



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

One East Main, Suite 301 • Madison, WI 53703 • (608) 266-3847 • Fax: (608) 267-6873
Email: fiscal.bureau@legis.wisconsin.gov • Website: <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/lfb>

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Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #595

Law Enforcement Equipment (Natural Resources -- Law Enforcement)

[LFB 2023-25 Budget Summary: Page 450-451, #1 & 3]

CURRENT LAW

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Division of Public Safety and Resource Protection (PSRP) is responsible for enforcement of state laws regarding fish and wildlife, motorized recreation and environmental quality, as well as for ensuring public safety at DNR recreational properties. DNR law enforcement personnel may respond to incidents in coordination with other law enforcement agencies. Currently, DNR law enforcement staff use several different systems to issue and track citations, develop criminal reports, track and inventory evidence, dispatch and locate wardens and other law enforcement, and report uniform crime data.

DISCUSSION POINTS

Law Enforcement Safety Equipment Overview

1. DNR has 221 credentialed full-time wardens and 40 credentialed limited-term employee (LTE) wardens. DNR reports that in recent years, PSRP has adopted new technologies, including equipping nearly every warden with electroshock stun guns (Tasers) and has increased use of body-worn cameras, automated external defibrillator (AED) units, and other supplies.
2. Recent biennial budgets have provided DNR with funding to acquire, maintain and operate new equipment. 2019 Wisconsin Act 9 provided \$4.6 million in one-time funding to acquire multi-band radios. 2021 Wisconsin Act 58 provided \$145,100 in one-time funding to acquire body-worn cameras and increased base general operations funding for DNR law enforcement by \$227,400 accommodate increased costs of routine warden equipment such as opioid-blocking naloxone and data storage.

3. Assembly Bill 43/Senate Bill 70 would provide \$402,400 (\$4,500 GPR, \$15,900 environmental SEG, and \$382,000 conservation SEG) annually to purchase and operate body-worn cameras and other safety equipment for DNR law enforcement wardens. The provision would increase base funding to acquire electroshock stun guns (Tasers), automated external defibrillator (AED) units, and other supplies for DNR wardens. Funds would be used to replace AEDs, body-worn cameras and electroshock stun guns (Tasers). The provisions are intended to provide DNR wardens with equal access to functional equipment, as some types of equipment are reaching obsolescence, or in some cases equipment pieces have not been deployed to all wardens.

4. PSRP is funded by multiple sources including general purpose revenues (GPR), the segregated (SEG) environmental fund and the SEG conservation fund. Conservation fund SEG is further divided between accounts based on the number of hours wardens spend on each patrol area. The following table illustrates how funding would be used under AB 43/SB 70 as introduced.

Annual Warden Safety Equipment and Body-Worn Camera Funding Summary

<u>Fund Source/ Resource Area</u>	<u>AEDs</u>	<u>Body-Worn Cameras</u>	<u>Tasers</u>	<u>Subtotal</u>
GPR	\$4,500			\$4,500
SEG				
Environmental Fund	\$4,100	\$11,800		\$15,900
<i>Conservation Fund</i>				
Boat Enforcement	\$9,900	\$19,800		\$29,700
Fish and Wildlife	45,300	136,300	\$100,100	281,700
ATV/UTV	3,000	8,500		11,500
Water Resources	700	2,100		2,800
Parks	6,100	18,400	13,500	38,000
Forestry	<u>2,900</u>	<u>8,900</u>	<u>6,500</u>	<u>18,300</u>
<i>Conservation Subtotal</i>	\$67,900	\$194,000	\$120,100	\$382,000
SEG Total	\$72,000	\$205,800	\$120,100	\$397,900
All Funds Total	\$76,500	\$205,800	\$120,100	\$402,400

A. Automated External Defibrillators

5. DNR currently does not supply wardens with AEDs. DNR reports that AEDs have a usable life of approximately six years. At current prices, the Department estimates that \$76,500 could purchase approximately 37 units each year over a six-year period. In total, PSRP would purchase 220 units, sufficient to supply each full-time warden with a unit. After approximately six years, DNR would use base-level funding to replace units that have reached the end of their usable lives.

6. AEDs are widely considered a useful device for responding to cardiac events, which DNR wardens may encounter in responding to emergency calls. To allow DNR to implement an AED acquisition and replacement plan, the Committee could increase base level PSRP general operations

funding by \$76,500 (\$4,500 GPR and \$72,000 SEG) annually [Alternative A1].

7. It should be noted that approximately half of PSRP's conservation fund SEG appropriation is funded through the fish and wildlife account. The fish and wildlife account carries a structural deficit and is likely to deplete its balance in the coming years, absent legislative action. It could be argued that the fish and wildlife account has insufficient funding to acquire AEDs or other expensive equipment. To reduce fish and wildlife expenditures, the Committee could replace fish and wildlife SEG with GPR for AED acquisition. The Committee could provide \$49,800 GPR, \$4,100 environmental SEG and \$22,600 conservation SEG annually for AEDs [Alternative A2].

