claims to the Civil Litigation Unit regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.
- The Sheriff's Office purchased an additional Lenco Bearcat G3 for approximately \$402,900 during 2023-2024 FY. The purchase of this armored vehicle is needed to replace the Lenco Bearcat G2 purchased in 2007. This vehicle is nearing the end of its expected life span and needs replacement to improve maintenance and reliability issues. The current build time for the new Lenco Bearcat G3 is over one (1) year, and the Sheriff's Office is still waiting for it to be built and delivered.

#### **NIJ Level IV Armored Caterpillar (CAT) Multi-Terrain Loader (The ROOK)**

- The Sheriff's Office has one (1) 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 shield, hydraulic breaching ram, a grapple claw, and a vehicle extraction tool. The ROOK may be utilized during SWAT or Bomb Unit deployments when there is a need for its defensive ballistic protection, rescue platform, and 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
  - One (1) time for mutual aid requests from other local law enforcement agencies to assist with search warrants or barricaded suspects.
  - Six (6) times for barricaded subjects or high-risk search warrants.
- Equipment Costs
  - Approximately \$681.00 was spent on service, repairs and fuel The Rook.
  - There were no training costs as the training for this equipment is incorporated into the existing SWAT team training.
- There was one claim made to the Civil Litigation Unit claiming damages to a vehicle that was moved by the Rook during a SWAT callout.<sup>1</sup>
- There were no personnel complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.

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<sup>1</sup> Details related to the civil claim for damages caused by The Rook during a SWAT callout can be reviewed under case number 2024-00030008.

- 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**

- The Sheriff's Office utilizes three (3) command and control vehicles, including the Bomb Squad response vehicle, the Crisis Negotiations Team vehicle, and the SWAT equipment vehicle. These vehicles are deployed during critical incidents, search and rescue operations, and pre-staged events to transport specialized equipment, provide a mobile office, shelter, and access to Sheriff's Office computer systems.
- Usage
  - Bomb Squad Response Vehicle
    - Eleven (11) times for community events/demonstrations.
    - Thirty-One (31) times for calls related to explosives/ordnance.
    - Five (5) times for SWAT callouts related to barricaded subjects/high-risk search warrants or operations.
  - Crisis Negotiations Team Vehicle
    - Seven (7) times for community events/demonstrations.
    - Five (5) times to assist SWAT with barricaded subjects/high-risk search warrants or operations.
  - SWAT Equipment Vehicle
    - The vehicle was deployed to one (1) SWAT-related incident.
  - Pull Behind Command Post Trailer.
    - This vehicle was purchased during the 2023-2024 FY for approximately \$137,417.00. This vehicle was received during the 2024-2025 FY.
- Equipment Costs
  - There were no new costs related to this equipment.
  - Approximately \$9,500 was spent on service, repairs, and fuel for all command and control vehicles.
- There were no personnel complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no claims to the Civil Litigation Unit regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.

### **40 MM Launchers and Rounds**

- The Sheriff's Office currently has 80 40mm single-launchers, seven (7) 40mm multi-launchers, 775 exact impact 40mm rounds, and 72 direct impact OC rounds. The Sheriff's Office also has 68 Ferret 40mm liquid CS rounds, 70 Ferret 40mm powder OC rounds, ten (10) 40mm CS muzzle blast rounds, and 81 40mm multiple wooden baton rounds. These launchers are less lethal tools designed to be used from a distance to compel potentially violent suspects to cease dangerous actions and/or comply with arrest.

- Usage
  - Eight (8) times a 40mm launcher was fired at a suspect.
  - Two (2) times a 40mm chemical agent round was deployed during a SWAT operation.
- Equipment Costs
  - Four (4) deputies attended Less Lethal Instructor course, refer to “Less Lethal Launchers and Munitions” section for training costs.
  - SERT spent \$3,496.62 dollars on replenishing inventory of 40mm Exact Impact Sponge munitions.
- There were no personnel complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no claims to the Civil Litigation Unit regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.

#### **Less Lethal Launchers and Munitions**

- The Sheriff's Office currently has 48 FN 303 launchers, thirty-five (35) FTC PepperBall launchers, and three (3) PepperBall Custom Carbines. The Sheriff's Office also has 135 FN 303 indelible yellow paint projectiles, 1850 FN 303 Pava/OC projectiles, 1305 FN 303 clear impact projectiles, 1902 PepperBall inert projectiles, 7850 PepperBall live projectiles, and 3000 PepperBall Live-X projectiles. These launchers are less lethal tools designed to be used from a distance to compel potentially violent suspects to cease dangerous actions and/or comply with arrest.
- Usage
  - 12 times a FN 303 less lethal launcher was fired at a suspect.
- Equipment Costs
  - Approximately \$1,922.80 dollars was spent on FN 303 PAVA/OC Projectile rounds.
  - Approximately \$775.00 dollars was spent on FN 303 Clear Impact rounds.
  - 13 Detention Deputies attended a PepperBall Instructor School, totaling \$4,000.00 dollars.
  - Four (4) Deputies attended a Less Lethal Instructor Course, totaling \$7,883.45.
- There were no personnel complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no claims to the Civil Litigation Unit regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.
- The Sheriff's Office SWAT and SERT teams intend to purchase additional less lethal launchers and munitions from the 2024-2025 FY to meet needed inventory requirements. The actual number of lethal launchers and munitions purchased will be provided in the 2024-2025 Military Equipment Annual Report.



