

I MINA'TRENTAI OCHO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
Informational Briefing/Hearing/ Oversight Hearing / Roundtable Hearing

STANDING COMMITTEE / SENATOR	HEARING	COMMITTEE REPORT	HEARING DATE	DATE COMMITTEE REPORT FILED	NOTES
Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management, and Guam National Guard.	Oversight Hearing	Digital Committee Report on the Oversight Hearing on the Department of Agriculture Conservation Officers-Law Enforcement.	3/4/26 2:00 p.m.	6/17/26	



OFFICE OF SENATOR
Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao

38th Guam Legislature | *I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan*

June 2, 2026

The Honorable Frank F. Blas, Jr.
Speaker
I Mina'trentai Ocho na Liheslaturan Guåhan
163 Chalan Santo Papa
Hagåtña, Guam 96910

VIA: The Honorable V. Anthony Ada 
Chairperson, Committee on Rules

**RE: Committee Report on the Department of Agriculture, Conservation Officers
(Law Enforcement)**

Håfa Adai Speaker Blas:

Transmitted herewith is the Committee Report relative to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation Officers (Law Enforcement) Oversight Hearing which was conducted by the Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management, and Guam National Guard (Committee) on March 4, 2026 at 2:00 p.m..

Please contact our office if you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further.

Si Yu'os ma'åse'


SHAWN GUMATAOTAO
Chairman

Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management, and Guam National Guard



COMMITTEE ON RULES

RECEIVED:
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Marie Crisostomo



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Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao

38th Guam Legislature | *I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan*

COMMITTEE REPORT

Oversight Hearing
Department of Agriculture, Conservation Officers
Law Enforcement

First Notice of Oversight Hearing - Wednesday, March 4, 2026, 2:00 p.m.

Senator Shawn Gumataotao <office.senatorshawn@guamlegislature.gov>

Tue, Feb 24, 2026 at 8:00
AM

To: phnotice@guamlegislature.gov

Bcc: "Speaker Frank Blas Jr." <speakerblas@guamlegislature.gov>, "vicespeakertonyada@guamlegislature.gov"

<vicespeakertonyada@guamlegislature.gov>, "office.senatorbri@guamlegislature.gov"

<office.senatorbri@guamlegislature.gov>, "senator.duenas@guamlegislature.gov" <senator.duenas@guamlegislature.gov>,

Jesse Lujan <senator.lujan@guamlegislature.gov>, "officeofsenatorshellycalvo@guamlegislature.gov"

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Senator Tina Muna Barnes <senator.munabarnes@guamlegislature.gov>, "senator.parkinson@guamlegislature.gov"

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Maureen Maratita <publisher@glimpsesofguam.com>, publisher@pacificislandtimes.com, reporters@postguam.com,

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jimk@ebpublishing.com, tritonscalluog@gmail.com, nestor@postguam.com, Jenna Blas <jenna.g.blas@ghs.guam.gov>

February 24, 2026

MEMORANDUMTo: **All Senators, Stakeholders, Media**From: **Senator Shawn Gumataotao**, Chairman, Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management, and Guam National GuardSubject: **First Notice of Oversight Hearing - Wednesday, March 4, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.**

Buenas yan Håfa adai! Please be advised that the Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management, and Guam National Guard (Committee) will conduct an Oversight Hearing on **Wednesday, March 4, 2026**, in the Public Hearing Room of the Guam Congress Building in *Hagåtña*. The Oversight Hearing will cover the following topics:

- **Department of Agriculture, Conservation Officers (Law Enforcement)**

- Preparation for Performance-Based Budgeting
- Conservation Officer Apprenticeship Program Update
- Enforcement and Citation Authority

Watch Live

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Guam National Guard. Testimonies may be submitted via Senator Gumataotao's mailbox located at the Guam Congress Building in *Hagåtña* or via email to his office at office.senatorshawn@guamlegislature.gov.

Special Accommodations

Individuals requiring special accommodations, auxiliary aids or services are asked to submit their request to Ms. Diana Topasna at the Office of Senator Shawn Gumataotao at (671) 647-1409/1411, 120 Father Duenas Avenue Capitol Plaza Building, Suite 103, *Hagåtña*, Guam 96910, or via email at office.senatorshawn@guamlegislature.gov. *Si Yu'os Ma'åse'!*

--

Office of Senator Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao
Chairman, Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management, and Guam National Guard
38th Guam Legislature
120 Father Duenas Avenue Capitol Plaza Building, Suite 103, *Hagåtña*, Guam 96910
(671) 647-1409/1411



02.24.26 First Notice of Oversight Hearing - DOAG Conservation Officers (Law Enforcement).pdf

261K



OFFICE OF SENATOR
Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao

38th Guam Legislature | I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan

February 24, 2026

MEMORANDUM

To: **All Senators, Stakeholders, Media**

From: **Senator Shawn Gumataotao**, Chairman, Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management, and Guam National Guard 

Subject: **First Notice of Oversight Hearing - Wednesday, March 4, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.**

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First Notice of Oversight Hearing - Wednesday, March 4, 2026, 2:00 pm

First Notice of Oversight Hearing - Wednesday, March 4, 2026, 2:00 pm

PUBLIC HEARING

 **Posted on:** 02/24/2026 08:00 AM

 **Posted by:** Diana Topasna

 **Public Hearing Date:** 03/04/2026 02:00 PM

 **Department(s):**

GUAM LEGISLATURE (/notices?department_id=92)

 **Division(s):**

OFFICE OF SENATOR SHAWN GUMATAOTAO (/notices?division_id=294)

 **Notice Topic(s):** PUBLIC HEARING (/notices?topic_id=74)

 **Types of Notice:** PUBLIC HEARING (/notices?type_id=7)

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February 24, 2026

MEMORANDUM

To: All Senators, Stakeholders, Media

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Senator Shawn Gumataotao <office.senatorshawn@guamlegislature.gov>

Second Notice of Oversight Hearing - Wednesday, March 4, 2026, 2:00 p.m.

Senator Shawn Gumataotao <office.senatorshawn@guamlegislature.gov>

Fri, Feb 27, 2026 at 8:00 AM

To: phnotice@guamlegislature.gov

Bcc: "Speaker Frank Blas Jr." <speakerblas@guamlegislature.gov>, "vicespeakertonyada@guamlegislature.gov"

<vicespeakertonyada@guamlegislature.gov>, "office.senatorbri@guamlegislature.gov"

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Senator Tina Muna Barnes <senator.munabarnes@guamlegislature.gov>, "senator.parkinson@guamlegislature.gov"

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February 27, 2026

MEMORANDUM

To: **All Senators, Stakeholders, Media**

From: **Senator Shawn Gumataotao**, Chairman, Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management, and Guam National Guard

Subject: **Second Notice of Oversight Hearing - Wednesday, March 4, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.**

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--

Office of Senator Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao
Chairman, Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management, and Guam National Guard
38th Guam Legislature
120 Father Duenas Avenue Capitol Plaza Building, Suite 103, *Hagåtña*, Guam 96910
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02.27.26 Second Notice of Oversight Hearing - DOAG Conservation Officers (Law Enforcement).pdf

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OFFICE OF SENATOR
Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao

38th Guam Legislature | *I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan*

February 27, 2026

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Second Notice of Oversight Hearing - Wednesday, March 4, 2026 - 2:00 p.m.

Second Notice of Oversight Hearing - Wednesday, March 4, 2026 - 2:00 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING

 **Posted on:** 02/27/2026 08:00 AM

 **Posted by:** Diana Topasna

 **Public Hearing Date:** 03/04/2026 02:00 PM

 **Department(s):**

GUAM LEGISLATURE (/notices?department_id=92)

 **Division(s):**

OFFICE OF SENATOR SHAWN GUMATAOTAO (/notices?division_id=294)

 **Notice Topic(s):** PUBLIC HEARING (/notices?topic_id=74)

 **Types of Notice:** PUBLIC HEARING (/notices?type_id=7)

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February 27, 2026



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OFFICE OF SENATOR
Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao

38th Guam Legislature | *I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan*

**Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management,
and Guam National Guard**

Oversight Hearing
Department of Agriculture, Conservation Officers (Law Enforcement)
Wednesday, March 4, 2026 • 2:00 p.m.
Guam Congress Building, Public Hearing Room

Agenda

- I. Call to Order
- II. Chairman's Opening Statement
- III. Department of Agriculture, Conservation Officers
(Law Enforcement) Presentation:
 - a. Preparation for Performance-Based Budgeting
 - b. Conservation Officer Apprenticeship Program Update
 - c. Enforcement and Citation Authority
- IV. Question & Answer Section
- V. Chairman's Closing Statement
- VI. Adjournment



Office of Senator

SENATOR EULOGIO SHAWN GUMATAOTAO

Chairman

Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management, and Guam National Guard

I Mina'trentai Ocho na Liheslaturan Guåhan • 38th Guam Legislature

OVERSIGHT HEARING

Department of Agriculture, Conservation Officers (Law Enforcement)

Wednesday, March 4, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.

