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## The Use of Pepper Spray in Frontline Policing by the Military Police of Amazonas

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### Summary:

This study aims to discuss the applicability and efficiency of pepper spray use by military police officers acting as first responders (first-line policing) in the state of Amazonas. The central objective of the research is to examine this technology as a control tool in daily conflict situations in police service. The importance of adopting less-lethal technologies is highlighted as a crucial measure to reduce lethality in police operations, offering a proportional alternative to the use of lethal force, according to the literature in the field. The methodology employed is qualitative and exploratory in nature, focused on technical, legal, and operational aspects. Bibliographic review and document analysis of incident reports, training manuals, and internal regulations of the corporation in Amazonas are used. The investigation of qualitative data will be conducted through content analysis.

The expected results will contribute to the field of public safety, offering a new perspective for the formulation of public policies and training, promoting safer, more efficient, and more humane police practices.

**Keywords:** Pepper spray. First-line policing. Amazonas Military Police.

### Abstract

The present study proposes to discuss the applicability and efficiency of pepper spray utilization by military police officers who act as first responders (first-line policing) in the state of Amazonas. The central objective of the research is to examine this technology as a control tool in daily conflict situations encountered during police service. The importance of adopting less-lethal technologies is highlighted as a crucial measure to reduce lethality in police operations, offering a proportional alternative to the use of lethal force, according to existing literature in the area. The employment methodology is qualitative and exploratory, focusing on technical, legal, and operational aspects. It uses a bibliographic review and documentary analysis of incident reports, training manuals, and internal



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regulations of the corporation in Amazonas. The qualitative data investigation will be conducted through content analysis. The expected results will contribute to the field of public security, offering new insights for public policy formulation and training, promoting safer, more efficient, and humanized police practices.

**Keywords:** Pepper spray. First-line policing. Amazonas Military Police.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Military Police of Amazonas plays a vital role in maintaining order. public, as established by the Federal Constitution of 1988, (BRAZIL, 1988) which assigns to Military police are responsible for visible uniformed policing and for preserving the Public order. The pursuit of excellent policing is essential, especially in light of... daily challenges faced by law enforcement officers, such as urban violence, drug trafficking, and conflict situations that require quick and efficient responses. In this context, Ferreira (2015) highlights that

The Military Police is therefore one of the bodies responsible for ensuring Public Security, being responsible for visible policing and preserving public order, a characteristic that defines it as a state entity that constantly participates in the life and routine of society.

In the state of Amazonas, there is a significant discrepancy in the distribution and use of Less-lethal technologies. Special forces have access to less-lethal equipment. like pepper spray, while conventional policing, responsible for responding Continuous and direct coverage of the most varied occurrences lacks these resources. This gap represents a This is a crucial challenge, as frontline police officers are frequently exposed to situations that... They require interventions that are quick, efficient, and at the same time proportionate and respectful of rights. humans. As presented by Castelo Branco (2015), in research applied to military police officers. In 2015, the 6th Interactive Community Company (6th CICOM) found that the only The least lethal weapon available to that police force was the Police Baton (BP-60). Given the lack of availability of other important resources, such as elastomer ammunition, Chemical agent sprayers or electrical control devices (Taser).

Thus, it is demonstrated that the troop lacks a technology capable of incapacitating, even if temporarily, the citizen who in some way attempts to violently confront the officer Military police. Pepper spray has its active ingredient derived from oleoresin capsicum, which is the a mixture of the natural active ingredient in chili peppers, capsaicin, obtained from the seed coat, which is what It causes a burning sensation, a kind of synthetic oil, to make removing the product difficult. Causing irritation. and burning sensation in the mucous membranes of the eyes, nose, and mouth. With all these properties, pepper spray It has been used by police to control civil disturbances, such as strikes and protests. ideological, student and landless movements, aggressive mobs, riots and revolts, as well as self-defense, Keep in mind that in some countries it is permitted for private use in self-defense, including defense. against animals, such as dogs and bears (BOTELHO, 2009).

