Cost of Canine Program

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INTRODUCTION

The benefits of using a Service Trained Canine (K9) in Law Enforcement are apparent on the surface, however the costs associated with the Service Trained Canine (K9) Program may not be as transparent. The starting point for future K9 Programs must include the initial investments and reoccurring costs in order to know where and how the K9 Program would factor into Departmental expenditures. A tool or method that could provide Law Enforcement Agencies with an overview of the costs associated with the initial implementation and subsequent maintenance of a K9 Program would be beneficial to Law Enforcement, especially in light of the budget cuts and budget restraints occurring across the United States. Loss of or reduction in financing can be devastating to a K9 Program.

The purpose of this research study is to examine the theory of costs and upkeep of a K9 Unit and K9 Program in a Law Enforcement Agency. While vast amounts of information has been gathered and researched in this field (K9 Programs), one has yet to ascertain the actual costs of running a K9 Program.

The focus of this research was to gather and analyze data, specifically related to the costs associated with K9 Program, from Law Enforcement Agencies across the United States then propose a means to justify the cost for new or existing K9 Programs. Challenges addressed in this report include the selection and purchase of a K9, a K9 handler, K9 Transportation, K9 overall health and maintenance, labor standards, budget issues and additional points offered by various Law Enforcement Agencies during the query process. The results from this report will provide future K9 Programs a financial starting point. The results will also provide Law
Enforcement Agencies with an idea of where and how the money is currently accounted for within overall departmental expenditures.

The data was collected by contacting various Law Enforcement Agencies across the United States, that have or have had active K9 Programs, and subjecting them to targeted research questions. Included within the data analysis is additional information offered by various Law Enforcement Agencies.

**METHODS, MATERIALS AND DISCUSSION**

The task was to seek facts and figures. A survey questionnaire was sent to Law Enforcement Agencies with one or more K9 Unit(s). Law Enforcement Agencies were asked to participate in this research by filling out the questionnaire, *Appendix #1*, and returning the questionnaire. The participants in this study included Police K9 Handlers and K9 Trainers throughout the United States. The Law Enforcement Agencies include City Police, Sheriff’s Offices and one State Police. All 26 questionnaires were returned, along with the support and trust of the Law Enforcement Agencies, with the understanding that all data accessible to the researcher would be used to determine the true costs of the K9 Program.

With the graphs located at the end in Appendixes, one can visualize the costs compared between one Law Enforcement Agency (LEA) Department and other LEA Departments, see the collection of different LEA Departments, note the sizes of the various LEA Departments and realize the various styles of K9 deployment. These LEA entities are different in size and understand the role of K9s within the structure of the Law Enforcement Agencies.
The investigation looked for the complete cost, per K9 Unit. This included the following:

1. Purchase of Canine (K9)
2. K9 training and maintenance
3. Equipping/Structuring vehicle(s) for transporting the K9s on patrols or narcotics’ searches (K9 Transport)
4. The cost of sending a K9 home with the K9 Handler
5. The cost of kennels for the K9s if they are not sent home with the K9 Handler
6. The cost involved in the K9 Handler meeting up with the K9 and deploying to the sites in the K9 Transport
7. Equipment, training clothes, suits or sleeves and all pertaining to the K9 use, veterinary shots, health checkup, the cost to spay or neuter - if required.
8. Food for the K9
9. Wages and overtime (FALA) required fees including yearly certifications and animal licensing.
10. Quantity of K9 units in operational status at the Department

**Questionnaire:**

Not all Law Enforcement Agencies could or would answer every question (Figure 2) thus leaving some questions blank. These are the questions the Law Enforcement Agency’s Departments (Department) were asked. Accompanying the questions are breakdowns as to the relevance of the questions and how they fit in the overall analysis of the K9 Program.
"How many K9 Units are in the Department: Patrol, Narcotic, Explosives, Search and Rescue (SAR)?"

This question was asked to determine how many K9s were in the Departments and how they were deployed. (Figure 3) The Component (Patrol, Narcotic, Explosives, SAR) count is necessary to determine how Departments value their K9 Units and how they implement the mission of K9 Unit. The total quantity of K9s in conjunction with where the K9 Unit was more heavily deployed and the population of any given area affects the cost-benefit ratio. The use of the K9 affects the cost effectiveness of K9 Programs and is why some K9 Programs are terminated due to lack funding (grant money) and operating costs.

