

**INTRADEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE**

February 2, 2022  
14.2

**TO:** The Honorable Board of Police Commissioners

**FROM:** Chief of Police

**SUBJECT:** LAPD BOMB DETECTION K-9 SECTION AUDIT (AD NO. 21-011)

**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

It is recommended that the Board of Police Commissioners REVIEW and APPROVE the attached LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section Audit.

**DISCUSSION**

Audit Division conducted the LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section Audit to evaluate compliance with Department policies and procedures.

If additional information regarding this audit is required, please contact Trina Unzicker, Commanding Officer, Audit Division, at (213) 486-8480.

Respectfully,



MICHEL R. MOORE  
Chief of Police

Attachment

**LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
**LAPD BOMB DETECTION K-9 SECTION**  
**AUDIT 2021**  
*(AD NO. 21-011)*



Conducted by  
**AUDIT DIVISION**

**MICHEL R. MOORE**  
Chief of Police

*December 2021*

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AD No. 21-011

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# LAPD BOMB DETECTION K-9 SECTION AUDIT

Conducted by  
Audit Division  
2021

## OVERVIEW

In accordance with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD or Department) Annual Audit Plan for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020/21, Audit Division (AD) conducted an LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section Audit. The purpose of the audit was to determine whether Department policies and procedures were followed.<sup>1</sup> The topics evaluated included Odor Certification, Canine Training, Canine Evaluations, and Canine Care. This is the first audit that AD has conducted of the LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section.

While assessing LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section records from January 17, 2021 to September 25, 2021, AD found that:

- Odor certification was obtained 100 percent of the time (*Objective No. 1*);
- Canines completed 100 minutes of “Sniff Time” per Deployment Period (DP) or had a documented reason for adjustment to the requirement 96 percent of the time (*Objective No. 2(a)*);
- Canine training sessions were documented on training record sheets 100 percent of the time (*Objective 2(b)*);
- Canines were evaluated by a Bomb Squad supervisor 100 percent of the time (*Objective 3(a)*);
- LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section supervisors logged Canine Training Observations in their Sergeant’s Report 100 percent of the time (*Objective 3(b)*);
- Canines received Annual Veterinary Exams/Care 100 percent of the time (*Objective 4(a)*); and,
- Canine Vehicle Heat Alarm Systems were operational 100 percent of the time (*Objective 4(b)*).

## BACKGROUND

The Department has three entities that uses canines to assist them with their mission. These include Metropolitan Division K-9 Platoon; Gang and Narcotics Division K-9 Unit (Narcotics Dogs and Bloodhounds) and Emergency Services Division (ESD) LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section. The LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section is a specialized group of Bomb K-9 handlers

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<sup>1</sup> This audit was conducted in accordance with the U.S. Government Accounting Office, *Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards*, July 2018 Revision.

and their K-9 (canine) partners whose mission is to deter and detect the introduction of explosive devices at public events and venues and to respond to calls within the City of Los Angeles.

The use of highly trained Bomb K-9 teams is a proven deterrent against terrorist threats directed towards critical infrastructures. The LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section teams are deployed to conduct protective sweeps for explosives and serve as a visible deterrent against possible terrorist acts. They are available to respond to bomb threat incidents, special events, dignitary protection details, search warrants and searches for secondary devices during ESD’s Explosives Unit operations or other large-scale operations where the need for such sweeps are anticipated. Currently, the LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section uses three canines.

**SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY**

Audit Division requested that the LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section provide documentation of all canine training certificates, training records, training evaluations, Sergeant’s Daily Reports and veterinary reports from January 17, 2021 through September 25, 2021, (DPs 1-9).

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

This audit is comprised of four main objectives. Table No. 1 summarizes the audit findings for each objective:

**Table No. 1 – Summary of Findings**

Objective No.	Description of Objectives	2021 Number Meeting Standards / Evaluated	2021 Percent Meeting Standards This Inspection
1	<b>Odor Certification</b>	3/3	100%
2	<b>Canine Training</b>		
2(a)	Canines Completed 100 minutes of “Sniff Time” Per Deployment Period	26/27	96%
2(b)	Canine Training Sessions Documented on a Training Record Sheet	241/241	100%
3	<b>Canine Evaluations</b>		
3(a)	Canines Evaluated by a Bomb Squad Supervisor	3/3	100%
3(b)	Bomb Squad Supervisor Logged Canine Training Observation in their Sergeant’s Report	3/3	100%
4	<b>Canine Care</b>		
4(a)	Canines Received Annual Veterinary Exams/Care	3/3	100%
4(b)	Canine Vehicle Heat Alarm Systems Were Operational	3/3	100%

## **DETAILED FINDINGS**

### **Objective No. 1 – Odor Certification**

This objective evaluated whether canines obtained their odor certification during the audit period.