8. As noted above, DNR does not currently equip wardens with AEDs. As such, DNR is unable to estimate the costs of training wardens and other service costs for AEDs. It could be argued that DNR should pursue an AED pilot program before seeking ongoing funding. Under this perspective, the Committee could consider providing one-time funding for the 2023-25 biennium for DNR to equip a portion of PSRP wardens with AEDs. Under this perspective, the Committee could provide \$153,000 including \$9,000 GPR, \$8,200 environmental SEG and \$135,800 conservation SEG as one-time funding to DNR's biennial appropriations for law enforcement technology [Alternative A3]. This would allow the Department to equip approximately one-third of wardens during the 2023-25 biennium before committing to a multi-year effort.

9. If the Committee were to fund a pilot program without the use of funding from the fish and wildlife account, the Committee could provide \$99,600 GPR, \$8,200 environmental SEG and \$45,200 conservation SEG [Alternative A4].

10. The Committee could also take no action to supply AEDs [Alternative A5].

B. Body-Worn Cameras

11. 2021 Act 58 provided \$145,100, including \$6,000 GPR, \$9,100 environmental SEG and \$130,000 conservation SEG as one-time funding to acquire body-worn cameras for DNR wardens. DNR reports that the Department used this funding to acquire 70 cameras, which are currently being deployed to wardens.

12. DNR reports that the annual cost of a body-worn camera is \$1,900. This includes both the price of the unit as well as service and license costs, data storage, and software charges. AB 43/SB 70, would fund the acquisition and ongoing maintenance costs of an additional 176 cameras. In total, under the funding provided in the bill and base funding provided under 2021 Act 58, DNR would deploy 246 body-worn cameras, enough to equip each warden and to have extra cameras available if some cameras are damaged in service. To fund the full body-worn camera program, the Committee could consider providing \$205,800 including \$11,800 environmental SEG and \$194,000 conservation SEG annually [Alternative B1].

13. If the Committee wishes to reduce fish and wildlife account expenditures, the Committee could fund body-worn cameras using \$136,300 GPR and \$69,500 SEG (\$11,800 environmental fund and \$57,700 conservation fund) annually [Alternative B2].

14. The Committee could take no action to supply body-worn cameras. The Department could either allocate additional funding from PSRP's base budget or could selectively deploy the 70 body-worn cameras currently in inventory [Alternative B3].

C. Tasers

15. PSRP currently has 243 tasers in the division's inventory. Of these, the majority (146 units) will reach the end of their warranty in 2023. The Department reports that PSRP has replaced five to 15 of these expiring units annually in recent years, and has prioritized upgrading its obsolete inventory. AB 43/SB 70, would provide DNR with \$120,100 conservation SEG annually to fund the replacement of outdated tasers. The Committee could consider providing \$120,100 SEG annually to increase PSRP's base budget to accommodate taser replacement [Alternative C1].

16. DNR reports that PSRP purchases and licenses tasers through a five-year contracted lease. This lease typically supports replacement cartridges, rechargeable batteries, training and training equipment including inert cartridges, and warranties. The Committee could consider providing \$600,500 conservation SEG as one-time funding in DNR's biennial law enforcement technology appropriation to fully fund a five-year lease for all newly acquired tasers [Alternative C2].

17. If the Committee takes no action [Alternative C3], the Department will likely prioritize replacing tasers with expiring warranties over other purchases of warden equipment.

D. Off-Road Vehicle Modernization

18. In addition to using off-road vehicles for motorized recreation enforcement, DNR wardens use ATVs and snowmobiles for fishing and hunting license checks and enforcement, search and rescue operations, property patrols and responses, and other enforcement areas. PSRP owns 102 snowmobiles and 88 ATVs. Of these, 44 snowmobiles and 42 ATVs were acquired before 2015.

19. DNR allots \$130,000 from PSRP's base budget annually to replace off-road vehicles. DNR reports that ATVs used by Department wardens cost approximately \$9,900 per machine to replace; snowmobiles cost approximately \$15,400 to replace.

20. AB 43/SB 70, would provide \$194,300 conservation SEG annually to replace PSRP snowmobiles and ATVs. Of the funding provided, \$112,700 would come from the snowmobile account of the conservation fund and \$81,600 would come from the ATV account. DNR estimates that the funding would replace seven snowmobiles and eight ATVs annually. The Committee could consider providing \$194,300 SEG annually to modernize off-road enforcement vehicles [Alternative D1].