When looking at the statics of how many dogs are within the LEA Departments, one must first look at the population (Figure 1) within the area of the LEA’s responsibility. The tax base for a given population will vary with the movement of the population. The examples that follow will provide a better perspective of the populations and what would be the ideal K9 Program responsible for specific areas of interest within those area populations.

Examples: Smaller area LEA Departments:

One example of a smaller area LEA that utilizes K9 Units is the City of Winston-Salem, NC. The Winston-Salem Police (Department Winston-Salem Police Department, Winston - Salem NC, 2012), one finds that in 2010 the Winston-Salem the human population was 229,617 people. Winston-Salem, NC reports thirteen (13) K9 Units in their LEA Department. When one averages the number of people compared to the number of K9s, one finds that for every 17,662 persons there is one K9 Unit. That implies one K9 Unit protects a large number of people.

The city of Longmount, CO is another example of a smaller area LEA that utilizes K9 Units. Longmount, CO has a human population of 86, 270 people. Longmount Police Department
reports two (2) K9 Units. When one averages the number of people compared to the number of K9s in the Longmount Police Department, one finds that for every 43,135 persons there is one K9 Unit.

One of the smaller Departments is East Greenwich Township Police Department (East Greenwich Township Police Department, East Greenwich NJ, 2012). East Greenwich Township Police Department has just one K9 Unit at the time of the paper. East Greenwich has a population of 4,838 people. This places one K9 Unit per 4,838 people at the time of this document.

Examples: Larger Law Enforcement Agency (LEA) Departments:

New York State Police (New York State Police, Albany NY, 2012) covers the full state of New York. New York State Police reports seventy-two (72) K9 Units. The State of New York has a human population of 19,378,102 people. This breaks down to 269,140 people per K9 Unit.

One realization of a wealthy County Sheriff’s office utilizing the ability to have K9 Units available is Stanislaus County Sheriff’s Department, (Stanislaus County Sheriff’s Department, Modesto CA, 2012). Stanislaus County Sheriff’s Department has a total of 13 K9 Units within its Department. The human population in Stanislaus Co is 518,522 people. This means that for every 28,206 people there is one K9 Unit. This particular county was singled out due to the funds they invest in their K9 Program. The K9 Program is well funded due to an outreach and educational effort on the part of the Stanislaus County Sheriff’s Department. The County at large is highly supportive of the K9 Program, financially and in other capacities.
In Oklahoma, the Police Department Patrol Districts include large isolated geographic areas. To be considered sufficient police officers out on patrol in isolated areas, Chief Hugh Miller from Oklahoma (Ret), indicates one K9 in every patrol car for use in back up (as stated in 2011). Chief Miller (Ret) was under-manned due to budgetary cost and restraints when this statement was made: “We can make a reality that with every officer out in the outlined areas, where backup to see is to the maximum time to meet, having a K9 in each outlying area, would be an extra in support of an officer where backup period extended.”

- **“What was the purchase price per canine (K9)?”**

The cost is believed to be the cost of purchasing the K9 in order to implement a program, however there are additional items that factor into the costs (*Figure 4*).

The purchase price of a K9 is one of the pertinent issues we can focus on in this study. Most dogs used as K9s are imported to the United States from Europe. These imported dogs are mostly sport dogs with varying degrees of sports titles (Schutzhund). The level of the sport training and awards for these dogs factors into the price paid for the dogs. This also means they will typically require additional training here in the United States specific to the type of K9 Unit an entity desires.

With the dogs that come from Europe, most will be brokered through dog Brokers. These dog Brokers will typically contract with various entities (Law Enforcement Agencies, private businesses and private individuals) here in the United States. Contract expectations are set in place as the customer is informed a) the dog does not arrive from Europe trained for K9 b) that the price of the Dog does not include the additional K9 training, unless c) the Customer wishes to purchase K9 training through the Broker as well.
When the dog Broker goes to Europe they have orders to fill, which they then resell to their customers. When the Broker goes to Europe they purchase groups of dogs with X number of dogs in each Y Component (potential for Patrol, Narcotic, Explosives, SAR, protection, cadaver, therapy, etc) depending upon what has been requested from them by their customers. The dogs purchased through the Broker will typically require additional training in order to work in its specified field. This is where Trainers come into play. Sometimes a Broker can be a Trainer, however the Broker’s main role is to purchase in large quantities in order to broker or resell the dogs to companies they have contracted with or to others who might want lower grade dogs. Some Brokers set a contract-pricing table in which the customer pays the price of the dog and also pays for additional training of the dogs for specific purposes.