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In this context, this article proposes the use of pepper spray as a research topic.

all military police officers acting as first responders in the state of Amazonas, aiming to

to analyze its applicability and effectiveness as a tool for controlling everyday conflict situations.

within the police service. Furthermore, it is important to emphasize the importance of research in the sense of

The adoption of low-lethality technologies, such as pepper spray, is a crucial measure for

to reduce lethality in police operations. As Santos (2015) states, this technology should

to be restricted to security forces. Given this, in many conflict situations, the use of force...

Lethal force can be disproportionate and result in serious consequences, both for citizens and...

For police officers, pepper spray offers an effective alternative for temporarily immobilizing individuals.

aggressive individuals, allowing police officers to control the situation safely and without

resorting to firearms.

Furthermore, from an institutional point of view, the adoption of pepper spray will enhance the image.

of the Military Police of Amazonas. The decrease in deaths caused by firearms will contribute

so that the corporation ceases to be seen as a violent force, and begins to be recognized as

To act with more humanity, professionalism, and respect for citizens' rights. This change

A change in perception can strengthen community trust in the police and foster a better relationship.

more positive among the population and security agents.

Therefore, the results of this research will contribute significantly to the field of

public safety, offering valuable insights into the application of less-lethal technologies.

in conventional policing. Furthermore, the research will provide an empirical basis for the

formulation of public policies and allocation of resources, promoting more effective policing practices.

safe, efficient, and humane. Finally, by highlighting the benefits and limitations of using

Pepper spray research could positively influence the education and training of

security agents, contributing to better preparedness and response to conflict situations.

The overall objective of this research is to describe the effectiveness and impacts of using the spray of

Pepper in the first-line policing of the Amazonas Military Police, with the aim of improving

improving working conditions for police officers and promoting safer and more humane interventions in management.

of conflict situations. Specific objectives include: discussing the use of spray of

pepper in the Military Police of Amazonas, identifying practices, procedures and frequency of

use; discuss first-line policing; relate the use of pepper spray and

first-line policing, focusing on the proper and effective use of pepper spray, aiming to

Safer and more humane interventions. Therefore, this study sought to understand how...

The way to implement pepper spray in frontline policing by the Military Police

The presence of the Amazon rainforest can influence the effectiveness of police operations and the safety of officers and the public.

population?



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The following is hypothesized: the introduction and use of pepper spray in policing.

The new first-rate network of the Amazonas Military Police will increase the efficiency of police operations and

This will improve the safety of both officers and the public, reducing the need for lethal force.

and promoting a more proportionate and controlled approach in conflict situations.

Based on the research classification criteria suggested by Vegara (1990),

as for the technical procedures used for its development. In this sense, the research

It adopted a qualitative and exploratory perspective, with the aim of understanding the use of the spray of

Pepper in first-line policing in Amazonas, based on technical, legal and...

operational.

A literature review was conducted regarding the use of pepper spray and its implications.

Legal aspects, efficiency as a control tool, and its impact on first-line policing. From this

Thus, the main sources will be scientific articles, books, both written and electronic, legislation and

Reports from public security organizations in Brazil and in the Amazon will be analyzed. In addition, reports from public security organizations in Brazil and in the Amazon will be examined.

also official documents, such as incident reports, police training manuals

and guidelines on the use of force applicable to the use of pepper spray in the state of Amazonas. Being

Thus, the analysis will make it possible to identify usage patterns, technical instructions, and regulations.

The investigation of the qualitative data was also carried out using content analysis.

enabling the identification of emerging categories and themes from documents. Therefore,

It will be possible to link the use of pepper spray to the actions of first-line policing.

In conclusion, the suggested methodology aims to offer a broad understanding of the...

The use of pepper spray in frontline policing in Amazonas, through a combination

bibliographic review, legislation, and document analysis. In this way, when verifying these different

Given the data sources, the research is expected to provide essential information and insights into the...

conditions of use of this technology, its employability in the local context, and challenges faced by

military police officers of the Amazonas Military Police. Furthermore, the limitations inherent in access to certain

Documents and potential restrictions on official data will be considered in the research.

## 2. USE OF PEPPER SPRAY

Pepper spray is used in both civilian and military contexts. Therefore,

Less-lethal weapons date back to the First World War and have been used since that event.

