

MEMORANDUM

TO: California City Councils, City Attorneys, County Boards of Supervisors, County Counsels

FROM: ACLU of Northern California & American Friends Service Committee

DATE: October 20, 2025

SUBJECT: AB 481 Requirements and Implementation Regarding Military Equipment

This memorandum is designed to support local governments to achieve ongoing compliance with California's Military Equipment Acquisition, Funding, and Use law (passed as Assembly Bill 481 in 2021). This memo offers guidance, clarification, and best practices with focus on AB 481's requirements for (1) reporting on military equipment, including assault weapons, and (2) community engagement meetings.

All law enforcement agencies in the state – including for cities, counties, schools, transit agencies, and park districts – are covered by AB 481. The law sets specific procedures that local governing bodies must follow to approve even existing military equipment, funding, and/or use. AB 481 also mandates procedures for *new* military equipment, requires annual public reports on the funding and *use* of military equipment, review of military equipment reports and policies by elected officials, and mandates community meetings to ensure public transparency and participation.

Since AB 481 went into effect, agencies have ranged in their compliance with the law, with many approving their existing military equipment in 2022. Some governing bodies have taken seriously their responsibilities, while others have rubber stamped these policies and reports with no comment. Some agencies have proactively implemented AB 481's requirement to engage communities, while others have failed to fulfill the law's mandate to do so. As a result, AB 481's goals and the public have been frustrated by noncompliance, obstacles to accessing information and meaningful discussion, and deceptive reporting about the use of military equipment.

The local governing body is the first level of accountability if a law enforcement agency is non-compliant. AB 481 requires policy approval from the local body **before** any law enforcement agency can fund, acquire, or – on an annual basis – continue to use military equipment. Upon approval, annual reporting and community engagement on military equipment is required.

I. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER AB 481

Regular written and public reporting is required under AB 481. Any acquisition or funding of covered military equipment must also have been documented in a written policy and approved by the local governing body.¹

AB 481 does not define “use” of military equipment. The preamble and purpose of AB 481 make clear that its policy requirement is not limited only to “use” of equipment. Rather, AB 481 governs broad categories of militarization of law enforcement including “funding, acquisition, or use”; “purchase, use, and reporting”; and “acquisition...and [] deployment.”² This includes the deployment of military equipment, not only firing of weapons. Compliant policies and reporting under AB 481 must cover all areas of military equipment.

AB 481’s legislative history and purpose make clear that the statute is addressing militarization of law enforcement with a broad, plain meaning of “use.”³ Therefore, “use” must encompass all types of usage including, but not limited to: carrying, concealment, brandishing, exhibiting, and/or pointing military weapons. Even though brandishing is not the same as a weapon’s discharge, both are types of usage that are still subject to AB 481 policy and reporting requirements. Weapons use *restrictions* must be clearly documented in an AB 481 policy and the law enforcement agency should clarify and disaggregate what types of uses are documented in the report.

Contrary to AB 481’s intent, some law enforcement agencies define “use” of assault rifles or projectile launchers as only those times when they were fired or discharged in the field. Such a definition excludes even pointing a rifle at a person, which the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) states should be governed by use of force policy and that each instance of pointing a weapon should be reported.⁴ Some law enforcement agencies only report “operational use” of the weapons. For example, Los Angeles PD excludes from reporting “deployment” of military weapons, which it defines as “public display of any covered equipment.”⁵ Multiple agencies that almost certainly have deployed officers with patrol rifles and/or projectile launchers did not report these uses.⁶

Conversely, the Long Beach Police Department reports the number of “deployments, not use” as well as the number of “uses” (e.g., for launchers and rifles, the number of times fired) for each type of military equipment.⁷ Santa Ana PD reports on deployments of rifles and/or projectile launchers, not only when they are fired or used in a use of force.⁸ Oakland PD publishes a list of when officers deployed with their patrol rifles but did not fire them.⁹ San Diego PD defines “Show of Force Incidents” as “deploying with a firearm at an incident, but not actually pointing it at a person” and reports the number of

these. In addition, San Diego PD reports the number of incidents “pointing a firearm at a person to gain compliance.”¹⁰