Typically, K9 Trainers are exactly that – they train K9 dogs and their K9 handlers for specific goals. There are some Trainers that skip the middle man (the broker) and order from a trusted vendor a dog with specific inclinations so they have a base to train from. In the end this could save money without the middle man (the broker).

Very few K9 or K9 potential dogs purchased here in the U.S. are from U.S. breeders. Most Departments want to skip the actual training of young dogs and prefer to work with already trained to apprehend dogs. Thus they either Contract with a Broker or work through a qualified Trainer.

**Costs are varied (per the presented questionnaire).** *(Figure 4)*

Ewing Police Department (Ewing Police Department, Ewing NJ, 2012) pays $6,500 to $7,100 for guard dogs. In 2012 they accepted 4 K9s.
With some of the bigger sized Departments like Los Angeles Police Department (Los Angeles Police Department, 2012) patrol K9s cost $8,000 - $10,000. This is from a different part of the U.S. than Ewing, NJ, however the price is nearly the same. This could be due to various factors. It could be due to different vendors in different locations. It could be the difference in quality or quantity of desired titles.

New York State Police has 72 K9s, of which 69 of the patrol K9s were from dogs donated to the government and subsequently used in the New York State Police program. To have the ability to obtain a donated dog creates a cost effective K9 Program.

Enfield Police Department (Enfield Police Department, Enfield, CT, 2012) paid $3,500 for a Narcotics K9 in 2008.

Minneapolis Police Department (Minneapolis Police Department, Minneapolis MN, 2012) paid $1,500 per narcotics dogs.

Lander Wyoming Police Department (Lander Police Department, 2012) received a dog through a donation. Cost of the Narcotics K9 is $0.

The highest cost for dogs is Oregon State Police (2010) with a cost of $14,000 per Narcotics K9.

One can see that the purchase cost of Narcotics K9s is significantly lower than that of fully trained Patrol dogs and that Narcotic K9s do vary in price. On the whole Narcotic K9s are a cheaper in price due to the fact that training is minimal. Most dogs that can chase a ball can learn to become a Narcotic K9.

In the past, the shelter dogs with a strong drive usually fit the bill for a scent dog. Trained for the ability to manage their recognition for narcotics, explosives and search missions to find a lost or missing person to cadaver work, Labrador Retrievers are the traditional type that is public
friendly. There are programs that offer donated K9s. The donation consists of the trained K9 and did not include equipment and operating costs. Oregon Canine Consulting was one of these companies that took refuge and rescue dogs to train for Narcotics and Explosives dogs.

There are some companies and groups that train dogs for searches in schools. These companies typically use dogs from shelters who have been determined to have search aptitude. This serves to save animals and minimize overall costs

- **What is the cost per K9 for the initial training and in mandatory training, (schools, etc.)**

Training of the K9 is one of the important steps of the process that is included within the price of the K9 when purchased. However, equally as significant are other training costs associated with the K9. These other associated costs are the K9 Handler training and the upkeep (Figure 6) training that is required within the K9 Program. Research suggests that various Law Enforcement Agencies conduct in-house training, meaning that the Department has a Master Trainer and that the K9 Handlers study as a group within the Department, with guidance from the Master Trainer. Some Departments contract training from outside of the Department. This is understandable, as an outside contractor would tend towards an unbiased opinion as to the credibility of the K9s and K9 Handlers. It costs more to keep hired trainers on staff than utilizing in-house Police Officers trained for K9, especially since in-house K9 Trainers get paid within their respected profession descriptions.

The laws are changing. Some outsiders believe that in-house training is covering the least amount of required training to keep up with current court requirements. So with the stated belief that the vendors for the K9 cover most training costs, they must charge for the K9 Handler Training.
• **Vehicle cost**

Research indicates the highest Departmental costs are the Police Vehicles (Figure 7), even though the Police Vehicles are purchased through the Fleet Pricing. The cost of Police Vehicles is high not only due to the initial fleet purchase price, but the use of the vehicles for patrols and executing the safe and secure delivery of justice breakers in custody is costly. The extensive mileage, vehicle wear and tear, constant use and ever-rising mileage adds to the costs of the vehicle. This is before costs are incurred due to the conversion of a Police Vehicle to a K9 Transport Vehicle. Studies show that vehicles cost relatively the same across the United States for most popular brands. The main difference in pricing is due to the unique handling claims of the Police Vehicle and with the K9 Transport Vehicle.