Historically, new technological modalities are created that provide less harm to the being.

human, with the aim of upholding respect for the differentiated use of force, and complying with the rules.

of human rights established in national laws and international agreements. In light of this,

Alexander (2003, p.19) asserts:

Non-lethal weapons are specifically designed and used to incapacitate personnel or



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Material, minimizing fatalities, permanent injuries to people, unwanted damage to property and the environment. In other words, the probability of fatalities or permanent injuries is reduced compared to traditional weapons that aim for physical destruction.

In the Brazilian context, according to Santos (2015), the use of pepper spray began in Riot police forces from both the Military Police and the Armed Forces. Therefore, this technology... It became part of the routine for police officers, remaining prohibited for citizens who do not... part of public safety.

The use of pepper spray should be guided by the techniques of Differentiated Use of force. According to Torres and Costa (2022), this philosophy replaced the idea of the progressive use of force. In this In short, the law enforcement agent must assess the environment to which they are subjected and, Based on these aspects, the choice will be made regarding the level of force that should be used.

In this context, FLETC (Federal Law Enforcement Training Center), originating from its FLETC, a namesake program, was created in 1992 in the United States by the Police Training Institute. The model developed by the University of Illinois is the one that has been adopted by the Military Police in Brazil. This model is used at the American Federal Police Academy (FBI), and it is organized as follows. Form: a graph with five steps that have different colors. Thus, each color illustrates a The level of resistance that a citizen can offer is proportional to the degree of force used by a state agent. You can use it.

In addition, there are also bidirectional arrows that indicate the levels of force that can be used. to evolve or regress according to the scenario of the occurrence. In this model, it is still mandatory that the Physical presence and verbalization are present at all levels, and the instruments of lesser importance are used. Potential offensive weapons, such as pepper spray, may be used in conjunction with varying degrees of force. Contact control and physical control are possible, but there must be justifiable reasons for their use. a combination of these two force apparatuses.

The United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, The event that took place in Havana, Cuba, on September 7, 1990, added basic principles regarding the use of... Regarding the Use of Force and Firearms, among other things, the use of necessary force is advised. Progressive and proportional for the faithful fulfillment of the Law. The use of force must always be necessary. and proportionate to the threat. (United Nations Congress, 1990).

In Brazil, the use of pepper spray is permitted by Law No. 13.060/2014 (Brazil, 2014) which governs the use of lethal and non-lethal weapons by public security agents. The provision Legal counsel dictates that law enforcement agents "should prioritize the use of the least restrictive instruments." "Offensive potential" in its various forms of action, provided that its use does not expose to risk. The physical or mental integrity of the state operator must also comply with the principles of legality. necessity, reasonableness and proportionality.

Within the scope of the Military Police of Amazonas (PMAM), according to Santos and Correia, (2020)





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It was found that up to the year 2015 there were some restrictions regarding recommendations for the use of the spray. pepper, especially when used within the "first-rate" troops. In this way, one had...

only scattered and very generic citations, such as Resolution No. 003, of January 12th.

2009, which approves the Provisional Instructions for Operational Doctrine of the PMAM (IP-02). However, in the year

In 2015, the Standard Operating Procedures of the PMAM and PCAM (POP, 2015) were published.

Volume I – PMAM, which in its Module I, regarding the use of personal protective equipment

(EPI) lists the Chemical Agent Sprayer as materials for optional use by the military police officer.

Furthermore, still within Module I, the POP presents a detailed explanation of the use

this technology, which gives us a solid foundation for how to trigger the capacity building and training of

conventional troops. Further on, in Module III of the same document, there are several guidelines.

essential regarding the differentiated use of force. In the section dealing with expected results

The following guidance is provided: "That the team in possession of the equipment: Electronic Control Device

– DEC, OC agent sprayer and BP stick – 60, use properly and thus bring a

"The least offensive result to the physical integrity of the person acting suspiciously." Furthermore, in the topic of

Regarding corrective actions, the guidance is as follows: "If there is a superiority in the physical build of the person in

suspicious attitude (non-cooperative) is much greater, or identifying skill in fighting practices, state

altered or abnormal mental state (under the influence of drugs, intoxicated and/or mentally incapacitated) or

If the officer continues to exhibit a high level of aggression towards police officers, they should reassess the use of...