Public Hearing Room, Guam Congress Building

SIGN-IN SHEET

	NAME	AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION (IF ANY)	Please indicate with ✓		Contact Number	Email Address
			Written	Oral		
1	Chelca Muna	DOAH			300 7965	chelca.muna@doag.guam.gov
2	Lt. RMT Ragsadio	Doag			300 0760	Reichard.Ragsadio@Doag.Guam.Gov
3	Sgt SB ^{SHIAN} Ineetern ^{ARICHETA} ARICHETA	Doag			300 0760	SHIAN.Anceterra@Doag.Guam.Gov
4	ees kic Hattori ^{KIANA} HATTORI	Doag			300 0760	Kiana.Hattori@Doag.Guam.Gov
5	Glenn Takai	DOAG			300 0760	
6						
7						
8						



OFFICE OF SENATOR
Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao

38th Guam Legislature | *I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan*

February 24, 2026

Ms. Chelsa Muña
Director
Department of Agriculture
Sent via: chelsea.muna@doag.guam.gov

Subject: First Notice of Oversight Hearing – Department of Agriculture, Conservation Officers (Law Enforcement)

Håfa adai Director Muña, *Chelse*

Please be informed that the Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management, and Guam National Guard (Committee) has scheduled an Oversight Hearing on the Department of Agriculture, Conservation Officers (Law Enforcement) for **Wednesday, March 4, at 2:00 p.m.** in the Public Hearing Room of the Guam Congress Building in *Hagåtña*.

The Committee respectfully requests your attendance and participation in the upcoming Oversight Hearing, which will provide the Department of Agriculture, Conservation Officers (Law Enforcement) with the opportunity to provide information and respond to questions from members of *I Liheslatura* regarding the following topics:

- Preparation for Performance-Based Budgeting
- Conservation Officer Apprenticeship Program Update
- Enforcement and Citation Authority

A copy of the Notice of Oversight Hearing is attached to this letter to help guide the Department of Agriculture, Conservation Officers (Law Enforcement) in its preparation for the upcoming Oversight Hearing. Please be informed that if you intend to include a PowerPoint presentation in your testimony during the Oversight Hearing, the file(s) should be submitted to my office via email **at least 72 hours in advance** of the intended use.

Please contact my office at the numbers provided below or via email at office.senatorshawn@guamlegislature.gov should you have any questions.

Si Yu'os ma'åse'!

Shawn Gumataotao
SHAWN GUMATAOTAO
Chairman

Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management, and Guam National Guard

Attachment: Notice of 3.4.26 Oversight Hearing – Department of Agriculture, Conservation Officers (Law Enforcement)



Department of Agriculture

Law Enforcement Division

Conservation Officers



Law Enforcement Division

Conservation Officers

FY2027 BUDGET OVERSIGHT

March 3, 2026



Department of Agriculture

Law Enforcement Division

Conservation Officers



Current Appropriation Fiscal 2026 Budget

Budget control dimension values	Dimension descriptions	Budget funds available	Total revised budget	Total actual expenditures	Budget reservations for encumbrances	Budget reservations for pre-encumbrances	Percent used
	REGULAR SALARY-GENERAL FUND-FISCAL YEAR 2026-CONSERVATION OFFICERS	\$ 150,929.64	\$ 295,117.00	\$ 144,187.36	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 48.86
	OVERTIME SALARY-GENERAL FUND-FISCAL YEAR 2026-CONSERVATION OFFICERS	-\$ 5,361.05	\$ 1.00	\$ 5,362.05	\$ -	\$ -	#####
	FRINGE-GENERAL FUND-FISCAL YEAR 2026-CONSERVATION OFFICERS	\$ 179,731.05	\$ 244,375.00	\$ 64,643.95	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 26.45
	CONTRACT-GENERAL FUND-FISCAL YEAR 2026-CONSERVATION OFFICERS	\$ 9,586.61	\$ 12,660.00	\$ 475.39	\$ 2,598.00	\$ -	\$ 24.28
	SUPPLIES-GENERAL FUND-FISCAL YEAR 2026-CONSERVATION OFFICERS	\$ 6,932.07	\$ 8,869.00	\$ 1,936.93	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 21.84
	EQUIPMENT-GENERAL FUND-FISCAL YEAR 2026-CONSERVATION OFFICERS	\$ 6,800.00	\$ 6,800.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	MISCELLANEOUS-GENERAL FUND-FISCAL YEAR 2026-CONSERVATION OFFICERS	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

Budget control dimension values	Dimension descriptions	Budget funds available	Total revised budget	Total actual expenditures	Budget reservations for encumbrances	Budget reservations for pre-encumbrances	Percent used
	CONTRACT-GENERAL FUND-FISCAL YEAR 2026-CIVILIAN VOLUNTEERS CO PROG	\$ 2.00	\$ 12,500.00	\$ -	\$ 12,498.00	\$ -	\$ 99.98
	SUPPLIES-GENERAL FUND-FISCAL YEAR 2026-CIVILIAN VOLUNTEERS CO PROG	\$ 21,200.00	\$ 24,500.00	\$ -	\$ 3,300.00	\$ -	\$ 13.47
	EQUIPMENT-GENERAL FUND-FISCAL YEAR 2026-CIVILIAN VOLUNTEERS CO PROG	\$ 44,000.00	\$ 44,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	MISCELLANEOUS-GENERAL FUND-FISCAL YEAR 2026-CIVILIAN VOLUNTEERS CO PROG	\$ 61,000.00	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12.86
	CAPITAL OUTLAY-GENERAL FUND-FISCAL YEAR 2026-CIVILIAN VOLUNTEERS CO PROG	\$ 49,000.00	\$ 49,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -



Department of Agriculture

Law Enforcement Division

Conservation Officers



CURRENT MANNING	
1. Conservation Lieutenant	Classified
2. Conservation Officer II	Classified; Detailed Acting Seargent
3. Conservation Officer II	Classified; "Indefinite / Permanent Detailed to Fusion Center"
4. Conservation Officer I	Classified; "Detailed Acting COIII, "Shift Leader"
5. Conservation Officer Recruit	Classified
6. Conservation Officer Recruit	Classified
7. Conservation Apprentice	P.O.S.T Certified DEPCOR BCOT 2024-01; On the Job Training On-going; ARPA
8. Conservation Apprentice	P.O.S.T Certified DEPCOR BCOT 2024-01; On the Job Training On-going; ARPA
9. Conservation Apprentice	GCC P.O.S.T Cycle DOAG BCOT 2025-01; Certification On-going; ARPA
10. Conservation Apprentice	GCC P.O.S.T Cycle DOAG BCOT 2025-01; Certification On-going; ARPA
11. Conservation Apprentice	GCC P.O.S.T Cycle DOAG BCOT 2025-01; Certification On-going; ARPA
12. Conservation Apprentice	GCC P.O.S.T Cycle DOAG BCOT 2025-01; Certification On-going; ARPA
13. Conservation Apprentice	GCC P.O.S.T Cycle DOAG BCOT 2025-01; Certification On-going ARPA
14. Conservation Apprentice	GCC P.O.S.T Cycle DOAG BCOT 2025-01; Certification On-going; ARPA
15. Conservation Apprentice	GCC P.O.S.T Cycle DOAG BCOT 2025-01; Certification On-going; ARPA
16. Conservation Apprentice	GCC P.O.S.T Cycle DOAG BCOT 2025-01; Certification On-going; ARPA



Department of Agriculture

Law Enforcement Division

Conservation Officers



CONSERVATION OFFICER APPRENTICE – DOAG APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

