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September 17, 2013

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

Dear Grand Jury:

In accordance with Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, enclosed please find the response to the Fiscal Year 2012-2013 Orange County Grand Jury report, "To Protect And to Serve: A Look at Tools to Assist Law Enforcement in Achieving Positive Outcomes with the Homeless Mentally Ill." If you have any questions, please contact me at (714) 724-7101.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David L. Maggard, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

David L. Maggard, Jr.  
Chief of Police

Enclosures

**Findings: F1 – F11**

**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.**

- Agrees with finding based upon the information provided in the Grand Jury report. Our Field Training Program provides every newly hired Irvine Police Officer with additional training on dealing with the mentally ill, resources available to assist the mentally ill and their family, as well as resources available for the homeless in our community. The Field Training Program is California POST Approved, and this training is documented in the officer's training manual. The Office of Professional Development provides briefing training to officers on a semi-annual basis. This training is documented in the training file for each officer.

**2. Field officers desire more in-depth training in dealing with the mentally ill on the street.**

- Agrees with finding based upon the information provided in the Grand Jury report. The Irvine Police Department has committed to providing all officers with more in-depth training in dealing with the mentally ill. We have sent every police officer and police sergeant to the 16-hour California POST approved Crisis Intervention Training. To date, all of our officers and sergeants have attended this training. Newly hired officers have been, or will be, scheduled to attend this training.

**3. There is one officer – in a very few instances two officers – for every one thousand (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.**

- Partially agree with the data. The Orange County Grand Jury Report states most cities within Orange County have about one officer per one-thousand residents. The report states the range of officers per one-thousand individuals is 0.88 to 2.04. The City of Irvine has a resident population of approximately 230,000 residents with the authorized number of police officers at 209. The Irvine Police Department utilizes professional staff (civilians) to significantly augment the work of sworn officers. This staff includes civilian investigators, civilian report writers, and civilian traffic investigators.

**4. Nationally accredited police departments police less than 10% of Orange County cities.**

- Agrees with finding based upon the information provided in the Grand Jury report.
- 5. Not all Orange County cities have at least one officer trained in Crisis Intervention.**
- Agrees with finding based upon the information provided in the Grand Jury report. As noted above, all of our officers and sergeants are required to attend advanced Crisis Intervention training.
- 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.**
- Agrees with finding based upon the information provided in the Grand Jury report. The Irvine Police Department has a comprehensive training plan which starts in the police academy, where officers are introduced to strategies on providing support to those with mental illness. These strategies are reinforced and built upon during the Field Training Program where officers gain real world experience in providing support to the mentally ill. After successful completion of the Field Training Program all of our officers have been sent to the 16-hour California POST approved Crisis Intervention Training.
- 7. Five departments have their patrol officers ride periodically with the homeless liaison officer. Seventeen do not.**
- Agrees with finding based upon the information provided in the Grand Jury report. The Irvine Police Department is one of the five agencies with a homeless liaison officer that rides with officers and detectives.
- 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.**
- Agrees with finding based upon the information provided in the Grand Jury report. The Irvine Police Department's Homeless Outreach Officer is a part the Orange County Community Officer's group which holds regular meetings to discuss the best practices in providing support for the homeless in our communities. We continue to look for all opportunities for training in this area, and have ongoing dialogue with experts in the field. In July of 2013 we partnered with the Orange County Health Care Agency to create a mental health team to increase our expertise and effectiveness in

providing support to the mentally ill in our community as well as their families. We currently have a County mental health worker partnered with our Mental Health Liaison and Homeless Outreach Officer one day per week to provide this support and care.

**9. All police departments believe that on-going training should be supported by Mental Health Services-Act funding.**

- Agrees with finding based upon the information provided in the Grand Jury report. It is important to leverage all available and appropriate funding to train our field personnel in this area.

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

- Agrees with finding based upon the information provided in the Grand Jury report. The Irvine Police Department has policies and procedures to provide guidance to officers when contacting those who are mentally ill or are emotionally disturbed. These policies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they are up to date, accurate, and consistent with best practices.

**11. Policy and lawmakers in the County of Orange continue to examine Laura's Law in light of its potential impact on the mentally ill and all citizens for positive outcomes.**

- Agrees with finding based upon the information provided in the Grand Jury report.

**Recommendations:**

**R1 - Require specific continuing education for all police officers and sheriff's deputies in interacting with the mentally ill and homeless population:**

The Irvine Police Department has a homeless outreach officer who is responsible for providing resource referrals to the homeless in our community and assisting them in finding shelter when possible.

All Irvine Police Officers receive mental health training when they attend the police academy. New officers receive further training during the California POST approved Field Training Program they attend after completing the police academy. Additionally, the Irvine Police Department has committed to providing all of its officers advanced training in regards to dealing with the mentally ill. Every police officer and police sergeant is required to attend the 16-hour California POST approved Crisis Intervention

Training. To date, all of our officers and sergeants have attended this training, with the exception of recently hired personnel, who have been, or will be scheduled to attend this course.

Over the past year the Irvine Police Department has partnered with the Orange County Health Care Agency (OCHCA) to develop a mental health response team. This team includes a mental health professional from the OCHCA, a detective assigned as the mental health liaison officer, and the homeless outreach officer. The purpose of this team is to build the bridge between police response and the many resources available to the mentally ill and their families. This is accomplished by conducting timely follow up on cases involving people in crisis where immediate support is needed, assess consumer and family needs, and provide available resources. They are also tasked with the development and implementation of ongoing training for officers on best practices and available resources for calls involving the mentally ill. This team became operational in July of 2013.

The Irvine Police Department will embrace and engage in any new training created and provided by the Orange County Department of Mental Health Services and the Orange County Board of Supervisors fund, as well as any new and contemporary trainings provided elsewhere that may allow us to provide better service to those in our community dealing with mental illness, both consumers and their families.

**R2. All Orange County City Police Departments and the Sheriff's Department shall be accredited with a national accreditation agency within five (5) years.**

The Irvine Police Department does not have plans to pursue national accreditation at this time. We are familiar with the standards that the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) helps set for many departments across the nation.

Lexipol is a company that has been providing risk management resources for public safety agencies since 2003. Lexipol provides a risk based, continuous improvement system of policy review that assists law enforcement stay up to date with current litigation trends, and provide clear and concise policy guidelines to personnel.

Lexipol has arguably become the industry standard for professionalism in law enforcement in Orange County as well as throughout the State. We currently contract with Lexipol to assist us in maintaining "best practices" with our policies and procedures. We will continue to pursue excellence in our policies and practices and always look for ways to improve the quality of service that we provide to the community.

The Irvine Police Department adheres to the standards provided by The California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST). POST has been establishing training standards and best practices for public safety agencies in California since 1959. POST continually enhances the professionalism of California law enforcement by providing and certifying training, creating and distributing publications about best practices in public safety, and recommending hiring standards for new police officers. The Irvine Police Department meets and exceeds these standards every year.

The Irvine Police Department has high standards for excellence and professionalism, reflected in our hiring practices, policies, procedures and training standards. We strive to be a forward-thinking, innovative policing agency, always in pursuit of contemporary “best practices”. We aim to provide only the highest level of service to the Irvine community, while respecting the rights of every individual.