



CITY OF FOUNTAIN VALLEY

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Daniel S. Llorens

Chief of Police

August 8, 2013

The Honorable Thomas J. Borris,
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Subject: ORANGE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT ON THE MENTALLY ILL

Dear Judge Borris:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the most recent report issued by the Orange County Grand Jury entitled, "To Protect and to Serve: A Look at Tools to Assist Law Enforcement in Achieving Positive Outcomes with the Homeless Mentally Ill," which I received on June 17, 2013.

As required by Penal Code §933 and 933.05, please consider this letter my response to the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations.

Findings

Finding #1: "Although POST requires continuing education in the area of dealing with individuals who are mentally ill, it does not specify the number of hours or frequency of officer training; nor does it require that such training be documented."

The Department agrees.

Finding #2: "Field officers desire more in-depth training in dealing with the mentally ill on the street."

The Department agrees.

Finding #3: "There is one officer - in a very few instances two officers - for every 1,000 citizens in a given city within the County who are expected to deal with the full range of law enforcement issues of that city."

The Department agrees.

Finding #4: "Nationally accredited Police Departments police less than 10% of Orange County cities."

The Department agrees.

Finding #5: "Not all Orange County cities have at least one officer trained in Crisis Intervention."

The Department does not disagree; however, the Department cannot speak towards the staffing of Departments other than this one.

Finding #6: "There is a broad spectrum of on-going training provided to patrol officers in order to develop their abilities and strategies in dealing with the mentally ill. Some departments provide minimal training; others have comprehensive programs in place.

The Department does not disagree; however, the Department cannot speak towards the training of Departments other than this one.

Finding #7: "Five departments have their patrol officers ride periodically with the homeless liaison officer. Seventeen do not."

The Department does not disagree; however, the Department cannot speak towards the deployment of Departments other than this one.

Finding #8: "Departments are reaching out - or beginning to reach out - to neighboring departments and to other skilled professionals, both in dialogue about the mentally ill and homeless issues in their cities, and to learn more effective strategies in dealing with these individuals."

The Department does not disagree; however, the Department cannot speak towards the outreach efforts of Departments other than this one.

Finding #10: "All police departments adhere to written policy, procedure and/or protocol regarding contact with mentally ill persons."

The Department does not disagree; however, the Department cannot speak towards the policy mandates of Departments other than this one.

Recommendations

Recommendation #1: "Require specific continuing education for all police officers and sheriff's deputies in interacting with the mentally ill and homeless population:

- Orange County City Police Chiefs and the Sheriff-Coroner shall corroborate with the Orange County Chiefs' and Sheriff's Association to set the type, hours and frequency of this supplemental training;
 - Include Crisis Intervention training (Perhaps the Memphis Model);
 - Training is to be documented.

The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted nor is not reasonable. Setting a precedent for mandated training, let alone an unfunded mandate, has never been, and should not be, the mission of the Orange County Chiefs' and Sheriff's Association. Mandated training is properly the purview of the California POST Commission, precisely because it has the authority, personnel, expertise, and funding mechanism to properly oversee and institute training mandates.

Law enforcement agencies within this County have regularly partnered together and pooled resources successfully, in part because such an effort was self-initiated and not over-managed with unnecessary mandates. An example is the Santa Ana and Orange Police Department's laudatory training series on the mentally ill, mentioned in the Grand Jury's report. In addition, Golden West College has created, and 14 of our officers have attended, curricula for officers dealing with the mentally ill known as Crisis Intervention Training. The Fountain Valley Police Department has benefited from these excellent training resources, but such resource decisions are best left to the discretion of each individual Chief of Police.

Further, my Department already documents our extensive training efforts in a variety of disciplines, which consisted of over 3,000 hours of training in 2012, not including daily training bulletins and daily briefing training.

Recommendation #2: "All Orange County City Police Departments and the Sheriff's Department shall be accredited with a national accreditation agency within five years."

The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted nor is not reasonable. As I previously mentioned, setting unfunded mandates for City Police Departments is unhelpful and unnecessary. I commend the Garden Grove and Tustin Police Departments for their commitment to the CALEA process. I have worked alongside their personnel for 25 years and have been duly impressed by their professionalism and dedication. But to suggest, as the Grand Jury has, that somehow an agency not accredited through CALEA is less professional is profoundly misguided.

To quote from the report, "We do not send our children to non-accredited schools because we recognize it may jeopardize their future professional success. The Grand Jury believes our cities deserve like-quality police departments that achieve and maintain a measurable standard of excellence" (Grand Jury Report, 2013, p. 28).

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Page 4
August 8, 2013

I can assure you, your Honor, the Fountain Valley Police Department has had measurable standards for excellence since 1967, which my personnel regularly meet and exceed. To suggest otherwise is simply misinformed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Llorens', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

DANIEL S. LLORENS
CHIEF OF POLICE

c: Orange County Grand Jury
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701