Distinguished from force, it can employ other less lethal means, such as: DEC, OC Sprayer and

"BP 60 or retractable and then handcuff him."

Pepper spray is a regulated technology because its use is restricted, only authorized by law enforcement.

Security forces and public security agencies, as outlined in Article 144 of the law, may make use of this.

CF(BRASIL,1988) and specialized private security institutions. Therefore, it can be observed that the

The average citizen cannot have access to this type of instrument.

According to Santos (2015), public security professionals, from the beginning of their careers,

While still in training, they receive basic instruction on how non-lethal weapons work.

Among the most common examples, besides pepper spray, is the use of a taser, which is a device for...

Conducting energy used to incapacitate an individual in violation of the law. It should be emphasized that

Training aimed at improving and updating the operator's skills has a frequency that

It varies depending on the institution.

Furthermore, according to Santos (2015), it is necessary to pass on the entire theoretical framework to agent, which ranges from operating principles, health risks, the situations in which the instrument

It should be used until, finally, it comes into contact with pepper spray. Along these lines, as a rule,

It is recommended that the operator activate the sprayer against the aggressor's face with one or two bursts of 0.5 to 1

Second. Maintaining a safe distance is essential when using the sprayer, and the rule is that...



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Use should be done while respecting a distance of ten, five, and two meters from the person, depending on the product concentration.

It is important to highlight the consequences that may arise from the use of pepper spray in this context. In this sense, for example, respiratory injuries with the possibility of death are cited. Therefore, it is of utmost importance. It is important that the agents who will operate with this technology experience the effects firsthand. that they know what they will cause to other individuals. Santos (2015) comments that the pepper spray It is made from a chemical component called capsaicin, which when in contact with the skin can... to cause tearing, blurred vision, temporary blindness, burning sensation, reddish discoloration and closure. involuntary eyelid drooping. Furthermore, it can also cause prolonged coughing, lung irritation, and... Bronchospasm can also cause a burning sensation with the presence of blisters and peeling. when exposed to the chemical agent for a long time.

Regarding ways to mitigate the effects, Santos (2015) states that laypeople try to minimize Rubbing the affected area, however, is far from solving the problem; on the contrary, it... It enhances the effects, as it further facilitates the entry of *capsicum* crystals into the capillaries. The effects The effects on the person being hit last about fifteen to thirty minutes, and the most effective way to mitigate the impacts is... Wash the contaminated area thoroughly with plenty of water and a neutral soap. Wash the skin only with Water is not interesting considering it's an oily product. Similarly, it's also not... The use of creams or moisturizers is recommended, since the application of these products prevents *oleoresin*. *Capsicum* coming out of the skin.

Furthermore, when possible, according to Madsen (2023), the affected person should seek an area Ventilated to reduce irritation caused by the product. Those who wear contact lenses should Please be aware that you can only remove the lenses when your hands are completely clean. Afterwards, hands should be washed again to remove any remaining residue. There are situations where the effects are very intense, causing the eyes to become extremely irritated or even inflamed. In this scenario, it is important to be vigilant; applying an ice pack or cold compress is recommended. in the affected area of the body. However, if these options are not sufficient, the individual should be He was taken to the hospital immediately.

### 3. FIRST-RANGE POLICING

The work of the Military Police of Amazonas (PMAM) is one of the essential pillars of Public security in the state of Amazonas. Given this, the efficiency with which this service is provided... This directly impacts the maintenance of order and the protection of individual rights. According to Reiner (2004), the Police is the state institution legitimized to use force in order to



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to safeguard security. The PMAM, like other military police forces in Brazil, is structured as follows:  
in a phased manner, distributing their efforts according to the specific needs of each.

occurrence. In this context, according to Silva Filho and Brillhante (2016), the role of the Military Police  
as part of the public security system responsible for visible policing and  
Preserving public order means guaranteeing people's rights, as these are generally the first state  
intervention mechanisms that citizens recognize in moments of vulnerability. It is from this perspective that...

