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CITY OF SANTA ANA
POLICE DEPARTMENT
60 CIVIC CENTER PLAZA • P.O. BOX 1981
SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA 92702

CITY MANAGER
David N. Ream
CITY ATTORNEY
Joseph W. Fletcher
CLERK OF THE COUNCIL
Patricia E. Healy

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

May 10, 2004

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

Dear Members:

Recently, the Orange County Grand Jury released a report which discusses the current law enforcement response to Identity Theft crimes. The report made several FINDINGS, followed by several RECOMMENDATIONS. We are required by law to respond to the elements of the Grand Jury report related to our jurisdiction.

RESPONSES TO GRAND JURY FINDINGS:

3. Identity Theft Sub-Task Forces are in place in five major population centers in California and are functioning to facilitate better communication, coordination and cooperation among federal, state, and local law enforcement and public record-keeping agencies involved in prevention, investigation and prosecution of identity theft. Orange County does not have an Identity Theft Task Force or Sub-Task Force.

Response: The Santa Ana Police Department is aware of the existence of Identity Theft Sub-Task Forces in other jurisdictions, notably Los Angeles County. The Santa Ana Police Department has sent investigators to training hosted by the Los Angeles County Sheriffs' Office.

4. The Orange County District Attorney's Office, Orange County city police agencies and the Orange County Sheriff-Coroner Department provide some form of public information and resource materials outlining how one can prevent identity theft as well as corrective steps to take where identity theft has occurred.

Response: For some time, the Santa Ana Police Department has provided victims of identity theft with a pamphlet developed in-house. The pamphlet outlines the steps that need to be taken by the victims to fix their credit, such as contacting the major credit bureaus. More recently, the Department has been mailing victims the Federal Trade Commission's "ID Theft- When Bad Things Happen to Your Good Name."

5. Eight city police agencies in Orange County have developed specialized identity-theft crime reporting forms that incorporate standardized terms and information formats. These forms can help identity-theft victims repair damaged credit history more quickly.

Response: The Santa Ana Police Department recognizes that the single most critical issue to victims is that they be issued a case number and a copy of the police report. Virtually all financial institutions require one or both of these items before they will take steps to repair the victim's credit. The Department is currently in the process of developing a specialized form to be used by field officers when documenting Identity Theft. The new form will capture additional information often omitted during field investigations, but which is necessary for investigators to conduct an efficient investigation.

RESPONSES TO GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS:

3. 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 the cooperation and participation of the United States Postal Inspector, the United States Secret Service, the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service and the United States Federal Trade Commission.

Response: The Santa Ana Police Department recognizes the value of the regional task force concept, especially with the inclusion of federal law enforcement agencies. The expanded powers of Federal authorities would facilitate the investigation of Identity Theft crimes especially as it relates to the subpoenaing of documents from financial institutions and investigations which cross state boundaries. In light of the tough fiscal times which have already strained investigative resources, the Department would need to carefully evaluate the cost/benefits of such an effort.

4. 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.

Response: The Santa Ana Police Department supports the development of standardized materials for dissemination to victims of Identity Theft.

5. 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.

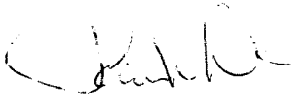
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Response: The Santa Ana Police Department supports the concept of a standardized reporting form, however, the Department recognizes that differences in the case management and reporting systems at the various agencies may make the development of a completely standardized form impractical or impossible. The Department is currently developing a new form for use in-house which was designed after the review of forms used in other jurisdictions.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul M. Walters", written in a cursive style.

PAUL M. WALTERS
Chief of Police

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