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HPD unveils \$1.5M Mobile Command Center

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By Brenton Awa - email



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Honolulu (HawaiiNewsNow) - With the help of federal funds, the Honolulu Police Department has two new additions to its crime fighting fleet. One of them is critical for communications and the other aims to keep their K9's safe.

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SLIDESHOW: HPD's unveils new Mobile Command Center/ K-9 truck



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HPD's new mobile command vehicle is 65-foot long and costs just over \$1.5 million. It's equipped with the latest communications technology.

"This will allow us to respond to not just man-made but also natural disasters in a unified fashion," said Chief Louis Kealoha of the Honolulu Police Department. "We have to keep up with technological advances. This is the top of the line command truck, we can put federal, city, and state agencies in here and this allows us to better serve the community during man-made or natural disasters."

The multi-agency mobile command center is the second of its kind for HPD. They also have a 40-foot long mobile command center that was unveiled in December 2002. The new and improved tractor trailer comes with a hefty price tag, but part of that was paid for by a federal grant.



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"Honolulu is such an isolated place from the rest of the US, the satellite capabilities, that's the number one thing that we have is the satellite capabilities so we can connect with people worldwide if we have to," said Chief Kealoha.

The command center wasn't Wednesday's only addition to HPD's fleet. Two ballistic vests fitted for dogs were donated by a non-profit organization called "Vested Interest in K9s." The organization is currently raising funds so that it will be able to outfit the rest of HPD's K9s with vests.

The donated ballistic vests were dawned by HPD's K9's Bose and Rex, who will now have a new ride to go along with their body armor. The department's new K9 truck comes in at a cost of \$174-thousand. It's equipped with six air-conditioned kennels, a heat alarm system, emergency lights, four-wheel drive, and cab room for six K9 handlers.

In the past each handler would have to transport and tend to their dogs in their own police vehicles, occasionally taking time away from their assignments.

"With bomb sweeps and call out assignments sometimes lasting long hours and days, K9 handlers often had to be creative to shade and secure their K9s to prevent them from overheating while waiting to be deployed," said Major Alexander Ahlo of the Honolulu Police Department.

Dudley Munar has been a K9 handler for 18-years and wishes these vehicles were around during APEC, when he was staged outside with his dog Bose for long periods of time. He constantly had to move his patrol car in search for shade.

"They gave us certain areas that we need to stage at for 12-14 hours a day and as you know the sun will change so we have to keep moving our vehicles around or take the dogs to a shaded area," said Munar. "So it's constantly tending to the dogs, where now we can put the dogs here and concentrate on other assignments that we do."

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At least it will look good in the Honolulu City Lights parade. Now, HFD will probably have to get a new one too.

+3

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\$1.5M for ONE (1) pimped-out, decommissioned fire truck. \$174K for TWO (2) protective suits for police dogs. When was the last time anyone heard of HPD being completely hamstrung because of a lack of either? I mean, really? In the past year we had a few officers being clipped and dying on H-1 during seemingly routine stops, and we have TWO (2) police dogs with Gucci body armor?!?! WTH???

+2

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I'm so glad they dawned it and not donned it. But what do I know? I'm not a journalist.

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What about the other million dollar mobile command center they had before? If they don't want it, I'll take it...

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