Furthermore, despite the statute’s explicit inclusion of assault weapons as military equipment, some law enforcement agencies have excluded them entirely. Many law enforcement agencies have owned assault rifles for years and they are among the police’s most militarized type of weaponry, as perceived by community members. AB 481 explicitly lists “specialized firearms” less than .50 caliber “including assault weapons” as military equipment, for which law enforcement agencies must create use policies and report on use.¹¹ Despite their coverage under AB 481, the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) has documented the exclusion of assault rifles and found that approximately half of all 58 county sheriffs exclude some or all assault rifles from their AB 481 military equipment use reports.¹² Some of these agencies already published policies for the use of patrol rifles (typically AR-15-style rifles) in their policy manuals, before the passage of AB481. Most of the county sheriffs that exclude assault rifles from military equipment policies cannot claim they are standard issue weapons, because they have many more sworn officers than they have rifles.¹³ All law enforcement agencies must comply with the law by publishing AB 481 policies and reports that include assault rifles. Local governing bodies must not approve any policy or report that is noncompliant.

Thus, AB 481’s written policy and reporting requirements are not limited to only use but should address all aspects of military equipment. AB 481 policies are most effective when incorporating other state and local requirements on covered weapons including chemical agents and kinetic energy weapons restrictions.¹⁴

A. Best Practices for Reporting Use of Military Equipment

- Register in the annual report uses of firearms and less-lethal launchers that distinguish between firing, pointing and displaying (without pointing) the weapon, using the standard of San Diego PD.
- Use or establish software that documents use of military equipment at the time of deployment, facilitating detailed and accurate end-of-year reporting.
- Clearly show the number of uses for each type (model) of military equipment in a single chart or page.
- Define the calendar period covered by the annual report (e.g., Jan. 1-Dec. 31).
- Include geographic and demographic information on the use of military equipment.¹⁵
- Report monthly on uses of military equipment.¹⁶
- Include a list of incidents in which military equipment was used; this could be in a supplemental spreadsheet posted with the report.¹⁷

- Publish all AB 481 annual reports and military equipment policy on a single web page that is clearly identifiable from the agency's home page.
- Maintain prior-year annual reports on military equipment use on the agency's page (required by AB 481).
- Clearly document any uses not authorized or limited under the policy (required by AB 481).
- Law enforcement agencies should include all assault weapons, as defined by California law, in their published AB 481 equipment inventories, together with policies for authorized deployment, costs for acquisition, maintenance, repairs, training and personnel. These must include model numbers, quantities, expected lifespans, and manufacturer product descriptions.
- Agencies should also include all other specialized firearms, including sniper rifles, .50 caliber rifles, submachine and machine-guns, in their AB 481 equipment inventories, along with use policies as defined by AB 481.

II. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MEETINGS

Every local government with military equipment is required to host at least one community meeting per year that provides a real opportunity for public engagement. These community meetings must take place *after* the law enforcement agency publishes its annual military equipment use report and *within 30 days* of such publication.¹⁸ The obligations to host public community meetings are listed in separate sections for the governing body of a locality and the local law enforcement agency. Thus, they are separate responsibilities: one of the local governing body and the other of the law enforcement agency receiving approval. A meeting held by the local governing body (e.g., city council) does not replace or meet the requirement for the local law enforcement agency to itself host a community engagement meeting on AB 481.

AB 481 emphasizes the importance of public transparency and public input throughout its text. A military equipment use policy under AB 481 must be reviewed and approved by the local governing body at a meeting subject to the Brown Act and other open meeting laws.¹⁹ This review by the governing body should *not* be placed on its consent calendar, which undermines meaningful review and comment by both the public and elected officials, and it should occur *after* the annual community engagement meetings on military equipment hosted by the agency, to offer elected officials the benefit of public input and discussion not limited by Brown Act requirements.

