



Full Measure: EPA, Other Federal Agencies Using Taxpayer Dollars To Arm Up

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SWAT stands for Special Weapons and Tactics.

But other federal agencies, whose missions don't normally include police work, are arming up at taxpayer expense.

Even the Environmental Protection Agency, also known as the EPA, has armed agents.

In August 2013, some of those armed EPA agents in bulletproof vests conducted a raid near the town of Chicken, Alaska: population about seven.

Today, at least forty federal agencies have their own armed units. That includes:

The Agriculture Department

The Office of Personnel Management

The Consumer Product Safety Commission

The Railroad Retirement Board

"They've acquired the power to make arrests, the power to carry firearms and to conduct raids. It's been proliferating over the years and we don't really have a full accounting of how many of these agencies and units are out there. And now they're now acquiring militarized weaponry and equipment," said Tim Lynch, director of the project on criminal justice at the CATO Institute.

When the Justice Department believed a guitar maker in Tennessee violated environmental rules by using endangered wood, it sent armed agents to raid the company-- twice.

Armed agents from the Bureau of Land Management confronted a Nevada rancher and tasered protesters over a land management dispute last year.

WARNING: Video contains explicit language.

Those armed federal agents have been involved in raids and actions in several states, leading some lawmakers to question both the costs and the overstepping authority.