The preferred Police Vehicle throughout the years has been the Crown Vic or the Interceptor. Many Departments have transitioned into other vehicle brands and models for a variety of reasons, including terrain and extreme weather conditions. These other vehicles include the Dodge Durango, Chevrolet Tahoe, Ford Excursion, or as in Idaho, due to inclement weather, they have used Chevrolet Pickups and 4X4’s.

The costs of K9 Transports reported in the returned documents are the reality of what the Departments used in the K9 industry.

San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District, BART, (San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART), San Francisco CA, 2012) use Ford Police Interceptors at a cost of $27,187 per vehicle.

Bristol Police Department cost per vehicle is $22,000 per vehicle, (no brand indicated).

Glendale Police Department cost is also $22,000 per vehicle, (no brand indicated).
Winston - Salem Police Department (Winston- Salem Police Department, Winston - Salem NC, 2012) spends $14,000 per vehicle. The findings do not reveal if the purchase of the vehicle was specifically for the K9 Unit.

One Department, Plymouth Police Department (Plymouth Police Department, Plymouth MA, 2012) states it utilizes one of the existing vehicles in its fleet as their K9 Transport.

In most of the Departments, they may exercise a vehicle in their fleet and convert it for the use of K9s.

Vehicles in use for K9 Transport are an expensive issue to consider. Whether the use of a newly purchased vehicle or a used fleet vehicle is more effective in the use of K9 Unit is not significant. What is significant is that the vehicle is safe and effective for its intended purpose.

**Costs to adapt it for use by the K9**

Most Police vehicles have the Law Enforcement standards version back seat with which to move the prisoners going to jail. The K9 Transport has a different requirement. The K9 must be contained in the back of the vehicle for safety and to be secured from the public (Figure 9). The latter also protects the dog. The use of K9 cages is a dependable, safe and reliable means in which to hold a K9. There are vendors that include models of cages for K9s.

A potential problem arises when a LEA Department issues a specific Police Vehicle purchase plan for a K9, Vehicle Make and Model changes cannot be made after the Vehicle purchase is approved. Each agency must create a K9 Transport purchase plan that fits within the Department preferences, retains some resiliency, flexibility and meets safety and effectiveness criteria.

*The questionnaire asked about additional costs to rebuild vehicles for K9 use.*

Kansas City Police Department’s (Kanas City MO Police Department, Kanas City MO, 2012) responsibility for adapting a vehicle are almost $2,290.
Roseville Police Department (Roseville Police Department, Roseville MN, 2012) stated the costs were $7000.

Elko County Sheriff’s Department, (Elko County Sheriff’s Department, 2012) stated their costs were $1500 for the K9 enclosure and $1200 for the temperature monitor.

Los Angeles Police Department (Los Angeles Police Department, 2012) pays $12,748 per K9 Transport vehicle.

Some Departments are not financially able to obtain a K9 cage due to the high costs associated with the K9 cage. This is especially conspicuous when the K9 Program is in the beginning stages of implementation. A different option is to create their own cage. If they follow and respect most safety rules for the K9s in case of rollovers or collisions, the K9 should be okay. However, every safety factor must be followed.

K9 cages are not the only criteria that must be met in the K9 Transport Vehicles. Some K9 Transport Vehicles also include temperature alarms that allow the K9 Handler see and hear that the car is too hot for the K9 to stay inside the vehicle while other vehicles have automatic fans installed to turn on when the temperature reaches too high for the K9. An additional factor not mentioned in the questionnaire, some of the vehicles have what they call a "Bail Out." This is to allow the K9 Handler to hit a button on a duty belt which in turn pops open the K9 Transport Vehicle door so the K9 can establish a suspect or K9 Handler protection. The above items help the dog when stationed inside a K9 Transport Vehicle, plus offers some help to engage when on duty.

- **Use of vehicle to take home or Departmental on calls.**
In order to maximize efficiency and support, the ability for the K9 Handlers to take Department K9 Transport Vehicles home at the end of shift is imperative. This allows the K9 Handlers to be better prepared for availability when dispatched on calls. (Figure 10) Many Departments call the K9 Unit into service as needed including when the K9 Handler (officer) is leaving shift or is on Department scheduled days off.

Although many Departments follow this practice, some civilians take exception to the K9 Handler taking home the government owned vehicle. Typically, this is due to a misunderstanding within the civilian population and could be remedied with outreach and education on the cost benefit of the K9 Unit and Transport take home procedure.

