



BURLINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Antonio B. Pomerleau Building
One North Avenue
Burlington, Vermont 05401

Brandon del Pozo
Chief of Police

Phone (802) 658-2704
Fax (802) 865-7579
TTY/TDD (802) 658-2700

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 28, 2015
Contact: Deputy Chief Bruce Bovat
bdbovat@bpdvt.org
802.540.2211

Burlington Police Department Severs Ties with Department of Defense

Burlington, VT – The Burlington Police Department announced today that the Department has severed its ties with the much-scrutinized “1033 Program,” a Department of Defense initiative that allows aging military equipment to be repurposed for domestic policing. Until this summer, the Burlington Police Department possessed two military-issued night vision devices, which were the extent of its holdings under the Department of Defense (DOD) program.

“The militarization of local police departments is a genuine concern in our nation,” said Burlington Chief of Police Brandon del Pozo. “There are times when military-style equipment is essential for public safety, but they are very rare. Between our partners in the Vermont State Police and the Vermont National Guard, as well as the other federal and local agencies the Burlington Police Department partners with, we have the resources to handle all but the most inconceivable public safety scenarios. Amassing a worst-case scenario arsenal of military equipment results in officers seeing everyday policework through a military lens. When I realized what a small role the military played in equipping our police, I concluded it was better to return the items and let our 1033 Program memorandum of understanding expire.”

The Burlington Police Department has no plans to acquire tactical or military items beyond the types of conventional policing equipment it already possesses.

Respect ~ Honor ~ Remember

*Officer James P. McGrath, end of watch May 12, 1904; Officer J. Albert Fisher, end of watch December 15, 1947;
Officer Robert W. Provost, end of watch January 13, 1954*

Mayor Miro Weinberger offered his support of this decision: "Today's announcement cements the Burlington Police Department's long-standing practice of avoiding the use of military equipment, in contrast to many other police departments. Our focus instead is on the basics of good policing in the 21st century: foot patrols, strong relationships between the officers and the community, and the use of modern tools to increase public transparency and police effectiveness."

#

Respect ~ Honor ~ Remember
Officer James P. McGrath, end of watch May 12, 1904; Officer J. Albert Fisher, end of watch December 15, 1947;
Officer Robert W. Provost, end of watch January 13, 1954