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## San Diego County Sheriff's Department

Post Office Box 939062 • San Diego, California 92193-9062

William B. Kolender, Sheriff

William D. Gore, Undersheriff

July 5, 2007

Honorable Janis Sammartino  
Presiding Judge, San Diego Superior Court  
County Courthouse  
220 West Broadway  
San Diego, CA 92101

RECEIVED  
JUL 12 2007  
SAN DIEGO  
COUNTY GRAND JURY

Dear Judge Sammartino:

**Response to the San Diego County Grand Jury's Report Dated May 18, 2007**  
**"Conditions and Management of Detention Facilities in San Diego County"**

Pursuant to California Penal Code Section 933, the following is my response to the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations 07-80; 07-82 through 07-87; 07-92; 07-93; 07-94.

**Grand Jury Recommendation 07-80:**

The 2006-2007 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that the San Diego County Sheriff's Department:

"Continue the ongoing recruitment efforts and establish a task force or consider hiring a consultant to examine current recruitment policies and formulate a comprehensive recruitment plan to address the understaffing referred to in several individual detention facility reports."

We Agree; the recommendation has been implemented:

The San Diego Sheriff's Department recognizes the staffing needs of the Sheriff's Detention Services Bureau. We are committed in our efforts to minimize the staff shortages we are experiencing today.

The San Diego Sheriff's Department has hired a marketing and advertising agency; Astone/Croker & Flanagan.

Astone/Crocker & Flanagan (ACF) is a marketing firm based in Sacramento. They have done impressive work for the Sacramento Sheriff's Department as well as other Law Enforcement agencies.

*"Keeping the Peace Since 1850"*

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We are confident they will assist in achieving our recruitment goals.

At the time of this report, Astone/Crocker & Flanagan are conducting an organizational marketing assessment. A follow-up meeting as to their findings is scheduled for July 12, 2007.

The Sheriff's Recruiting Unit added some unique recruiting methods to their agenda this past year; highlighted by two Women's Recruitment Seminars held at our Sheriff's Headquarters. The two presentations gathered one hundred sixty women interested in becoming members of the Sheriff's Department.

In addition to our traditional advertising using print, television and radio; we have expanded our efforts by including Military Publications, Sign-on San Diego, the Union Tribune, The Law Enforcement Expo, The Daily Aztec at SDSU, mobile billboards and sponsored a venue at the Charger Confidential. These efforts have been very successful in that we continue to test 300 + applicants each month.

The Sheriff's Recruiting Unit has revitalized the 'Recruiting Team' consisting of approximately sixty department personnel who have shown an interest in being a formal participant of our recruitment efforts. These new members volunteer to assist the core team with recruiting at various venues throughout San Diego.

Sheriff's Recruiting has significantly increased the number of employment testing dates and times to better accommodate prospective applicant schedules. The Sheriff's Background Investigative Unit has also increased the cadet orientation from one to three times per month.

The Sheriff's Personnel Division continues to work closely with the County Department of Human Resources on the testing and processing of qualified candidates. This is an ongoing effort, in which several changes have been made to expedite our hiring process. We have been invited to work closely with the State Peace Officer Standards and Training Division for the development of a new employment testing process. It is our hope that these new procedures will facilitate a more efficient, timely hiring process.

In 2006, the department implemented a lateral hiring signing bonus program of \$5000. The implementation of this program and hiring of Lateral Deputy Sheriff's has increased 300% in the past year. Other incentives remain in place including a recruitment bonus awarded to our own employees of \$500 for every applicant who is hired and successfully completes probation.

The Sheriff's Department is confident these efforts will have a meaningful impact.

**Descanso Detention Facility:**

**Grand Jury Finding:**

“Improved electronic monitoring would release staff for other duties.”

We Agree in part; see the following response to Grand Jury Recommendation 07-82.

**Grand Jury Recommendation 07-82:**

The 2006-2007 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that the San Diego County Sheriff's Department:

“Determine, purchase and install additional camera surveillance equipment.”

We Agree in part:

The recommendation as to exterior cameras will not be implemented. The Descanso Detention Facility is situated on approximately 14 acres. The facility currently operates (36) cameras which monitor all major walkways, staff areas and main gate. Due to the expansiveness of the grounds, additional exterior cameras would not enhance what is currently being used. Interior cameras may be a consideration for the inmate living areas (dorms) at some future date; not this fiscal year. Trenching and wire installation would be very expensive due to the distance between the dorms and the main control building where cameras would be monitored.