First-line policing is included here, as it is the type of policing that performs

The core activity of the institution. Therefore, it plays an essential role, since it is the first...

point of contact between society and the public security system, responsible for dealing with

A wide variety of incidents occurred in various neighborhoods of Manaus and in the interior of the state.

First-line policing is the most basic operational segment and, at the same time,  
indispensable part of the visible policing structure. Thus, according to Cabral (2019), the  
First-rate policing, which she calls "conventional police," has the responsibility of  
Area patrolling, or "standard" patrolling, is that which is carried out in streets, schools, events, squares, among other places.  
In this context, he is responsible for prioritizing the handling of routine incidents, such as thefts,  
Traffic disputes, public disturbances, many frequent situations involving the application of the law.  
"Maria da Penha".

Furthermore, it acts in cases of disputes motivated by excessive alcohol consumption.  
Alcohol consumption, especially on weekends, is often characterized by a high risk of  
bodily injuries and, in more serious cases, even death. It also acts in other incidents that, although  
Even if they are not highly complex, they require immediate intervention. In this context, taking as a basis  
Cabral's idea (2019), the term "first mesh," refers to the idea of a first barrier.  
of containment, conventional and non-specialized, that is, the military police officers who perform this  
Those in that role must always be constantly vigilant and ready to act directly in the first instances.  
moments of any crisis or need situation.

In the PMAM (Military Police of Amazonas), according to the Basic Manual of Ostensive Policing of the Military Police of São Paulo  
Paulo, M-14-PM (1997) this type of policing involves squads that patrol both on foot  
both in cars, motorcycles and bicycles, in order to cover urban and rural areas throughout  
state of Amazonas. Along these lines, it is essentially a preventive policing approach, in which the  
The police officer must display their full conspicuousness in such a way that they are seen at a glance by the citizen who  
while in transit, thus preventing any potential disturbances to the peace. However, this type  
Police can also act reactively, which the scholar Lazzarini (1994) calls  
as immediate repression, characterized by intervention when order has already been broken. This occurs,  
for example, in situations of flagrant offense, in which the police officer may directly encounter, or  
in response to emergency calls relayed by the Operations Center in Manaus known



like "Giant".

First-line policing is structured around several core functions, including

Their activities include: preventative patrolling, responding to all types of incidents, and mediation and resolution of disputes. conflicts.

Visible patrolling is the main function of this type of policing, being the way

through which the state, via the PMAM (Military Police of Amazonas), demonstrates its presence and strength, with the objective of to discourage any violation of public order. Thus, according to Oliveira and Souza (2017),

The primary objective of military police activity is the preservation and maintenance of the daily struggle in Opposition to violence and crime, with respect for democracy, citizenship, and human rights.

Therefore, preventive patrolling is carried out both by vehicle and on foot, being

strategically distributed according to intelligence and statistical data from the Secretariat of

Public Security Secretariat of Amazonas (SSP) or the Military Police of Amazonas (PMAM). Therefore, it is possible to verify the presence police presence in areas with a higher incidence of crime or in locations with a large circulation of people.

such as in the commercial center of Manaus, for example, in the main squares and residential areas of greater vulnerability.

The Brazilian Classification of Occupations (CBO) (BRASIL, 2002) determines that the Police Officer

A soldier needs to possess certain skills and abilities that set him apart from others.

categories of public servants. For example, in rural areas there is a major logistical challenge that

This requires the use of appropriate boats and other means of transport suitable for the terrain.

Amazonas, given its geographical characteristics, which include urban areas

In densely populated areas, as well as rural and riverside zones, first-line policing is essential.

Adapt to local specificities.

Handling all types of incidents is another inherent characteristic of policing.

first mesh, and such competence is aligned with the idea of the CBO (BRASIL, 2002), regarding adaptability skills that a military police officer must possess, whether preventive or reactive.

Therefore, there is a wide range of situations, from petty theft and public disorder to accidents.

From traffic accidents with or without victims, to more complex and serious cases requiring initial intervention.

before the arrival of specialized units, such as riot police or tactical groups of

Special Operations Company (COE).

Readiness is an inseparable aspect of this modality. It is the first line of defense.