1	Conservation Officer Apprentice	P.O.S.T Certified DEPCOR BCOT 2024-01; On the Job Training On-going; ARPA
2	Conservation Officer Apprentice	P.O.S.T Certified DEPCOR BCOT 2024-01; On the Job Training On-going; ARPA
3	Conservation Officer Apprentice	GCC P.O.S.T Cycle DOAG BCOT 2025-01; Certification On-going; ARPA
4	Conservation Officer Apprentice	GCC P.O.S.T Cycle DOAG BCOT 2025-01; Certification On-going; ARPA
5	Conservation Officer Apprentice	GCC P.O.S.T Cycle DOAG BCOT 2025-01; Certification On-going; ARPA
6	Conservation Officer Apprentice	GCC P.O.S.T Cycle DOAG BCOT 2025-01; Certification On-going; ARPA
7	Conservation Officer Apprentice	GCC P.O.S.T Cycle DOAG BCOT 2025-01; Certification On-going ARPA
8	Conservation Officer Apprentice	GCC P.O.S.T Cycle DOAG BCOT 2025-01; Certification On-going; ARPA
9	Conservation Officer Apprentice	GCC P.O.S.T Cycle DOAG BCOT 2025-01; Certification On-going; ARPA
10	Conservation Officer Apprentice	GCC P.O.S.T Cycle DOAG BCOT 2025-01; Certification On-going; ARPA
▪ DOAG BCOT 2025-01 On-going Block 7; CJ102 First Responder and CJ126 Officer Survival/LAB ▪ Block 8 CJ200 EVOC (3/23/2026-3/31/2026) and Block 9 SJ120 Intro to Island Ecology (4/6/2026-4/15/2026) ▪ Anticipated Completion of GCC POST CYCLE DOAG BCOT 2025-01 April 15th, 2026		



Department of Agriculture

Law Enforcement Division

Conservation Officers



Civilian Volunteer Conservation Officer		
1	Civilian Volunteer Conservation Officer	Filled
2	Civilian Volunteer Conservation Officer	Filled
3	Civilian Volunteer Conservation Officer	Filled
4	Civilian Volunteer Conservation Officer	Filled
5	Civilian Volunteer Conservation Officer	Filled
6	Civilian Volunteer Conservation Officer	Filled
7	Civilian Volunteer Conservation Officer	Filled
8	Civilian Volunteer Conservation Officer	Filled
9	Civilian Volunteer Conservation Officer	Pending Recruitment
10	Civilian Volunteer Conservation Officer	Pending Recruitment



Department of Agriculture

Law Enforcement Division

Conservation Officers



- **Title 17 GCA Education** CH. 51 PEACE OFFICER STANDARDS AND TRAINING COMMISSION (7) the Chief and all Conservation Officers of the Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources of the Department of Agriculture (Note: Law Enforcement Section changed to Law Enforcement Division as per DOAG Director's adjudicated powers (Memo dated August 16th, 2025))
- **Primary duties and responsibilities for Conservation Officers**
 - **Title 5: Government Operations;** Division 6 – Agriculture Chapter 63. Fish, Game, Forestry, and Conservation
 - Guam Administrative Rules and Regulations; Title 9 – Animal Regulations; Division 2. Conservation, Hunting & Fishing Regulations, Chapter 10. Endangered Species List, Chapter 11. Hunting Regulations, Chapter 12. Fishing Regulations
 - **Assisting DAWR – Wildlife Section and Fisheries Section**
 - Guam Administrative Rules and Regulations; Title 9 – Animal Regulations; Division 2. Conservation, Hunting & Fishing Regulations, Chapter 10. Endangered Species List, Chapter 11. Hunting Regulations, Chapter 12. Fishing Regulations
 - **Assisting Animal Control Division / Animal Control Officers**
 - Title 9 GCA CRIMES AND CORRECTIONS CH. 70 MISCELLANEOUS CRIMES § 70.25. Animal Abuse “Cruelty”
 - **Assisting Forestry Division – Wildfire Investigation**
 - Title 5 GCA GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS CH. 63 FISH, GAME, FORESTRY AND CONSERVATION §63711. Wildland Fire Enforcement Officer: Deputies
 - **Assisting Agricultural Development Services**
 - Title 9, GCA, Article 1, Chapter 63, Relative to Penalties and Restitution for Theft of Livestock or Agricultural Products



Department of Agriculture

Law Enforcement Division

Conservation Officers



Conservation Officers Daily/ Nightly Operations





Department of Agriculture

Law Enforcement Division

Conservation Officers



Drug ring busted following traffic stop by DOA Conservation officers

By
Johanne Torres



- Authorities were in for a treat when they got a call from Department of Agriculture conservation officers in need of assistance with a traffic stop in the Marbo Cave area.
- According to GPD Spokesperson Sgt Paul Tapao, David Cepeda Torres was discovered with 7 ounces of methamphetamine, and over 18-thousand dollars in cash and firearms.
- His arrest led to the arrest of six other individuals under two search warrants carried out by GPD's Mandana Drug Task Force and the Drug enforcement Administration.
- Police say, the first warrant was executed on a home in Mongmong, where they encountered Kevin James Camacho, Jason Camacho, Quitigua, Jeffery Cepeda Camacho, and Justin Vincent Camacho. The four men were at the home when officers discovered methamphetamines, drug paraphernalia and guns.
- According to Tapao a second raid was conducted on a home in Agana Heights. The raid yielded 4.4 ounces of methamphetamine, 14 grams of cocaine, 30 grams of marijuana, and over 15-thousand dollars in cash.
- At the Agana Heights home police came upon Cynthia Leon Guerrero Paulino who provided GPD with information about drug proceeds contained within a local bank safety deposit box. Police say when they executed a search warrant on the box, 510-thousand dollars in cash and other assets were discovered.
-



Department of Agriculture

Law Enforcement Division

Conservation Officers



Chinese illegal immigrant entry by vessel found at Tanguissan beach by Conservation Officers during night enforcement patrol.

He said he was briefed about Department of Agriculture conservation law enforcement officers discovering contraband during a patrol on the perimeter of DOC's adult correctional facility in Mangilao on Aug. 17.

"Since we are communicating about budgets, we at DOC hopefully see that our other law enforcement partners, DOAG conservation law, get funding support for their needs to respond to threats in ungoverned spaces around our island, from the coastline to the interior jungles," Bordallo said.



Department of Agriculture

Law Enforcement Division

Conservation Officers



Joint Operations with The U.S. Coast Guard MSST Units and Sector Guam





Department of Agriculture

Law Enforcement Division

Conservation Officers



Conservation Apprentice under-go defensive tactics/ officer survival training.



Department of Agriculture

Law Enforcement Division

Conservation Officers



Conservation Officer Apprentice DOAG POST Cycle “Defensive Tactics” practicum training at Ryze Gym for combative.



Department of Agriculture

Law Enforcement Division

Conservation Officers



COIII J.A. Terlaje provided a detailed briefing on fire arms qualifications, outlining the procedures, safety protocols, and performance standards required during low-light firearms training.
DOAG BCOT 2025-01 and DEPCOR BCOT 2025-02 P.O.S.T Cycle



Department of Agriculture

Law Enforcement Division

Conservation Officers



During Firearms course COA'S engage in the DOAG Law Enforcement low-light course of fire, applying tactical weapon handling and controlled illumination to identify and accurately engage the targets under reduced visibility conditions



Department of Agriculture

Law Enforcement Division

Conservation Officers



Conservation Officers participate in multiple education and outreach events



Department of Agriculture

Law Enforcement Division

Conservation Officers



GFA President Valentino San Gil poses with Guam Department of Agriculture Conservation Officers during the 17th Annual Sugar and Spice Middle School Girls Festival Jan. 17 at the Guam Football Association National Training Center. GFA partnered with Dept. of Agriculture for its Football 4 Schools program to promote its conservation efforts designed for the island's youth. In the photo are, from left to right, COA Jhonnie Domingo-Castro, San Gil, COA Kealani Techur, COA CT Kiana Hattori, COA Eden Idelbong, COA Aaron Blaz, and COA Edward Sandlin. Photo by Ashley Marques / GFA



Conservation Officers along with Conservation Apprentice collaborate with GFA – Soccer 4 School “Sugar and Spice” Tournament as part of Conservation education and outreach.