#### **Criteria**

*LAPD Bomb Squad Standard Operating Procedures*, May 2019, “Addenda,” Part D, “Bomb Squad K-9 Procedures,” “Odor Certification” states:

The canine(s) deployed by the Bomb Squad will be certified by an accredited master trainer consistent with the standards set forth by the NAPWDA<sup>2</sup> or IPWDA<sup>3</sup> or other major work dog association offering certification.

#### **Audit Procedures**

Auditors reviewed all LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section training certificates during the audit period to determine if the canines were certified by an accredited master trainer. The Department met the standard for this objective if the LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section provided a copy of an odor certificate for each canine.

#### **Findings**

Each of the three (100 percent) canines met the standard for this Objective.

### **Objective No. 2 – Canine Training**

This objective evaluated the training records of each canine.

#### **Objective No. 2(a) – Canines Complete 100 Minutes of “Sniff Time” Per Deployment Period**

#### **Criteria**

*LAPD Bomb Squad Standard Operating Procedures*, May 2019, “Addenda,” Part D, “Bomb Squad K-9 Procedures,” “Training Type and Frequency” states:

Bomb Squad canine handlers shall ensure canines acquire a minimum of 100 minutes of “sniff time” (actual active odor searching) a Deployment Period.

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<sup>2</sup> North American Police Working Dog Association

<sup>3</sup> International Police Working Dog Association

### **Audit Procedures**

Auditors reviewed all LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section training record sheets in their Google Drive database during the audit period. The Department met the standard for this objective if each of the canines had acquired a minimum of 100 minutes of “sniff time” per DP or had a documented adjustment.

### **Findings**

Twenty-six of the 27 (96 percent) DPs (nine DPs per the three canines) evaluated met the standard for this Objective.

Auditors noted that the *LAPD Bomb Squad Standard Operating Procedures* allow for adjustments to the minimum 100 minutes of “sniff time” per DP. During the review of the training records sheets and discussions with LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section personnel, it was noted that four adjustments occurred during the audit period.

There was documentation supporting three of these adjustments. However, one of the three canines did not acquire the 100 minutes of sniff time during one of the DPs due to a change in behavior. Bomb Detection K-9 Section personnel were unable to provide documentation for this adjustment (See Recommendation No.1).

### **Objective No. 2(b) – Canine Training Sessions Documented on a Training Record Sheet**

#### **Criteria**

*LAPD Bomb Squad Standard Operating Procedures*, May 2019, “Addenda,” Part D, “Bomb Squad K-9 Procedures,” “Documentation and Record Keeping” states: “Each canine training session shall be documented on a training record sheet...”

#### **Audit Procedures**

Auditors reviewed each LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section training record sheet maintained on their Google Drive database to determine if each canine training session was documented during the audit period. The Department met the standard for this objective if the LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section documented each training session on a training record sheet.

#### **Findings**

Each of the 241 (100 percent) canine training sessions evaluated met the standard for this Objective.

### **Objective No. 3 – Canine Evaluations**

This objective evaluated the observance and documentation of canine training by LAPD Bomb Detection Section supervisors.

#### **Objective No. 3(a) – Canines Evaluated By A Bomb Squad Supervisor**

##### **Criteria**

*LAPD Bomb Squad Standard Operating Procedures*, May 2019, “Addenda,” Part D, “Bomb Squad K-9 Procedures,” “Training Type and Frequency” states:

In addition to the Odor Certification guidelines set forth earlier in this document, all canines shall be formally evaluated by a Bomb Squad supervisor once a year.”

##### **Audit Procedures**

Auditors reviewed all LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section documentation indicating the canines were evaluated by an LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section supervisor during the audit period. The Department met the standard for this objective if an LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section supervisor formally evaluated all canines being trained once a year.

##### **Findings**

Each of the three (100 percent) canines met the standard for this Objective.

