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# FIREARMS & Accessories





## The Importance Of Continued Firearms Education



Articles by  
**Lt. Frank Borelli (ret.)**

Editorial Director



Submit your questions, news tips and comments to [Frank@Officer.com](mailto:Frank@Officer.com).

### Contents:

- 4** The Law Enforcement Shotgun: Tried, True & Not Going Away
- 6** From Military Into Law Enforcement: The SIG SAUER P320
- 8** The Patrol Rifle Necessity
- 10** Glock's Handgun Evolution
- 11** Product Showcase

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**W**ho is the firearms expert in your department? If you're on a big agency, then there are likely many of them regularly working at your firearms range. If your agency is small, it might just be the person who has been hunting long enough or enjoys firearms the most. Whether that responsibility falls on you or not, it's important for you as a law enforcement officer to stay as informed about firearms as possible. Your firearms education—from learning about developments in related firearms technology to evaluating what your agency is carrying and authorizing—should never stop.

I have never understood officers who acquired only minimal knowledge about their weapons and nothing more. What about the plethora of weapons the bad guys might bring against you? What about the two dozen holsters you have to choose from for off-duty carry? What about the ammo selection, optics, cleaning tools, etc.? Your agency may not change weapons often, but that should be a conscious and purposeful decision made annually.

During the course of my career, which spans more than 35 years now, I've carried everything from a six inch .357 Magnum revolver to the Glock Model 43 9mm (my current off-duty weapon). In patrol cars I've seen shotguns, pistol caliber long guns, patrol rifles, extra handguns, 37mm munition launchers and more. Interestingly, what law enforcement agencies issue or authorize for carry often trends after changes in military weapon selection. This wasn't as quick to happen at one time. The U.S. Army switched to the Government Model 1911 .45ACP semi-automatic pistol beginning in 1911. Most law enforcement agencies

in the U.S. didn't switch away from revolvers until the 1960s, '70s and '80s. Then, many didn't make the switch until the Army selected the Beretta M9 9mm in 1985.

When we look back at the last 35 to 40 years in law enforcement-issued sidearms, we can clearly see evolution and change that's accelerating—from the Beretta 92FS to the Glock 17 to the S&W 4006 and the SIG P320; from .38 Special to 9mm to .40S&W to 10mm, .45ACP, .45GAP, .357Sig and more; from four inch barreled revolvers (or two or six inch) to single stack or double stack magazines for semi-autos; from steel frames to aluminum frames to other alloys and polymers—the bits and pieces of the issued handgun puzzle have changed shape and form quite a bit.

On top of that, crime and criminals keep evolving as well, demanding that we constantly adapt to keep up. As a result, we have patrol rifles, shotguns, handguns, backup guns, off-duty guns, and more accessories than ever before. Sights and optics are always changing while new holsters come on the market every year.

To that end, welcome to the 2019 Firearms & Accessories Supplement from Officer.com, *Law Enforcement Technology* and *Law Enforcement Product News*. To be complete, this could be 500 pages and would probably still leave something important out. After you've read through this, feel free to email comments, questions and suggestions for next year's supplement.

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# WELCOME TO THE FOLD

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■ The KSG-25 can hold 24+1 rounds of 2 3/4" shells or 40+1 rounds of 1-1/2" shells.

Photo courtesy of KelTec

■ Above, Frank Borelli firing the Remington 870. One (left) featuring a Knoxx Stock, SureFire light-bearing forward grip and rifle sights, and one featuring wooden furniture and parkerized finish with a bead-only front sight (right).

# The Law Enforcement Shotgun: Tried, True & Not Going Away

**W**ith the first patent on a slide action—or pump action—weapon having been issued in 1854, it's safe to say that the pump action shotgun has been around for quite some time.

Long known as a good hunting tool, its value as a self-defense weapon was a given. When you add in the versatility of the weapon thanks to the wide variety of ammunition available, it maintains its value in the law enforcement armory. Despite this, the issue and use of it in law enforcement dropped off somewhat back at the beginning of the 21st century.