UNCLASSIFIED / FOUO / LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE



OFFICE OF SENATOR
Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao

38th Guam Legislature | *I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan*

COMMITTEE REPORT DIGEST

I. OVERVIEW

The Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management, and Guam National Guard convened an Oversight Hearing regarding the Department of Agriculture, Conservation Officers Law Enforcement Division on March 4, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. at the Public Hearing Room of the Guam Congress Building in Hagåtña.

Public Notice Requirements

Public Hearing Notices sent out via email to all Senators and all main media broadcasting outlets on February 24, 2026 (5-Day Notice) and again on February 24, 2026 (48-Hour Notice) for the Oversight hearing on February 27, 2026. All notices were also published on the Guam Public Notice Website on the aforementioned dates.

Senators Present

Senator Eulogio S. Gumataotao, Committee Chairperson

Vice Speaker V. Anthony Ada, Committee Vice Chairperson

Attendees

Ms. Chelsa Muna, Director – Dept. of Agriculture

Lt. Richard Ragadio, Conservation Officer - Department of Agriculture

Ms. Shian Aricheta, Conservation Officer - Department of Agriculture

Ms. Kiana Hattori, Conservation Officer - Department of Agriculture

Mr. Glenn Takai, Department of Agriculture

II. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY & DISCUSSION

Oversight Hearing - Senator Shawn Gumataotao - March 4, 2026 2pm

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Buenas and hafa adai everyone. Today's oversight hearing by the Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management and your Guam National Guard regarding the Department of Agriculture, Conservation Officers Law Enforcement Division. Today is Wednesday, March 4th, 2026, and the time is now 2 p.m. CHamoru Standard Time.

For the record, and in accordance with the open government law, notices for today's oversight hearing were sent on February 24th, 2026, and again on February 27th, 2026. Notices for this hearing were also published on the Guam Legislature website and the Guam Public Notices website. Joining us here this afternoon are members of the Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management and Guam National Guard, and I appreciate the attendance today, and I want to recognize the Vice Chair of this committee and the Vice Speaker of the Guam Legislature, Tony Ada, for being with us, si Yu'os ma'ase', Vice Speaker for your attendance today.

And before we proceed with today's discussion, I'd first like to provide some general rules of conduct for this afternoon's oversight hearing, which shall be as follows. Written comments or presentations shall be submitted to the committee. Please provide my legislative staff with your written comments for photocopying. Comments may be read, and lengthy presentations should be summarized to about five minutes. Those offering comments will be allowed to present written or oral testimony in the five-minute time frame allotted. I would ask that you could please respect the committee's request. Once you are done, please remain in the room for questions or additional comments as may be desired by members of the Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management and the Guam National Guard and other members of the legislature. Questions and comments shall be confined to the nature of the agenda. The agenda for this afternoon's oversight hearing concerns the Department of Agriculture, Conservation Officers, Law Enforcement Divisions, preparation for Performance-Based Budgeting, updates regarding the Conservation Officer Apprenticeship Program, and the enforcement and citation authority of these law enforcement officers.

For the record, the committee requested the attendance and participation of Ms. Chelsa Muna, Director of the Department of Agriculture. And again, I want to thank her for being with us this afternoon. And before speaking, Director Muna and anyone else she calls upon to participate in the hearing shall first be recognized by the Chair and shall state their name for record purposes. The order of questioning will begin with a panel of Senators who shall each have five minutes to ask their questions. The time allotted to each Senator does not include the responses that are provided by those that are testifying today. Personal inferences about the character or motive of any Senator or any individual commenting is not permitted. Any violations of this general rule of conduct will result in removal from the public hearing room for this afternoon's oversight hearing. Individuals who fail to maintain proper form or decorum may be restricted from providing oral testimony and or may be asked to leave or be escorted and removed from the room. Proper form and decorum shall be practiced by all present here in the public hearing room.

Now, at this time, the committee requests that the Sergeant-at-Arms, Ed Pocaigue to please swear in Director Muna and any other members of the panel before she provides general comments and answers questions from Senators on the items outlined in today's oversight hearing agenda. Mr. Pocaigue, you can proceed. Thank you.

Sargeant-at-Arms Ed Pocaigue: Please stand and raise your right hand. Under penalty of perjury, do you affirm that any and all information you provide today, whether it be verbally, electronically, and in writing, be the whole truth and nothing but the truth? *I do.* Mr. Chair, you are adjourned. You may proceed.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Thank you, Mr. Pocaigue. On August 1st, 1956, Guam Public Law 3-103 from the Third Guam Legislature established the responsibility of the local government to control and regulate our natural resources. This public policy, from nearly 70 years ago, authorized the Director of Agriculture to appoint suitable employees or deputies to enforce our natural resource laws and regulations, and as peace officers, to make arrests for the violation of policies that protect and promote the agricultural resources and the economy of Guam, described by the Executive Branch as the entity responsible for assisting the Department of Agriculture in managing Guam's natural resources through the enforcement of Guam's Fish, Wildlife, Endangered Threatened Species Law, Forestry Law, and the Standard of Care for Livestock and Branding Law, conservation officers and the civilian volunteer conservation officers directly impact families through food, economic, and environmental security.

In preparation for the fiscal year 2027 budget session, the Committee recognizes that Public Law 29-19 from September 29, 2007 required the respective heads of several departments and agencies, including the Department of Agriculture, to develop and implement Performance-Based Budgeting no later than September 30, 2009. The Committee is interested in reviewing records, if any, summarizing the steps the Department has taken between fiscal year 2009 and its budget preparation for fiscal year 2027 for Performance-Based Budgeting as these efforts impact the work of our conservation officers' law enforcement. We appreciate in advance any information that confirms the inclusion of the Department's conservation officers in any official submissions to the Administration pursuant to BBMR Circular 09-01 from October 31, 2008.

The Committee also looks forward to receiving an update regarding the Conservation Officer Apprenticeship Program, which according to the Department's proposed staffing pattern for FY 2026 included at least 13 apprentices, and we appreciate that the Administration this past year launched Guam's inaugural Conservation Officer Apprenticeship Program, and we look forward to hearing about the support that has been provided by those in charge since its creation 12 months ago. Now the Committee will conclude this Oversight Hearing with a frank discussion on the challenges, if any, facing our conservation officers specific to their enforcement and citation authority under Guam law, including 5GCA Section 63103, which authorizes conservation officers to issue citations for violations and investigate, detain, or make arrests for violations across their enabling and associated statutes. The Committee appreciates in advance the attendance and participation of Director Chelsa Muna of the Department of Agriculture and our conservation officers who are with us today, as well as the new Deputy Director.

We look forward to your cooperation as we put forward our questions, and we recognize your commitment to continue working together to protect our natural resources and to secure our borders. So thank you very much, and I'll turn it over to Director Muna again. Thank you, and welcome back to the Guam Congress Building, specifically the Public Hearing Room. Thank you, and you may proceed.

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Hafa adai Senator Gumataotao, Vice Speaker Ada, thank you for this opportunity to discuss our Conservation Officer Law Enforcement Division. For the record, my name is Chelsa Muna, Director for the Guam Department of Agriculture. We welcome any opportunity to talk about the work done by our conservation officers in the Law Enforcement Division. We submitted a presentation to your staff, if they can bring that up, or are they going to bring that up? Okay.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Sorry, we're not able to.

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: So you have the paper.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: We'll track alongside of you.

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: All right. Starting with our current appropriation for fiscal year 2026 budget, we have six conservation officers that are full conservation officers from the recruit up to the lieutenant position, as well as 10 apprentices that have been moved on to the general fund, but I would like to take it back a few fiscal years, and starting with fiscal year 24, we had five conservation officers and 11 reservists that were funded through the general fund. In fiscal year 26, we were able to recruit and start our Conservation Officer Apprenticeship Program. We started off with 14 apprentices that were funded through the ARPA funding provided by the Lieutenant Governor Tenorio at the time. In this current fiscal year, we've moved 10 Conservation Officer Apprentices to the general fund as the ARPA funding expired, but we were able to utilize most of that funding for the apprenticeship program as it started. We lost four officers, apprentices in the program, and then after the transition to the general fund, we lost two more to federal jobs. The funding for the law enforcement division sits roughly around half a million dollars between salaries, fringe benefits, and supplies, equipment, miscellaneous provisions, all which go towards operations.