#### **Objective No. 3(b) – Bomb Squad Supervisor Logged Canine Training Observation in their Sergeant’s Report**

##### **Criteria**

*LAPD Bomb Squad Standard Operating Procedures*, May 2019, “Addenda,” Part D, “Bomb Squad K-9 Procedures,” “Training Type and Frequency” states:

...all canines shall be formally evaluated by a Bomb Squad supervisor once a year. This evaluation shall include the observation of handler/canine teams during the completion of exercises...

The supervisor shall log this observation in their respective Sergeant’s Report.

##### **Audit Procedures**

Auditors reviewed LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section supervisor “Sergeant’s Daily Reports” during the audit period to determine if the “Sergeant’s Daily Reports” contained observations of



canine training sessions. The Department met the standard for this objective if an LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section supervisor logged canine training observations for each canine on a "Sergeant's Daily Report."

### **Findings**

Each of the three (100 percent) canines met the standard for this Objective.

### **Objective No. 4 – Canine Care**

This objective evaluated the veterinary care for the canines and the LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section vehicles' heat alarm systems.

### **Objective No. 4(a) – Canines Receive Annual Veterinary Exams/Care**

#### **Criteria**

*Transportation Security Administration – Other Transaction Agreement*, July 1, 2020, states:

The Participant shall ensure routine examinations and emergency care are performed by licensed, board certified veterinary medical professionals for all canines...

#### **Audit Procedures**

Auditors reviewed all LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section veterinary records during the audit period to determine if the canines received routine exams and/or care from a licensed, board certified veterinary medical professional. The Department met the standard for this objective if the LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section provided a copy of veterinary records for each canine.

### **Findings**

Each of the three (100 percent) canines met the standard for this Objective.

### **Objective No. 4(b) – Canine Vehicle Heat Alarm Systems**

#### **Criteria**

*Transportation Security Administration – Other Transaction Agreement*, July 1, 2020, states:

All installed heat alarm systems shall be checked at the beginning of each duty day to ensure proper operation. At no time will a canine be left unattended in a canine vehicle with a faulty heat alarm system...

## **Audit Procedures**

Auditors inspected the LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section vehicles' heat alarm systems to determine if the systems were in good working condition. The Department met the standard for this objective if the vehicle heat alarm systems were in good working condition.

## **Findings**

Each of the three (100 percent) LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section vehicles met the standard for this Objective.

## **OTHER RELATED MATTERS**

During a review of the training record sheets, auditors observed ten duplicate entries for the canines in the Google Drive database (See Recommendation No. 2).

During a discussion with LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section personnel, auditors were advised that the heat alarms for the canine vehicles self-test daily and are inspected by the officers on a weekly basis. However, this inspection is not documented (See Recommendation No. 3).

Auditors noted that the *LAPD Bomb Squad Standard Operating Procedures* require that the canines acquire a minimum of 100 minutes of "sniff time" per deployment period (DP). LAPD Bomb Detection K-9 Section personnel indicated it is canine industry practice to track minutes by month. To maintain standardization with their peers, they have been tracking minutes per month as well. This did not affect the findings for Objective 2(a), however the distinction between month and DP could impact whether a canine met the 100-minute requirement (See Recommendation No. 4).

During a review of the training record sheets, auditors noted that some of the timestamps of the entries in the database were entered months after the training was conducted (See Recommendation No. 5).

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that ESD:

1. Document all adjustments to the required 100 minutes of "sniff time" along with the reasons for the adjustment in the Google Drive database. This requirement should be added to the *LAPD Bomb Squad Standard Operating Procedures* (See Objective 2 (a)).
2. Revise the procedure in which K-9 Handlers input canine training sessions into the Google Drive database to allow for only one entry per training session (See other related matters).
3. Amend the *LAPD Bomb Squad Standard Operating Procedures* to have K-9 Handlers manually test heat alarms daily to ensure they are fully operational. The test shall be notated in the officer's log book. Supervisors shall ensure and document in the

Sergeant's Daily Report that the officers are testing and documenting the tests daily (See other related matters).

4. Amend the *LAPD Bomb Squad Standard Operating Procedures* to reflect the tracking of "sniff time" per calendar month (See other related matters).
5. Have supervisors ensure that when training is conducted it is entered into the database on the same day (See other related matters).

**ACTIONS TAKEN/ MANAGEMENT RESPONSE**

Audit Division submitted the findings related to this audit report to the Commanding Officer, ESD, who is in general agreement with the findings.