Why?  
After the Columbine school attack

in 1999, many agencies made the move to put patrol rifles into their units. Instead of adding another firearm to the patrol vehicle, they swapped out the shotgun for a rifle. This reduced their initial cost (or so they thought) and in many cases removed the long gun in the cruiser from public view. For many agencies, instead of having the shotgun in the lock in the passenger compartment, the patrol rifle went in a case in the trunk. Some agencies did it correctly and simply added the patrol rifle to the shotgun already being carried, thereby expanding the response capabilities instead of swapping one for another. In light of the shotgun's variety of capabilities, swapping a shotgun for a rifle is actually rather limiting in response options.

Let's take a quick look at some of the models of shotgun that are common for police work in addition to some of the newer or more unique models that we should see grow into greater use in the future. After that, we'll take a look at a few of the ammo options that expand mission capability.

## Shotgun legacies and newcomers

**Remington 870:** In service since its invention in 1950, the Remington 870 comes in a wide variety of configurations and there are many aftermarket accessories available for it. It has been carried and used not only by law enforcement but also by a number of military units around the world, having seen combat action in Vietnam,

Lebanon and Iraq. Reports indicate that more than 11 million of them have been manufactured with at least nine unique configurations, each meant for a specific mission use. It has been manufactured in 12 gauge, 16 gauge, 20 gauge and .410. The non-customized barrel lengths produced have measured from 14" to 30" with the most common length found in police cars being either 18.5" or 20". While many of these shotguns were produced with just a front bead sight, many also were produced with rifle sights. With properly mated ammo, they are capable of accurate shots out to 50 yards with a smoothbore barrel.

**Mossberg 500:** Perhaps the second most issued or used pump action shotgun, the Mossberg 500, and its variants, have been in production since 1960. Like the Remington 870, the Mossberg hasn't seen action just in the hands of law enforcement. The Mossberg has seen combat action with military units in the Persian Gulf War, Lebanese Civil War, Iraq War and others. The Mossberg 590, specifically built for ease of cleaning in the field, has been issued to many front line combat military units and has been used for breaching as much as anti-personnel work. The Mossberg 500/590 remains a popular shotgun and can often be found in a police vehicle's shotgun lock or in the trunk.

**Benelli M4:** Perhaps one of the rare semi-automatic shotguns that has been found in law enforcement use, the Benelli M4, using the nomenclature of M1014, was adopted by the U.S. Marine Corps in 1999 as a result of winning the Joint Service Combat Shotgun contract. Since that time, Benelli Tactical has become a division of Beretta's Law Enforcement division. Available in three configurations (the M4 Entry with a 14" barrel, the M4 with a 18.5" barrel and the Military model the M1014), the Benelli serves with a variety of law enforcement, government and military agencies.

Before we look at the next shotgun on the list, let's quickly consider the limitations that usually exist for a shotgun in a police vehicle.

- **Size.** Like a patrol rifle, the shotgun is usually 30" or more in length if it has a standard shoulder stock and 18.5" or 20" barrel. It's not usually foldable or flexible in any way.
- **Capacity.** While it's hard to conceive of a situation where five rounds of 12g wouldn't be enough to defeat a target, there are tactical and crowd situations where "never enough" applies. Even with extended magazine tubes holding 7 or 8 rounds, there is still a limited capacity and relatively slow reload.

**Kel-Tec KSG:** Step in the Kel-Tec KSG bullpup configuration pump action shotgun. Because of the bullpup configuration, overall length even with a 18.5" barrel, was reduced to 26". That alone would be enough to get a few eyebrows raised, but add on the design feature that uses parallel magazine tubes to hold 12 rounds of ammo (two tubes of six) and you get the eyebrows going up even higher. Selecting which tube you're feeding from as you pump the action is a matter of flipping a selector switch just behind the pistol grip and doing so under pressure does require some training.

