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## **Mayor's office buys 8,513 more face shields for NATO summit**

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Mayor Rahm Emanuel's administration is buying 8,513 more face shields for Chicago Police officers at a cost of \$757,657 — and demanding delivery in time for the May 20-21 NATO summit — to give every officer on the street a shield that fits over a gas mask and prevents them from being blinded by liquids thrown by protesters.

The supplemental purchase from Colorado-based Super Seer Corp. brings to \$954,118 the amount of money spent to purchase 11,570 face shields twice as thick as the old ones with a larger surface and air-tight seal to keep liquids out.

The new contract was piggybacked onto an existing Fairfax County, Va. award with a third-distributor to expedite delivery. It makes it clear the Chicago Police Department is not scaling back its protest preparations even though President Barack Obama has shifted the G-8 summit from Chicago to Camp David.

"It's an urgent thing. They want 'em by May 15th. Their intent is to outfit all of the officers Chicago Police have with the new face shield for the NATO summit," said Super Seer President Steve Smith, who is hiring a dozen employees to "ramp up" production.

"Whenever there is a G-8 or NATO summit, it's a very volatile situation with protesters. In a riot-type situation, they do throw liquid containing urine and feces at police officers. Which is why Chicago wanted an improved face shield with the liquid" seal.

Smith said Chicago is wise not to scale back its preparations just because the G-8 is headed to Camp David. The NATO summit is expected to draw 50 world leaders to McCormick Place.

"Take a look at the Occupy movement website and blogs. Occupy is scheduling a month-long protest in Chicago with demonstrators from around the world. That's who's coming to your town. The Police Department knows this, which is why they're quite concerned," Smith said.

Fraternal Order of Police President Mike Shields demanded the new shields to prevent his officers from being blinded by bags of urine and feces thrown by "anarchists" and other hard-core protesters.

Shields welcomed the city's decision to supplement the earlier contract so all officers on the street could have the added protection.

"I don't know if that means that every single officer is going to be used. But it does make sense to have our officers prepared with facial shields and gas masks prior to the event," Shields said.

“This is something Chicago Police Department planners of this event overlooked. If it wasn’t for the union prodding the department to get these necessary pieces of equipment for their officers, nothing would have happened. What else have they overlooked?”

Chicago Police Department spokesperson Melissa Stratton refused to say whether the purchase of additional shields means all 11,570 officers would be involved in NATO summit duty.

But, she said, “If there is an emergency, all officers are expected to respond anywhere in the city and all members need to be equipped. We’re seeking to ensure that all officers have appropriate protection.”

Shields also complained that city planners are “not doing an adequate job” of preparing Chicago residents, employees and businesses for the inconveniences they will be forced to endure during summit week.

“If you commute downtown, you need to know how is my week going to be impacted? Where are the security zones going to start? If I drive downtown, where will travel be inhibited? If I take public transportation, how will my schedule and my safety be impacted? Where will I be able to walk?” he said.

The NATO Host Committee has acknowledged that a large security perimeter will prevent motorists from driving and parking on some downtown streets and that motorcades will tie up traffic periodically. But the precise locations and restrictions will be up to the Secret Service and will not be announced until about a month before the event.

The new face shields will be used with powder-blue motorcycle helmets purchased before 2005 at a cost of \$89 each. The old shield was smaller, thinner, and could not fit over the gas mask police are now using. There was no air-tight seal, so liquids could get through.

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