Separately, “[w]ithin 30 days of submitting and publicly releasing an annual military equipment report pursuant to this section, the **law enforcement agency** shall hold at least

one” community engagement meeting.²⁰ AB 481 specifies that the community meeting must be “well-publicized and conveniently located,” at which the “general public may discuss and ask questions regarding the annual military equipment report and the law enforcement agency’s funding, acquisition, or use of military equipment.”²¹ The law enforcement agency is required to hold a community meeting that coincides with its obligation to submit an annual AB 481 report. This is not an obligation by the local governing body and cannot be replaced with one. Annual reporting, posted use policies including inventories, and community engagement meetings are the minimum requirement of law enforcement agencies under AB 481.²²

Implementation across the state of AB 481’s requirement for community engagement meetings has varied widely. In many jurisdictions, agencies have barely publicized meetings, only posting them on hard-to-find pages of their web site. In some, they have not held community meetings at all.²³ Some agencies have held community meetings, but before publicly posting the annual report.²⁴ Other agencies have made community questions and comments impossible in public meetings.²⁵

Some agencies have made good-faith efforts to engage the community. For example, Alameda County Sheriff’s Office and Oakland PD have shared draft versions of their annual reports with AFSC and police commission members, respectively, for feedback before issuing public versions.²⁶

The annual report is critical to transparency of actual military weapons use, as well as determining whether it complies with the written use policy and whether the use policy meets the law’s standards.²⁷ It is also necessary for a meaningful community engagement meeting with the public’s ability to know and to provide input on military equipment use, funding, or acquisition.

A. Best Practices for AB481 Community Engagement Meetings

- Agencies publicize community engagement meetings at least two weeks in advance on all social media channels, in print and broadcast media, through email lists, and by notifying key constituencies, including community organizations, advocacy groups, and governing body members. Notification should include a link to the annual report and military equipment policy.
- Outreach should equitably target all demographics in the community with a goal to achieve turnout that is representative of the jurisdiction including, but not limited to: age, race, socioeconomic status, gender identity, etc.
- Meetings are in community-accessible locations (*not* in police stations), with disability access and language interpretation available for those who may need it.

- Presentations about military equipment are comprehensive but not overly technical, and do not take up a majority of meeting time.
- Agencies approach the meetings with openness, as a place for meaningful community input, not only to answer technical questions or defend agency choices.
- The public should have methods to submit questions or comments to the law enforcement agency and the local governing body. These should be documented as part of the meeting record.
- If there is poor attendance, technical problems, or the jurisdiction is large, hold more than one meeting before the governing body considers the annual report.
- Agencies record meetings and post them on their web sites afterward.
- Governing body consideration of the annual report is held *after* any community meetings.
- Meeting and meeting materials are accessible for those that require language translation, ASL interpretation, etc.
- Agencies invite local governing body officials, and partner with them on outreach and publicity to the community.
- Agencies avoid or limit the physical presence of military equipment at the meeting.

ANNEX: PLAIN LANGUAGE AND LEGISLATIVE INTENT OF AB 481

AB 481 was passed in 2021 and applies to all California law enforcement agencies including California Highway Patrol, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, sheriff departments, and police departments. The findings of AB 481 assert that the public has a right to know and to provide input on funding, acquisition, and use of military equipment by law enforcement.²⁸

Military weapons use has increased the number of police killings and uses of force, have been used disparately on people of color, and may diminish public perceptions of police.²⁹ AB 481 was introduced with a goal to rebuild trust between communities and law enforcement through transparency, fiscal accountability, and policy/training safeguards on military equipment use in our communities.³⁰

AB 481 is mandatory and creates legal obligations for local law enforcement agencies and governing bodies across the state. These are spelled out in a California Department of Justice bulletin issued to all law enforcement agencies in October 2024.³¹ AB 481 creates a mandatory procedure for local law enforcement prior to the use, funding, and/or acquisition of military weapons. AB 481 defines “military equipment” with fifteen (15) categories including “firearms of .50 caliber or greater,” assault rifles, chemical agents, impact projectiles, flash bang devices, robots and drones, armored vehicles, sound cannons, and explosives for breaching doors.³² The legislature further clarified that the weapons covered under AB 481 were not meant to be limited to specific product names, but instead include all weapons regardless of brand or manufacturer.³³ The legislature continues to clarify that all military weapons are subject to AB 481’s requirements.³⁴

a. Written Policy

i. Funding

Funding includes acquisition cost, maintenance costs, training and personnel costs and associated costs of each type of equipment, as well as the sources of funding.³⁵

ii. Acquisition

Acquisition covers the method(s) by which the agency came into possession of the equipment including, but not limited to, gifts, purchases, and loans, as well as use by outside agencies collaborating with the law enforcement agency within its jurisdiction (i.e., in mutual aid). As outlined in the legislative history, AB 481 covers any of the following by a law enforcement agency:

- a) Requesting military equipment made available to law enforcement under Federal law;

- b) Seeking funds for military equipment, as specified;
- c) Acquiring military equipment either permanently or temporarily, including by borrowing or leasing;
- d) Collaborating with another law enforcement agency to deploy military equipment in the governing body's jurisdiction;
- e) Using any new or existing military equipment without approval under these provisions;
- f) Soliciting or responding to a proposal, agreeing with any other person or entity to seek funds for, apply to receive, acquire, use, or collaborate in the use of, military equipment; and
- g) Acquiring military equipment through any other means.³⁶

iii. Policy Requirements

AB 481 sets out *minimum* requirements for a written military equipment use policy to include:

- a. A description of each type of military equipment, including:
 - i. Quantity for each type of equipment
 - ii. Capabilities for each type of equipment
 - iii. Expected lifespan for each type of equipment
- b. Purpose and authorized uses of each type of equipment;
- c. Initial and estimated annual costs for each type of equipment;
- d. Legal and procedural rules that govern each type of equipment;
- e. Training required before an officer can use each type of equipment;
- f. Mechanisms to ensure compliance with the use policy; and
- g. Process for the public to make complaints or ask questions about the use policy.³⁷

AB 481 requires local governing body approval of use policies ***prior*** to military weapons use, acquisition, and funding. "The governing body shall only approve a military equipment use policy pursuant to this chapter if it determines all of the following:

- (A) The military equipment is necessary because there is no reasonable alternative that can achieve the same objective of officer and civilian safety.
- (B) The proposed military equipment use policy will safeguard the public's welfare, safety, civil rights, and civil liberties.

(C) If purchasing the equipment, the equipment is reasonably cost effective compared to available alternatives that can achieve the same objective of officer and civilian safety.

(D) Prior military equipment use complied with the military equipment use policy that was in effect at the time, or if prior uses did not comply with the accompanying military equipment use policy, corrective action has been taken to remedy nonconforming uses and ensure future compliance.”³⁸

Any approval shall be reviewed annually and a renewal must be voted upon by the governing body each time.³⁹ A renewal shall be disapproved or require modifications if the equipment use policy or the agency’s use is noncompliant.⁴⁰

b. Annual reports

Furthermore, AB 481 details that the *law enforcement agency* that receives approval for military weapons use, funding, and/or acquisitions must produce an annual report and host a “community engagement meeting” about the annual report.⁴¹ This report must be submitted and approved by the local governing body at a public meeting. As discussed above, the community engagement meeting requirement is separate from the requirement of the local governing body to hold regular public meetings for the use policy and of the annual report.

AB 481 specifies that each law enforcement agency must make a public report that *shall* include:

“(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 law enforcement agency intends to acquire additional military equipment in the next year, the quantity sought for each type of military equipment.”⁴²

These are the “*minimum*” requirements for annual AB 481 reporting.

AB 481 is mandatory and applies to all law enforcement agencies and governing bodies in California. Legal compliance is the minimum. Exceeding the minimum requirements further increases transparency and public accountability intended by AB 481's passage. This can include AB 481 reporting more frequently than the annual requirement, holding additional community engagement meetings, and providing longer public notice than is statutorily required.

A local governing body shall not approve a policy unless AB 481's specific requirements are met for each type of military equipment. The approval of any policy must be at a publicly noticed meeting with opportunities for the public to review and comment on the policy proposed. Upon approval, the law enforcement agency is required to make annual AB 481 reports publicly available and to hold at least one community engagement meeting annually. Any changes to AB 481 policy must go through the local governing body approval process. Any new funding, acquisition, or use of military weapons must go through the local governing body approval process. Even if the law enforcement agency seeks renewal of the same policy for the same weapons, the local governing body shall not approve unless the AB 481 reporting is compliant. The local governing body may direct its law enforcement agency to attend public meetings that it holds and to attend public meetings that a local commission may hold.

