

REPORT FROM

OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Date: November 6, 2014

CAO File No. 0130-01862-0017

Council File No. 14-1373

Council District: --

To: The Council

From: Miguel A. Santana, City Administrative Officer *MAS*

Reference: Board of Police Commissioners Transmittal dated October 7, 2014

Subject: **2014 PAUL COVERDELL FORENSIC SCIENCES IMPROVEMENT GRANT**

SUMMARY

The Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) is seeking retroactive authority to apply for and accept a 2014 Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program (Program) award of \$168,980 for the period October 1, 2014 through September 30, 2015 from the United States Department of Justice. The grant funding will support work to validate the BULLETRAX system, a new ballistic identification technology that captures high-resolution images and topographic information from fired bullets.

BACKGROUND

The Program awards grants to states and units of local government to help improve the quality and timeliness of forensic science and medical examiner services and/or to eliminate backlogs in the analysis of forensic evidence, including controlled substances, firearms examination, forensic pathology, latent prints, questioned documents, toxicology, and trace evidence. State Administering Agencies (SAAs) may apply for both "base" (formula) and competitive funds, while units of local government, including the City of Los Angeles (City), may apply for competitive funds.

In this instance, the LAPD sought competitive funding that would support validation and implementation of the BULLETRAX system, a new ballistic identification technology that captures high-resolution images and topographic information from fired bullets at the nanometer level. Shooting crimes typically result in two types of physical evidence for investigators, either a bullet shot from a revolver (about 33 percent of shootings) or a cartridge case if a semi-automatic pistol is used. The LAPD has used the BRASSTRAX ballistic technology system to identify cartridge cases for twenty years but has relied on staff-intensive, hands-on analysis for bullet evidence.

The Firearms Analysis Unit (FAU) spends about 3,000 staff hours per year on bullet microscopy. The BULLETRAX system is anticipated to expedite the analysis of bullet evidence by about fifty-percent from the current rate. The BULLETRAX system will also enhance the ability of the LAPD, and its law enforcement partners in Southern California, to develop a ballistic database to

quickly and efficiently compare the characteristics of bullets entered into the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network system.

To launch the BULLETRAX system, personnel from the FAU will be reassigned from regular FAU work to the BULLETRAX project. However, the FAU currently has a casework backlog of 451 requests for analysis, of which 198 are from homicide investigations. To prevent the reassignments from increasing this backlog, Program funds will be provided to maintain the current level of service in the FAU. If any funds remain after implementation of the BULLETRAX project, they will be allocated to staff costs for entering bullet evidence into the BULLETRAX database from approximately 234 crimes and 1,200 test-fired samples from confiscated revolvers. The funding will be allocated as follows:

Civilian Salaries	\$14,258
Civilian Overtime	\$117,078
Sworn Overtime	\$31,356
Related Costs	\$6,288
TOTAL	\$168,980

Acceptance of the grant does not require a direct match. Further details on the grant are provided in the Los Angeles Police Commission transmittal dated October 7, 2014 (C.F. 14-1373).

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor:

1. Authorize the Chief of Police, or designee, to retroactively apply for and accept the 2014 Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program (Program) in the amount of \$168,980 from the Department of Justice for the period October 1, 2014 through September 30, 2015;
2. Authorize the Chief of Police or designee to negotiate and execute the 2014 Program Agreement on behalf of the City and submit all necessary documents relative to the grant award and to negotiate, execute, and submit any other necessary agreements and documents relative to the grant, subject to the approval of the City Attorney as to form and legality;
3. Authorize the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) to submit grant reimbursement requests to the grantor and deposit grant receipts in the Police Department Grant Trust Fund No. 339, Department 70;
4. Authorize the LAPD to spend up to the total grant amount of \$168,980 in accordance with the grant award agreement;

5. Authorize the Controller to:

- a. Establish a grant receivable in Fund 339 in the amount of \$168,980 and establish an appropriation account, account number to be determined, within Fund 339, Department 70 for the receipt and disbursements of 2014 Coverdell grant funds;
- b. Increase appropriations on an as-needed basis from Fund No. 339, Department No. 70, appropriation account number to be determined, to Fund No. 100, Department No. 70, account numbers and amounts as follows:

<u>Account No.</u>	<u>Account Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>
001010	Salaries Civilian	\$14,258
001090	Overtime Civilian	117,078
001092	Overtime Sworn	31,356
TOTAL		<u>\$162,692</u>

- c. Transfer appropriation within Fund No. 339, Department No. 70, for the related costs:

From:

<u>Account No.</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Appropriation Account No. to be determined	\$6,288

To:

<u>Account No.</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Related Costs	\$6,288

- 6. Authorize the LAPD to prepare Controller's instructions for any technical adjustments, subject to the approval of the City Administrative Officer, and authorize and instruct the Controller to implement the instructions.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Approval of the recommendations in this report will have no additional impact on the General Fund. Acceptance of the grant is in compliance with the City's Financial Policies as one-time revenue will be used for one-time expenses.