

**From:** Eric [REDACTED]  
**To:** -- City Clerk  
**Subject:** Public Comment for Item #13: FY23 Annual Military Equipment Use Report  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 1, 2023 9:42:56 PM

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Dear Mayor and Council Members,

Studies show that equipping police departments with military grade weapons and equipment does not reduce crime, nor does it increase officer safety  
(source: <https://abcnews.go.com/US/providing-police-military-gear-reduce-crime-protect-officers/story?id=74518923>).

**This means that we should remain very critical of our investments in military grade weapons. Why should we invest in something that does not help reduce crime or increase officer safety?**

When the Council adopted Ordinance No. 2818 N.C.S., they rightly expressed concern to invest in military grade weapons and equipment only where absolutely justified, when no better alternative exists.

**Why should we invest hundreds of thousands of dollars buying and maintaining military grade weapons & equipment when the data shows it is not effective in reducing crime, or increasing officer safety?** The report indicates very little use of the military grade weapons and equipment we have invested in. Our investments include purchasing these weapons, along with maintaining them and training officers to use them.

The staff report on page 5 indicates that our police used a 40 mm impact munition to break a window to gain access to a noncompliant driver. **The use of this military weapon is not advised in this situation** by several law enforcement agencies (including the Los Angeles Police Department 2021 Use of Force Tactics Directive), as the occupant within the vehicle is subject to impact by the force of such a munition (by the munition and the accompanying destruction/debris).

**Why was there such intense use of force against minorities?** The staff report indicates that the "subjects of the show of force were approximately 30% White, 35% Hispanic, 30% Black" The demographics of Petaluma are 75% White, 21% Hispanic and 1.3% Black.

As countless studies have shown, minority populations are much more likely to be subject to violence from police relative to their percentage in the population. Shockingly, Black people shot by police are more than twice as likely to be unarmed as compared to White people. If the explanation in this case is that so few people were subject to use of force by these weapons, why are we investing so much money buying and maintaining them if they are not effective AND not used?

**Please explain, what oversight has IntegrAssure provided on this 2023 Military Equipment Use Report and on our Ordinance No. 2818?** The staff report mentions that Petaluma hired IntegrAssure as our Independent Police Auditor, yet nowhere does the staff report explain whether they actually reviewed our use of force policy, or this 2023 report.

Thank you for your work on behalf of Petaluma.

Sincerely,

Eric Leland