**Grenade Launching Cups**

- The Sheriff's Office currently has 17 grenade launching cups. Grenade launching cups are devices designed to attach to the muzzle of a shotgun. They are used to deploy various types of less lethal or special-purpose munitions during crowd control, riot control, and other situations where less lethal force is required.
- Usage
  - There were no instances of a grenade launching cup utilized during this period.
- Equipment Costs
  - There were no new costs related to this equipment.
  - There were no training costs as the training for this equipment is incorporated into existing SWAT team training.
- There were no personnel complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no claims to the Civil Litigation Unit 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.

**Distraction Devices (Noise Flash Diversionary Devices)**

- The Sheriff's Office SWAT and SERT teams currently have 31 low-roll reloadable body distraction devices, 26 multi-port reloadable body distraction devices, 78 distraction device 12-gram reloads, and 19 Low Roll Distraction Device Reloadable Training Body. Distraction devices produce a loud "bang" and white light to cause short-term physiological/psychological sensory overload. SWAT and SERT teams utilize distraction devices to provide a tactical advantage during critical incidents such as high-risk search warrants, arrests of armed and violent subjects, and hostage rescues.
- Usage
  - Three (3) instances, a noise flash diversionary device was used during the service of a high-risk search warrant by SWAT.
- Equipment Costs
  - SERT spent approximately \$1609.00 on NFDD reloads.
  - SWAT spent approximately \$1642.00 on NFDD reloads.
  - There were no training costs as the training for this equipment is incorporated into existing SWAT and SERT team training.
- There were no personnel complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no claims to the Civil Litigation Unit regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.
- The Sheriff's Office SWAT and SERT teams intend to purchase additional distraction devices from the existing 2024-2025 fiscal budget to meet needed



inventory requirements. The actual number of distraction devices purchased will be provided in the 2025 Military Equipment Annual Report.

**Rifles**

- The Sheriff's Office currently has 377 .223 caliber rifles and nine (9) .308 caliber rifles. These are precision weapons intended to address a deadly threat with more accuracy from a greater distance than a handgun, such as an encounter with an armed barricaded suspect. They also provide greater penetration of soft body armor than a handgun.
- Usage
  - Two (2) times a .223 rifle was fired at a suspect during this period.
- Equipment Costs
  - The Sheriff's Office purchased 75 Colt M-4 Carbine rifles this fiscal year, totaling \$86,706.43.
- There were no personnel complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no claims to the Civil Litigation Unit regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.

**Chemical Agent and Smoke Canisters**

- The Sheriff's Office maintains several types of chemical agents and smoke canisters, 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 and smoke canisters may also be used against members of riotous crowds and jail-related riots 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 approximately 300 expired chemical agents and smoke canisters that will be removed from inventory and only utilized for training purposes.
- Usage
  - There were two (2) instances of chemical agents or smoke canisters being utilized during this specific period.
- Equipment Costs
  - SWAT spent \$3,094.70 on replacing their inventory of chemical agents.
  - SERT spent \$605.50 on replacing their inventory of chemical agents.
  - There were no training costs as the training for this equipment is incorporated into existing SWAT and SERT team training.
- There were no personnel complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no claims to the Civil Litigation Unit regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.

- The Sheriff's Office SWAT and SERT teams intend to purchase additional chemical agents and smoke canisters from the existing 2024-2025 FY to meet needed inventory requirements. The actual number of chemical agents and smoke canisters purchased will be provided in the 2025 Military Equipment Annual Report.

### **Explosive Breaching Tools**

- The Sheriff's Office has an inventory of specialized 12-gauge rounds and explosive materials utilized to breach doors, windows, and other locking components. This equipment is used by the Bomb Squad and SWAT team to breach doors, walls, and/or windows to provide a tactical advantage quickly and effectively during critical incidents.
- Usage
  - One (1) incident which used a BK-90 12-gauge round from a ground robot platform during a search of a residence for booby traps.
  - There were no instances of explosive breaching materials being utilized during this period.
- Equipment Costs
  - There were no new costs related to this equipment.
  - There were no training costs as the training for this equipment is incorporated into existing Bomb Squad and SWAT team training.
- There were no personnel complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no claims to the Civil Litigation Unit regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.
- The Sheriff's Office Bomb Squad intends to purchase additional explosive breaching tools from the 2024-2025 FY to meet the needed inventory requirements. The actual number of explosive breaching tools purchased will be provided in the 2024-2025 Military Equipment Annual Report.

### **Bell OH-58+**

- The Sheriff's Office returned both OH-58A+ helicopters to the federal government over the past year.
  - N397E was returned to OES on December 13, 2023, and was re-assigned to the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office for spare parts. It did not fly at all during 2023.
  - N497E was returned to OES on February 13, 2024, and was re-assigned to the Sacramento Police Department for spare parts. The Sheriff's Office flew this helicopter 3.1 hours in 2024.
- Usage
  - 3.1 total flight hours (for only N497E Bell OH-58A+; N397E not in use)
- Equipment Costs
  - There were no new costs related to this equipment.

- There were no additional training costs for these helicopters.
- There were no personnel complaints received regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no claims to the Civil Litigation Unit regarding the use of this equipment.
- There were no discoveries of any inappropriate use of this equipment.
- The Sheriff's Office does not intend to continue participating in the Law Enforcement military equipment surplus "1033 Program" Military surplus items as it relates to aircraft.

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

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