If both the law enforcement agency and local governing body fail to comply with AB 481, its locality cannot legally use any military weapons. The locality will also be exposed to liability for failure to comply with state law and for unauthorized military weapons use, funding, or acquisition during noncompliance.

¹ See Annex (pp. 7-10) on policy requirements.

² See Assem. Bill No. 481 (2021-2022 Reg. Sess.) (hereafter "AB 481") § 1, subds. (a)-(b); Gov. Code, § 7075. AB 481 (full bill language available at

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB481) (as of Oct. 10, 2025)) is codified at Cal. Government Code § 7070 *et seq.* All statutory citations in this Memorandum and Annex are to the Government Code unless otherwise noted.

³ The statute does not define or limit the word "use" as it does in other law enforcement regulations, including use of force laws.

⁴ See Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training, *POST Use of Force Standards and Guidelines: 2021* <https://post.ca.gov/Portals/0/post_docs/publications/Use_Of_Force_Standards_Guidelines.pdf> (as of Oct. 7, 2025).

⁵ Los Angeles Chief of Police, Intradepartmental Correspondence, *California Assembly Bill 481 Annual Equipment Report (October, 8, 2024)* at p. 4 <https://www.lapdpolicecom.lacity.org/101524/BPC_24-261.pdf> (as of Oct. 7, 2025).

⁶ See, e.g., Kern County Sheriff's Office, *Military Equipment Annual Report 2024* (Mar. 14, 2025) <https://www.kernsheriff.org/KCSO_Document/2024_Military_Equipment_Annual_Report.pdf> (as of Oct. 7, 2025).

⁷ See Long Beach Police Department, *Assembly Bill 481 Military Equipment Use Annual Report 2023*, at p. 4 <<https://www.longbeach.gov/globalassets/police/media-library/documents/about-the-lbpd/ab-481/2023-ab481-annual-report--final->> (as of Oct. 7, 2025).

⁸ See Santa Ana Police Department, *Annual Military Equipment Report: May 1, 2024 – April 30, 2025* <<https://public.powerdms.com/SAPDCA/tree/documents/1520651>> (as of Oct. 7, 2025).

⁹ See, e.g., Oakland Police Department, *Redacted – OPD Military Equipment Tracking Sheet (2024)*, available for download at <<https://www.oaklandca.gov/Public-Safety-Streets/Police/OPD-Policies-and-Resources/Militarized-Equipment-Documents>> (as of Oct. 7, 2025).

¹⁰ See, e.g., San Diego Police Department, *Annual Military Equipment Report 2024*, at p. 78 <<https://www.sandiego.gov/police/data-transparency/mandated-disclosures/ab481>> (as of Oct. 7, 2025).

¹¹ Section 7070, subdivision (c)(10) of AB 481 defines “military equipment” to include “[s]pecialized firearms and ammunition of less than .50 caliber, including assault weapons as defined in Sections 30510 and 30515 of the 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.” This provision incorporates by reference California’s statutory definition of assault weapons. It also excludes “standard issue service weapons” from such specialized firearms; officer sidearm pistols are not covered by the law.

¹² AFSC compared AB 481 inventories reported in AB 481 reports with responses to Public Records Act requests. County sheriffs with confirmed non-reporting of assault rifles include: Calaveras, Colusa, Contra Costa, Fresno, Humboldt, Imperial, Kings, Lassen, Madera, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Monterey, Napa, Nevada, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Cruz (inclusion will begin with the 2025 report), Sonoma, Stanislaus, Tulare, and Yolo.

¹³ For example, Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office has 700 sworn officers, but possesses 333 specialized and assault weapons, of which it lists only a portion in its AB 481 inventory. See Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff Webpage <<https://www.cocosheriff.org/join-our-team>> (as of Oct. 7, 2025); Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office Rifle Inventory (Sept. 2, 2025), available for download at <<https://www.muckrock.com/foi/contra-costa-county-3034/rifle-inventory-records-office-of-the-sheriff-contra-costa-county-190911/>> (as of Oct. 7, 2025); Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff, *GC 7070 Defined Equipment Report: January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024* <<https://www.cocosheriff.org/home/showpublisheddocument/722/638850559309634185>> (as of Oct. 7, 2025).