As with so many things in law enforcement, any added training requirement has an attached increase in equipment (ammo) and labor (training hours) cost. Those increased costs are all too easy for administrators to use when citing why they don't upgrade to a new weapon.

The other thing you'll often hear is, "Why replace what we have? Those shotguns are still serviceable and work just fine." There is no arguing that rationalization. It's true. That acknowledged, the KSG allows an officer to carry twice as much ammo in a more compact overall package. That is something that needs to be taken into

consideration, especially in light of the previous "never enough" condition put on ammo capacity. Just recently, perhaps in response to some of these arguments, Kel-Tec released the KSG in a new single-magazine-tube configuration. This slimmer model is just as compact as the KSG, incorporates an optional carry handle and is lighter than the original. For those administrators who are worried about training curve and/or the added capacity of 12g ammo, this shotgun answers the concerns while incorporating the easier to store and carry size of the bullpup design.

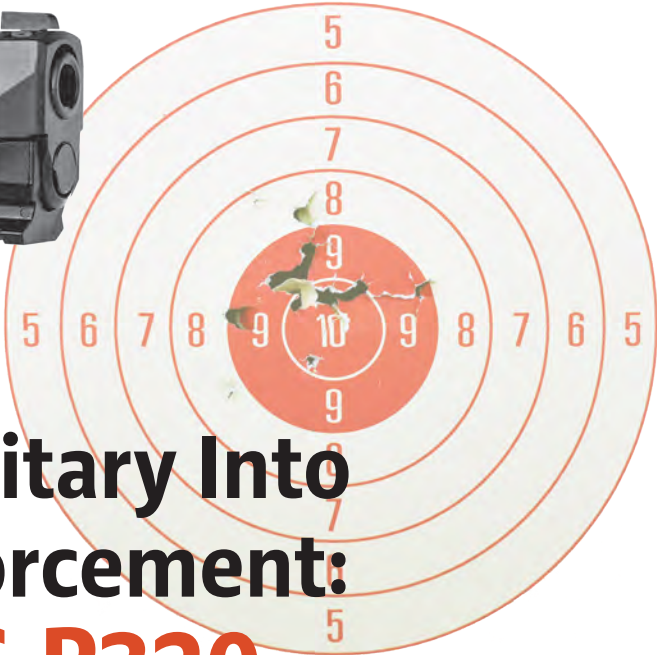
## A look at less lethal

Now let's consider the ammunition options for the 12g shotgun. It should be noted up front that some types of less lethal ammo will not function in a semi-automatic shotgun. It is the responsibility of the agency or shotgun owner to test and ascertain whether less lethal is reliable in their weapon(s) or not.

Because of the payload size available for a 2.75" 12g shotgun round (much less those with 3" or 3.5" capacities), the variety of payload is vast. Many pump action 12g shotguns are equipped with blaze orange stocks to designate them as less lethal-only weapons. That less lethal ammo, available from many manufacturers, includes rubber bullets, rubber BBs, OC (pepper spray) blasts and more. There is training required for using less lethal ammo in 12g shotguns so agencies must ensure all proper policies are written and disseminated.

With a history now dating well over 160 years, there's no reason to think that shotguns are going away any time soon. With the constant development of new technologies and capabilities, the versatility of 12g shotguns should continue to expand. With that thought in mind, we'd encourage you not to write yours off in your arsenal. ■





