From:	Lagunte, Richard (BOS)
To:	Young, Victor (BOS)
Subject:	FW: Supervisors: Item 24 on Sheriff"s Military Equipment, Feb. 11
Date:	Friday, February 7, 2025 10:56:12 AM

From: John Lindsay-Poland <JLindsay-Poland@afsc.org>
Sent: Friday, February 7, 2025 10:23 AM
To: Board of Supervisors (BOS) <board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org>; BOS-Supervisors <bos-supervisors@sfgov.org>; BOS-Legislative Aides <bos-legislative_aides@sfgov.org>; BOS-Operations <bos-operations@sfgov.org>
Cc: Goossen, Carolyn (PDR) <carolyn.goossen@sfgov.org>; Kingston, Tim (PDR) <tim.kingston@sfgov.org>; jfriedenbach@cohsf.org; mlyon01mlyon01@gmail.com; dlee@im4humanintegrity.org; Jennifer Tu <JTu@afsc.org>
Subject: Supervisors: Item 24 on Sheriff's Military Equipment, Feb. 11

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Dear Supervisors:

We are writing regarding Item 24 on your Board agenda on Tuesday, the Sheriff Department's Military Equipment Use Report.

1. The organizations signed below urge you to direct the Sheriff's Office to dispose of the eight submachine guns it owns. The Sheriff's Office does not train officers on these high-powered weapons and it has not assigned or deployed them for at least 10 years. They are not appropriate for San Francisco.

2. The Sheriff's Office is seeking approval to acquire 12 new Pepperball launchers and 1,200 munitions, weapons the Department has not previously owned (pp. 26-27 of Military Equipment Annual Report). These weapons launch chemical agents. which can be in the jail or on patrol, both as an anti-personnel weapon and to break glass. The policy for using this weapon includes the state law restrictions on using 'less lethal' weapons for crowd control, but it does NOT include prohibitions and other guidelines included in the manufacturers manual.

The launcher that SFSO proposed to acquire fires up to 160 rounds from a single magazine, on an AR-15-type platform.

These manufacturer guidelines in the product manual for the Pepperball VKS PRO launcher and munitions include:

- Never point or discharge your launcher at anything you do not intend to shoot
- ***Increasing the velocity of this product increases the risk of death or injury.*** (italics/bold added)
- Never discharge your launcher at the personal property of others.
- KEEP ALL PEPPERBALL PROJECTILES AND LAUNCHERS OUT OF THE SIGHT AND REACH OF CHILDREN.

However, the proposed uses for this weapon do not include these restrictions. Authorized uses in the proposed policy include making arrests ("criminal apprehensions"), an extremely wide range of situations, as well as operations at homes where a person is "resisting arrest." The latter could include people in mental health crises who do not represent a threat to others. The Sheriff's Office already has 50,000 "less lethal" munitions, according to the report (p. 22).

We strongly urge you to require the Sheriff's Office to incorporate stronger protections to prevent harms from the use of these weapons. These should include limitations on the velocity setting for the Pepperball launchers and a prohibition on their use in the presence of children.

Sincerely,

American Friends Service Committee
Coalition on Homelessness
Gray Panthers of San Francisco
Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity
Racial Justice Committee of the San Francisco Public Defender
San Francisco Public Defender's Office