**Grand Jury Finding:**

“Occasional inclement weather makes outdoor visiting impossible.”

We Agree; see the following response to Grand Jury Recommendation 07-83.

**Grand Jury Recommendation 07-83:**

The 2006-2007 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that the San Diego County Sheriff's Department:

“Establish a room where indoor visiting can take place.”

We Agree; the recommendation is in the process of being implemented:

A cost estimate and plans for this project were completed in September of 2006. The cost for materials was approximately \$18,000.00. The labor would be performed by inmates in the construction trades program at the Descanso Detention Facility. The cost savings from inmate labor would be \$125,000.00. This will likely be a project funded and completed next fiscal year.

**Grand Jury Finding:**

“Books are well-used and often wear quickly.”

We Agree; see our response to Grand Jury Recommendation 07-84.

**Grand Jury Recommendation 07-84:**

The 2006-2007 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that the San Diego County Sheriff's Department:

“Approach school districts, libraries and publishers to obtain books at low or no charge.”

We Agree; the recommendation has been implemented:

Instructors for the educational programs at the Descanso Detention Facility are contracted through the Grossmont High School District. Teachers can submit requests for replacement books through the Grossmont District Adult School Office. This procedure has been explained to the instructional staff.

**Grand Jury Finding:**

“Staff was not given adequate notice of the evacuation by the fire department.”

We Disagree; see the following response to Grand Jury Recommendation 07-85.

**Grand Jury Recommendation 07-85:**

The 2006-2007 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that the San Diego County Sheriff's Department:

“Improve communication between the Fire Department and Descanso staff to point out the need for additional notification in the event future evacuations are needed.”

We Disagree:

There have been two (2) wild land fires over the last seven years in the area of the Descanso Detention Facility. In each case, an Incident Command Post was established with a member of the Fire Department present. All affected detention facilities, stations and the community as a whole were given timely, up to date information. The Sheriff's Emergency Operations Manual provides specific details in the event of Wild Land Fire, to include evacuation notification procedures; those procedures were followed. Our working relationship and communication with the local fire department and their staff is excellent.

**East Mesa Detention Facility:**

**Grand Jury Finding:**

“The educational program at East Mesa Detention is excellent and could be expanded.”

We Agree; see the following response to Grand Jury Recommendation 07-86.

**Grand Jury Recommendation 07-86:**

The 2006-2007 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that the San Diego County Sheriff's Department:

“Continue to add more classes with the goal of preparing inmates to reintegrate into society when their terms of incarceration are completed.”

We Agree:

The Grand Jury's recommendation was implemented by creating a course of instruction, titled, “Re-entry to Society.” This is a four part program covering a period of two weeks. The Re-entry to Society course provides inmates with detailed, individualized plans that assist with the transition from jail to community.

**Grand Jury Finding:**

“Understaffing has an impact on the ratio of deputy to inmates, which make deputies' jobs more difficult.”

We Agree; see our response to Grand Jury Recommendation 07-80.

**George Bailey Detention Facility:**

**Grand Jury Finding:**

“Increased sworn staffing is an immediate need at this facility.”

We Agree; see our response to Grand Jury Recommendation 07-80.

**San Diego Central Jail:**

**Grand Jury Finding:**

“All areas were in compliance. Medical and mental facilities are outstanding.”

Cleaning fluids and chemicals were safely stored. Weapons lockers were located outside the perimeter of the modules (cells) and were well secured. The kitchen area was clean and responsibly run. Recreation areas were spartan but well maintained. Contact sports are not permitted.”

We Agree

**South Bay Detention Facility:**

**Grand Jury Finding:**

“All areas were in compliance. Cleaning fluids and chemicals were safely stored. Weapons lockers were located outside the perimeter of the modules (cells) and were well secured. The kitchen area was clean and responsibly run.”

We Agree

**Grand Jury Finding:**

“Understaffing continues to be a concern. Recruitment is difficult which seems to be a problem with the Sheriff’s Department.”

We Agree; see our response to Grand Jury Recommendation 07-80.

**Grand Jury Finding:**

“Additional cameras would provide information to the staff so intelligent correctional measures could be made.”

We Agree; see the following response to Grand Jury Recommendation 07-87.

**Grand Jury Recommendation 07-87:**

The 2006-2007 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that the San Diego County Sheriff’s Department:

“Conduct a site survey and cost estimate to determine necessary video surveillance equipment to be purchased and installed to address the problem of inadequate monitoring of the daily activities of the inmates.”