# From Military Into Law Enforcement: The SIG P320

**A** little more than 100 years ago the U.S. Army adopted the Government Model 1911 .45ACP as its standard issue handgun. The selection of that pistol was to replace the .38 caliber revolvers that they were using at the time and the focus had been on a weapon that fired a larger caliber projectile at a slower speed to achieve greater energy delivery and tissue damage to the intended enemy target. Fast forward roughly 75 years and we saw the adoption of the Beretta M9 chambered in 9mm. The change from .45ACP to 9mm and from single stack to double stack magazines was foreseeable given the NATO specification of a 9mm ammunition and the desire to have more ammo on the individual soldier. Given that 75-year service span for the Government Model 1911, it might have been expected that the military would have stayed with the Beretta M9 for a little longer, but with the approaching end of the pistol service life in 2015, the U.S. Army and Air Force began their search for a replacement pistol. While several respected and well-known

manufacturers submitted models for consideration, the SIG P320 ultimately won out and came to be known as the M17 in its full size configuration or the M18 in its compact configuration. The SIG SAUER name and reputation wasn't anything new to the military in general. The U.S. Navy Special Warfare community had long been using the SIG P226—a 15+1 9mm pistol with its unique decocking lever, no manual safety, high slide clearance and demonstrated tolerance for unfavorable environmental conditions. The profile of the P320 is very similar to that of the P226, but the design features and modularity make them two very distinctly different pistols. Let's take a look only at the full size variant, chambered in 9mm as would be the M17 or usually carried P320 for law enforcement.

- Length: 8"
- Barrel length: 4.7"
- Width: 1.4"
- Height: 5.5"
- Action: Short recoil operated, locked breech

- Capacity: 17 rounds (9mm; +1 in the chamber for a total of 18)
- Sights: fixed iron sights, blade front, notch rear; night sights are an option

The only significant differences between the P320 and the M17 are the maximum capacity limit and the sights. For the military version, magazines can hold 21 rounds and the sights are taller, presumably to allow for use with an attached suppressor. What makes the P320 so unique, however, is that it's the first weapon to be identified by serial number on the fire control unit (FCU) which contains the trigger, slide stop and manual safety (if present). Around this FCU, the barrel, slide, recoil spring, grips and magazines can all be interchanged. Essentially, this defines the firearm as the FCU with every other part being modular and adaptable.

### The military's influence on LE handgun selection

Four decades ago you would never have discussed weapons systems in the law enforcement arena, unless you were in a very forward-thinking and highly specialized unit. The concept of a weapon system was a purely military

concept that encompassed not only the weapon but the accessories, mounts, carrying systems and more that were used in conjunction with or support of that weapon.

When the military announced that it was searching for a modular handgun system to replace the M9, the solicitation requirements specified that the weapon be non-caliber specific and allow for adapting pistol grips, magazines, mounting accessories using Picatinny rails and readily accept a suppressor. The solicitation called for the submitted weapon to be more accurate than the M9 pistol with an accuracy requirement of "a 90 percent or more chance of hitting in a 4" circle out to 50 meters." That accuracy was to be maintained throughout the service life of the weapon. Ambidextrous controls were set as a requirement and the weapon

had to be compatible with tactical lights, lasers and sound suppressors.

There were reportedly 12 pistols entered for consideration, but SIG SAUER Inc. was awarded the contract and the SIG M17/18 was christened. As was proven in the mid-1980s after Beretta won the contract for the M9, law enforcement agencies nationwide paid attention to the benefits of the new military handgun selection and a great many of them began to replace their aging duty weapons with the new SIG P320. Thanks to the modularity built in with the usage of the FCU, agencies saw savings in the ability to purchase modular parts and pieces rather than having to purchase several pistols to accomplish the same goal. Additionally, for many agency armorers, this made inventorying weapons easier as there were fewer to keep track of.

In parallel with this choice by the U.S. Military, agencies across the country have begun to move back away from the .40S&W cartridge and back to the 9mm. There will always be debate about "what's best," and the same will continue regarding all serious service calibers. It may have taken awhile for law enforcement agencies to get on the semi-automatic pistol bandwagon after the Army did it in 1911 but they are firmly there now and not going back.

Given the totality of circumstances around the development and adoption of the SIG P320/M17 by the U.S. Military and law enforcement agencies across the country, it's obvious that the new pistol is not only here to stay but will prove a strong concept foundation for SIG SAUER to continue to build on. ■

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■ Frank Borelli firing a Rock River Arms AR-15.