These include supplies like bullets, Kevlar, targets, gas for vehicles, et cetera, maintenance for vehicles. The Civilian Volunteer Reservist Program is funded annually through the legislature at \$200,000 to cover stipends for the civilian reservists as well as any operational costs. On the next slide, you'll see that we have our, the top six positions are current conservation classified positions. We've moved 10 conservation apprentices onto, again, the general fund. We're still on the ARPA, I didn't see that. The apprentices are currently ongoing their block seven of training, which includes first responder and officer survival training as well as the laboratory.

They will commence block eight on March 23rd, and we anticipate the conclusion of the apprenticeship program in April 15th, 2026. At that time, we will then have a conservation law enforcement division staffed with 16 conservation officers, which has not been seen for decades with the agency. We currently have eight civilian reservists on staff that come in during their regular law enforcement and their full-time jobs, but they pull reservist duties with our department based on scheduled needs. We move into our authorities and

responsibilities as requested. Primary duties and responsibilities for conservation officers include and are delegated under division six, title five, division six, chapter 63 for fish, game, forestry, and conservation. And the accompanying GAR is title nine for animal regulations, which oversees everything from conservation hunting and fishing to our endangered species list, which the officers provide support for, as well as hunting regulations and fishing regulations that are not restricted to just our marine protected areas, but also just fishing regulations that govern gear, gear types used, and locations for fishing. The division or the department is working on our fisheries management plan, will then include additional responsibilities for our conservation officers to enforce as well. We also have, they provide assistance to our animal control division through animal abuse and cruelty investigations. Our animal control officers are responsible for identifying incidents of animal cruelty or animal abuse, and then they would then call on our conservation officers to come in and assist with any further investigation that is warranted, or in some cases, arrests. Our conservation officers have also now assumed the additional responsibility of assisting our forestry and soil resources division forestry aides who conduct arson, wildland arson investigations. Our conservation officers were trained in this as well, so they incurred additional training and enforced those as required or as needed, pending investigations from our forestry aides. Another responsibility that has been added to the plethora that they have is relative to the penalties for livestock and agricultural theft, which has proven to be an increasing criminal offense on island in the last several years, actually. And the conservation officers are tasked with conducting these investigations. They would be forwarded cases. In many instances, the community calls on GPD for the initial response, and GPD will forward cases to our conservation officers for investigation and pursuit.

I do also want to add that the brevity of some of the descriptions for these authorities and mandated responsibilities doesn't quite convey the amount of work that goes into the duties that they perform. Their patrols nightly and daily, with the additional now six officers, we've been able to have split shifts for investigations or for just regular patrols, but they have additional responsibilities that are delegated by federal regulations, which include marine mammal protection, the Lacey violations, and the endangered species as well, but expanded beyond just Guam-listed and protected species to include federally listed species. But our conservation officers have embraced all of this responsibility and even expanded their capacity through partnerships that have been established with Anderson Air Force Base through a memorandum of agreement with the United States Coast Guard. We've engaged in multiple events for cross training and capacity building for the Coast Guard and for our team as well. As you'll see in some of the slides, I forgot the pictures part. There's a lot of pictures that you can see. During their regular trainings and patrols, especially in marine protected areas, they've pulled out just several instances of gill nets that are abandoned in the water, which is against Guam law, but they cause wanton waste and kill any fish that swims into the nets, so they go in and they regularly pull out nets that are left abandoned or for fishers that choose to leave them there, but they're not really abandoned. They just want to see how many fish they can catch and then come back later and discard whatever they don't want, which contributes to the waste. Our conservation officers also enforce the regular laws of Guam that are typically or assumed to be the sole responsibility of Guam police officers or Guam police department, but our officers are also tasked with enforcing those as well. They were the first officers during their patrol to identify the vessels that were being left abandoned by Chinese migrants that were coming over from the CNMI. Conservation officers were the first ones to determine that and then report that, which then became a much larger issue as we saw several occurrences of that. We have several, again, joint operations with the United States Coast Guard units, and we report these at the federal level as well during the Western Regional

Pacific Fisheries Management Council meetings, so they hear about these trainings, cross-trainings at the federal level as we have U.S. Coast Guard representation on that council. Conservation officers are the first ones called when GPD has instances of individuals that they are looking for. Most recently, when there was the shootings in Talofofo, conservation officers were called and requested to support because they have the training to go into the forests and conduct investigations during the manhunts. They engage in several training opportunities at FLETC, which is the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, so our officers are trained at the national level and receive certifications and become training officers themselves. And I think we have three of our officers who are registered with the Guam Community College to conduct training during the post-cycles as well. You'll see some of the pictures for the firearms training and certification for our apprentices. And part of their federal responsibilities as well as local, which we found to be a great contribution to enforcement is the education and outreach. So our conservation officers regularly, on a monthly basis, engage in outreach and education with the community. And that's also been the approach with those who they find maybe lacking in their knowledge of some of Guam's laws relative to natural resource management, so they conduct education before they come down with arrests. And then again, you'll see more conservation officer training. This was a sugar and spice event with the Guam Football Association. They were a large part of the—they had an education and outreach booth set up. And although it sounds promising that we've gone from five officers, fiscal year 2024, to now potentially having 16, that's still nowhere near the capacity that we need to truly be able to provide effective conservation law enforcement protection for the island for our resources.

Conservation officers are responsible for surveilling over 80 miles of shore on the island when they conduct their nightly patrols or daily patrols, at least on the ocean level, not to mention the thousands of acres in government properties, and also the support they provide to private citizens when they get calls for poaching on private property and the investigations that they need to conduct. I mean, at the time, think about that, with six conservation officers patrolling over 80 miles of shore for Guam, and then hundreds of thousands or thousands of acres of jungle. And they have designated areas where they conduct these. Oh, and another, not mandated, but an additional task that they've taken on at the request of the farming community is to conduct sort of drive-bys with farms to help deter crop theft and livestock theft. And that came at the request of the Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and the conservation officers were happy to comply with that. That concludes our presentation, and we stand ready for questions.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Yeah, thank you so much, Chelsa. And let me just start with the saying that the Talofofo incident that you mentioned earlier in support of law enforcement was a big deal, considering that I was in my, that's where I live, that was my community, so I appreciated the assistance. That was actually a multi-agency assistance, and so thank you, Mr. Ragadio and your team for all that help. But let me go ahead and begin on the preparation for, we'll stick with the agenda, for preparation for Performance-Based Budgeting, and I know this is going to be specific, Chelsa, just to conservation officers. And I know that this is perhaps, could be addressed by the committee chair on land at some point. But let's start with this. What records as they relate to the mandates and operational requirements of conservation officers are available? Summarizing the steps that were taken to comply with Section 43 of Public Law 29-19, which required the respective heads of several departments, including the Department of Agriculture, to develop and implement Performance-Based Budgeting no later than September 30, 2009. And I know that was such a

long time ago. But can you, just from since you became director, have you been able to see any of those as we're getting into this fiscal year?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Short answer, no. And when I entered office in 2019, at least with respect to this division, they had always been operating at a deficit, both financially and with capacity. So it's only since then that we've been able to start building capacity within the division to even meet all of the mandated requirements, and that we've been able to secure additional appropriation from the legislature, specifically with the \$200,000 that we've received annually to help support the division.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Yeah, thank you for your candor about this specifically with Performance-Based Budgeting. Now, acknowledging that Performance-Based Budgeting links budget requests to program performance, just, if you can, share with us, how often do you as director of agriculture and your teams, your entire, all your division heads, how often do you review the at least 16 legal mandates as outlined in executive budget requests for FY 2027 against the annual legislative appropriations, personnel requirements, and resource availability? And are there specific mandates that your department had to prioritize over other responsibilities, specifically to conservation officers?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Lucky you added that last segment there, because the short answer for that is yes, we review that regularly. Since 2019, we've reviewed our mandates through GCA, GAR, and federal. I think we're on our third vision, or third revision, or third iteration of reviewing our mandates to determine what we can enforce, what is practicable, and what we just don't have the capacity for. With respect to our conservation officers, we've been able to meet, I would argue that we've been able to meet all of our mandates, for the most part, but not as frequently as we would like to, and we do have the data to support that, so we'd be happy to provide that to you, absolutely not as frequently as we should, and you would hear it from the community as well.

