



550 N. FLOWER STREET
P.O. BOX 449
SANTA ANA, CA 92702-0449
(714) 647-7000

**SHERIFF-CORONER DEPARTMENT
COUNTY OF ORANGE
CALIFORNIA**

**SANDRA HUTCHENS
SHERIFF-CORONER**

**EXECUTIVE COMMAND STAFF
JACK ANDERSON
J. B. DAVIS
RICK DOSTAL
CHARLES WALTERS**

July 8, 2008

The Honorable Nancy Wieben Stock
Presiding Judge
Orange County Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92702

Subject: Response to the Orange County Grand Jury Report, "After the BIG ONE, Will Critical County Services Survive?"

Judge Wieben Stock:

Per your request and in accordance with California Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, enclosed please find the Orange County Sheriff's Department response to the above referenced FY 07-08 Grand Jury Report.

If you have any questions regarding this response document, please contact Executive Director Rick Dostal at (714) 647-1803.

Respectfully,

Sandra Hutchens
Sheriff-Coroner

cc: Ann Andres, Grand Jury Foreman
Members, Board of Supervisors
Thomas G. Mauk, County Executive Officer

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ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

SHERIFF-CORONER
SANDRA HUTCHENS



AFTER THE BIG ONE, WILL CRITICAL
COUNTY SERVICES SURVIVE?

JULY 2008

GRAND JURY RESPONSE

ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT
GRAND JURY RESPONSE
AFTER THE *BIG ONE*, WILL CRITICAL COUNTY SERVICES SURVIVE?

Dear members of the Grand Jury,

The Orange County Sheriff Department has received and reviewed the Orange County Grand Jury report titled "After the BIG One will Critical County Services Survive?" We have reviewed the findings in a collaborative effort with necessary personnel and have prepared the following response.

Finding 1b

Coordination is insufficient between the full-time safety officers at OC Waste & Recycling, Sheriff-Coroner Department, Health Care Agency and OC Infrastructure, and the County Safety Office.

Response: Disagree with the finding.

In 2005, prior to the Orange County Sheriff-Coroner Department (OCSD) creating the position of Safety and Training Officer, an evaluation from the County Executive Office indicated that the OCSD Safety program lacked coordination. As an agency, our safety and training programs did not meet the minimum County or State standards. This was a result of each Division attempting to manage their safety and training program separately. Consequently, department personnel were not trained in safety, mandated programs were not implemented, and identified safety issues went unresolved. To address these issues, the County Safety Office recommended that OCSD appoint a central safety representative to coordinate the efforts of the entire department.



ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT
GRAND JURY RESPONSE
AFTER THE *BIG ONE*, WILL CRITICAL COUNTY SERVICES SURVIVE?

Since the OCSD Safety and Training Officer position was filled full-time in June of 2006, the department has seen marked improvement in its Safety and Training program. The OCSD Safety and Training Officer works cooperatively with the County Safety Office to ensure the OCSD is compliant in all areas of Safety and Training.

As a result of this, the OCSD Safety and Training Officer established Division Safety Representatives (DSRs) at 56 locations department wide. These DSRs work with the department Safety and Training Officer to monitor and maintain safety requirements, such as ladder inspections and chemical inventory updates. In addition, the DSRs correct deficiencies documented during facility inspections and conduct training or coordinate with supervisory personnel to ensure that required training is presented to staff.

The OCSD Safety and Training Officer also implemented department wide training for the four main safety programs, which are Injury and Illness Prevention, Fire Prevention, Emergency Action, and Hazard Communication. Additionally, the OCSD Safety and Training Officer implemented Supervisory Safety Training. The County Safety Office and the OCSD Safety and Training Officer coordinated policies, procedures, training materials, and schedules to design and deliver Supervisor Safety Classes for both sworn and professional staff. After implementing the annual safety inspection process, the OCSD Safety and Training Officer worked with the DSRs to complete and submit safety inspections for all 56 locations on or before the County deadline. This would not have been possible without the coordination and support of the County Safety Office.



ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT
GRAND JURY RESPONSE
AFTER THE *BIG ONE*, WILL CRITICAL COUNTY SERVICES SURVIVE?

Another example of coordination between the County Safety Office and the OCSD Safety Officer involves the 2008 annual safety inspections. For 2008, the County Safety Office opted to take the lead with the inspections. The County Safety Officer assigned to assist OCSD with compliance and regulatory requirements coordinates the inspection schedules with the OCSD Safety and Training Officer. During each inspection the OCSD Safety and Training Officer is present and has the ability to answer questions because she is a member of the Orange County Sheriff's Department and is familiar with each location.

As you can see, the County Safety Office and the OCSD Safety and Training Officer coordinate activities related to safety and training on a regular basis. This relationship has developed over time and has worked to improve Department Safety and Training standards, by ensuring Department compliance with state, federal, and local regulations, as well as with County policies.