# The Patrol Rifle Necessity

In this article, a long gun chambered to fire a handgun cartridge will be referred to as a carbine. The term “rifle” will only be used to refer to a long gun that chambers and fires a true rifle cartridge.

In the law enforcement world, especially for patrol, the most common calibers for patrol rifles are .223/5.56mm and .308. Prior to the turn of the century, what you found was a bit more varied. The necessity of a rifle was a bit more accepted in the open spaces and there were fewer restrictions on caliber, capacity, etc. The county sheriff was as likely to have his own assortment in the trunk as was any one of his deputies. They had grown up around rifles and viewed them more as tools than weapons.

Inside the cities, the perception of rifles was different. When reality slapped law enforcement in the face in the form of the Columbine school attack, there was a lot of resistance to

issuing officers the rifles they might potentially need for response to such events. Then the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks occurred and the reality of such events on our own soil pushed more law enforcement administrators over the edge and into the abyss of reality. Some still tried to resist by compromising and allowing their officers semi-automatic long guns chambered for handgun ammo: carbines. They justified such to resistant politicians by touting the savings of having a long gun that used the same magazines and ammo as the already issued handguns. It has felt like a long battle since then, but it seems like law enforcement is finally winning the battle to have arms suited for response to high threat situations.



■ The M&P 15 Sport II Optics-ready rifle.

Photo courtesy of Smith & Wesson



■ The AR-15 SAINT rifle.

Photo courtesy of Springfield Armory



■ The M400 rifle.

Photo courtesy of SIG SAUER

In today’s patrol vehicles it seems you’re most likely to find a semi-automatic rifle chambered in .223. It’s probably an AR-15 variant with a barrel that measures somewhere between 16” to 20”. When it comes to selecting a patrol rifle for your agency the options are abundant. Virtually every major manufacturer produces a semi-automatic (and select fire variant) rifle chambered for .223.

■ **SIG SAUER** offers four rifles that all meet the patrol rifle requirements. The SIG516 is the most basic and offers several options within a reasonable price point. The SIGM400 is identified as “a true AR platform exceeding military standards,” and providing a plethora of options to suit agency specifications. The SIG MCX Virtus is “configurable in more than 500 combinations,” making it truly modular and allowing agencies to select exactly what they need in a patrol rifle and within their budget restrictions. The SIG TREAD comes with “... all the features, all the freedom—none of the compromises.” This has its own line of accessories and is fully adaptable to any law enforcement mission.

■ **Smith & Wesson** produces the M&P SPORT II rifles (and several others) that meet the demands of law enforcement at a significantly lower price point than most. Between \$400 and \$850 (per their website), there are eight variants of the S&W M&P Sport II, three of which are state-specific compliant (California, Colorado and New Jersey). Chambered for .223 and ready to accept common aftermarket optics, lights, etc. the M&P Sport II is ready to serve.

■ **Springfield Armory** offers two great weapon variants that can serve, and one of which looks nothing like an “evil” AR-15. It’s amazing still that so many politicians object to a weapon due to its appearance, with zero understanding of its function. Those politicians who object to an AR-15 style rifle chambered in .223 might not object to the Springfield Armory SOCOM 16 because it doesn’t look like the rifle so often villainized by the mainstream media. That the SOCOM 16 chambers the more powerful 7.62 NATO round would be lost on them. Springfield Armory also produces the SAINT line of AR style

rifles in 5.56 NATO with a few of them also available in .300 Blackout.

■ **Doublestar**, a not-so-well-known manufacturer of high quality rifles, sorts their rifles into two categories: carbine length and rifle length. (Note that “carbine” here does not indicate handgun caliber.) With five of the 17 rifles priced under \$1,000 and only three priced over \$2,000 (special purpose rifles), the majority of their products are between that price range. For me, that puts them squarely in the correct price range for a good quality duty rifle. Like every other contemporary manufacturer, these rifles are ready to accept after-market accessories and to be built/customized for an officer’s individual or agency’s need.