¹⁴ Assembly Bill No. 48 (2021-2022 Reg. Sess.) states that “kinetic energy projectiles and chemical agents shall not be used by any law enforcement agency to disperse any assembly, protest, or demonstration” unless listed exceptions are met, noting that this restriction “does not prevent a law enforcement agency from adopting more stringent policies.” Codified at Cal. Penal Code § 13652.

¹⁵ See, e.g., Sacramento Police Department, *Annual Military Equipment Use Report: May 1, 2024 – April 30, 2025*, at pp. 32-41 <https://www.cityofsacramento.gov/content/dam/portal/police/Transparency/Military-Use-Reports/2024-2025/2025_0616-AMEUR%202025%20Draft.pdf> (as of Oct. 8, 2025).

¹⁶ See, e.g., Richmond Police Department's Military Equipment Use Statistics <<https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/4706/Military-Equipment-Use-Statistics>> (as of Oct. 8, 2025), and past monthly reports by Oakland PD on armored vehicle deployments, available for download at <<https://www.oaklandca.gov/Public-Safety-Streets/Police/OPD-Data>> (as of Oct. 8, 2025).

¹⁷ See Oakland PD military equipment tracking sheets, available for download at <<https://www.oaklandca.gov/Public-Safety-Streets/Police/OPD-Policies-and-Resources/Militarized-Equipment-Documents>> (as of Oct. 8, 2025) and Richmond PD's Incident Summary Logs, available for download at <<https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/4706/Military-Equipment-Use-Statistics>> (as of Oct. 8, 2025).

¹⁸ § 7072, subd. (b).

¹⁹ § 7071.

²⁰ § 7072, subd. (b) (emphasis added). This also means the community meeting must be held after the report is created and made public. Community engagement prior is encouraged but does not meet the AB 481 requirement.

²¹ *Id.*

²² See, e.g., Richmond Police Department, *Agenda Report: AB 481 “Military Equipment Use” Annual Report* (May 7, 2024), at pp. 6-7 (listing *multiple* community engagement meetings on AB 481 in 2024) <<https://pub-richmond.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=53733>> (as of Oct. 8, 2025).

²³ This includes some rural county sheriffs that have not produced annual reports at all (Alpine, Del Norte, Humboldt, Mariposa, Modoc, Trinity, Toulumne, Siskiyou). Several departments that produced AB 481 reports have never held AB 481 community meetings, such as Berkeley PD and Fresno PD. (See Marek Warszawski, Opinion, *Police Military Equipment Requires Public Scrutiny. Fresno Fails Transparency Test*, The Fresno Bee (Apr. 13, 2025) <<https://amp.fresnobee.com/opinion/opn-columns-blogs/marek-warszawski/article303975366.html>> (as of Oct. 8, 2025).) San Francisco PD held a community engagement meeting, but only after it had acquired drones without obtaining governing body approval. In 2024, Los Angeles PD held a community engagement meeting via Zoom videoconferencing, consisting of a slide show of military equipment; the Zoom crashed, and not everyone re-joined, with insufficient time for community feedback. LAPD apologized and promised to reschedule. They did not.

²⁴ Pleasanton PD and Alameda County Sheriff’s Office in 2025 had not posted their report before the meeting. Chico PD held a community engagement meeting in 2022 after the city council had already approved military equipment; since community members protested this, Chico PD has held the community meeting before the annual report is acted on by the city council.

²⁵ In Los Angeles, LAPD held its first AB 481 community engagement meeting in 2024 via Zoom videoconferencing. Engaged stakeholders, such as the League of Women Voters, received only two days’ notice. Half of the meeting was devoted to a slide show; when the Zoom crashed, only a few people could re-connect. LAPD pledged to hold another meeting, but did not do so.

²⁶ Alameda County Sheriff’s Office and Alameda PD also held community meetings in large community rooms in a public library with A/V equipment. Los Angeles Sheriff Department publicized their 2025 community engagement Zoom meeting in county supervisors’ newsletters 10 days in advance and on the Department’s transparency webpage, available at <<https://lasd.org/transparency/>> (as of Oct. 8, 2025).