Patrol must be able to respond quickly in case of a situation that requires speed to meet. Response time from dispatch call to actual presence of the K9 Unit team on stage is critical and urgent when dealing with the need to protect the rights of a suspect and it is crucial in working with narcotics. In a non-take home situation, the K9 Handler is called back to the Department office to pick up the K9 and K9 Patrol Transport before going on stage. The K9 Handler must go to the Department Office, check out the K9 Transport Vehicle from the Department vehicle lot, make sure the K9 Vehicle is stocked with all equipment (including water, treats, food, etc.) available that might be needed on this particular call out, then go to the Department Kennel to pick up the K9, exercise the K9, transfer the K9 to the K9 Transport Vehicle, then proceed to on stage. This diminishes significantly the efficiency and effectiveness of the K9 Unit as too much time is lost in the extended response time which in turn jeopardizes any successful recovery. It also increases the clocked hours on duty, which again is an increased expense to the Department.
Increased clocked hours, longer response times and lower successful recoveries leads to increased costs to the Department and less benefit to the Public. Lower response times lead to less hours on the clock and higher successful recoveries which in turn leads to benefits for both the Department and the Public. The cost of the fuel relative to a take home vehicle as opposed to a Department Lot parked vehicle is minimal. It should be noted here that the use of a take home K9 Transport Vehicle is strictly for K9 on duty use and at no time are they to be used as a personal family carry vehicle. This is as much for liability issues as it is for respecting government property.

- **Equipment such as training clothes, suits or sleeves, harnesses, leads pertaining to the K9 use**

When the Departments use K9s in the public, and any use within the scope of the work the K9 was originally purchased for, the K9 Team must undergo rigorous training and up-keep training. This is so the use of the K9 meets standards that have been established throughout the court systems. Equipment costs (Figure 11) are fairly standard across the nation as most Departments purchase various items as the need warrants and pricing is relatively standard across the nation. Most Departmental purchases are not driven by brand popularity. Resources available and vendor experience with the equipment and its use drive them. The vendor’s reputation and experience does factor into the equipment purchase decision-making process.

These equipment items include but are not limited to Apprehension suits. Apprehension Suits protect the practice target’s body and gives the dog a larger aim area in order to capture the decoy. Some Departments use Apprehension Bite Sleeves that go over the arm and hand. Although widely used, the Apprehension Bite Sleeves does limit the area for the dog to lock onto to solely the decoy’s arm. Dog leads (leashes) and reward toys (balls, tugs or squeaky toys) are standard purchases, however tracking harnesses and tracking leads are also ideal. There are
numerous items needed to keep the K9 and K9 Handler up to date on current training requirements. Per data supplied by the various Departments, the cost is fairly even across the nation.

Lander Police Department (Lander Police Department, 2012) has one (1) Narcotics K9 with equipment costs of $150 for the year of 2010. Narcotics K9s, the equipment is more limited, thus minimal cost.

New York State Police has seventy-two (72) K9s that are used in a variety of roles and paid out an annual expense of $14,722, which averages out to $204 per K9. Again, not significantly different ($150 versus $204) when averaged per K9, especially if one factored in that some of the NYSP K9s are used on Patrol as well.

One last note pertaining to the cost of equipment, even though the equipment costs may appear to be high in the view of the public, they are not high in the long run. Most of the equipment purchased from a vendor has a long life if maintained by the Department. However, one must keep in mind that dogs are dogs and they will damage equipment, especially with Apprehension work (which is part of their training process).

- Veterinary services, such as shots, health checkups, spay or neuter and on the job injury

The care of the K9 is of the upmost importance to the Department. (Figure 12) One must be cognizant that they are working with an intensely trained, alert and live animal. The K9 is tasked to perform in extremely dangerous conditions and may suffer injury or fatality in the line of duty. The K9 is active within the community, which leads to the potential to and risk of being exposed to viruses and disease. Sustained, current and old injuries must be monitored and hopefully will lead to sufficient improvement and subsequently expand the K9s’ use. If the K9 contracts one of
the viruses or diseases it has been exposed to, this can place the K9 out of commission for an extended term if not permanently. The weight of the K9 must be monitored. Required inoculations, such as Rabies, Distemper, and definitely Kennel Cough (which notoriously damages the ability to scent for contraband), plus other local and state mandated inoculations must be administered on a timely basis.