■ **Battle Rifle Company** is another not-so-well-known company that produces high quality rifles for the law enforcement community. They manufacture at least nine different AR-style rifle models that would be suitable for law enforcement use. With model names like Spartan, Trident and Defender, the company obviously produces rifles meant for sheepdogs—those of us who stand in the gap and face down (or hunt down) the bad guys who would prey on the weak and innocent.

With such a wide variety of high quality weapons available, and at pricing that is more than reasonable, it’s difficult to understand why some government entities (municipal, county or state) would still be resistant to the idea of having their officers properly armed to defeat significant threats. The issued handgun may be great for threats within 25 yards, and they are certainly more convenient and less threatening in appearance to carry, but most schools have hallways far longer than that, and it’s an unfortunate reality that today’s officers need to be armed to address threats at the distance dictated by circumstance.

Are your officers properly armed? ■





# Glock's Handgun Evolution



At the beginning of 2018, I wrote on the pros and cons of the Glock 19X 9mm. Since then, Glock produced and released the models 45, 43X and 48. All chambered in 9mm, the three weapons fit distinctly different niches in the law enforcement officer's side-arm needs.

## The G45: A long awaited request

In the early 1990s after purchasing what was then a brand-new second-generation Glock Model 19 9mm (15+1 capacity), I voiced my eagerness for a Glock 17 framed weapon with a Glock 19 size slide assembly. This desire for such a weapon would go unfulfilled until 2018 when they introduced and released the 19X, a full-size frame that held Glock's 17-round 9mm magazines beneath a shortened barrel and slide assembly the same size as their midsize model 19 (hence the 19X nomenclature).

Originally manufactured for submissions to the U.S. Army as part of the Army's search for a replacement sidearm, the Glock 19X was sold, where legal, with one flush fit magazine (17 rounds) and two extended

magazines holding 19 rounds each. There were a few other minor design features specific to the Army's requirements but overall the 19X was the "Glock 17 Commander" some had wanted for so long. Many agencies and off-duty officers, however, took issue with the Coyote Tan color—it didn't look as good in a duty holster and just didn't seem as aesthetically appealing as a black or blued weapon would.

In response, the Model 45 was released later in 2018. It incorporates the same frame and slide assembly sizes, full frame length with 17+1 capacity under a mid-size slide assembly, and did away with the Army-specific design features many agencies either didn't need or didn't want. For the small percentage of duty assignments that did require a specific design feature, i.e. the lanyard loop, aftermarket parts are plentiful and cost effective so the agency armorer can modify the weapons easily and quickly.

If you compare the G45 to the fifth generation Glock 17, you see that the barrel and slide assembly are approximately 0.5" shorter. That also results in a sight radius that's about 0.5" shorter as well. Do either of these differences matter in the real world?

## Specifications for the Model 45:

- Overall Length: 7.44"
- Slide Length: 6.85"
- Overall width: 1.34"
- Slide width: 1"
- Height (including mag): 5.47"
- Sight Radius: approx. 6"

In other words, do you *need* that extra 0.5" of barrel or 0.5" of sight radius? Realistically, the answer is *no*. Sure, in a world where everything is measured with a micrometer and the gun is only fired from a fixed ransom rest, this difference in length might matter. Even then, the difference would be so small as to be statistically insignificant.

Where that 0.5" matters is in the holster and under concealing garments. That difference does have an equivalency in weight and comfort. If you own a G45 you can, theoretically, not have to buy a second gun. If you are issued a G17 and then buy a G19 for off-duty, you'd split the difference and only need one gun if that gun was the G45. So, if your agency bought and issued the G45, how much would the off-duty gun be necessary? Those of you who are always looking for justification to buy another gun can pretend you didn't read this paragraph.