While we believe the County Safety Officer and the OCSD Safety Officer coordinate their activities on a regular basis; OCSD will contact the County Safety Office and discuss opportunities for better coordination.



ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT
GRAND JURY RESPONSE
AFTER THE *BIG ONE*, WILL CRITICAL COUNTY SERVICES SURVIVE?

Finding 4

Some County data centers housing critical computer and telecommunication equipment are using water in their fire suppression system rather than inert gas.

Response: Agree with the finding

The Sheriff-Coroner Department has an approved capital project that is funded by Prop 172 savings (14Q / Org P744) for a "Dry Fire Suppression System" at Loma Ridge. The scope of this project is limited to 4,135 square feet. Although funding has been reserved, there are concerns that the funding amount is inadequate to support either scope of this project based on recent feedback from another agency's dry fire suppression projects. The status of this project as of 5/6/08 is Scope Development.

It should be noted, the data center located in the Brad Gates building currently has an under floor gas suppression system and a water-based pre-action sprinkler system. The pre-action sprinkler system is for structure protection and was installed to meet building codes, and as such, cannot be removed.

Recommendation 1b

Transfer the full-time Safety Officers positions at OC Waste and Recycling, OC Infrastructure, Health Care Agency and Sheriff-Coroner Department to the centralized County Safety Office.



ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

GRAND JURY RESPONSE

AFTER THE *BIG ONE*, WILL CRITICAL COUNTY SERVICES SURVIVE?

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted.

The County Safety Office conducts an annual safety program evaluation for each County Agency/Department. To address previous recommendations from the County Safety Office, the position of Safety and Training Officer was created at the Sheriff-Coroner's Department (OCSD).

This position was filled in June 2006. Since that time, the County Safety Office's annual evaluations of OCSD's safety programs and performance have greatly improved. The County Safety Office's evaluation of OCSD from October 2006 states, "... in the past four months, all facilities in OCSD have been inspected (a first), all Divisions are turning in Material Safety Data Sheets (a first), Emergency Evacuation Drills are being conducted (a first), and a concerted effort is being shown for a safe work environment. The Risk Management Bureau/Safety Office is still in the early stages of development and implementation of programs, but I can see a positive change in the direction OCSD has taken."

Comments from the County Safety Office's evaluation of OCSD from the November 2007 evaluation include, "The Orange County Sheriff's Department has taken giant steps in the past year to successfully meet Cal/OSHA requirements. The Department is now on the right track, and I'm sure it will continue to improve and grow in a safe and healthy manner during the next year."

The improvements noted in the County Safety Office's annual evaluations of OCSD are largely due to having a Safety and Training Officer position within the Sheriff -Coroner Department, Risk Management Bureau (RMB).



ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

GRAND JURY RESPONSE

AFTER THE *BIG ONE*, WILL CRITICAL COUNTY SERVICES SURVIVE?

OCSD's Safety and Training Officer continuously interfaces with staff in RMB and other areas of the Department to compile program content, obtain program approval, distribute policies and projects, provide assistance and information related to inspections, and verify information for Cal/OSHA record keeping.

The OCSD has shown improvement with safety compliance since the Safety and Training Officer position was created and placed in OCSD's Risk Management Bureau. Due to the successes that have been achieved and the ongoing efforts and improvements, we conclude, it is more beneficial for OCSD's Safety and Training Officer to remain assigned within the Sheriff-Coroner's Department, Risk Management Bureau.

This allows personnel in the OCSD to have a point of contact within the agency to address any safety concern. It provides personnel with the opportunity to consult with a knowledgeable member of the Department, who understands Department specific needs. If we remove/transfer the OCSD Safety and Training officer to the County Safety Office, the Department would be taking a step backward. Reverting to a practice where the department, on a regular basis, was unsuccessful in meeting and complying with the minimum State, Federal, and Local regulations, as well as with County policies.

Recommendation 4

Require all data centers in Orange County, including the Loma Ridge EOC and others, to replace water-based fire suppression systems with those using inert gas, based upon the Standard on Clean Agent Fire Extinguishing Systems, 2004 Edition published by the National Fire Protection Association.



ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT
GRAND JURY RESPONSE
AFTER THE *BIG ONE*, WILL CRITICAL COUNTY SERVICES SURVIVE?

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a timeframe for implementation as stated below.

The dry fire suppression project, for the Loma Ridge facility is a funded project and is currently in Scope Development. At this stage of the project, a timeframe for implementation cannot be accurately stated. The Grand Jury recommendations for the type of clean agent will be included in the scope development process.

The recommended system coverage is greater than the original budgeted scope of work. This will require a cost analysis and a funding request to be submitted to the Board of Supervisors for review and approval after the completion of a cost estimate.

