

**2001-02 GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT**  
**After-Hours Access to Ventura County Law Enforcement**  
**Facilities**

**Respondent: Board of Supervisors**

**Recommendation R-1:** All law enforcement facilities should provide a safe haven 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Response:** The Board concurs with this recommendation. Ideally, providing a safe haven would mean 24/7 staffing at each location. The Board places the highest priority on public safety in all its aspects, and within the County's stringent budget constraints, allocates funding that will allow the Sheriff to fulfill his mission. The Board relies on the Sheriff to make appropriate prioritization in managing his budget in such a way as to maximize public safety. The highest priority is to deploy adequate patrol staffing to respond as quickly as possible to emergencies when and where they occur, and to deal with other calls for service within the respective patrol areas. Clearly marked phones have been installed at the front of each patrol station. This allows an individual to immediately contact the Sheriff's Communication Center from the patrol station.

**Recommendation R-2:** All law enforcement facilities should be easy to find, clearly identifiable and well lit.

**Response:** The Board concurs with this recommendation and encourages the Sheriff to periodically review the signage and lighting at each patrol station.

**Recommendation R-3:** If unmanned and/or locked, a protected area such as access to the lobby and/or a loud, widely heard alarm system should be available and clearly marked at all facilities.

**Response:** The Board does not concur with this recommendation. Significant structural changes or expansion of the facilities to provide an additional protected area is financially not a practical possibility. Additionally, the Board agrees with the Sheriff that, if lobby areas were left open without staffing on the premises, there would be a significant risk of vandalism. A loud, widely heard alarm system could become a public nuisance in the community, and its effect could be nullified by repeated false alarms.

**Recommendation R-4:** Written procedures and policies should be in place to address minimal response time to calls for help at all facilities.

**Response:** The Board concurs with this recommendation, and believes that it is already in place within the Sheriff's policies and procedures.