One of the loudest cries from both the farming and fishing community is that we need more conservation officers, because that's the only way we can prevent and capture poachers, and that's where we've fallen short, because of funding and capacity. We've been able to address that more recently, and we've seen the difference. We see the difference in the number of arrests we've had to engage in, and more outreach and education that's been conducted, but we absolutely do, do those reviews to determine what we can enforce, and I'd be happy to discuss multiple, or other divisions, what other mandates we're not able to meet, due to funding.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: No, I appreciate that. Now, Director, you are the ex officio chief conservation officer by policy. Now, in fiscal year 2025, you were authorized nine classified law enforcement personnel just up just one position from 2024. This fiscal year, you jumped up by 10 staff, 13 unclassified, and a reduction of six classified positions, a total of 19 total FTEs. You have one conservation lieutenant, three CO2s, to include one assigned to the fusion center, a conservation officer one who is paid higher than those above him, and a single conservation recruit. This is six. Can you help me explain, help us understand the other 13 that are part of your team today?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Those are the conservation officer apprentices. So, those were hired again under ARPA funding and are converted to general fund just this last fiscal year.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: All right. Thank you for that. Now, public policy allows your conservation officers to carry arms. With 78 GovGuam weapons, GLOCKS, and a single AR-15, does your agency have an armory for those weapons?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Yes, we do.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Thank you. In your budget request, you asked for two AR-15 rifles. Are all of your peace officers annually certified on the GLOCKS, but specifically, are they also certified on the AR-15?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Yes. We just finished recertification.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Okay. Thank you for that, which is going to get me to my next question was, are you properly reporting that back to the Peace Officers Standard Training Commission after the certification of your teams?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Yes, we do.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Thank you.

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: We CC them in all of the certifications after they're finalized.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Okay. Now, in the Budget Act, and this is a question about the budget, but is the ammunition and your target amounts, which was \$3,000 that was listed, is that really enough to certify all your peace officers, your reservists, and your three funded vacancies when it's time to certify? Is that enough?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: We get by with that, and then we look to other federal funds, when available, to supplement that.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Why I'm asking, just from experience from the judiciary, that it seemed like it wasn't enough that they were listing, so when you say \$3,000 in your budget, is there another amount that could be, is it \$5,000, is it \$10,000? Why I'm asking, because I think that it's important for our community to know that when you're getting certified on the Glock or on the AR-15, that those sheets are specific to those law enforcement teams, and so if it's not enough or the rounds aren't enough, I'm hoping that you're not undercutting, and publicly I'm saying I don't want you to undercut it. I'm hoping that if it's not \$3,000, is there an amount that, is it higher, obviously?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: We've discussed this, and we know the exact amount, and it's closer to \$20,000 that would be sufficient, especially given the addition of the apprentices to the roster.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: So that would be the Glocks and the AR-15, to be fully certified on an annual basis, it's about \$20,000?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Yes.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Okay. Okay, let me now turn it over to the Vice Chair of the committee, and I believe he's your committee oversight. Vice Speaker Tony Ada, do you have any questions regarding performance-based, or preparation for Performance-Based Budgeting? And you have five minutes.

Vice Chairperson/Vice Speaker Tony Ada: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think the only questions I probably would have is, in discussions with the, because your department is split into two, I have oversight of agriculture, but the chairman has oversight of the law enforcement division, so have you had the conversations that we've been having? Have you had that conversation with the oversight chair of law enforcement division?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Not as frequently as we'd like, but we have had conversations, yes.

Vice Chairperson/Vice Speaker Tony Ada: I see. Okay, only because, you know, we need to see where we're going to go, especially with the Performance-Based Budgeting that has been asked of the all committee chairs moving forward in this upcoming FY27 budget. And then also, the other, how is it that we went from the ARP funding, and then right into general fund for the law enforcement officers, because when, I think back in, when all the positions that were filled by ARP funding, then they turned around and said, well, after those ARP fundings expire, then they're going to, those positions would be terminated, right? And I think my concern with the agriculture is, how is it that we protect what's already there, right, and how do we move those, how were those individuals moved? If any, have any individuals been moved already from ARP to general fund?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Yes, so that actually just recently occurred, and that was part of the challenge that we faced this fiscal year, was the termination of the ARP funding in the middle of the fiscal year, and compounded, what compounded that fact was that our ASO, our administrative services officer, had overseen the initial establishment of the conservation apprentices on the ARP funding, and has been unable to rejoin us in the workforce for medical reasons. So we were kind of catching up to a lot of different issues. So it did take us, not by surprise, but it was, we had to react quickly in converting them, so we moved them onto the general fund, considering that we would have lapses for other personnel that we had not hired at the time, or that were in process. But what it has done, this fiscal year is caused us to be in roughly \$200,000 shortfall for this fiscal year. So we're still trying to figure out how to navigate and get through the rest of the fiscal year, considering that.

Vice Chairperson/Vice Speaker Tony Ada: Did you have any lapse funds from, or funds that were lapsing and were taken back to, taken back from the department?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: In the prior year, yes.

Vice Chairperson/Vice Speaker Tony Ada: And how much was that?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Roughly \$386,000.

Vice Chairperson/Vice Speaker Tony Ada: So that actually would have covered the shortfall?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Yes.

Vice Chairperson/Vice Speaker Tony Ada: Okay. So these are the only positions that are going to be moved from ARP funding to, there's no other position within the department?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: No.

Vice Chairperson/Vice Speaker Tony Ada: So it's just the conservation officers?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Yes.

Vice Chairperson/Vice Speaker Tony Ada: And that's very concerning, because like I said, they play a very integral part in keeping...

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Absolutely.

Vice Chairperson/Vice Speaker Tony Ada: ...our island safe. And how is it that we're going to continue to move forward, knowing that you had the funds to prevent that shortfall, but yet it was taken back? No. I'll be working with the chair on the oversight for the law enforcement side, and then hopefully we'll be able to come up with something to ensure that we protect the conservation office. It's a...*It's a doozy*. But that's all I have, Mr. Chair.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Yes, thank you so much.

Vice Chairperson/Vice Speaker Tony Ada: Working with you.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Yes, absolutely. And especially going back to my line of questioning relative to the certification from our firearms. So yes, thank you for that. OKAY, let's now move on to updates regarding the Conservation Officer Apprenticeship Program. So the Civilian Volunteer Conservation Officer Reserve created 21 years ago. It looks like, I would look at it, it's 13 reservists or apprentices that are currently on there now. And can you help me? I know that you presented it, but just for the record, one more time. How many reservists or apprentices do we have today currently?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: So those are two different groups, two different positions. *Okay*. The reservists are like the part-time weekend warriors, so to speak, that serve in other law enforcement agencies, which is a requirement to become a reservist. And so then when they want to pick up extra cash monthly, but they have to apply and be a part, an accepted part of the position.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: So how many reservists do we have?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: We have nine. Nine reservists. I'm sorry, eight pending recruitment for two.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Okay. And then the apprentices, how many again?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: We had, yes, but then we lost two, so we're down to eight or still down to 10. Okay, we have 10. So 10. We started with 14 and then lost, yeah.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: So a total of?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: 10.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: So eight reservists, 10 apprentices.

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Yes.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Okay, so where can the public view the law enforcement or agency staffing pattern? I was having a little bit of trouble. I couldn't find it. Is it not on your website the doag.guam.gov, is it there?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: I don't believe we've posted that to our website, no.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Okay, yeah.

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: We can make that available.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Okay, all right. With that said, for the record, I know we have eight reservists, but are you looking to convert the, at some point, the reservists to the funded vacancies, or are you going to move the apprentices to the funded vacancies? What's your plan? Maybe Mr. Ragadio or?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: The apprentices will convert to recruits.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: But not the reservists?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: No, not the reservists. They have other full-time employment, but when...

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: I'm sure those other law enforcement agencies could use that help, but I'm saying that you need help too.

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Absolutely. No, and when we open up positions, we notify them so that they have the opportunity to apply if they choose. I know, I can think of one reservist just offhand who is in military service, but we would gladly welcome and embrace that reservist if they came to our agency full-time.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Okay, thank you. Mr. Ragadio, did you want to say something on that?

