



ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

SHERIFF-CORONER
SANDRA HUTCHENS

July 11, 2016


Honorable Charles Margines
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Subject: Response to Orange County Grand Jury 2015-2016 report, "Sheriff's Temporary Detention/Holding Areas, Patrol Areas and Special Services."

Dear Judge Margines:

In accordance with Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, enclosed please find the response to the FY 2015-2016 Orange County Grand Jury report, "Sheriff's Temporary Detention/Holding Areas, Patrol Areas and Special Services." If you have any questions, please contact my office.

Sincerely,


Sandra Hutchens
Sheriff-Coroner

cc: Dr. Carrie Carmody, Grand Jury Foreperson
Members, Board of Supervisors
Frank Kim, County Executive Officer

Orange County Sheriff's Department
Response to Findings and Recommendations
2015-16 Orange County Grand Jury Report

Sheriff's Temporary Detention/Holding Areas, Patrol Areas, and Special Services

FINDINGS

F.1

The Pedestrian screening areas located at the entrances to the Central Justice Center are heavily used and become congested during high traffic times. Pedestrian crowding prevents the Sheriff's Special Officers from having an adequate view of persons entering the facility.

Response: *Disagrees with finding.*

The Orange County Sheriff's Department adequately deploys Sheriff Special Officers at the entrances of the screening areas to visually inspect all visitors and court employees as they enter the screening areas. Additionally, a Sheriff Special Officer is stationed at the exterior of the front entrance of the Central Justice Center at peak hours. This position monitors pedestrian and vehicle traffic in front of the court. Sheriff Special Officers and Deputies have adequate viewing range of persons entering the Central Justice Center.

F.2

The industrial/office grade partitions used in the Central Justice Center's screening areas to channel the public entering and departing the facility do not provide ballistic protection for Sheriff's Special Officers in the case of an active shooter emergency.

Response: *Agrees with finding.*

The Orange County Sheriff's Department and Court Facilities Manager have been and are currently working to identify ballistic barriers to adequately accommodate the individual floor plan design and provide additional protection for our staff at each of Justice Center's screening areas.

F.3

There is no system for regulating or channeling the public in order to prevent crowding at the scanning stations. Sheriff's Special Officers must use verbal commands in order to maintain public order and organization.

Response: *Disagree with finding.*

The screening areas in each Justice Center are strategically designed to promote security and to properly screen persons entering the secure area of the Justice Center. It is correct that at peak times the screening areas become crowded and staff properly use verbal commands to control both ingress and egress into the Justice Center. The Central Justice Center uses passive barriers to direct the flow of persons walking through the screening areas.

F.4

None of the County jail or court facilities visited uses full body scanners to prevent the public from bringing non-metallic weapons, tools or other contraband into the facility.

Response: *Agrees with finding.*

F.5

The current security/surveillance camera system on the exterior of the Harbor Court Justice Center is not adequate and until completion of upgrades, does not provide for sufficient monitoring.

Response: *Agrees with finding.*

The Harbor Justice Center security/surveillance system upgrade was installed in the month of May 2016 to the exterior of the facility and now provides adequate and sufficient monitoring.

F.6

The roll-up doors located at the Harbor Justice Center do not prevent some observation of inmates arriving and departing the court by the Sheriff's transportation vehicles.

Response: *Agrees with finding.*

The replacement of the roll up gates with roll-up privacy gates has been added to the security project list. In addition, the bus bay area is currently under review due to the new fleet of OCSD buses which have larger dimensions. The increased size of the bus fleet may result in a redesign of the bus bay area which will include privacy gates.

F7.

The command Center at John Wayne Airport uses outdated surveillance equipment.

Response: *Disagrees with finding.*

The surveillance equipment at John Wayne Airport meets the current security needs. The surveillance equipment has passed Transportation Security Administration operational tests.

F8.

The K-9 office located at John Wayne airport is in need of repair or replacement.

Response: *Agrees with finding.*

F9.

The Harbor Patrol Marine Operations Bureau does not have waterproof dashboard or handheld video cameras for use at all three harbors in its patrol area.

Response: *Disagrees with finding.*

All primary vessels in the Sheriff's fleet are equipped with waterproof GoPro cameras. Additionally, each of the 3 stations has a digital camera capable of taking still photos and video for evidentiary purposes. Research is currently being conducted regarding the addition of body worn cameras.

F10.

Adequate long-range surveillance equipment is not available to Dana Point deputies performing harbormaster duties.

Response: *Agrees with finding.*

Long-range surveillance equipment is not utilized due to the fact that it is not consistent with the current deployment model. It is not desirable to have Sheriff's deputies monitoring television screens rather than proactively patrolling.

F11.

The outside parking/equipment staging area located at the Aliso Viejo Sheriff's Station provides inadequate protection along the rear of the enclosed area. No barrier exists to prevent unencumbered access onto Sheriff's property.

Response: *Disagrees with finding.*

The Grand Jury report indicates that the rear of the Aliso Viejo Sheriff's Station is not separated "from public land by any type of wall or fencing." This comment is not entirely correct. Although there is no barrier adjacent to the sidewalk on Aliso Viejo Roadway and the embankment that slopes to the western portion of the property, there is a 480 foot long chain link fence that borders the entire rear of the parking lot separating the lot from the adjacent wooded area. The fencing has been in place since the facility opened in September of 1996.

