

county of ventura

THOMAS BERG
Agency Director

TO: Lin Koester, CAO

DATE: June 3, 1997

FROM: Thomas Berg, Director *Tom*

SUBJECT: **RESPONSE TO 1996-97 FIRST FINAL
GRAND JURY REPORT**

The following comments are in response to the recommendations directed toward the Resource Management Agency, Weights and Measures, on page 10 of the "First Final Report" dated March 24, 1997.

Grand Jury Recommendation: *The leaking roof at the El Rio Facility meter testing laboratory should be repaired to provide a safe working environment for the inspector and to protect the equipment housing in the lab. The better solution would be to have larger and more adequate facilities provided by GSA for the safety of the inspectors and the protection of the costly equipment maintained by Weights and Measures.*

RMA Response: We agree. The recommendation regarding the leaking roof has already been implemented. The roof was replaced in December, 1996. The recommendation for larger and more adequate facilities has not yet been implemented. The General Service Agency (GSA) plans to demolish the office building used by Weights and Measures staff and is currently searching for an appropriate replacement site. The time frame for implementation is therefore controlled by GSA, not RMA.

Grand Jury Recommendation: *Copies of Certificates of Accuracy issued by the California Division of Measurement Standards should be kept with the standards in the field trucks, or a label indicating the next recall date should be attached to the standard. This action will keep inspectors aware of recall dates for each standard used in the field. The process of attaching labels to standards is used by commercial calibration/certification laboratories as the common method to document date calibrated and next due date.*



RMA Response: We disagree. The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. Certificates of Accuracy, issued by the State of California's Division of Measurement Standards ("DMS"), are retained at Weights and Measures' main office in the Hall of Administration, with copies on file at the El Rio facility. There is no State requirement that copies be kept in the field trucks. Because of the possibility of damage to those copies, it is Weights and Measures' policy to maintain the records at the offices where they are readily available.

The scheduling of certification inspection dates is the responsibility of DMS. Weights and Measures is notified by DMS of the assigned dates. Each type of standard is inspected on a specific frequency, based on the standard classification; i.e., 25-lb weights, inspector's weight kits., etc. Over the past several years, the frequency of certification required by DMS has varied, based on a combination of a random scheduling factor and the results of prior DMS tests. Generally, the higher the accuracy rate, the less frequent the inspection.

The current method of certification, as established by DMS, does not require that labels be attached to standards. Further, the next "due date" is not set by DMS at the time of the last inspection .

Grand Jury Recommendation: *Additional funding should be allocated to increase the number of inspectors needed to adequately cover the county areas of inspection.*

RMA Response: We agree. Consumer protection would indeed be enhanced by an increase in staffing. However, this recommendation cannot be implemented at the present time because it is not reasonable due to the County's current budget crises. The addition of positions which are not revenue offset is not currently feasible.