



# CITY of CYPRESS

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**R. A. HICKS**  
Chief of Police

June 15, 2004

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

Dear Members of the Orange County Grand Jury:

RE: Response to Grand Jury Identity Theft Findings

On behalf the Cypress Police Department I am pleased to respond to the request of the Orange County Grand Jury regarding law enforcement's response to Identity Theft, as outlined in the 2003-2004 report entitled "Identity Theft: What Are Local Law Enforcement and Prosecutors Doing to Combat the Problem?"

## **RECOMMENDATION #3 OF GRAND JURY REPORT**

*"The Orange County District Attorney, the Orange County Sheriff-Coroner Department and the city police departments in Orange County take steps to form and actively participate in a countywide Regional Identity Theft Task Force comprised of representatives of each of these agencies. The task force should seek cooperation and participation of the United States Postal Inspector, the United States Secret Service, and the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service and the United States Federal Trade Commission."  
(Finding 3)*

## **RESPONSE**

Regional Task Forces have proven to be a proactive method in combating law enforcement issues. Such examples would be the Regional Narcotic Suppression Program and the Orange County Auto Theft Task Force. One of the many problems with Identity Theft investigations is the expansive area of impact caused by the perpetrators creating multi-jurisdictional concerns. Many



agencies may be investigating the same suspect and not knowing it, thereby duplicating efforts. Currently there is no central depository for I.D. theft investigators and a regional task force would be one way of handling such jurisdictional and information sharing issues. Although regional task forces have proven to be successful, what remains to be a consistent problem for smaller agencies like Cypress is the lack of personnel and financial resources to participate in such a program, as well as measurements to demonstrate specific impacts and positive returns to the citizens of Cypress. As such, the Cypress Police Department does not currently participate in any regional task force, but does cooperate and network with other investigative agencies and professional associations.

The Cypress Police Department has one detective assigned to investigate I.D. theft crimes. Although this may appear to be small in numbers, what should be kept in mind are organizational structure and philosophy, as well as city demographics. Our one I.D. theft detective handles highly complex investigations and most follow-up investigations initiated by line level police officers. It is an organizational philosophy, standard and expectation that our police officers who respond to calls for service, such as I.D. theft, immediately investigate the crime. Preliminary investigations shall be completed within twenty-four hours, and reports are immediately available to crime victims. This service to the community has proved to be highly successful.

#### **RECOMMENDATION #4 OF GRAND JURY REPORT**

*"Orange County city police departments and the Orange County Sheriff-Coroner Department work cooperatively to develop standardized public information materials, possibly modeled after excellent pamphlets that now exist, for use by all departments." (Finding 4)*

#### **RESPONSE**

The Cypress Police Department would welcome a standardized information pamphlet as long as it did not preclude pertinent information we deem important or necessary for the needs of the Cypress Police Department. We do currently utilize an Identity Theft pamphlet that is very similar to the Irvine exemplar mentioned in the Grand Jury report, but is altered to meet the needs of the Cypress community and internal policies and procedures. This information is also available on our Department website that can be accessed at [http://www.ci.cypress.ca.us/police/police\\_home.htm](http://www.ci.cypress.ca.us/police/police_home.htm).



## RECOMMENDATION #5 OF GRAND JURY REPORT

*"Orange County city police departments and the Orange County Sheriff-Coroner Department adopt a standardized identity-theft crime reporting form, possibly modeled after forms now in use by several police departments." (Finding 5)*

## RESPONSE

The Cypress Police Department currently does not utilize a separate Identity Theft report form. Typically forms are developed with the specific intent to capture statistical information (ie. State traffic accident report forms). Our standard crime report form has been formatted and coded to capture specific information via our Records Management System, including that of Identity Theft cases. We would find no use for an additional form to add to our inventory of over one hundred forms already in use, unless it was a State form used to compile reports and/or a state-wide database used as a central depository for investigators.

Thank-you for allowing us the opportunity to respond to the Grand Jury report, and we always stand ready to assist you in any way. Should you have any questions or are in need of additional information please feel free to call me at (714) 229-6621. We will be readily available to help you in any way possible.

Sincerely,



R.A. Hicks, Chief of Police  
Cypress Police Department

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