

September 1, 2006

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

Re: Response to Orange County Grand Jury Report: Oversight of Orange County Law Enforcement Agencies, *Resolving a Dichotomy!*

Dear Judge Wieben Stock:

My office has received the Orange County Grand Jury report on "**Oversight of Orange County Law Enforcement Agencies, *Resolving a Dichotomy!***". Per the request detailed in the report, I have compiled responses to Findings 6.2 through 6.3 as well as Recommendations 7.2 through 7.3.

Response to Findings:

*6.2 Independent Reviews of Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs): The use of independent reviews of LEA's practices is limited to unique reviews rather than to periodic reviews of policies, procedures, and compliance.*

I disagree. As Mayor of the City of La Palma, I know that the policies of the La Palma Police Department come under regular review by the State and Federal Judicial Systems, the City Manager, the City's Risk Manager and the City Attorney's Office. I believe the amount of oversight from all of these sources is sufficient. Furthermore, the Department has an excellent reputation among the resident and business community of La Palma, who regularly express their support and admiration for the conduct of its personnel and policies they adhere to.

*6.3 Orange County is Changing: Orange County and city LEA's will face new challenges as the number of crimes increase, reflecting those of surrounding counties.*

I agree. The County is changing and growing. As a result, I believe that Law Enforcement agencies will face new challenges as the County grows and crime increases. The La Palma Police Department prides itself on its ability to remain responsive to evolving community needs, in an effort to minimize any increase in crime.

Response to Recommendations:

*7.2 Near-term, independent review of LEA policies, procedures, and compliance: The Orange County Municipal Police Departments, in cooperation with the Orange County City Mayors, should consider contracting for a near-term independent review of LEA's current policies, procedures, and compliance to provide current status as compared to best practices.*

This recommendation has been implemented in part. The La Palma Police Department currently contracts with an independent consultant to annually review and update Department's Policies, Procedures, Rules and Regulations. Updates to these documents reflect "best practices" in the law enforcement arena.

However, the La Palma Police Department will not be implementing a near-term independent review of compliance compared to best practices because it is not warranted at this time. The Department has an excellent reputation among the residents and business community of La Palma. These community stakeholders provide an excellent benchmark for assessing the effectiveness and appropriateness of public safety services being provided. As mentioned in my response to Finding 6.2, I believe the amount of oversight from all these sources is sufficient.

*7.3 Periodic, independent reviews of LEA compliance to policies and procedures: The Orange County municipal police departments, in cooperation with the Orange County City Mayors, should consider contracting for periodic, independent reviews of LEAs' policies and procedures, using best practices guidelines as criteria.*

This recommendation has been implemented. The La Palma Police Department currently contracts with a private consultant for the annual review and revision of the Department's Policies, Procedures, Rules and Regulations. Updates reflect "best practices" in the law enforcement arena

I want to thank the Grand Jury for their work on behalf of all of our residents, and for the opportunity to respond to this report.

Sincerely,



Christine M. Barnes  
Mayor