Which brings us to the Veterinarian. Scheduled maintenance appointments with a Veterinarian are imperative. Acquiring a reasonable Veterinarian, who is on staff and prepared for emergencies with the K9 on a 24hr/7days/week basis, is essential and mandatory. The Veterinarian must be experienced with and knowledgeable of high drive dogs, thus diligence must be applied when seeking a Veterinarian. Not all Veterinarians are qualified to work with high drive dogs much less K9s.

Veterinary costs across the nation tend to run relatively the same.

Memphis Police Department (Memphis Police Department, Memphis TN, 2012) has nineteen (19) K9s and their costs run $12,000 to $18,000 annually per their Veterinarian Statement. This averages out to about $632 to $950 per year per K9.

Roseville Police Department (Roseville Police Department, Roseville NM, 2012) has three (3) K9s and spends approximately $3,000 annually. This averages out to $1,000 per K9 per year. Many Veterinarians offer discounts for Service Dogs of which K9s are most definitely a Public Service Dog. The direction of most Departments is to use the opportunity of a discount from the services of a Veterinarian.

Given these costs, on the average significantly less than humans pay for health costs annually, and considering the quality of the K9 as a Law Enforcement tool, this appears to be an excellent buy.
• **Food**

The saying "You are what you eat" also applies to a K9s, meaning the K9s require nutritious food. (Figure 13) Purchasing a low cost brand to save money is not the same as delivering an adequate amount of protein in which to maintain the health, tenacity and energy of the K9. There are some excellent dog nutrition focused and savvy companies that are known by their brand labels, however, this article is not constructed to recommend which brand is the best. Departments report utilizing an excellent food choice, as per consultation with their Veterinarians and food bag logos.

Stanislaus County Sheriff’s Department (Stanislaus County Sheriff’s Department, Modesto CA, 2012) is a large county with thirteen (13) K9s. The Average cost per month is $545 for all 13 K9s. That is an average of about $42 per K9 per month.

Ewing Police Department (Ewing Police Department, Ewing NJ, 2012) has an annual budget of around $400 per K9.

• **Wages and overtime (FLSA)**

Labor and Fair Labor Act (FLSA) ("Compliance Assistance - Wages and Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)," n.d.) The dedication of K9 Handlers and their respected Departments is to comply with the rules on labor and wage. (Figure 14) While the Departments have the ability to have a K9 in use, they must abide by the labor compliance laws. This holds true when the K9 Handler is under requirement to manage regular 40 hours per week. The K9 Handlers must be able to attain and be compensated for the appropriate amount of training with and for their K9. Training requirements and workload needs must be addressed prior to requesting overtime compensation. Some Departments pay overtime, others use Compensation Time (Comp Time). Compensation Time allows the Handler to obtain additional scheduled time off with pay. Working during the
required training hours is difficult for the K9 Handler, especially when faced with a heavy workload, and when one or more colleagues are on leave or are off-duty for personal reasons. The Departments for quite some time have ignored FLSA laws. This has led to lawsuits on the part of the K9 Handler (typically when they have been laid off or dismissed) in order to receive reimbursement for the work required K9 Training hours that resulted in work outside of the standard 40 hour work week. This Risk is to the Department’s accountability of federal mandates to pay. Thus it is standard practice to keep track of time spent on training, no matter what. Additionally, the logging of hours is in essence an accounting of quantity of hours one has invested in the field of K9 Handler, which in turn benefits the K9 Handler as well.

Bristol Police Department (Bristol Police Department, Bristol TN, 2012) pays the K9 Handler $33,000/year plus the grade per day care for the K9.

BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit District, Oakland CA 94604) pays K9 Handlers $87,165 per year (without benefits) and $167,043 (includes benefits).

San Jose Police Department (San Jose Police Department, San Jose, CA, 2012) paid $52.57 hourly. They treat the additional K9 Training as overtime and pay $75.35 hourly (Overtime).

Salaries vary across the United States in correlation with Cost of Living (CoL) in different areas. The CoL in the larger cities is higher, thus salaries are higher in order to maintain a decent living for the officers. ($33K in Bristol, TN is relatively equivalent to $87K in Oakland, CA)

- **Required fees (Certifications and Licensing)**

K9 Certification is not regulated throughout the Law Enforcement field as a whole. There is not a set certification in most states, although some states do certify under their Police Officer
Standards. What is expected of the K9 in a Department is that they must be certified to meet the required specified task. The certification can be a minimum as set within the state required standards or a general stands certification. (Figure 15)

Many Departments demonstrate within their Department thus keeping their K9 training costs at a minimum. For instance, Ewing Police Department (Ewing Police Department, Ewing NJ, 2012) has in-house training at a cost of $0. Most of the Departments belong to or are affiliated with large certification organizations. The benefit of the large certification organization is in acquiring intense training and knowledge outside the box. One of these organizations, American Society of Canine Trainers (ASCT), offers advanced coursework as required for the relevant certification process to K9 Schools and Law Enforcement Agencies K9 Schools. ASCT includes research on how and why their strategies and techniques work.