21. DNR wardens use ATVs and snowmobiles extensively for a variety of enforcement and public safety actions. However, the bill would fund acquisition of off-road vehicles from accounts that receive revenues only from ATV, UTV and snowmobile users. It could be argued that off-road vehicles should be funded by the fish and wildlife account, parks account, and forestry account, as well as motorized recreation accounts. Under this perspective, the Committee could provide \$194,300 conservation fund SEG as ongoing annual funding to DNR's biennial law enforcement technology

appropriations, and to expand the allowable uses of the appropriations to equipment, instead of exclusively technology [Alternative D2]. The law enforcement technology appropriation is split-funded across multiple accounts based on the number of patrol hours wardens use each piece of acquired equipment for.

22. DNR has 44 snowmobiles and 42 ATVs greater than eight years old. This includes 17 snowmobile and 20 ATVs greater than 14 years old. These machines are approaching the end of their serviceable lives. The Committee could consider providing one-time funding for these outdated off-road vehicles. Under this perspective, the Committee could consider authorizing DNR to acquire equipment in addition to technology for the Department's biennial law enforcement technology appropriations and providing \$460,000 SEG as one-time funding to replace ATVs and snowmobiles acquired before 2015 [Alternative D3]. Alternatively, the Committee could provide \$1,100,000 SEG as one-time funding in DNR's biennial law enforcement equipment appropriation to replace all ATVs and snowmobiles acquired before 2009 [Alternative D4].

23. The Committee could also take no action [Alternative D5]. DNR would likely continue to allot a portion of PSRP's budget for off-road vehicle modernization as needed.

ALTERNATIVES

A. Automated External Defibrillators

1. Provide \$76,500 annually (\$4,500 GPR, \$4,100 environmental SEG and \$67,900 conservation SEG) to acquire AEDs for DNR wardens.

ALT A1	Change to Base
GPR	\$9,000
SEG	<u>144,000</u>
Total	\$153,000

2. Provide \$76,500 annually (\$49,800 GPR, \$4,100 environmental SEG and \$22,600 conservation SEG) to acquire AEDs for DNR wardens.

ALT A2	Change to Base
GPR	\$99,600
SEG	<u>53,400</u>
Total	\$153,000

3. Provide \$153,000 (\$9,000 GPR, \$8,200 environmental SEG and \$135,800 conservation SEG) as one-time funding for a pilot project to acquire AEDs for DNR wardens.

ALT A3	Change to Base
GPR	\$9,000
SEG	<u>144,000</u>
Total	\$153,000

4. Provide \$153,000 (\$94,700 GPR, \$8,200 environmental SEG and \$45,200 conservation SEG) as one-time funding for a pilot project to acquire AEDs for DNR wardens.

ALT A4	Change to Base
GPR	\$99,600
SEG	<u>53,400</u>
Total	\$153,000

5. Take no action.

B. Body-Worn Cameras

1. Provide \$205,800 annually (\$11,800 environmental SEG and \$194,000 conservation SEG) to purchase and license body-worn cameras.

ALT B1	Change to Base
SEG	\$411,600

2. Provide \$205,800 annually (136,300 GPR, \$11,800 environmental SEG and \$57,700 conservation SEG) to purchase and license body-worn cameras.

ALT B2	Change to Base
GPR	\$272,600
SEG	<u>139,000</u>
Total	\$411,600

3. Take no action.

C. Tasers

1. Provide \$120,100 conservation SEG annually to acquire and license tasers.

ALT C1	Change to Base
SEG	\$240,200

2. Provide \$600,500 conservation SEG as one-time financing to fund a five-year contract

for tasers.

ALT C2	Change to Base
SEG	\$600,500

3. Take no action.

D. Off-Road Vehicle Modernization

1. Provide \$194,300 SEG annually to implement an off-road vehicle replacement program for DNR law enforcement.

ALT D1	Change to Base
SEG	\$338,600

2. Provide \$194,300 SEG annually in DNR's biennial law enforcement technology appropriation to implement an off-road vehicle replacement program for DNR law enforcement. Authorize DNR to acquire equipment in addition to technology from this appropriation.

ALT D2	Change to Base
SEG	\$338,600

3. Provide \$460,000 SEG in DNR's biennial law enforcement technology appropriation as one-time financing to replace off-road vehicles acquired before 2015. Authorize DNR to acquire equipment in addition to technology from this appropriation.

ALT D3	Change to Base
SEG	\$460,000

4. Provide \$1,100,000 SEG in DNR's biennial law enforcement technology appropriation as one-time financing to replace off-road vehicles acquired before 2009. Authorize DNR to acquire equipment in addition to technology from this appropriation.

ALT D4	Change to Base
SEG	\$1,100,000

5. Take no action.

Prepared by: Eric R. Hepler