Lt. Richard Ragadio-Conservation Ofcr., Dept. of Agriculture: Thank you, sir. Yes, we're proud because in our CivCorps program, one did get picked up at the Superior Court Marshals, and then another one did get picked up at the Camp Blas Federal. So, yes, they are

afforded an opportunity from our training where they can get to a full-time position elsewhere within the local or the federal. So, we're very proud of that program.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: And I was going to say that I'm a big fan of the reservist program. I believe that our workforces, we should be rewarding that effort if they're going to commit time, that if there is an opening in the agency, that we look to the reservist program first. Obviously, we have apprentices, so that makes a lot more sense, too. But I'm, again, a big fan of how that works out. Based on the reported balance as of September 30, 2025, of \$55,334 from the FY 2025 appropriation of \$200,000 for the Civilian Volunteer Conservation Officers Program, has the unexpended balance been made available to your department since the conclusion of FY 2025?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: My thought is that no. If it was the fiscal year 2025, no. I think that was part of the—actually, no, I do recall now. That was part of the lapsed funds that were no longer available.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Okay, thank you. What expenditures are tied to the remaining \$193,500 balance from your department's FY 2026 appropriation of \$200,000 for the Civilian Volunteer Conservation Officer Program? Do you have any expenditures attached to it?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Um, those would be relative to equipment, and I believe part of that was also used for the Conservation Officer Building.

Lt. Richard Ragadio-Conservation Ofcr., Dept. of Agriculture: So what we're trying to do right now with that is for the vehicles. We're trying to get vehicles in the EVOC, and I'm working to see if we can use that funding. But we have the new building, but we still have some other scope of work or change orders, right? Specifically for the outer perimeter fencing, and then we have the backdrop in the rear to extend the building to have like a bay, an open bay, but the ARPA could only have funds so much. I was trying to see if I can use that for the change order that's going to need to happen soon.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Yeah, I'm hoping that at some point we can—when I asked about how much you need to certify, at some point we need to consider that that—I mean, the amount that you listed in your budget, it's such a—the delta's huge. So I'm hoping that priority-wise we can—I mean, while the buildings are important and the fleet, but keeping all your officers certified in line with law, that would be super helpful. But I just—I digress. Let me just ask this next question. Is—following the February 2025 launch of the Department of Ag's Conservation Officer Apprenticeship Program, Lieutenant Ragadio and your team, you met with the Vice Speaker and the Vice Chairman of this committee regarding personnel and other operational funding requirements beginning in FY 2027. Can you tell us, for the record, how many of the apprentices have since earned post-commission certification, and what's their employment status as of FY 2026?

Lt. Richard Ragadio-Conservation Ofcr., Dept. of Agriculture: Out of the 10, sir, two got certified under September 24 under—with the DepCorp cycle at the time, because they asked—they needed extra, so I loaned them, in a sense, three of my officers. Two of my officers, they're certified already. Two. One left at the federal, eventually. The remaining eight—Okay, the remaining eight are currently in our post-cycle with GCC. It just so happens that myself, Sergeant Aricheta, and right now Officer Terlaje is doing the defensive—I mean,

the officer survival in Block 8 right now. We're almost finished, so it's—eight are still pending to be certified. We should be done April 15, and we're—that's along with the DepCorp 2025-02 as well. So April 15, we'll still check. They'll be all fully post-certified by April 15, and we're done.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: All right, thank you so much for that. Okay, I will now turn the mic over to Vice Speaker Ada regarding any updates on the Conservation Officer Apprenticeship Program. You have five minutes.

Vice Chairperson/Vice Speaker Tony Ada: No, I don't have any questions of the officers. Thank you.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: All right, thank you so much for that. Let's move now to the Enforcement and Citation Authority, and regarding the enforcement up takings of wild birds, feral animals, do you guys—are you seeing any of these cases coming, especially on any of your forestry-managed areas that you guys—are you seeing any of that in your—are your conservation officers coming across any of those instances?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: No, not directly. And our officers are called when we find instances of take for endangered species. We—our Wildlife Division is often notified, and then we'll reach out to our conservation officers, but we're also obligated to notify U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and they have—well, they have one officer in CNMI, so then it still falls on our conservation officers.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Now, and this is probably going to be more important for Performance-Based Budgeting, but if you can—for the record, are you able to tell us how many of those you might have encountered between—like, since the start of this fiscal year?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: What they do have is marine mammal protection and turtle—endangered species relative to green sea turtles, and we have—we do have that documented and data for that.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: There's at least one case?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Oh, more than one.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Can you—for the record, since the start of the fiscal year, how many you're looking at here?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: For the fiscal year?

Lt. Richard Ragadio-Conservation Ofcr., Dept. of Agriculture: For the turtle, I believe we have three—two or three right now, right? That's been referred to NOAA, but we are the lead because we were the first investigating, as far as the conservation officers. We have, on the marine protected for the dolphins, we have two. That's for the harassment of the dolphin pods. Then that's basically it for the ESA for the turtles, about three. We just had one recently, two at Achang and one over at Agat, okay. And then for the MMPA, we just have two. That's for the harassment of the dolphin pods.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: So any endangered species at all? So you have—

Lt. Richard Ragadio-Conservation Ofcr., Dept. of Agriculture: Those are considered the endangered species.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Under the Act?

Lt. Richard Ragadio-Conservation Ofcr., Dept. of Agriculture: Yes.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Okay, thank you for that. Now let me ask you, are you—and maybe, Lieutenant, you can respond to this—are you responding regularly to investigate, detain, or arrest in regard to the theft of agricultural products as defined by law? And maybe since the start of the fiscal year?

Lt. Richard Ragadio-Conservation Ofcr., Dept. of Agriculture: At this time, no. We're actually—we're working now with ADS to get a more proactive program with that, but at this time, no, we have not.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: How about last fiscal year?

Lt. Richard Ragadio-Conservation Ofcr., Dept. of Agriculture: No, not last fiscal year. I'm hoping we can—

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Part of the issue with that, with last fiscal year, which we've been able to work through and resolve, was the LRMS system of reporting for GPD because our officers did not have equal access through the system. So GPD wasn't able to forward any reports to our team. We addressed that and resolved it, I believe, in September, where we resolved the LRMS issue.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: So now Ag is able to act or is on the LRMS system right now?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Yes.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: So then are you expecting to start seeing more of those reports coming your way?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Absolutely, and especially with the increase in outreach to the farmers.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Yeah, I think as—I know we have one farmer that's in this room. I think that he would appreciate knowing that at least at some point, our conservation officers will be able to respond. I live next door to a farm, and I think as they're watching this hearing right now, they're probably thinking to myself, they probably had no comfort hearing that we're not going to talk about takings or people going onto these properties. But I'm hoping that they can see that on the horizon with new conservation officers, there is going to be some effort *absolutely*, for them to be able to, when reports come in, that they're able. Now with the LRMS access, that's going to be significant.

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: It'll absolutely streamline the process. And then it was probably this farmer that wanted us to do the patrols. But like I said,

when I mentioned it earlier, that our conservation officers were happy to comply with that. We all thought it was a great idea. And for the farming community to get to know on a more personal level who our conservation officers are and then see them as they patrol around the different farming areas which they're doing and learning the different farms with our Agriculture Development Services team.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: And with that said, let's look at this in totality now, looking at your entire mandate. It is an important mandate to make arrests. So can you tell us, at least from last fiscal year, how many arrested conservation officers make in 2025? Do you have that number available?

Lt. Richard Ragadio-Conservation Ofcr., Dept. of Agriculture: We have that number available. I can't tell you offhand right now. But I believe it's about eight right now. It's very minimal.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: For last year?

Lt. Richard Ragadio-Conservation Ofcr., Dept. of Agriculture: From last.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Okay. I think for the committee, if you can, if you can pull up the record, not just last year, but the last three fiscal years. This is important for us in terms of our discussions going into the budget. And I just want to make sure that you have it. Can you tell me, Lieutenant, have you, those, at least in the last, those eight, were those all prosecuted by the Attorney General of Guam?

Lt. Richard Ragadio-Conservation Ofcr., Dept. of Agriculture: No, all those are all forwarded and pending.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: So those are, they're with the Attorney General?

Lt. Richard Ragadio-Conservation Ofcr., Dept. of Agriculture: Yes.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Okay, that's good to know.