Regarding fundamental rights and guarantees, conventional police officers need to be...

constantly on the move and in communication with the operational centers, ensuring a

Quick and efficient response.

Furthermore, frontline policing performs another essential function, which is...

mediation of interpersonal conflicts. Along these lines, many of the cases handled involve



Misunderstandings that, if not properly mediated, can escalate into more serious situations.

serious.

As explained by Sales; Alencar; Feitosa (2009), conflict mediation is a consensual dispute resolution procedure whereby a third, impartial person, chosen or accepted by the parties, it acts to encourage and facilitate the resolution of problems. In the context of the state of Amazonas, the PMAM (Military Police of Amazonas) faces numerous particular challenges due to... Geographic, demographic, and socioeconomic characteristics of the region.

Another factor to consider is the cultural and social diversity of the state, and also according to Sales; Alencar; Feitosa (2009) discuss how the practice of mediation establishes the participation of the population. When people are involved in conflict resolution, the discussion shifts from individual issues to simply addressing them. Collective issues require police officers to have a particular sensitivity in dealing with different situations. Constant training and capacity building are essential for the first force to operate. The network can adequately respond to the demands of the population, dealing with situations ranging from... everyday situations as well as emergencies in isolated locations. According to Pinc (2011), training is the A path to updating and improving knowledge surrounding police practices.

Furthermore, first-line policing in Amazonas is of paramount importance to the guaranteeing public safety in urban and rural areas. Its overt and preventative nature, combined with the rapid response to incidents makes this modality the foundation for maintaining social peace in this context. The rapid response to incidents makes this modality the foundation for maintaining social peace in this context. Furthermore, its initial performance is crucial for the scalability of operations. security, being the starting point for the action of more complex forces, when necessary.

#### 4. The Relationship Between Pepper Spray and First-Level Policing in the Military Police of Amazonas

First-line policing by the Amazonas Military Police, as discussed. Previously, it was responsible for acting as the first line of response in everyday occurrences, prioritizing the prevention and rapid resolution of conflicts. In many situations, it is essential that the police officer must have in his arsenal of tools, in addition to his firearm, other effective technology and, primarily, it must be capable of containing individuals or groups that offer resistance, with the purpose of this was to prevent the escalation of violence in that context. Therefore, pepper spray was used. According to Andrade (2011), a chemical substance that irritates the eyes with pain and intense irritation. Temporary tearing becomes an essential tool in the differentiated use of force, allowing the police officer to act in a proportional and controlled manner in situations that, At first glance, they seem simple, but they can evolve rapidly. In these circumstances, it is



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It is crucial that the police officer remains alert and prepared to react appropriately at all times.

Pepper spray, according to the standards of differentiated use of force, Torres and Costa (2022), is widely used by security forces due to its ability to neutralize and to temporarily incapacitate aggressive individuals without causing permanent damage is Of course, if used correctly. In this way, it aligns directly with the function of First-line policing: ensuring one's own safety and that of others (Legitimate Defense Art 25) (of the Brazilian Penal Code) (BRAZIL, 1940) with the aim of preserving public order efficiently and without resorting to extreme measures, such as the use of firearms, for example.

In the initial response to incidents, especially in public settings and situations In cases of crowding, where the police officer is outnumbered, the use of control techniques and Crowd dispersal is very necessary. Therefore, pepper spray enables the police to... First-line teams manage conflicts quickly and with minimal need for physical intervention. direct. Nogueira (2016, p.100) states that it is the State's responsibility to train Military Police officers in a variety of weapons and ammunition, both lethal and less-lethal, which, despite requiring an investment... High levels of government involvement in ongoing training will enable the use of other forms of action before resorting to lethal force. As already mentioned, pepper spray, when used, induces Some side effects include burning eyes, difficulty breathing, and temporary disorientation. which is extremely helpful in preventing the advance of aggressive individuals, as in cases of occurrences of widespread fights, resistance to arrest, and people under the influence of substances. psychoactive.