As a budgetary line item training and certification is difficult to maintain, as each Law Enforcement Agency (LEA) must watch its budget. Thus defending training and certification costs can be difficult.

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

The main point of this research was to attain information about the minimum costs involved with maintaining a K9 Program. The public or a new Departmental K9 Program has minimal real knowledge about the costs associated with purchasing a dog, training the dog, equipping the dog or maintaining a K9 Program, which is what this research has attempted to reveal. In reality, the service and an itemized list of required tools detailed and priced needs to be created and maintained for the upkeep of K9 Programs.
The second point was to find out what the costs of a rounded K9 Program are and the similarities of costs throughout the United States. What is the rationale for implementing a K9 Program? Concerns with today's budgetary funding issues that Police Departments face yearly affect the decision making process. The idea of utilizing a valuable tool, such as a K9, to save time and money is appealing. The K9’s proper use must factor into the program costs carefully. As we see the facts throughout the documentation as generated from the various Law Enforcement Departments, we will get a better understanding of the costs across the United States.

Although there is background information on the Internet, it is several years old. The reports that are available do state there are costs associated with the K9 Program, however they do not indicate the actual dollar amounts nor do they factor in the costs occurring at higher amounts than when most Departments started their K9 Programs. The information from the previous background information does not reflect current costs due to the current rate of inflation. This research will provide a basic cost comparison between the Western and Eastern United States. The results from this research will help to inform the public of the continuing and inflating costs, so the Public and Law Enforcement Agencies will be well versed in the current costs when considering a K9 Program.

This document will help the Public and Law Enforcement Agencies see what other Departments across the United States are paying for their K9 Programs. One of the first reactions of most Law Enforcement Agencies, when faced with a budget shortage, is to deal with the shortage by eliminating the K9 Program. Knowledge about the K9 Program should show the Public that the costs associated with the K9 Program compared to the benefits and savings proves that a K9
Program is both a powerful and cost effective tool. As we proceed with how many K9s are in each region, we need to look at the dog to human population ratio and correlate that to acreage as well, as this will help to determine the amount, on a national average, of dogs to people per area and acreage.

The questionnaire was presented to various Departments across the United States. Many Departments were willing to participating in the study and research. They returned, either fully completed questionnaire or at least a partially completed questionnaire. Twenty (20) Departments responded with a completed questionnaire for the research. Appendix #1 shows the results of this study.

Data proved that the K9s were well cared for nutritionally and medically with good veterinarians. As the cost of operations and inoculations rise, budgets must be adjusted to accommodate these expenses.

When reviewing the purchase costs, various K9 Handlers stated their K9s were great dogs or they would not have them out in the field. On the whole, most purchase costs were similar even when different vendors were utilized. Most dogs were imported, thus the cost of the European Euro must be factored into the overall purchase cost of the dog.

This approach eliminates the problems associated with the Euro, transportation from overseas, quarantine, re-training a sports trained dog to be a K9 and other additional purchase cost associated fees.

This research project was met with an enthusiastic response to the letter and questionnaire sent to the responding Agencies. This study had such a tremendous response, one could only wish for
the time and space to address all that was presented to the researcher. Departments participating in this research were up front and quick to respond with the information they gathered through their own internal research. Some Departments followed up to make sure the researcher was who the researcher claimed to be. Other Departments asked the researcher why the information disclosure request was requested and what was its use. In other words, the responding Departments take the K9 Programs seriously and they took this research seriously. This made the project even more exciting, knowing that many K9 Programs are well intentioned, well certified, well informed and well maintained. We can learn a lot in conducting similar and follow-up research.