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: I do want to qualify that. *Sure.* With the eight arrests and then the numbers that we'll give you for the prior three fiscal years is that was when we're operating with five to six conservation officers.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Oh no, I was going to, you know, I didn't want to make an apples to oranges comparison. I just want to make sure that when we're looking at the work of our conservation officers that we know that number, even with a smaller amount, right, Chelsa, we want to make sure we have an idea. And, and we don't include the endangered species, those dolphins, and those are separate and apart, yes, from those that are sent off to the local yes for local adjudication. Okay. Let me, I only have a couple more questions on this. You're also, again, conservation officers are mandated to issue citations for violations across the board, right, Guam's fish, game, forestry, our statutes. On the fish side, we don't talk about that much. Did you make, outside of the other marine ones we spoke about, any one of those for fish, takings for fish, do you have an idea on the number for that?

Lt. Richard Ragadio-Conservation Ofcr., Dept. of Agriculture: We have the data, but we didn't bring it with us, but I believe it's going to be about, about 10, 10 to 15, right. Those have been forwarded. We've had that before in another presentation I did with Senator Ada, but it's there.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Okay, thank you. And then, can you tell us on the record, were those in, were those 10, were those in the preserves?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Yes.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Primarily? All of them were in the preserves? On the preserves.

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: Yes.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: Okay, because I was going to ask you if there's any other, outside of those other fishery managed areas, but thank you for that. And then, I only have one more question, is regarding Wildlife Conservation Fund, the actual Wildlife Conservation Fund, and special funds, to when we get fines from violators of your statutes, and they're supposed to be deposited, how are those resources being used to support our conservation officers?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: That is a, there's, there's a conflict within that situation. So, the Wildlife Conservation Fund was created as a, to meet a federal requirement for the Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources. And the fees were going into that, but part of the restriction for that fund is that it cannot be used for law enforcement. So, it's been challenging, and what we actually need, and one of the policy changes we need to make now with this citation program, is to create a fund separate and apart from the Wildlife Conservation Fund, specific to the law enforcement officers.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: So, we don't have one currently, Chelsa? We don't have a fund specifically for their actions?

Ms. Chelsa Muna-Director, Department of Agriculture: No. So, it's, it's, it's a bit misleading, because it's called the Wildlife Conservation Fund, but it's specific to the Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources. And again, it's required through our funding, through the Dingo, Dingo Johnson and Pittman Roberts funding from the Wildlife Sports Fish Restoration Fund out of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: If you have draft legislation that you think would be helpful for this *sure, I do*, to help support them, I think we're like sponges right now. I think we'll be able to take them, especially as we're getting into the Budget Act. If it does anything to help our conservation officers in the field and get the resources back to them, especially a, a, a citation just can't be one and done, and then it just goes nowhere. You have, I mean, you just talked about your firearm certification. I mean, you could easily help out in different operations of that. Okay, thank you for that. Vice-Speaker, do you have any questions on Enforcement and Citation Authority?

Vice Chairperson/Vice Speaker Tony Ada: None, Mr. Chair. We'll just go ahead and have you give them the, the draft legislation. That way we can move it forward and introduce it. I

think it's very important, and I, I believe that the Chair is on the, on the right track with this, right, in establishing a separate and apart so that it'll be, you guys will be able to get the resources that you guys need from a fund that is, you know, will be there. So, thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman Shawn Gumataotao: All right, thank you so much, Vice-Speaker, and again, thank you, Chelsa and your team for being with us this afternoon, and again, I want to thank you for participating in today's oversight hearing, and continue to thank you and your team. They're not here, but they're over there in, over there on Dairy Road. Thank you for their work, and I know that they, they're watching this as we are going through this, this afternoon.

Again, the Committee will continue to monitor the decisions by this Administration relative to the potential inclusion of our Conservation Officers in any effort, and especially with this pilot program for performance-based budgeting beginning in this upcoming fiscal year FY 2027. I'll just say this, that our predecessors some 70 years ago recognized the Government's role in protecting our natural resources through responsible economic development, and the creation of programs that strike a balance between the needs of our growing communities and our shared responsibility to safeguard the very resources that have supported Guam's families for generations, and we have a farmer in the House who can attest. We must be good stewards of our aquatic and wildlife resources through consistent and effective enforcement of local agriculture laws and regulations. Our Conservation Officers, to include those in this room, are critical to our collective efforts, and they must be supported through corresponding local support, as one we just mentioned just a few minutes ago. Strong partnerships that you've demonstrated and shown us today in this oversight hearing with your federal partners and your military partners as well. And as well, you also mentioned your regional and international support to include those NOAA and Endangered Species cases.

It's that preservation of our natural resources that extends beyond one generation of Guamanians. A single department, a single fiscal year, it's going to work, but it's going to take even more than that. This difficult but necessary work requires community support and a serious commitment from policymakers to include myself and the Vice Speaker across our other branches of government to include our judiciary and our partners in the Executive Branch to guarantee that our land and water resources are protected now and into the future.

The committee appreciates this administration's acknowledgement of the often overlooked but vital role that Conservation Officers serve in Guam's law enforcement landscape. Moving forward, it's this recognition that must translate into stronger public policies the resources that they all need, okay, and in serving Guam's law enforcement landscape. Again, thank you again for being with us. Again, the taxpayers who pay every penny it takes to serve and fund public services, they're demanding that of you and all of us. With that said, the committee will review the information provided through this oversight hearing as we plan the next steps policy-wise, there is certainly a lot of work to do and we need you all to do that work for the benefit of all of the people of Guam. And I thank you again for being with us this afternoon. The Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management, and the Guam National Guard appreciates the attendance and the participation of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation Officers, law enforcement during this oversight hearing.

Today's oversight hearing regarding the Department of Agriculture is hereby adjourned. The time is now 2:55 p.m. CHamoru standard time. And again, thank you all for being with us today.

III. FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management, and Guam National Guard (Committee) finds that Public Law 3-103 from August 1, 1956 established the responsibility of the local government to control and regulate our natural resources. Described by the Executive Branch as the entity responsible for assisting the Department of Agriculture (DOAG) in managing Guam's natural resources through the enforcement of Guam's Fish, Wildlife, Endangered/Threatened Species Law, Forestry Law, the Standard Care for Livestock and Branding Law, the Committee finds that the work of our Conservation Officers and Civilian Volunteer Conservation Officers directly impacts families and our wider community by enforcing policies that support food security, environmental stewardship, and responsible economic development.

Through the March 4, 2026 Oversight Hearing regarding DOAG's Conservation Law Enforcement Division, the Committee confirmed that the department has no record of actions taken in the past pursuant to P.L. 29-19. Section 43 of Public Law 29-19 required the respective heads of several departments and agencies including DOAG to develop and implement Performance-Based Budgeting (PBB) no later than September 30, 2009. BBMR Circular 09-01 from October 31, 2008 required DOAG as one of the entities identified in P.L. 29-19 to submit information to the Bureau of Budget and Management Research (BBMR) pursuant to BBMR Circular 09-01.

According to DOAG, the department employs six (6) Conservation Officers from Recruits up to the position of Lieutenant and an additional ten (10) apprentices whose funding source shifted from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) allocations to the General Fund. Prior to Fiscal Year 2026, DOAG in FY 2024 had five (5) Conservation Officers and eleven (11) Reservists who were funded through the General Fund. In the current Fiscal Year 2026, DOAG was able to recruit and launch the department's Conservation Officer Apprenticeship Program. The department began with fourteen (14) apprentices that were funded through ARPA; however, DOAG lost four (4) officer apprentices and after the transition to the General Fund occurred, two (2) additional employees secured employment with the U.S. Government. DOAG anticipates a staff of sixteen (16) Conservation Officers by April 15, 2026.

The Committee finds that DOAG's efforts to expand its Law Enforcement Division will strengthen our Government's ability to exercise good stewardship of our aquatic and wildlife resources through the consistent and effective enforcement of local agriculture laws and regulations. Through active surveillance of over eighty (80) miles of shoreline and thousands of acres of Government properties, Conservation Officers serve a critical role in protecting Guam's natural resources.

The Committee appreciates the Administration's acknowledgement of the often overlooked but vital role Conservation Officers serve in Guam's law enforcement landscape. Moving forward, the Committee recommends that policymakers ensure adequate financial support for DOAG's Conservation Law Enforcement Division through the FY 2027 Budget, as this division has not maintained the staffing level it worked to develop in recent years.