According to Cabral (2019), the work of a Military Police Officer is characterized by situations that They require a great deal of adaptation to adversity, such as: imminent risk of death, work schedule. exhausting and with low social support. Cases of violent individuals under the influence of narcotics are... a very common reality in the central region of Manaus where there are countless people who live in streets, many of whom are addicted to various types of drugs and sometimes engage in many [activities]. illicit. Furthermore, some are carriers of unknown diseases, which can even lead to problems. putting the police officer's life at risk, should he come into physical contact with that individual. In this way, it is possible to see that there are numerous dangerous situations in which the first-line police officer... The mesh is being subjected to it daily. The use of pepper spray is an excellent This is a preventive and coercive measure, given that its use aims to guarantee the safety of both both the police officer and those involved in the incident, reducing the need to use more severe force. Therefore, the use of pepper spray by frontline police aligns with the principles. preserving order with proportionality is one of the pillars of the Military Police's actions. Amazonas.

Amazonas is the largest state in Brazil in terms of land area, according to...



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The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) and this poses an additional challenge to the forces.

security. In regions where distances are great and mobility may be limited by

geographical features, such as rivers, forests and roads in very poor condition, the

First-line policing, in some cases, represented by a force of two police officers.

Military personnel alone, responsible for serving an entire city, need quick and effective solutions.

that allow not only the rapid resolution of conflicts but also the preservation of the lives of those involved.

police.

In this context, pepper spray becomes a very important tool for...

Responding to incidents in remote areas of the Amazon, especially in peripheral and rural areas.

where police reinforcements may take days to arrive. In community policing

riverside communities, for example, where tension between residents can arise due to local disputes or

In social conflicts, with the proper and technical use, the spray allows police officers to have a

An escape valve beyond their firearms, which can cause irreparable losses. Therefore

In this way, the agility provided by the use of pepper spray is a critical characteristic in

Amazonian context, where distances between locations and the complexity of access to places

This can delay the dispatch of reinforcements. The first-line police officer, using this tool, can

to resolve conflicts immediately, preventing the situation from escalating, especially in regions

isolated areas where the presence of the State is more limited.

It is important to emphasize that police action is always under public and legal scrutiny.

and any use of force that exceeds the limits established by law may incur

responsibility in the civil, criminal or administrative sphere. According to Law No. 1154 of 09 of

December 1975 (Statute of the PMAM). Therefore, the use of pepper spray offers the police officer...

An effective tool for containing various situations with minimal risk of causing damage.

severe penalties can significantly reduce the likelihood of the action being challenged.

prosecuted for excessive use of force.

Furthermore, the Brazilian Penal Code (BRASIL, 1940) provides in article 23, item III, a

Legitimate self-defense as an exclusion of unlawfulness, which means that the police officer, when using the pepper spray...

Pepper, used to contain an immediate threat or control a situation of resistance, is acting

within a legal framework. Furthermore, the use of less lethal means, such as pepper spray,

It reinforces the proportionality of the police response, one of the principles most valued by the justice system.

Therefore, by using pepper spray instead of resorting to firearms or force...

Through direct physical intervention, the police officer demonstrates that he is acting in accordance with the principles of moderation and

necessity, thus reducing the risk of being held liable for disproportionate action.

In light of all this, it is important to emphasize that, to guarantee the legal security of the police officer...

The first step in using pepper spray is to ensure that the action is always...



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accompanied by correct procedures. In this regard, Silva (2009) and Cruz (2011) explain about the need for and scope of military police education, ensuring that, while receiving from The state, as the monopoly of force, needs not only to assimilate but, above all, to defend itself. The fundamental constitutional principles and foundations of the rule of law. The Military Police of Amazonas must to provide these professionals with adequate and ongoing training on the use of this technology, covering everything from theoretical aspects, notions of human rights and legislation, to practical ones, This is when he, the security agent, will experience the effects of the spray firsthand so that he can understand what it means. use.

Furthermore, in these training courses, the police officer should be warned about following the registration protocols, to have their actions backed up, completion of detailed reports on the incident, justifying the use of pepper spray and describing the circumstances that led to it. its application. For example: the seriousness of the situation such as imminent aggression, resistance to arrest or turmoil; previous attempts at dialogue or other forms of peaceful resolution and their effects; consequences of using pepper spray on those involved, such as immobilization time and need for medical attention, if any.