## The G43, 43X and 48: Customer feedback is key

Since we're talking about concealability and off-duty carry, let's look at the Glock Model 43, the 43X and the 48, all chambered in 9mm (9x19).

The Model 26 is a shortened version of the G17 and G19, shortened both in frame and slide/barrel length. The double stack magazine holds 10 rounds of 9mm. The challenge is, however, that even as compact as it is, the grip circumference is still more than comfortable for some folks with small hands. That same challenge is a problem with the G19 and G17, and every other Glock or similar capacity handgun with double stack magazines. What can be done about it?

The Glock Model 43 was released with a single stack 6-round 9mm magazine. Considering the fact that for decades off-duty officers carried revolvers holding either 5 or 6 rounds of ammo—and some actually carried a backup load in a speed strip or speedloader—the available rounds of 9mm in the G43 seems sufficient. Add in a backup magazine or two and you can have 13 to 19 rounds of ammo available. The grip on the G43, however, received the same complaint as the G26, not about circumference, but length. There is no place to put the pinky finger of the shooting hand. Some people fix this by changing out the magazine base plate so that there's an extension and others just replace it with expanded capacity base plates.

Listening to the feedback and seeing the need for a larger capacity and longer barreled 9mm handgun, Glock produced the Model 48. With a 10-round staggered (but not double stack) magazine, it still has a slimline grip but with room for all of the fingers on the shooting hand. They also added about 0.75" onto the barrel and slide length making it just over 4" instead of

just under 3.5". Even with the increase in capacity, the frame width didn't change. Someone smart at Glock realized that by putting a G43 slide assembly on a G48 frame, you could have a "full capacity, shortened slide assembly" weapon similar in overall appearance, albeit smaller all around, to the G19X and G45. With that realization, the G43X was born.

Glock has hit a homerun with the G43, 43X and 48. Shooters who already own a G43 voiced their intent to purchase a G48 and, with the ability to switch out the slide assemblies, effectively also have a G43X in their personal armory.



■ The Glock 48 and 43X  
Glock Inc.

## A strong reputation

With all of that info about the various Glock 9mms, we haven't even touched on the Glock Model 34 variants (the longer slide competition models chambered in 9mm) or the Glock Model 17L, a long slide 17 without the competition features of the G34. Despite our efforts, we were unable to find any information about the not-released-but-existent-somewhere-in-the-plans Glock Models 46 and 47. If we find anything out, we'll obviously share it.

If your agency is issuing Glock handguns or authorizes them for off-duty use, check out the new offerings and options. With a history dating back decades and having been carried in virtually every environment on the planet, Glock firearms have a strong reputation for taking abuse and performing as needed when needed. ■

## .300 Blackout 110 Grain TTSX

Shooters looking for the ultimate perfor-



mance in their .300 Whisper/Blackout guns will be pleased with a new copper bullet load from **Black Hills Ammunition**, the 110 grain Tipped TSX (TTSX) from Barnes Bullets (G1 B.C. of .295). This projectile was designed with a long ogive to ensure smooth and positive feeding even from full 30 round magazines. It expands immediately upon impact and retains nearly 100% of its weight, penetrating to desired depths of 18"+. Testing has shown it also performs well through tough barriers, such as car doors and windshields, making this a very suitable round for police patrol rifles.

★ Officer.com/21072446

## Training just got more competitive

Designed as an accurate, easy-to-handle competition pistol, the new **KelTec CP33** .22LR Pistol is proving itself to be a fun, ideal training pistol, as well. Its adjustable fiber optic sights with a long sight radius



and 5.5" threaded barrel are just a few CP33 qualities that help shooters hit long-range bullseyes, shot after shot.

It features a smooth, single-action, 4-pound trigger pull and light recoil. The CP33 Competition Pistol is also equipped with a M-LOK slot on the dust cover for mounting a quality light and a Picatinny style rail from sight to sight for mounting optics. Because it also features an ambidextrous operating handle, magazine catch and safety, lefties don't lose out at all.

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