We Agree; the recommendation has been implemented:

At the time of the Grand Jury inspection, there were six video surveillance monitors in the South Bay Detention Facility Control area.

Eighty cameras positioned throughout the facility fed their images into one of the six monitors. Each monitor had a six inch screen capable of projecting a single image. If the deputy wanted to see a different image; they had to make a camera change manually.

In support of the Grand Jury recommendation, the South Bay Detention Facility purchased and installed five new video surveillance monitors with 19 inch screens. Each monitor is capable of projecting 16 simultaneous images. This allows us to monitor all camera views, at all times.

The existing camera system has been modified as much as possible; however, the system recording capability is mostly obsolete. In November 2006, the Facility Superintendent and the Facility Assessment Team conducted a site survey and cost estimate to update our system to a more modern Digital Video Recording program. The proposed DVR system will allow us to increase the amount of cameras used for surveillance and automatically records and saves real time images.

As a result of the Facility Assessment Team's survey and recommendation, the DVR system for the South Bay Detention Facility was placed onto the Department's Major Maintenance Priority List.

**Vista Detention Facility:**

**Grand Jury Finding:**

"All areas were in compliance. Medical and mental health services are available every day. A medical doctor is on site for four hours in the morning, and three registered nurses are in the medical unit 24 hours a day."

We Agree

**Grand Jury Finding:**

"Recommendation 06-062 by the 2005-2006 Grand Jury to the San Diego County Board of Supervisors and Sheriff was to consider means of increasing the number of sworn officers. The budget has been increased from 113 sworn officers to 120. Recruitment of detention officers appear to be a universal problem within the Sheriff's Department."

We Agree; see our response to Grand Jury Recommendation 07-80.

**Grand Jury Finding:**

"The recreation areas were well lit and although indoors, did provide adequate ventilation."

We Agree

**East Mesa Food Service Facility:**

**Grand Jury Finding:**

“This operation is well run, cost effective (using inmate personnel) and up to date.”

We Agree; see the following response to Grand Jury Recommendation 07-92.

**Grand Jury Recommendation 07-92:**

The 2006-2007 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that the San Diego County Sheriff's Department:

“Continue the operation on its present course and share with other jurisdictions the methods employed to make respective facilities as prestigious as East Mesa's food service operation.”

We Agree; the recommendation has been implemented.

The Sheriff's Department's Central Production Center has conducted tours of the facility on a regular basis for the past sixteen years. Various county, state and federal correctional facilities and departments have toured the facility and received design and operational instruction in Cook/Chill and Centralization technology. This included hands on instruction for cooks and managers. In addition, various school districts, hotels, casino operations, hospitals and universities have received assistance in their plans to implement these processes. Many institutions have built their own production centers based on the San Diego Sheriff's operations. The Sheriff will continue to share knowledge and expertise with other agencies.

**Grand Jury Recommendation 07-93:**

The 2006-2007 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that the San Diego County Sheriff's Department:

“Employ an additional full-time dietician to supplement the staff.”

We Agree:

The Sheriff's Department has recognized the need to employ an additional dietician to assist the existing dietician in handling the ever increasing workload. The addition of a second dietician is a long term objective for the food service division. Funding has not been identified for this fiscal year.

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**East Mesa Laundry Facility:**

**Grand Jury Finding:**

“This laundry operation is well run and efficient despite the obstacles that can be present due to cramped working conditions and heat.”

We Agree; see the following response to Grand Jury Recommendation 07-94.

**Grand Jury Recommendation 07-94:**

The 2006-2007 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that the San Diego County Sheriff's Department:

“Upgrade the ventilation in the laundry operation to improve working conditions.”

We Agree: efforts to address this recommendation have been implemented.

This project has been packaged and funded in the amount of \$412,000.00 for Major Maintenance in Fiscal Year 07/08. The estimated start date is November of 2007.

In closing, I would like to thank the Grand Jury for their efforts in working through this investigation.

If they need further clarification or additional discussion, please feel free to contact Commander Al Skoglund of our Detention Services Bureau at (858) 974-2088.

Sincerely,



William B. Kolender, Sheriff

WBK/aas

cc: Members, Board of Supervisors  
Walt F. Ekard, CAO  
Thomas Pastuszka, Director, Clerk of the Board  
David R. Higgins, Foreman, 2006-2007 San Diego County Grand Jury