These incident reports are essential to avoid misinterpretations by part of observers or, in more extreme cases, the allegation of abuse of authority, as provided for in Law No. 13.869/2019 (Brazil, 2019). This law classifies abuse by agents as a crime. Public authorities, including police, are prohibited from using excessive force without legal justification.

Furthermore, a fundamental aspect to be considered is the way in which society It understands the military police service, especially with regard to the proper use of technology. like pepper spray. Benevides (1983) and Menandro (1992) assert that there is evidence of that significant sectors of society have a negative view of the police, even if curiously are favorable to increased repression. In a scenario where public trust in Security institutions can be shaken by widely publicized cases of police violence. In traditional media and social networks, the technical use of less-lethal weapons can become a crucial factor in restoring the credibility of the police. It is not uncommon to find videos that expose, negatively, the image of police institutions, whether through aggressive approaches or the use of The excessive use of force ends up having negative repercussions throughout Brazil. Therefore, the The use of pepper spray, when applied professionally and within protocols... security can help reverse the negative image. Because the spray, being a less lethal weapon, It offers a less impactful alternative for containing individuals resistant to orders. police officers, when compared to other mechanisms, such as firearms or batons, which can causing irreparable harm. The proper use of this resource projects the image of an institution. A police force that is better prepared and equipped to handle conflict situations in a proportionate manner and



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efficient.

Finally, the use of pepper spray in frontline policing in Amazonas,  
When carried out legally and proportionally, it offers the police officer a valuable tool for  
to control disorderly situations without exceeding the limits of legitimate self-defense or incurring in  
legal responsibilities. Therefore, the correct application of this resource, accompanied by records.  
Accurate procedures and compliance with legal standards ensure that police officers act safely and effectively.  
avoiding legal complications and preserving the rights of all parties involved. A  
Adherence to the principle of proportionality is the central axis that aligns police action with the  
The legal certainty necessary for agents to perform their duty without risk.  
undue liability.

#### 4. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The general objective of this study was to describe the effectiveness and impacts of the use of  
the use of pepper spray in frontline policing by the Amazonas Military Police, with a view to  
to improve working conditions for police officers and promote safer interventions and  
Humanized approaches to conflict management. Based on normative, doctrinal, and practical analysis,  
It was found that this objective was fully achieved, insofar as the study allowed  
to understand both the operational potential of the instrument and its impact on police action.  
everyday life.

The hypothesis initially formulated was that the introduction and use of pepper spray in  
First-rate policing by the Amazonas Military Police would increase the efficiency of  
operations would improve the safety of officers and the public, reducing the need for force.  
lethal and promoting more proportionate and controlled interventions, was validated, as the data  
The findings, as well as the theoretical framework consulted, demonstrate that pepper spray, when  
employed in a technically sound and proportionate manner, and within institutional protocols, it acts as a  
an effective means of restraint and defense, reducing direct physical contact, minimizing injuries and  
expanding the capacity to resolve conflicts without unnecessary escalation of force.

It was also found that the proper use of pepper spray contributes to the protection of  
The physical integrity of the police officer is ensured, providing an intermediary tool between verbalization and physical integrity.  
and lethal means, and also for the preservation of the life and integrity of the citizen, reinforcing the  
principles of legality, proportionality and humanity foreseen in the national guidelines for use  
of force. These aspects confirm that its adoption strengthens an institutional culture of security.  
A citizen-focused public sector aligned with international best practices.



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However, the research also shows that the success of this instrument depends on several factors. structural factors, such as ongoing training, standardization of procedures, and adequate distribution of... equipment, supervision of its use, and raising public awareness about its function as a technology of less offensive potential. These elements prove essential to consolidating a model of More efficient, transparent policing, guided by the defense of rights.

Therefore, it can be concluded that pepper spray represents an important advance for the First-rate policing in Amazonas, contributing significantly to more effective operations. safer, more technical, and more humanized. For future studies, it is recommended to expand the... investigation into other less lethal weapons, as well as the carrying out of Empirical analyses with larger samples of occurrences, in order to deepen understanding. Regarding its impact on police practice.

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