

City of Seal Beach

POLICE DEPARTMENT



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May 10, 2004

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

Dear T.W. Staple, M.D., Foreperson:

Pursuant to your letter of April 13, 2004, reference Identity Theft, the following is the City of Seal Beach's response to the findings and recommendations of your report.

Finding 1 The OC District Attorney's Office is in need of additional staff to effectively investigate and prosecute identity theft crimes. *We would concur, however, our assessment is that the District Attorney's Office is also understaffed in other areas.*

Finding 2 Some city police agencies need more training by the District Attorney's Office on the investigation and preparation of identify-theft crimes. *Considering the magnitude of these crimes, we can hardly disagree that additional training for law enforcement would be beneficial.*

Finding 3 Orange County does not have an Identity Theft Task Force. *This is correct.*

Finding 4 The OC District Attorney's Office and Orange County city police agencies provide some form of public information related to the prevention of identity theft. *The Seal Beach Police Department currently provides printed material and makes public presentations on identity theft.*

Finding 5 Eight police departments in Orange County have developed specialized identity theft report forms. *As the eight cities were not identified nor their respective forms provided, we cannot comment on the value of the identity theft form, or how it might assist victims of identity theft.*

Recommendation 1 The OC District Attorney should increase the number of investigators and prosecutors for identity theft cases. *This recommendation has merit, however, in light of the current financial environment, and pending staff reductions, this does not appear possible, or likely the highest priority.*

Recommendation 2 The OC District Attorney should provide more training to local police on identity theft. *This recommendation also has merit, however, in light of the current financial environment, and pending staff reductions, this does not appear possible, or likely the highest priority.*

Recommendation 3 The County should form a Regional Identity Theft Task Force. *This recommendation also has merit, however, in light of the current financial environment, and pending staff reductions at the District Attorney's Office, the Sheriff's Department and local Police Departments, this does not appear possible, or likely the highest priority.*

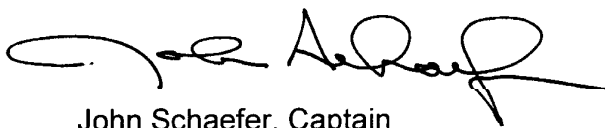
Recommendation 4 The Sheriff's Department and local police departments should cooperate to develop standardized public information on identity theft. *As most agencies already produce material and distribute information of this type, standardization of the public information should be fairly simple. This recommendation should be presented to the Orange County Chiefs' and Sheriff Association for implementation.*

Recommendation 5 Orange County law enforcement should standardize identity theft reporting forms. *This recommendation also has merit and should be pursued. If the Chiefs, Sheriff and District Attorney would agree, possibly an ad hoc committee could be created to develop the suggested standardized forms.*

In light of the growing problem of identity theft and the burden it is creating for law enforcement and the community, thank you for the effort the Grand Jury has put into this effort.

If we can provide any additional assistance or information, please do not hesitate to call.

On behalf of Seal Beach City Manager John B. Bahorski, and Seal Beach Police Chief Michael F. Sellers,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Schaefer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "S".

John Schaefer, Captain