The Departments that shared their information have shown they use this tool (the K9 Program) effectively and properly maintain it with the best tools as allowed by their respective budgets. On average, the data supports that K9 Program costs are similar across the United States. Data also supports that most Departments’ strategies are in sync with other Departments across the United States. Due to the higher Cost of Living in some areas, there may be an artificial appearance of higher pay, greater benefits when one is employed in larger cities. Once one factors in Cost of Living, they realize the K9 Handler or K9 Trainer wages are relatively equal across the United States. Usually the cost of the K9 Program is the first wave of shock the Departments and Public encounters. The K9 Program is a significant investment that leads to both hidden and obvious benefits. In areas that are remote, the use of a K9 as a support partner proves that a K9 can assist efficiently over a broader range of space, thus the amount of support relative to the amount of coverage is tremendous. The number of K9s in certain cities is proving the importance of Departments having K9 Units at their disposal. Once the Public and Departments realize that over the long term these costs are not only beneficial they are cost
effective when the K9 Programs are successfully utilized and administered. When our country is educated and exposed to the benefits, cost effectiveness and success of the K9 Units and K9 Programs, the Public has more confidence in and will fall more in love with the K9 Units and the overall concept. This will lead to more funding for the K9 Programs. The first remedy is seen in realizing the steps, the costs, the successes and the benefits. With this report the researcher is establishing a solid baseline.

The conclusion is clear; the K9 Program is a powerful tool for any Department. The K9 Unit has significant cost effective advantages if the program is funded properly and has Department approval. Educating the Public, Law Enforcement Agencies and the various K9 Programs benefits all parties involved.

The overall costs are close to the same across the United States. A ballpark figure on the cost are, Canine, about $10,000 per canine for patrol, $2500 per dog for narcotics or explosive canines. Training, about what costs for most departments to acquire, and equipment depends on the canine and what it is trained for. Patrol about $3500 for suit and leashes and harnesses. Veterinarian is around $2000 per year depending on how many dogs. Vehicles seem too high in the costs which is around $16000 per dog with another approximately $3000 - $5000 to adapt the car with canine cage. The total wages will be within the costs of regular time for the handlers plus overtime. Of course you can find a lower costs in all the first time programs, but in conclusion the estimated cost would be around $34,000 to $35,000 to start off with a new canine program.
Figure 1 (per Questiaure area)

Population For Partisipating Department

Figure 2 (Sent Questionaire)
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<td>Los Angeles Police Dept, Los Angeles CA</td>
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*Figure 3 (Returned Questionnaire)*
Figure 4 (Total Canines per Department)
Figure 5 (Costs per dog)

Costs of Canine Program Across the United States

Figure 6, (Cost per K9 Unit Handler Training)
Figure 7, (Per K9 unit Vehicle)

Adaptation of Vehicle for use of per Canine

Figure 8 (Per K9 Vehicle)
Figure 9, (Per K9 Unit)

Figure 10, (Per total K9 Unit)
Veterinary Services Costs per Unit

Figure 111, (Per K9 Unit per year)

TOTAL FOOD COSTS

Figure 122, (Per K9 Unit per Year)
Figure 13, (Per K9 Handler per Year)

Figure 14, (Per K9 Unit per Year)
Appendix 1

Questionnaire of Questions either asked by United States Postal Service, and/or E-mail

Thank you for the participation in this project, your response will help in defining the goals of this project.

• How many canines are in the Department?
  1. Patrol dogs__________________________
  2. Narcotic dogs________________________
  3. Explosive dogs_______________________
  4. SAR dogs __________________________
  5. Other_________________________________

• What was the cost of each dog?
  1. Patrol dogs__________________________
  1. Narcotic dogs________________________
  2. Explosive dogs_______________________
  3. SAR dogs __________________________
  4. Other ___________________________________

• Vehicle cost and any additional costs to adapt it for use by the canine?
  1. Cost of Patrol vehicles ____________________________
  2. Additional cost to adapt vehicles for K9 use?_______________
  3. Other ___________________________________

• Are the vehicles taking home or departmental pickup on calls?
  1. How many take home vehicles? ______________________
  2. How many department pickup to deploy vehicles?__________
  3. Other ___________________________________

• Training Equipment cost, such as, suits or sleeves, leads pertaining to the canine use
  1. Training clothes ____________________________
  2. Harnesses _________________________________
  3. Leads _____________________________________
  4. Apprehension suits __________________________
  5. Sleeves ________________________________
  6. Other ___________________________________

• What is the cost per canine for the initial training, and in mandatory training, including canine schools, etc)
- Veterinary services, such as shots, health checkups, spay or neuter and on the job injury,

- Food, what brand, and costs

- Average wages and overtime (FLSA),

- Required fees (Certifications and Licensing)
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