



September 25, 2006

Nancy Wieben-Stock
Presiding Judge
Orange County Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Dear Judge Wieben-Stock:

RE: Orange County Grand Jury Report "Oversight of Orange County Law Enforcement Agencies, Resolving a Dichotomy"

Please accept the following responses in accordance with California Penal Code 933 and 933.05 to the "Orange County Grand Jury Report: Oversight of Orange County Law Enforcement Agencies, Resolving a Dichotomy!"

Response to Findings

6.1 Best Practices Goal: I respectfully disagree. The Laguna Beach Police Department has adopted and implemented policies and procedures that already rise to the level of best practices. The policies are in line with the Orange County Chief's and Sheriff's Association as well as the Commission of Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) and other professional organizations. A member of our City Attorney's Office who acts as our legal advisor reviews our policies. This review is done to ensure that the policies and procedures remain at the level of "best practices".

6.2 Independent Reviews of LEAs: I disagree. The City of Laguna Beach Police Department's policing practices are subject to the scrutiny of independent reviews by our own community. The City Manager, City Council, City Attorney, Management Staff and State and Federal Judicial Systems also review our practices. I believe the review systems currently being used in our city are operating effectively and the amount of oversight by them is sufficient.

6.3 Orange County is Changing: I agree on this point. The county is changing as it continues growing and changing demographically. The City of Laguna Beach and our police department are committed to working closely with our community to address the changes necessary for us to provide the best possible service to our residents, our schools, members of the business community and visitors to the community of Laguna Beach.

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6.4 LEA self-assessment: The Laguna Beach Police Department has an on-going practice of engaging in self-assessment to ensure that we are striving to achieve the mission of the city and department while in accordance with our organizational values. We already have in place sufficient procedures, along with internal and external review, to ensure we are following best practices. I do not believe that independent audits would provide any increase of improvement in service and operation than our existing procedures already do.

Response to Recommendations:

7.1 Best Practice Guidelines: The Laguna Beach Police Department receives recommendations from many different organizations, such as the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training, Chiefs' of Police and Sheriff's Associations, police legal advisors who specifically practice law related to police issues as well as other law enforcement agencies on a regular basis. These recommendations provide information on a variety of topics, including training in the handling of citizen's complaints and other issues facing a police department. Staff level personnel of the department also participate in and attend conferences and seminars or organizations such as FBI National Academy Associates, California Police Officers Association and Police Executive Research Forum to name just a few. These organizations provide information and insight into current best practices in law enforcement. These are often adopted by our agency ensuring the department is operating within best practices guidelines.

7.2 Near-term, independent review of LEA policies, procedures and compliance:

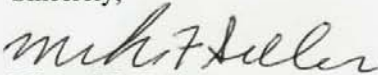
The internal and external system of checks and balances currently in place in the City of Laguna Beach are functioning effectively. There are periodic and ongoing reviews of the Police Department's policies, procedures and compliance by city elected and appointed leaders as well as the members of the community. The procedures and policies in place with the Laguna Beach Police Department already rise to the level of best practices. I do not support any additional independent review.

7.3 Periodic independent reviews of LEA compliance to policies and procedures:

As outlined in 7.2, I believe the Laguna Beach Police Department is already using best practices in attempting to carry out their mission of providing the best law enforcement possible to the residents, business members and visitors to our community.

I would like to thank the Orange County Grand Jury for their work on behalf of the citizens of the community and allow me an opportunity to respond to the recommendations listed in the Grand Jury report.

Sincerely,



Michael F. Sellers
Chief of Police