²⁷ See, e.g., City of Mountain View’s Annual Reports, which include “the use of military equipment, any complaints received, any internal audits or other information about violations of Policy 709, the cost of such use and other similar information.” Reports and information available at <<https://www.mountainview.gov/our-city/departments/police/transparency/assembly-bill-481>> (as of Oct. 8, 2025).

²⁸ AB 481, § 1.

²⁹ Senate Government and Finance Hearing on Assembly Bill 481 (July 8, 2021) (citing American Civil Liberties Union, *War Comes Home: The Excessive Militarization of American Policing* (June 23, 2014), a report on nationwide disparate impact of military equipment use on minority communities), at p. 4 (“The report found that the use of paramilitary weapons and tactics primarily impacted people of color; where 42% of people impacted by a SWAT deployment to execute a search warrant were Black and 12% were Latinx, which means that of the people impacted by military equipment use during deployments for warrants, at least 54% were minorities”), available for download at <https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billAnalysisClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB481> (as of Oct. 9, 2025); Casey Delehanty et al., *Militarization and Police Violence: The Case of the 1033 Program* (Apr. 2017) 4(2) Research & Politics <<https://doi.org/10.1177/2053168017712885>> (as of Oct. 9, 2025); Jonathan Mummolo, *Militarization Fails to Enhance Police Safety or Reduce Crime But May Harm Police Reputation* (Aug. 20, 2018) 115 Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) <<https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1805161115>> (as of Oct. 9, 2025).

³⁰ Assembly Public Safety Committee Hearing on Assembly Bill 481 (Apr. 27, 2021), Author’s Statement (“California’s local law enforcement agencies have acquired more military equipment than any other state over the last 30 years. Yet often, the public have little to no information about such acquisitions, which can cost local governments tens of millions of dollars. With troubling examples of this military equipment being used without clear protocol in recent years against peaceful demonstrators from Orange to Walnut Creek, it is time to reevaluate how law enforcement receives and implements war weapons in our communities. This

bill is about rebuilding community trust. Our streets in California are not war zones, and our citizens are not enemy combatants. Law enforcement in California are our partners in public safety, and the weapons and equipment they carry should reflect that reality.”), available for download at https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billAnalysisClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB481 (as of Oct. 9, 2025).

³¹ California Department of Justice – Division of Law Enforcement, Information Bulletin No. 2024-DLE-13, *Guidance for Preparing Assembly Bill 481 “Military Equipment” Use Policies and Annual Reports* (Oct. 10, 2024) (“AB 481 Supersedes Any Inconsistent City or County Provisions” (citing Cal. Gov’t Code § 7074)) <https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/media/2024-dle-13.pdf> (as of Oct. 9, 2025).

³² § 7070, subd. (c).

³³ Assem. Bill No. 2568 (2023-2024 Reg. Sess.) “[c]larifies that the definition of “military equipment’ . . . also includes long-range acoustic devices, acoustic hailing devices, and sound cannons rather than just the Long-Range Acoustic Device (LRAD) manufactured by the Genasys Corporation.” Assembly Committee Public Safety, Hearing on AB 2568 (March 19, 2024), available for download at https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billAnalysisClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240AB2546 (as of Oct. 10, 2025).

³⁴ *Id.* at Author’s Statement.

³⁵ See, e.g., Richmond Police Department, *Annual Military Equipment Report: Jan. 1, 2024 – Dec. 31, 2024*, at p. 14 (listing fiscal impacts of “acquisition” costs, “maintenance/replacement” costs, and “total cost”) <https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/72911/2024---AB481-Annual-Report> (as of Oct. 10, 2025).

³⁶ § 7071, subd. (a)(1).

³⁷ § 7070, subd. (d).

³⁸ § 7071, subd. (d)(1).

³⁹ *Id.*, subd. (e)(1).

⁴⁰ *Id.*, subd. (e)(2).

⁴¹ § 7072, subd. (b).

⁴² *Id.*, subds. (a)(1)-(6).