To the knowledge of staff who have worked at the station over the last several years, there has never been a breach of the rear fencing. Deputies and staff are well aware of the unfenced slope and routinely scan the area whenever they are in the parking lot. Additionally, the rear lot and fence line is monitored by surveillance cameras. The cameras are viewed by the 24/7 staff assigned to the station.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1.

The Orange County Sheriff's should make best efforts to coordinate with the Court Facilities Manager no later than September 2017 to determine which space designation (County, Court, or Common) applies to points of ingress and egress at the county's courthouses to help determine fiscal responsibility for security/safety improvements. (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5)

Response: *The recommendation has been implemented.*

The Sheriff's Department continues to coordinate with the Court Facility Manager with regard to security and safety improvements.

R2.

The Orange County Sheriff should make best efforts to coordinate with the Court Facilities Manager by January 2017 in order to develop a plan that includes objectives and funding options for providing a better system for channeling pedestrians at the points of entry for each court facility. (F3)

Response: *The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable.*

The current screening areas in each Justice Center are sufficient and strategically designed to promote security and to properly screen persons entering the secure area of each Justice Center.

R3.

The Orange County Sheriff should make best efforts to coordinate with the Court Facilities Manager by January 2017 to develop a plan to replace existing industrial/office grade partitions at the courthouse entrances and screening stations with ballistic partitions. (F2)

Responses: *The recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.*

The Orange County Sheriff's Department and Court Facilities Manager have been and are currently working to identify ballistic barriers to adequately accommodate the individual floor plan design and provide additional protection for our staff at each of Justice Center's screening areas. The project will be completed as funding becomes available.

R4.

The Orange County Sheriff should continue best efforts to coordinate with the Court Facilities Manager by January 2017 to support the current project to upgrade and expand the video surveillance system at the Harbor Justice Center. (F5)

Responses: *The recommendation has been implemented.*

The Harbor Justice Center security/surveillance system upgrade was installed in the month of May 2016 to the exterior of the facility.

R5.

The Orange County Sheriff should make best efforts to coordinate with the Court Facilities Manager by January 2017 to plan for funding, procurement and installation of solid roll up doors at the inmate vehicle entrance to the Harbor Justice Center. (F6)

Responses: *The recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.*

The replacement of the roll up gates with roll-up privacy gates has been added to the security project list. The project will be completed as funding becomes available.

R6.

The Orange County Sheriff should continue working with John Wayne Airport management to develop a plan by September 2017 for the funding and replacement of outdated surveillance equipment at John Wayne Airport, to include placing a redundant off-site backup system. (F7)

Responses: *The recommendation has been implemented.*

There is currently a multi-year project to renovate the Command Center at John Wayne Airport. This renovation includes replacement of the surveillance equipment at that location. Funding for the first year of that project is included in the FY 2016-17 John Wayne Airport budget. The Sheriff's Department will work with John Wayne Airport and provide any input on security that is needed.

R7.

The Orange County Sheriff should coordinate with the Airport Director for John Wayne Airport to develop a plan by September 2017 for the funding, and repair or replacement of the K-9 Staff Office at John Wayne Airport. (F8).

Responses: *The recommendation has been implemented.*

The Sheriff's Department has met with John Wayne airport staff to discuss a plan for replacing the existing K-9 Staff Office. The replacement of the K-9 Staff Office is one of multiple identified projects proposed for FY 2016-17. Projects are selected based on priority and availability of funds. In the event the project is not selected for funding in the current fiscal year, John Wayne Airport staff have committed to recommend the project in FY 2017-18.

R8.

The Orange County Sheriff should develop a plan by September 2017 to fund and equip Harbor Control watercraft with dashboard and handheld cameras contained in waterproof housings. (F9).

Responses: *The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable.*

All primary vessels in the Sheriff's fleet are equipped with waterproof GoPro cameras. Additionally, each of the 3 stations has a digital camera capable of taking still photos and video for evidentiary purposes. Research is currently being conducted regarding the addition of body worn cameras.

R9.

The Orange County should develop a plan by September 2017 to fund and equip the harbormaster deputies with long-range surveillance equipment. (F10)

Responses: *The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable.*

The Grand Jury report states: *In the event of a watercraft accident in the most congested area, the mouth of the harbor, deputies would have to go to the scene in order to determine what was occurring.* The Harbor Patrol deployment design is intended to have deputies actively patrolling on the water much like uniformed patrol in contract cities. It is not desirable to have Deputy Sheriffs monitoring television screens rather than proactively patrolling.

R10.

The Orange County Sheriff should coordinate with the City of Aliso Viejo by January 2017 to develop a plan for the funding and construction of a wall or fence along the entire rear of the Aliso Viejo Sheriff's Station Facility. (F11)

Responses: *The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable.*

The existing fencing is sufficient for the Sheriff's Departments security needs.

R11.

The Orange County Sheriff should develop a plan by January 2017 for the funding, purchase and installation of Fully Body Scanners for each courthouse entrance. (F4)

Response: *The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable.*

Security measures in place are sufficient at the entrance of each Justice Center. Each individual entering secure areas goes through a proper screening process.