



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

Agenda Item Number: 3

Agenda Date: March 21, 2022

In Control: Public Safety Committee

DEPARTMENT: San Antonio Police Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: William P. McManus, Police Chief

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

ROOK Multi-Terrain Loader Purchase

SUMMARY:

Briefing on the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD) procurement of a new Armored Caterpillar Multi-Terrain Loader (the ROOK) with trailer and attachments for an estimated cost of \$389,600. This unarmed vehicle will be used by the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Team to respond to critical emergency situations during all outside operational phases of a tactical or rescue response. Funding for this purchase is available from the 2021 Urban Area Security Initiative Grant.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The San Antonio Police Department SWAT Team is the only full-time Tier 1 team in the Alamo Area Council of Governments Region 18. A Tier 1 SWAT team responds to hostage rescue, barricaded armed individuals, sniper operations, high-risk warrant service, apprehension, security operations, terrorism response, special assignments and other incidents which exceed the capability and/or capacity of an agency's first responders and/or investigative units. SWAT's assignments are planned and unplanned, deliberate responses and rescue operations.

The durability and versatility of the ROOK enables the SAPD SWAT Team to conduct tactical and rescue operations with a dramatic enhancement to officer safety and efficiency. This vehicle does not contain

weapons, but rather offers ballistic protection, mobility and function allowing for safe approach to dangerous situations, safe movement, and clearing of structures during critical incidents.

The ROOK provides a ballistically shielded platform in which 4 officers can:

1. Safely navigate open terrain and second story structures such as balconies providing officers protection from handgun and rifle rounds. It also provides a doorway to safely deploy officers into primary or secondary entry points.
2. The ROOK can navigate large open interior spaces. This allows for entry into areas such as malls and warehouses. It provides enhanced protection to a rescue team, previously only available using body armor, in a more protected environment.
3. The ROOK is ideal for operations involving explosive ordinance disposal. Members of the bomb squad, part of the Special Operations Unit, would experience greater protection with the ROOK, when approaching suspected explosive devices, allowing them to safely neutralize the device. These tactics are often conducted utilizing only a handheld shield which offers minimal protection for members of the bomb squad.
4. The ROOK can aid during critical incidents which occur in tight areas or multi-story structures. The ROOK can be utilized inside these tight spaces and can transport personnel, equipment and provide real time video surveillance. This gives commanders on scene the necessary intelligence to make patient, accurate decisions.
5. The ROOK provides safety during major public safety incidents. It can provide an advantage to rescue teams evacuating victims who have sheltered in place where the threat is still active, thereby protecting civilians and SWAT operators.
6. During critical incidents in neighborhoods where the majority of SWAT response incidents occur, the ballistic shield capability of the ROOK can be used to protect areas of vulnerability in the event a suspect begins indiscriminately shooting.
7. The ROOK can be outfitted with a grapple claw to remove debris following a natural disaster or with a vehicle extraction tool to remove or immobilize vehicles.

Currently, SWAT's ballistic resistant fleet consists primarily of large, bulky wheeled vehicles. The ROOK will enhance mobility in almost any environment while providing the protection necessary for officers in life saving operations. It will also allow SWAT to provide ballistic protection to officers when conducting operations on multi-level structures. There is no other piece of equipment in SAPD's inventory that provides this level of protection for officers and civilians. The SAPD is seeking to enhance the ballistic-resistant vehicle inventory to maintain its Tier 1 distinction.

There are approximately sixty ROOKs deployed throughout the nation. Texas currently has four agencies with ROOK capabilities, Fort Worth Police Department, Houston Police Department, Harris County Sheriff's Office and Conroe Police Department.

The ROOK, with trailer and attachments, would be purchased as a sole-source item from Ring Power Tactical Solutions utilizing funding awarded to the City of San Antonio by U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The Small Business Economic Development Advocacy (SBEDA) Ordinance requirements were waived due to the lack of small, minority, and/or women businesses available to provide these goods and services.

There were no bids submitted from local bidders for this contract, therefore, the Local Preference Program was not applied. The Veteran-Owned Small Business Preference Program does not apply to goods/supplies contracts, so no preference was applied to this contract.

ISSUE:

Briefing on the purchase of an Armored Caterpillar Multi-Terrain Loader with trailer and attachments (The Rook) for the San Antonio Police Department SWAT Unit.

ALTERNATIVES:

If City Council does not agree to accept the awarded funds for the ROOK purchase, the funds would be returned to the State.

Additionally, the San Antonio Police Department's SWAT Team will continue to use existing capabilities to manage high-risk situations.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Funding in the amount of \$389,600.00 is available from the 2021 Urban Area Security Initiative Grant.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Public Safety Committee forward the purchase of an Armored Caterpillar Multi-Terrain Loader with trailer and attachments to full City Council for approval. This item is tentatively scheduled for City Council consideration in April 2022.